

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

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August 26, 1977

MEMORANDUM FOR

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

SUBJECT: PD/NSC-18
U. S. National Strategy

The first sentence of PD/NSC-18 which was forwarded to you on August 24 should read, "I have reviewed the PRM/NSC 10 conclusions and the discussion of the Special Coordination Committee." This confirms today's telephone conversation between my office and yours.

Christine Dodson
Staff Secretary

Declassified/Released on 1/6/92
under provisions of E.O. 12356
by S. Titley, National Security Council
(F87-198)

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

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August 24, 1977

Presidential Directive/NSC-18

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

ALSO: The Director, Office of Management and Budget
 The Assistant to the President for National
 Security Affairs
 The Director, Arms Control and Disarmament
 Agency
 The Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff
 The Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT: U.S. National Strategy (U)

I have reviewed the PRM/NSC conclusions and the discussion of the Special Coordination Committee. It is clear that in the foreseeable future, US-Soviet relations will continue to be characterized by both competition and cooperation, with the attendant risk of conflict as well as the opportunity for stabilizing US-Soviet relations.

In that competition, military aspects aside, the United States continues to enjoy a number of critical advantages: it has a more creative technological and economic system, its political structure can adapt more easily to popular demands and relies on freely given popular support, and it is supported internationally by allies and friends who genuinely share similar aspirations. In contrast, though successfully acquiring military power matching that of the United States, the Soviet Union continues to face major internal economic and national difficulties, and externally it has few genuinely committed allies while lately suffering setbacks in its relations with China, parts of Africa, and India.

In this situation I direct that US national strategy will be to take advantage of our relative advantages in economic strength, technological superiority and popular political support to:

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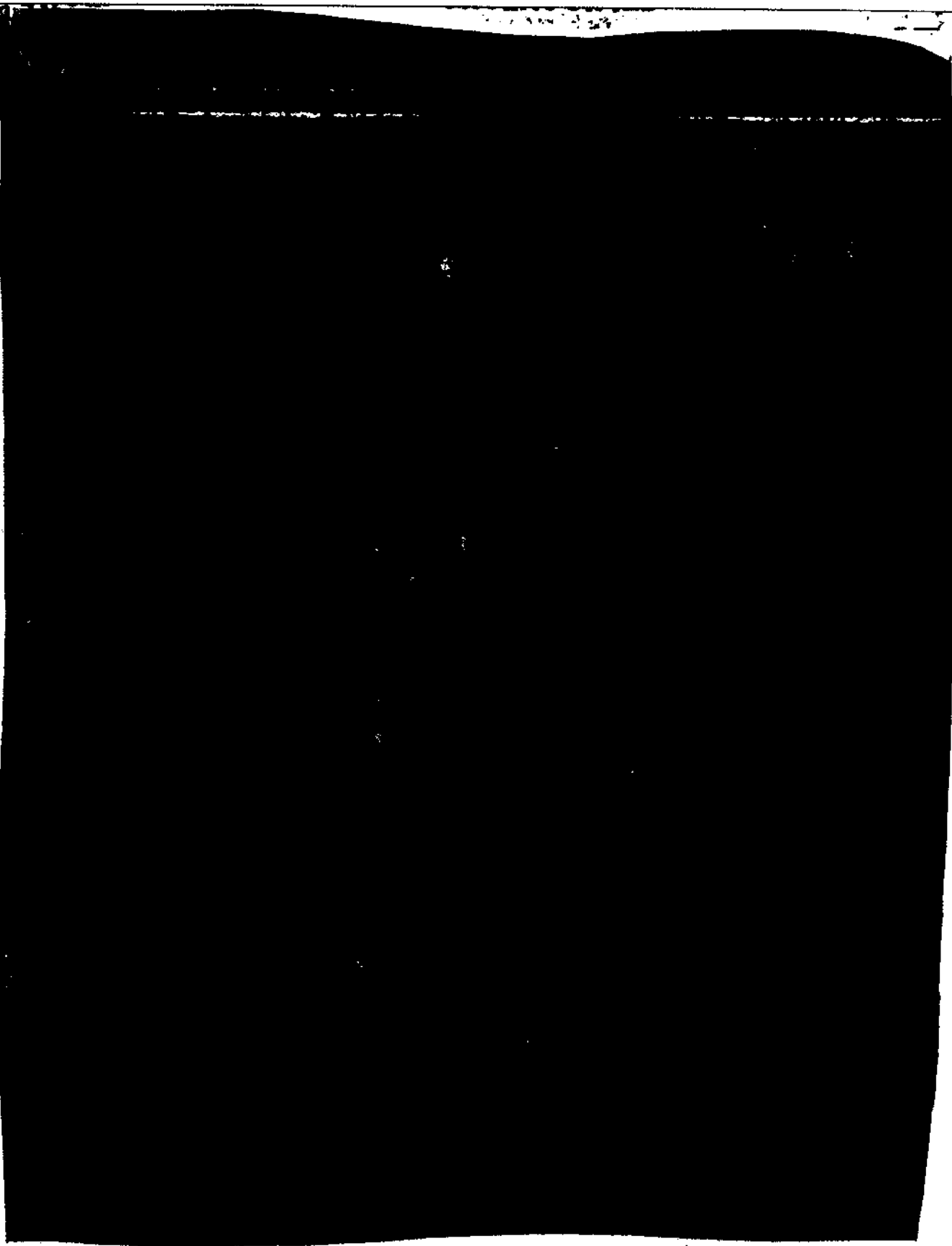
- Counterbalance, together with our allies and friends, by a combination of military forces, political efforts, and economic programs, Soviet military power and adverse influence in key areas, particularly Europe, the Middle East, and East Asia.
- Compete politically with the Soviet Union by pursuing the basic American commitment to human rights and national independence.
- Seek Soviet cooperation in resolving regional conflicts and reducing areas of tension that could lead to confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union.
- Advance American security interests through negotiations with the Soviet Union of adequately verifiable arms control and disarmament agreements that enhance stability and curb arms competition.
- Seek to involve the Soviet Union constructively in global activities, such as economic and social developments and peaceful non-strategic trade.

To fulfill this national strategy, the United States will maintain an overall balance of military power between the United States and its allies on the one hand and the Soviet Union and its allies on the other at least as favorable as that that now exists. In this connection, the United States will fulfill its commitment to its NATO allies to raise the level of defense spending by approximately three percent per year in real terms along with our allies.

To carry out US national strategy, I am also providing the following initial guidance regarding US military strategy, programs and policies.

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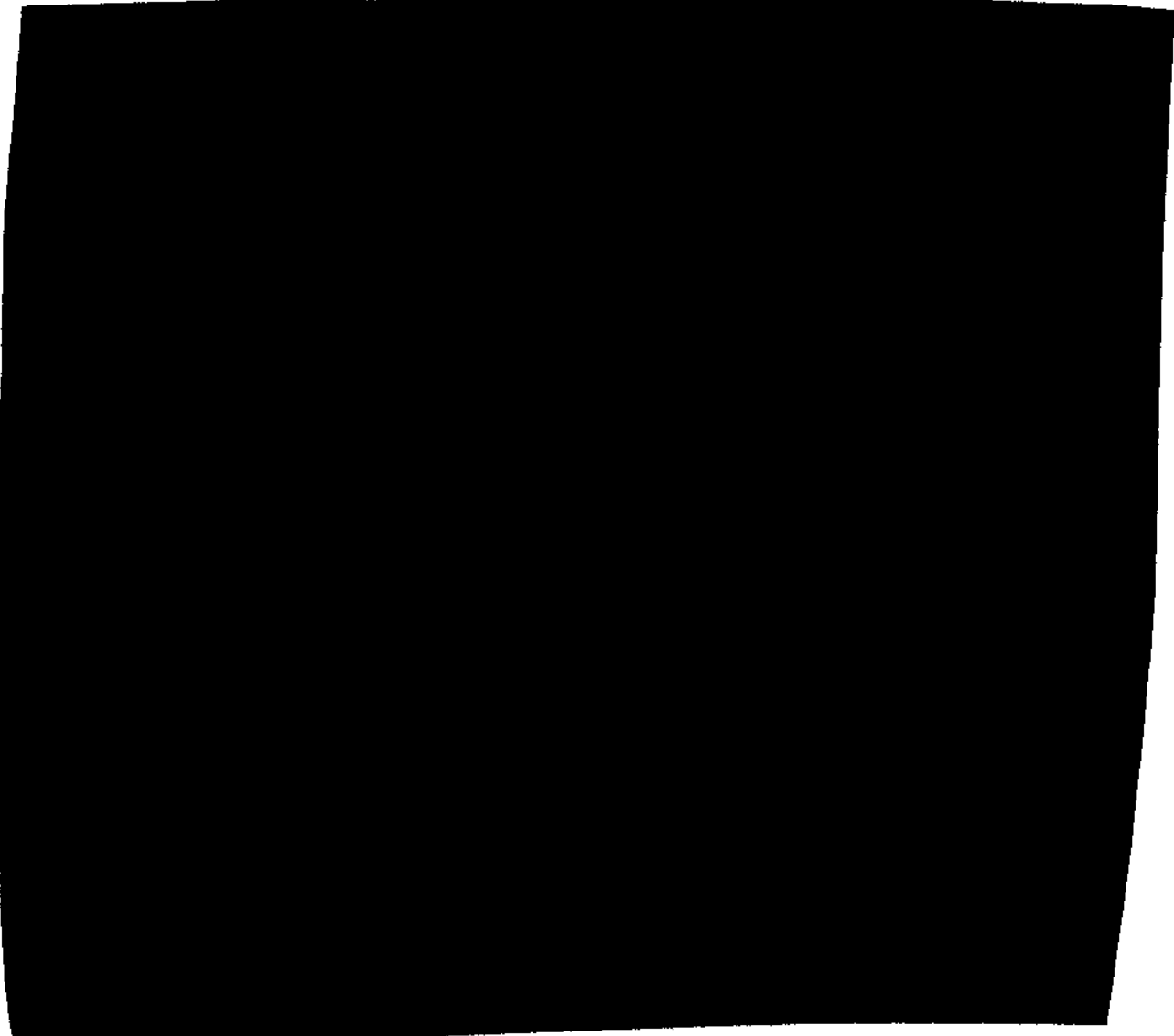
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Global Contingencies

In addition, the United States will maintain a deployment force of light divisions with strategic mobility independent of overseas bases and logistical support, which includes moderate naval and tactical air forces, and limited land combat forces. These forces will be designed for use against both local forces and forces projected by the USSR based on analyses of requirements in the Middle East, the Persian Gulf, or Korea, taking into account the contribution of our friends and allies in these regions. US planning should provide that these requirements may be met by a combination of the light deployment forces, supplemented

by forces in the United States, primarily oriented toward NATO defense. The 2nd Division will be oriented toward deployment in Asia but available for global contingencies as described above.

Asia

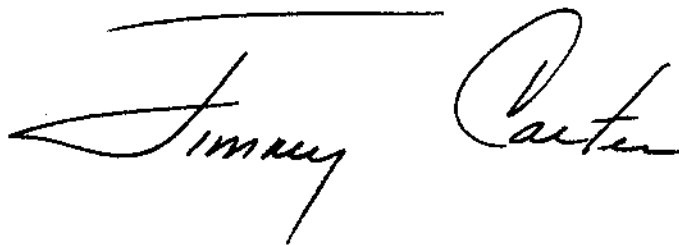
With the exception of withdrawals from Korea directed under PD/NSC-12, the United States will maintain the current level of combat forces deployed in the Western Pacific in order to preserve regional stability, to deter aggression in Korea and elsewhere, and to protect US interests and meet treaty commitments in the event of aggression.

Additional Studies

The Secretary of Defense will undertake, subject to separate instructions, a review of US targeting policy, as well as other studies; recommendations on the appropriate level of US capability to sustain a worldwide conventional war against the Soviet Union and its allies should be coordinated by the National Security Council for my decision, as per additional instructions.

Pending the conclusion of the targeting review, the US will continue to employ its strategic forces according to NSDM 242.

Otherwise, this Directive supersedes NSDM 242.

 Jimmy Carter

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

August 24, 1977

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MEMORANDUM FOR

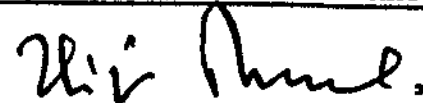
The Vice President
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ALSO: The Director, Office of Management and Budget
The Director, Arms Control and Disarmament
Agency
The Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff
The Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT: PD/NSC-18
U. S. National Strategy

Attached is a copy of PD/NSC-18, "U. S. National Strategy".

This PD is to be held very closely and distributed only to those officers in your department or agency with strict need to know.



Zbigniew Brzezinski

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by S. Tilley, National Security Council

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