

DECLASSIFIED

E.O. 12958, as amended, Sect 3.5

NSC/Soubers to Smith 09/06/2002

By bat Date 02/13/07

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

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April 14, 1970

National Security Decision Memorandum 53

TO:           The Secretary of Defense  
              The Director, Bureau of the Budget  
              The Director, Selective Service

SUBJECT: Draft Reform and the Elimination of Draft Calls

Following the NSC meeting of March 24th, the President has decided to plan on reducing draft calls to zero while carrying out interim draft reforms.

1. Conditions

The President has decided that future reductions in draft calls shall be subject to the following conditions:

-- the maintenance of active and reserve forces at levels consistent with the President's strategic and fiscal guidance;

-- the extension of induction authority beyond its current expiration date of July 1, 1971;

-- the availability of adequate funds to meet our timetable for reducing or eliminating draft calls.

The President wishes the Department of Defense to advise him when and if these conditions are not met, and to recommend changes, as necessary, in the implementation plan outlined below.

2. Implementation

To implement his decision, the President has directed that the Department of Defense take the following steps:

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-- during FY 1971, increase the pay of enlisted men with less than two years of service by 20 percent (\$300 million) to demonstrate our tangible commitment to the zero draft call concept;

-- during FY 1972, plan a large commitment of funds (\$2.0 billion) toward substantially reducing draft calls;

-- during FY 1973, plan a larger expenditure (\$3.5 billion) in the expectation that draft calls should be eliminated between July 1972 and July 1973.

Within this framework, the President wishes the Department of Defense, in coordination with the other addressee agencies, to prepare a detailed annual plan of the source, composition, and timing of expenditures necessary and their expected effects upon enlistments and retention. This plan shall be prepared by September 1 of each year for the following fiscal year and submitted to the President.

### 3. Draft Reform

The President has also decided to take the following immediate action on draft reform:

-- Request the Congress to permit the Selective Service to induct men according to their random sequence number.

-- Request the Congress to restore discretionary authority over undergraduate student deferments to the President. Then issue an Executive Order providing that those students, who do not now hold II-S deferments, would not be granted such deferments in the future. Students in two year colleges and apprentices should be treated similarly.

-- Continue to bar graduate student deferments except for students in medicine and allied specialties for which the Department of Defense advises the National Security Council that a special draft call will be required.

-- Take independent action in issuing an Executive Order phasing out occupational, agricultural, and paternity deferments. A man not now

holding one of these deferments would not be granted one in the future. At the same time, the Congress will be requested to make provision for the other reforms outlined above.

-- Grant postponement of induction to volunteers in government service programs, such as the Peace Corps, to complete their initial term of service. The granting of new postponement should be continued until the Director of the Selective Service determines, in cooperation with the interested agencies, that the denial of new postponements will not seriously disrupt these government programs.

The President wishes the Director of Selective Service to recommend any further procedural and administrative reforms necessary to make the Selective Service system as equitable and efficient as possible. These recommendations should be submitted to the President by July 1, 1970.

4. Induction Authority

The President deferred a decision on the following until next year:

-- The extension of authority for general inductions and medical inductions.

-- The establishment of an effective standby draft.

  
Henry A. Kissinger

cc: The Secretary of State  
The Director, Office of Emergency  
Preparedness  
The Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff