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Date: May 31, 1996

DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
<u>entire folder</u> 1. memo	Alexander H. Platt to Frank C. Carlucci, re Legislative Strategy Group Meeting on Trade, 3 p.m., January 12 [0201] (2 pp)	12/17/87	P5 CDB 11/15/00

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- P-1 National security classified information [(a)(1) of the PRA].
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- P-4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential commercial or financial information [(a)(4) of the PRA].
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- F-9 Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA].

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

INFORMATION

January 12, 1987

MEMORANDUM FOR FRANK C. CARLUCCI

THRU: STEPHEN I. DANZANSKY

FROM: ALEXANDER H. PLATT

SUBJECT: Legislative Strategy Group Meeting on Trade,
3 p.m., January 12, Don Regan's Office

There will be a Legislative Strategy Group meeting today at 3 p.m. in Don Regan's office to discuss trade legislation. The probable issues for discussion are the packaging, timing and presentation of legislation to amend U.S. trade laws -- as part of the Administration's competitiveness program.

Last week's EPC meetings (including the one you attended) concluded with the adoption of a series of legislative proposals that the Administration could either include in its own bill, or could live with if negotiations with the Congress forced upon us a more restrictive bill than we want. From a policy standpoint, although the Administration really only wants and needs legislation providing negotiating authority for a new round of trade negotiations, the additional proposals approved by the EPC -- with minor exceptions -- are unobjectionable.

One other competitiveness and trade related issue which may arise at the LSG, prompted in part by today's Post article, is export controls. Given the current political atmosphere, it is unlikely that an Administration competitiveness program could emerge without addressing this issue, including possibly legislative changes. NSC has taken a leading role in coordinating and leading Administration policy in this area and has exacted concessions from the leading agencies (Commerce, Defense and State) to participate in a National Security Study Directive on this subject to be completed with recommendations for administrative and legislative changes by March 1, 1987. Your willingness to become personally involved in this difficult dispute, indicated at this morning's ODSM, will give the process needed impetus.

Along this same line, another item that might arise will be the question of renewing oil and gas equipment controls (political) when they expire in late January. We are certain that Baker, Shultz, Regan and Baldrige will be pressing hard for release of these controls as a political gesture. Your response to Allen Wallis last Friday struck the right tone.

Presumably, the purpose of today's meeting will be to develop a consensus on the best approach for the Administration to present these proposals in order to control, to the extent possible, the terms of the debate.

One major strategic question is the packaging of the legislation. The EPC consensus last week, expressed by Jim Baker, is that there is no Administration trade bill, just a trade component of an Administration competitiveness program. That still leaves open the question of whether the Administration should introduce an omnibus competitiveness bill, or send up separate components as discrete pieces of legislation. The best answer to this lie in how the Administration intends to manage our overall negotiation with the Congress on competitiveness. For the greatest effectiveness, in our view, the Administration should adopt that strategy that enables Secretary Baker, as Chairman of the EPC, to be the lead spokesman on all portions of either an omnibus bill or a broad competitiveness program.

A strong Administration spokesman and negotiator, such as Jim Baker, is needed on these issues because of the very real risk that Congress will take actions that will seriously undermine the long-term ability for the U.S. to compete, and for the world economy to grow. Our overall legislative strategy should be to open negotiations with the Congress in a cooperative spirit, but to clearly enunciate those areas where Congressional action would be totally unacceptable, i.e., actions that close U.S. markets, limit Presidential discretion in trade cases (under Sections 201 and 301), violate U.S. trade agreements (such as GATT, especially at a time when the U.S. has assumed a leadership role in the new round of trade negotiations) and sectoral reciprocity. The Administration's posture should be to work with Congress to positively promote U.S. competitiveness, accept politically necessary legislation that has neutral effects on the trading system, but to boldly call those provisions that are unacceptable (listed above) "protectionist" and their supporters, "protectionists."

In its consideration of possible trade provisions last week, the EPC implicitly avoided any attempts to adopt proposals which would call for drastic reductions of the trade deficit through legislation -- i.e. there was no discussion of import surcharges or other market closing measures. The LSG may also be used as a forum to air opinions on the President's long term plan to respond to the serious political problem of the continuing trade deficit.

Alison Fortier concurs.