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PREP REPLY 519 CVC

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26 NOV 1955

SUBJECT: (Uncl) SAC Position on Missiles

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

1. Major General Samuel R. Brentnall, Assistant Chief of Staff for Guided Missiles, has requested my views regarding priorities in the missile program. Close examination of the various programs underway or being considered convinces me that the field of missiles cannot be considered in isolation, but must be considered in the broader framework of our over all offensive system. Specifically, any approach to long range missiles which fails to consider their relationship to strategic bombing would be unrealistic.
2. Since we can never predict the exact state of the art of a particular system at a point in time in the future, it is fundamental that we develop on a sufficiently broad front to permit some choice when the time comes. However, expansion on too broad a front will so dilute our development resources that we may never produce anything significantly worthwhile at the right time.
3. Obviously, the proper approach is a compromise between these extremes and great care should be taken in the narrowing process. When it becomes necessary to eliminate one weapons system in favor of another, the selection process should not be confined to a particular family of weapons, but should include the entire spectrum of offensive systems.
4. As the long range objective, I consider an intercontinental ballistic missile with a capability of instantaneous launch and with acceptable reliability, accuracy, and yield to be the ultimate weapon in the strategic inventory. During the interim and until these capabilities are proven, we must establish initial objectives and utilize demonstrably effective weapons systems.

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S.A. GOLDBERG
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C, Subj: (Uncl) SAC Position on Missiles

5. The B-52 will be the primary weapons system in the SAC inventory until the follow-on has demonstrated acceptable combat effectiveness. It is not likely that this follow-on will be a missile or an atomic powered aircraft, but rather that a chemically powered manned bomber will be the most feasible and effective successor.

6. Our studies indicate that employment of missiles, whether carried on airplanes or launched from the ground, will be principally to aid the penetration of the manned bomber. Their military worth will, in all likelihood, be less than their political and psychological value, and in no case will they alone be capable of destroying the target system.

7. Consequently, it is my firm belief that the manned bomber must be the backbone of our offense for some time to come. As the Russian air power target system increases, as we know it will, there must be an attendant increase in the number of B-52's or follow-on aircraft. By 1963, the inventory of the B-52 aircraft, the only proven delivery system anticipated to be available at that time, should comprise some 1900 with some 1300 KC-135 tankers in support. Airborne devices which aid the bomber in successfully penetrating defenses will become increasingly important. These are principally bomber defense armament, electronic countermeasures, decoys, and air-to-surface missiles.

8. A high performance, chemically powered follow-on to the B-52 is urgently required and should contain the families of penetration aids indicated, but of more sophisticated design as the state of the art progresses. The follow-on to this aircraft should be the nuclear powered bomber. Its design should incorporate penetration aids most effective for that time period.

9. In order that the phasing of manned bombers with offensive missiles be in consonance with continuous National Security and technological progress, the various missile programs should be re-examined to eliminate as many as is necessary to provide the funds for extension of our bomber capability. First on the list for elimination should be the Rascal. Next should be the Snark, since its performance is low for the time period in which it could be used. As far as the intermediate range ballistic missile is concerned, I feel that this is a step backward and in my opinion this program should never have been started. I would retain the Navaho in the missile program and, in order to improve Air Force direction of the program, would assign it to the Western Development Division of ARDC for Air Force supervision, coincidentally providing for it to be funded in the same manner as the ICBM and the IRBM.

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10. With funds then available for the manned bomber, I would press for maximum improvement in the penetration aids required and would place all emphasis necessary on the earliest practicable development of the 110A.

11. There are indications that by 1962 an air-to-surface missile for the B-52 can be operational which can be launched 400 or more miles from target, with as much as 10 megatons yield and with an accuracy of one nautical mile. Such a weapon could certainly be desirable in the SAC inventory of weapons, but would not be the answer to our total bombing problem. Higher yield weapons deliverable only by manned bombers would still be required for many critical targets.

12. In summary, I recommend:

- a. Discontinuance of the Rasgal Program.
- b. Elimination of Snark if it detracts from development of the 110A.
- c. Transfer of Navaho to Western Development Division and revision of funding concept in order that it not compete for Air Force funds to the derogation of the heavy bomber program.
- d. Assignment of highest priority possible on development of the 110A with compatible penetration systems to include the air-to-surface missile.
- e. Expansion of the heavy bomber force to forty wings of forty-five UE with appropriate tanker support.
- f. Early development and production of an air-to-surface missile for the B-52.

Curtis E. LeMay
 CURTIS E. LeMAY
 General, USAF
 Commander in Chief
 1580

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GENERAL N. F. TWINING
CHIEF OF STAFF: U S A F

DEC 9 1955

DATE

MEMORANDUM TO:

Mr. Charles

*You & Mr. May were asked
to submit his comments,
which are attached & with
regard to the missile
program.*

For your information.

→ Not 2

*Noted thanks - Let's
discuss the implications
when you are ready*

D.A.D. # 13-55

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