

Air Force Plans To Boost Fleet Of B-36s to 250

BY EDWARD JAMIESON.

WASHINGTON, Aug. 13.—The purchase of 79 more B-36 heavy bombers, manufactured by Consolidated Vultee Aircraft Company at Fort Worth, during the next 18 months is planned by the United States Air Force.

With the acquisition of these additional planes the Air Force will have a fleet of approximately 250 giant B-36 bombers which top Air Force officials this week told the House armed services committee are the nation's first line of defense.

Whether the purchases finally will be made, of course, depends on the total appropriations voted by Congress and the result of the investigation being conducted by the House committee.

Pending in Senate.

Funds for the first 28 of the new B-36s are included in the armed services appropriation bill for the current fiscal year which already has passed the House of representatives and now is pending in the Senate. The remaining 51 of the additional 79 will be paid for from appropriations for the fiscal year 1951, which starts July 1, 1950. Budget estimates for this part of the contract now are being prepared by the Air Force, but will not be submitted to Congress until next winter.

Meanwhile, there seemed little doubt but what the armed services committee, when it concludes the present probe of the B-36 will give the plane and the Air Force officials who approved its purchase a clean bill of health.

Majority Convinced.

Although the investigation is scheduled to continue for another 60 days, at least, it was evident during the past week that an overwhelming majority of the committee has been convinced by the testimony of the top Air Force officials that the B-36 not only is the best heavy bomber in the world, but the only weapon with which the United States could successfully prosecute a war during the next five or six years.

Among those who hailed the plane during the hearings this week were Secretary of the Air Force Symington, General Vandenberg, chief of staff of the USAF; Lt. Gen. George C. Kenney, commanding general of the Air University, Alabama, and former chief of the SAC; former Secretary of War Robert O. Patterson; and Maj. Gen. Frederick H. Smith, chief of the USAF requirements division.

Without exception, these officials told the committee that the B-36 is the best heavy bomber in the world; that it can deliver the atomic bomb to any possible enemy target in the world from an American base and return; and is virtually invulnerable at this time from successful attack by fighter planes when flying at an altitude of 40,000 feet or more.

Symington, in his testimony before the committee, disclosed officially for the first time that the

plane has actually flown more than 10,000 miles with a 10,000 pound bomb load. He said that the bomb was dropped beyond the half-way mark, and the bomber returned to its home base.

All of the officials testifying before the committee with the exception of General LeMay who had no contact with the B-36 until he assumed command of the

Turn to B-36 on Page 6.

When Japs Threw i

Fort Worth After Some

BY IRVIN FARMAN.

Any bands that were playing will not be oom-pahing . . . The whistles that shrieked the tidings have blown themselves out . . . The girl that got kissed at the corner of W. 7th and Main is a memory now of smeared lipstick and a high-pitched squeal . . .

V-J Day four years after. How many remembered?

A bulletin of the Department of Commerce revealed that Sunday, Aug. 14, was V-J Day, the day the Japs threw in the towel, some three weeks before the actual surrender was put on the dotted line on Sept. 2 aboard the USS Missouri.

So Sunday is V-J Day. How many remembered? About one in 10.

And yet they got into the spirit of the occasion that Tuesday on the 14th of August four years ago today in Fort Worth. They dumped water out of windows downtown, they jiggled in the streets, they hugged strangers and kissed the girls and everybody just knew it was the greatest day in history . . .

Lester Taylor who lives at Liberator Village remembered. He looked up from the car radio he was working on, grinned and said, "Sure I know what day August the 14th is—V-J Day. You know the reason I know? My little girl was born on August the 14th.

"I walked out of Harris Hospital and I heard people shouting the word, 'The war's over.' I don't think I'd have remembered if not for that."

Mrs. Margaret Crowson, 709

MORE ABOUT B-36 PURCHASE PLANS

Continued from Page 1.

SAC last October also admitted that prior to May 1948, they were seriously concerned about the prospects of the B-36 and had definitely considered abandoning it but since the plane came into actual operation, they told the House committee, it has far exceeded in performance what had even been anticipated by its designers.

First tip-off that the Air Force is planning to buy more B-36s, despite the criticism of a few members of Congress, came Friday afternoon when Symington testified before the House committee.

Buried deep in his testimony was this statement:

"As of July 20, the Air Force plan under consideration provided for the procurement of 5,309 planes during the fiscal years 1949, 1950, and of these 5,309 planes, only 154, or 2.9 per cent, are B-36s."

Since the original 95 planes ordered from Consolidated already have been appropriated for, this showed that the 154 planes mentioned by Symington were in addition to that number. It was disclosed during the hearings this week that contracts already have been awarded Consolidated for 75 planes, in addition to the 95 already paid for. Symington's figure, therefore, revealed that another 79 B-36s will be bought if funds are made available and Congress does not bar the purchase.

A spokesman for the Air

Force Saturday confirmed this plan. He emphasized, however, that it still must be considered a plan so long as funds from Congress are not finally available. In view of the the emphasis the Air Force has placed the B-36 as the nation's major weapon for the next five or six years, it seems evident at this time that Congress will not step in to alter these plans.

Whether this will end the purchase of B-36s of course, can not be known at this time. Air Force officials told the House committee this week that the B-52, now under design by Boeing Aircraft Company, eventually will succeed the B-36 as the nation's heavy bomber. While they estimated that it may be ready by 1954 or 1955, they conceded that they may still have similar difficulties with the B-52 that they had with the B-36 during the early days.

Under present plans, the Air Force, will set up six B-36 groups—four for strategic bombing and two for reconnaissance. General LeMay said this week that each group will consist of 30 planes. A total of 180 planes would be required to keep these six groups

at full strength. It appears unlikely that additional groups would be set up in the near future, since the additional planes will not be available for two or more years. Nevertheless, the added number of planes would not be considered excessive for spares, replacements, etc.

Cost Not Disclosed.

What the actual cost of the B-36 now is has not been disclosed by the Air Force. Witnesses told the committee this week, however, that the cost of the plane will be furnished before the investigation has been concluded.

Symington, however, disclosed that the cost of the 75 B-36s which were ordered earlier this year will be approximately \$1,250,000 less per plane than the cost of the original 95 planes ordered from Consolidated. He said that this is the result of "lower tooling costs and the better learning curve."

CAKES

Decorated cakes for birthdays and special occasions.

LEACH BAKERY

110 Houston St. Phone 3-9784

RHEUMATISM

NEURITIS—ARTHRITIS

Torturing pains relieved quickly with pharmacologist's amazing