FORM DS-747

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

~~TOP SECRET~~ COVER SHEET

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4. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF ATTACHED DOCUMENT(S) (*Origin, subject, reference no. or other pertinent data*)

~~12/8/58~~ - Memo to Secy fr. S/P-GCSmith re Review of Strategic Concept w/att: Tab A - NSC 5810/1; Tab B - let. to Secy McElroy; Tab C - S/P Paper.

~~12/8/58~~ 1/20/59

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~~12/8/58~~ 1/20/59 (Date) S. Goodman (Top Secret Control Officer)

3. DATE AND NAME OF PERSON PREPARING FORM

~~12/8/58~~ 1/20/59 A. Van Hise

6. PERSONS TO WHOM ROUTED OR READING DOCUMENT	7. OFFICE SYMBOL	8. SIGNATURES	9. DATE RECEIVED	10. DATE READ	11. DATE RELEASED
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EO 12356, Sec. 1.3 (a) (
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This document consists of 8 pages
No. 3 of 10 Copies, Series A

~~TOP SECRET~~

1- Secy
2- S/P-J Military Naval Policy
3- S/P-Amb Policy
4- U/Hunter
5- G/Murphy
6- G. Reinhardt
7- ~~EUR~~ Bunnell & HVH
8- S/S
9- S/S Gordon Gray
10- ~~EUR~~ Bunnell 9/6/57

January 20, 1959

TO: S - The Secretary

THROUGH: S/S
G - Mr. Murphy

FROM: S/P - Gerard C. Smith

SUBJECT: Review of Strategic Concept

1/28/59 cy 9 given to Gordon Gray by JCS at Secy's suggestion

In your letter of July 23, 1958, to the President, you said you had told Secretary McElroy that you remained of the opinion that the military doctrine set forth in paragraphs 13 and 14 of the Basic National Security Policy paper (Tab A) is rapidly outgrowing its usefulness and that we need to apply ourselves urgently to finding an alternative strategic concept. You stated also that we should seek the President's approval of further study of an alternative doctrine by a small State-Defense group. You will recall that the President later gave his approval for this study.

one copy made & given to Mr Elroy with attachment & put in "long range planning" papers.

When I approached Defense on this subject in early August, they requested that the study be deferred until the FY 1960 budget was behind them. I accordingly let the matter lie dormant.

The budget process is now drawing to a close, and we should press ahead without further delay. My talks with General Picher, Director of the Joint Staff of the JCS, and others in the Pentagon have convinced me that we must take the initiative, as Defense and the Chiefs seem to be paralyzed by inter-service differences.

S/P has accordingly ventured to draft "A Concept of US Military Strategy for the 1960s" (Tab C) to serve as a basis of discussion with the Pentagon. This concept, which I believe reflects views that you have expressed in several conversations with Secretary McElroy, differs from the current strategic concept in the following major respects:

1. We

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1. We abandon the major premise of the current concept -- i.e. the threat of massive nuclear retaliation is the primary deterrent to all kinds of Communist aggression. A corollary current premise is that general war forces are also limited war forces. Our premise is that the massive retaliation threat of our general war capability effectively deters only major Communist aggression. To prevent limited Communist aggression, a separate deterrent strategy and force, specifically designed for this purpose, is required.

2. We also abandon a major thesis of the current concept -- i.e. any substantial overt engagement of US and USSR armed forces or any substantial Soviet aggression against the NATO area would automatically trigger massive nuclear retaliation against the USSR. As you have pointed out, this thesis is becoming less and less credible. Although not specifically stated in our paper, we assume the probability of a lesser US response to Soviet aggression which does not clearly threaten a permanent alteration of the world balance of power against us.

3. We question the current counter-force strategy which provides that the primary mission of our strategic nuclear striking force is to destroy military targets, especially nuclear strike capabilities, in the Communist empire. We believe that this strategy will become increasingly infeasible in the dawning era of quick-reacting and elusive missile weapons systems. Moreover, the destruction of many military targets would require ground bursts of very large yield weapons with resultant heavy fall-out, the effects of which, in addition to causing millions of unnecessary casualties in the Communist empire, would extend around the world. Finally, the cost of matching the Communists missile for missile, an inherent necessity of the counter-force strategy, would in a very few years require defense budgets substantially larger than the much debated FY 1960 budget. You will recall that the President has on a number of occasions expressed concern that we seem to be "over-insuring" by accumulating too many strategic weapons systems. Our paper, therefore, inclines toward an alternative strategy, which has many adherents in the Pentagon, of striking a finite number of control centers and power bases of the Communist empire. Although the prime targets of this strategy are population centers, the fall-out effects and the number of casualties would be far less than under a counter-force strategy as we believe that air bursts of many fewer weapons of much lower yield would suffice to accomplish the mission.

4. Because

4. Because we incline to a smaller strategic striking force, we place much greater emphasis than the present concept on the invulnerability of the force.

5. We question a major assumption of the current concept -- i.e. nuclear weapons will be used in most limited war situations. The fact is that whenever the issue has arisen in the past decade, we have consistently drawn back from using nuclear weapons in limited war situations. We believe that we would rarely find it politically practicable or militarily desirable to use nuclear weapons and accordingly propose that our limited war force be able to fight effectively without these weapons.

Since the question of cost is now very much to the fore, it is pertinent to mention my belief that it is reasonable to assume that the savings resulting from a shift to a smaller strategic nuclear striking force would offset the increased costs of an effective limited war force.

As you indicated to the President that the review of the strategic concept would be held very closely, I have sought clearance of this memorandum from G and C only.

Recommendation

It is recommended that you sign the attached letter (Tab B) to Secretary McElroy transmitting the S/P paper as a basis for State-Defense discussion.

Attachments:
NSC 5810/1 (Tab A)
Letter to Secretary McElroy (Tab B)
S/P Draft Paper (Tab C)

Approved JFD 1/24/57

Disapproved _____

Concurrence:
C

S/P:EGMathews:AVH

TOP SECRET

Jan. 24, 1959

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I believe the time has come for our two Departments to undertake the joint study of our strategic concept which you and I have discussed on several occasions in the past. This is, of course, related to the President's directive that paragraphs 13 and 14 of NSC 5810/1, Basic National Security Policy, be kept under continuing study.

In order to provide a point of departure for study of the strategic concept, the Policy Planning Staff of this Department has prepared the enclosed paper entitled "A Concept of US Military Strategy for the 1960s". This is a staff paper, put forward as a basis for discussion. I am myself reserving judgment on this paper pending such discussion.

As I have previously told you, I do not have in mind that we should make any abrupt change in our strategic concept. I am, however, convinced that if we are to make a change in the next few years, we must now determine the direction in which we wish to go and begin to pave the way for the change.

Assistant Secretary Gerard C. Smith stands ready to meet with your people to discuss the enclosed paper or any other related proposals that your Department may wish to advance. I hope that we shall be in a position to report progress to the President within the next few months.

Sincerely yours,

John Foster Dulles

Enclosure:

S/P Paper dated January 5, 1959

The Honorable
Neil H. McElroy,
Secretary of Defense.

S/P:EGMathews:AVH
January 22, 1959

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January 5, 1959

A Concept of US Military Strategy for the 1960s

I. Objectives

1. The objectives of US military strategy should be:

Primary, to deter Communist imperialism from resort to force; and

Secondary, to deal with Communist aggression if it occurs.

We also need to prevent and halt resort to force within the non-Communist world. We shall be militarily prepared to act to this end if we have an effective strategy and capability to deal with limited Communist aggression.

II. Deterring Communist Aggression

A. General War

2. We must deter Soviet nuclear attack on the US and other major Communist aggression which would threaten a permanent alteration of the world balance of power against us. Although we must have active and passive defensive capabilities to reduce the disastrous effects of a Soviet nuclear attack and should undertake preparatory measures to facilitate national recovery after attack, the primary component of our general war deterrent is our strategic nuclear striking force.

3. If our deterrent is to be effective, the Communists must be convinced that retaliation will be inevitable. This requires that our strategic striking force be relatively invulnerable. As the USSR will know the location of most fixed installations (air bases, missile sites, etc.) in the non-Communist world, mobility and elusiveness are among the qualities we should emphasize in the further development of our striking force.

4. A relatively invulnerable US strategic striking force would make impracticable a pre-emptive Soviet nuclear attack to disarm us. It would also reduce the risk of war by

by misadventure as we would not have to react instantaneously to an ambiguous threat of major Communist aggression; we would have time to verify the threat; we might also have time for maneuver.

5. The Communists must also be convinced that our strategic striking force could inflict a scale of damage that would be fatal to the structure of their empire. It may not be necessary that we be able to destroy most Communist military targets, with the side effect of killing most of the Communist peoples. It may be sufficient to have a known capability to destroy the imperial control centers and power bases. A capability so designed would be more acceptable to our allies and the uncommitted peoples than a counter-force capability with its attendant danger of severe fall-out effects extending around the world.

B. Overt Limited Aggression

6. We must deter a wide range of possible overt limited aggressions by Communist imperialism. This kind of Communist aggression can best be deterred by further development of our present strategy of forward defense.

7. We should continue to encourage states on the periphery of the Communist empire to maintain armed forces commensurate with their economic capacity. Where the threat is great and the will to resist strong, but the indigenous economy weak, we should, as we have in the past, provide appropriate assistance upon request to enable the endangered state to maintain forces at least capable of harassing and delaying a Communist invasion.

8. We should also continue to encourage those few non-Communist states that have the requisite military experience, manpower and economic capacity to develop armed forces that could be made available outside their national territory for collective defense. We should where necessary provide military aid to this end.

9. The US will have to provide the major supporting force at all points on the periphery of the Communist empire. For us, the essence of a strategy of forward defense is speed of reaction.

10. Our

10. Our deterrent limited war force should, therefore, be highly mobile and so deployed as to be able to react quickly in any part of the world. It should comprise a balanced and flexible combination of ground, sea and air power. In view of the growing difficulty of maintaining foreign bases, much of this force may have to be sea-borne in the 1960s. Its training should enable it to perform effectively in conjunction with widely varied local forces and in all types of terrain and climate.

11. The force should have nuclear capabilities but should be able to fight effectively without using those capabilities.

12. Such a US limited war force would give the nations under the threat of overt Communist limited aggression greater confidence than they now have in their security and defensibility.

C. Indirect Aggression

13. We must deter Communist imperialism from indirect aggression -- covert resort to force. We should continue to encourage and where necessary assist all states outside the Communist empire to maintain the effective internal security forces and procedures which constitute the first line of defense against Communist indirect aggression. While this function can normally be left to police forces, the magnitude of the threat of indirect aggression to states on the periphery of the Communist empire requires that the training of their military forces include preparation for internal security duties.

14. Indigenous efforts to deter covert Communist resort to force should be reinforced by a readily available US limited war force as described in paragraphs 10 and 11. This is particularly important for the peripheral non-Communist states where the proximity of Communist military power, unless offset by the evident, prompt availability of US power, tends to sap the courage of non-Communists and to feed the aggressiveness of Communists.

III. Dealing with Communist Aggression

15. General War. Given a relatively invulnerable US strategic nuclear striking force with a known capability to inflict a scale of damage that would be fatal to the structure of the Communist empire, it is very unlikely that

the

the Communists would venture major aggression which would risk bringing that force into action. If they did, the relative invulnerability of our force would enable us to tailor our response to the character of the aggression. At the maximum, we should employ the full power of our force to destroy the structure of the Communist empire.

16. Limited Aggression. Our military response to Communist limited aggression, overt or covert, should deny the objectives of the aggression in a manner least likely to lead to a large expansion of the scope and intensity of the hostilities.