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NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING

DATE, TIME January 28, 1983; 1:10 p.m.  
AND PLACE: Cabinet Room  
SUBJECT: Discussion on Defense Program (U)

PARTICIPANTS:

The President	<u>USUN</u>
The Vice President	Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick
<u>State</u>	<u>JCS</u>
William Schneider	General John Vessey
Adm. Jonathan Howe	Vice Admiral Thomas Bigley
<u>Treasury</u>	<u>ACDA</u>
Secretary Donald Regan	James George
<u>OSD</u>	<u>FEMA</u>
Secretary Caspar Weinberger	Louis Giuffrida
Fred Ikle	<u>White House</u>
Dov Zakheim	Edwin Meese III
<u>Commerce</u>	William P. Clark
Lionel Olmer	Robert C. McFarlane
<u>Energy</u>	Richard Darman
Troy Wade	<u>NSC</u>
<u>OMB</u>	General Richard T. Boverie
Alton Keel	Allan Myer
<u>CIA</u>	Robert Helm
Director William Casey	

MINUTES

William P. Clark: Judge Clark opened the meeting by pointing out that the key to a positive Congressional response to the FY 84

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BY LOJ

DATE 12/21/05

Defense Program will depend on our ability to link the budget submission to policy, strategy, and objectives, and that this was the purpose of this meeting.

Secretary Weinberger: The Secretary provided a thirty minute briefing of the defense program. This briefing included a perspective of US national security objectives, threats to those objectives, the US defense strategy, and the nuclear and general purpose force programs which support the strategy. The briefing concluded with a look at allied contributions to our collective defense posture, an examination of the FY 84 security assistance program, and a discussion of defense budget comparisons. Secretary Weinberger highlighted the following points:

- It is essential to regain our military strength if we are to be able to accomplish fundamental security objectives for the United States.
- With regard to our strategy, the nature of our geo-strategic position requires both forward deployments and a flexible force structure that can move rapidly to a range of global locations.
- The Administration inherited a vulnerable deterrent posture for our strategic nuclear forces. Unless all legs of the Triad are modernized, this vulnerability will reach dangerous proportions.
- With regard to conventional forces, our first priority is to make ready what we have. We have already made a 40 percent increase in the readiness of our units.
- The defense program will provide a 70 percent increase in capabilities for our ground forces, should they be required for commitment in Southwest Asia and a 40 percent increase in air force capability for the same contingency.
- When looking at the budget figures, it becomes apparent that the charge that the defense budget has been immune to cuts is absolutely wrong. The Five Year Defense Program as of today is already \$66 billion less than the program submitted in March of 1981.

The President: The President noted that on the news, during an examination of the defense program, one critic stated that the defense budget was unwise, and that the Administration did not have a strategy that it was attempting to execute.

Secretary Weinberger: Secretary Weinberger noted that the critic was a former Under Secretary of Defense and was in fact the architect of the defense problems that this Administration inherited.

Secretary Regan: The Secretary asked the Secretary of Defense whether any fallback defense budget positions were being developed so that, should the pressure to decrease the defense budget become a reality, there would be a rational measured program to cope with these budget reductions. Secretary Regan concluded by observing that it might be better to have a clear set of guidelines to cope with budget reductions rather than allowing Congress to indiscriminately reduce the budget by killing programs.

Secretary Weinberger: Secretary Weinberger responded by noting that there is no detailed plan by which to guide budget reductions. He stated that there is no fallback position at this time.

The President: The President stated that the defense budget is already in its fallback position in that the cuts that have been made have resulted in a reduced budget request.

Secretary Weinberger: The Secretary noted that he could cut a number of programs that were added to the defense budget by Congress despite the fact that the Defense Department did not want the additions. He cited the A-10 aircraft as a perfect example, and also noted that it could be possible to close additional US military installations, but you would not accrue any savings for two years.

The President: The President stated that we need to stand where we are with regard to the defense budget; to dig our heels in and stand fast and together. The President then observed that we have to do a better job in getting our message to the public. The President observed that it was simply not a fight with the Congress and that we need to gather the support of the American people. With regard to the Congress, the President said it was not necessary to have them see the light, only to make them feel the heat.

Secretary Weinberger: The Secretary observed that it would be a long struggle but that he will take it on, and he felt confident that the entire Administration would take it on.

Director Casey: Mr. Casey stated that it was important to get a vigorous public affairs effort underway. The Director felt that we needed 20 to 30 people--on a full-time basis--presenting our message and rationale to the American people.

The President: The President noted that the Carter budget of January 1981 was clearly underpriced; meaning that the programs in the budget could not be purchased for the dollars requested. The President felt it would be a good idea to cost-out the Carter budget in order to determine the true nature of that budget.

Ambassador Kirkpatrick: The Ambassador stated that public affairs could indeed be the essential factor and determinant in the defense budget battle. She suggested that the President deliver a strong defense speech which provided clear evidence that the defense program being proposed was both prudent and essential. The

Ambassador further pointed out that with a clear presentation of the vulnerabilities to American security and wellbeing, we could achieve our objective and secure the defense budget we need. however, it was essential that the President deliver this hard hitting and direct message to the American people.

The President: The President agreed to the recommendation that he provide such a presentation to the American people.

The meeting adjourned at 1:45 p.m.

Attachment

Briefing Slides

Prepared by  
Allan A. Myer

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MEMORANDUM

Unclassified with NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL  
SECRET attachment

January 29, 1983

ACTION

MEMORANDUM FOR WILLIAM P. CLARK

THROUGH: *ju* RICHARD T. BOVERIE *celly*

FROM: ALLAN A. MYER *oay*

SUBJECT: NSC Meeting Minutes, January 28, 1983 (U)

Minutes of the NSC Meeting on the Defense Program have been prepared.

Recommendation

That you approve the NSC Meeting Minutes at Tab I.

Approve *[Signature]* Disapprove \_\_\_\_\_

Attachment

Tab I NSC Meeting Minutes

Unclassified with  
SECRET attachment

*oay 1/12/83*

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