

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT-ELECT

From: Henry A. Kissinger *HK*

Subject: Memorandum on a New NSC System

The attached memo (Tab A) outlines my ideas for organizing the NSC and my own staff. It is based on extensive conversations with a number of people--particularly General Goodpaster, who agrees with my recommendations.

I apologize for its length, but the decisions you make on the issues raised here will have an important effect on how we function in the field of foreign affairs in the years ahead. I thought, therefore, that it would be best for you to have as full a description as possible of what General Goodpaster and I have in mind.

We would like a chance to discuss the memo with you after you have gone over it.

At Tab B are outline summaries, plus action recommendations, covering each of the subsections of the basic paper.

A NEW NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL SYSTEM

I. National Security Structure

A. National Security Council

1. Principal forum for issues requiring inter-agency decisions and for setting basic national objectives.
2. Meets on basis of fixed agenda.
3. NSC staff paper to synthesize agency papers and sharply define the issues.
4. Deals with middle and long-range issues as well as current matters.
5. The NSC as such takes no decisions but advises the President.
6. The President reserves the option to constitute subcommittees or other groups for the expeditious handling of operational problems.

B. NSC Review Group

1. Membership: State, Defense, Chairman, JCS, Director of Central Intelligence, others as appropriate; Assistant to the President acts as Chairman.
2. Reviews papers on way to NSC -- unless the Secretary of State and the Assistant to the President deem it unnecessary -- to assure that:
 - a. worth NSC attention
 - b. all relevant alternatives included
 - c. facts are adequately stated
3. Does not seek consensus but defines alternatives
4. NSC staff prepares agenda and supervises back-up papers
5. Assigns studies and operations to Ad Hoc groups or IRG's

C. NSC Ad Hoc Under Secretary's Committee

1. Composed of the Under Secretary of State, the Deputy Secretary of Defense, the Under Secretary of the Treasury, and the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs.

2. This group, chaired by the Under Secretary of State, handles matters referred to it by the NSC Review Committee deemed of insufficient importance to bring before the NSC (including matters on which an IRG cannot agree).

D. Inter-Agency Regional Groups (IRGs)

1. Inter-agency groups chaired by Assistant Secretaries of State: Membership includes Defense, Joint Staff, CIA and others as appropriate.
2. Perform following functions:
 - a. take decisions on issues which can be settled at Assistant Secretary level.
 - b. prepare policy papers listing alternatives for NSC
 - c. prepare crisis contingency papers for NSC

E. Ad Hoc Working Groups

1. Set up at the direction of the President
 - a. to do planning on issues which transcend regional boundaries
 - b. to coordinate operations in matters not important enough to bring to NSC
2. Chairman receives a Presidential mandate enabling him to effectively coordinate inter-agency matters.
3. Reports of these groups go to Assistant to the President for inclusion on NSC agenda, or are referred to Under Secretary's Group for disposition.

F. Outside Consultants

1. NSC should have a panel of outside consultants.
2. Where possible, consultants should participate in deliberations of inter-agency groups preparing papers for NSC consideration.

Recommendation

That you approve the National Security structure outlined above.

Approve _____ Disapprove _____ Other _____

A NEW NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL SYSTEM

II. NSC PROCEDURES

A. NSC Memoranda

1. Presidential decisions will normally be conveyed to the departments and agencies in writing.
2. Two series should be established:
 - a. National Security Decision Memoranda (NSDMs) - informing departments and agencies of Presidential decisions and the reasons for the decisions
 - b. National Security Study Memoranda (NSSMs) - requests for studies, giving terms of reference and due date

B. Annual Review of the International Situation

1. Presidential Report to Congress reviewing the situation and stating U.S. objectives and policy.
2. Provides for high-level attention to basic U.S. national security goals.
3. Has the same relationship to the State of the Union Message as the Economic Report. It takes the State of the Union Message as a point of departure, but elaborates it.

Recommendations

1. That you approve the procedures outlined above.

Approve _____ Disapprove _____ Other _____

2. That the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs prepare a NSDM -- to be issued on January 20 -- establishing these procedures.

Approve _____ Disapprove _____ Other _____

A NEW NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL SYSTEM

III. NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL STAFF

- A. The National Security Council Staff should be divided into three groups (plus the Military Assistant to the Assistant to the President)
 1. Assistants for Programs.
 2. Operations Staff
 3. Planning Staff
- B. Assistants for Programs
 1. Three of four Assistants dealing with long-range issues.
 2. Combine planning and operations by bringing a five-year perspective to current operations.
 3. Responsible for encouraging Departments to produce necessary basic studies for NSC discussion of policy options, taking account of long-range objectives.
 4. Work closely with NSC Operations Staff and Planning Staff to maintain link between planning and operations.
- C. Operations Staff
 1. Approximately five senior staff members (with a small number of staff assistants).
 2. Each senior staff member responsible for certain geographic regions and/or functional activities.
 3. Follow day-to-day business, and attend inter-agency meetings.
 4. Bring to the attention of the Assistant to the President matters requiring Presidential attention.
- D. Planning Staff
 1. Approximately three senior and five junior staff members.
 2. Prepare NSC agenda papers, synthesizing agency papers and necessary back-up and follow-up papers.
 3. Support Assistants for Programs.

4. Participate in inter-agency planning studies.

E. The Military Assistant

1. Helps the Assistant to the President in developing staff papers on military matters, including judgments on military questions.
2. Helps monitor and assemble intelligence material.

Recommendation

That the Assistant to the President be authorized to organize his staff along the above lines.

Approve _____ Disapprove _____ Other _____

A NEW NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL SYSTEM

IV. MAJOR POLICY ISSUES

A. High Priority Major Policy Issues -- Matters Requiring
Early NSC Attention

1. Vietnam

- a. NSC staff to prepare -- prior to January 20 -- a paper listing alternative strategies (with military and diplomatic actions mutually supporting).
- b. Paper should be sent to relevant departments for comment within two weeks after January 20.
- c. Then considered by NSC

2. Middle East

- a. Ad hoc working group should develop paper examining alternative approaches
- b. Report should be completed within one month

3. Europe

- a. Ad hoc working group should consider alternatives and examine specific issues (such as German offset arrangements and relations with France) in context of overall approach

4. International Monetary Policy

- a. Ad hoc working group, chaired by the Under Secretary of the Treasury, should prepare a report to the NSC (within two months) on the basic issues and alternatives of international monetary reform.
- b. Group would also oversee current operational matters relating to international monetary affairs.

5. Strategic Forces

- a. NSC staff should prepare a paper listing issues and alternative policies prior to January 20 (per agreement with Secretary-designate Laird)

- b. The paper should be sent to the relevant agencies for comment before review before the NSC
- 6. Ad Hoc Working Group on U.S. Security Policy
 - a. A high-level inter-agency group should examine entire range of U.S. security policy.
 - b. Should consider U.S. interests, threats to those interests and alternative security policies
 - c. Working group should be staffed by the NSC staff, augmented by personnel from relevant agencies
 - d. Group should report to the NSC in six months
- 7. Contingency Planning
 - a. An ad hoc working group should be established after January 20 to review existing inter-agency plans and procedures for contingency planning on possible major trouble spots (e.g., Berlin and the Middle East).
 - b. The group would pay particular attention to the political impact of proposed military moves, and to the orchestration of political and military measures
- 8. Japan
 - a. An ad hoc group should examine the full range of U.S.-Japanese relations (including Okinawa, Mutual Security Treaty and economic matters).
- 9. AID Review
 - a. Paper should be prepared examining AID related issues -- particularly the relationship between economic and political development -- and options

Recommendation

That you authorize the studies outlined above.

Approve _____ Disapprove _____ Other _____