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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

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National Security Decision  
Directive Number 73

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## THE PEACEKEEPER PROGRAM ASSESSMENT (U)

On November 22, 1982, I issued NSDD-69 to provide direction for the deployment of 100 Peacekeeper missiles in an array of 100 closely spaced, superhardened silos located at or near Francis E. Warren Air Force Base, Wyoming. Since that time, the Congress decided in their 1983 Continuing Resolution to provide no procurement funds, to restrict obligation or expenditure of funds for full-scale engineering development of a permanent basing mode, and to prohibit missile flight testing until both Houses of the Congress have approved a permanent basing mode. In addition, the Congress requested that I submit a report to the Committees on Appropriations not earlier than March 1, 1983. (U)

Although the Congress has directed that the report not be submitted earlier than March 1, it is critical that the report be submitted no later than that date so as to facilitate Congressional action and assure the earliest possible initial operational capability of the missile in an approved basing mode. To facilitate this process, I have established a Commission on Strategic Forces, with technical and administrative support to be provided by the Department of Defense. (U)

The Commission, working in cooperation with the Department of Defense, will prepare the report requested by the Congress and submit it through the National Security Council to the President no later than February 18, 1983. The report will include the following information:

- A. A detailed technical and strategic assessment of the closely spaced basing system recommended to the Congress on November 22, 1982, including modifications determined to be advisable.
- B. A detailed technical and strategic assessment of other basing systems for the Peacekeeper missile that might serve as alternatives to closely spaced basing, such as Minuteman silos, deep underground basing, multiple protective shelters and closely spaced basing incorporating mobility and deception, silos on the reverse side of mesas, and new widely spaced hard silos.
- C. A detailed technical and strategic assessment of different types of intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) together with appropriate basing modes that might serve as alternatives to the Peacekeeper missile, such as an enhanced and improved Minuteman missile, a common missile, and a small missile.

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- D. A comparative technical assessment of the options considered in A, B, C.
- E. A detailed comparative technical, strategic, and foreign policy assessment of alternatives to maintaining the ICBM in the strategic Triad, including acceleration and/or expansion of the following programs: Trident SSBN with D-5 missiles, second generation cruise missile, B-1B bomber, and the advanced technology bomber. (S)

The assessments will address, as a minimum, the following subjects:

- A. Military capability and deterrence value.
- B. Survivability against current, projected and responsive Soviet threats.
- C. Projected costs required to support each alternative, including those associated with command, control, and communications.
- D. Impact on present and future arms reduction negotiations.
- E. Foreign policy considerations.
- F. SALT (IA, ABM, SALT II) interim restraint considerations.
- G. Geographic, geological, and other qualifications a site would require.
- H. Likely environmental impacts and public interest issues.
- I. Identification of possible sites. (U)

An initial operational capability of 1986 and fully operational capability of 1989 should be maintained as critical objectives for both the missile and basing mode. If an alternative missile, basing mode, or system does not permit this schedule, the earliest achievable dates must be clearly identified and taken into account in each assessment. (C)

In the interim, until the Congress completes the evaluation and responds to the President's decision, all activities required to maintain a 1986 IOC for closely spaced basing, and which are not incompatible with restrictions set forth by Congress, should be continued. In this way, all options will remain open, while not prejudicing the ultimate decision. (S)

*Ronald Reagan*

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