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APRIL 26, 1976

Office of the White House Press Secretary

THE WHITE HOUSEFact Sheet

The President is today requesting an amendment to the FY '77 Budget that would provide an additional \$260.7 million in ~~missile~~ procurement funds for the Minuteman III ICBM; \$56.3 million for a higher yield MK-12A reentry vehicle; and \$5.4 million in associated military construction.

When the FY '77 Budget was being prepared a decision was made not to request funds in the FY '77 Budget for continued Minuteman III production. However, in Secretary Rumsfeld's Annual Report, he stated that, depending on the pace of the SALT II negotiations and our continuing assessment of Soviet ICBM programs, it might be necessary to request supplemental funding to continue production.

The Administration continued to review this program and has now concluded that, with the benefit of the additional time to note the pace of the strategic arms limitations negotiations, it is appropriate to request the funds necessary to give us the option to continue Minuteman III production in FY '77.

If Congress approves the Administration's \$40 million reprogramming request for FY '76, the Minuteman III line will continue until about September. Prior to September some parts of the line would begin to complete their work and re-opening them would be both expensive and time consuming.

We would expect to review this issue again in late summer. Prudence demands that we ask Congress now for approval of funding that will provide the necessary options to continue full Minuteman III production.

In addition, the Administration has continued to review the MK-12A program and has concluded that because of the decision to maintain the option to continue Minuteman III production, it is desirable to submit a FY '77 Budget Amendment to provide procurement funds for the MK-12A higher yield reentry vehicle in FY '77 instead of waiting until FY '78.

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