

# B-36 Called Safeguard Against War

## Spatz Says Air Giant And Atom Bomb Are 'Best' Peace Weapons

BY EDWARD JAMIESON.

WASHINGTON, Aug. 22.—The B-36 and the atomic bomb in the hands of the United States are the best safeguards against another world war that exist in the world today, Gen. Carl Spatz, former commanding general of the Air Force, told the House armed services committee Monday.

The two weapons, Spatz declared, represent the industrial power of this country which is not only greater than that of Russia, but all of Europe as well.

As did Gen. Hoyt S. Vandenberg, chief of staff of the Air Force, when he testified before the B-36 investigating committee, Spatz frankly named Russia as the only potential enemy of the United States.

"It is evident," he declared, "that Russia, with its mass armies and dominant position on the greatest land area in the world could, if it desired, subdue by military force practically all of Europe and Asia in a relatively short time if we think in terms of war as it has been fought in the past.

### Cites Industrial Power.

"In such an eventuality, however, it would still be faced by the United States, whose industrial capacity at this time is not only greater than Russia's, but is greater than Russia could achieve through exploitation of the countries she might overrun.

"Our industrial power should be a potent factor in defeating him if he starts a war but, more important, should be its use as a stop sign to prevent him from starting a war."

Spatz, now retired, vigorously defended the B-36, joining previous Air Force officers in telling the committee that it has proved a far better plane than had originally been anticipated.

Nevertheless, he explained that it was strictly a gamble when it was first planned in 1940 and 1941.

Spatz said that he was chief of the plans division of the Air Force when the original contract for the bomber was signed with Consolidated Vultee Aircraft Company, and as commanding general of the Air Force when it was first proposed that the contract be canceled, he decided to go ahead with it.

### Opposes Cut in Force.

"I believed that the results to be obtained from possession of an intercontinental bomber were so enormous as to justify going ahead and taking the chance of failure, just as was done in developing the atomic bomb, which this plane is designed to deliver," he told the committee.

Spatz bitterly criticized President Truman's decision to reduce the size of the Air Force at this time, describing it as a "threat to the security of the nation."

Unlike active Air Force officers who have preceded him before the committee, Spatz spoke freely on the controversial issue. Active officers are under orders not to advocate a larger Air Force than the 48 groups approved by the budget bureau.

Spatz told the committee that

Turn to B-36 on Page 2.

# MORE ABOUT B-36 INVESTIGATION

Continued from Page 1.

he feels that the originally planned 70-group Air Force is required for the adequate defense of the United States. "This year's decision to cut back from a 55-group Air Force to one of only 48 groups is very dangerous," he declared.

## 'Frightened Friends.'

"It has not only weakened the United States but has frightened our friends," he declared. "When they saw us reverse ourselves this year, what can they expect next year?"

Asked about the reaction of the nation's potential enemies, Spaatz bluntly replied:

"Our potential enemies are just waiting for us to weaken ourselves enough and then they will hit us."

"Then you feel that by cutting our air force we are imperiling the security of the country?" asked Chairman Carl Vinson.

Vinson assured Spaatz, to the obvious delight of Air Force officers seated in the hearing room, that the House of Representatives will insist upon the retention in the armed forces appropriation bill of the \$800,000,000 added to the bill earlier this year for the Air Force. The Senate appropriations committee has stricken the added money from the bill, but the Senate has not yet acted upon it.

## Duel Idea Rejected.

Spaatz, questioned by Representative Johnson of California, rejected the idea of a duel between the B-36 and either Army or Navy fighter planes.

He said that such a test could not mean anything unless live ammunition were used. In any event, he added, such a duel could not be decisive.

Earlier, Spaatz had told the committee the B-36 is not invulnerable, but comes as close to it as is possible at this time.

"Its performance," he testified, "exceeds that of the high-altitude reconnaissance planes of World War II which were practically never intercepted by the speediest fighter planes in their high-altitude operations deep in hostile territory. There is no reason to assume that present-day fighters would be more successful in shooting down B-36s than World War II fighters were in shooting down reconnaissance planes operating at lower altitudes."

## Would Strengthen Europe.

While possession of the B-36 and the atomic bomb by the United States "are the greatest forces for peace in the world," Spaatz said that strengthening of non-Communist Europe is also vital.

He declared that "this should be accomplished in advance of the time when Russia will have intercontinental bombers and atomic bombs."

"Unless an aggressor can develop weapons and techniques at least equal to ours, he will not start a war," Spaatz said. "If the prospective enemy could be reasonably sure that, under the pressure of open hostilities, his agents could so infiltrate American industry that our productivity could be fatally disrupted, he might then consider a hot war. Or, if he should become convinced that, through confused policy, our resources were being squandered to a point of national bankruptcy, he might then choose to rely on prolonging the cold war to achieve his objective. The prevention of such sabotage of our industry calls for constant vigilance. The possibility of a prolonged cold war requires that our military security be obtained at a minimum of sacrifice of our national wealth.

"With the B-36 and the atomic bomb, the United States today has a military force indicative of our industrial potential, resting on a solid and safe foundation within the confines of the American continent.

"Under cover of this present power of the United States, our allies of the Atlantic Pact must be built up in political, economic, and military strength to a degree that will remove them from Russia's list of pushover nations, focal points for sparking a war. This can be done, and a military

potential built up in the nations of Western Europe which will place them on a more favorable footing with respect to Russia. Russia was not so menacing as a world power in by-gone days when there were other European armies in existence."

The full committee resumed hearings in its B-36 inquiry after a week's recess, during which time a subcommittee headed by Rep. Melvin Price of Illinois went to California to hear the testimony of Gen. H. H. Arnold, wartime head of the Air Force, and others.

Rep. James E. Van Zandt of Pennsylvania, whose speech on the floor of the House citing "ugly rumors" set off the present probe, was not present during Monday morning's session.

## Challenge Made.

Just before the hearings closed a week ago Friday, Van Zandt was challenged by Secretary of Air Symbington to make the same speech over the radio so that "we can have our recourse." Van Zandt declined the challenge at that time, and has given no indication since that he will waive his congressional immunity and risk the threatened suit.

Spaatz, questioned by Committee Counsel Joseph B. Keenan, flatly denied that there could have been any favoritism shown for the Consolidated company when the decision was reached to go ahead with the B-36 program and increase the number to be purchased. "They are absolutely immune to any such favoritism," he declared.

One of the charges that has been made is that Consolidated was favored over other aircraft companies because Secretary of Defense Johnson was a former director of the company, and Floyd Odlum, board chairman, was a contributor to last year's Democratic campaign fund.

## No Politics.

"There was absolutely no political consideration in the B-36 decision," Spaatz declared.

A parade of other Air Force generals who participated in the decision to proceed with the B-36 program came before the committee.

Each was a member of the Air Force senior board and was asked point-blank by Committee Counsel Keenan or Chairman Vinson whether "political influence" had entered into their decision.

All replied vigorously in the negative.

Gen. Muir Fairchild, vice chief of the air staff, described the January and February meetings of the senior officers' board this year where the B-36 go-ahead decision was made, and Gen. Curtis LeMay, commander of the Strategic Air Command, "vigorously" stated the case for additional B-36s, Fairchild said.

## Persuasive Viewpoint.

Because LeMay had primary responsibility for executing any strategic bombing mission, he expressed "a persuasive viewpoint" at the meetings, Fairchild answered.

Another witness was Lt. Gen. Harold A. Craig, deputy chief of the air staff for materiel, who described the original difficulties with the B-36 because of inadequate power plant.

He said he recommended that the B-36 program be continued to the full number, with 3,500 horsepower engines instead of the earlier 3,000 horsepower engines.

At the senior officers board where he made his recommendation, General Craig said that there was "no political pressure whatsoever."

## No 5 Per Centers.

"Were any 5 per cents hanging around?" Vinson interjected humorously.

"I didn't see them if there were," Craig replied.

Craig told of LeMay's recommendation that the number of heavy bomb groups be increased from two to four under the 48-group program, at the expense of two medium bomber groups.

The senior board accepted LeMay's recommendation, Craig related.

LeMay's further recommendation that the B-54 be abandoned in favor of the B-36 also was adopted by the senior officers board, Craig said.

The B-54 had neither the average speed, target speed, range nor bomb-carrying capacity of the B-36, Craig said.

Craig said that the board received no suggestions from Secretary Symbington.

## McNarney Heard.

In answer to one of Keenan's questions, Craig said that recommendations flowed from the board to the secretary, rather than vice versa.

Gen. Joseph T. McNarney told of a Fort Worth meeting on April 14 and 15 of last year in which the B-36 program was reviewed.

Out of this meeting came the recommendation to Washington to substitute for the VDT engine to give the plane greater power and speed, McNarney said.

Spaatz agreed with several committee members who raised the point that the present investigation has disclosed information to potential enemies of the nation "which should have been kept secret."

The necessity for the Air Force to disclose information about the B-36 to the world because of this investigation was a great disservice to the nation," he declared.

## 'Come and See' Tours Planned by Chest

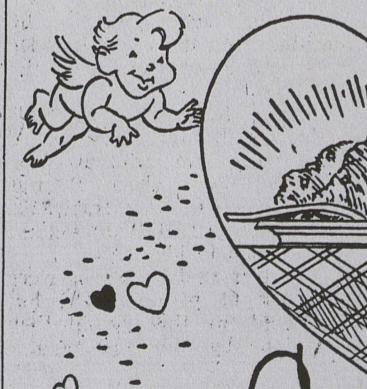
The Community Chest this week will initiate a series of "Come and See" tours to its Red Feather agencies for employe groups.

"The purpose of these 'Come and See' tours is to acquaint people with the activities and work programs of the 28 Red Feather agencies," Homer Covey, chest president, explained.

Arrangements have been made with the Fort Worth Transit Company to provide buses for the tours. Twenty to 25 persons will be taken on each tour. Employers are asked to call the chest office, 3-1443, to arrange for the tours.

## FIRE ALARMS

Fire alarms answered by the Fort Worth Fire Department, excluding nine grass and trash fires, during the 24-hour period ended at 8 a. m. Monday.  
SUNDAY.  
10:31 a. m.—2109 Langston, residence, overheated wood stove, \$20 loss.  
11:58 a. m.—4700 Bryce, honest mistake.  
5:08 p. m.—1304 Lee, garage apartment, boys with matches, \$10 loss.  
10:09 p. m.—1000 Cold Springs Rd., auto, cause unknown, \$350 loss.



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