

# Gen. Curtis Lemay Commands More Destructive Power Than All of History's Combined Armies

Editor's Note: To tough, hard-driving Gen. Curtis Lemay, the possibility of atomic war is never academic. He and his men of the Strategic Air Command live with it every day. On the ready, day and night, they train continuously for the big, fateful blow. Here's a closeup of the SAC boss by an AP correspondent who's a veteran of generals and wars.)

By DON WHITEHEAD

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — Out here in the brown, wind-swept center of America, a stern-faced man is polishing a fighting machine on which the whole free world may one day depend for survival.

He hopes that day never will come — an atomic war between the United States and Russia. He hopes and believes his efforts have shaped an instrument for enforcing peace in the world.

But if war does come, he alone will have at his command more destructive power than all the combined armed forces of mankind since the dawn of history. His will be the power to wipe out cities — the power to leave key areas of an enemy nation torn and bleeding within a few thunderous hours.

This man is four-star Gen. Curtis Emerson Lemay. His machine is the Air Force's Strategic Air Command — the atom bombers which also will be the hydrogen bombers.

Depends on Lemay  
If there is any one military man the Russians should fear above all others in another war — perhaps he is Lemay. For it would be his bombers which would carry the main weight of retaliatory atomic

attack against Russia. The outcome of the war might well be determined within a matter of days, depending on how efficiently Lemay and his men are doing and will do their jobs.

Day and night his bombers and crews remain on the ready. Day and night, regardless of weather, they work to perfect bombing techniques. Someone has said that SAC "is at war every day."

Who is this general shouldering such an awesome responsibility? Why was he chosen above all others? How well has he done his job? Is he the ruthless, machine-like driver he has been pictured? Why is he one of the most controversial men in military life today?

**Air Force Legend**  
You don't come by all the answers easily, because at 47 Lemay already is an Air Force legend. It is sometimes hard to separate legend from fact.

In appearance, Lemay is stocky and heavy-jawed. He weighs 185 pounds and stands 5'10". His hazel eyes are set under black brows. His thick black hair is tinged with gray. Most of the time he has a cigar stuck between his jaws. His face has a stern, set look older than his years. A smile doesn't come easily.

In the legend, Lemay is "a Georgie Patton with wings." He's "old Ironpants."

He's a general who regards men and machines with the same cold eye. He's the man who can look at a bomber crew and tell you whether they'll come home alive from a combat mission. He's the real tough guy you respect — but can't love.

**"Has No Friends"**  
Some of the stories go like this: A group of colonels invited Lemay to dinner and he replied: "A man should have dinner with his friends, and the commanding general has no friends."

At a reception in England, talkative woman asked Lemay why he was so quiet and he said: "Lady, if you talk all the time, you don't learn anything."

To his staff, Lemay said: "If any of you have anything to say, then get up and say it even if you think it's stupid. If you are stupid, everybody knows it anyway."

**Marines Run Second**  
Comparing the spirit of the Marines with the spirit of his own command: "The Marines are running second."

On the whittling away from the military men of such privileges as the commissary and medical aid for dependents: "If you keep up that sort of thing, you make this a career for saps and suckers. And you can't trust the security of this nation to second class citizens."

It is true that Lemay has built up a pride and spirit within his command that probably can't be matched by any other military outfit outside the Marines.

The word has gone around that "old Ironpants" gives you a fair shake if you're on his team.

The true driving force behind Lemay has been his conviction that air power, properly used — is the key to victory in war. Once a fighter pilot, he shifted to bombers early in his career.

"I saw the real power of the Air Force in the bombers," he says. "I wanted to be with them."

**Blunt Talk**  
Lemay has gambled his career and his life many times to prove his beliefs to himself and to others. He made enemies. He left a trail of wounded feelings behind him with his blunt talk. But in the crises, the Air Force has turned to Lemay time after time as their "get it done" guy.

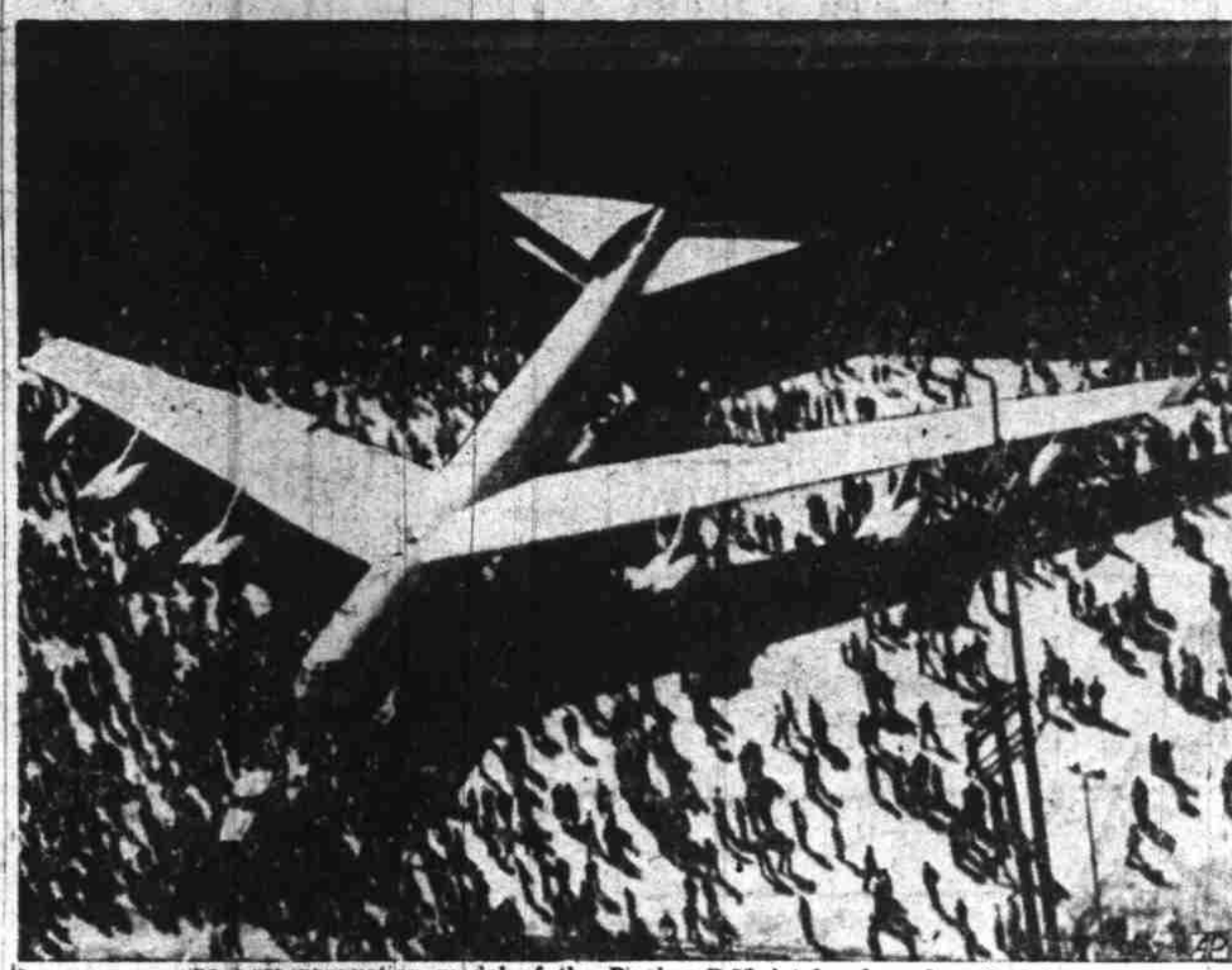
Example: In World War II, Lemay was one of the first to take the B17's into combat. He led 20 missions personally and fought — successfully — to prove that mass daylight bombing was practical, something the British had insisted couldn't be done.

He worked out a new "staggered box" formation for bombers which gave them greater protective firepower and sharply reduced losses. He proved that bombers could bore straight in to their targets, drop their bombs more accurately and come home with fewer losses than in attempting "evasive" action to avoid flak.

**Sent to Pacific**  
Example: In 1945, Lemay was sent to the Marianas to jack up the lagging B29 campaign in the Pacific. The bombers had been trying — and often failing — to hit their targets from high altitudes because of overcast and high velocity winds over Japan. Lemay made his decision. He sent the bombers in at only 5,000 to 12,000 feet. He gambled that this tactic would confuse enemy anti-aircraft gunners. And he was right. His B29s began plastering their targets right on the nose.

Example: In the early days of the cold war in Europe, it was

## First B-52 Off Production Line



— The first production model of the Boeing B-52 jet bomber, described by an Air Force general as the "long rifle of the air age," is shown as it was rolled from the Boeing Airplane Co. plant at Seattle, Wash. Gen. Nathan F. Twining, Air Force chief of staff, told Boeing workers the eight-engine sweptwing bomber is the weapon that is "going to keep that red fellow in his place." An undisclosed number of the bombers will be built at Seattle for the Air Force, Gen. Curtis Lemay's Strategic Air Command. Two experimental models were built and tested previously. (AP Wirephoto.)

Lemay who was chosen to head the U. S. Air Forces there. He scored perhaps the greatest of the cold-war victories with the Berlin Airlift. It was a precision air operation that kept the Allies in Berlin and finally broke the Red blockade.

**Fight With Navy**  
Example: Late in 1948, the Air Force was in a bitter fight with the Navy over strategic air policy. The Air Force felt the future of its strategic air program was at stake.

Lemay was given the command. Today, the long fight seems to have been won. The Eisenhower administration's "new look" at military strategy has put main reliance on strategic air power to keep the peace — and to smash an enemy in another war. This policy has shifted the military spotlight to Lemay and his atom bombers.

Since taking his SAC command, Lemay has fought to achieve the goal of an intercontinental bombing force capable of carrying out its war mission. The mission: Destroy the enemy's bomb bases, smash the enemy's war-making power by destroying his industries and communications, and support the ground forces.

**Brought Realism**  
One Air Force general looking back at that beginning says: "Lemay brought realism and hard-driving objectivity into SAC."

Today Lemay commands roughly 150,000 men. His command extends over the Fifteenth Air Force at Riverside, Calif.; the Eighth Air Force at Fort Worth, Tex.; the Second Air Force at Shreveport, La.; the Seventh Air Division at South Ruislip, England; and the Fifth Air Division at Rabat, French Morocco.

Day after day, week after week, the bombers roar into the stratosphere on missions to "bomb" targets in Denver, Seattle, Tampa, Salt Lake City or Birmingham. Except for the bomb itself, every phase of the operation so far as possible is carried out precisely as it would be in war. Then the names of Denver, Seattle, and Birmingham would be changed to names like Sevastopol, Moscow, Stalingrad.

**Crews Organized**  
Here's how Lemay has organized his operation:  
Readiness—Crews and planes stay on a ready basis around the clock. It is hammered into the men that the loss of one hour in another war might be fatal. Their flight bags are packed for takeoff

at anytime. Their planes are under constant care. Plans have been made—and there are repeated drills—for movement to foreign bases. Each crew knows its war target.

The men have spent hours and weeks studying where the bomb would be dropped—the exact corner of a building or the crossroads which would be the aiming point. They know the pattern their targets make on radar screens better than they know their own home towns. Some of this information on targets came from old German Luftwaffe photographs. Other information has been added from other intelligence sources.

**Bombing Accuracy**—Here is the payoff for the whole operation. Lemay asks there no longer is any from 40,000 feet in any kind of weather. Accuracy has improved better than 400 per cent due to improved electronic equipment and bomber efficiency.

**Efficiency**—Each month the SAC comptroller feeds facts and figures into tabulating machines, facts and figures on how personnel and equipment are used, how many flights are made by celestial navigation, how well the supply system works, the number of bombs dropped visually and by radar, the bombing accuracy, etc.

Out of this mass of statistics Lemay can tell at a glance the efficiency ratings of each wing, group, squadron and crew. The record is based on performance. Machines take no excuses.

Once a colonel complained to Lemay he had been "marked down" in efficiency because an eagle flew into one of his planes and damaged it. The general said: "We can't afford to distinguish between the unfortunate and the inefficient. The result is the same."

**Survival Training**—Lemay insists every crew learn how to survive in hostile country or in the Arctic if shot down. They study the findings of experts, and then go into wild mountain country to live with their "survival kits" as best they can. This training has brought some interesting results. The plane commander, absolute leader in the air, is not always the leader on the ground. Perhaps it is a sergeant raised in the hill country to whom the men look for leadership. Thus the men get to know each other better.

As for their "get home" chances in case of war with Russia—Lemay is highly optimistic. He is planning no kamikaze attack in which men and machines are

hurled at their target—and certain death.

The figures are secret, but Lemay is sure all but a remarkably small percentage of his bombers would return from atom bombing attacks. His command figures the defenders haven't yet narrowed the margin of advantage held by offensive attackers.

**Bomber Crews**—Lemay says: "There is as much difference between the SAC crew today and the World War II bomber crew as there is between a bush league baseball team and the New York Yankees."

You wouldn't recognize in these crews the wild-blue-yonder boys of a few years ago. Each crew is carefully handpicked, and works from that time on as a team. The crew that climbs to the select list has to fight to stay there. The competition is terrific — because reaching the select list means better pay, privileges and greater prestige.

**Previous Combat**  
The average aircraft commander today is a mature 32 years old. He is married, and has at least one child. He has been a member of a SAC crew for 35 months. He has had nine years of service in the Air Force. He has an average of 39 combat missions either in World War II or Korea. He is a major and his monthly pay is about \$750.

Lemay gives you the impression that he walks a lonely life in which there are only a few people with whom he can feel completely at ease. Except for occasional escapes, he is the prisoner of his work.

Sometimes he gets away for three or four days of hunting or fishing. "I like to throw a line in the water and then just sit and look stupid," he said. But there is no real escape. His office must know every move he makes and where he is at all times of the day and night.

"I just don't remember the last time I had a real vacation," he said.

## Teachers Elect Mrs. Crater Of Newberg

PORTLAND (AP) — Mrs. Antonia Crater, Newberg, was elected Friday vice president of the Oregon Education Assn., and will become president by automatic progression next year.

Warren H. Tinker of Portland became president. Mrs. Agnes Booth, Salem, was one of the trustees installed.

The association ended its annual convention Saturday with a series of discussion and workshop meetings.

Speakers Friday stressed the importance of improving relations between schools and the public. Dr. William G. Carr, executive secretary of the National Education Assn., said schools "need the help of the public desperately."

Portland School Supt. J. W. Edwards said "good teaching in the classroom is always the best public relations."

Dr. Richard R. Powell, Columbia University law professor, said the American heritage cannot be saved by persons fearful of change. He said the need is to keep a "nice balance" between tradition and change.

## Bellingham Area Plane Crash Kills 2

BELLINGHAM, Wash. (AP) — Two men were killed in the crash of a light plane near the Mount Baker Highway 25 miles northeast of Bellingham Saturday afternoon.

They were tentatively identified as Rollin Wood, Bellingham, and Wayne W. Craig, Route 1, Everson.

The two had left Bellingham in a two-seated Piper Cruiser in an attempt to find a trace of Howard F. Johnstone, Bellingham, who has been missing since March 6. Johnstone's car was found in the Nooksack River near Maple Falls, on March 10.

First reports indicated the plane had taken off from a field near the community of Maple Falls. It went into a sharp bank at a low altitude while attempting to clear trees at the edge of pasture and nosed into the ground.

Wood was a brother-in-law of the missing Johnstone. Wood had been employed as an assistant engineer at the Pacific American Fisheries here and was piloting the plane when it took from the Bellingham airport at 10 a. m. The plane was owned by the Bellingham Flying Service.

Craig, a flier with the Air Force in World War II, was employed by the Columbia Valley Lumber Co. of Bellingham.

## Ronald Chase, 29, Dies, Funeral Set Monday at Lyons

Statesman News Service  
LYONS—Funeral services will be held Monday at two p. m. at the Lyons Methodist Church for Ronald C. Chase, 29, son of Mr. and Mrs. Clem Chase of Lyons, who died Thursday in Eugene.

He was born at Springfield, Neb., May 9, 1924, and came to Oregon about eight years ago.

He is also survived by his wife, Jean, of Eugene, a sister, Mrs. Elsie Tepton, Payette, Idaho, three brothers, Floyd, Bernard and Willard, all of Lyons.

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## Italy Foreign Minister's Son Termed Assassin

ROME (AP) — A letter calling the son of Italy's Foreign Minister the "assassin" for a doping trial the sensational Wilma Montesi scandal trial into an uproar Saturday.

The explosive letter, signed by pretty Anna Maria Moneta Caglio, rocked anew the hard-pressed government of Premier Mario Scelba.

Only last Tuesday Scelba and his Cabinet expressed their "solidarity" with Foreign Minister Attilio Piccioni, who reportedly had offered to resign. The Communist press has led the attack on Scelba's regime, saying the trial disclosed scandal in high government circles.

**Sensational Testimony**  
Miss Caglio's letter was produced at the trial of Silvano Muto, 25-year-old magazine editor accused of "false and alarmist" reporting of the death of party girl Wilma Montesi. While testimony has been sensational, Muto is the only one facing criminal charges.

"I have known that Ugo Montagna is the chief of a doping ring with the consequent disappearance of many women. He is the brains of the ring while Piero Piccioni is the assassin."

Both Piero Piccioni, son of the Foreign Minister, and the self-styled Marquis Montagna were mentioned by Miss Caglio in direct testimony as "knowing too much" about Wilma's death. She alleged that they had sought out Pavone to "hush up" the case.

The shapely 22-year-old Wilma was found dead on the sands of Ostia beach, 15 miles from Rome, last April. Police ruled she died of accidental drowning.

Muto wrote that she had been dumped on the beach and left to die after being given too much drugs at a wild party attended by social and political notables.

Muto gave Anna Maria, admitted on-time \$800 a month mistress of Montagna, as one of his sources for his magazine article.

National Police Chief Tomaso Pavone resigned recently after being mentioned in testimony in the case.

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**State Suit for Fire Damages Loses Ground**

The State of Oregon's \$282,000 suit for damages in the 1951 Sardine Creek fire took a setback this week end.

Circuit Court Judge George R. Duncan sustained a demurrer, filed by three of the five defendants, which in effect compels the state to re-file the suit against either the defendants who were successful on the demurrer or against the other two. The demurrer was sustained on the grounds of a misjoinder of causes of action.

The suit grew out of a fire on state and other lands in the Santiam Canyon between Aug. 20 and Sept. 27, 1951. The state charged the defendants did not exercise sufficient caution.

Defendants prevailing on the demurrer were Ford M. Converse and Edith Converse, owners of land onto which the fire spread, and Russel L. Halecox, who at one time managed logging operations on the Converse's land.

The other defendants in the suit are the Vancouver Plywood Company and Jess Lee, doing business as the Lee Logging Company, who had a contract with the Vancouver Plywood Company to operate on the land.

The State of Oregon, as plaintiff, is acting for the Clackamas-Marion and Linn County Fire Control Associations. Plaintiff now will have to file an amended complaint to resume action in the case.

Attorneys for the three defendants who prevailed on the demurrer are Allan G. Carson and Wallace P. Carson. Attorneys for the state are Manley B. Strayer of Portland and District Attorney Kenneth E. Brown of Marion County.

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GEN. CURTIS LEMAY  
"At War Every Day"

## Adlai Won't 'Stoop to Reply To McCarthy'

NEW YORK (AP) — Adlai E. Stevenson said Saturday he will not reply to Sen. McCarthy's "20-count indictment" of the Democratic Party, declaring "I will not stoop to the senator's level."

Stevenson said he had read the charges of Sen. McCarthy, who Friday night in Milwaukee accused the Democrats of "20 years of treason" and called Stevenson the "attorney for the defense." McCarthy asked Stevenson to plead guilty or not guilty.

Stevenson flew here from Boston with his son, John Fell Stevenson, 17; William Blair, an aide, and Mrs. Carol Evans, his secretary. He currently is on a speaking tour.

While saying he planned to reply to any of McCarthy's statements, the unsuccessful 1952 Democratic presidential candidate did say, however, it was "the first I heard of it" when asked for comment on McCarthy's statement that Stevenson had been given the task of formulating America's postwar policy for Italy.

McCarthy had added: "That policy according to the sworn testimony of Gen. Bedell Smith was to 'connive' to bring Communists into the Italian government and to bring the Communist leader, Togliatti, back from Moscow."

Said Stevenson: "The proper person to consult would be Bedell Smith. 'At that time I never heard of Togliatti.'"

Stevenson said he spent only six weeks in Italy and that his work was "not political but technical." Smith was not available for comment.

Example: In the early days of the cold war in Europe, it was

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