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Gen LeMay's Diary

22 January 1951

Arrived Washington 21 Jan 51. The primary reason for this trip to the Pentagon was for General LeMay and General Sweeney to attend a commanders conference held in the Pentagon 22-23 Jan. This conference was to discuss mobilization and expansion plans and reminders of this trip to the CG.

23 January

General LeMay attended a short briefing by Mr. Stuart on Wherry housing and then conferred with the target board consisting of General Moore, General Cabell - Intelligence, General Edwards, General Landon - Operations, and General Twining, Vice C/S. The purpose of the meeting was to lay down the ground rules upon which target panels will establish target priority for submission to the JCS.

General LeMay strongly emphasized and his point was agreed upon by the board the need for very careful selection of the target system ~~SYSTEM~~ in order to conserve our stockpile of atomic weapons and he felt any target system picked that failed to reap the benefits derived from urban area bombing when a larger circular error is encountered than planned was wasteful and for that reason the basic target system of electric power was felt to be wrong. He agreed with priority on petroleum and atomic weapons, but felt that rather than attack the electric power resources we should concentrate on industry itself which is located in urban areas and when the circular error required is not made that a bonus will be derived from use of the bomb. As an example of what he tried to stress, he cited attacks on aircraft plant in Tokyo in the late war. Whereas the aircraft plant itself was untouched, the resulting fire raids in the surrounding urban areas resulted in nil production at that factory.

A copy of the agreement reached on the ground rules on which target selection will be based in the future can be obtained from Colonel Kenzie, Hq SAC Intelligence. One further point was discussed at this meeting. General LeMay had in his office at the time of the meeting a letter from the Air Force requiring that he adopt system 245 in his current war plan. Primary system in this plan was electric power. General LeMay clearly stated that he did not want to adopt this plan for aforementioned reasons and asked that this letter be rescinded. This was done and plan OFFTACKLE, later called SHAKEDOWN, is still in effect. General LeMay was opposed to the

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Eo. 12061	
By <i>H.A. [signature]</i>	Date <i>22 May 80</i>

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E.O. 12065, Sec. 3-402
DOD Directive 5200.30, June 18, 1979
By AAA; L.C.; Date- 4-8-81

General LeMay's Diary

23 January (continued)

per RD USAF

wording of this letter which he construed to mean that before he could change any aiming point contained in system 245 he had to receive the authorization of the Air Staff. General LeMay felt that his hands were being tied by this action and that he was not being given any leeway to make the most of a tactical situation that might arise. He clearly stated that no commander should ever be given an order of this type. General Twining agreed with him on this stand and ordered General Landon to retract the letter.

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