

**January 21, 1963**

**Memorandum for the Record by Lt. Colonel R.B. Spilman, Assistant Secretary, 'Summary of Discussions by the Joint Chiefs of Staff and Deputy Director, STPS [Strategic Target Planning Staff], Regarding Retargeting to Cover Withdrawal of JUPITER Missiles fr**

**Citation:**

"Memorandum for the Record by Lt. Colonel R.B. Spilman, Assistant Secretary, 'Summary of Discussions by the Joint Chiefs of Staff and Deputy Director, STPS [Strategic Target Planning Staff], Regarding Retargeting to Cover Withdrawal of JUPITER Missiles fr", January 21, 1963, Wilson Center Digital Archive, National Archives and Records Administration, Records of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Record Group 218, Maxwell Taylor Files, Box 36, Nassau/Jupiters/Skybolt/MLF (Folder #1). Contributed by Bill Burr and Leopoldo Nuti. <https://wilson-center-digital-archive.dvincitest.com/document/300426>

**Summary:**

The Joint Chiefs met with Admiral Roy L. Johnson, the deputy director of the Joint Strategic Targeting Planning Staff [JSTPS], to discuss how to cover the target gap left by the dismantling of 45 Jupiter missiles and also the gap that would be caused by the temporary absence of one Polaris submarine during its transit from Holy Loch (Scotland) to the Mediterranean. Johnson saw the missile shortage as one that would be of "decreasing significance after July 1963" when more ICBMs would be entering the nuclear arsenal. To complete retargeting of the previous Jupiter targets would take 90 days while retargeting of the Polaris submarines, which involved "cutting new cards for the computers," would take several months. Johnson reviewed in detail the problems involved in providing coverage of the previously targeted bomber bases, military control centers, and other targets.

JCS Chairman Taylor emphasized the importance of assuring General Lemnitzer that retargeting would not injure NATO's position and that the U.S. would retain the "present level of missile attacks" against Soviet missile and bomber bases that threatened NATO. Johnson made suggestions for "alternative criteria" to provide coverage of Soviet threat targets, while the Chiefs conveyed their criteria for retargeting, such as the same level of damage expectancy for the Jupiter targets.

Written on top of this document is the word "SIOP [Single Integrated Operational Plan]" because the targeting problems that the Chiefs were discussing with Admiral Johnson were integral to the U.S. nuclear war plan.

## **Credits:**

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## MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

Subject: Summary of Discussions by the Joint Chiefs of Staff and Deputy Director, STPS, Regarding Retargeting to Cover Withdrawal of JUPITER Missiles from Turkey and Italy (S)

1. At their meeting on Friday, 18 January 1963, the Joint Chiefs of Staff discussed with Admiral Johnson, Deputy Director, STPS, the retargeting necessary to provide attack of the threats that will be uncovered in consequence of the Presidential decision to withdraw JUPITER missiles from Turkey and Italy.

2. In his discussion with the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Johnson covered the following significant points:

a. Approximately 61 missiles will have to be retargeted from presently scheduled attacks on other time-sensitive targets. This figure of 61 results from the loss of 45 JUPITER missiles and a possible loss on station of up to 16 POLARIS missiles during transit from Holy Loch to the Mediterranean. (The average loss of POLARIS missiles will only be 8 missiles.) Admiral Johnson affirmed that this missile shortage was a relatively short range problem of decreasing significance after July 1963.

b. From a threat point of view the Soviets will be able to attack additional NATO targets with Soviet missiles presently scheduled to cover the JUPITERS.

c. In response to questioning as to how long SAC retargeting would take, Admiral Johnson stated:

(1) Assuming use of free time without resolution of TOP, retargeting could be accomplished in about 60 days.

(2) Optimizing and completing TOP resolution, retargeting would require approximately ninety days.

(3) Retargeting of POLARIS submarines was dependent on cutting new cards for the computers used in connection with the POLARIS missile. Admiral Dennison has indicated that these cards would not be completed prior to 23 March.

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d. To point out considerations involved in retargeting, Admiral Johnson provided an illustrative example of how 61 missiles could be diverted from currently scheduled attacks. The example presented drew the bulk of the 61 missiles retargeted from presently scheduled attacks on medium bomber bases. The specific breakout provided for taking 45 missiles off medium bomber bases, 1 missile off a heavy bomber base, 5 missiles off primary staging bases, 7 missiles off military control centers, and 3 missiles off missile submarine bases. In this example, Admiral Johnson pointed out that the DE against threats to NATO was increased by approximately ten per cent. Correspondingly, the DE against threats to the US was decreased by twenty per cent.

3. General Taylor emphasized to Admiral Johnson the problem of assuring General Lemnitzer that the NATO position would not be detrimentally affected by the retargeting which would follow the withdrawal of JUPITER missiles. He pointed out that it was particularly desirable to retain the present level of missile attacks against:

a. IR/MRBM targets now scheduled for attack by JUPITER missiles, and

b. Medium bomber bases now scheduled for missile attack.

Admiral Johnson pointed out that, considering the shortage of missiles and relative target worth, an attack of each medium bomber base with at least one missile might not be the optimum. The employment of missiles even against the threat to NATO. The JCS requested Admiral Johnson present specific proposals for their consideration.

4. In response to the above request by the JCS, Admiral Johnson presented for their consideration a range of alternative criteria for determining the targets from which missiles could be diverted to provide for attack of targets uncovered by the withdrawal of JUPITER missiles and the decrease in POLARIS missiles on station. These alternative lines of guidance were presented by means of three specific proposals for absorbing the over-all reduction of missile damage expectancy within the remainder of the missile target system. These lines of guidance were, respectively, to:

a. Cover targets now attacked by JUPITER and maintain the present DE against medium bomber bases.

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b. Cover targets now attacked by JUPITER and keep at least one missile on each medium bomber base.

c. Cover targets now attacked by JUPITER and maintain the present DE against ICEM threats to the US. This was the same proposal earlier outlined by Admiral Johnson diverting 45 missiles from attack of medium bomber bases.

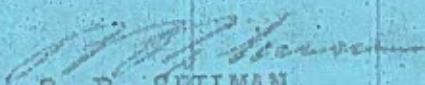
5. After discussion of the three proposals presented by Admiral Johnson, the Joint Chiefs of Staff agreed to leave specific selection of retargeting criteria to the STPS. In general, however, this retargeting should:

a. Provide, by missile programming, a DE on the current JUPITER targets which is no less than that provided prior to JUPITER withdrawal.

b. Provide, at a minimum, a missile weight of effort equivalent to one missile for each medium bomber base and approach, consistent with over-all considerations of target weight and priority, the present DE against medium bomber bases.

c. Absorb, within the remainder of the missile target system, the over-all reduction of missile damage expectancy brought about by the withdrawal of JUPITER missiles.

6. USCINCEUR was advised of the JCS action, paragraph 5 above, by JCS Msg 8304 dated 19 January 1963.

  
R. B. SPILLMAN  
Lt Col USA  
Assistant Secretary

cc: Chairman ✓  
Director  
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