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NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

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July 8, 1969

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National Security Study Memorandum 64

TO: The Secretary of Defense  
SUBJECT: U.S. Strategic Capabilities

As a result of National Security Council discussion of the U.S. strategic posture, prepared in response to National Security Study Memorandums 3 and 24, the President has directed that you prepare a follow-on study as follows:

With respect to strategic nuclear attacks on the United States, evaluate U.S. strategic forces projected through 1978 in terms of (a) their capability to deter and respond to less than all-out or disarming Soviet attacks, and (b) a range of possible war outcome measures in addition to surviving population and industry, such as surviving military and other economic assets. The analysis should be based on both low and high Soviet force levels in the National Intelligence Projections for Planning and on greater than expected threats.

The analysis should include consideration of the actual and required capabilities of the U.S. command and control system under the postulated operational situations.

The study should also address the following questions:

- What general strategic force levels and what types of force mixes and force characteristics are indicated to improve relative U.S. strategic capabilities as now projected?
- What improvements, if any, seem indicated for our programmed strategic command and control systems?
- Based on the analysis, what modifications or changes to the criteria for strategic sufficiency should be considered?

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Declassified/Released on 11-15-93  
under provisions of E.O. 12356  
by G. F. W. National Security Council

N. M. L. (F88-1122)

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The study should be forwarded to the NSC Review Group by October 1, 1969. Close liaison should be maintained in all phases of the study with the Office of the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs.

*Henry A. Kissinger*

cc: The Secretary of State  
The Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff  
Director of Central Intelligence  
Director of the Bureau of the Budget

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