

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

MAR 6 1970

Dear Senator Jackson:

In your letter of October 30, 1969, you asked me for "a memorandum or letter...describing the current approach to the NSC and its use in Presidential decision-making."

I have given your request the most careful consideration, and I am happy to comply. No student of policymaking could fail to appreciate the enormous contribution which you and your subcommittee have made to the body of learning on this subject. I hope I can be of assistance.

Enclosed is a copy of the section of the President's Report to the Congress on United States Foreign Policy which discusses the National Security Council system. The President intended this section of the Report to be a clear description of how the NSC system works and, more importantly, of what its purposes are. We prepared it with your request in mind. I believe it is a suitable document for your subcommittee to add to the body of literature on the subject of national security policymaking.

Perhaps I can add some background on our new NSC system which places it in historical perspective.

A staff report issued by your subcommittee nine years ago pointed out that "each successive President has great latitude in deciding how he will employ [the Council] to meet his particular needs. He can use the Council as little, or as much, as he wishes. He is solely responsible for determining what policy matters will be handled within its framework, and how they will be handled."* President Nixon's decisions as to the new role and structure of the NSC were influenced by his direct experience with the NSC machinery as it was used during the Eisenhower Administration, and also by the accumulated national experience of a variety of approaches to the utilization of the NSC machinery.

During the period of transition between election and inauguration, the President-elect devoted considerable attention to devising a system and procedure that would be efficient, effective, and suited to his own style of leadership.

*"The National Security Council," A Staff Report of the Subcommittee, December 12, 1960, in Organizing for National Security, Inquiry of the Subcommittee on National Policy Machinery, Committee on Government Operation

No Objection To Declassification in Full 2011/04/28 : LOC-HAK-4-4-7-5

As a result, President Nixon announced at the outset of his Administration that the National Security Council and the NSC system would be the central machinery in the process of policymaking for national security. As the White House announced on February 7, 1969, "The President... indicated that the Council will henceforth be the principal forum for the consideration of policy issues on which he is required to make decisions."

It is not, of course, the NSC which makes decisions. The President makes decisions, in accordance with his Constitutional responsibility, and the NSC remains an advisory body as conceived by the 1947 National Security Act. Nor does the President necessarily make his decisions in the NSC meetings; rather, this is usually done after further private deliberation, subsequent to NSC consideration of the issues. The NSC is a forum for discussion, in which the interested departments and agencies of the U.S. Government are asked by the President to state issues, present alternatives, and discuss implications, in order that the President may elicit and receive the advice he requires.

The chapter from the President's Foreign Policy Report indicates the purposes which the new NSC system is meant to serve. We recognize, of course, that no institutional arrangement can guarantee that these objectives will all be realized. Nor can we claim that the structure and procedures we have devised are the only way to go about the business of policymaking. But the orderly and regularized procedures which the NSC system provides have advantages which President Nixon prefers to exploit.

Perhaps I can add some background to this. The more ad hoc approach of the 1960's often ran the risk that relevant points of view were not heard, that systematic treatment of issues did not take place at the highest level, or that the bureaucracies were not fully informed as to what had been decided and why. Flexible procedures used in place of NSC meetings can enjoy the advantages which come with informality -- speed, frankness, convenience, and so forth -- but they may also suffer from the lack of fixed agenda, methodical preparation, and systematic promulgation or explanation of decisions. Of course, there is nothing to preclude a President from supplementing formal with informal machinery -- as indeed has frequently been the case in this Administration.

President Nixon prefers to make use of the NSC and the NSC system, with occasional recourse to less structured groups. Almost all major issues are now treated within the framework of the NSC system. The Council meets regularly, usually once a week, and its agenda specifies for discussion a problem which has been through the process of review in the NSC system. In most cases, Presidential decisions follow in writing.

At the same time, we have tried to avoid some of the problems of the NSC system of the 1950's. One such problem was that the papers which came to the President from the NSC system, and the decision papers based upon them, were often not specific enough to provide effective guidance to the bureaucracy. Incoming papers often reflected compromises reached among agencies at a lower level. The machinery gave too much emphasis to interdepartmental consensus and too little to the presentation of distinct points of view and distinct policy alternatives.

As the chapter from the Foreign Policy Report makes clear, President Nixon wanted a system which provided him with analytical papers focusing on issues for decision and on clear policy alternatives. The system of supporting subcommittees which the President set up is intended to present distinct options, together with their pros and cons and implications and costs, rather than a single policy recommendation founded on bureaucratic consensus. We thus try to identify the real issues for Presidential decision instead of burying them in "agreed language." Formal agency positions are taken only at the level of the Council itself, and are argued out in front of the President. In focusing on the issues, we try to ask first the crucial policy question of where we want to go. We formulate the alternative answers to this question, and the President's decision then guides our inquiry into the operational issues.

Finally, we have sought to avoid some of the problems of the formality of the NSC system of the 1950's, by introducing some flexibility as to the channel through which a subject travels to presentation to the Council. The Foreign Policy Report identifies some of the special groups and channels in the new NSC system, and indicates that they serve the same purposes that the regular groups and channels serve: systematic review and analysis, bringing together all the departments and agencies concerned.

There are inevitable kinks in the system, and we will continue to be flexible in order to iron them out. Further experience will no doubt give us a better perspective on how well the system is working. Further modifications will no doubt be made.

As the chapter from the President's Report concludes, there is no text-book prescription for organizing the system and staff for national security policymaking. The only basic rule is that the structure be suited to the

wishes and style of the President. As your subcommittee's staff report of 1960 pointed out, the National Security Council is "the President's instrument," and it "exists only to serve the President."*

Warmest regards,



Henry A. Kissinger

Enclosure

Honorable Henry M. Jackson
United States Senate
Washington, D. C.

* Ibid., p. 38.

THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL SYSTEM

If we were to establish a new foreign policy for the era to come, we had to begin with a basic restructuring of the process by which policy is made.

Our fresh purposes demanded new methods of planning and a more rigorous and systematic process of policymaking. We required a system which would summon and gather the best ideas, the best analyses and the best information available to the government and the nation.

Efficient procedure does not insure wisdom in the substance of policy. But given the complexity of contemporary choices, adequate procedures are an indispensable component of the act of judgment. I have long believed that the most pressing issues are not necessarily the most fundamental ones; we know that an effective American policy requires clarity of purpose for the future as well as a procedure for dealing with the present. We do not want to exhaust ourselves managing crises; our basic goal is to shape the future.

At the outset, therefore, I directed that the National Security Council be reestablished as the principal forum for Presidential consideration of foreign policy issues. The revitalized Council -- composed by statute of the President, the Vice President, the Secretaries of State and Defense, and the Director of the Office of Emergency Preparedness -- and its new system of supporting groups are designed to respond to the requirements of leadership in the 1970's:

- Our policy must be creative: foreign policy must mean more than reacting to emergencies; we must fashion a new and positive vision of a peaceful world, and design new policies to achieve it.
- Our policymaking must be systematic: our actions must be the products of thorough analysis, forward planning, and deliberate decision. We must master problems before they master us.
- We must know the facts: intelligent discussions in the National Security Council and wise decisions require the most reliable information available. Disputes in the government have been caused too often by an incomplete awareness or understanding of the facts.

-- We must know the alternatives: we must know what our real options are and not simply what compromise has found bureaucratic acceptance. Every view and every alternative must have a fair hearing. Presidential leadership is not the same as ratifying bureaucratic consensus.

-- We must be prepared if crises occur: we must anticipate crises where possible. If they cannot be prevented, we must plan for dealing with them. All the elements of emergency action, political as well as military, must be related to each other.

Finally, we must have effective implementation: it does little good to plan intelligently and imaginatively if our decisions are not well carried out.

Creativity: Above all, a foreign policy for the 1970's demands imaginative thought. In a world of onrushing change, we can no longer rest content with familiar ideas or assume that the future will be a projection of the present. If we are to meet both the peril and the opportunity of change, we require a clear and positive vision of the world we seek -- and of America's contribution to bringing it about.

As modern bureaucracy has grown, the understanding of change and the formulation of new purposes have become more difficult. Like men, governments find old ways hard to change and new paths difficult to discover.

The mandate I have given to the National Security Council system, and the overriding objective of every policy review undertaken, is to clarify our view of where we want to be in the next three to five years. Only then can we ask, and answer, the question of how to proceed.

In central areas of policy, we have arranged our procedure of policy-making so as to address the broader questions of long-term objectives first; we define our purposes, and then address the specific operational issues. In this manner, for example, the NSC first addressed the basic questions of the rationale and doctrine of our strategic posture, and then considered -- in the light of new criteria of strategic sufficiency -- our specific weapons programs and our specific policy for the negotiations on strategic arms limitation. We determined that our relationship with Japan for the 1970's and beyond had to be founded on our mutual and increasingly collaborative concern for peace and security in the Far East; we then addressed the issue of Okinawa's status in the light of this fundamental objective.

Systematic Planning: American foreign policy must not be merely the result of a series of piecemeal tactical decisions forced by the pressures of events. If our policy is to embody a coherent vision of the world and a

rational conception of America's interests, our specific actions must be the products of rational and deliberate choice. We need a system which forces consideration of problems before they become emergencies, which enables us to make our basic determinations of purpose before being pressed by events, and to mesh policies.

The National Security Council itself met 37 times in 1969, and considered over a score of different major problems of national security. Each Council meeting was the culmination of an interagency process of systematic and comprehensive review.

This is how the process works: I assign an issue to an Interdepartmental Group -- chaired by an Assistant Secretary of State -- for intensive study, asking it to formulate the policy choices and to analyze the pros and cons of the different courses of action. This group's report is examined by an interagency Review Group of senior officials -- chaired by the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs -- to insure that the issues, options, and views are presented fully and fairly. The paper is then presented to me and the full National Security Council.

Some topics requiring specialized knowledge are handled through different channels before reaching the National Security Council. But the purpose is the same -- systematic review and analysis, bringing together all the agencies concerned:

-- The major issues of defense policy are treated in systematic and integrated fashion by the NSC Defense Program Review Committee. This group reviews at the Under Secretary level the major defense policy and program issues which have strategic, political, diplomatic, and economic implications in relation to overall national priorities.

-- Through other NSC interagency groups, the United States Government has undertaken its first substantial effort to review all its resource programs within certain countries on a systematic and integrated basis, instead of haphazardly and piecemeal.

Determination of the Facts: Intelligent discussions and decisions at the highest level demand the fullest possible information. Too often in the past, the process of policymaking has been impaired or distorted by incomplete information, and by disputes in the government which resulted from the lack of a common appreciation of the facts. It is an essential function of the NSC system, therefore, to bring together all the agencies of the government concerned with foreign affairs to elicit, assess, and present to me and the Council all the pertinent knowledge available.

Normally NSC Interdepartmental Groups are assigned this task. But other interagency groups perform this function for certain special topics. For example:

-- The Verification Panel was formed to gather the essential facts relating to a number of important issues of strategic arms limitation, such as Soviet strategic capabilities, and our potential means of verifying compliance with various possible agreements. This Panel was designed not to induce agreement on policy views, but to establish as firmly as possible the data on which to base policy discussions. It helped to resolve many major policy differences which might otherwise have been intractable. As the section on Arms Control in this report explains in detail, the Panel played a central part in making our preparation for the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks with the Soviet Union the most thorough in which the U.S. Government has ever engaged.

-- The Vietnam Special Studies Group (VSSG) gathers and presents to the highest levels of the United States Government the fullest and most up-to-date information on trends and conditions in the countryside in Vietnam. This group is of key assistance in our major and sustained effort to understand the factors which will determine the course of Vietnamization.

Full Range of Options: I do not believe that Presidential leadership consists merely in ratifying a consensus reached among departments and agencies. The President bears the Constitutional responsibility of making the judgments and decisions that form our policy.

The new NSC system is designed to make certain that clear policy choices reach the top, so that the various positions can be fully debated in the meeting of the Council. Differences of view are identified and defended, rather than muted or buried. I refuse to be confronted with a bureaucratic consensus that leaves me no options but acceptance or rejection, and that gives me no way of knowing what alternatives exist.

The NSC system also insures that all agencies and departments receive a fair hearing before I make my decisions. All Departments concerned with a problem participate on the groups that draft and review the policy papers. They know that their positions and arguments will reach the Council without dilution, along with the other alternatives. Council meetings are not rubber-stamp sessions. And as my decisions are reached they are circulated in writing, so that all departments concerned are fully informed of our policy, and so that implementation can be monitored.

Crisis Planning: Some events in the world over which we have little control may produce crises that we cannot prevent, even though our systemized study forewarns us of their possibility. But we can be the masters of events when crises occur, to the extent that we are able to prepare ourselves in advance.

For this purpose, we created within the NSC system a special senior panel known as the Washington Special Actions Group (WSAG). This group drafts contingency plans for possible crises, integrating the political and military requirements of crisis action. The action responsibilities of the departments of the Government are planned in detail, and specific responsibilities assigned in an agreed time sequence in advance. While no one can anticipate exactly the timing and course of a possible crisis, the WSAG's planning helps insure that we have asked the right questions in advance, and thought through the implications of various responses.

Policy Implementation: The variety and complexity of foreign policy issues in today's world places an enormous premium on the effective implementation of policy. Just as our policies are shaped and our programs formed through a constant process of interagency discussion and debate within the NSC framework, so the implementation of our major policies needs review and coordination on a continuing basis. This is done by an interdepartmental committee at the Under Secretary level chaired by the Under Secretary of State.

Conclusions

There is no textbook prescription for organizing the machinery of policymaking, and no procedural formula for making wise decisions. The policies of this Administration will be judged on their results, not on how methodically they were made.

The NSC system is meant to help us address the fundamental issues, clarify our basic purposes, examine all alternatives, and plan intelligent actions. It is meant to promote the thoroughness and deliberation which are essential for an effective American foreign policy. It gives us the means to bring to bear the best foresight and insight of which the nation is capable.

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Dear Senator Jackson:

In your letter of October 30, 1969, you asked me for "a memorandum or letter... describing the current approach to the NSC and its use in Presidential decision-making."

I have given your request the most careful attention, and am happy to comply. No student of policymaking could fail to appreciate the enormous contribution which you and your subcommittee have made to the body of learning on this subject. I hope I can be of assistance.

The President has now submitted to the Congress his Report on United States Foreign Policy, which includes, in Part I, a discussion of the National Security Council system. The President intended this part of the Report to be a full and clear description of how the new NSC system works and, more importantly, of what its purposes are. We prepared it with your request in mind.

I believe it is a suitable document for your subcommittee to add to the body of literature on national security policymaking. I am therefore enclosing a copy of the text, which I hope will be useful to you and your subcommittee.

Warmest regards,

Henry A. Kissinger

Enclosure

Honorable Henry M. Jackson
United States Senate
Washington, D. C.

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7210

COMMITTEE ON
GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL SECURITY
AND INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS
(PURSUANT TO S. RES. 21, 81ST CONGRESS)
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

October 30, 1969

Mr. Henry A. Kissinger
Assistant to the President
for National Security Affairs
The White House
Washington, D. C.

Dear Henry:

I am very glad to have had the opportunity to talk with you yesterday. Dorothy and I greatly appreciated the hospitable luncheon in your office.

Following up on one of the matters we discussed, I am enclosing a copy of the letter sent to us by Mac Bundy in September 1961 describing how they were trying to do their job at that time at the NSC level. As I mentioned, we would welcome a memorandum or letter from you describing the current approach to the NSC and its use in Presidential decision-making, which could be published in the record of our Subcommittee this year.

As you may know, we issued a short print in March this year which included the text of the February 7, 1969 White House announcement on the new arrangements for the NSC, and two related official documents. I am including a copy of that print. You should feel free to include as an attachment to your statement to us any related materials that you think appropriate.

Best regards.

Sincerely yours,

Henry M. Jackson, U.S.S.
Chairman, Subcommittee on
National Security and
International Operations

Exchange of Letters Concerning the National Security Council
Between Senator Henry M. Jackson and Mr. McGeorge Bundy,
Special Assistant to the President for National Security
Affairs

U.S. SENATE,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL POLICY MACHINERY,
July 13, 1961.

MR. MCGEORGE BUNDY,
Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs,
The White House, Washington, D.C.

DEAR MR. BUNDY: As you know, our subcommittee will shortly hold hearings bringing to a close its nonpartisan study of how our Government can best staff and organize itself to develop and carry out the kind of national security policies required to meet the challenge of world communism.

As you also know, we have been deeply concerned from the outset with the organization and procedures of the National Security Council, its subordinate organs, and related planning and followthrough mechanisms in the area of national security.

Early in our study, the previous administration was kind enough to make available to the subcommittee a series of official memorandums describing the functions, organization, and procedures of the National Security Council and its supporting mechanisms. These memorandums, which were printed by the subcommittee in our Selected Materials, proved of great interest and value to our members, to students and interpreters of the policy process, and to the wide general audience which has been following our inquiry.

The purpose of this letter is to ask whether the present administration could now furnish us with official memorandums which would be the current equivalent of the above documents given us by the Eisenhower administration.

I presume that this material is readily at hand, and that it could be made available to us by August 4, so that we could profit from its study during the final phase of our hearings and make it a part of our permanent record.

Sincerely yours,

HENRY M. JACKSON,
Chairman, Subcommittee on National Policy Machinery.

THE WHITE HOUSE,
Washington, September 4, 1961.

Hon. HENRY M. JACKSON,
U.S. Senate, Washington, D.C.

DEAR SENATOR JACKSON: I have thought hard about your letter of July 13, which asks for official memorandums that would be the current equivalent of memorandums submitted by the previous adminis-

tration. I find that this is not easy to do, but let me try. The previous administration wrote out of many years of experience in which it had gradually developed a large and complex series of processes. This administration has been revising these arrangements to fit the needs of a new President, but the work of revision is far from done, and it is too soon for me to report with any finality upon the matters about which you ask. It seems to me preferable, at this early stage in our work, to give you an informal interim account in this letter.

Much of what you have been told in the reports of the previous administration about the legal framework and concept of the Council remains true today. There has been no recent change in the National Security Act of 1947. Nor has there been any change in the basic and decisive fact that the Council is advisory only. Decisions are made by the President. Finally, there has been no change in the basic proposition that, in the language of Robert Cutler, "the Council is a vehicle for a President to use in accordance with its suitability to his plans for conducting his great office." As Mr. Cutler further remarked, "a peculiar virtue of the National Security Act is its flexibility," and "each President may use the Council as he finds most suitable at a given time."¹ It is within the spirit of this doctrine that a new process of using the NSC is developing.

The specific changes which have occurred are three. First, the NSC meets less often than it did. There were 16 meetings in the first 6 months of the Kennedy administration. Much that used to flow routinely to the weekly meetings of the Council is now settled in other ways—by separate meetings with the President, by letters, by written memorandums, and at levels below that of the President. President Kennedy has preferred to call meetings of the NSC only after determining that a particular issue is ready for discussion in this particular forum.

I know you share my understanding that the National Security Council has never been and should never become the only instrument of counsel and decision available to the President in dealing with the problems of our national security. I believe this fact cannot be over-emphasized. It is not easy for me to be sure of the procedures of earlier administrations, but I have the impression that many of the great episodes of the Truman and Eisenhower administrations were not dealt with, in their most vital aspects, through the machinery of the NSC. It was not in an NSC meeting that we got into the Korean war, or made the Korean truce. The NSC was not, characteristically, the place of decision on specific major budgetary issues, which so often affect both policy and strategy. It was not the usual forum of diplomatic decision; it was not, for example, a major center of work on Berlin at any time before 1961. The National Security Council is one instrument among many; it must never be made an end in itself.

But for certain issues of great moment, the NSC is indeed valuable. President Kennedy has used it for discussion of basic national policy toward a number of countries. He has used it both for advice on particular pressing decisions and for recommendations on long-term policy. As new attitudes develop within the administration, and as

¹ Robert Cutler, "The Development of the National Security Council," Foreign Affairs, April 1958 ("Organizing for National Security," reprinted in "Selected Materials," committee print of the Committee on Government Operations of the Senate, GPO, 1960).

new issues arise in the world, the NSC is likely to continue as a major channel through which broad issues of national security policy come forward for Presidential decision.

Meanwhile, the President continues to meet at very frequent intervals with the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, and other officials closely concerned with problems of national security. Such meetings may be as large as an NSC meeting or as small as a face-to-face discussion with a single Cabinet officer. What they have in common is that a careful record is kept, in the appropriate way, whenever a decision is reached. Where primary responsibility falls clearly to a single Department, the primary record of such decisions will usually be made through that Department. Where the issue is broader, or where the action requires continued White House attention, the decision will be recorded through the process of the National Security Council. Thus the business of the National Security staff goes well beyond what is treated in formal meetings of the National Security Council. It is our purpose, in cooperation with other Presidential staff officers, to meet the President's staff needs throughout the national security area.

The second and more significant change in the administration of the National Security Council and its subordinate agencies is the abolition by Executive Order 10920 of the Operations Coordinating Board. This change needs to be understood both for what it is and for what it is not. It is not in any sense a downgrading of the tasks of coordination and followup; neither is it an abandonment of Presidential responsibility for these tasks. It is rather a move to eliminate an instrument that does not match the style of operation and coordination of the current administration.

From the point of view of the new administration, the decisive difficulty in the OCB was that without unanimity it had no authority. No one of its eight members had authority over any other. It was never a truly Presidential instrument, and its practices were those of a group of able men attempting, at the second and third levels of Government, to keep large departments in reasonable harmony with each other. Because of good will among its members, and unusual administrative skill in its secretariat, it did much useful work; it also had weaknesses. But its most serious weakness, for the new administration, was simply that neither the President himself nor the present administration as a whole conceives of operational coordination as a task for a large committee in which no one man has authority. It was and is our belief that there is much to be done that the OCB could not do, and that the things it did do can be done as well or better in other ways.

The most important of these other ways is an increased reliance on the leadership of the Department of State. It would not be appropriate for me to describe in detail the changes which the Department of State has begun to execute in meeting the large responsibilities which fall to it under this concept of administration. It is enough if I say that the President has made it very clear that he does not want a large separate organization between him and his Secretary of State. Neither does he wish any question to arise as to the clear authority and responsibility of the Secretary of State, not only in his own Department, and not only in such large-scale related areas

as foreign aid and information policy, but also as the agent of coordination in all our major policies toward other nations.

The third change in the affairs of the NSC grows out of the first two and has a similar purpose. We have deliberately rubbed out the distinction between planning and operation which governed the administrative structure of the NSC staff in the last administration. This distinction, real enough at the extremes of the daily cable traffic and long-range assessment of future possibilities, breaks down in most of the business of decision and action. This is especially true at the level of Presidential action. Thus it seems to us best that the NSC staff, which is essentially a Presidential instrument, should be composed of men who can serve equally well in the process of planning and in that of operational followup. Already it has been made plain, in a number of cases, that the President's interests and purposes can be better served if the staff officer who keeps in daily touch with operations in a given area is also the officer who acts for the White House staff in related planning activities.

Let me turn briefly, in closing, to the role of the Presidential staff as a whole, in national security affairs. This staff is smaller than it was in the last administration, and it is more closely knit. The President uses in these areas a number of officers holding White House appointment, and a number of others holding appointments in the National Security Council staff. He also uses extensively the staff of the Bureau of the Budget. These men are all staff officers. Their job is to help the President, not to supersede or supplement any of the high officials who hold line responsibilities in the executive departments and agencies. Their task is that of all staff officers: to extend the range and enlarge the direct effectiveness of the man they serve. Heavy responsibilities for operation, for coordination, and for diplomatic relations can be and are delegated to the Department of State. Full use of all the powers of leadership can be and is expected in other departments and agencies. There remains a crushing burden of responsibility, and of sheer work, on the President himself; there remains also the steady flow of questions, of ideas, of executive energy which a strong President will give off like sparks. If his Cabinet officers are to be free to do their own work, the President's work must be done—to the extent that he cannot do it himself—by staff officers under his direct oversight. But this is, I repeat, something entirely different from the interposition of such a staff between the President and his Cabinet officers.

I hope this rather general exposition may be helpful to you. I have been conscious, in writing it, of the limits which are imposed upon me by the need to avoid classified questions, and still more by the requirement that the President's own business be treated in confidence. Within those limits I have tried to tell you clearly how we are trying to do our job.

Sincerely,
McGeorge Bundy.

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

ACTION

February 25, 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR DR. KISSINGER

FROM: Peter Rodman *PR*

SUBJECT: Letter to Senator Jackson on the NSC System

At Bill Watts' request, I have prepared a letter from you to Senator Jackson enclosing the "NSC System" section of the President's Annual Review.

I have done two versions:

The letter at Tab A is a longer letter, introducing the Annual Review chapter with some material added from the prior drafts of the letter to Senator Jackson. (This material deals with the various past approaches to the NSC machinery; it does not include any of the discussion of the roles of the Secretary of State and the Assistant to the President.)

The letter at Tab B is a shorter version, simply transmitting the Annual Review chapter.

Bill Watts and Winston Lord agree with me that it is preferable to send Senator Jackson something more than a letter of transmittal, as a matter of courtesy, and also out of respect for the sophistication and expertise of his subcommittee.

At Tab C, for your reference, are Senator Jackson's letter to you of October 30, 1969, and McGeorge Bundy's 1961 letter to Jackson.

RECOMMENDATION:

That you sign the letter at Tab A.

Approve letter at Tab A (longer version) _____

Approve letter at Tab B (shorter version) _____