



THE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20301

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OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN

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Honorable Melvin Price  
Chairman  
Joint Committee on Atomic Energy  
Congress of the United States  
Washington, D. C. 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

As you know, the Department of Defense has been vitally concerned over the past year with the implications of the terrorist threat to the security of our nuclear weapons in Europe and throughout the world. Following the actions at the Olympic Games in Munich, Secretary Laird instructed the Department of Defense to review critically its security arrangements and take urgent steps to insure the protection of our nuclear weapons. Dr. Walske reported to Senator Pastore in a letter dated December 20, 1972, the significant measures taken to that date. Secretary Richardson followed Secretary Laird's initiative on April 3, 1973, by emphasizing his own concern to the Services and conveying the President's personal interest in this subject.

In late April Secretary Richardson met with Senator Baker to receive a report on his and Senator Pastore's visit to Europe and their views concerning nuclear weapons security. Subsequently, Secretary Richardson directed the Services to increase still further their efforts to reduce the vulnerabilities of our nuclear weapons to the terrorist threat. As a first priority they have just reported on additional actions now being considered. These are:

1. The desirability of further repositioning or consolidating nuclear weapon resources based upon an assessment of each nuclear storage site to determine its operational value vis-a-vis its vulnerability. Continuation of our current program of storage site consolidation. Since July 1, 1971, the nuclear storage sites in Europe have been reduced by a net of eight. As a part of this program, the two remaining vault storage sites will close by July 31, 1973.

Classified by ATSD(AE)  
SUBJECT TO GENERAL DECLASSIFICATION SCHEDULE OF  
EXECUTIVE ORDER 11652. AUTOMATICALLY DOWNGRADED  
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2. Increase in the size of the site security guard force after evaluation of the requirements for both security and the efficient use of manpower.

3. Application of operations security (OPSEC) provisions, including appropriate verification by the Inspectors General, to all aspects associated with the movement, storage, and operational use of nuclear weapons.

4. The need for and feasibility of a failsafe communication system which would trigger an alarm in a central security force area should the communication line to the storage site be severed or damaged.

5. Development of improved denial/disable measures for nuclear weapons in the current stockpile.

Furthermore, there are certain measures which have already been effected in Europe in addition to those enumerated in Dr. Walske's letter of December 20, 1972:

1. Site surveys by special forces teams to identify particular vulnerabilities to the terrorist threat. Improvements are being made where necessary.

2. Defensive fighting positions within sites, previously being considered, are now being prepared.

3. The hardening of guard towers and guard housing with steel plates and/or sandbags, previously under consideration, is now being carried out.

4. Firepower and communications for reserve forces have been improved.

5. Additional intrusion detection equipment is being installed.

6. Reserve forces are being bivouacked in the immediate vicinity of vulnerable, isolated sites on a random, unannounced schedule.

7. Communication security has been improved.

8. Plans have been reviewed and procedures have been established to insure timely actions in event of seizure. These include:

- a. Coordination with local military and police authorities for the early establishment of roadblocks at surveyed locations in the vicinity of storage sites.
- b. Provisions to recover any weapon in the hands of unauthorized persons within a site.
- c. Measures necessary for immediate recovery of any weapon in the hands of unauthorized persons which has been removed from a site.

As further actions are completed we shall keep the JCAE informed. Meanwhile I solicit comments and suggestions from you and your members.

Sincerely,

*H. P. Clement*

cc: Chairman, AEC