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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

December 20, 1985

Danny,
Dear General Graham:

Thank you for your letter of November 4, regarding the requirements for SDI C³. We agree that the C³ aspects of non-nuclear strategic defense should be different than the C³ requirements for offensive nuclear forces, and that the consequences of erroneous enablement of a competent defensive system would be dwarfed by the consequences of a similar error with central nuclear forces.

Further, I think we agree on the essence of the core issue-- that a resolution of the battle-management/C³ issue lies in structuring the system performance requirements to the realities of the threat and in the use of high leverage, very competent boost-phase intercept. Our adversaries decry the proposed application of computers for the reasons you mention; yet the clear advantage of their use, coupled with the reduced consequences of accidental attack on a non-threatening missile, helps make their use so compelling for SDI. And, given the competent boost-phase defense, the discrimination-decoy issue becomes tractable. Such a system can be made to interface gracefully with human controllers (e.g., a "few" missile threats could conceivably be deferred to midcourse intercept, whereas a massive launch would be handled automatically once the defense system was enabled). Given a realistic definition of the problem, I'm sure the C³ contractors can solve it. Of course, we should always demand an excellent, imaginative and vigorous response from them.

Your thoughts on similarities between SDI C³ and naval command mine fields parallel my own and lead me to another potential similarity. Several of our alliances establish joint control over forces in self-defense situations. Might we not carry this a step further with SDI so that some of our allies can activate the defense system in parallel with us? Assuming the consequences of an inappropriate SDI activation are minimal, there may be some advantages to broadening the base of operational control to our allies.

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As you know, I'm leaving government at the end of the year. I want to thank you, General Richardson, and your dedicated staff for your support of this Administration. I know we share the President's vision for a future dynamic and secure America.

Very truly yours,



G. A. Keyworth
Science Adviser to the President

LTG Daniel O. Graham, USA (Ret)
High Frontier
1010 Vermont Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20005