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NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING

DATE, TIME AND PLACE: February 25, 1983; 10:00 a.m.
Cabinet Room

SUBJECT: Briefing on Defense Guidance

PARTICIPANTS:

| | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| The President | <u>USUN</u> |
| The Vice President | Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick |
| <u>State</u> | <u>JCS</u> |
| Deputy Secretary Kenneth Damm | General Robert Barrow, USMC |
| <u>OSD</u> | <u>ACDA</u> |
| Secretary Caspar Weinberger | James George |
| Fred Ikle | <u>White House</u> |
| Dov Zakheim | |
| <u>OMB</u> | William P. Clark |
| Alton Keel | Robert C. McFarlane |
| Director David Stockman | Richard Darman |
| | Daniel Murphy |
| <u>CIA</u> | <u>NSC</u> |
| Director William Casey | General Richard T. Boverie |
| | Allan Myer |
| | Robert Helm |

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William P. Clark: Judge Clark opened the meeting by describing the importance of the Defense Guidance as the planning tool for the services as they prepare the FY85 defense budgets and then introduced Secretary Weinberger.

Secretary Weinberger: The Secretary provided a twenty minute briefing of the Defense Guidance. This briefing included a description of the purpose of the Defense Guidance and its role in the DOD PPBS budget cycle. He stated that the Soviet threat, policy guidance provided by the President, and top-line budget ceilings, formed the parameters for the Defense Guidance. He then highlighted comparisons of U.S./Soviet procurement trends, pointing out that if the Defense Guidance was not fully funded, the asymmetries between U.S. and Soviet forces would increase.

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The President: The President said that it was important to make this force comparison known to the public. He suggested that a presentation of year-by-year comparative force strength growth would be very useful as a part of a public affairs effort to demonstrate the need for the defense program.

Secretary Weinberger: The Secretary continued with a description of the resource allocation priorities which were reflected in the Defense Guidance. These include the need to maximize the quality of U.S. forces and improve the industrial base. Steps necessary to realize this goal included modernization of strategic nuclear forces and general purpose force capabilities (readiness, sustainability, modernization, force structure growth).

The Secretary then described the Defense Guidance in terms of budget allocation for mission category. He noted that mission capabilities will increase 77% by FY88. The largest improvements will occur in mobility force and strategic capabilities. Specific strategic and conventional force improvements were highlighted. The briefing concluded with a discussion of how U.S. force capabilities to operate in Europe and Southwest Asia would improve by FY89 as a result of the Defense Guidance.

The Secretary emphasized that achieving the force posture described in the Defense Guidance required successful funding of the FY84 request.

General Barrow: The General offered the view of the JCS that the Defense Guidance was a good product which reflected the Services' desire to expose the U.S. to the least possible risk, given resource constraints. He noted that the various CINCs and Unified Commands had been given the opportunity to comment on the Defense Guidance throughout its preparation.

The President: The President thanked the Secretary and General Barrow for their views and expressed the opinion that the specific detailed nature of the Defense Guidance refutes the criticism that the Administration has no overall strategic plan.

General Barrow: The General emphasized that the Services felt that the improvements specified in the Defense Guidance were vital and that it represented a balanced and realistic program. If funded, it would provide us with better quality forces than the Soviets. He added that the quality of U.S. military manpower was a key factor underlying the plan.

The President: The President commented on the latest propaganda threat that he was aware of -- a film by anti-nuclear advocate Helen Caldicott, noting that it represents the type of criticism to which U.S. security planning is continually subjected to.

Judge Clark: The Judge asked Secretary Weinberger if there were any plans to reduce the number of aircraft carriers which had been cited in previous Defense Guidance documents. He asked whether there was any change in the goal of a 600-ship Navy.

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Secretary Weinberger: The Secretary indicated that there were no plans to do this and that the target for carrier battle groups remained at 15. Two carriers were funded last year although there were Congressmen who advocated cutting one. Such action would cost us 22 months in additional time to achieve two new carriers and an extra \$750 million. He indicated that differing accounts about the carrier force goal reflected the fact that older carriers would be taken from active service as they entered the ship life extension program.

Mr. Stockman: Mr. Stockman requested a briefing in the future which would describe how the DOD arrives at the force structure goals (seven divisions to Europe in seven weeks, etc.).

Secretary Weinberger: The Secretary said that such determinations are based on an assessment of Soviet threat capabilities and plausible war scenarios. These analyses result in a force requirement sufficient to block any aggression until reinforcements are available.

Ambassador Kirkpatrick: The Ambassador emphasized the importance of getting the real story about the national threat to Congress and the public. She repeated her belief that a major speech by the President on this subject was essential. She also suggested that a paid advertisement campaign, funded by the Republican National Committee, be considered. She said the key was to put the anti-defense lobby on the defensive.

The President: The President agreed and emphasized that a new approach was necessary. He said that it was important to go beyond just discussing numbers and talk about the threat to U.S. security goals. He said that we needed specific examples of how the threat to U.S. security was growing (for example, citing global choke-points) to better illustrate the problem.

Judge Clark: Judge Clark mentioned the effort to put together a public affairs strategy for the defense budget which is being headed by Mr. William Greener. He said that Mr. Greener had developed an extensive plan for presenting the rationale for the defense program which included special briefings and a speakers' program.

Secretary Weinberger: Secretary Weinberger agreed that the Greener effort would be an important addition to the goal of increasing Congressional and public support for the defense program.

Ambassador Kirkpatrick: The Ambassador indicated that she was discouraged about the inability to make people understand U.S. security goals. She mentioned that recently, at the United Nations, 24 of 26 speeches given on the recent Libyan crisis were supportive of Libya and critical of the United States.

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The President: The President said that all the media criticism of alleged U.S. sabre rattling is ridiculous and harmful. He wondered if people appreciated how many men in our armed forces had died unnecessarily in conflict because of previous underfunding of training and equipment modernization.

The meeting adjourned at 10:30 a.m.

Attachment

Briefing Slides

Prepared by
Robert W. Helm

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