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NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

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October 15, 1974

National Security Decision Memorandum 276

TO: The Secretary of Defense  
The Chairman, Atomic Energy Commission

SUBJECT: FY 1975-1977 Nuclear Weapons Stockpile

The President has approved the proposed nuclear weapons stockpile for FY 1975-1977 submitted by the Department of Defense (DOD) and the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) on August 27, 1974.

Specifically, the President approves:

-- A total adjusted stockpile of [redacted] nuclear warheads for the end of FY 1975 and [redacted] nuclear warheads for the end of FY 1976.

-- A total stockpile of [redacted] nuclear warheads for the end of FY 1977, and associated planned production of [redacted] nuclear warheads and planned retirement of [redacted] nuclear warheads during FY 1977.

The nuclear weapons stockpile levels and composition approved by the President represent authorized ceilings, not to be exceeded except as provided below or otherwise approved by the President. The ceilings are subject to change due to budgetary actions and policy decisions that affect our future nuclear posture.

For the FY 1975-1977 period, the President authorizes:

-- The production and retirement of those quantities of nuclear warheads and nuclear warhead parts necessary to achieve and maintain the approved stockpiles, as well as the production of additional parts of nuclear weapons necessary for transfer to the United Kingdom pursuant to the agreement for cooperation.

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Partially Declassified/Retraced on 3/1/96  
under provisions of E.O. 12958  
by J. Saunders, National Security Council



Authority NSC Letter 4/16/96  
By [signature] NLF Date 4/11/97

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-- The AEC, in coordination with the DOD, to initiate production of such long lead time nuclear warhead parts as may be necessary to prepare for FY 1978 production of warheads required to support approved DOD forces.

-- The AEC to produce and transfer to the DOD parts of nuclear weapons, not containing special nuclear material, as may be agreed by the AEC and the DOD. These parts may be used in nuclear weapons, training programs, research and development, or production.

-- The AEC, in coordination with the DOD, to make such changes in the production and/or retirement of nuclear warheads in FY 1975-1977 as may be necessary to reflect changes in AEC material availabilities, production/retirement capabilities, or quality assurance requirements; or as necessary to reflect changes as may be required by the DOD because of changes in military requirements or adjustments in delivery assets so long as the changes do not exceed  $\pm 10$  percent in each year in strategic offensive, strategic defensive, tactical, and fleet anti-submarine/anti-air warfare warhead totals.

-- The DOD to designate as retired and, in coordination with the AEC, to retain custody of nuclear warheads for a period of up to one year from the date the designation is made if necessary to reduce AEC requirements for weapon storage during periods of high production workload at AEC assembly facilities.

Any changes indicative of a significant shift in defense policy or AEC production capabilities will be submitted to the President for his approval.

The President has noted the FY 1978-1979 stockpile projection submitted with the FY 1975-1977 request. Since the FY 1978-1979 projection is for planning purposes only, the President has neither approved nor disapproved the stockpile levels or composition for these years. However, the President has indicated that extended projections are useful in developing integrated programs, and requests that an extended planning projection again be included with next year's stockpile approval request. The submission should note any additional nuclear materials production capabilities required to satisfy the planning projection. If additional capabilities are required in the recommended planning estimate, the submission should also provide an alternative planning estimate that can be satisfied within available nuclear materials production capabilities.

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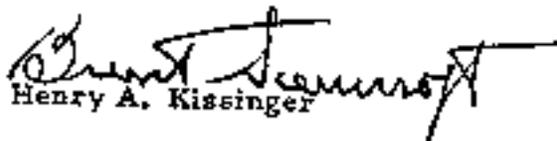


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The President has noted the Nuclear Artillery Modernization paper and its reference to the DOD assessment of the overall tactical nuclear posture. In view of the importance of the matter addressed to this assessment, the report containing the assessment should be submitted to the President by November 15, 1974.

The FY 1976-1978 stockpile approval request and the planning projection for FY 1979-1980 should be submitted in February 1975.

  
Henry A. Kissinger

cc: Deputy Secretary of State  
Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff  
Director of Central Intelligence

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