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PART TWO - TASK FORCE STUDY

I - THE SITUATION WHICH THE UNITED STATES
AND THE FREE WORLD MUST MEET

1. Task Force "B" did not consider it necessary to include in this report a discussion or interpretation of the nature of international Communism and the aims and objectives of the Soviet Union. It wishes to state its conclusion, however, that the United States must accept as fact that the nations of the Free World are confronted with a Soviet-Communist philosophy and program of conquest which if unchecked will result in the loss of their independence and the destruction of their free institutions. After being confined to the Soviet Union for more than twenty years the Soviet leadership gained its first major opportunity for Communist expansion with World War II, and it exploited this opportunity with signal success in Eastern Europe and the Far East. It is probable that the Kremlin had high hopes that expansion could be carried further - hopes which came close to realization in France, Italy, and Greece at a time when the Free World had almost completely demobilized and was licking its wounds of World War II. Perhaps the only deterrent to a more forcible attempt to expand was the possession of the atomic bomb by the United States, later supplemented by a growing firmness in United States policy marked by such measures as the Marshall Plan and NATO.

2. Despite these deterrents Soviet-Communist pressures have actively persisted, probing each weak spot in turn and achieving their

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greatest success with the attachment of China to the Soviet Bloc. Other efforts to expand - Iran, Greece, Berlin, Indo-China, Korea - have all been halted or impeded in one way or another by counter-action of the Free World under U.S. leadership.

3. In its efforts to contain Communist expansion the United States, which can alone give ultimate strength and hope to the Free World, has thus far reacted to Soviet pressures and aggressions as they have appeared at one point or another on the Free World periphery. This policy has not been entirely successful. It has inherent limitations which make it less likely to succeed in the future. Not knowing where Soviet Bloc pressures may appear, the United States must be prepared to meet them everywhere. It may be compelled to engage in a series of "police actions." This strategy, if continued, may be beyond the economic capabilities of the United States, will deprive this nation of the initiative, and will certainly divert the American people from the task of making the best possible use of their power and resources to be prepared to inflict decisive defeat on the Soviet Union if it imperils the vital security of this nation by continuing an active policy of expansion.

4. Task Force "B" assumes that the American and Soviet power-centers are approaching an age of atomic plenty when each will have the means to destroy almost completely the war-making capacity of the other despite any known or foreseeable defenses and regardless of which side has the advantage of surprise. This point may be reached in ten years'

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time. In any event, the U.S. stockpile of atomic weapons will grow to such enormous proportions in the next few years that the critical military factor will become not their number but the capability for their employment. There is every reason to believe that the Soviet program will not lag far behind, five to ten years at the outside.

5. This overriding factor confronts the Free World with two major alternatives: either a preventive war while the United States has a wide lead in the development and production of atomic weapons and their means of delivery, or the adoption of a policy that will do most to ensure the longest possible period of peace in which changes in the world situation and balance of forces, which must inevitably occur, may redound to the advantage of the Free World. However, since preventive war for a variety of reasons is rejected by the Free World, Task Force "B" has devoted its principal efforts to seeking a policy that offers the longest possible period of peace, in which efforts must be made to retain our lead in new weapons and strengthen our relative power position - a policy which will best utilize available resources, promote Free World strength and unity, and capitalize on Soviet weaknesses. Even if it could not solve the problem of the growing Soviet atomic stockpile, such a policy if successful would tend to minimize this danger and at the very least would preserve our strength and our freedom up to the time when, with both power centers in the age of atomic plenty, the threat of universal devastation may prove to be the only effective deterrent to war.

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6. To these ends Task Force "B" recommends the policy set out below.

II - RECOMMENDED NATIONAL POLICY

A. STATEMENT OF THE POLICY (HEREINAFTER REFERRED TO AS ALTERNATIVE "B").

1. That any advance of Soviet Bloc military forces beyond the present borders of the Soviet Bloc be considered by the United States as initiating general war in which the full power of the United States will be used as necessary to bring about the defeat of the U.S.S.R. and the dissolution of the Soviet Bloc.

2. That the United States make known publicly in an appropriate and unmistakable way that it has established and is determined to carry out this policy.

3. That the United States reserve freedom of action, in the event of seizure of power by indigenous Communist forces in countries beyond the borders of the Soviet Bloc, to take all measures necessary to re-establish a situation compatible with the security interests of the United States and its allies.

B. CLARIFICATION OF THE POLICY.

1. This policy is essentially a device to deter Soviet aggression and safeguard the security of the United States over an extended period. It is proposed as a support, rather than as a substitute, for existing policies, many of which Task Force "B" would expect to see continued; its acceptance is quite consistent with acceptance of most of the

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proposals of Task Force "A" or "C". It is intended to provide a firmer basis for national efforts in such fields as diplomacy and the maintenance of the military establishment. It will not solve specific problems such as Iran or Germany but should establish a posture of strength and leadership enabling the United States to deal with them more successfully.

2. In effect the proposed policy draws a line around the present limits of the Soviet Bloc and announces that any Soviet or satellite military advance beyond that line would result in general war. It further informs the Kremlin that in such a war the full power of the United States, including its atomic power, will be used. Under existing alliances and national policy it is likely that the United States would be prepared to engage in war in the event of aggression against almost any country on the borders of the Soviet Bloc (See Appendix A). Alternative "B" adds to and makes more rigid existing commitments in that (a) it covers countries with respect to which no policy decision has been taken (e.g., Finland, Afghanistan), (b) it makes a public commitment with respect to countries regarded as of great importance to U.S. security but to which there are no alliance obligations, and (c) it fortifies existing alliances by adding the specific statement of intention to invoke general war in case of an attack.

3. The "general war" envisaged is one in which the United States, assisted by those allies it might have at the time, would apply its full power - whenever, however, and wherever necessary - to defeat the main

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enemy and to achieve its other war objectives. It does not mean that all reliance would be placed on an immediate strategic atomic attack. The military strategy would depend on the war plans and circumstances existing at the time.

4. Alternative "B" is, in the final analysis, a unilateral policy, although every effort would of course be made to enlist the sympathy and support of other nations. This follows from the wording of the directive to this Task Force: to establish a line around the Soviet Bloc "beyond which the United States will not permit Soviet or satellite military forces to advance without general war." To make it multilateral now or in the foreseeable future would be, indeed, impossible. That it must be unilateral does not invalidate it, as the United States, like any other nation, reserves the right to take any action it considers vital to its security.

5. The main purpose of Alternative "B", however, is to prevent general war, and Task Force "B" believes that it will have that effect. Yet the policy cannot be based on bluff. The United States must be prepared to make good the commitment to use its full military power in the eventuality, however unlikely, that Soviet aggression should take place. Such deliberate aggression, in the face of a clear U.S. warning, would indicate the willingness and intention of the Soviet leaders to engage in general war in pursuit of their aims. Such a policy and line of action on the part of the Soviet leadership would face the United States with a

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choice of fighting or retreating, regardless of whether the United States had adopted Alternative "B" or any other policy.

6. It is understood that the United States would take the decision to apply the ultimate sanction of general war only on the basis of the most careful and serious consideration of the facts of the particular case and not whimsically or lightly. It would have to be clear that the advance of Soviet Bloc military forces was no trifling border incident of the sort that has occurred many times in the past and presumably will occur in the future, but an armed attack that would be recognized as such by the President, the Congress and the people of the United States.

7. Task Force "B", in deciding upon the substance of its proposal, considered several alternative locations for the proposed line but came to the conclusion that only if drawn along the present borders of the Soviet Bloc would it meet the security objectives of the United States. Only this line would give promise of preventing Soviet aggression and checking the fears, uncertainties and dispersion of effort which have marked the Free World's efforts to defend itself.

C. REJECTED ALTERNATIVE LINES

1. In accordance with its instructions Task Force "B" considered a line which would exclude certain countries not now in the Soviet Bloc, on grounds that such countries, because they were traditionally neutral or fearful of the Soviet reaction, did not want any American "guarantee" and might publicly reject it, or that they were not of sufficient strategic

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importance to the United States. Recognizing that there are good reasons against announcing specific guarantees to such countries as Sweden, Afghanistan, India and others, Task Force "B" nevertheless felt it necessary to reject the concept of a group of "in-between" countries lying beyond the line which could not be crossed by Soviet Bloc armed forces without general war. In its view the United States must take its stand in principle against any aggression and in practice against any further expansion of Soviet-Communist power. To leave any Free World countries beyond the line would be to invite Soviet aggression against them. By including them all the United States can make the policy more acceptable to all. To do otherwise would be to invite endless and dangerous speculation why some were included and some were not, to engender ill-will and to promote disunity. No other line would have the same moral foundation, the same value as a deterrent, or the same chance to endure.

2. Task Force "B" also explored the possibility of drawing a line to include only the "minimum" areas necessary to U.S. security. It rejected this concept, both in its narrower "Fortress America" form and its broader version including key base areas overseas such as Britain and Japan. Such a line, which would in effect be a line of withdrawal, would differ fundamentally and not merely in degree from our proposed line along the present Iron Curtain and indeed comes close to being ruled out by the directives to this Task Force, which excluded "a course which would, as a deliberate choice, rely solely upon the economic and military strength of the United States."

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Furthermore, the idea of drawing a line only around the "minimum" territory essential to American security, regardless of existing commitments and past associations, is in the view of Task Force "B" unrealistic, both from the political and the military standpoint.

3. Task Force "B" attaches the utmost importance to having strong Allies, particularly if general war does take place. The United States must strive to maximize the strength and resources of the Free World and to deny them to the enemy. This would be manifestly impossible if the U.S. Government should deliberately write off these countries, whether presently formally allied with the United States or not, by drawing a "minimum" line.

4. U.S. strategic interests, moreover, are too far-flung to be thus restricted. Task Force "B" believes that present commitments and associations exist largely because they do in fact reflect the basic security needs of this country. Of the greatest importance to U.S. security are bases from which air, naval and ground attacks may be launched against the Soviet Bloc. For example, air bases in Western Europe and North Africa will be vital until we can count on full-scale intercontinental delivery of our atomic power; the same considerations hold in the Far East. Even with the attainment of such intercontinental atomic delivery capability, the power of the United States to deter Soviet aggression and to inflict military defeat on the U.S.S.R. if it occurs would be enormously enhanced by the ability to use such bases.

5. With military realities requiring that U.S. power be exercised from so many distant points throughout the Free World, there is no profit,

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and possible danger, in selecting countries and areas to be written off as non-essential. Moreover, one area is dependent on another; many of the strategically "vital" areas are linked, politically or economically or culturally, to other Free World countries and might easily become untenable if those other countries were taken over by the Soviet Bloc.

6. In any alliance, the United States loses a certain amount of political freedom of action in return for compensating advantages which may include heightened political power and leadership, an increase in overall economic and military strength by combining resources with its Allies, or access to a strategic point on the map. Some military freedom of action may be lost as a result of the loss of a free hand politically, but the overriding military consideration in the case of existing alliances is that a greater military capability is realized especially by gaining access to areas suitable for advanced bases. Task Force "B", therefore, sees a net loss to the United States in any attempt to cut down its alliances or commitments for the purpose of increasing its flexibility of decision and operation, for in so doing it would at the same time be diminishing rather than improving its capabilities.

7. At the same time a U.S. decision to withdraw to a "minimum area" would open a wide field for Soviet expansion, to be effected at times of Soviet choosing and by a wide variety of political, economic and ideological pressures. Since these pressures would be backed by Soviet military power and would not be opposed by U.S. military power or the threat of military retaliation by the United States, the outcome would be determined.

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8. The human and natural resources of the area from which we might withdraw would become integrated into the Soviet Bloc, increasing its total strength and making available to its military forces additional base areas which would improve its military operational capability. The resources of Western Europe, for example, would be a gain of incalculable importance to the U.S.S.R. Extension of the Soviet Bloc to include such large and populous new territories would, of course, bring problems as well as advantages. Task Force "B" believes, however, that the United States could not afford to rely on hopes that the Soviet-Communist leadership could not control or exploit these territorial gains to the great peril of this country.

9. Withdrawal to a "minimum security area" would have the eventual effect of requiring the American people to live in a beleaguered garrison-state, with consequent economic sacrifices and dangers to free political institutions. The United States has great political potential, not only in the Free World but within the Soviet Bloc, because of what it is and what it stands for. If it seeks timid refuge in the pseudo-security of a "minimum" area, its spiritual and political powers of leadership will shrink and shrivel even more rapidly than its military and economic resources, and it will sooner or later face a direct challenge from a greatly swollen, confident, and powerful Soviet rival,

10. Therefore, Task Force "B" believes that the security requirements of the United States lie not in the drawing of a minimum line of defense but in the prevention of any Soviet Bloc attack on any nation of the

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Free World. The Soviet threat can be defeated only if the Free World, backed by U.S. power, grows in strength and unity to meet it.

D. REJECTION OF THE "TWO WORLDS" CONCEPT.

1. In accordance with its instructions, Task Force "B" explored the question of a complete isolation or outlawry of the Soviet Bloc from the rest of the world. From the military standpoint, by setting up the strongest possible deterrent to the movement of Soviet Bloc forces across the Free World border, the recommended policy does attempt the "outlawry" of the bloc, at least in the sense of pointing to it as the criminal who must be restrained. But the Task Force does not regard the "sealing-off" of the Iron Curtain countries for all political, economic, cultural and other purposes as desirable or even possible.

2. Such a sealing-off would presumably involve the rupture of diplomatic relations by all Free World countries with all Soviet Bloc countries, the cessation of all East-West trade, the termination of radio broadcasts and all other means of communication with the peoples behind the Iron Curtain, the expulsion of the U.S.S.R. and its satellites from the United Nations and other international organizations, and the denial of the rights and benefits of international law to Soviet Bloc countries and their nationals.

3. Task Force "B" believes that the United States could not possibly persuade all other countries of the Free World to cooperate in the sealing-off process, and that attempts to use pressure to induce their coop-

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eration would only tend to break up the solidarity of the Free World and isolate the United States. Obtaining general Free World acceptance of Alternative "B", in the form of a U.S. decision to invoke general war in case of armed aggression by the Soviet Bloc, may be difficult enough without the additional aspect of a proposed severance of all contact with the Soviet world.

4. Task Force "B" believes that such a severance of contact, even if it could be attained, would be contrary to American traditions and interests as well as unnecessary as an adjunct to the proposed policy. During the period of peace envisaged by the policy, it will be in the interest of the United States to maintain what contact it appropriately can both with the governments of Soviet Bloc countries, for purposes of negotiation, and with the peoples under Soviet rule, who are potential allies.

5. Similarly, there is nothing to be gained by an attempt to exclude all Soviet Bloc countries from the United Nations and other international organizations, even if such a move might be accepted by the rest of the world. So long as the principal reliance for preventing Soviet aggression is placed on U.S. power and not on the U.N., there need be no rush to transform that organization into an anti-Soviet coalition. American interests in the foreseeable future will be best advanced if the U.N. can continue to serve as a forum for discussion and a channel for negotiation as well as a means of rallying world opinion. The development of an effective world security organization must be regarded as a long-range prop-

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osition which will not necessarily be brought closer by the withdrawal of the Soviet Bloc or the Free World members from the United Nations as presently constituted.

6. The maintenance of a necessary minimum of diplomatic and other relations with the Soviet Bloc is desirable as a means of maintaining contact and of obtaining information. The continued existence of some trade will also be of benefit to the Free World; to eliminate it altogether would be to deprive Free World countries of even the opportunity to make trade bargains clearly to their own advantage. And the Soviet Bloc economy will continue to grow, even if all trade is cut off, since over the long run it is dependent only to a minor extent upon imports.

7. Actually, trade and ideas and influences are going to flow back and forth across the line, no matter how hermetically it may be sealed by law or policy. The very existence of the Soviet Union will continue to exercise political influence within the Free World, as the existence of the United States and other free countries makes them a powerful potential influence among the peoples of the Soviet Bloc.

8. Furthermore, the Soviet leadership cannot be expected to give up its basic philosophy or to deny itself the privilege of political penetration and subversion in Free World countries. It has imposed a type of Iron Curtain suitable to its own purposes. Task Force "B" regards it as unwise for the United States to accept the existence of this barrier to free international intercourse as justified or permanent, and doubly unwise to

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try to establish a new and thicker curtain which is inconsistent with American principles and detrimental to American interests. It is only realistic to recognize the fact of continuing political and ideological interaction across any line that is drawn as a military barrier, and to make every effort to turn it to the advantage of the security of the United States.

III. SUMMARY OF ADVANTAGES

A. ENUMERATION OF PRINCIPAL ADVANTAGES.

1. Following is a brief summary of the principal advantages which Task Force "B" believes will result from adoption of the proposed policy:

a. By invoking the warning of general war, including use of atomic weapons, it makes the most effective use of U.S. military strength and exploits Soviet weakness.

b. It diminishes to the vanishing point the probability that the U.S.S.R. will either deliberately initiate or blunder into a general war, at least until such time as the Kremlin believes its atomic capabilities are sufficient to knock out the United States.

c. If however, the Soviet leadership does bring on general war, it puts the United States in the most favorable position to wage it.

d. It provides a safeguard against aggression by Communist China.

e. It contributes to the solution of existing peripheral conflicts by placing an effective sanction behind any settlement reached on Korea and by deterring Chinese military intervention in Indo-China.

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f. It can be expected to assure a fairly long period of peace during which the balance between the Soviet Bloc and the Free World may change to the advantage of the latter.

g. It permits the United States to use its resources most effectively and to get the maximum return for the dollars expended on its security.

h. It allows the Free World to develop strength and unity behind a protective barrier, provides a clear mission enabling more efficient and effective development of military forces, and avoids dissipation of military and economic resources in peripheral wars at times and places of Soviet choosing.

i. It renders more difficult Soviet-Communist subversion in countries of the Free World, but also leaves the United States free to take advantage of any opportunities which may appear for diminishing the power and extent of the Soviet Bloc.

j. The clarity and firmness of the policy will make it understandable to the American people and will facilitate their support of the efforts and sacrifices necessary in the interest of national security.

B. EFFECTIVENESS OF ALTERNATIVE "B" IN MEETING POSSIBLE SOVIET LINES OF ACTION.

1. Task Force "B" has examined the recommended policy and its effectiveness in meeting the following three alternative Soviet lines of action. They are specifically set forth here because comment on them is called for by the instructions given to the Task Force. They should, however,

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be considered in conjunction with the discussion of probable Soviet reactions to Alternative "B" on pages 79-84 below.

a. Should the Soviet Bloc seek a military decision with the West at any time and resort to war, either by intention or by accident, Alternative "B" will:

(1) Find the United States and the Free World best prepared to conduct a general war because they will have avoided the necessity of preparing for an unknown number and variety of peripheral wars.

(2) Find the United States with a lead in the development and production of atomic weapons, although that lead will become less meaningful at such time in the future when both sides reach the age of atomic plenty. Thus, the sooner the Soviet Bloc initiates general war the less its chance of victory.

b. Should the Soviet Bloc maintain, at some risk of general war, aggressive pressure, continuously or interspersed with "peace offensives", Alternative "B" will:

(1) Act as the strongest possible deterrent to Soviet military aggression for the longest period of time.

(2) Ensure that Soviet aggressive pressures would not result in draining the strength of the Free World in a succession of "Koreas" because general war would result from any Soviet-Bloc military aggression.

(3) Call for a Free-World posture of readiness for general war whether the Soviet Bloc was in an aggressive or placatory mood.

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(4) By making possible a rational and sustained U.S. and Free-World defense effort, avoid the effects of the alternation of crisis and let-down caused by shifting Soviet tactics between aggressive pressures and "peace offensives."

c. Should the Soviet Bloc accept a defensive posture in order to consolidate its present position and avoid the risk of general war while relying upon and encouraging the divisive forces of the Free World, Alternative "B" will:

(1) Be as effective as any policy available to the United States in assuring that the Free World maintain an effective military posture. Indeed, it might be the best policy in this respect because its firm tone and explicit commitment make it manifest that the policy will require preparedness to meet adverse reaction.

(2) Allow scope for genuine settlement of specific issues by negotiation with the U.S.S.R. or other non-military means, especially if the Free World is growing stronger and more cohesive in comparison with the Soviet Bloc.

(3) Give the United States and its allies flexibility in devising tactics to meet specific Soviet divisive efforts.

IV. ANALYSIS OF IMPLICATIONS

A. MILITARY IMPLICATIONS OF ALTERNATIVE "B".

1. The military problem posed by the Soviet Union has two main aspects. The more familiar aspect comprises those traditional elements of

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Soviet military strength in being which have been used as a powerful tool in expanding the Soviet Orbit and implementing Soviet policy. It is this aspect of the problem which U.S. policies and actions in recent years have chiefly sought to counter -- by resisting armed aggression where it has occurred, undertaking to resist if necessary at numerous other points around the Soviet periphery, and building up the strength of countries subjected to Soviet pressures.

2. However, of overriding military consequence to the United States in the long term is the second aspect: the ever-increasing potentiality of the Soviet stockpile of atomic weapons, taken together with a developing capability for their delivery on important targets throughout the world, relatively free from the classic hindrances of distance and geography. This growing threat not only greatly raises the importance of the direct defense of the United States itself; it also profoundly alters the conditions for the defense of all free nations within reach of Soviet power.

3. This is the aspect of the Soviet military threat which is both more dangerous and more enduring. Any U.S. policy which claims to afford a continuing safeguard to the security of the United States must find its military basis solidly in the capabilities of atomic weapons. Alternative "B", while carrying no guarantee of permanent security, does rest on such a basis.

4. Alternative "B" is not in any way unique in that it envisages the possibility of general war, for which this country must be prepared under any policy. It is Task Force "B"'s contention that, by specifically stating

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the willingness of the United States to meet aggression with general war, Alternative "B" offers the best chance both to stop Soviet encroachment and to avoid general war. A comparison with Alternatives "A" and "C" in this regard is given in Enclosure 1.

5. By invoking the warning of general war, including the ultimate sanction of atomic destruction, Alternative "B" provides the only practical way to re-introduce U.S. military strength as an effective factor in world politics.

a. Soviet military strength in conventional forces and weapons will continue to be an effective instrument in the pursuit of Soviet objectives as long as the United States continues to attempt, as best it can, to counter Soviet force in kind, whenever and wherever it is applied. As long as the United States foregoes the firm threat of general war as the primary sanction against further Soviet aggression, free nations close to the Soviet Bloc must live in recognition of the danger that one by one, or in groupings, they may be eliminated as the Soviet leaders decide. The men in the Kremlin are fully aware that no determined and lasting military program can emerge from such an atmosphere, particularly in alliances of nations which are competitors as well as allies.

b. Uncertainty and despair can, however, be converted into assurance and hope if the United States makes it unmistakably clear that the full extent of its military power will be applied immediately against the Soviet Bloc in the event of armed aggression against any nation of the Free

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World. By thus reducing the potency of the Soviet and satellite military threat to contiguous states, the United States would also furnish the practical basis for intelligent improvement in their defenses.

6. By giving a clear indication that further military aggression by the Soviet Bloc would result immediately in general war, Alternative "B" will reduce the likelihood that such a war will occur.

a. By eliminating small "hot" wars, the United States will also eliminate the always dangerous possibility that a general war, unwanted even by the Kremlin, may grow up accidentally or by Soviet miscalculation out of an incident or a peripheral action. In addition, by making clear the conditions under which it will engage in general war, the United States gains a posture which limits Soviet freedom of action to embark deliberately on general war. At present, because of uncertainties as to American intentions, the Kremlin is permitted to assume that the U.S. capability might not be exercised, even in a general war, until quite late. The Free World consequently faces the continuous hazard that if general war is in fact in the Soviet scheme it can be begun in ways which could keep the U.S. military power off balance until the United States itself had been struck a lethal blow. Further, by preceding such a war with a series of peripheral actions, the U.S.S.R. can force the United States into maintaining strength in forces which would have only limited usefulness in a general war.

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b. In the face of a clear policy that the United States will henceforth, in the development and deployment of its military forces, regard them primarily in the light of their prospective effectiveness in a general war, Soviet planners will surely be inhibited, and can be precluded from considering deliberate general war as an even fairly safe gamble.

c. It is argued for less positive policies that the Free World, and particularly Western Europe, desires above all else that the United States avoid a war which would probably bring destruction to Western civilization. Task Force "B" believes that these nations know that the decision for general war rests with the U.S.S.R. now and would still rest there after the new U.S. policy was announced; and that they also know it is most unlikely that the U.S.S.R. would bring on such a war until it considered its atomic capability quite adequate and, even then, only if it calculated that conditions were such that the Soviet Union could itself escape being destroyed.

d. The growth of the Soviet atomic stockpile is inevitable in any case, but not the creation of the conditions prerequisite to its employment. Task Force "B" believes that these nations, with firm leadership by the United States, would be relieved to have a good reason to discard their current rationalization of an unpleasant prospect and give vigorous support to the U.S. effort to see to it that conditions will not be allowed to become favorable to Soviet success in an all-out war.

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e. Task Force "B" does not pretend that such a war would be less than terribly destructive even to the victor. It submits only that if the United States flees from the atomic reality of the present and near future, the nations of the Free World will recognize our fright for what it is and, sharing it, continue to fall successively by the wayside. They will thus assist the U.S.S.R., at least passively, in bringing about the only circumstances in which such a war would in practical fact become a probability.

f. Alternative "B" provides no guarantee that the Kremlin will not take the decision for general war. If such a decision is certain to be taken, it is obvious that U.S. chances for survival are not likely to increase with time. Should the adoption of Alternative "B" precipitate the inevitable Soviet decision, the United States would at least be in the most favorable position to achieve the objectives of the advocates of preventive war.

7. Alternative "B" will clarify the purposes of Free World forces, enabling their more effective and economical development and maintenance.

a. At present, partly because the Free World cannot be sure whether, when or how the United States would fight to stop further aggression, most efforts at rearmament suffer from confusion as to the type and size of forces needed. There is not only the question whether the action would be local or general. Even in the latter case, there are wide-open questions concerning strategy and forces.

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b. It is generally assumed that the United States would invoke general war in the event of a major Soviet attack in Western Europe. The same assumption may be made for certain other parts of the world. But even this assumption fails to answer several important questions. For example, as regards Western Europe, would the United States strike quickly and decisively to destroy the source of the aggression, or would the historical theater of general war again be the scene of the major military action? For lack of an unequivocal answer to questions such as this, not only is there apathy as to the necessary level of effort, there are discontinuities and indecision in the application of the effort that is in fact being put forth.

c. With a clear indication that the United States will reply to further military aggression anywhere by striking with full power at the Soviet Bloc, it will be made similarly clear that while there remains a vitally important requirement for peripheral forces, it is different from the requirement that would follow from a concept that all wars will be fought solely as peripheral wars and in theaters chosen by the Soviet leaders.

d. Friendly forces around the Soviet periphery will continue to be needed to stabilize the defense of the peripheral zone. Without them it would be difficult in some instances even to tell when aggression occurred. They would be needed in the event of war as protection against being easily overrun, and in the same role would undoubtedly be able to shorten the war in some areas. They would be essential in restoring post-war order in liberated or enemy territory.

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e. They are valuable for many other purposes. But, under Alternative "B", they would not be depended upon for the main effort to defeat the U.S.S.R. itself in an atomic war. Their task, therefore, would no longer be a hopeless one, and it would be the sort of task that is subject to analysis and sound decisions as to the level and nature of effort that is necessary. Task Force "B" believes that the outcome would be a substantial increase in the effectiveness of the military programs of our allies, while enabling the United States to keep the requirement for U.S. support in funds and equipment on a realistic level.

8. By clarifying the principal purpose of U.S. military forces and the circumstances in which they would be employed, Alternative "B" will permit U.S. military policies and programs to be formulated and executed with much greater wisdom and economy, and will best assure the necessary degree and continuity of public support.

a. The cardinal element in U.S. military policy must be to develop and maintain the military strength necessary to defeat the main enemy, the U.S.S.R. A military policy which depends on trying to stalemate, or even win, a number of peripheral wars is inherently self-defeating. It denies to the U.S. even a meaningful strategic concept to form a basis for deciding on the sort of forces needed, let alone their size or method of employment.

b. A basic policy which honestly and courageously recognizes this fact can bring enormous benefits to the formulation and execution of

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subordinate policies and programs, in the form of intelligent decisions and continuity of public support. Under Alternative "B" the United States will have a basis for selectivity in deciding on forces to be built and maintained, recognizing that this country cannot maintain for an indefinite period the desirable levels of all types of forces that would be needed to fight the variety of possible wars the Soviet Union might choose to force upon us.

c. The United States will thus stabilize military programs, with attendant orderliness and economy in the application of resources, minimizing false starts and extravagant obsolescence of equipment.

d. A commitment to general war to meet Soviet aggression, under clearly defined rules which may be tough but which must be conceded to be just, is not only the sort of commitment the Kremlin will respect; it is one the average American can understand and support. On the other hand he will have increasing difficulty in understanding the importance of costly small wars none of which seems to lead anywhere except to another one, particularly as he sees the potential of widespread atomic destruction tower higher and higher over such military operations.

e. A commitment which is publicly understood and accepted as necessary will give the best chance for the country to remain adequately alert to the Soviet threat. The alternative, which is obviously unwise and even dangerous, is to depend on a series of "Koreas" to accomplish that purpose, with intervening periods of confused counsel as to what the basic U.S. purpose really is.

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