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~~Office Memorandum~~ • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : Chief of Naval Operations
Via: Vice Chief of Naval Operations

Op-06/jg
DATE: 1 February 1957

FROM : DCNO (Plans and Policy)

OP-002 ✓
OP-003 ✓ 2/4
OP-004 ✓
OP-005 ✓
OP-006 ✓
OP-007 ✓

SUBJECT: Railroad; running of

Ref: (a) Op-09 Second Memorandum Endorsement, ser 0002P00,
31 Jan 1957, subject: Guided missile sites in the
Middle East
(b) Op-06 ser 00038P06, 25 Jan 1957, same subject

1. I believe that the dim view of reference (b) expressed by the Vice Chief of Naval Operations in reference (a) is not wholly warranted, and may be due to some misunderstanding of the intent of reference (b). Without any desire to initiate an exchange of memoranda which could last all winter, I am nevertheless impelled to submit this one in order to set the record straight.

2. It is not the intent of my memorandum to recommend that the sea-borne IRBM capability be superimposed on the SAC capability, but that it supplant it in substantial measure. The whole idea is to free this retaliatory capability from fixed shore bases in the United States and in Allied territory, thereby removing a major threat to our allies and to the continental United States resulting from the mere presence of SAC bases and missile bases in these locations. I am in agreement with the thought implicit in paragraph 2 of reference (a) that the retaliatory capability of the United States, expressed in weight of bombs, is more than adequate now.

3. I am still of the opinion that if we had a substantial number of IRBM submarines deployed as a matter of routine around the Eurasian periphery, we would have a retaliatory capability which would be difficult if not impossible for the Soviets to neutralize--certainly more difficult to neutralize than our existing capability which relies upon fixed bases at locations which we must presume are known to the enemy.

4. This is not a matter of "casting envious eyes on the SAC side of the fence". The Navy does not need the IRBM; the IRBM needs the Navy. When this capability materializes, I think the United States would be better advised to channel funds and manpower in this direction rather than to more B-52s, more airfields, more tankers, and more overseas bases in somebody else's front yard, thereby increasing the number of No. 1 priority Soviet targets in the United States and Allied territory.

Copy to:
Op-61

R. F. Libby
R. F. Libby
Deputy Chief of Naval Operations

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