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Frame 009

HISTORY OF STRATEGIC AIR COMMAND

JANUARY-JUNE 1968

HISTORICAL STUDY NO. 112 (U)

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NARRATIVE

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B. K. Holloway
B. K. HOLLOWAY, General, USAF
Commander in Chief

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HISTORY & RESEARCH DIVISION
HEADQUARTERS STRATEGIC AIR COMMAND

FEBRUARY 1969

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(THIS PAGE IS UNCLASSIFIED) SAC CY 2 OF 5 CYS

ACC 94-HO-65

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(U) ~~(S)~~ Early in March SAC and SANSO met to develop a concept for a Trans-attack Environmental Probe. SAC proposed to deploy ten to 20 hardened TAP missiles in each wing. They would be launched in small groups and transmit UHF signals to all control centers in their wing if powered flight (third stage thrust termination) was successfully completed.³⁰⁴ SANSO indicated that the job could be done by a considerably smaller number of missiles. But the problem was much more complex than merely transmitting a signal after powered flight. In its consideration of the cost of the new UHF equipment and the question of signal reception probability, SANSO again locked at the old Trajectory Accuracy Prediction System (TAPS) concept which had been rejected as too expensive. For Minuteman III completion of third stage thrust termination did not mean much. The post boost vehicle would then have to continue on and deploy the reentry system. To provide a signal of successful post boost vehicle flight, a system like TAPS would be required.³⁰⁵ Late in May SAC asked SANSO to include TAP in the next program change request so that the program could be officially approved and funded.³⁰⁶

Force Application

(U) ~~(S)~~ On 1 January 1965 the control time launch (CTL) concept became effective with Revision C to SIOP-4. In addition to the pin-down threat and suppression of Soviet ASX defenses, fratricide in the target area and the reduction of vulnerability to Soviet offensive weapons in the launch area dictated the need for precise launch timing for the whole ICBM force. These threats now made the salvo tactic unwise. For the preemptive option a doctrine for more rapid sequential firing was introduced. In the normal retaliatory option a slower rate of firing was used. If a pin-down resulted in a launch delay, the force would later resume firing over an extended period. All sorties would be timed from a master reference time according to their tasks, and to meet the fratricide restraints, if a hold was encountered the proper timing would be accomplished by transferring the delayed sorties to their proper position in another wave block.

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A simple wave block scheme was used for Minuteman I and Titan II since their firing could be stopped at any time. Until Minuteman F launches could be cancelled while in progress (CLIP) that force was divided into increments related to tasks. Minuteman F sorties delayed by a pindown would resume launching in their own increments in other wave blocks, or they could be moved to other increments by changing targets and/or tasks. Thus, if a defense suppression sortie was lost to a pindown, a back up sortie assigned to a later increment could be switched into an earlier increment in the next wave block.³⁰⁷

(U) ~~(TOP SECRET)~~ To insure the penetration of the ICBM force, the Soviet AEW system would be attacked first. Minuteman B* and F**, and Polaris missiles would first hit the Hen House early warning radars and their Tailin system defenses. Then the Dog House radar and the Triad system around Moscow would be attacked. More than 100 Minuteman would be involved in AEW suppression.³⁰⁸

During the first three months of 1968 these suppression sorties were spread throughout the force. On 1 April 43-133A sorties were deleted from this role because of the relatively slow reaction time of these sorties if the medium frequency (MF) radio system had to be used for a launch. For this and other reasons 100 sorties were to be retargeted and 278 retired.³⁰⁹

(U) ~~(TOP SECRET)~~ More doctrinal refinements were planned for 1 July 1968 (Revision 3). Crew documents would be consolidated and reduced. The two hour preplanned launch delay for urban/industrial targeted sorties (Task C) was eliminated to reduce prelaunch vulnerability. To preserve the assured destruction capability, Task C sorties were distributed throughout the wave block and reprogramming from Task A (threat) to Task C targets was made easier. The ripple would be used through six wave blocks. After that there would be so few missiles left that the remainder could be salvaged. The length of

(U) ~~(TOP SECRET)~~ with 100 and retro-rockets.

(U) ~~(TOP SECRET)~~ with 100 ICBM A/V, and 100 ICBM penetration aids when available.

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A.F.F.
the basic wave block was extended by a few minutes. The increase in the Minuteman B/MK 11 A CEP relegated those sorties to soft targets only. The Titan IIs were targeted against soft missiles, command and control facilities and urban/industrial areas. For Revision D another 427 Minuteman would have to be retargeted during May and June. ³¹⁰

(U) ~~TOP~~ During the first half of 1968 SAC operations planners showed renewed interest in the use of nuclear bursts to black out enemy radar and enhance penetration of his defenses. This could be done by putting a high altitude fuse on some Minuteman missiles and bursting them in the exoatmosphere. Radar blackout might also occur as a result of Soviet ABX bursts. Development of a high altitude fuse for the MK 11B/C had been directed in December 1967, but by June 1968 it was more likely that it would be developed for MK 12. Although the development of such a radar blackout technique would be expensive, SAC favored development of a fuse and further study of radar blackout as a penetration tactic. ³¹¹

(U) ~~TOP~~ Although a fire on warning doctrine was the best military answer to the pindown threat, it was politically unacceptable. However, this might not always be so. With credible warning from new systems currently under development,* streamlined national command authority procedures, and a minimum reaction posture (MRP) for ICBMs, a fire on warning tactic could be feasible. An MRP concept was studied in 1967 and was conditionally approved by General Scompton for further development. Much of what was recommended to save time would require changes to nuclear safety rules. ³¹² In March and April Ellsworth, Grand Forks and Little Rock were directed to test new crew checklists that would save time. ³¹³ The results were still being studied by Headquarters at the end of June.

* Over-the-horizon radars and satellite sensors.

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Force Application:

(TS-NF) On 1 January, 1956 the control time launch (CTL) concept became effective with Revision C to STOP-4. In addition to the pindown threat and suppression of Soviet ABM defenses, fratricide in the target area and the reduction of visibility to the Soviet offensive weapons in the launch area dictates the need for precise launch timing for the whole ICBM force. These threats now made the /salvo/ tactic unwise. For the preemptive option, a doctrine for more rapid sequential firing was introduced. In the normal retaliatory option, a slower rate of firing was used. If a pindown resulted in a launch delay, the force would later resume firing over an extended period. All sorties would be timed from a master reference time, according to their tasks and to meet the fratricide restraints. If a hold was encountered the proper timing would be accomplished by transferring the delayed sorties to their proper position in another wave block.

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