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Re:Notes on the Purcell & Galbraith, "The the US Military Plan a Nuclear First trike for 1963?"

This article is based on a recently (FOIA) document accounting a high-level meeting in July of 1961.

This is th so-called Col. Burris memo (written by LBJ's military adviser to the VP). Johnson was not at this July meeting.

Where the US stood in 1961 based on NIE. The Soviets had only 4 ICBMs that appeared operationalWhereas the US nuke arsenal stood at 185 ICBMs and over 3,400 deliverable nuclear bombs. (Nothing on SLMBs unless they were counted as part of the strategic ICBM compnents.)

This NIE was where the projected nuclear arsenals of each country would be by 1963.

JFK's response to this July 1961 briefing. (This was the first he received on this crucial matter as a new president).

Notes second hand accounts by Schlesinger in his Robert Kennedy and His Times. JFK walked out of the meeting in disgust.

Notes via Bundy JFK's response to Dean Rusk "And we call opurselves the human race."

The general conclusion that emerges from all the various sources cited in the article. That is was incandesently clear that nuclear war was a non-starter. That it would destroy the Soviets as well as the United States. As a consequences JFK made it his primary policy from the very beginning of his administratiion to work toward a structure of relations with the Soviets that would militate against any nuclear exchange. (Se this clearly in "One Hell of a Gamble.")

Page 93 he mentions Schelling's report to JFK at Hyannis Port over the weekend of July 21, 1961. he recommended the nukes be used as a deterrent only in the face of any Soviet massive land invasion of Western Europe. And secondly, that the administration develop a system of control of these weapons so the president, and only the president, had the authority to release this serpent from its cage. The point here is that in July 1961 that was not the case. Later McNamara developed the PALs system. This was crucial at the time because of the 1961 Berlin crisis.

Notes that the bomb shelter program that was endorsed by the Kennedy White House was to protect US citizens against the fallout from a first strike on the SU (and everything Red) and not from a surprise attack by Moscow.

Pressures from the military. This from LeMay and Powers of SAC. They had developed a 1963 SIOP in which all US nukes would be

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launched in one paroxym of mass annihilation to reduce the SU and all her red satellites (and including Red China) to a smoking, radiating, ruin.

This was not a flexible response scenerio but a full flush attack. All the birds would be launched at the same time.

JFK's response was to limit the US strategic arsenal to 1000 missiles and to move ahead with PAls to gain control over the launching of these missiles. Neither of these moves was popular with LeMay/Powers of SAC. The concern was that the US superiority in nulcear weapons might prompt the military to use them in a first strike without the permission of the White House. To present JFK with a fait accompli is the right crisis in US/Soviet relations provided the occasion.

The October 1962 Cuban missile crisis was such an occasion.

They end with the speclation that Kennedy's concern about the military and nukes may be the undrlining reason for his determined effort to settle diffeences with the Russians by negotiated means rather than by threats and possible nuclear attack:

- @ Normalization of the Berlin crisis w/ acceptance of the Wall
- @ pledge of no-invasion of Cuba and removal of US nukes from Turkey
- @ ending of Mongoose(if Kennedy was actually successful in turning off the CIA. See the Church Committee docs. Especially Fitzgerald/ meeting in Paris on Nov. 22, 1963
- @American University speech
- @The withdrawal of US units from Vietnam/NSM #263

\* note fr. that it was official US policy -  
first-Strike