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PROJECT SOLARIUM

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June 1, 1953

PROJECT SOLARIUM

I. PURPOSE

1. The President has approved the creation of a project under the direction of the National Security Council to formulate and present alternative courses of action which the United States might presently or in the future undertake with respect to the Soviet power bloc.

2. In fulfillment of its portion of the project, the Panel has selected and defined in general terms certain courses of action for study, development and evaluation by Task Forces under terms and conditions set forth below.

3. Each Task Force will prepare and later present its report to the National Security Council in order to assist the Council in making its recommendation of the best courses of action to be adopted by the United States.

II. GENERAL INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE

1. U. S. National Objectives.

The objectives pursued by the United States in its relations with the rest of the world are extremely diverse and highly complex, not readily reduced to simple or systematic form. For examples of general statements of the more important

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objectives, see NSC 153, the President's speech to the American Society of Newspaper Editors on April 16, 1953, and the Preamble and Articles I and II of the United Nations Charter.

2. Range of Soviet Policies or Courses of Action.

a. The capabilities of the Soviet bloc will be assumed to be as set forth in National Intelligence Estimate No. 65 supplemented by such other agreed intelligence and pertinent studies as exist within the Government.

b. In order to avoid differing estimates by the several Task Forces as to Soviet intentions, each Task Force will analyze the course of action assigned to it with reference to the following alternative Soviet lines of action:

(1) The Soviets may seek a military decision with the West at any time, based either upon a determination to resort to war as an instrument of policy or upon a miscalculation as to free world intentions and capabilities.

(2) The Soviets may maintain, at some risk of general war, aggressive pressure, continuously or interspersed with active phases of "Peace Offensives", to extend their control and weaken the free world coalition.

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(3) The Soviets may accept a defensive posture in order to consolidate the present position of the Soviet bloc and to avoid a risk of general war, relying upon and encouraging the divisive forces within the free world.

The Panel has not entirely excluded the possibility that the Soviets will, for reasons of their own, become bona fide peaceful members of the family of nations, but does not consider such action sufficiently likely to include it in the foregoing Soviet lines of action. The Task Forces, however, may find it desirable at least to consider this possibility in examining and developing the policy assigned to them.

3. Factors Used in Selecting U. S. Courses of Action for Study.

a. The Panel has recognized that courses of action, other than those recommended below for Task Force examination, are conceptually possible and, indeed, may receive support from one or another quarter. The Panel calls attention, therefore, to certain courses which it has excluded from its directives as being in conflict with the realities of the world situation. Examples of those excluded are:

(1) A course of action which would rest upon a drastic reduction of our armed strength (in the absence of effective international regulation) and a

determination not to fight except in the event of invasion of U. S. territory.

(2) A course of action which would, as a deliberate choice, rely solely upon the economic and military strength of the United States.

(3) A course of action which would involve a major change in the structure of international organization (Atlantic Union, World Government, etc.).

(4) A course of action which would contemplate the launching of a preventive war against the Soviet Union on our own initiative.

b. The Panel has also recognized that the separate courses of action to be studied by Task Forces may be divided and combined in many variations. It seemed to the Panel that its own task could best be performed if it set clearly distinguishable courses before the Task Forces in such a way as to develop a full examination of the factors involved. After the Task Forces have completed their work on specific alternatives, and the National Security Council has had an opportunity for preliminary consideration, it will probably be necessary to attempt a synthesis of the constructive elements of several alternatives, as a basis for final decision.

c. The Panel would add the comment that vitally important as it is to develop a unity and consistency of effort behind basic courses of action and to project them

into the future, no major policy decision can serve the needs of the United States unless subjected to continuous review and modified to exploit changing circumstances.

III. SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS

1. Each Task Force will prepare its study as a proposed coordinated policy for the United States, to the extent possible in terms of specific actions or projects. It is important that each Task Force take into account not only the mechanical and material factors involved in its proposed policy but also the psychological, philosophical and ideological intangibles which may affect the cohesion and common purpose with which the nations of the free world face the challenge and threat of Communism.

2. Each Task Force should consider such of the following questions as are relevant to its proposed courses of action, using its own discretion as to how such questions should be handled in its final report:

a. What general results are expected to be accomplished by the proposed policy? Over what general time period?

b. What specific actions (diplomatic, political, military, economic, administrative, or other) should be undertaken by the United States to implement the proposed policy? What is the time phasing of such actions?

c. What major lines of action now being carried out by the United States should be abandoned in order to

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act economically and to remain consistent with the proposed policy?

d. What is the approximate magnitude and rate of expenditure of U. S. resources which would be required to carry out the proposed actions? What is the comparative probability and general magnitude of U. S. casualties involved?

e. Which features of the proposed policy and actions can be made public, and what elements should remain secret?

f. To what extent would the proposed policy and lines of action be supported by U. S. public opinion and by the U. S. Congress, assuming vigorous leadership on the part of the principal officers of government? Would the proposed actions require additional major legislation?

g. What is the estimated effect of the proposed policy and actions upon U. S. relations with (1) the Latin American governments, (2) the NATO governments, (3) other Western European governments, (4) the governments of Japan, the Philippines, Australia and New Zealand, (5) countries of the Asian-Arab bloc and others not now allied with the United States? What action can be taken to increase the support of world opinion for the proposed policy and to minimize adverse effects?

h. Are the proposed actions consistent with the United States commitments under the United Nations Charter, other

treaty obligations, and the general rules of international law?

i. How would the leaders of the Soviet Union be expected to interpret and react to actions by the United States under the proposed policy? Of Red China?

j. To what degree would the proposed actions reasonably safeguard the security of the United States and of its principal allies regardless of the line of action adopted by the Soviet Union?

k. To what degree would the proposed actions affect the risk of general war?

l. Would the proposed actions weaken or strengthen the cohesion of the Iron Curtain coalition? What effect would these actions have on the peoples of those countries? What steps can be taken to enlist the support of populations behind the Iron Curtain?

m. In the event action is directed toward an area now behind the Iron Curtain, what disposition is to be made of the area in the event of success? What are the problems created by (1) success, (2) failure?

n. Are the proposed actions based upon well-established facts as regards our own capabilities and those of the non-Soviet world? What additional studies must be initiated?

o. Under the proposed policy, which questions would require negotiation with the Soviet Union? What safeguards or sanctions would insure performance by the Soviet Union.

of resulting agreements? What type of negotiations with the Soviet Union would be precluded by the proposed policy?

p. In what specific ways would it be possible to confront the Soviet Union with necessary choices between alternatives other than general war, any of which would work to the advantage of the United States and its allies?

3. Any assumptions made by a Task Force should be clearly stated and promptly coordinated with other Task Forces concerned.

4. Each Task Force will develop the presentation of the policy assigned to it in the same manner that a responsible advocate works up a case for court. Though the arguments in favor of the policy will be marshalled as effectively as possible, each Task Force is also charged with disclosing the weaknesses inherent in that policy and the countervailing arguments. Consultation between Task Forces and mutual criticism of each others' work are encouraged.

5. The essential elements of the policy, courses of action and arguments will be set forth in a paper; the Task Forces will focus their efforts particularly on making an effective oral presentation to the National Security Council, using maps, charts and other visual aids to the maximum extent.

IV. SECURITY

The highest security should be maintained concerning the existence of the project and its objective. To this end the Task Forces should operate under a suitable "cover plan". Special identity passes should be issued to all persons working on the project, and the area in which they work should be under special security guard.

V. ALTERNATIVE POLICIES ASSIGNED TO TASK FORCES

1. Alternative "A".

a. The policy of the United States, as elaborated more fully in NSC 153, would be:

(1) To maintain over a sustained period armed forces to provide for the security of the United States and to assist in the defense of vital areas of the free world;

(2) To continue to assist in building up the economic and military strength and cohesion of the free world; and

(3) Without materially increasing the risk of general war, to continue to exploit the vulnerabilities of the Soviets and their satellites by political, economic and psychological measures.

b. For purposes of analysis and study by the Task Force, it is assumed that this policy would be interpreted and administered on the following bases:

(1) Time can be used to the advantage of the free world; if we can build up and maintain the strength of the free world during a period of years, Soviet power will deteriorate or relatively decline to a point which no longer constitutes a threat to the security of the United States and to world peace.

(2) In seeking to deter and oppose further expansion by the Soviet bloc, the policy would include the

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utilization of military operations, as necessary and feasible, even at the grave risk of general war. However, an attempt would be made to localize such military operations as far as possible.

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V. ALTERNATIVE POLICIES ASSIGNED TO TASK FORCES

2. Alternative "B".

a. The policy of the United States would be:

(1) To complete the line now drawn in the NATO area and the Western Pacific so as to form a continuous line around the Soviet bloc beyond which the U. S. will not permit Soviet or satellite military forces to advance without general war;

(2) To make clear to the Soviet rulers in an appropriate and unmistakable way that the U. S. has established and is determined to carry out this policy; and

(3) To reserve freedom of action, in the event of indigenous Communist seizure of power in countries on our side of the line, to take all measures necessary to re-establish a situation compatible with the security interests of the U. S. and its allies;

b. The Task Force should consider:

(1) Where the line should be drawn; if it excludes countries now outside the Iron Curtain, the effect of such exclusion upon such countries and U. S. interest therein.

(2) Whether aggression across the line in particular regions should be met at the outset by general military action against both the Soviet Union and China or only against the one most directly involved.

(3) The nature of the measures to be taken by the

and the "outlaw" bloc, but it would attempt to make as costly as possible the decision of the Soviet bloc not to conform to the minimum standards of conduct essential to peaceful co-existence. The Iron Curtain countries would be sealed off for all political, economic, cultural and other purposes which may be advantageous to them; Iron Curtain countries would not participate in international organizations and could claim no protections or benefits from international law. The policy would envisage, in effect, two worlds.

V. ALTERNATIVE POLICIES ASSIGNED TO TASK FORCES

3. Alternative "C".

a. The policy of the United States would be:

(1) To increase efforts to disturb and weaken the Soviet bloc and to accelerate the consolidation and strengthening of the free world to enable it to assume the greater risks involved; and

(2) To create the maximum disruption and popular resistance throughout the Soviet bloc.

b. The purpose of this policy would be, by actions such as those suggested below, to force the Soviets to shift their efforts to holding what they already have rather than concentrating on gaining control of additional territories and peoples and, at the same time, to produce a climate of victory encouraging to the free world. While this policy is not designed to provoke a war with the Soviet Union, it involves a substantial risk of general war which will vary according to the nature and timing of the steps taken to implement it.

c. The following actions should be among those considered, with proper time phasing, as means of implementing the above policy:

(1) To remove the threat arising from the Moscow-Peiping axis by (a) bringing about the overthrow of the Peiping regime or (b) separating Peiping from Moscow.

(2) To take such steps as are practicable to

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separate selected peripheral areas from the Iron Curtain. Examples might be Hainan, Albania, and possibly Kwantung Province, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Poland.

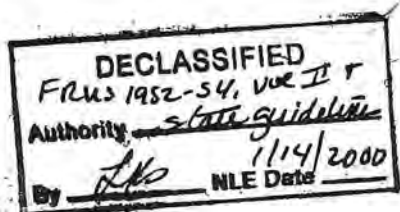
(3) To bring about clear-cut defeats, by military and other means, of present local Communist aggressions in Indo-China and Korea and the effective suppression of Communist-inspired guerrilla operations in Malaya, the Philippines, and other areas.

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VI. MEMORANDUM ON BASIC ISSUES

The Panel has recognized that, in setting forth the foregoing alternative policies for study, it has not been possible to deal specifically with certain basic issues which cut across all lines of action and upon which a judgment will be needed when final decisions are made.

Some of these issues are outlined in the attached paper (Memorandum on Basic Issues). The Panel does not recommend that these questions be referred to a specific Solarium Task Force, although the Memorandum might be furnished each Task Force as a matter of interest. The NSC Working Committee may wish to consider whether some or all of these issues should be examined by other means which would permit more time than is available to Solarium.



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MEMORANDUM ON BASIC ISSUES

Certain questions are crucial to the determination of any adequate foreign policy for the United States. The adoption of a general policy with which to meet the present Soviet threat necessarily involves careful examination, for example, of the possibilities and limitations of negotiation with the Soviet Union, the factor of time, the role of general war as a solvent of the threat, the ability of the U.S. economy to carry burdens in the security and foreign policy field, and the essential elements in maintaining a strong free world coalition. An outline of some of these problems is set forth below.

I. Negotiation with the Soviet Union

1. What are the probable specific objectives which the Soviet Union might seek to accomplish in the event of negotiations with the West?

- a. The neutralization of Germany?
- b. Confirmation of Soviet control of Central and Southeastern Europe?
- c. The collapse of NATO?
- d. The outlawry of weapons of mass destruction?
- e. An expansion of East-West trade?
- f. The withdrawal of U. S. forces and bases from the Eurasian-African land masses?
- g. Elimination or reduction of VOA and other U. S. propaganda directed at the U. S. S. R.?

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h. A disruption of the free world coalition by the exploitation of stresses and strains within the coalition?

i. The neutralization of Japan?

j. The recognition of Peiping and its admission to the U.N.?

k. The attachment of Formosa to Red China?

l. The liquidation of Western "colonial interests?"

m. Others?

2. What specific objectives should the U. S. seek to accomplish in the event of negotiations with the Soviet Union?

a. The unification of a Germany associated with the West?

b. The withdrawal of Soviet forces into Russia proper?

c. The liquidation of communist subversion outside the Iron Curtain?

d. The performance of war-time agreements and Peace Treaties in the cases of Rumania, Bulgaria, Czecho-Slovakia, and Poland -- or other arrangements which would restore the independence of those nations?

e. The unification of Korea?

f. The liquidation of communist pressure on Indo-China?

g. Basic amendments to the Charter of the U. N., for example, by a removal of the veto from Chapter VI and the elimination of General Assembly memberships for the Ukraine and Byelo-Russia?

- h. The independence of Austria?
 - i. The independence of Formosa?
 - j. The admission of Japan, Germany, Italy and other free world governments to the United Nations?
 - k. A demonstration to the free world and to populations behind the Iron Curtain that it is the intransigence and bad faith of the Soviet Union which bar the way to a lasting peace?
 - l. The independence of the Baltic States?
 - m. The elimination of the Iron Curtain?
 - n. The curbing of internal propaganda and teachings against the United States?
 - o. Others?
3. Under what circumstances should the United States be willing to negotiate with the Soviet Union?
- a. After the liquidation of one or two key questions as a test of seriousness of Soviet purpose?
 - b. Only after a further build-up of Western strength?
 - c. Only on issues on which the principal Western governments have reached prior agreement among themselves?
 - d. On some question, however remote the possibility of agreement, in order to avoid an appearance of undue U. S. intransigence?
4. Are there any combinations of U. S. and USSR demands which offer any prospect of a settlement which would be to our net advantage? As examples,

a. Should the U. S. agree to an admission of all present applicants now seeking admission to the U. N., excluding Japan, Germany and Red China? Should any such step be related to amendments of the U. N. Charter?

b. Assuming a cease-fire in Korea, would it be in the U. S. interest to agree to the admission of Red China to the U. N. in exchange for the following:

(1) Recognition of the independence of Formosa and the retention of a U. N. seat for Formosa, plus

(2) Liquidation of communist pressure on Indo-China, plus

(3) The substitution of India for China as a permanent member of the Security Council, plus

(4) The admission of Germany, Japan and Italy to the U. N.?

c. Would it be in the U. S. interest to accept the hegemony of the Soviet Union in Rumania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia and Poland in exchange for the evacuation of Austria and Germany by Soviet forces and the unification of a Germany associated with the West?

5. Are there methods which should be adopted to induce or coerce the Soviet Union to agree to a settlement on acceptable terms? This involves questions such as:

a. What are the possible alternative means of inducement or coercion and their relative strengths and weaknesses?

b. To what extent would the use of any or all of these means require the support or acquiescence of the other members of the free world?

c. To what extent would the use of any such means weaken or destroy the free world coalition?

d. Would the availability or effect of such means differ at various times during the period considered?

6. If it is highly improbable that a basis can be found for agreements with the Soviet Union which would be advantageous to U. S. interests, should the U. S. make one or more reasonable offers on major questions to fix firmly the responsibility for lack of progress toward agreement?

II. The Question of Time

1. Is "time" working "for" or "against" the United States and its allies in our relations with the Soviet Union? What are the principal factors which give any meaning to such concepts?

2. If important factors can be identified which suggest that "time" is working "for" us, what can we do to exploit these further? If that "time" is working "against" us, what can we do to reverse the effect of such factors?

3. If it is concluded that, on balance, "time is working against us" despite such action as we could reasonably take, when do we reach a critical period at which the world situation clearly forecloses the possibility of peace within which U. S. security and freedom can be maintained?

4. Are there special features about the present or developing Soviet threat to the United States which make it different in character from the threat which other nations, differently situated, have had to face for centuries?

5. What are the risks involved in continuing indefinitely a situation in which "time is working against us?"

III. The Role of General War

The Soviet Union is capable of precipitating a general war at any time. Various lines of action which might be followed by the United States involve greater and lesser degrees of risk of general war. In the event that "time is working against us," questions of the deepest gravity will necessarily arise. In order to consider such matters realistically and responsibly, the following questions should be examined:

1. The extent to which general war might accomplish the purposes for which it might be used, assuming the military success of the U. S. and its allies.

2. The major steps which it would be necessary to take prior to the outbreak of a general war to insure the support of the American people and our allies and to minimize the destruction to the human and material resources and the institutional life of the United States and its principal allies.

3. The probable situation which would result from military victory in a general war against the Soviet Union, whether won quickly or in a protracted struggle, and the problems which would then confront the United States in maintaining its basic values.

4. Whether general war can remove the type of threat posed by communism and whether the free world can devise means other than general war which would be equally or more likely to deal with the threat of communism.

5. Recognizing that the Soviet Union might be reluctant to resort to general war except over issues of the gravest importance, the risk of general war offers an instrument for achieving certain political results, even though it would be hoped that general war would not ensue. To what extent can the risk or threat of war be used in support of policy and to what extent should such be used only where we would be prepared to accept general war rather than forego our particular objective?

IV. The Economic Load-Carrying Capacity of the U. S.

1. What are the limitations upon the capacity of the U. S. economy to carry the burdens of armament and of a strong foreign policy? Do these limitations arise

a. At a point where the industrial plant and raw materials structure of the U. S. cannot produce the goods and services required on a sustained basis?

b. At a point where fiscal and tax structures cannot work out the arrangements by which production is divided between security requirements and the needs of the civilian economy?

c. At a point where the American people, for any of many possible reasons, are simply unwilling to carry the burdens involved?

2. What is the impact of the burden upon the U. S. economy of the demands for security and foreign aid since 1947? Weakened industrial plant? Lowered production? Unacceptably rapid consumption of basic raw materials? Reductions in civilian standards of living? Undemocratic controls?

V. Elements of a Free World Coalition

1. To what extent does the psychological, economic and military strength of the United States depend upon actively associated allies? Upon economic and other forms of cooperation with neutral countries?

2. What are the major differences in national interest between the U. S. and its principal allies which impose strains upon coalition? For example, is a part of the free world difference on China in fact an argument about the allocation of U. S. military resources as between the Atlantic and Pacific theaters?

3. What differences of view between members of the free world so weaken our position toward the Soviet bloc as to call for the most strenuous efforts at settlement? E.g., the Jewish-Arab, Indian-Pakistani, British-Egyptian issues?

4. To what extent do the peoples and governments of the free world in fact share common aspirations, basic moral purposes, and needs which can provide the basis for an ever-strengthening coalition?

5. Does communism challenge the political unity of the free world by offering political, economic or security

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advantages which in fact are rooted in the aspirations of large numbers of people in various parts of the world? In what respect can Western democracy meet any such challenge?

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