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5. ~~(S)~~ QUESTION: What is the role of nuclear forces in deterring "uses" of WMD, taking into account such factors as the degree of US interests involved, US declaratory policy, world opinion?

- (U) Nuclear forces have a role in deterring such "uses" of WMD. The fundamental purposes of US nuclear forces are to deter the use of WMD and to prevent or respond to aggression against the US and its allies. Ideally, any deterrent strategy needs to consider an entire range of political, military, and economic options that can be brought to bear against a given adversary. Nuclear forces should be thought of as tools in our "toolbox" of deterrent options.
- (U) To be effective, such a strategy requires identifying an adversary's national interest (what they value) and then convincing that adversary that we have both the capability (appropriate weapons, delivery means, and C3) and the will (demonstrated by exercising the forces and by our readiness posture) to threaten those interests. National sovereignty, survival, freedom of action, and power (political and coercive) are examples of what the leadership of the countries concerned value. To be credible, we need to hold at risk those elements of power which support what the leadership values, i.e., political industrial and economic infrastructure, military capabilities which underpin their power, both political and coercive. Deterrence also assumes an opposing nation's political leadership will act according to the logic of national self interest. While each nation has varying national interests, it should be logical to assume most would regard the possibility of a US nuclear response contrary to their national self interest. Under this deterrent paradigm, an adversary must consider the probability of any US response across a range of options.

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- (U) In the final analysis, any aggressor will assess his "use" of WMD upon his perception of our nuclear capability, our national will, declaratory policy, stated doctrine, and our ability to employ all of our instruments or tools of national power.

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(S) What makes the US nuclear posture most effective and credible in deterring WMD use? Do particular nuclear systems or deployment patterns deter better than others? Does forward presence matter? Historical ties to region/country?

- (U) Certainly in the context of deterring WMD by the FSU, our alert weapon systems of the US strategic nuclear forces are probably the most effective and credible aspect of our current posture. Deterrence involves capability and will. Alert forces demonstrate a credible, survivable, fast response, trained, and exercised capability. The will to employ those forces is demonstrated through our readiness levels and robust exercise program.

- (U) By exploiting the ICBM's responsiveness, the SSBN's survivability, adaptability, and firepower, and the bombers survivability, flexibility, and rapid generation and deployability, we maximize our deterrent across many possible WMD scenarios. Many of these force characteristics can also be useful in deterring Nth country actors in their calculations to use or threaten to use WMD.

- (U) Forward presence may increase the perception of US capability in certain scenarios. There may be a difference in the perception of a potential proliferator when a system is located in the theater (forward deployed). A nuclear weapon "in theater" is much more of a threat than one in the US. Also, some systems forward deployed (i.e., gravity bombs) will be more responsive than one in CONUS. Further, the deployment of theater weapons may send a strong message to proliferators. These contributions may increase the deterrent value of a nuclear system.

- (U) Forward presence and historical/regional ties and security commitments are paramount in making extended deterrence credible. This can be seen in our ties and commitments to Europe,

Japan, and South Korea as an example. Without these ties and associations, the most sophisticated of capabilities would lack credibility in extended deterrence.

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6. (S) Question: Under what circumstances might the US use, or threaten to use, its nuclear forces? /

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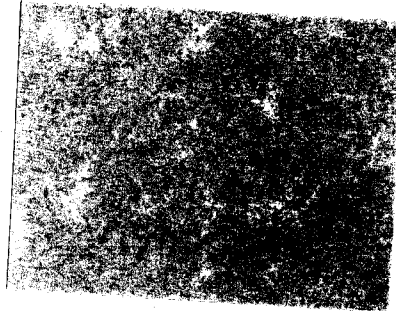
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