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6 APR 1964

Strategic Force Capability

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1. During the past few months we have conducted a detailed review of the strategic force with particular emphasis on examining the unplanned reduction in capability which has resulted primarily from the extended structural modification program for the B-52, and secondarily, from recognition of the marginal effectiveness of the early liquid fueled ICBMs. This review also included the cost comparisons involving these ICBMs as you requested at the 24 January meeting of the DSMG.
2. As currently scheduled, the B-52 modification program requires more aircraft in-work than the 10% that are normally available in the command support inventory to support such programs. So far, it involves an unexpected reduction in B-52 aircraft assigned to each operational unit of from 4 to 11 percent. This means that until these modifications are completed, almost one-fifth of our total B-52 inventory (including command support aircraft) will be in-work and not available.
3. Additionally, we do not have complete assurance that the current modifications will be adequate or that it will not be necessary to initiate additional modifications. The structural loads placed on the B-52 are increasing constantly, and although the aircraft are being modified to meet these greater loads, the adequacy of the structural strengthening will not be proven until the aircraft can be operated by SAC under simulated combat conditions. That this uncertainty should be a matter of concern is also pointed out in the useful and timely study of the life expectancy of the B-52 which is nearing completion by members of the OSD Staff headed by Mr. James Davis. In this study it is suggested that it may be at least two more years before we are sure that these modifications are adequate. It is my understanding the Davis study concluded that a sufficient number of B-47's should be retained until modified B-52 aircraft have been proven in planned SAC usage.
4. In addition to the interim solution considered by the Davis Group, we examined other possible force adjustments, such as increased production of new systems, which could compensate

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for the known and potential deficiencies. Other solutions, however, were not only too costly but did not provide the necessary capability in a timely manner.

5. The B-47 is one of the most effective weapon systems in the current SIOP and, using expected planning factors, can deliver a weapon on target at relatively low cost. The aircraft is very reliable, is easily maintained, and a considerable number can be retained without unacceptable impact on other programs. Furthermore, the retention of the B-47 would increase our contingency capability -- both nuclear and conventional. As you will recall, last year we increased the number of B-47 aircraft assigned to each unit to sixty (45 UE plus 15 command support). Although this additional resource - currently nearly one hundred aircraft - does not increase the alert capability, it does provide an extra strategic resource during a Cuban-type crisis, and does enable us to meet short term contingency requirements without reducing the alert force.

6. Because of the overriding need to maintain - and to increase - effectiveness without an increase in funds and manpower, we have explored possible adjustments within the strategic force as a means of providing the resources required to retain B-47's to compensate for B-52 problems. Our examination of the current and projected contributions of the early liquid fueled missiles indicates these systems will give a marginal return for the money to be expended. Specifically, in a comparison of the relative cost per weapon on target, the B-47 offered a marked advantage over the Atlas E and Titan I under the three attack conditions in the current SIOP.

7. In the long run, although we can expect an increase in the reliability as well as the alert factor of these missiles, this very likely will be offset largely by their decreased survivability as the Soviets acquire additional - and more accurate - ballistic missiles. So that although we expect some decreased penetration capability for the B-47, the comparison should continue to favor a B-47 carrying a single weapon; obviously, there would be greater margin with multiple weapons. It should be recognized, however, that a cost comparison does not consider important factors such as the quick-kill of time urgent targets and, therefore, should not be the sole basis for decision.

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8. Finally, if the Atlas D, Atlas E and Titan I were phased out by the end of this calendar year, approximately \$240 million would be available during the five year program to support the retention of the B-47. This figure includes the savings which would be realized by cancelling the Atlas F production and substituting the Atlas E, modified to an F configuration for \$100,000 per missile, to fulfill further Atlas F requirements.

9. As to the number of B-47 units whose phase-out should be deferred, we would recommend that three additional wings be retained to the end of FY 1967 and two wings to the end of FY 1968, based principally on the following considerations:

a. Impact on other programs. Three wings can be retained without unacceptable impact on other programs. In this regard, however, with any retention, relief from the current pilot shortage will be deferred. Beyond three wings, retention would require major adjustments to other programs.

b. Impact on strategic capability. Three B-47 wings would provide almost the same number of UE vehicles that would be taken from the force by the modification of the B-52 and by an early phase-out of the Atlas E and Titan I. Furthermore, three wings have a rather substantial capability which would provide insurance against further B-52 problems.

c. Impact on manpower and funds. Three wings can be retained well within the manpower and funds which would be made available by early phase-out of the Atlas D, Atlas E, and Titan I. In fact, the B-47's could be retained and still realize overall savings of up to \$65 million and 1700 manpower spaces by the end of FY 1965 if an immediate decision is made.

10. Accordingly, we recommend that the B-47 program be adjusted as follows:

	<u>FY 64</u>	<u>FY 65</u>	<u>FY 66</u>	<u>FY 67</u>	<u>FY 68</u>
Current (Wings)	10	5	0	-	-
Revised (Wings)	10	8	3	2	0

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11. In order to provide the necessary resources, we also recommend the following ballistic missile program revision be approved:

	<u>FY 64</u>	<u>FY 65</u>	<u>FY 66</u>	<u>FY 67</u>	<u>FY 68</u>
Current (Squadrons)					
Atlas D	3	0	-	-	-
Atlas E	3	3	3	0	-
Titan I	6	6	6	6	0
Revised (Squadrons)					
Atlas D	0	-	-	-	-
Atlas E	3	0	-	-	-
Titan I	6	0	-	-	-

12. The manpower and fund requirements and savings as well as the specific B-47 unit changes are outlined in Attachment 1.

13. We have studied all major areas associated with this program and have determined there are no limitations which would prevent implementation. Reparable spares, consumables, ground support equipment, and weapons are available. Adjustments will have to be made within the personnel area. Primarily, these are related to terminating certain missile training courses and the future assignment of some missile personnel to fulfill requirements currently planned to be met by B-47 personnel. Some adjustments within the funds and manpower figures may be warranted as the proposal is implemented. For example, it is very likely that an increase in maintenance manpower spaces in the Atlas F and Titan II and the assignment of some of the highly qualified personnel which would become available from the early phase-out could result in increased reliability and alert for these later systems.

14. In conclusion it is my belief that the actions outlined in this letter are militarily sound, economically desirable and should be implemented. It is therefore requested that the proposal be approved as soon as possible. In this regard, it should be noted that we are well into our normal programming lead time

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which would apply to units to be extended or phased-out early. It is to our advantage to obtain a decision at an early date to achieve the program adjustments in an orderly manner and to effect maximum savings. This is especially true with reference to the FY 1964 estimated savings of \$29.5 million which were computed on the basis of a 1 April decision to have the Atlas D out of the force by 30 June and the Atlas E and Titan I by the end of this calendar year. The amount of savings to be achieved in FY 1964 diminishes rapidly after this date.

1 Attachment
Program Change Summary

CURTIS E. LOWMY
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Chief of Staff

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PROGRAM CHANGES SUMMARY

1. General. The manpower and funding information listed below are the changes to the Air Force program which will be necessary to support the program change.

2. Manpower. The following is the year end position of manpower space adjustments required.

	FY 1965			FY 1966			FY 1967					
	OFF	AMN	CIV	TOTAL	OFF	AMN	CIV	TOTAL	OFF	AMN	CIV	TOTAL
ACQUIRED (B-47's)	1002	3956	62	5020	949	3718	100	4767	652	2565	61	2378
SOURCE												
ATLAS E	408	2181	87	2676	408	2181	87	2676	---	---	---	---
TITAN I	437	3515	168	4120	437	3515	168	4120	437	3515	168	4120
TOTAL	845	5696	255	6796	845	5696	255	6796	437	3515	168	4120
BALANCE	-157	1740	193	1776	-104	1978	155	2029	-215	950	107	842

3. Funding. The following is a listing of savings and costs in millions of dollars. The savings for FY 64 are computed on terminating the update program in the Titan I, terminating procurement of training devices for Titan I and other similar actions. The estimate for FY 64 used a decision date of 1 April 1964. The savings listed for Atlas D/E include cancellation of procurement for Atlas F missiles and converting all available Atlas E missiles to Atlas F configuration at the cost of \$100,000 per missile.

	FY 64			FY 65			FY 66			FY 67			FY 68			TOTAL
	\$NONE			\$31.6	\$63.9	\$64.4	\$32.2	\$192.1								
REQUIRED (B-47's)																
SOURCE																
ATLAS D/E	8.0			48.4	39.9	18.0	13.0	127.3								
TITAN I	21.5			20.0	33.0	32.0	11.0	117.5								
TOTAL	29.5			68.4	72.9	50.0	24.0	244.8								
BALANCE	\$29.5	\$36.8	\$ 9.0	-\$14.4	-\$ 8.2	\$ 52.7										

There is no impact on Gold Flow involved in this program change.

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4. Unit Changes. The unit changes listed below are used for computing the costs, savings, and manpower adjustments in this program change. Following is a listing of the changes in the B-47 force for the period of FY 1965 through FY 1968:

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>INACTIVATION DATES</u>	
		<u>PROGRAMMED</u>	<u>REVISED</u>
310	SCHILLING	September 1964	June 1966
384	LITTLE ROCK	September 1964	June 1966
376	LOCKBOURNE (ECL)	March 1965	September 1964
307	LINCOLN	March 1965	June 1966
380	PLATTSBURGH	June 1966	June 1967
509	PEASE	June 1966	June 1968
100	PEASE	June 1966	June 1968

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