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September 30, 1977

Presidential Review Memorandum/NSC- 32

TO: The Vice President
The Secretary of State
The Secretary of Defense

ALSO: The Director, Office of Management and Budget
The Director, Arms Control and Disarmament
Agency
The Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff
The Director of Central Intelligence
The Administrator, General Services Administration

SUBJECT: Civil Defense (C)

The President has directed that the Policy Review Committee undertake a review of issues related to civil defense in the United States and the Soviet Union. The purpose of this study is to analyze the strategic implications of civil defense programs in the United States and the Soviet Union, and to determine what changes, if any, should be made in current U. S. policies related to civil defense questions. For the purpose of this study, the term "civil defense" will be assumed to include all activities related to the protection from attack of population, industry, and political leadership below the level of the national command authority.

The study, to be prepared for the Policy Review Committee, chaired by DOD, is to be conducted by a working group chaired by the NSC staff (with Sam Huntington designated as chairman). This study should be completed for PRC review by February 15, 1978.

This review should include an analysis of the following issues:

-- The nature and capabilities of current U. S. and Soviet civil defense programs.

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-- Doctrines, policies and objectives of U. S. and Soviet civil defense programs.

-- The strategic usefulness of current and potential U. S. and Soviet civil defense programs.

-- Alternative U.S. policy responses to Soviet civil defense and alternative policies for U.S. civil defense.

Attached are more detailed Terms of Reference for this study.



Zbigniew Brzezinski

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PRM/NSC-32

Civil Defense

TERMS OF REFERENCE

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this study is to analyze the strategic implications of civil defense in the United States and the Soviet Union and to determine what changes, if any, should be made in current U.S. policies related to civil defense questions.

II. DEFINITION OF CIVIL DEFENSE

In common usage, the term "civil defense," as applied to U.S. programs, usually refers only to the protection of population -- although at times the protection of local political leadership and industry is also included. In contrast, when applied to Soviet programs, the term civil defense encompasses programs for the protection of population, political leadership, and industry. To avoid any ambiguity, for the purposes of this study, the term civil defense will be assumed to encompass protection from attack of population, industry, and political, governmental, and economic leadership below the level of the national command authority.

III. STUDY OUTLINE

A. Nature and Capabilities of Current Civil Defense Programs.

This part of the study will be a factual summary description of: (1) the nature, extent, and major elements of current US and Soviet civil defense programs including organization, command and control, training, material and fiscal support, and (2) the capabilities and effectiveness of these programs during, immediately after, and for up to six months after an attack. This effort should draw on, among other sources, the NSSM 244 study, the recently completed study on a possible US-Soviet civil defense working group, and the soon to be completed intelligence community study of the Soviet civil defense program.

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B. Civil Defense Doctrine, Policy, and Objectives. This portion of the study should analyze the stated objectives of US and Soviet civil defense programs and the purposes which they actually do serve. The rationale for civil defense capabilities should be put in the context of the distinctive military and political structures and national purposes of each state. For the Soviet Union this will involve analysis of their programs in light of the shift from strategic nuclear inferiority to strategic nuclear parity, the developing threat from the PRC, U.S. theater nuclear capabilities in Europe, and the impact on them of the ABM treaty. For the U.S. this will involve analysis of the role of civil defense in light of the shift from strategic nuclear superiority to strategic nuclear parity, the low level of US air defense, the impact of the ABM treaty and lower US sensitivity to proliferating nuclear attack threats, i. e., other nuclear powers unfriendly to the U. S.

C. Strategic Usefulness of Civil Defense. This portion of the study will assess the strategic usefulness of civil defense for both the U. S. and the Soviet Union under conditions of strategic nuclear parity. It will examine a broad range of attack scenarios designed to explore and reveal the ability of current and alternative U. S. and Soviet civil defense programs to limit the other's strategic attack capabilities as well as attacks by other powers including those with far more limited nuclear attack capabilities.

D. Implications for U. S. Policy. Drawing on the analysis of the other sections, this portion of the study will identify alternative US policy responses (for example, changes in U. S. targeting and nuclear weapons employment policies) to current and likely future Soviet civil defense programs and their policies and strategies for using these programs. It will also identify alternative policies for US civil defense programs to deal with a variety of attack scenarios. The costs, benefits, and organizational implications of these alternative policies should be identified, and appropriate issues defined for NSC and Presidential decision.

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