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J.C.S. 2056/208

27 January 1961

Pages 1909 - 1921, incl.

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Authority *MWD 921118*
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NOTE BY THE SECRETARIES

to the

JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF

on

STRATEGIC TARGET PLANNING (U)

References: a. J.C.S. 2056/164 ✓
b. J.C.S. 2056/194 ✓

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The enclosed memorandum by the Secretary of Defense, dated 20 January 1961, together with its attachments (Appendix, Annex and Tab), is referred hereby to the J-3 for consideration in connection with the review of the NSTL and SIOP-62 which will be directed toward possible changes in developing the next NSTL/SIOP as indicated in paragraph 5 of Enclosure to J.C.S. 2056/194.

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F. J. BLOUIN,
M. J. INGELIDO,
Joint Secretariat.

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ENCLOSURE

THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

20 January 1961

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff
Subject: Strategic Target Planning

You will recall that, during the discussions leading to the designation of General Power as the Director of Strategic Target Planning, it became apparent that a National Strategic Target List could only be developed in the final analysis through the intelligence and operational planning and war gaming functions associated with the development of the Single Integrated Operations Plan. My decision* of 16 August 1960, approving the Strategic Target Planning policy, was based on the conviction that the resources to develop and maintain a Single Integrated Operations Plan existed in large measure at Headquarters, Strategic Air Command, and not within the Joint Staff. I gave assurance that the views of the Unified Commanders would be considered in the development of the Plan, and in addition to the planning teams provided from the participating Unified Commands, each participating Commander in Chief was authorized a senior personal representative to work with the Director and his staff.

At the Unified Commanders Conference held in Omaha 1-3 December 1960, I expressed my gratitude for the work of the Director and all others who contributed to the development of the first Plan and discussed other work that must follow. I am

* Enclosure "A" to J.C.S. 2056/164

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reasonably optimistic that with continued concerted effort, without disrupting the maintenance of the SIOP-62, further actions should be initiated leading to continued refinement of strategic planning for the initial retaliatory strike under various conditions of warning.

Incident to further actions, I would include a detailed study by General Power and the Joint Chiefs of Staff of the attached memorandum* for the President from Dr. Kistiakowsky. Further, both General Power and the Joint Chiefs of Staff should re-evaluate the damage criteria used in SIOP-62, specifically,

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/s/ THOMAS S. GATES

* Extract in Annex hereto

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Enclosure

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A P P E N D I X

Extract from memorandum for the Secretary of Defense from the Staff Secretary to the President, dated 12 January 1961.

* * * * *

At the request of the President, the attached report* to him from Dr. Kistiakowsky is forwarded for the information and permanent files of the Department of Defense. A copy is also being placed in the permanent files of the President's Science Advisory Committee. The President anticipated that you and your successor would wish to give this document special handling within your own office and that of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in view of its references to war plans.

* Extract in Annex hereto

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Appendix

A N N E X

Extract from memorandum for the President
from the Special Assistant to the President for
Science and Technology, dated 25 November 1960

* * * * *

Carrying out your directive to report to you on the methodology used in the preparation of the Optimized Strategic Target List and the Single Integrated Operational Plan (SIOP), my associates (Dr. H. E. Scoville and Dr. George Rathjens) and I studied the relevant aspects of the activities of the Joint Strategic Planning Staff (JSPS), and I have come to the following conclusions:

1. The staff is following the directives received from the JCS which, in turn, are based on your approval of the NSC action following the presentation of "Study 2009" by General Hickey. The JSPS is making effective use of available intelligence information. I believe that the presently developed SIOP is the best that could be expected under the circumstances and that it should be put into effect.

2. I recommend that, an effort be initiated now to review the directive to, and the procedures used by, the JSPS in anticipation of the preparation of subsequent SIOPs for the following reasons:

(a) To achieve operational simplicity, each weapon carrier is now assigned the same target or targets regardless of whether our strike is
This leads to the result that even a retaliatory strike has largely a "counter force" character.

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The question may be raised as to whether they need to be given such high priority in a retaliatory strike and be assigned about 5 weapons apiece.

(b) The JSPS used blast effect as the only criterion of damage and neglected thermal radiation, fires which will be caused by it, and fall-out. The question may be raised as to whether the resultant damage criteria are unnecessarily conservative, whether they result in overkill and will create unjustified additional "force requirements."

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This figure has been computed using only blast and thermal radiation and not allowing for fires, for fall-out and for direct neutron and gamma radiation. Moreover, DASA criteria which we use are very conservative. For instance, for a 20 kt burst at 1500 feet altitude, DASA handbook gives an immediate casualty radius of 1500 yards. From actual observations in Hiroshima, the lethal radius there, upon the burst of less than a 20 kt weapon, was 2200 yards.

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In addition to the 4 weapons scheduled on the 1st ground zero 3 from the alert force are scheduled on the 2nd one (about 6 miles away) and 1 on the 3rd DGZ from the "follow on" force. Are these additional weapons really necessary, since it would appear that [redacted] survive unscathed the attack, on the first ground zero?

(c) The staff is making extensive use of computers, but I believe that their programming could be improved and that the most competent people (such as available in WSEG, for instance) should become involved. This refinement, the revision of damage criteria, and possibly a re-evaluation of the importance of "counter force" strikes, will become especially important when operational plans are developed for less than our total alert force (the force that may survive a surprise attack by the enemy).

(d) The present SIOPS which are being developed for situations in which we receive longer strategic warning call for the use not only of the alert, but also for the larger "follow on" forces. The damage which is expected to the [redacted] from the strike of the alert force alone appears to be so extensive that one may question whether the commitment of "follow on" forces to strategic strike is urgently required. If not, the over-all national planning of strategic forces may need revision, with the highest emphasis being given to the survival of the alert force and low emphasis to the use of "follow on" forces.

I attach herewith a summary* of our detailed observations, made on the basis of briefings from the Joint Strategic Planning Staff.

/s/ G. B. KISTIAKOWSKY

* Extract in Tab hereto

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T A B

Extract from Comments on Briefings by the Joint Strategic Planning Staff, November 3 - 5, 1960.

* * * * *

The JSTP staff is following quite closely the so-called "Study 2009" - General Hickey's presentation to NSC - as regards criteria for the selection of targets and the assessment of damage required. Since that study, in turn, followed rather closely the earlier War Plans of SAC, so-called ALPHA and BRAVO, the emerging SIOP is in these respects a refinement, a combination and expansion of earlier SAC plans, rather than a brand new approach.

Much of the briefing emphasized the objective character of the plan of procedure and the extensive use of machine calculations. Actually, however, we found so many consecutive steps involving judgment that the so-called point system of military worth of targets and the machine calculations based on it appear to be of very secondary importance. In fact, some of the machine uses may be unsound. So long as the plan is designed for the entire alert force, this has no grave consequences because of the large number of weapons assumed to be available and, therefore, of

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sequently, operational plans based on smaller forces (assumed to survive surprise attack) will be developed, it will be most important to review the entire procedure and introduce more effective use of mathematical procedures, as otherwise the assignment of forces to targets may be inefficient, and less than optimum effect may be calculated for the retaliatory force still available to us; thus "evidence" may be obtained that we have inadequate forces and the attack, if carried out, will not be optimized.

The steps which are involved in the preparation of SIOP are as follows:

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