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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

POLICY GUIDANCE

FOR

THE EMPLOYMENT OF NUCLEAR
WEAPONS (NUWEP) (U)

OCTOBER 1980

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POLICY GUIDANCE FOR THE EMPLOYMENT OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS (NUWEP) (U)

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24 October 1980

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THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301

24 OCT 1980



MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARIES OF THE MILITARY DEPARTMENTS
CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF
UNDER SECRETARIES OF DEFENSE
ASSISTANT SECRETARIES OF DEFENSE
ASSISTANTS TO THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
DIRECTOR, NET ASSESSMENT
DIRECTORS OF DEFENSE AGENCIES
COMMANDERS-IN-CHIEF OF THE UNIFIED
AND SPECIFIED COMMANDS

SUBJECT: Policy Guidance for the Employment of Nuclear
Weapons (NUWEP)

To enhance deterrence and thereby reduce the dangers of nuclear war -- which is at once a military, a political, and a moral objective -- we must continue to pursue an integrated policy of force modernization, equitable and verifiable agreements on arms limitations, and more credible doctrine and plans for the employment of nuclear weapons. To insure achievement of the latter, the attached Policy Guidance for the Employment of Nuclear Weapons (NUWEP) sets forth in accordance with national guidance (PD-59) policy for the employment of nuclear weapons.

NUWEP has important elements of continuity with past guidance, but it is intended to yield improvements in employment flexibility, provide the basis for strengthening endurance of forces and supporting C³I, and produce better interaction between policymakers and military planners. We should seek through plans we develop, the forces and C³I systems we procure, the exercises that we conduct, and the operational practices we employ to convince our adversaries that they could not and would not "win" a nuclear war in any meaningful sense, however they may define winning. To this end each of you should fully understand and carefully take into account the attached policy guidance in future actions.

Harold Brown

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I. INTRODUCTION

~~(TS)~~ This document establishes guidance for the planning for employment of nuclear weapons and provides planning guidelines consistent with national policy. It reflects current realities of power relationships among the United States and its allies, the Soviet Union and its allies, and China. This guidance is intended to strengthen the defense posture of the United States through the development of greater flexibility and endurance in our forces and supporting C³I systems, and in the plans for their employment. It sets forth the principles for the planning needed to implement a (b)(1) strategy--an ability to deter by a manifest capability to carry out a broad range of nuclear attacks such that in considering aggression against our interests any adversary would recognize that no plausible outcome would represent a victory by any plausible definition of victory. To this end and so as to preserve the possibility of bargaining effectively to terminate the war on acceptable terms that are as favorable as practical, if deterrence fails initially, we must be capable of fighting successfully so that the adversary would not achieve his war aims and would suffer costs that are unacceptable, or in any event greater than his gains, from having initiated an attack. This capability must be maintained even after absorbing an initial Soviet surprise attack optimized to reduce U.S. retaliatory capability and even through a prolonged series of exchanges.

II. BACKGROUND

~~(TS)~~ National policy for the employment of nuclear weapons is set forth in PD/NSC-59 which directs that US targeting plans provide flexible sub-options in ways that will enable us, to the extent that survival of C³I allows, to employ nuclear weapons consonant with our objectives and the course of the conflict. (b)(1)

~~(TS)~~ The Nuclear Targeting Policy Review (NTPR) recommendations which were approved have also been incorporated in the development of this policy guidance document. (b)(1)

(U) The guidance herein is to be used by the OSD staff as appropriate and by the Joint Chiefs of Staff for the preparation of capabilities plans for the employment of nuclear weapons. The Joint Chiefs of Staff will insure that this guidance is reflected in the Single Integrated Operational Plan (SIOP) and in all other plans for the employment of nuclear weapons.

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III. OBJECTIVES

A. Deterrence

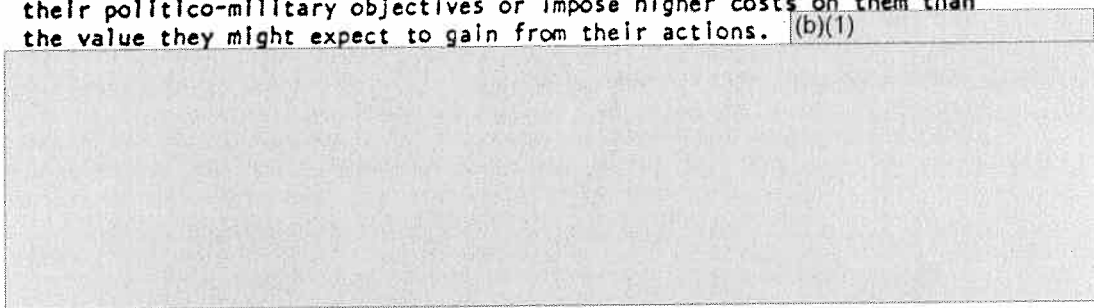
(U) The most fundamental objective of our policy for the employment of nuclear capable forces is the deterrence of nuclear attack against the U.S., its forces, and its allies and friends; and, in conjunction with conventional forces, deterring non-nuclear aggression as well. PD/NSC-59 reaffirms the directive of PD/NSC-18 in that respect. Also, our nuclear capable forces must support NATO strategy as expressed in MC-14-3. We must continue to make the prospect of nuclear war even more remote by remaining capable, in all plausible scenarios, of fighting successfully so that the adversary would perceive that he could not achieve his war aims, and should he initiate an attack, he would suffer losses that were unacceptable or, in any event, greater than his expected gains. We seek to make a Soviet victory, as seen through Soviet eyes and measured by Soviet standards, so improbable over the broadest plausible range of scenarios that the Soviets will be deterred.

B. Crisis Stability

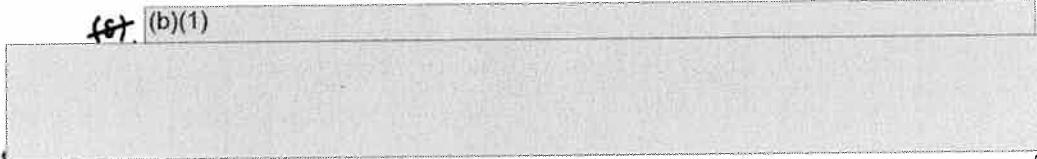
(U) In a crisis, we must ensure that the USSR has no incentive to initiate a nuclear attack and that the U.S. is not under pressure to do so. We must minimize vulnerabilities in our forces and supporting C³I systems, improve our ability to detect and assess a Soviet attack (or preparations for an attack) and enhance our ability to respond appropriately. The latter must include effective options to reach and maintain higher levels of force readiness, launch under attack if directed, and conduct a prolonged and controlled nuclear exchange.

C. War Objectives

~~(S)~~ If conflict occurs, the most critical military employment objective of the United States is to defeat Soviet attempts to achieve their politico-military objectives or impose higher costs on them than the value they might expect to gain from their actions. (b)(1)



D. Protection and Coercion



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IV. STRATEGY FOR EMPLOYMENT

A. Flexibility

(U) The U.S. must have the capability to respond appropriately and effectively to any level of Soviet aggression, over the continuum of nuclear weapon employment options, ranging from use of a small number of strategic and/or theater nuclear capable weapon systems in a contingency operation, to a war employing all elements of our nuclear forces in attacks against a broad spectrum of enemy targets. The ability to respond with selectivity to less than an all-out Soviet attack in keeping with the needs of the situation is required in order to provide the National Command Authorities (NCA) with suitable alternatives, strengthen deterrence, and enhance the prospects of limiting escalation of the conflict. In addition to pre-planned options we need an ability to design employment plans on short notice in response to the latest and changing circumstances. To advance the goal of flexibility, planning will provide an objective-oriented series of building block options for the employment of nuclear weapons in ways that will enable us to employ them consonant with our objectives and the course of the conflict.

~~(S)~~ As it evolves, the building block approach should provide plans which satisfy a hierarchy of targeting objectives and which will provide the NCA an improved capability to employ nuclear weapons effectively in as measured and controlled a manner as feasible in case of a limited conflict. It should provide complementary elements which can be combined in an integrated and discrete manner to provide larger and more comprehensive plans for achieving politico-military objectives in specific situations. The building block approach places emphasis on the individual elements, their objective utility, and our ability to employ them separately or in total. However, this does not imply that the total plan be finely divisible--practical realities cannot be ignored. The desire for enhanced flexibility in employment must be balanced by practical consideration of the increased complexity incurred in planning and operations, the need to avoid compromising the effectiveness and workability of the larger options, and the need to maintain a responsive decisionmaking and force execution process.

B. Endurance

~~(S)~~ Endurance of forces and supporting C³I can strengthen the US defense posture by: (1) ensuring that the U.S. is not placed in a "use or lose" situation that might result in an unwarranted escalation of the conflict; (2) providing a hedge that allows us to adapt the employment of our forces across the spectrum of nuclear war; and (3) (b)(1)

(b)(1)

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(b)(1)

C. Escalation Control

(U) U.S. nuclear weapon employment plans should provide the NCA with the ability to conduct military operations at various levels of conflict in ways that will be militarily effective and will maximize the chance of controlling escalation. Plans for the controlled use of nuclear weapons should seek in conjunction with other political and military actions to: (1) provide the U.S. and its allies with leverage for a negotiated termination of fighting; (2) reverse or stalemate an unfavorable military situation, at least temporarily; (3) diminish the enemy's expectations of success both by the direct military effect of the attacks and by evidencing U.S. willingness to respond as appropriate, while indicating clearly the limited character of the U.S. response executed to that point; (4) convince an enemy that previously calculated risks and costs were in error and that early termination of the conflict or a reconsideration of his course of action is the most attractive alternative; and (5) leave the enemy with sufficient remaining political, military and economic resources clearly still at risk so that he has a strong incentive to seek conflict termination.

D. Targeting Objectives

~~(S)~~ Planning for SIOP attack options will be in accordance with the overall objectives set forth below. (For relative priorities for allocation of weapons against these objectives, see page 13). These objectives are consistent with PD/NSC-18, PD/NSC-59 and NTPR initiatives as subsequently approved by the President and contained in the SecDef 29 January 1979 Implementation Instructions.

~~(S)~~ Structured plans other than the SIOP will be guided by the political and military situation for which they are being prepared, in keeping with guidance provided to military commanders-in-chief (CINCs) by the Joint Chiefs of Staff. (b)(1)

(b)(1) The Under Secretary of Defense for Policy in coordination with the Joint Chiefs of Staff will propose measures to insure that SIOP and non-SIOP plans complement each other to the maximum feasible degree.

~~(S)~~ It is recognized that the ability to achieve many of the individual objectives will require the suppression of selected enemy defenses not a part of the objective itself.

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(U) Details of specific near term objectives for providing increased flexibility in current employment plans against the USSR and its allies and China are contained in Section V.

~~(TS)~~ General target objectives are:

1. USSR and Allies

(a) ~~(TS)~~ (b)(1)

[Redacted]

(b) ~~(TS)~~ (b)(1)

[Redacted]

(c) ~~(TS)~~ (b)(1)

[Redacted]

(d) ~~(TS)~~ (b)(1)

[Redacted]

(1) ~~(S)~~ (b)(1)

[Redacted]

(2) ~~(S)~~ (b)(1)

[Redacted]

(3) ~~(S)~~ (b)(1)

[Redacted]

(e) ~~(S)~~ (b)(1)

[Redacted]

2. (b)(1)

~~(TS)~~ (b)(1)

(a) ~~(TS)~~ (b)(1)

(b) ~~(TS)~~ (b)(1)

(c) ~~(TS)~~ (b)(1); and

(d) ~~(TS)~~ (b)(1)

~~(TS)~~ (b)(1)

(a) ~~(TS)~~ (b)(1)

(b) ~~(TS)~~ (b)(1)

(c) ~~(TS)~~ (b)(1)

~~(TS)~~ (b)(1)

[Redacted]

E. Reserve Forces

~~(TS)~~ (b)(1)

[Redacted]

~~(TS)~~ (b)(1)

[Redacted]

~~(TS)~~ (b)(1)

[Redacted]

~~(TS)~~ (b)(1)

[Redacted]

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F. Exercises

(U) To ensure continuing assessments of nuclear employment plans, evaluations in regular exercises must be pursued. To this end, periodic exercises shall be conducted to test the suitability of implementing preplanned and ad hoc nuclear weapons plans; to familiarize senior civilian officials with the overall objectives of the plans; and to test future concepts of weapons employment to include the use of mobile command centers and simulated stress environments. Exercises for nuclear employment operations shall include interaction between the Department of Defense and other federal agencies, as appropriate. At least two exercises involving the National Command Authorities should be conducted each year to evaluate our capabilities and our employment doctrine.

V. PLANNING CONCEPTS

A. Pre-planning and Review

(U) It is essential to pre-plan nuclear employment options to the extent practicable for important reasons: (1) to permit consideration and balanced treatment of the key factors involved; (2) to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning process and the forces used; (3) to provide for rapid and effective communications of NCA execution orders; and (4) to develop a more comprehensive ability for estimating the consequences of execution given specific scenarios.

(S) Structured plans, and especially the SIOP, will be pre-planned for use in circumstances where vital national interests clearly would be imperiled. Overall targeting planning appropriate to implement a (b)(1) strategy will result in a capability to choose to put the major weight of the initial response on (b)(1). To the extent appropriate for individual plans, and specifically for the SIOP, each will comprise an integrated set of options for attacking coherent sets of objective-related targets. Ideally, the number of attack options to be developed to provide the NCA with a range of alternatives should be limited only by consideration of the associated complexities. In planning and execution, the constraints imposed by operational characteristics of US weapon systems, and the capabilities and limitations of U.S. and Soviet warning, attack characterization and C³I systems.

(U) Where only general plans can be prepared in advance, appropriate organizations and procedures should be established by all nuclear CINCs and exercised to improve the capability for the rapid development, assessment and execution of specifically tailored options. This capability must be comprehensive enough to allow rapid construction of plans that integrate strategic force employment with theater nuclear force and general purpose force employment for achieving theater campaign objectives and other national objectives when pre-planned response options are not judged suitable in the circumstances.

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(U) Periodic review by the NCA and senior defense advisors of the potential risks, limitations and effectiveness of nuclear employment options in meeting national policy should be undertaken to promote understanding and facilitate reaching timely and appropriate decisions in crisis and conflict situations.

B. Force Planning Postures

~~(S)~~ The U.S. must maintain the capability to increase and maintain force readiness levels so as to react promptly to warning and force employment directives. Minimally provocative force and C³I readiness alternatives should be available which provide the NCA with the ability to: (1) signal increased military readiness and national resolve; (2) enhance capability and flexibility to respond to attack; and (3) support the timely re-establishment of lower force readiness postures after relaxation of tension. Plans for the latter situation should not prejudice our ability to increase force readiness again in the near-term should subsequent developments require such actions. In general, force readiness levels shall be geared to the perceived threat and the need for survivable and enduring forces (and C³I) capable of reacting in a timely manner, taking into account the ability to support and maintain specific force readiness postures.

~~(S)~~ Plans for the employment of nuclear forces should be structured so as to take advantage of the flexibility and capability of the specific forces assumed to be available at the time of execution. (b)(1)



~~(TS)~~ (b)(1)



C. Attack Option Structure

(U) Attack options shall be structured to take advantage of the inherent flexibility and capability of U.S. forces, so as to permit the U.S. to respond appropriately to any level of Soviet/Warsaw Pact or Chinese aggression. The attack option structure should provide plans for a number of objective-oriented attacks that satisfy a hierarchy of political/military objectives and consist of:

~~(S)~~ (b)(1) [Redacted]

~~(S)~~ (b)(1) [Redacted]

~~(S)~~ (b)(1) [Redacted]

~~(S)~~ (b)(1) [Redacted]

1. ~~(S)~~ (b)(1) [Redacted] and
 2. ~~(S)~~ (b)(1) [Redacted]
- [Redacted]

D. Targeting Constraints.

~~(TS)~~ (b)(1)

[Redacted]

1. ~~(TS)~~ (b)(1)

[Redacted]

2. ~~(TS)~~ (b)(1)

[Redacted]

3. ~~(TS)~~ (b)(1)

[Redacted]

4. ~~(TS)~~ (b)(1)

[Redacted]

5. ~~(TS)~~ (b)(1)

[Redacted]

* ~~(TS)~~ (b)(1)

[Redacted]



(b)(1)

E. Weapon Allocation Planning

~~(TS)~~ (b)(1)

1. ~~(TS)~~ (b)(1)

2. ~~(TS)~~ (b)(1)

3. ~~(TS)~~ (b)(1)

(U) More detailed guidance for the weapon allocation process will be issued separately.

F. Planning Actions

~~(TS)~~ (b)(1)
[Redacted]

1. (U) Revisions of Employment Plans for the Near Term

(U) The following near-term changes and improvements will be made to the existing plans.

a. ~~(TS)~~ (b)(1)
[Redacted]

b. ~~(TS)~~ (b)(1)
[Redacted]

c. ~~(TS)~~ (b)(1)
[Redacted]

d. ~~(S)~~ (b)(1)
[Redacted]

e. ~~(TS)~~ (b)(1)
[Redacted]

f. ~~(S)~~ (b)(1)
[Redacted]

g. ~~(S)~~ (b)(1)

[Redacted]

2. (U) Revision of Employment Plans for the Long-Term

(U) Much of the employment flexibility which is the major objective of this guidance will require improvements in endurance and capability of forces and C³I (in accordance with PD/NSC-53 as applicable), as well as additional research leading to the improvements of target data bases and targeting concepts. These actions are necessary to support further development of building block options for the SIOP and other nuclear plans, as appropriate, and should be developed in parallel.

~~(S)~~ The following efforts should proceed at a deliberate pace to provide the following specific improvements, with full recognition of the practical limitations involved and the need to maintain the ability to execute effectively the full range of options:

a. (U) further development of the building block planning approach and structure;

b. ~~(S)~~ (b)(1) [Redacted]
(b)(1) [Redacted]

c. ~~(S)~~ (b)(1) [Redacted]

d. ~~(S)~~ (b)(1) [Redacted]

e. ~~(S)~~ (b)(1) [Redacted]

f. ~~(S)~~ (b)(1) [Redacted]

g. (U) more effective utilization in the employment plans of improvements in the endurance of U.S. nuclear capable forces and supporting C³I;

h. ~~(S)~~ (b)(1) [Redacted]

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1. ~~(S)~~ (b)(1)

VI. RELATION TO OTHER POLICY

~~(S)~~ The fundamental nuclear weapons employment policy concepts and targeting objectives detailed herein have implications for acquisition, declaratory, deployment and arms control policy.

A. Acquisition Policy

~~(S)~~ Our ability to support our strategic objectives is ultimately determined by how well we coordinate acquisition and employment policies. Accordingly, objectives for nuclear weapon employment and the required flexibility, survivability, endurance, and target destruction capability needed to support (b)(1)

and their supporting C³I, as set forth in the Defense Policy Guidance, the Consolidated Guidance, and related long-range planning documents. Every effort should be made to strengthen the synergistic effect of acquisition and employment efforts through stronger analysis of how well our nuclear capable forces, both current and future, measure up to the task of achieving the employment objectives, and offer additional flexibility for potential future changes in employment policy. OSD, the Service Secretaries, and directors of the relevant defense agencies will insure that the employment concepts described herein are fully considered when planning for research, development, and acquisition of nuclear weapons and delivery systems, related C³I, and associated support systems.

B. Declaratory Policy

~~(S)~~ Declaratory policy consists in part of the numerous statements and public reports by U.S. officials which describe the objectives and capabilities of our nuclear forces. Since declaratory policy, de facto, also includes the inferences drawn from our exercises and operational and training practices, their impact on perceptions of our capabilities and determination should be accounted for in planning. A major objective of declaratory policy is to enhance deterrence in the eyes of our enemies and our allies alike by conveying U.S. determination and capability to deny an adversary, particularly the Soviet Union, the prospect of successful military adventurism.

~~(S)~~ (b)(1)

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(b)(1)

Public statements related to objectives and capabilities of our nuclear forces should conform to the declaratory policy set forth in those documents and other authoritative public statements on the subject.

C. Deployment

~~(S)~~ In implementing the employment objectives, nuclear weapon deployments or adjustments to deployment postures will be consistent with national guidance contained in PD/NSC-60 (or as subsequently changed) and the Secretary of Defense's Annual Weapons Deployment Plan, as approved.

D. Arms Control

(U) In order to meet our own national security needs, force planning and force posture decisions should accommodate equitable arms control agreements, provide the U.S. effective responses to potential Soviet violations and be able to continue to meet our national security objectives in the absence of such agreements. In turn, arms control and limitation proposals, which are evaluated on the basis of their contribution to our defense posture (PD/NSC-50), should take into account their impact on the employment objectives contained in this guidance, or their attainability.

VII. CONTINUING POLICY REVIEW

~~(S)~~ Past experience shows that whenever changes occur to nuclear employment policy, questions and issues arise from planners regarding points of interpretation, technical issues, adequacy of nuclear forces to meet guidance objectives, and testing and exercising of plans developed during implementation. The Under Secretary of Defense for Policy will have overall staff responsibility for actively monitoring the implementation and continuing review of this policy and supporting employment plans to ensure an orderly progress. His responsibility will include, but not be limited to, coordination of supporting studies and analyses, the review and comment on planning reports and the annual assessment of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and recommendations on revisions to the employment policy, as appropriate.

~~(S)~~ The Joint Chiefs of Staff will submit to the Secretary of Defense for approval a proposal for each SIOP development cycle. Data should include, but not be limited to: (1) planning assumptions (postures and damage criteria for planning); (2) changes in size, composition or tasking (b)(1); (3) new or revised options; (4) recommendations to adjust the number of weapons targeted against (b)(1) to accommodate changes in threat; and (5) changes, if any, to priorities and objectives for weapon allocation or for fatalities/collateral damage constraints.

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(U) The Joint Chiefs of Staff shall also provide an annual assessment to the Secretary of Defense on the status and progress of the development of nuclear employment plans including, but not limited to, (b)(1) (b)(1) the degree of employment flexibility available, limiting factors in achieving flexibility, and the status of programs to provide improvements. An integral part of the assessment will be a statement on the expected capability of deployed forces and supporting C³ to accomplish the objectives stated in this guidance. The JCS assessment will include: (1) an evaluation of the results of exercises and tests of the plans developed in support of this policy; (2) an evaluation of the ability of current plans to achieve the objectives specified and the fatality estimates (both prompt and delayed) associated with each option, (3) intelligence data base gaps; (4) progress made toward implementing an objective-oriented building block approach; (5) deficiencies in force employment that may exist; (6) the ability to constrain collateral damage and fatalities and the impact on achieving the stated objectives; (7) measures that should be taken to correct any force employment deficiencies; (8) questions of interpretation and potential application of this and other guidance; and (9) recommendations on any suggested revisions to this policy.

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