



MEDARIS

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Defense Department committee which has just postponed decision on whether to go ahead with the Air Force's Thor missile or the Army's Jupiter. Maj. Gen. Medaris is of the Army's ballistic agency; Holaday is Special Assistant Defense Secretary. Maj. Gen. Schriever heads the missile division of the Air Force.

Differences in U. S., Russia. Americans should not be surprised at the Soviet accomplishment in the ballistic missile field. The dictatorship of the Soviet Union can put on a crash program at any time for any purpose. If resources are short, it merely means a further lowering of the standards of living of the population. Scientists, engineers, management and technical experts can be ordered anywhere and on any job regardless of personal choice. In crash programs, the Russians developed the A-bomb four years before our scientists estimated that it was possible at the earliest. Although the United States exploded the first hydrogen device, the Russians exploded the first practical hydrogen weapon seven months before the United States.

To counter the United States threat of bombing attack, they built 13,000 Mig-15 jet fighters in three years. While the United States felt it had to choose between turboprop engines and jet engines, since there was not money enough to develop both, the Russians developed both at the same time.

They developed, more than two years ago, jet engines of greater thrust than any the West has operating to date, although we are about to catch up. They are operating the first jet passenger aircraft in the world.

The people pay the price. There are no smiles on their faces in Moscow. The average family lives in a hut, sharing kitchen and toilet facilities with three or four other families. Looking at the people on the streets of Moscow, one wonders where all the second-hand clothing came from, for no one is well dressed. There are no neckties in evidence and few have coats.

Unlike the United States which has started and stopped its missile programs off and on, which has starved them until the past two years, the Russians have been going full speed ahead with them ever since 1946. In this they showed more imagination than our own officials, many of whom considered ballistic missiles visionary.

Dictatorship Advantages. The Soviet dictatorship is reaping the benefits now in the success of its missile program, of their efforts made to educate scientists and engineers, of the sacrifices of the people, of the imagination of their military and scientific personnel and of the iron dictatorship that pursues its ends regardless of the low standards of living of its proletariat.

The United States in peacetime cannot operate in such a fashion. Nevertheless, had there been more imagination in official circles before they became frightened, about three years ago, of what intelligence reported of Soviet progress, had the missile program been maintained at an adequate level since the war and had an organization not diffused between

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in the world by intercontinental ballistic missiles."

"Submarines," he declared, "have also become formidable weapons as they can be used to shell coastal cities and even other targets with rocket weapons carrying atomic and hydrogen warheads."

This is probably the explanation for the tremendous Soviet submarine fleet variously estimated at from 450 to 600.

United States military officials do not grant that Soviet rockets can make our bases untenable so easily as the Soviet military propagandists maintain. An air base, by definition and fact, is a pinpoint target. To actually hit the runway and make it permanently unusable may require a dozen or two dozen missile attacks.

Low-ground installations might be destroyed and the base might have to be evacuated for a time until radioactivity decayed to safe levels, but operations can be resumed with crews and supplies flown in as soon as the level of radioactivity permits. The base remains usable as long as the runway is intact.

The Air Force has always counted on losses from a surprise attack and that is one reason why the Strategic Air Command and the tactical air forces in Europe, if they are unharmed initially, have the capacity of destroying everything of military significance in the Soviet Union twice over.

The Air Force recognizes that Soviet missile capability makes the problem more acute, since so far there is no counter-missile missile and warning-time decreases to negligible proportions. They would expect losses in a surprise missile attack, but not to be knocked out. The problem is more acute than it was, but the missile threat changes it only in degree.

Other Side of the Picture.

Looking at the other side of the picture, our strategic and tactical air forces are still capable of inflicting the same disastrous losses on the Soviet Union. The ballistic missiles of the enemy do not lessen their capability to get through.

What ultimately will make missiles instead of bombers a preferred system of delivery is the imminent development of anti-aircraft missiles with nuclear warheads that many experts estimate can make defense against manned or unmanned aircraft almost 100 per cent perfect.

However, the Soviet military forces, with the perfection of intermediate-range and intercontinental missiles, as well as missiles fired from submarines, will have the capacity of massive retaliation against the United States.

When the interplay of threat depended upon long-range bombers only, the United States had a massive superiority. Now we shall have to accept in the near future the unhappy fact that the Soviet Union will have as great a capacity for massive destruction in the United States and on our allies as we can inflict on it.

In view of the possibility of surprise attack, the Strategic Air Command has for a long time kept a percentage of its aircraft in the air ready to go. This has run from 10 to 20 per cent, depending upon world tensions. To increase the percentage of aircraft constantly alert will require more crews than SAC now has and if such an effort is made, it cannot be maintained for some time.