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PRESIDENT'S REVIEW OF  
DEFENSE POSTURE  
SAN CLEMENTE  
JULY 28, 1970

SELECTED COMMENTS

RN: "We are at a hell of a disadvantage in conventional forces with respect to the Soviet Union."

He notes in two tables he was given that non-Vietnam DOD budget is going up as the costs of the war come down.

"I want to look at that, where it's going."

"You've got to increase your conventional forces in the light of strategic considerations."

"If you limit ABM, why have air defenses?

It's just ridiculous. Air defense makes damn little sense."

"Primitive area defense makes diplomacy credible for ten years."

The President placed considerable emphasis on role of forces in supporting diplomacy, indicating repeatedly that diplomacy is what really matters.

"Foolish to throw in Titans before agreements."

"ABM opponents don't want defense, don't believe Russia is a threat."

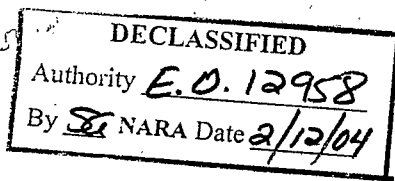
"B-1 ridiculous."

"B-52s useful as a deterrent against N. Korea.

"We are 8 years away from when you can put land-based missiles to sea."

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Ehrlich-  
man:

"There will be a strong wave of resentment at standing down the bombers."

RN:

Schlesinger's idea is a good one: cut crews but keep bombers, just not flying around.

"Air Force is a disgrace. Unbelievable bureaucracy. Still fighting World War II."

Navy is one we need the most. Credible power in area of world where we have brush fires. Navy, Marines, airlift are important. Navy has done better planning in Vietnam.

"Using a carrier against a major enemy is ridiculous. You get the issue of 15 vs. 12, etc. Carrier is battleship of today; gunboat diplomacy is now carrier diplomacy."

"Amount you can take out of defense safely is damn small."

"We have to do some very tough thinking, crack a hell of a lot of heads in the Pentagon.

Don't need assistant secretaries of Services, even Service secretaries. Laird knows this.

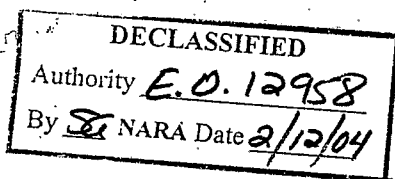
Unbelievable to see layers of bureaucracy. We shouldn't take busy men, give them these jobs. Pentagon is in hell of a shape. [Ehrlichman: In DOD, they have a pudgy ex-advance man as assistant secretary with full colonel carrying his bag.]

Taking the Services down evenly to keep everyone happy is coming. We should decide what we need; otherwise, they will keep chicken colonels, take out the guts.

HAK:

We should use DPRC mechanism.  
We've wasted 8 years.

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RN: "Eight years of \$80-90 billion per year and what have we to show for it?"

HAK: Should go back to bureaucracy and ask questions we raised here.  
[Discusses GPF. Big disagreements, e.g. NATO planning horrendously sloppy.]

RN: "We've been here 18 months, they were here 8 years. we're waddling along at the same damn thing; we've done nothing."

HAK: You've got to let me do some bloodletting in the Pentagon.

RN: We've got to do it.

HAK: SIOP is a horror strategy.  
[goes on at length]  
[goes on about NATO]

RN: "Isn't it time we get at this thing?"

HAK: If you order study, you will get answers.

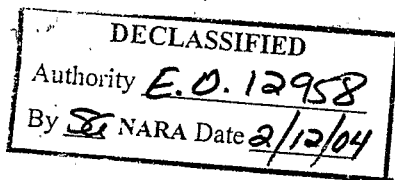
RN: I don't want a study.  
We've got to. We've got to bite the NATO bullet.

HAK: We could probably afford reduced program plus some strategic cuts. We could get \$5 billion, perhaps down to \$4 billion.  
  
I was initially opposed to any cuts.

RN: I was too. In this case, it doesn't cut our real strength. But, we must beef up our strength in other areas.

HAK: Our analysis isn't good enough to justify the low program.

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- RN: It's important not to have impression that budget tail wags defense dog.  
We've got to ask for budget review for purpose of doing some fundamental thinking.  
We've done a lot, but we've got to grab it more.
- HAK: DPRC meeting next Tuesday or Wednesday.
- We can get limited or reduced GPF, \$1 billion from strategy, say limited reduction and more air defense.
- We must change SIOP.
- RN: Slip Volunteer Service to FY 73.
- Schlesinger: Need not slip program. Can get attractive power for \$1 billion because of smaller manpower base.
- HAK: I think defense budgets not going to go up.
- Ehrlich-  
man: Can we find out what it will take?

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