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NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

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BY RW NARA DATE 7/22/11

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National Security Council Briefing
May 25, 1984, 9:30-10:30 a.m., Oval Office

SUBJECT: Gulf War

PARTICIPANTS:

The President

The Vice President

State

Secretary George P. Shultz

OSD

Secretary Caspar W. Weinberger

JCS:

General John W. Vessey, Jr.

White House:

Mr. Edwin Meese, III

Mr. James A. Baker, III

Mr. Robert C. McFarlane

RADM John M. Poindexter

Minutes

Mr. McFarlane: Talked from "Discussion Paper":

- UN update
- STINGER - all recommended immediate emergency shipment

Secretary Weinberger: We recommend sending 200 on Tuesday.

General Vessey: They really need 1,200, but we only want to send 200 on an emergency basis.

Secretary Shultz: Israel has come in opposing the sale. We will pay a price.

Mr. McFarlane: I think threshold of tolerance on Hill is 500.

Mr. Baker: We should take advantage of emergency conditions now and send as many as we can.

Mr. McFarlane: I think we should not go for follow-up number. It will be defeated. We wait for another emergency.

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The President: We should send 400 now. Wait until they use these and then we could provide more. Shouldn't we tell Arens our reasoning for selling STINGERS.

Secretary Shultz: We are doing that and will continue to do so.

Mr. McFarlane: Next, what do we do if they ask for AWACS and/or tanker support? What about F-15 support?

General Vessey: They have asked for tanker support for their F-15s CAP over Saudi territory.

Secretary Weinberger: We would need one more KC-10.

General Vessey: Chiefs recommend we send one KC-10. Our attorneys say no war powers requirement. If Iranians step up attacks and threaten AWACS, then we should ask to send F-15s.

** Need carrier air to protect carrier.

Mr. McFarlane: The decision to send KC-10 does not require F-15s at this point.

General Vessey: Saudis have asked for tanking. We have to get them to agree to accept one more tanker.

The Vice President: Don't we need a request?

Secretary Weinberger: We have the request.

Secretary Shultz: A more likely threat is a terrorist attack on our facilities. Then we would be in war powers situation.

Secretary Weinberger: I agree with terrorist threats.

The President: What about contingency plan, if they attack us. Then we would attack the air base from where the aircraft came.

General Vessey: Our contingency plans would have us attack a military base--not necessarily same base.

Mr. McFarlane: Let's be clear. If direct Iranian violence against a U.S. target, are we agreed we should retaliate against an Iranian target.

The Vice President: Don't want to get us into an automatic war.

Secretary Weinberger: We aren't asking for automatic approval.

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The Vice President: Would the Saudis and Kuwaiti air forces be with us?

Secretary Weinberger: It would depend on what we were responding to.

General Vessey: If it is response to an attack against U.S., we would want to do it ourselves.

Mr. Baker: I want to be sure we understand that there is no automatic approval for retaliation against Iran for any terrorist action they might be involved with.

Secretary Shultz: But, we need to consider these issues so we can move promptly.

Mr. McFarlane: We need to send the President a range of things that could happen and what we might do in retaliation.

The President: In response to terrorist attacks, then we take out an expensive enough target that they will think twice next time. But, I think a more likely target will probably be a ship and we should respond.

Mr. McFarlane: Should we have an Iranian demarche through Pakistan? (no support) Can we get STINGERS before next Tuesday?

The President: Send 400 now. Hold-up on official notification until STINGERS are in-country and we actually make transfer.

General Vessey: We may want to inform key committee chairmen so they don't take more negative action against some other bill.

The Vice President: I'm concerned that we not push ourselves on the Arabs. We should wait until asked. Europeans may think we are trying to force our way in.

ADM Poindexter: Saudis asked French for air defense systems and French have agreed to four.

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NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

May 31, 1984

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INFORMATION

MEMORANDUM FOR JOHN M. POINDEXTER *J*

FROM: *VLP* PHILIP A. DUR

SUBJECT: Your Notes of the NSC
Briefing for the
President, May 25, 1984

Attached are your meeting notes
in typescript for file/future
reference.

Attachment
Briefing Notes

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