

GUS-0264
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19 May 1959

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT : CIA/Air Force Meeting, 18 May 1959

1. General White, General Smart, and Colonel Geary, (Headquarters, USAF), and Mr. Dulles, General Cabell, Mr. Bissell, and Col. Burke, (CIA), met on 18 May 1959 to discuss the status and future planning with regard to the GUSTO program.
2. Mr. Bissell briefed those present on the extensive radar reflectivity testing being accomplished on the Convair proposed airframe. He stated that present progress indicates that great improvement can be expected with regard to reducing the number of times during one flight when an aircraft is painted on a typical radar set. Although invisibility to radar may not be achieved, large steps can be made in that direction with small modifications to the Convair proposal.
3. Mr. Bissell then reviewed the current status of the Convair proposals and the Lockheed proposals, pointing out the various advantages and disadvantages of each. He reviewed the composition of the panel which will meet in early June to make recommendations regarding the proper course to take. He also covered source and availability of funds which might be used to defray some major costs should a go-ahead decision be given by the President.
4. The panel recommendations would be reviewed by the Department of Defense and, hopefully, the agreed proposal would be presented to the President approximately 15 June, so that monies available could be obligated if approval is given.
5. General White stated he felt it would be unwise to make a decision without having a senior officer with operational experience review the two proposed systems. He felt this


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experience should be put into the considerations of the panel at the earliest possible time. Mr. Dulles, General Cabell, and Mr. Bissell concurred and advised that anyone selected by General White would be acceptable and would be most useful in arriving at a panel recommendation. General Smart was asked by General White to advise the Agency as to the identity of the officer selected. General White stated that it should be made very clear to the President that there is a critical and urgent need for the information this system could furnish and that in seeking any possible approval to construct the vehicle the President should be urged to permit use of the vehicle to gather this invaluable information. This was agreed and Mr. Dulles stated that he hoped to return to the President with a request for reapproval of certain missions. General White stated that the Joint Chiefs of Staff had fully supported the previous request and at every opportunity he urged approval. Further, he understood that Mr. Herter was most sympathetic to the program. Mr. Dulles advised that he planned to contact Mr. Herter prior to going to the President.

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6. General White was then briefed on the status of the J-75 engine tests and advised that initial tests appeared to be quite hopeful with regard to increased altitude performance. The present schedule was to have these engines in a detachment by 1 August 1959. General White stressed the need for engine reliability prior to operational commitment. He said he hoped this would not cause a delay in any approvals for overflights. He was assured by Mr. Bissell that in previous approaches to the President this matter had been discussed but that he did not believe approvals would be delayed until the engine is in the units.

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WILLIAM BURKE
Colonel, USAF
Acting Chief, DPD-DD/P