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SYSTEM II

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

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NSC Meeting

November 18, 1982
2:00 p.m.
Cabinet Room

SUBJECT: M-X Basing Decision **N**

PARTICIPANTS:

The President

State
Secretary George P. Shultz
Admiral Jonathan Howe

JCS
General George W. Vessey, Jr.
Lt General Paul F. Gorman

OSD
Secretary Caspar W. Weinberger
Dep Sec Frank C. Carlucci

OSTP
Dr. George A. Keyworth

CIA
Mr. William J. Casey

White House
Mr. Edwin Meese III
Mr. James A. Baker III
Judge William P. Clark
Mr. Richard G. Darman
Mr. Robert C. McFarlane
Mr. Fred Fielding
Ms. Pam Turner

OMB
Dr. Alton Keel

E.O. 12958
As Amended
Sec. 1.4(c)

ACDA
Mr. Robert T. Grey

NSC
Mr. Thomas C. Reed
Col Horace L. Russell
Col Michael O. Wheeler

Minutes

Judge Clark began the meeting by stating the purpose was to discuss the M-X permanent basing mode and the possible deployment areas. He then introduced Thomas C. Reed, Special Assistant to the President, and noted that after Reed's overview Secretary Weinberger would provide some comments.

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By ML NARA, Date 12/21/05

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Mr. Reed opened with the comment that the problem to be solved was should the M-X be deployed and if so, how? He noted that we are retiring 1 Titan missile every 45 days and the Minuteman force will also start to wear out. He also noted that by 1986 only 5% of the Minuteman force would survive a Soviet ICBM attack. Reed then reviewed the expected kill probability of MMIII versus M-X and raised the question, should we continue the TRIAD or go to sea? He noted the cost of options ranged from no cost up to \$36B. He then expressed his understanding that closely spaced basing (CSB) would probably be supportable by Congress, but silo stuffing would not. He then ticked off the following options:

- Abandon the land-based leg of the TRIAD - no cost.
- Deploy 100 M-X in existing MM silos - \$17B.
- 100 M-X in CSB - \$26.4B.
- Add deception to CSB with 200 additional silos (would soak up entire SS-18 force). +\$5.8B
- Add Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD) with a small area to defend and treaty compliant. +\$8B
- Do BMD R&D and Long Lead Procurement. +\$3.5B
- Proceed back to M-X/Multiple Protective Shelters. -\$40B to \$45B

He then indicated the Secretary of Defense had provided a list of suitable basing locations if CSB was selected and that an environmental summary had been provided to the participants. Reed also indicated that any location would be legally defensible if challenged on environmental grounds.

Secretary Weinberger began by saying M-X basing was a most difficult decision given Soviet technology. He then noted that MPS was not suitable because the Soviets would require no new technology to defeat it. Weinberger noted at an expected cost of \$40B for MPS, the President was correct by deciding not to proceed with MPS. He then said the question is do we give up the TRIAD or do we keep ICBMS? Weinberger then stated that we have to keep the TRIAD because he does not feel the other two legs are so invulnerable that we can afford not to. Weinberger indicated that the Soviets must not lose the perception that our systems can survive a first strike. He noted that the situation was okay now, but our deterrence is weakening. He further noted that what is left is for the President to conclude in 15 minutes that we are under nuclear attack and then launch - very destabilizing. Weinberger then indicated that we must look at the future. He noted that in 1989 the submarines will have survivability and the B-1s can penetrate through the 1990s. He pointed out

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that Senator John Tower says silo stuffing will not be supported; we would not get support for only keeping MINUTEMAN; Congress doesn't like the idea of an airplane; deep underground basing can't be ready until the late nineties; and south sides of mesas are in the future. Weinberger then said, "I have no hesitancy to recommend CSB."

He then noted that fratricide would not allow a simultaneous attack because the incoming warheads would destroy each other and that close spacing and superhardness would stress the Soviet system. Weinberger indicated an M-X flyout window of about two hours should restore a substantial amount of deterrence at a baseline cost of \$26B. He then turned to the defended system employing SPARTAN and SPRINT as a possible addition after we see how the Soviets respond. He next talked about deceptive options--adding additional silos. He noted that two or three states are displaying interest in being selected. He then noted that Dr. Townes recommended against M-X/MPS because the Soviets could develop a counter within three years after deployment.

Weinberger then noted that Townes did have some doubt on the amount of silo hardness obtainable, but on balance he (Weinberger) still recommends CSB and keeping the 1986 initial operational capability.

General Vessey opened with the comment that he would perhaps repeat some of the previous arguments, but would indicate areas of JCS agreement and disagreement. He then made the points that security is dependent on both arms control and military strength; stability comes from deterrence, and deterrence comes from warfighting ability; strategic nuclear forces alone will not buy deterrence; JCS supported START with the understanding that M-X would be deployed; all JCS Chiefs support fielding the M-X, but do not agree on basing mode.

Vessey outlined the position of the Service Chiefs as follows: Army Chief of Staff and the Chief of Naval Operations worry about M-X survivability and command-and-control problems as well as the fact that fixed based systems cannot be made invulnerable. The two Chiefs recommend we base some M-X in MINUTEMAN silos but eventually move to the sea-based system, D-5. If the decision is made to go with M-X in CSB, then a BMD system should be included at the outset. The Air Force Chief of Staff recommends M-X in CSB. The Commandant of the Marine Corps worries about the uncertainty of M-X survival with or without BMD.

General Vessey then noted that NSDD-13 plans certain attacks--

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be fielded to complicate the Soviet attack. He further stated that CSB does add survivability, and recommended the M-X in CSB and R&D for BMD.

Secretary Shultz opened with the point that this M-X missile is an essential part of what we need if Geneva is to succeed. He then said, "I will support M-X/CSB." He added that if we don't maintain our strength--the Soviets' stock-in-trade--we will have problems as we urge our allies with respect to the INF. Shultz then indicated that he would not comment on technical difficulty.

Deputy Director Grey made the point that deployment in MM silos would be destabilizing, but M-X/CSB does not undercut START or existing agreements.

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Director Casey opened with the possible Soviet threats to dense pack and deceptive basing and referred to the NSC issue paper which treated the threat in more detail. He identified the 25 megaton weapon and soft landers as a potential threat if the Soviets expended considerable effort. He presented the timing of such a threat as uncertain, but added it could come as soon as the early 1990s.

He also indicated that the Soviets will have to do missile defense or deception, therefore, requiring an enormous increase by the Soviets. Casey also indicated that the Soviets might abrogate the ABM Treaty.

Mr. Keyworth opened with the statement that we need the Triad and need the CSB effectiveness which would make it most expensive for the Soviets. He then said the M-X/CSB should work very well and he thinks we should proceed.

Deputy Director Grey then recommended that BMD should be included as a growth option.

Mr. Meese asked whether we could save billions if M-X is not placed in capsules and whether or not using capsules is a SALT requirement.

Mr. Reed responded that only a billion could be saved; however, the capsules are needed for the hardness, and SALT adherence is not a factor. He then indicated that a nod toward deception could help pick up M-X/CSB supporters.

Mr. Reed then outlined environmental considerations as follows:

- Virtually certain that we will be sued on environmental grounds, regardless of M-X basing mode or site.

- Justice position, concurred in by all concerned counsel, is that Presidential (as opposed to agency) decisions are not subject to the requirements of National Environmental Policy Act.
- Nevertheless, to strengthen our legal position and minimize adverse publicity, we should pay careful attention to environmental considerations. Thus, Defense has prepared a Legislative Environmental Impact Statement, a summary of which is in our materials, and will prepare full administrative EIS after final decision.
- While environmental concerns (particularly concerning land withdrawal from the public) increase at the various sites as you go from (1) silo stuffing to (2) CSB/100 silos to (3) CSB/300 silos, the basic conclusion from the various environmental studies is that any combination of basing mode and site is environmentally defensible.
- However, there may be operational difficulties at the various sites in seeking deception via an increase in silos. Cap is prepared to discuss this point.

Mr. Baker made the point that we should not underestimate the difficulty on the Hill.

Secretary Weinberger indicated that the call was the President's on basing mode and area selection, if required.

General Vessey then told the President that his decision would be supported by the JCS, but the Chiefs would give personal views if asked.

The President expressed the need for the Triad, the need for the M-X missile, and his strong belief in deterrence as the correct policy. He then thanked the participants for their views.

The meeting adjourned at 2:58 p.m.

Postscript. On November 22, the President stated his decision to deploy 100 M-X missiles in an array of 100 closely spaced, superhardened silos at or near Francis E. Warren Air Force Base, Wyoming. He directed that the initial operational capability be achieved in 1986 with full operational capability by 1989. He also directed that the deployment be designed with the growth possibility of deceptive measures in mind, and with the recognition that in the future we may have to deploy a Ballistic Missile Defense System.