

Noise Expected in Congress Over Death of Skybolt Missile

By CHARLES W. CORDDRY
 United Press International
 Washington (UP) — There will be a lot of noise in Congress over the death of the Skybolt missile, and some wrathful advocates of the weapon may take to jabbing pins into the image of Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara.

But neither Capitol Hill nor Pentagon authorities expect the Air Force's lately cherished bomber-launched missile to be resurrected. In the Air Force's upper echelons, the idea is to put the Skybolt out of mind and get on with other means of fortifying B52 bombers. Airmen expect the huge jets, armed with improved versions of other type missiles, to be key strategic weapons for another decade.

May Ignite Debate
 But if the Skybolt is dead, its fiery exit may ignite a fundamental debate in Congress and around the nation on where President Kennedy's defense policies are heading.

By the time the new Congress convened, the president had talked Britain into substituting submarine-launched Polaris missiles for the Skybolts it wanted and McNamara had instructed the Air Force to shut down the project.

A year ago, the defense chief was telling Congress he and the Air Force believed the Skybolt could be developed "satisfactorily" as a 1,000-mile range ballistic missile to be launched from B52's. Now he has executed the project, which employed thousands, promised longer life for bombing planes, and offered a potent new war deterrent. Done for a combination of financial, technical and military reasons, the deed annoyed a variety of members of Congress, defense experts, representatives of communities that will suffer economically, Republican critics, and service veterans.

The Skybolt episode stimulates two questions, further underlined by the defense budget sent to Congress last week, around which a new strategy debate is likely to revolve:

—Is the bombing plane face to face with oblivion, with America about to base its strategic forces entirely on intercontinental and submarine-launched ballistic missiles?

—Are there to be enough missiles? Is the trend toward a "latter-day Maginot line" concept based on a rigid design of missiles mainly designed to prevent war through the threat of annihilation — in brief, a city-busting force? Or will America continue to develop flexible forces able to "prevail" over an enemy armed force if deterrence fails-in brief, to come out of nuclear war at least less of a loser than the enemy?

For his advocacy of the B52-Skybolt combination and the RS70 war plane, which the administration also does not plan to produce, Gen. Curtis E. LeMay is being charged in some quarters with vainly holding on to outmoded concepts. In other words, the man the free world praised for building the greatest bomber force in history is now being accused of being a bomber general.

The criticism ignores that LeMay, now Air Force chief of staff, was Air Force research chief as a major general in 1945 when McNamara was an Air Force major and some of McNamara's present strategic weapons advisers were in high school.

LeMay could be called a father of the Air Force missile program. Last year he urged far more Minuteman intercontinental missiles than McNamara allowed. His sole aim is to be able to deliver weapons on targets accurately if there is war. He told Congress he would use a kiddie car if that were the best way to do it.

In-Being Protection
 He said: "We should never replace tested and reliable weapons with new and unproven ones until we are sure that the new one can either

do a better job or a necessary job that can not be done at all by the old systems. In short, I believe in having in-being protection along with progress."

The Air Force believes, with support from the other services, that America must have a "mix" of missiles and manned air craft in its strate-

gic forces, with emphasis increasingly on missiles. It is certain that later on there will have to be manned spacecraft—especially when missile defenses are perfected and men are needed aloft in machines to defeat mechanical devices.

Its arguments are generally that manned war planes, as

Cuba shows, can provide any kind of response from showing the flag up to total annihilation. Missiles are last resort weapons. With both missiles and planes, the nation has a variety of attack methods in case one or another is rendered ineffective by enemy defense.

Moreover, the enemy is

forced—as Russia has been for years — to invest enormous sums in defenses against many kinds of weapons. The enemy also has an almost insoluble problem in trying to attack this country. Finally, there are many targets that intercontinental missiles cannot attack.

Those are some of the rea-

sons the Air Force will be trying to improve the Hound Dog missiles now carried on B52's, devise new types of missiles of shorter range than the Skybolt would have had, and design a successor to the B52 that McNamara may endorse. Curiosity whether present administration defense policies may lead to a "Maginot

Line" concept based mainly on a city-busting force stems from action like that taken on the Skybolt and others indicated in the new budget.

Clues Are Seen

These are some of the clues seen by those asking the question: Skybolt is dead. RS70 is dying. The Nike-Zeus anti-

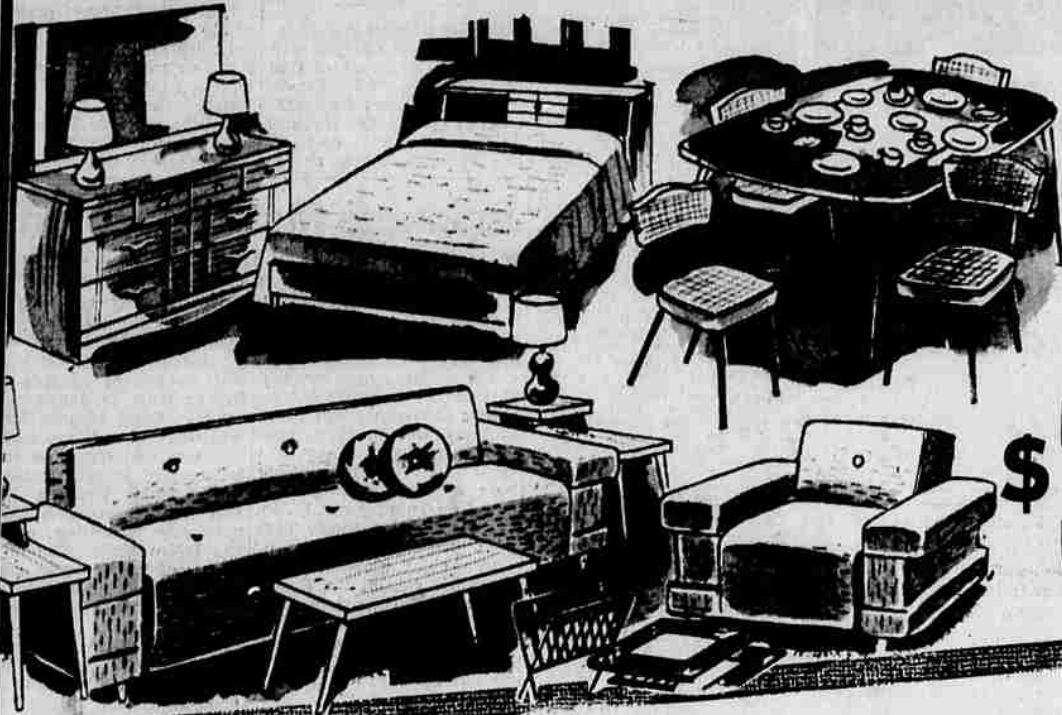
missile missile is not being put into production. The B47 jet bomber force will be extinct by about 1966. Only a few hundred B52's will be left by 1970. In fact, there are estimates that Russia in a few years may have more bombers than America.

With these factors are the other controversial questions

whether an adequate force of Minuteman and Polaris missiles is being built to do more than bust cities, that is, to impose some sort of defeat on the enemy's military forces if deterrent fails.

McNamara's computers and judgments apparently say yes, while those of the military men are not at all sure.

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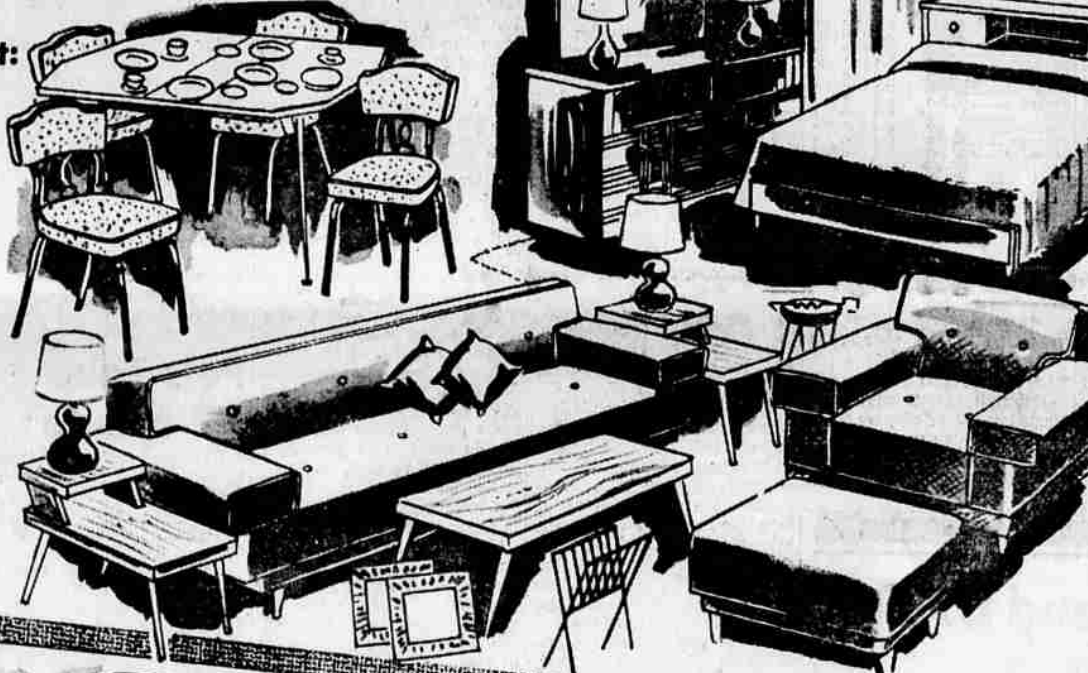
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Out of 217 permits, 50 were for non-residential construction, Loughridge said. The largest was \$1,058,009 for the new Josephine General hospital, which is now under construction.

Second largest was \$240,000 for the new First Federal Savings and Loan association building on Sixth st., also under construction.

Seventy-two residential building permits were issued, for a total of \$892,450. Permits for alterations, additions and repairs totaled 95, with an estimated cost of \$317,950.

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