

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

June 24, 1969

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National Security Decision Memorandum 16

TO: The Secretary of State  
The Secretary of Defense  
The Director of Central Intelligence

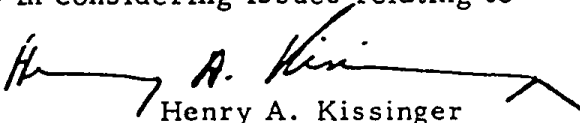
SUBJECT: Criteria for Strategic Sufficiency

As a result of the June 18, 1969 National Security Council meeting, the President has made the following decision:

For planning purposes, strategic sufficiency as far as nuclear attacks on the United States are concerned should be defined as follows:

1. Maintain high confidence that our second strike capability is sufficient to deter an all-out surprise attack on our strategic forces.
2. Maintain forces to insure that the Soviet Union would have no incentive to strike the United States first in a crisis.
3. Maintain the capability to deny to the Soviet Union the ability to cause significantly more deaths and industrial damage in the United States in a nuclear war than they themselves would suffer.
4. Deploy defenses which limit damage from small attacks or accidental launches to a low level.

Pending further studies, the President has directed that these criteria be used by all agencies in considering issues relating to the U.S. strategic posture.

  
Henry A. Kissinger

cc: Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff  
Director, Bureau of the Budget  
Director, Arms Control and Disarmament Agency  
Director, Office of Emergency Preparedness  
Director, U.S. Information Agency  
Director, Office of Science and Technology

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