

THE WHITE HOUSE

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## MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

**PARTICIPANTS:** Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs  
 Dr. James R. Schlesinger, Secretary of Defense  
 Major General Brent Scowcroft, Deputy Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs  
 General John Wickham, Military Assistant to Secretary Schlesinger

**DATE AND TIME:** Thursday, August 2, 1973  
 8:00 a.m. (Breakfast)

Schlesinger: These, I see it, are the key aspects. One, what are the prospects for control of escalation? What are the constraints? In Europe, for example, we could warn them we will hit within 10 miles of the FEBA.

Wickham: The planners have not had any national-level objectives against which to plan.

Schlesinger: Second, what is the effect of changes in employment policy on deterrence? -- We decided that flexibility strengthened deterrence. -- We tried to codify the target system -- to hit things which destroyed the regime; to get military forces, including conventional forces which could attack after a nuclear exchange.

We do not target the industry of friends.

We want to look at the political details. For example, Russians are less than 50% of the population of the USSR. Should we say we will hit Russians and let the "Golden Horde" take over? Targeting is against the Party, economics, the Army.

Third, what is the anticipated Soviet/Chinese reaction?

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CLASSIFIED BY Henry A. Kissinger  
 EXEMPT FROM GENERAL DECLASSIFICATION  
 SCHEDULE OF EXECUTIVE ORDER 11652  
 EXEMPTION CATEGORY 5 (B) (1, 3)  
 AUTOMATICALLY DECLASSIFIED ON Imp. to det.

Damage limitation by force of arms is not likely, given the possibility of secure second strikes. Therefore there is an inducement toward this method of limiting damage.

Soviet declaratory policy would probably oppose on this.

We have broken the targets into packages to play with. There is no practical way to get complete flexibility.

If the policy is approved, it will take two years to complete the change in plans.

Fourth, allied reaction. They will be concerned about any possible decoupling.

The Europeans think an attack on Soviet cities is not a very credible option for an attack on Europe. Therefore they would support broadened options which are credible.

Kissinger: What we need are options which the President has beforehand. When a crisis comes, there is not time to figure these things out. We can't wait two years either.

Schlesinger: There is the big problem with the troops that executing the options will degrade the SIOP.

Kissinger: I am impressed with your work. What we need is the details.

Our declaratory policy is now ahead of our ability to execute.

I am comfortable for the moment with what the Secretary has said as declaratory policy.

Schlesinger: We must leave uncertainty in the Soviets' mind that we might be willing to use nuclear weapons for something less than direct defense of the United States.

Kissinger: We need a meeting next week on current plans.

Schlesinger: We need a couple of European packages -- an interdiction strike in East Poland, a strike within 10 miles of FEBA.



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REASON FOR WITHDRAWAL . . . . ÇNational security restriction  
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