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Op-06/jg
Ser: 00038P06

JAN 25 1957

FIRST ENDORSEMENT on Op-611 Serial 00016P61, 18 Jan 1957

From: DCNO (Plans and Policy)
To: Chief of Naval Operations
Via: Vice Chief of Naval Operations

Subj: Guided missile sites in the Middle East

1. Forwarded, concurring in the underlying idea of the usefulness of IREM sites in the areas indicated, and in the idea that it would be well to explore the political obstacles in the way of their establishment with a view toward removing these obstacles if the ultimate decision is to put IREM installations in the Middle East countries.

2. I think Op-61 underestimates the danger to the countries concerned which would accrue from Soviet knowledge that these sites had been established. In this connection, I have asked Op-60 to prepare a memorandum for the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the gist of which is as follows:

a. The primary target of SAC in their retaliatory effort is the Soviet capability to attack us with atomic weapons; this target includes every known major airfield and all known atomic facilities in the USSR and their satellites. It can be assumed that the Soviet effort will be directed, at least in part, against similar facilities of our own world-wide.

b. The damage and casualties to each country accruing from the atomic exchange designed primarily to eliminate each other's atomic capability is all out of proportion to the purely military objective; and it is generally acknowledged that effective defense against this attack is not possible.

c. It follows that the best defense is to remove our atomic retaliatory capability from fixed bases either in the United States or elsewhere and put it afloat. The sooner we can muster a massive ship-based retaliatory capability, the sooner we can remove attractive military targets from our own country and by so doing eliminate the military necessity which the Soviets will feel to attack the continental United States to the extent which they undoubtedly would do in the event of global war.

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3. The foregoing is only a rough cut at what will be in the paper, but I recommend that we adopt and push this general concept as hard as we can, and that our proposals regarding location of IRBM and ICBM sites overseas be consistent with this idea.

Copy to:
Op-61

R. E. LIBBY
Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Plans and Policy)

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