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THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

WASHINGTON, THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

#13

80 JUL 1983

MEMORANDUM FOR CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF

SUBJECT: Short-Range Nuclear Forces Issues (U)

(U) This is in reponse to the JCS memo of June 27, 1983. I have discussed the matter with Richard Perle, who shares your concern and is managing the NATO High Level Group's (HLG) efforts toward reaching a balanced evaluation of our European nuclear requirements for consideration by NATO Ministers.

(U) To be sure, there are significant pressures, both here and in Europe, for significant reductions in the numbers of nuclear warheads deployed as part of NATO's defensive forces. If we do not make clear the rationale for the numbers we believe to be necessary to support NATO's strategy of flexible response, these pressures will lead to reductions that could undermine the credibility of the deterrent forces.

(U) I understand that the Joint Staff has been directly involved in all phases of current HLG work and has provided to Richard Perle some recommendations for European nuclear stockpile numbers that represent varying levels of assessed risk. I am also aware that General Rogers is developing his recommendation for the numbers of warheads necessary. I hope these efforts can be brought together quickly, so that we may have a firm military judgment of the requirement to provide to NATO Ministers this autumn.

(U) I welcome the continuing support of the Joint Chiefs of Staff as the High Level Group's study is brought to completion.

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