

SUMMARY OF INTERVIEW

Subject: Andrew W. Marshall
Position: Director, OSD Net Assessment, 1972-present
Location: OSD Net Assessment, The Pentagon
Interviewer: John G. Hines
Date/Time: October 22, 1991, 8:30 a.m.
Duration: 3 hours
Prepared by: Daniel Calingaert, based on notes

The view held by Henry Kissinger, certainly in the late 1960s and through the 1970s, was that the Soviets were ambitious expansionists whose ideology prevented them from acting like a normal country. The United States had to reach the best deal possible with the USSR. Kissinger was concerned about the Soviet Union converting its increased military power into political influence.

In the prevailing view under President Carter, the USSR was not anxious for war, but if war broke out, the Soviet military would be serious about warfighting. Soviet forces had made provisions for conducting operations in a nuclear war. For example, as part of the targeting review (run by Mr. Marshall and Walter Slocombe) connected to PD-59,⁷⁷ DIA found extensive facilities built to protect the Soviet leadership, which reinforced the warfighting posture of the USSR.

PD-59 was developed to reinforce deterrence by making it clear to the Soviet leadership that they would not escape destruction in any exchange. The objective was to clarify and personalize somewhat the danger of warfare and nuclear use to Soviet decision makers. Publication of selected elements of the contents of PD-59 was an integral part of the strategy, and Secretary Brown directed and personally cleared certain articles and discussions of the directive to ensure that Soviet leaders were made aware of some of its most important aspects.

The Carter Administration was split over whether or not American accommodation would encourage moderation on the part of the Soviet Union. Harold Brown observed some relation between U.S. moves and Soviet actions, but he expected the Soviet arms buildup to persist even if U.S. modernization stopped. His conclusion was based partly on the Soviet investment in power projection capabilities and the Soviet weapons modernization rate which exceeded that of the U.S.

During the 1960s and 1970s, the United States did not have a policy for forcing the Soviets to spend their way into economic defeat. In fact, the Joint Chiefs were worried

⁷⁷ Presidential Directive 59, a key White House statement, on U.S. nuclear strategy that was discussed by knowledgeable U.S. government officials in the U.S. press. Published accounts reinforced the concept of selective use of nuclear strikes under various scenarios and suggested early targeting of Soviet leadership and command and control in the event of Soviet aggression.

that the USSR could always spend more than the U.S. because the Soviet Armed Forces did not face the sort of budget constraints placed on the U.S. military.

The first Reagan Administration undertook a large effort to catch up with the Soviets in strategic military power. Senior members of the administration intended to make up for the previous years of reduced U.S. defense expenditures.

President Reagan believed that the Soviet economy was in trouble. In contrast, Casper Weinberger refused to believe in Soviet weakness.