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NIE 11-8-64  
10 May 1965  
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# MEMORANDUM

To Holders of

NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATE

NUMBER 11-8-64

## Soviet Capabilities for Strategic Attack

Submitted by the  
DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

Concurred in by the  
UNITED STATES INTELLIGENCE BOARD

As indicated overleaf  
10 MAY 1965

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The Central Intelligence Agency and the intelligence organizations of the Departments of State, Defense, AEC, and NSA

**Concurring:**

Director of Intelligence and Research, Department of State

Director, Defense Intelligence Agency

The Atomic Energy Commission Representative to the USB

Director of the National Security Agency

**Abstaining:**

The Assistant to the Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation, the subject being outside of his jurisdiction.

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## SOVIET CAPABILITIES FOR STRATEGIC ATTACK

### THE PROBLEM

To review the evidence acquired since the publication of NIE 11-8-64, and to assess its implications for the Soviet ICBM forces through mid-1966.

### SCOPE NOTE

NIE 11-8-64, "Soviet Capabilities for Strategic Attack," dated 8 October 1964, TOP SECRET RESTRICTED DATA, is a comprehensive estimate of Soviet capabilities in the field of strategic attack. This memorandum has been prompted by new evidence which requires us to review our judgments of Soviet ICBM programs and, in particular, the pace of ICBM deployment. A new estimate in the 11-8 series, which will deal with all Soviet strategic attack systems, will be issued in late 1965.

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DISCUSSION

1. In NIE 11-8-64, we estimated that deployment of second-generation ICBMs in soft sites and three-silo hard sites had come to an end, and that the Soviet ICBM program was moving into a new phase characterized by dispersed single silos. Subsequent evidence has confirmed these trends, but single silos apparently have been started at a faster pace than previously estimated.

2. We have now identified about 125 single silos, all begun since about January 1964. The actual number under construction is probably larger. When compared to past rates of starting ICBM launchers, the present level of activity is high; the largest number of ICBM launchers previously started in a single year was about 90. The building rate, however, is not without precedent nor does it represent what could be termed a maximum effort; at one point in 1963 about 140 ICBM launchers were under construction in a variety of site configurations, and MR/IRBM launcher construction was also continuing.

3. We believe that the most advanced of these launchers will not reach operational status until late 1965. This means that the mid-1965 operational ICBM strength will be about 225,<sup>1</sup> somewhat lower than our previous estimate of 235-250.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, the pace of single-silo deployment could carry the force by mid-1966 beyond the high side of the previously estimated range of 285-320. Considering the estimated time to bring launch groups to operational status and making allowance for undetected launchers now under construction, our new estimate for mid-1966 is:

Soft Launchers .....	146 <sup>3</sup>
Hard (3 silo) .....	78
Single Silo .....	126-178
TOTAL (Rounded) .....	350-400 <sup>1</sup>

The number of hardened ICBM launchers will increase from the present figure of 78 to 200-250 in mid-1966. The force will become more dispersed, with 150-200 separate hardened sites in mid-1966 in contrast with the present 26.

<sup>1</sup> These totals do not include R&D launchers at Tyuratam. There are now about 25 completed R&D launchers and we believe this number will increase to approximately 45 by mid-1966. We judge these launchers are not normally available for operational use, but varying numbers of them could be prepared to fire ICBMs at the US depending on the amount of advance notice.

<sup>2</sup> The Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, USAF, continues to hold to his footnote estimate in NIE 11-8-64, but considers the mid-1965 figure will be at the low side of his forecast spread of 275-325 (including Tyuratam launchers and a small allowance for unlocated second-generation operational launchers). The mid-1966 figure will somewhat exceed the high side of his forecast spread of 325-425 operational launchers in the field and at Tyuratam.

<sup>3</sup> This number does not include the SS-large, which we estimated in NIE 11-8-64 at 0-5 for mid-1966. Because this missile has not yet been tested, we no longer believe it could become operational by that date.

4. We cannot yet determine what missiles are intended for the new silos. The Soviets have tested two third generation ICBM systems, the SS-9 and the SS-10. We believe that the SS-9 which has followed a normal test program will be deployed in at least some of the silos. The SS-10 was test fired eight times between April and October 1964 but, for reasons we cannot explain, there have been no test firings since. It too may be deployed in some of the silos.

5. Finally, there is evidence pointing to the development of other missiles, including one which is probably small, at the test range. Thus, it is possible that some of the silos are intended for a new ICBM, which has not been identified in test firings.<sup>4</sup> If so, the deployment of the launchers so far in advance of the flight tests of the missile would represent a departure from previous Soviet practice. Such an innovation would imply confidence that no major changes in the weapon system will be required; it could stem from a desire to reach a planned ICBM force level more quickly than would otherwise be possible. An intensive and successful test program would be necessary for this missile to become available for extensive deployment as early as mid-1966. Thus it is possible that many of the new silos listed as operational in mid-1966 will at that time lack missiles.

6. It is not now clear how far the Soviets will push the current deployment program or whether it will be succeeded by follow-on programs. Though by mid-1967 the Soviets almost certainly will have more than the 330-395 operational launchers estimated in NIE 11-8-64, it is yet too early to revise our estimate that the Soviets will achieve a force of 400-700 ICBM launchers over the next five years. We expect, however, that evidence collected before the publication of NIE 11-8-65 this far will help to clarify Soviet goals.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> We are unable to determine whether this missile would employ solid or liquid propellants; we believe that storable liquids are likely.

<sup>5</sup> The Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, USAF, sees no basis in current evidence for change to his footnote in NIE 11-8-64, which projected 600-900 operational ICBM launchers by mid-1970.

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