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1 AFDDC Appr  
2 AFCCS Sgr

AFDRD-CS/S 56234

7 OCT 1959

Major R. W. Dillon aff

Rocket Powered Strategic Air-to-Surface Missile (CAN-87A)

1. General Power has submitted two letters dated 2 and 11 September 1959 reaffirming the requirement for an airborne ballistic air-to-surface missile. The desirability of initiating the development of this missile is shared by the Air Staff. However, we are not only faced with the problem of convincing the Department of Defense that the ballistic trajectory is the best approach, but we are faced with the problem of providing sufficient funds during the FY 1961 period.

2. The attached proposed response to General Power's letters reports that the Air Force may be forced by limited funds to pursue an Advanced Air-to-Surface Missile under the category of an Advanced Development Program.

RECOMMENDATION:

3. It is recommended that the attached proposed letter to General Power be signed.

B. R. LAWRENCE, Colonel, USAF  
Deputy Director of  
Research & Development, DCS/D

3 Atch

- 1. Proposed ltr to Gen Power (S)
- 2. Ltr to Gen White dtd 11 Sep 59 (S)
- 3. Ltr to Gen White dtd 2 Sep 59 (S)

- DRD-OS/S - Coord Cy
- DRD-OS - Rdg File
- DRD-OS/S - Rdg File
- AFDRD - Info
- AFDDC - Info
- AFCCS - Ofc of s3
- AFCVC - Ex Serv c

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By <i>5a 1206</i>	Date <i>12/10/82</i>

*Cmd SAC*

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Dear Tommy:

I am quite in accord with your views on the necessity for developing the GAM-87A in a timely manner. I agree that this weapon system promises to increase the effectiveness of the B-52 and to extend its military life. It is important to do both of these things since the B-52's will represent the major portion of our bomber force as well as our largest capital investment in manned aircraft. My views are known and supported by the Air Staff.

We do have two difficult problem areas. We have not yet convinced the Department of Defense that we have a valid requirement for both the ALBM and the Hound Dog; and we have, as you know, serious funding problems.

We have a good military case for the ALBM. In this connection I have directed DCS/Operations and DCS/Development to concentrate on solving this problem.

As far as funding is concerned, we cannot do this fully without giving up something else. The Air Staff has the problem under study now and are scheduled to make an early report. It is possible that money shortage may force the ALBM into the Advanced Development category with work limited to booster, guidance and other component projects. Obviously, this is not our recommended approach but is a reality which the Air Force may have to face. Its one advantage is that it keeps the program alive and will permit a go-ahead to be given, without undue loss of time, at any future date.

The facts and comments contained in your letters relative to the delays in the GAM-87A Rocket Powered ASM

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Program have contributed much to our discussions with the Department of Defense on this matter. I am confident that in time our continuous and concerted efforts to get on with the GAM-87A will prove successful. Moreover, it is my hope that the GAM-87A, along with other concrete examples, will serve to point up the need for returning to the military services the responsibility for determining operational requirements as well as the selection of contractors and the required Weapon System Management.

Sincerely,

General Thomas S. Power  
Commander-in-Chief  
Strategic Air Command  
Offutt Air Force Base  
Omaha, Nebraska

CURTIS E. LEAHY  
General, U.S. Air Force  
Vice Chief of Staff

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*Action Base*  
*EBA*

HEADQUARTERS STRATEGIC AIR COMMAND  
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE  
OFFUTT AIR FORCE BASE, NEBRASKA

*C/S MacNata*

2 SEP 1959

*W.*

General Thomas D. White  
Chief of Staff, USAF  
Washington 25, D.C.

Dear Tommy

I am very concerned over the delays in the GAM-87A Rocket Powered ASM program. I have been informed that unless funds are released, development will be stopped completely on 30 September. (S)

The Rocket Powered ASM was selected to satisfy a definite military requirement. In order to deter an attack and prevail against the enemy, we must threaten him with assault from all directions, at low and high altitude, and through vertical ballistic missile trajectories. To do this we need a composite force which is relatively secure and able to retaliate quickly and decisively under positive control. (S)

GAM-87A is an essential element of a composite force. It has a significant speed advantage over any potential carrier, and can soften defenses not only for its own carrier but for other bombers well ahead of the release point. The missile's short flight time will enable us to catch more of the enemy's force on the ground. Speed, altitude, and the ability to approach omni-directionally make it practically invulnerable to the enemy, and will force him to develop a costly new defense system. Present intelligence indicates that even if he achieves an operational anti-ICBM, its probability of killing the GAM-87A will be in the order of only 5% by 1970. (S)

I have received unofficial reports that a recent cost effectiveness study favors an improved Hound Dog over GAM-87A. I would like to emphasize that a long range Hound Dog will not satisfy our requirement for a follow-on missile to the GAM-77. Such a model improvement operating at the same speeds and altitudes as Hound Dog will be at least as vulnerable as Hound Dog by the post-1963 time period. The GAM-77 program must certainly be continued to insure a current ASM capability while GAM-87A is under development. However, we should strive for GAM-87A as early as possible for use on the B-52, with later adaptation to the B-70 and CANAL. Adequate funding from 1 October 1959 will permit us to equip B-52s at relatively small cost, since we can provision approximately 11 squadrons in currently programmed modification lines. Each month's delay will cost us one of these squadrons, commensurate savings, and a second downtime for GAM-87A capability. (S)

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By *[Signature]* Date *12/10/88*

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*9 Oct*

*C. 18305*

*9-8*

*People reply to your CCS. C/S MacNata*  
*RNA*

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In summary, the Rocket Powered ASM promises us great strategic gains at relatively low cost, and I consider it an essential addition to our composite force. Your aid is requested in getting this program funded for immediate and continued development. (S)

This letter is classified Secret because it discusses development of a future weapons system. (U)

Sincerely

THOMAS S. POWER  
General, USAF  
Commander in Chief

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