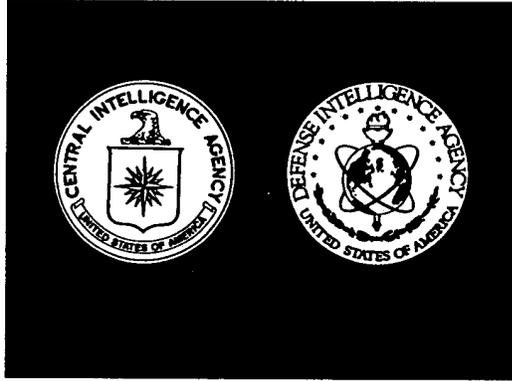


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*Possible Soviet Employment of Strategic Forces*

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Possible Soviet Employment of Strategic Forces

Introduction

This paper assesses the strategic military requirements that underlie current programs to upgrade the Soviet forces for intercontinental attack. Its framework is shaped by such questions as "Why do the Soviets want more strategic force throw weight and weapons?" "How would the Soviets employ their strategic forces?" "How do the Soviet military leaders justify extensive force improvements to the political leadership?"

This paper reaches the following principal conclusions:

1. *Soviet nuclear strategic doctrine:*
  - stresses the requirement for a strategic nuclear force which is capable of executing a massive preemptive strike based upon strategic warning.
  - recognizes the possibility that a preemptive strike may be denied the USSR; therefore stipulates the requirement for a strategic force posture which provides the capability to survive an attack and to launch a retaliatory strike that inflicts unacceptable destruction on enemy military and economic targets.

2. Current Soviet programs to modernize their ICBM forces and to enlarge their SLBM forces will significantly improve the ability of these forces to meet the military requirements of overall target coverage, coverage of hard targets, and survivability. These requirements are among the factors that explain current Soviet force improvements.

3. Soviet force posture and improvement decisions are the product of numerous factors in addition to strategic military requirements. They include the leadership's concern for the political image of stra-

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*tegic power, the imperatives of technological progress and competition, and the interplay of internal bureaucratic interests.*

4. *The Soviets probably believe that their current force improvements assure them at minimum an overall strategic position equal to that of the United States, enhance the prospect of attaining a margin of superiority in terms of political image and warfighting potential, and put them in a strong negotiating position vis-a-vis the US.*

The paper is organized in the following manner:

- Section I      Soviet Strategic Nuclear Doctrine
- Section II     Soviet Targeting Philosophy
- Section III    Possible Target Sets
- Section IV     Current and Projected Soviet Capabilities
- Section V      How Much Is Enough?

It was produced jointly by the Central Intelligence Agency and the Defense Intelligence Agency, 15 May 1974.

I. Soviet Strategic Nuclear Doctrine

Soviet military writers and political spokesmen have discussed three principal employment options for their strategic nuclear forces: preemption, launch-on-warning, and retaliation. Soviet discussions of strategic employment policy have been cast in general terms and have focused predominately upon massive use of strategic weapons against a wide range of US military, political and economic targets. Soviet military writings have indicated Soviet awareness of limited strategic employment concepts but have not yet suggested that such employment is being planned for intercontinental attack.

There is good evidence that the Soviets do not consider a bolt-from-the-blue first strike--that is, a strike without a period of rising tensions in which forces could be brought to alert--to be a workable strategy. The Soviet political leadership, while endorsing preemption, has long stressed that the Soviet Union would not initiate a surprise nuclear war, and at SALT Soviet spokesmen have asserted that the USSR does not have a first-strike capability. The Soviets, moreover, do not have an offensive and defensive posture that would make a first-strike damage limiting strategy feasible today. At the same time, the Soviets evidently do not anticipate a sudden first strike by the US. Their propaganda continues to cite the threat of a US surprise attack, but the observed day-to-day readiness posture of their strategic forces indicates that the Soviets do not, in fact, expect such an attack.

Soviet military writings have emphasized the desirability of strategic preemption if unambiguous strategic warning is available. Their descriptions of Western initiation of nuclear war are often followed by statements calling for the "forestalling" and "frustrating" of such an attack--beating the other side to the draw. Preemption offers the most effective way to use Soviet strategic forces for the traditional military objective of destroying the enemy's means of waging war. Preemption is therefore believed to be one of the strategic options that govern Soviet force posture decisions.

[ ]

Given the immense consequences involved, however, the political leadership would need to be confident that the US was about to attack before ordering a preemptive strike. It is not known what kind of evidence the Kremlin leadership would think solid enough to warrant a preemptive strike. In view of the US retaliatory capabilities it is difficult to envision circumstances under which the Soviet political leaders would feel so sure of US motives and intentions that they would initiate general nuclear war.

Another strategic option that the Soviets apparently have considered is the concept of launch-on-warning; that is, launching an all-out attack when there is clear evidence that an enemy attack has already begun. It is difficult to judge how seriously this option is considered at the top decisionmaking level. As a concept with which to confront the US, it may be seen to have a certain psychological value in reinforcing deterrence. As a genuine policy, it would present immense problems of decisionmaking, command, and control. Additionally, there are major technical difficulties that presently appear to preclude Soviet adoption of a launch-on-warning policy. However, these problems are not necessarily insurmountable.

All the evidence on military decisionmaking in the Kremlin points to the preeminence of the civilian leadership and its firm control over nuclear weaponry. It would be out of character for the Soviet political leadership to delegate the authority to launch a nuclear attack or to accept the unpredictable risks of accidental or unauthorized launch inherent in a launch-on-warning policy.

Retaliation--delivering an "answering blow"--is the oldest declared Soviet employment option and the one most frequently enunciated by the top party and government officials. The Soviet strategic buildup over the past decade has made retaliation a thoroughly credible option. The assumptions underlying the leadership's view of retaliation, as reflected in the Soviet position at SALT, are that the US and

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USSR possess more than enough nuclear weapons to bring about a worldwide catastrophe, that the side attacked first would retain a retaliatory force capable of annihilating the attacker's homeland, and that a war between the US and USSR would be disastrous for both. This broad political view of nuclear war coexists, however, with a strongly stated military view that, however nuclear war began, the Soviet Union would somehow survive it and its enemies would be defeated. Retaliation is therefore believed to be the second of the strategic options governing Soviet force posture decisions.

Whatever flexibilities the Soviets may be building into their strategic attack forces, there is no indication in available doctrine that they accept the feasibility of limited strategic nuclear warfare. On two occasions Soviet officers writing in [ ] [ ] military publications have noted the theoretical possibility of employing selective strikes against targets of secondary military importance. Their comments in this regard appear purely speculative, demonstrating Soviet awareness of the limited strategic use concept without indicating a readiness to adopt this strategy. In their writings and statements on the subject, the Soviets have generally rejected the possibility that either the US or the USSR would be able to exercise restraint once nuclear weapons had been employed against its homeland. Despite these disclaimers, the Soviet strategic arsenal could support a strategy of controlled strategic attack, and there is evidence that the Soviets are incorporating limited nuclear employment concepts into their military doctrine for a Central European war. This process of doctrinal adaptation will probably continue and perhaps eventually spill over to Soviet planning for intercontinental attack. We believe, however, that this arena is not likely to see Soviet adoption of limited use concepts during the Seventies.

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## II. Soviet Targeting Philosophy

Evidence on Soviet targeting indicates that both counterforce and countervalue targets are incorporated in their planning. This would evidently be the case regardless of whether the circumstances of Soviet force employment were those of preemption or retaliation. The primary mission of Soviet strategic attack forces is destruction of the enemy's warmaking capability, and this is interpreted in Soviet military writing to cover a very broad range of targets.

The Soviets have consistently identified the basic targets of their strategic attack forces as missile launch sites, nuclear weapons production and storage facilities, other military installations, military-industrial targets, political-administrative centers, and the enemy's systems for controlling and supporting strategic forces. Explicit references to the destruction of enemy population, as such, are omitted from Soviet listings of strategic targets with very rare exceptions. Attacks upon US military industry, as well as political and administrative centers, however, would involve the direct targeting of major American cities and result in massive civilian casualties.

Specific target responsibilities for the several elements of the Soviet strategic nuclear forces--the Strategic Rocket Forces (SRF), the ballistic missile submarine element of the Navy, and Long Range Aviation (LRA)--cannot be fully delimited on the basis of Soviet military writings because the requisite specificity is not provided, and changes and accommodations apparently continue to be made. Moreover, the relative importance of each of these three elements changes over time. The SRF and the Navy presently constitute the most important strategic forces; the LRA's intercontinental attack responsibilities have been diminished.

In general, open Soviet military literature attributes to the SRF practically the full range of targets in a general nuclear war. A typical example

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of such a citation is that the SRF is assigned the role of destroying the enemy's nuclear attack capability and major groupings of his forces, destruction of military-industrial targets, and disruption of governmental and military control, logistic operations and transportation. Although the specifics of particular SRF target citations vary, this service is almost always cited as responsible for attacking the potential enemy's strategic nuclear forces. On a few occasions the SRF has also been said to be responsible for the destruction of the enemy's naval groupings and bases. [ ]

[ ] in both general nuclear war and in a NATO-Warsaw Pact nuclear confrontation, the SRF's responsibilities would include targets in the theaters of military operations, particularly airfields.

Open Soviet military writings have been comparatively less specific concerning the target responsibilities of the Soviet ballistic missile submarine force. Soviet naval writings have long indicated that naval bases, naval-related industrial facilities, and command and control facilities are major naval targets. Recent citations are usually cast in such general terms as "important military objectives in the interior" of the enemy's territory. Information from [ ] indicates that in the late Sixties naval strategic forces were "assigned" responsibility for destroying the enemy's military economic capability. Such SLBM target references suggest some overlap with SRF targets. Clearly both SRF and naval strategic offensive missiles are capable of destroying targets such as enemy military bases, political and administrative centers, military-industrial targets, and national communications and transportation networks.

Soviet military men have infrequently considered withholding some strategic forces during the initial intercontinental exchange. When the concept has been discussed it usually has been in terms of unintentional withholding, e.g., some strategic nuclear forces are not employed in the initial, massive salvo because they were not in firing positions at the time.

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Apparently upon attaining their station they would be used immediately. Suggestions of intentional withholding, however, have occurred. In the late Sixties, a high-level military leader noted that a single strike may not achieve all its objectives, thus necessitating reassignment of tasks and targets and repeated launchings of weapons. The repeated strikes would be both individual and group strikes and would be fired against new strategic objectives and partially destroyed targets.

When intentional withholding has been discussed, the context suggests its purpose is for military effect rather than for political effect of intrawar deterrence and diplomacy. The major focus continues to be a massive, initial salvo at the intercontinental level.

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III. Possible Target Sets

There is no direct evidence indicating precise targets for Soviet intercontinental weapons. Development of a Soviet targeting plan for intercontinental weapons is based on what is known about possible Soviet plans for employment of nuclear weapons at the tactical level and from general Soviet statements on the use of strategic forces.

The potential targets for Soviet strategic nuclear weapons can be broken down into four geographical categories--the US, Western Europe, China, and US military bases overseas. On a worldwide basis, there are more than 1,700 fixed military targets that probably are of highest strategic importance and should be targeted by the most effective available Soviet delivery systems. In addition, urban-industrial areas are presumed to be targeted, though we have no knowledge about what criteria the Soviets use in their targeting plan for such areas.

Although the present structure of Soviet forces is an outgrowth of many doctrinal, technological, budgetary, and bureaucratic influences and compromises, we presume that their justification rested in part on the view of the target system presented by the military planners to the political leaders. The various decisions made over the years about how best to deal with these targets have resulted in some blurring of the distinction between what we in the US call intercontinental delivery systems--ICBMs, SLBMs, and heavy bombers--and what we call peripheral attack systems--such as medium- and intermediate-range missiles and bombers. In the past four years, the Soviets have allowed their aging MRBM/IRBM force and their medium bomber force to shrink somewhat in size, and have developed and tested the capability to employ certain of their ICBMs at ranges appropriate to peripheral attack.

There are indications that the Soviets plan to employ some 370 SS-11 missiles against peripheral targets. They probably will target some of the new ICBM systems in a similar fashion. Like the SS-11,

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the SS-X-19 has been test-fired to short range. In time the ICBM force may even assume a greater role in peripheral attack because the aging SS-4 MRBM force is more vulnerable and much less effective than the new systems. There is tenuous evidence that a new MRBM may be in the early stages of development, but it probably could not be deployed in large numbers until the early Eighties.

For these reasons, it seems certain that a portion of the total Soviet requirement for ICBMs and SLBMs-- now and in the future--is for striking some of the European and Asian targets.

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Western Europe

The Soviets have an extensive and varied force capable of attacking Western Europe. They could use strategic systems, either intercontinental-range or medium-range missiles and aircraft, and in some cases tactical nuclear delivery systems as well. In the late Sixties the Soviets began construction of 180 SS-11 silos whose sector of fire includes Western Europe. At about the same time they conducted short-range flight tests of the SS-11. During this time they also were deactivating some of their SS-4 and SS-5 sites. At the present time there are 496 SS-4s and 77 SS-5s targeted toward Western Europe.   
at short ranges with a lofted trajectory, the SS-11

For the purpose of this paper, an attempt is made to identify some of those high-priority targets in Western Europe that the Soviets may judge require ICBMs or SLBMs because of special operational considerations--such as time-urgent targets and hardened facilities which an accurate ICBM would have an enhanced probability of destroying.



There are many other targets--military installations as well as urban-industrial areas in Western Europe--which could be targeted with ICBMs. Since these are not time-sensitive or hardened installations, the Soviets could assign them to MRBMs or medium bombers.

China

China, like Western Europe, can be attacked from the USSR with a wide variety of nuclear weapons. How the Soviets structure their nuclear targeting plan against China with tactical nuclear systems deployed along the Sino-Soviet border, medium bombers, ICBMs, and SLBMs is not known. If the same criteria that were applied to Western Europe are used, there are some 75 to 100 targets in China which the Soviets may assign to ICBMs or SLBMs. These include about 55 CSS-1 and CSS-2 missile sites and about 20 airfields. In this connection, it should be noted that Soviet MRBM/IRBM units in the Far East were deactivated a few years ago, and their targets presumably taken over by ICBMs.

One feature of a target base in China that distinguishes it from those for the US and Western Europe is the expanding Chinese strategic missile threat. In addition to the two ballistic missile systems now deployed, China has two more under development. Although deployment continues at a slow pace, Chinese strategic missile deployment could reach some 150 units by about 1980. From a Soviet planner's view-

point, the bulk, if not all, of this force would be capable of striking the USSR. Thus, Soviet strategic weapons requirements for China will continue to grow as new missile units become operational and the command and control, logistics, and industrial base to support them is developed. Soviet targeting of Chinese missiles would probably be difficult, however, because the Chinese deploy some systems in a semimobile mode and because even at fixed sites missiles may be stored in caves located some distance from a launch site.

Most of the major industrial targets in China are concentrated in a few areas. Thus, a Soviet targeting plan to attack the industrial base of China would not require a large number of nuclear weapons. To a large extent, Soviet targeting of industrial areas of China probably could be allocated to medium-range bombers or SLBMs on older submarines.

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IV. Current and Projected Soviet Capabilities

The development and deployment of the present Soviet force provide what may be described as rough strategic equality with the US. There are, however, a number of areas in which the intercontinental attack force might be considered as falling short of Soviet objectives. These shortcomings of the present force generated--at least in part--the design, development, and the ultimate deployment of the new systems now being tested.

Analysis of the capabilities of Soviet intercontinental attack forces in this section includes:

- Comparison of present and future US and Soviet forces by static measures of strategic power
- Assessment of the possible effectiveness of the Soviet force--at present and in 1980--in the preemptive and retaliatory roles.

For purposes of this paper, we have used a "best" projection of Soviet forces in 1980 [ ]

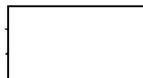
[ ] The tables on pages 15-16 show the Soviet intercontinental attack systems and their operational deployment levels for 1974 and 1980.

The projection takes into account recent indications--including some which are tenuous--concerning future Soviet ICBM and SLBM deployment. It assumes extension of the quantitative limits of the Interim Agreement to 1980, but no additional limitations on the quantitative or qualitative aspects of Soviet force programing. The projection includes extensive modernization of the ICBM force and expansion of the SSBN fleet to 62 submarines and nearly 940 SLBMs. It postulates rates of deployment for new systems that are comparable to past rates of deployment. The pace and extent of deployment are based on the assumption that vigorous strategic competition



On-Line Soviet Intercontinental  
Attack Forces, Mid-1974

<u>Type</u>	<u>Number of delivery vehicles</u>
<u>ICBMs</u>	
SS-7	156
SS-8	19
SS-9 Mod 1	48
Mod 2	222
Mod 4	12
SS-11 Mod 1	670
Mod 3	210
SS-13	60
<u>SLBMs</u>	
SS-N-5	24
SS-N-6 Mod 1	384
SS-N-6 Mod 2	32
SS-N-8 Mod 1 (G)	6
(H)	6
(D)	72
<u>LRA aircraft</u>	
Bear (ASM-carriers)	70
(bombers)	35
Bison	35



On-Line Soviet Intercontinental  
Attack Forces, Mid-1980

<u>Type</u>	<u>Number of delivery vehicles</u>
<u>ICBMs</u>	
SS-9 Mod 2	24
SS-11 Mod 3	210
SS-X-16 Mod B	60
SS-X-17 Mod A	200
SS-X-18 Mod 2	134
Mod C	84
SS-X-19 Mod 1	280
Mod B	160
Mobile Mod A	60
<u>SLBMs</u>	
SS-N-6 Mod 2	208
Mod C	208
SS-N-8 Mod 1 (G)	6
(D)	168
Mod B	54
New SLBM (D)	12
(Mod D)	108
<u>LRA aircraft</u>	
Bear (ASM-carriers)	70
(bombers)	25
Bison	20
Backfire	*

\* It is estimated that some 250 Backfire aircraft will be deployed by the end of 1980. About 75 of these could be assigned to Soviet Naval Aviation. Of the 175 that probably will be allocated to Long Range Aviation some could be--and in DIA's view probably will be--assigned the mission of intercontinental attack.

between the US and USSR will continue and that the overall level of effort will be on the order of that which the Soviets devoted to intercontinental forces in the mid- and late Sixties.

The US Programed Force is used for these comparisons. It is derived from the force projections of the US Department of Defense Five-Year Defense Program as of January 1974.

Static Measures

Comparison of existing US and Soviet forces--using static measures of strategic power--shows that the Soviets have an advantage in some areas while the US leads in others. The chart on the next page illustrates the relative strengths of each in terms of total delivery vehicles, on-line missile RVs, throw weight, and equivalent megatons for 1974 and 1980. By 1980 the Soviets would increase their lead in numbers of delivery vehicles and in missile throw weight, and almost equal the US in numbers of missile RVs. The US, however, would retain a much larger bomber force.

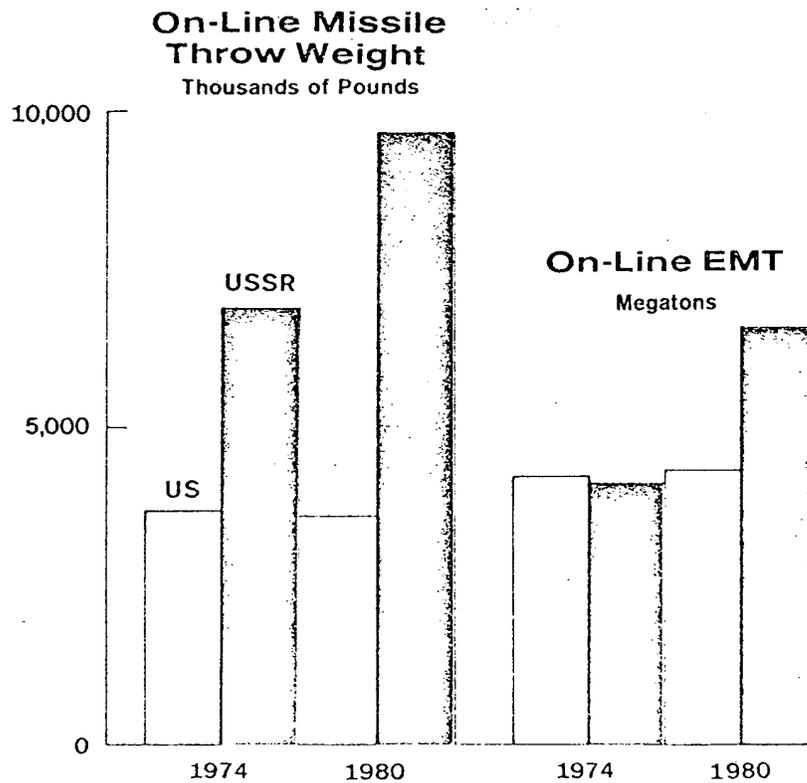
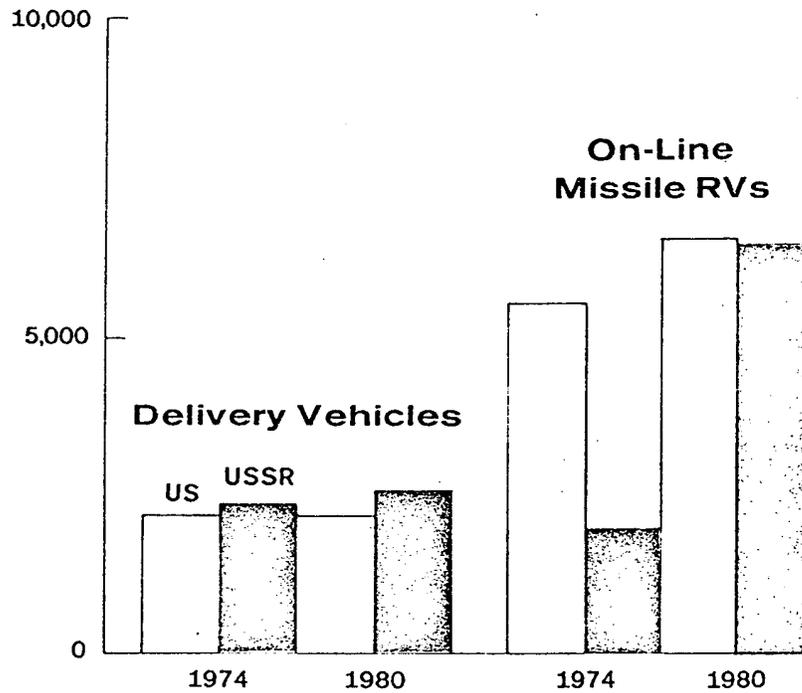
Given the lead the Soviets have achieved in a number of these static measures of strategic power, they may attach high political significance to these measures. If so, they probably would attempt to equal or surpass the US in those areas where they are now behind. In addition, they may see their advantages as compensating for certain US advantages--such as the size and capabilities of the US bomber force, the capabilities of the US SSBN fleet, and the level of US technology in general.

These static measures of strategic power, however, fall far short of presenting a full assessment of the capabilities of the weapon systems--individually or collectively--and would not give a Soviet military planner a full evaluation of their effectiveness in the preemptive and retaliatory roles.

Force Employment and Effectiveness

Estimates of how the Soviets plan to employ their

## Static Measures: US-USSR



[redacted]

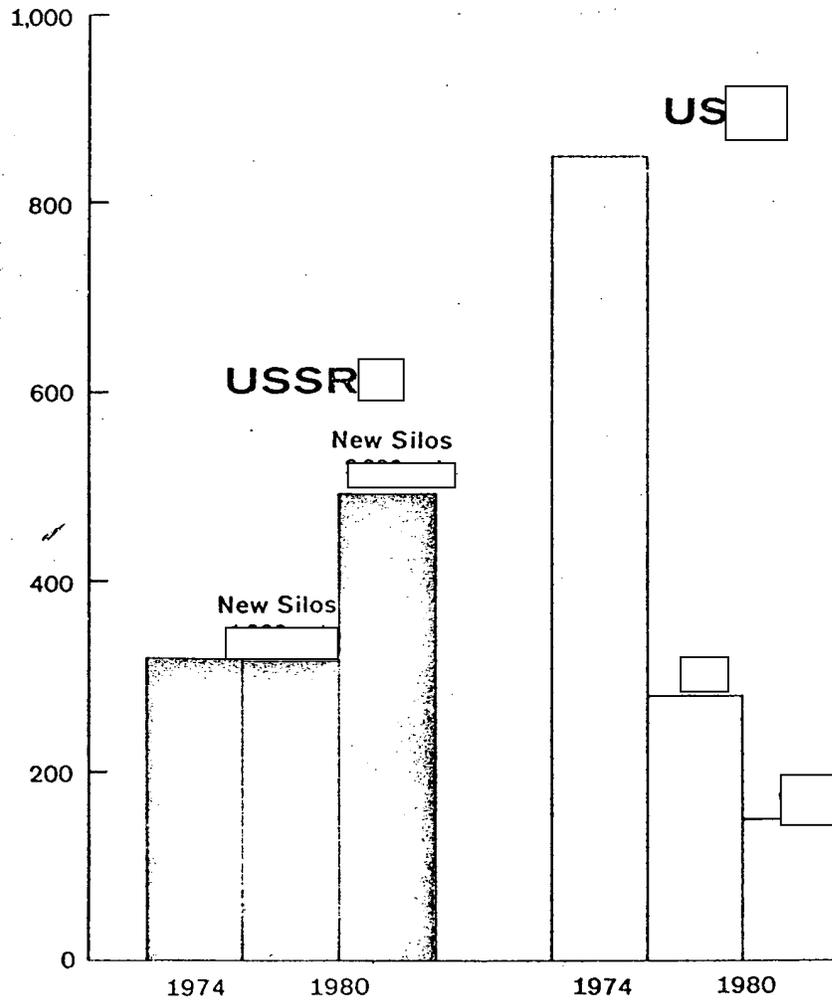
intercontinental attack forces are tenuous because we lack firm evidence about many variables which must be considered in detailed targeting plans. Based on what is declared Soviet nuclear doctrine, general Soviet plans about targeting, the potential target sets, and the characteristics of their weapons, a reasonable--but hypothetical--employment scheme can be constructed for Soviet intercontinental attack forces.

The table on page 22 outlines a postulated Soviet allocation plan for their present force of intercontinental weapons. At the present time the Soviet SS-9 system is the only Soviet intercontinental delivery system with a significant capability to attack US ICBM silos, and it could destroy no more than about 200 ICBM silos in a preemptive strike. Direct comparison of the total number of military targets--excluding the US ICBM force--and the number of Soviet weapons indicates that they have a sufficient number of weapons to destroy some 90 percent of the US military target base, and still have a residual of some 400 missile RVs and all bomber weapons for use against urban-industrial targets and for withholding. This case assumes that 140 on-line SS-11 missiles are directed against targets in Western Europe and 190 are assigned targets in China. The chart on page 20 illustrates the Soviet ICBM threat to US ICBMs.

If Soviet weapons requirements are based at all on desired minimum force capabilities for retaliation after absorbing a first strike from the US, they may consider deployment of the new systems and the hardening program for their ICBM silos necessary force improvements. The chart on page 20 illustrates a possible Soviet view of the threat posed by the US Programed Force. Calculations--from a conservative Soviet planner's viewpoint--show that at the present time some 300 to 400 ICBMs would survive a strike [redacted]

[redacted]

### ICBM Survivability (a)



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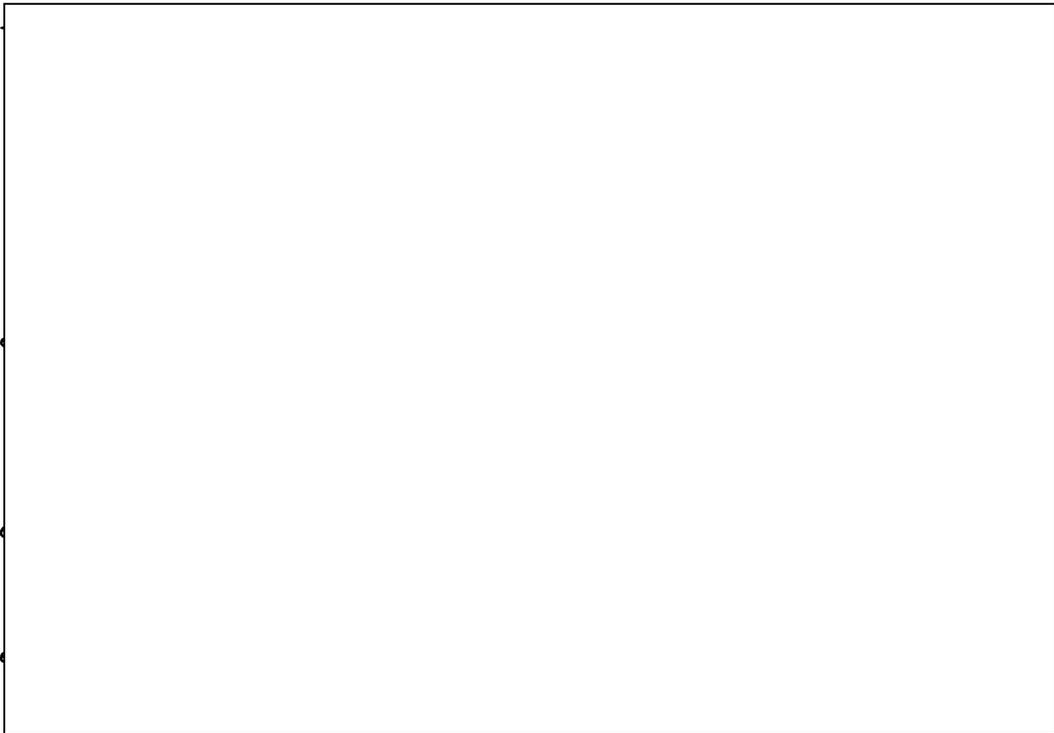


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*Notes to Chart*

- a. *The attacker is assumed to allocate a maximum of two RVs of highest available SSPK to each silo.*



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Postulated Targeting of Present  
Soviet Intercontinental Attack Weapons

<u>System</u>	<u>On-line weapons</u>	<u>Probable target areas</u>	<u>Potential targets</u>
SS-7, SS-8, SS-11, SS-13	795	US	Military targets, urban/industrial areas
SS-9	270	US	ICBM silos, hardened command and control fa- cilities
SS-11	190	China and pos- sibly US bases in the Far East	Soft missile sites, air- fields, other military targets
SS-11	140*	Western Europe	MRBM silos, airfields, naval bases, urban/in- dustrial areas
SS-N-6, SS-N-8	502	US and US bases overseas	Naval facilities, air- fields, defensive sys- tems, urban/industrial areas
Bear, Bison	140	US	Urban/industrial areas, ICBM silos

\* Forty launchers in this category are now undergoing conversion.

In this case target coverage would be reduced significantly. In addition to the surviving 300 to 400 ICBMs, the retaliatory force would consist of some 400 SLBMs, assuming the Soviets surge their SSBN fleet before the US attack and that it is highly survivable. Under these conditions the Soviets could allocate all of their surviving intercontinental weapons against the US and destroy some 90 percent of the military targets--excluding ICBMs--or about 40 percent of the urban industrial base. Only surviving medium-range ballistic missiles and bombers would be available for use against Western Europe and China.

The projected Soviet intercontinental force in 1980 would represent substantial improvements across a wide spectrum of military measures of effectiveness. In a preemptive strike against the US Programed force, the projected Soviet force would have a theoretical capability of destroying all but about 150 of the US Minuteman force, assuming the Soviets allocate two missile RVs to each US ICBM silo and the effects of fratricide can be overcome. In this case the accuracies of the new ICBMs are assumed to be [redacted] for the initial versions and [redacted] for later variants. Of the remaining 4,200 on-line weapons in the force, 750 could be used to destroy 90 percent of the other military targets in the US. The Soviets could assign the remaining weapons to Western Europe, China, urban-industrial areas in the US, or to be withheld.

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Survivability of US ICBM Force in 1980  
(SS-X-18 With One-RV Payload)

		<u>Number of Soviet RVs allocated against each silo</u>		<u>Number of residual Soviet RVs</u>
Case 1	[redacted]	2	[redacted]	3,500
		3		2,500
Case 2	[redacted]	2	[redacted]	3,500
		3		2,500

V. How Much Is Enough?

Soviet strategic force posture decisions are significantly influenced by traditional military values of war-waging, victory-seeking, and national survival after a conflict. These values place before the Soviet military planner the goal of strategic superiority in warfighting power. Both political and military decisionmakers alike probably appreciate that this is a moving target at best, especially when they consider the performance of the US over the decades of strategic arms competition.

In some respects, Soviet policy displays a determination to keep after this goal no matter what, because it is viewed as the correct way to avert a war that all would prefer not to take place, the premise being that deterrence would best be served by forces able to wage and win a nuclear war. In other respects, however, Soviet arms policy displays awareness that "ideal" strategic goals are not always attainable in practice, and that, in any case, the costs and risks of unrestrained arms competition should be limited where permitted by other Soviet objectives. Soviet participation in SALT and the desire for an ABM Treaty--for possibly different reasons among different Soviet decisionmakers--testifies to this awareness.

In addition, Soviet strategic force posture decisions, specifically those underlying the current modernization programs, reflect a variety of interests and impulses in addition to purely military or strategic rationale. Among these are:

- the concern of the military and political leadership for the overall image of Soviet strength
- the determination of political and military leaders to master important evolving military technologies, e.g., MIRVs, solid-fueled ICBMs, guidance improvement, ballistic missile defense, and antisubmarine warfare.

- the interplay of internal political and bureaucratic interests among those most vitally concerned with strategic weapons programs, a factor that may have much to do with the emergence of four, rather than a lesser number of new ICBMs.

From a military requirements standpoint the new weapons programs the Soviets now have under way are likely viewed as necessary steps to maintain pace with what they expect US intercontinental attack forces to be during the late Seventies and early Eighties, and to gain such superiority in strategic power and warfighting capabilities as may be possible. From this point of view, the principal criteria for judging the worth of new systems are the contributions they can make to Soviet capabilities for both preemptive attack and retaliation.

The new Soviet ICBM systems now under development represent substantial improvements over existing systems in both the preemptive and retaliatory roles. The introduction of MIRVs will increase the number of targetable weapons and give greater target coverage. The new systems will also provide the capability to attack larger numbers of hard targets. The new silo and launch control construction programs provide greater survivability. New guidance systems will allow more rapid retargeting.

Soviet capabilities to attack hard targets will improve as the new systems are deployed in large numbers. The potential hard-target capabilities of the Soviet force will depend on the accuracies of the new systems and how the Soviets treat the problem of fratricide. In any event, Soviet potential to attack the US Minuteman force will almost certainly improve over time as the new systems are deployed.

At the same time the Soviets might see a major hardening program for their ICBM silo systems as a necessary step to keep pace with the threat posed by the US Programed Force. An extensive program to upgrade their silo system hardness would theoretically provide in 1980 on the order of 300 to 500 ICBM survivors. Soviet deployment of MIRVs would significantly increase the number of surviving RVs.

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Thus, there is an evident relationship between the Soviet, particularly the Soviet military, view of the nature and conduct of strategic war; the targeting and survivability requirements that emanate therefrom; and the strategic force improvements currently under way in the Soviet Union. Strategic operational requirements, that is, target coverage and survivability, have played a major role in determining both the qualitative aspects of Soviet force improvements and the fact that they will be implemented on a large scale. But our analysis of Soviet strategic requirements does not yield a clear answer to the question of how much is enough in the way of strategic force improvement for Soviet decisionmakers. Moreover, as observed earlier, many factors additional to strategic requirements play a major role in Soviet decisions on how much is enough.

As to the perception of strategic power, the new ICBM systems will erode the long and well-publicized US lead in development and deployment of MIRV systems. Extensive deployment of the new MIRVed ICBMs--as illustrated in the projection of Soviet forces on page 16--would give the Soviets in about 1980 a lead in the number of missile RVs and would reduce the large advantage the US has in total weapons, including missile RVs and bomber weapons.

In the final analysis, the strategic position the Soviets do in fact achieve through force improvements and, to some extent, what they believe they can effectively strive for will be influenced by US behavior. It is unlikely that any specific strategic position vis-a-vis the United States, for example, parity, equality, or superiority, is the definitive military goal of current Soviet programs. When the Soviets make decisions on military posture, they think about these general goals in a conditional manner. They probably believe that their current force improvements will assure them rough equality in the important parameters defining the US-Soviet strategic balance, even if the US proves a vigorous strategic competitor. They also probably believe that their current programs could deliver some militarily and politically useful forms of advantage should the

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United States restrain itself unilaterally. They cannot be certain of the outcome but they appear to believe that their extensive force modernization programs are the right investment to assure attainment of minimum goals, to keep open the prospect that more ambitious goals can be achieved, and to put them in a strong negotiating position vis-a-vis the US.

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