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October 20, 1986

NATIONAL SECURITY STUDY
DIRECTIVE NO. 4-86

ANTI-SATELLITE (ASAT) OPTIONS (U)

The recent action by the Congress to continue restrictions against the testing of the F-15 Miniature Homing Vehicle ASAT system against a target in space brings us to an important juncture in our effort to develop systems that deter the Soviet Union from attacking U.S. satellites. (U)

While our F-15 Miniature Homing Vehicle ASAT system is a good first step towards deterring the Soviet Union from using its ASAT capability, support for our program has been eroded due to its relatively high cost and limited capability. Fortunately, we have the technology to do much better with newer systems, given more time to develop other approaches. Either way, the U.S. ASAT program must be continued. (S)(u)

The Secretary of Defense should report to me by 12 December 1986 with recommendations regarding the continuation of the U.S. ASAT program. This report should examine alternate program options to the current U.S. ASAT program and recommend appropriate modifications to the existing program or a shift to an appropriate new program utilizing newer and more capable technologies. In developing these recommendations, the Department of Defense should consider options that could become operational in the early 1990's without the requirement for testing against objects in space during the next two years. (S)(u)

Ronald Reagan

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