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Orig: Centerville  
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12 JUN 1958 rd: General  
Montgomery  
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SUBJECT: Future Strategic Force (UNCLASSIFIED)

TO: Chief of Staff  
United States Air Force  
Washington 25, D. C.

1. The baseline for determining the size and character of the future strategic force is the B-52. This bomber employed in combination with the KC-135 will, without question, be the greatest single factor in deterring aggression during the next five to ten years. Our first task, therefore, is to build and man sufficient B-52's and KC-135's to insure for an aggressor an unacceptable outcome from an air atomic exchange, even if he should strike first.  
(SECRET)

2. It is expected that the defensive posture of Russia by 1960 will offer a serious challenge to the sub-sonic bomber. It is unlikely that the B-52 will be able to penetrate these defenses with acceptable attrition rates unless significant advances in penetration devices are made and incorporated into the weapon system. The B-52 will ultimately require both active and passive systems. Our second task, then, is to continue to support the B-52 model improvement program and the penetration systems under development for this time period.  
(TOP SECRET)

3. The improved B-52 will be the practical end of the line in the evolution of the sub-sonic bomber. The design point for the follow-on bomber will necessarily be beyond the sonic barrier. To provide a growth potential beyond the original design objectives, it is imperative that steel and titanium be utilized in its construction. It is fully appreciated that speed is obtained at the expense of range and that over-all sizing is kept within established practical limits by restricting the military load. Aerial refueling will be required to insure an intercontinental capability from the start. Floating wing tips should be examined as the support system offering the greatest promise for the future. They may, when developed, supplement and in time replace the tanker. Passive counter measures employed in

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combination with speed offer the greatest per pound defensive capability. Our third task, then, is to accept the interim objectives set down in the 110-A GOR as a satisfactory basis for the design of the follow-on to the B-52, taking full advantage of time and effort expended in this direction to date, and provide for this program national support second only to the B-52/KC-135. (SECRET)

4. The Strategic Air Command has no quarrel with the priority afforded the Navaho and the ICBM, providing these activities are not pursued at the expense of the B-52/KC-135 and 110-A programs. As desirable as it is to press for development of a tactically useful intercontinental missile, the proven manned-bomber system must be retained to insure survival through the period when the missile is, at best, a psychological weapon and a device useful for softening of defenses in advance of the bombers. The building of a 1500-mile missile in the time period when the feasibility of a 5500-mile missile is generally accepted, is believed an unnecessary distraction in competition with the main event. Our fourth task is to seek at the earliest practical date a realignment of the strategic missile program to eliminate duplication of effort and dilution of resources. (SECRET)

5. The application of nuclear power to airplanes is inevitable. The nation which produces the first operational nuclear bomber will have obtained a tremendous military advantage. The 125-A program, after numerous false starts and several narrow escapes from crippling cut-backs in support, is now established on a firm basis and is beginning to show significant progress. It is essential that this program continue to receive such support as is required to keep development in the power plant area and studies in the nuclear effects areas proceeding at the maximum practical rate. With AEC underwriting a large portion of this program, and a military budget in excess of \$30 billion, it is inconceivable that a \$300 million dollar program cannot be fully funded. Our fifth task, then, is to continue to support the nuclear bomber, but not at the expense of the B-52/KC-135, the 110-A, the Navaho, or the ICBM. If necessary we should go beyond the artificial and arbitrary confines of the Air Force budget for support of the 125-A program. (SECRET)

6. The expenditure of large sums of money for production of the still unproven Rascal and Snark cannot be justified on the basis

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of fulfilling an operational requirement. These systems have now been overtaken by events. The Bell and Northrop facilities should be redirected along more productive lines. (SECRET)

CURTIS E. LEMAY  
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