

DECLASSIFIED

E.O. 12958, as amended, Sect 3.5

N.S.C./Soubers to Smith 09/06/02
By hr Date 02/08/07

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

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September 1, 1973

National Security Study Memorandum 186

TO: The Secretary of State
The Secretary of Defense
The Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT: National Net Assessment of the Comparative Costs
and Capabilities of U.S. and Soviet Military Establishments

The President has directed the preparation of a series of national net assessments under the guidelines approved in NSDM 224. The first national net assessment will evaluate the comparative costs to the U.S. and the USSR to produce, maintain, and operate comparable military forces. It will assess the status of the competition between the U.S. and USSR in maintaining such forces, trends in the competition, significant areas of comparative advantage or disadvantage to the U.S., and the nature of opportunities and problems implied.

The President has directed that the analyses and comparisons required by this net assessment be prepared by the Department of Defense, in consultation with the Net Assessment Group/NSC, and with the assistance of the Department of State and the Director of Central Intelligence.

The complete assessment will cover all aspects of U.S. and Soviet military forces, and will take place over a long period of time. The initial part of the net assessment will focus specifically on the ground forces on each side. Comparisons of interests will include the costs and performance of comparable military units. The analysis should highlight the major determining factors in costs and performance on each side, and any evident trends.

A first report on the net assessment of U.S. and Soviet ground forces should be forwarded to the Chairman, NSCIC, by 1 November 1973.



Henry A. Kissinger

cc: The Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff

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