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THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
WASHINGTON

7 November 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. McGeorge Bundy
Mr. Kermit Gordon
Dr. Jerome Wiesner

In each of the past two years we have reviewed with you the major issues affecting the Defense Budget before presenting the Budget to the President. We should like to follow the same procedure this year. As a basis for the review, I shall send to you copies of "Draft Memoranda to the President" covering the following subjects:

1. Strategic Nuclear Forces
2. Continental Air and Missile Defense
3. Army and Marine Ground Forces
4. Land Based Tactical Air Forces
5. Attack Carrier Forces
6. Anti-submarine Warfare Forces
7. Airlift and Sealift Forces
8. The National Underground Command Center
9. The Research and Development Program.

I propose that we meet together on Friday, November 15, at 1:30 in my office to discuss items 4, 5, 7, 8 and 9, and on Friday, November 22, at 1:30 to discuss items 1, 2, 3 and 6. Following such meetings, I hope we will be prepared to discuss the issues with the President at his convenience on or after November 25. He may wish to meet for this purpose on Friday, November 29, the day after Thanksgiving.

Attached are copies of the memoranda on the National Underground Command Center and the Research and Development Budget. Memoranda relating to items 4, 5 and 7 will be sent to your office later today or early tomorrow.

Please ask your secretary to inform my office if these arrangements are satisfactory to you.

Robert S. McNamara

cc: DepSecDef
DDR&E
ASD(Comp)

TOP SECRET

FINAL DRAFT
November 7, 1963

TOP SECRET

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: National Deep Underground Command Center as a Key FY 1965 Budget Consideration (S)

A continuing examination of the problems associated with providing an adequate national command and control structure to meet contingencies that might occur in the 1970-1975 time period prompts serious consideration of the construction of a Deep Underground Command Center (DUCC) in the Washington area.

As you know, the currently projected Washington Command and Control Complex consists of the National Military Command Center (a soft installation in the Pentagon), the Alternate National Military Command Center at Ft. Ritchie, Md. (being hardened to withstand 140 psi of overpressure), the Emergency Airborne Command Post, the Emergency Command Post Afloat and the OEP classified location at High Point (hardened to withstand about 50 psi overpressure). Studies indicate that the fixed facilities of this complex and their communications could be eliminated with reasonably high probability by a small number (6-10) of 10 megaton weapons, resulting in only the aircraft and the ship surviving. The aircraft, operating on ground alert at Andrews, would require 10 to 15 minutes to become airborne and another 10 minutes to fly beyond the lethal range of a 50 MT weapon if airburst over Andrews. The ship is 30 to 60 minutes flying time from Washington. Both times are in excess of the upper limit of expected tactical warning. Projected improvement in enemy weapons size and delivery means (sub-launched missiles) will further shorten this time. These considerations create serious doubt that currently projected facilities are keyed to today's threat, much less the threat of the 1970's, or that they adequately provide for protection of top civilian and military leaders who would be required to make and disseminate high level decisions in an emergency.

Studies of deep underground structures and analysis of weapons test data indicate that it is feasible to design and construct a command facility at depths of about 3,500 ft. so that it will withstand multiple direct hits of 200 to 300 MT weapons bursting at the surface or 100 MT weapons penetrating to depths of 70-100 feet. Extrapolation of weapons technology predicts that such weapons represent the upper practical limit to be credited to the enemy in the mid-1970's.

A Deep Underground Command facility would have two very fundamental functions: To protect key people with sufficient staff and data to render critical decisions, and to insure a survival of facilities to allow dissemination of these decisions. From a practical standpoint, the DUCC would serve these purposes only if the President and other high officials could move to it within the minimum warning time and if the movement could be made unobtrusively so that political and sociological factors would not make it undesirable. The very existence of a DUCC would also contribute in a very major way to the broad objective of deterrence of enemy attack by making a survivable control posture credible and by creating the impression of a strong will to fight if necessary.

The situations that might exist in the event of future war highlight the inadequacies of currently projected command facilities. If attacked we will be faced with an initial and critical decision in the selection of an appropriate response. The nature of the attack may not be clear at the outset, particularly if the attack is quite limited. Red China and even other lesser powers could have nuclear weapons in varying quantities by 1970. A single weapon on Washington could be a third party attempt to trigger general war between the two major powers by capitalizing on a crisis situation. It could be an accident. The appropriateness of our response here would be extremely critical. A prolonged continuation of mounting crisis between the U.S. and Russia might create situations in which we must consider initiating use of nuclear weapons. Our own confidence that we do possess the ability to control our forces would be a major factor bearing on such a decision.

If a major attack on the U.S. has been mounted there will be a sequence of key decisions vital to limiting the conflict and insuring as favorable an outcome as possible. Such important decisions would include utilization of withheld or residual forces, the direction of the course of military operations, and the timing of political negotiations when cessation is possible. Finally, steps for reconstruction of the country must be directed. Decisions of this import should be made by the President, or by responsible civilian officials succeeding him or designated by him, supported by competent senior military and political advisors. Accurate and continuous information as to the exact nature of the attack, the changing status and capabilities of surviving U.S. and allied military forces, factual assessment of the damage our forces have inflicted on the enemy and the damage we have suffered are the minimum essential elements of information required for such decisions. A DUCC would provide a logical, survivable node in the control structure at which the decision maker and his support could meet.

The primary alternative for the NUCC concerns size. Among the alternatives that have been investigated are austere and moderate size NUCC's at a depth of 3,500 feet. Cost estimates for these are as follows:

	Operating Space (Sq. Ft.)	Total Space (Sq. Ft.)	Cost[a/] (Millions)	Lead-time (Months)	Number of People
Austere	5,000	10,000	110	47	50
Moderate Size	50,000	100,000	310	66	300

In these examples, multiple, dispersed and hardened communications exits are included. This arrangement would require the enemy to expend on the order of ten 100 megaton or tens of 10 megaton weapons for a high probability of destroying the facility or its communications. A pacing item in the construction of either size facility is the construction of a shaft to the facility depth. Almost two years is required to arrive at the 3,500 foot depth before construction of the main facility can begin.

The operational capsule of the NUCC would be located close to the Pentagon with an access elevator directly into the Pentagon building. Elevator shafts would also be built below the White House and State Department buildings to the facility depth with horizontal tunnels and rapid transportation to the facility itself. Access to these elevators would be gained from within these buildings allowing key individuals to proceed from their offices undetected to protected tunnel depths in less than ten minutes and to be in the facility in less than fifteen minutes.

Pros and Cons of Building A NUCC

The views expressed by the JCS on a NUCC in essence are that the provision of a highly survivable command center for the National Command Authorities is desirable. They feel that a NUCC would have certain advantages over existing alternate centers, particularly ready accessibility within anticipated warning time of a ballistic missile attack and feasibility of relocating key individuals to the facility inconspicuously during periods of crisis. The JCS is concerned over the size of the facility selected and feel that the austere NUCC is too small and should not be specified until functional studies and overall feasibility of the project as proposed have been determined. They also recommend that your views on the concept of a NUCC be obtained.

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a/ 25 per cent special contingency has been added over normal contingencies.

There is little argument that construction of a DUCC is technically feasible and that it offers a unique capability in terms of accessibility and endurance to the President and key military and civil advisors. If constructed as proposed, so as to be accessible from within the White House, the Pentagon, and the State Department, it would provide protection based on 10 minutes or less of warning. It would have the potential of reducing significantly the problem of transition from peace to war. It offers the potential, under conditions of nuclear war, for establishment of a unified strategic command and control center under duly constituted political authorities. The nature of the DUCC, regardless of the initial size selected, lends itself to later expansion. Facilities at such depths are extremely costly, however, and require extensive construction leadtime. The need for and utility of the DUCC therefore merit close scrutiny. Among the primary arguments raised against the DUCC are:

1. The threat may outpace the survivability of the DUCC. The enemy may have the capability to develop weapons in excess of 300 MT yield or could elect to try to develop special penetrating weapons of greater than 100 MT yield.

a. Here there is, of course, much room for speculation. A primary question to be evaluated is would or will the enemy allocate the very sizable effort required to develop operational delivery systems and warheads specifically to destroy a DUCC? A countering consideration is that hard-point AICBM protection of the DUCC might just as likely outpace the threat, and with or without AICBM protection, the attacker would inevitably be in considerable uncertainty about his ability to destroy the DUCC.

2. Although the present National Military Command System will not protect the President, at least some general officers will survive. Other complementary alternatives exist such as prelocation of successors outside the Washington area or relocation of key people such as the Vice President to truly classified locations when strategic warning is received.

a. The fixed sites of the present system, as has been pointed out, are not very survivable. The mobile alternates are not accessible within expected tactical warning time. Consequently the personnel at the surviving command sites would probably not be the senior civil or military leaders. It is true that relocation of selected personnel does offer a potential enhancement of our survivability under any arrangement and should be pursued. We must recognize, however, that prelocation and relocation both require sufficient discipline to keep key people away from Washington during crisis situations. The very people we are trying to protect have the most need for direct access to the President. The feasibility of maintaining a truly classified location is open to question if survivable and secure communications are to be provided. Relocation

to dispersed sites will be a lengthy and very visible procedure and it often may not be expedient to take this action. In the event of very serious situations, such as a limited war in which nuclear weapons have started to be used, the existence of a DUCC would permit relocation of a part of the key staff while holding the remainder in Washington.

3. If the DUCC were available, key people may not use it; or if an attack occurs during other than office hours, they will not be able to reach it.

a. Operational arrangements to provide for survival of key people are difficult at best. It would certainly be much easier to assign senior military and civilian personnel to emergency duty in the DUCC where they could continue to remain in close touch with critical activities than to assign them to remote relocation sites. The DUCC seems to offer the only feasible protection for key people in Washington when short tactical warning is received. Senior military or civilian key staff members who do gain access to the DUCC would make a likely contribution to the war effort especially considering that the only survivors at the Unified and Specified Command Headquarters are likely to be duty officers in mobile command posts.

4. If the enemy elects to attack Washington, he is irrevocably committed to full scale destruction and as long as a doctrine to insure U.S. retaliation is provided there is no real point in providing a survivable control mechanism at the national level.

a. In the event of a massive USSR attack which included directed destruction of Washington, there might be no reason for attempting to exercise a controlled response. However, as has been pointed out, a number of situations could arise in which Washington is attacked and control would still remain of paramount importance. Such situations would be: accidental attack on Washington during the course of a general war; third party attack; irrational or accidental small attack. Even in the event of directed major attack on Washington, the survival of key leaders is needed to terminate the war and direct reconstruction.

5. The political considerations of building a DUCC could be unfavorable. The impression that a major public expenditure is being considered for the survival of key government figures while little is being spent for protection of the public could have a significant impact on congressional review actions.

a. The introduction of this type of criticism of the DUCC program may be unavoidable. It is not feasible, and is in fact counter to the deterrent objective, to attempt to build so extensive a facility in secret. Instead, the command capability provided by the DUCC, its

functions of control and restraint and its deterrent value should be emphasized in mitigation against the view that protection of selected people is the motivating purpose. It should be noted that since the DUCC will not be in operation before about 1970, the incumbent administration will not "benefit" from such protection, and thus can consider the problem dispassionately.

Conclusions

The primary reason for proceeding with the DUCC would be a decision that there is a need for a survivable control capability to provide flexibility and latitude in dealing with contingencies, especially in escalating situations and a desire to convey an image of national will and determination during crisis and tension by making realistic provisions to fight if necessary. In short, the DUCC would contribute to a total impression of U.S. will and determination by making our command and control arrangements much more credible.

The DUCC offers unique capabilities for protection of key people and staffs. It provides accessibility compatible with tactical ballistic missile warning and convenience which could encourage inconspicuous relocation based on intelligence warning or developing crisis. Opinions admittedly vary as to the contribution of a DUCC to deterrence of massive attack and whether key people would in fact use the facility.

In considering the military needs together with the broader national issues I am convinced that a DUCC of at least the size of the austere proposal is required. I am satisfied that there are no unresolved technical problems that would prevent going ahead with construction of a DUCC at this time. There is general agreement that the austere and moderate sizes discussed earlier represent practical upper and lower size limits, but the exact size and configuration must wait for a more detailed functional analysis. A decision to build a DUCC now will save valuable time and will not preclude later size adjustment if future functional design definition so indicates. The two years required to dig the shaft permits deferral of final cavity design for a year or more without program slippage or wasted funds.

Recommendation

That a DUCC for the Washington area be approved now and that the austere size (10,000 sq.ft. - 50 man) DUCC be authorized according to the schedule outlined below with construction to be initiated beginning with FY 1965 funds. Design and engineering should be accomplished so that the facility could be expanded up to the size of the moderate DUCC (100,000 sq.ft. - 300 man), provided such a decision is made within a year following program approval.

	FY 65	FY 66	FY 67	FY 68	FY 69	Total
RDT&E	5M	2M	--	--	--	7M
Military Construction	23M	31M	35M	1M	--	90M
O&M	--	--	--	--	3M	3M
Procurement	--	7M	3M	--	--	10M
Total	28M	40M	38M	1M	3M	110M

The Secretary of State has seen this paper and concurs.