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

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REPLY TO
ATTN OF: DO

SUBJECT: (U) GAM-87A Skybolt Production Program

31 AUG 1962

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

C/S has noted

1. General Power is out of the country and has instructed me to highlight his concern over the repeated delays and lack of positive action being taken to approve the GAM-87A Skybolt production program. Operational planning for this system was based on a production go-ahead of 1 July 1962. If additional time is lost in justifying and restating the requirement for the system, our Skybolt operational objectives will be placed in jeopardy. (S)
2. We have been informed that DOD is presently studying a proposal concerning an advanced GAM-77A as an alternative to the GAM-87A. We consider this action untimely and unwarranted. In the initial appraisal of the ALBM, full consideration was given the air breathing ASMs and the requirement for replacing the ASM with the ALBM at the earliest possible date was unequivocally established. (S)
3. We are unaware of any state-of-the-art limitations that would keep Skybolt from being produced on schedule and provide SAC with seven operational ALBM squadrons by end 1965. We are convinced that B-52 aircraft, equipped with internal weapons and four Skybolt missiles, operating on ground and airborne alert from ZI and overseas bases give this country positive assurance of a secure, quick reacting, omni-directional, flexible striking force. (S)
4. The GAM-87 has always been considered as a primary weapon system critical to the essential requirement for a mixed force. Any decision to delay or to not build the GAM-87 will immediately increase the deficit between weapons and DZGs. It is extremely doubtful that production of Minuteman could be increased, even with a new source, to fill this gap. Aside from the above, the requirement for the GAM-87 as an integral part of the basic necessity to have a mixed force cannot be over emphasized. (S)

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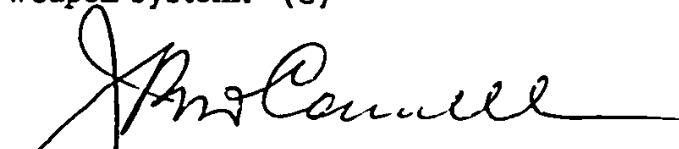
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5. General Power requests your personal support in securing immediate approval of a Skybolt production program and will support you with whatever personal action you recommend. (U)

6. This letter is classified SECRET because it discusses a future weapon system. (U)



J. P. McCONNELL
Lieutenant Colonel USAF
Vice Commander-in-Chief

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