

~~TOP SECRET~~

7 November 1963

SANITIZED COPY
SENSITIVE INFORMATION DELETED

*266
NESC*

MEMORANDUM FOR GENERAL TAYLOR

SUBJECT: Management and Termination of War

DECLASSIFIED
Authority NND 941125
By NCL NARA, Date 4/28/92

BACKGROUND

1. Attached (TAB A) is the study of war termination done by the NESC. It resulted from a SecDef request (TAB B) growing out of some work done by one of Mr. Rostow's BNSP Planning Tasks Groups under Mr. Tom Schelling of Harvard. Originally, the study attached was to have been done by the Special Studies Group, but after some discussion, the JCS recommended, and the SecDef accepted, that it be done by the NESC staff. You then so directed (TAB C).

STUDY CONTENT

2. The study examines general war with USSR initiated under three different conditions: (1) a Soviet nation-killing attack on the US; (2) a discriminate US preemptive attack following convincing evidence of Soviet intent to attack; (3) war involving escalation from (a) one limited war, and (b) two simultaneous limited wars.

3. The table of contents (TAB D) gives some measure of the scope of the study. I have red-lined certain portions, identified by the paper clips. In oversimplified terms, the study says that (1) if both sides decide to launch nation-killing attacks, at the termination of hostilities each will be thinking primarily (and perhaps only) in terms of survival, but that (2) in other situations, particularly in escalating ones, there are decision points where it would be to the advantage of both sides to stop--even though both may have received some attack on their homeland. It must be added that such an oversimplified summary, while fairly accurate, nevertheless misses the kernels of provocative insights the study provides on the use of force and diplomacy under conditions of extreme tensions.

*Genl Taylor
col R*

*Part signed
mm*
~~TOP SECRET~~

File 0

~~TOP SECRET~~

STUDY CONCLUSIONS

Options should extend over types of decisions illustrated in the scenarios and an "options" weapon, reconnaissance, and command apparatus aligned with them.

4. The conclusions the NESC staff draws are not particularly startling. (See p. 78ff.): The US needs improved political-military planning, improved command and control (including a survivable facility in the DC area), more discriminate weapons, better reconnaissance capabilities, and forces capable of escalating without making large jumps in the amount of force employed. Its most significant recommendation (p 86 recom. 1) is that the NSC should provide "comprehensive" guidance for war plans, including the SIOF and should review the plans when formulated. An integrated staff would be placed under J-5 for this purpose (p 86, recom. 2).

Most of this can & should be done in military channels. I am doubtful about bringing in the outside agencies.

COMMENTS

5. The most significant thing the present study does is to provide evidence that the proposed NESC task for next year has real merit. The present study barely scratches the surface of an endeavor that should be extremely useful in helping the government better understand the processes of war.

6. No one will be completely satisfied with the NESC product. It is a broad brush treatment (but still the best--the only--such analysis available). Some will question the conclusions and recommendations. Other may question that it makes the unreal seem possible, by treating the possibility of exerting some control over the use of nuclear weapons at both the tactical and strategic level. With respect to the conclusions and recommendations, at this early stage of this type analysis, it will be recognized they must be tentative. Far more important will be the insights afforded along the way as the analysis proceeds.

7. The NESC has provided us a copy of the study asking for any informal comments by Friday. I suggest these modifications.

These given them this informally

a. As General Goodpaster noted in the study, in the two-war escalation scenario, the relationship in time between the events in Europe and the Far East is not as clear as it should be.

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

b. The study does not make clear what it means or why the Soviets would prefer "unilateral disarmament" to "unconditional surrender" under certain conditions (p 41). The writing is obscure here.

c. The description of the Soviet basic national security objective being "identical" (p 29) to that of the US seems incorrect. A more sophisticated description of Soviet political-military objectives seems required.

will pass these to them directly during review stage.

THE STUDY'S FUTURE

8. In his April memorandum (TAB B), the SecDef stated he intended to forward the war termination study to the Rostow Inter-agency Panel and subsequently, after their examination, to the JCS for comment. This means that the study would pass through you on the way to the SecDef but not come formally before the JCS until considerably later.

RECOMMENDATIONS

9. I recommend:

a. That we pass the comments in para 7 to the NESC Staff.

WYS
W.O.Y. S.

TAB A - Report by NESC - The Management and Termination of War with the Soviet Union

TAB B - JCS 2433

TAB C - CM-693-63

TAB D - Table of Contents 3
to TAB A

~~TOP SECRET~~