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November 13, 1957

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Discussion at the 344th Meeting
of the National Security Council,
Tuesday, November 12, 1957

Present at the 344th Council meeting were the President of the United States presiding; the Vice President of the United States; the Secretary of State; the Secretary of Defense; and the Director, Office of Defense Mobilization. Also present were the Secretary of the Treasury; the Attorney General; the Director, Bureau of the Budget; the Special Assistant to the President for Disarmament; the Chairman, Atomic Energy Commission; the Federal Civil Defense Administrator; the Director, International Cooperation Administration, the Acting Director, U.S. Information Agency; the Under Secretary of State; the Deputy Secretary of Defense; the Secretary of the Army; the Secretary of the Navy; the Secretary of the Air Force; the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff; the Chief of Staff, U.S. Army; the Chief of Naval Operations; the Chief of Staff, U.S. Air Force; Lt. General Verne J. McCaul for the Commandant, U.S. Marine Corps; the Deputy Director, Bureau of the Budget; the Chairman, Council of Economic Advisers; the Chairman, Interdepartmental Intelligence Conference; the Chairman, Interdepartmental Committee on Internal Security. The following members of the NSC Planning Board also attended the Meeting: Messrs. Gerard C. Smith, Department of State; Karl G. Harr, Jr., Department of Defense; Robert Finley, Office of Defense Mobilization; Fred C. Scribner, Treasury Department; William E. Foley, Department of Justice; Robert Matteson, Office of Mr. Harold E. Stassen; John L. McGruder, Atomic Energy Commission; Admiral Charles O. Triebel, Joint Chiefs of Staff; Robert Amory, Central Intelligence Agency; Ralph W. E. Reid, Bureau of the Budget; Elmer Staats, Operations Coordinating Board; Ralph E. Spear, Federal Civil Defense Administration. The following members of the Net Evaluation Subcommittee*also attended the meeting: General G. C. Thomas, USMC, Director; Brig. General W. W. Smith, USAF, Deputy Director; Colonel W. L. Kindred, USA, Chief of Staff; Dr. L.L. Montague, CIA; Dr. R. J. Smith, CIA; Colonel J. O. Beckwith, USAF; Captain A. W. Slayden, USN; Colonel C. L. Granger, USMC, Colonel S. D. Kelsey, USAF, Colonel J. D. Raney, USA; Captain W. R. Stevens, USN; and Captain David Whelchel, USN. Also attending the meeting were the Director of Central Intelligence; the Assistant to the President; the Deputy Assistant to the President; Special Assistants to the President Cutler and Harbom; the White House Staff Secretary; the Naval Aide to the President; the NSC Representative on Internal Security; the Executive Secretary, NSC; and the Deputy Executive Secretary, NSC.

*Staff

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FOLDER 344th Meeting of NSC
November 12, 1957

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There follows a summary of the discussion at the meeting and the main points taken.

1. REPORT BY THE NET EVALUATION SUBCOMMITTEE
(NSC Actions Nos. 1260, 1330, 1430, 1463, 1532, and 1641;
NSC 5605)

General Cutler opened the meeting by informing the Council that it was to hear a briefing of the annual report submitted by the Net Evaluation Subcommittee of the NSC, pursuant to the directive recommended by the Council and approved by the President on May 24, 1956 (NSC 5605). Under the terms of the aforementioned directive, the Subcommittee was established as part of a permanent procedure "to provide integrated evaluations of the net capabilities of the USSR, in the event of general war, to inflict direct injury upon the continental United States and to provide continual watch for changes which would significantly alter its net capabilities." General Cutler identified the members of the NSC Subcommittee as follows: General Twining, Chairman; the Director, Office of Defense Mobilization; the Chairman, Atomic Energy Commission; the Federal Civil Defense Administrator; the Director of Central Intelligence; and the Chairmen of the Council's Internal Security Committees. He also referred to the Subcommittee's Staff Director, appointed by the President, General Gerald C. Thomas, USMC (Ret.).

General Cutler then introduced the Chairman of the Subcommittee, General Twining, who in turn introduced General Thomas.

General Thomas summarized the Subcommittee's terms of reference as outlined in NSC 5605 noting that the report covered the period through mid-1960. He added that, although the USSR was not credited with an ICBM capability in this year's report, the Russians will indeed have a substantial ICBM capability in 1960, according to reliable reports recently received by the Subcommittee. General Thomas indicated that in its war-gaming for purposes of this year's report, the Subcommittee omitted overseas bases, confining itself, insofar as U.S. forces were concerned, to continental U.S. elements. He indicated that at the outset the Subcommittee Staff prepared auxiliary terms of reference and basic assumptions consistent with NSC 5605. These terms and assumptions facilitated the making of a realistic evaluation of U.S. and USSR capabilities and vulnerabilities. After outlining the Subcommittee's general approach to the problem, General Thomas mentioned briefly the several agencies which contributed to and otherwise participated in the preparation of this year's Net Evaluation Report.

General Thomas next introduced Brig. General W. W. Smith, USAF, the Deputy Director of the Subcommittee Staff. General Smith outlined in detail the basic assumptions on which this year's net evaluation exercise was based. These included the assumption that the USSR would

initiate war against the U.S. in mid-1960. Proceeding on that assumption, the Subcommittee had war-gamed the attack on the basis of its being perpetrated: (a) with no warning (strategic surprise), and (b) with full warning (full alert) and with U.S. forces on maximum sustainable alert.

General Smith thereafter outlined the auxiliary assumptions on which this year's evaluation was based. These included, but were not limited to, the following: USSR would have adequate bases from which to launch an attack; they would have adequate refueling capability; they would be willing to expend some of their aircraft by assigning them to one-way missions; their nuclear warheads would be set to detonate on impact if the carrying aircraft were shot down; some of their submarines would have guided missile capabilities; they would risk strategic surprise in order to outflank the DEW Line; they would not engage in large-scale clandestine attack, etc. Insofar as the U.S. is concerned, General Smith indicated that some of the auxiliary assumptions included the following: the status of U.S. forces as of the time of the attack would be the same as those actually in being on March 1, 1957; a substantial portion of SAC would be in constant alert status; etc. General Smith then indicated that four hypothetical Soviet attacks were planned by the Subcommittee: (a) attack based on Strategic Surprise and aimed only at military targets, (b) an attack based on Strategic Surprise and aimed at composite targets, (c) an attack based on Full Alert and aimed only at military targets, and (d) an attack based on Full Alert and aimed at composite targets.

General Smith then called upon Colonel S. D. Kelsey, USAF, a member of the Subcommittee Staff, who presented in detail the highlights of the USSR's attack on the continental U.S. He was followed by Captain W. R. Stevens, USN, a member of the Subcommittee Staff, who outlined in some detail the retaliatory attack made on the USSR by SAC. Colonel Kelsey then gave the results of the country's damage assessment insofar as the U.S. was concerned. He was followed by Captain Stevens who summarized the results of the damage inflicted on the USSR.

Dr. L. L. Montague, CIA, a member of the Subcommittee Staff, presented the effects of Soviet clandestine operations on the continental U.S. Dr. Montague was followed by Colonel J.D. Raney, USA, a member of the Subcommittee Staff, who outlined the military actions resulting from three alternative conditions of attack considered by the Subcommittee. Colonel Raney also described the damage done to the U.S. under each of these attacks. In essence, the conclusion was drawn that under any of the attack conditions described by Colonel Raney, the survival of the U.S. would hang in the balance.

General Thomas concluded the Staff presentation by noting that any evaluation of net capabilities at a time three years hence was necessarily speculative. As a consequence, the estimates made could be either

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high or low, but in any event were considered by the Subcommittee to be as realistic as any that could be made at this time. General Thomas noted that the Subcommittee report highlighted a number of deficiencies including: (a) lack of concrete information as to the size of the forces of both the USSR and the U.S. in mid-1960; (b) limitations on the kind and amount of operational data available concerning new weapons; (c) uncertainties as to the extent to which our air defense measures could be degraded by Soviet electronic countermeasures equipment; (d) the paucity of intelligence concerning Soviet guided missiles systems, etc.

General Thomas indicated that it was the conclusion of the Subcommittee that in the event of a Soviet attack on the U.S. in 1960, both the US and the USSR would be devastated; that by such an attack the USSR in 1960 could kill from 1/4 to 1/2 of the U.S. population and injure many many more in the process; and that the military and civilian leadership of the U.S. at the Seat of Government would be virtually wiped out.

Upon the completion of the Subcommittee's presentation, General Cutler mentioned that access to the Subcommittee's report was being strictly limited in accordance with the President's direction; that only two copies thereof would be made; the President's copy would be retained in the files of the NSC, and that a second copy would be designated for the NSC's Disaster File. He also mentioned that access to the report in any future instance would be decided in each case by the President. General Cutler then called for questions.

Admiral Strauss asked that one of the charts utilized by the Staff be re-exhibited, namely the chart dealing with Attack Conditions numbered VI and VIII (Full Alert vs. Strategic Surprise). Admiral Strauss observed that the chart seemed to indicate that the same number of weapons were placed on target and yet there was a large difference in the weight thereof under the respective attack conditions simulated. It was pointed out to Admiral Strauss that the 12% increase in the weight of the weapons detonated is attributable to the fact that in that particular instance (Full Alert) larger aircraft were mounted where the larger attack occurred, thus enabling the Russians to carry larger weapons.

The President referred to that portion of the presentation dealing with Full Alert and queried as to the nature of the USSR's calculations relative to our taking the offensive if we were to see tremendous mobilization occurring in the USSR. He wondered if the Russians would dare give the Free World such warning lest it be concerned that we would strike first upon seeing such tremendous mobilization. The President said that while the democracies don't start wars, the Russians might calculate that they would in such an eventuality.

General Thomas commented that it was his own belief that it was not realistic or reasonable to think in terms of starting war under conditions of full alert for the opponent.

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The President observed that from the presentation it seemed that we suffered more casualties when we were in a state of alert than when we were attacked with no warning. To this General Thomas responded that the distinguishing feature of an attack under conditions of full alert is that each of the adversaries can make a heavier attack under full alert than under conditions of surprise.

The President expressed his sincere thanks to the Subcommittee and its Staff for its presentation on the subject.

S. Everett Gleason

S. EVERETT GLEASON

After the regular meeting of the National Security Council, there was a meeting held in the President's office (See Attached for List of those attending this meeting). The purpose of this meeting was to discuss a proposed change in the Net Evaluation Directive as reflected in the following documents which are filed in the official minutes of the 344th meeting of the National Security Council.

- (1) Memorandum to the Executive Secretary, NSC, from the Chairman, Net Evaluation Subcommittee, subject, "The 1958 Net Evaluation", dated October 17, 1957;
- (2) Memorandum for the Secretaries of State and Defense from the Acting Executive Secretary, NSC, same subject, dated October 29, 1957;
- (3) Memorandum for General Cutler from J. Patrick Coyne, same subject, dated November 7, 1957;
- (4) Memorandum for General Twining from General Cutler, same subject, dated November 8, 1957;
- (5) Letter to General Twining from General Cutler, same subject, dated November 12, 1957, enclosing a MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD of the discussion at the Special Meeting held on November 12, 1957;
- (6) Memorandum for the Chairman, Net Evaluation Subcommittee, subject, "The Report of the Net Evaluation Subcommittee", from the Executive Secretary, NSC, dated November 12, 1957.

SPECIAL MEMORANDUM
(11/12/57)

James S. Lay, Jr.
JAMES S. LAY, JR.

The National Security Council:

Noted and discussed the annual report for 1957 of the Net Evaluation Subcommittee, pursuant to paragraph 4 of NSC 5605, as presented orally by the Director and other members of the Subcommittee Staff.

NOTE: Immediately following this NSC meeting, the President met with the statutory Council Members and the Members and Director of the Staff of the Net Evaluation Subcommittee to discuss the types of attack which should be used as the assumption for future reports by the Net Evaluation Subcommittee. As a result of the discussion, the President requested the Net Evaluation Subcommittee, with the assistance of the Director of its Staff, to prepare for Council consideration modifications in NSC 5605 to provide that future net evaluations will assume one alternate type of attack each year in a three-year cycle.

S. E. G.

LIST OF THOSE PRESENT AT MEETING IN
THE PRESIDENT'S OFFICE
ON
November 12, 1957*

The President of the United States, Presiding
The Vice President of the United States .
The Secretary of State
The Secretary of Defense
The Net Evaluation Subcommittee:
 The Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff
 The Director, Office of Defense Mobilization
 The Chairman, Atomic Energy Commission
 The Federal Civil Defense Administrator
 The Chairman, Interdepartmental Intelligence Conference
 The Chairman, Interdepartmental Committee on Internal Security
 The Director of Central Intelligence
The Director, Net Evaluation Subcommittee Staff (General
 Gerald C. Thomas, USMC (Ret)
The Special Assistant to the President for National Security
 Affairs
The Executive Secretary, NSC

*Following the 34th Meeting of
the National Security Council

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EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
WASHINGTON

November 8, 1957

MEMORANDUM FOR: (SEE ATTACHED LIST)

SUBJECT: 344th Meeting of the National Security Council

At the direction of the President, you are invited to attend a meeting of the National Security Council, in the Broadcast Room of The White House, on Tuesday, November 12, 1957, from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m., to note and discuss an oral presentation of the annual report of the Net Evaluation Subcommittee, pursuant to NSC 5605.

In addition to the regular Council attendance, the Attorney General, the Chairman, Atomic Energy Commission, the Federal Civil Defense Administrator, the Acting Director, U. S. Information Agency, the Director, International Cooperation Administration, the Chairman, Council of Economic Advisers, the Under Secretary of State, the Deputy Secretary of Defense, the Service Secretaries, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Chairmen, Interdepartmental Intelligence Conference and Interdepartmental Committee on Internal Security, the NSC Planning Board, and Members and Staff of the Net Evaluation Subcommittee, are being invited to attend this meeting.

It is requested that you enter The White House grounds not later than 8:50 a.m., by automobile, through the southeast gate, proceeding through the south entrance of the Executive Mansion to the Broadcast Room. It would be appreciated if the number of cars from each department or agency be held to a minimum, and that the cars be released to return at 10:30 a.m.

JAMES S. LAY, Jr.
Executive Secretary

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The Director, Bureau of the Budget
- The Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs
The Special Assistant to the President for Security Operations
Coordination
The Executive Secretary, NSC
The Deputy Executive Secretary, NSC
The Assistant to the President
The Deputy Assistant to the President
The White House Staff Secretary
The Special Assistant to the President for Foreign Economic Policy
The Special Assistant to the President for Information Projects
The Deputy Director, Bureau of the Budget
The Naval Aide to the President
The NSC Representative on Internal Security
Dr. Ralph W. E. Reid, Bureau of the Budget Member, NSC Planning Board
Mr. Elmer E. Staats, Operations Coordinating Board Adviser,
NSC Planning Board
Dr. Raymond J. Saulnier, Chairman, Council of Economic Advisers
Mr. Robert Finley, Office of Defense Mobilization, NSC Planning Board
Mr. Gordon Gray, Director, Office of Defense Mobilization