Operation LINEBACKER II: A Retrospective
PART 3: Strategic Bombardment Theory Prior to Vietnam
With an Introduction to the Series

Report of the LSU Shreveport unit
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QUOTES

Every SAM in Hanoi went off—just a fantastic barrage of SAMS!...and then the bombs started to hit...It was a continuous din of noise and shaking of the ground...We had a panoramic view over the courtyard roof of the prison...You could see the flashes of explosions on the overcast...they just keep coming and kept coming!...a constant barrage of sound, flash, and concussion...An awesome display of power...We were just pasting hell out of them for the first time.¹

_Capt Bob Lilly, Prisoner-of-War (POW), 1965-1973_

The first few times I experienced a B-52 attack it seemed, as I strained to press myself into the bunker floor, that I had been caught in the Apocalypse. The terror was complete. One lost control of bodily functions as the mind screamed incomprehensible orders to get out.²

_The Viet Cong Minister of Justice Truong Nhu Tang_

At the heart of warfare lies doctrine. It represents the central beliefs for waging war in order to achieve victory. Doctrine is of the mind, a network of faith and knowledge reinforced by experience which lays the pattern for the utilization of men, equipment, and tactics. It is the building material for strategy. It is fundamental to sound judgment.

_General Curtis Emerson LeMay, 1968_

The purpose of surprise is to strike at a time or place or in a manner for which the enemy is unprepared. Surprise can help the commander shift the balance of combat power and thus achieve success well out of proportion to the effort expended...³

_Joint Publication 3.0 Doctrine for Joint Operations_

We have the power to destroy his war making capacity. The only question is whether we have the will to use that power. What distinguishes me from [former President] Johnson is I have the will in spades.⁴

_Richard Nixon to Henry Kissinger_

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¹ Luse Shackelford, and Ray, "Eleven Days in December: Linebacker Ii" (USAF Southeast Asia Monograph Series, Air University, 1977), V.
One more observation needs to be made, which goes to the very heart of the matter. Only the commander who imposes his will can take the enemy by surprise.…

*Carl von Clausewitz*

The first, the supreme, the most far-reaching act of judgment that the statesman and the commander have to make is [rightly to understand] the kind of war on which they are embarking, neither mistaking it for, nor trying to turn it into, something that its alien to its nature. This is the first of all strategic questions and the most comprehensive.

*Carl von Clausewitz*

The bastards have never been bombed like they’re going to be bombed this time.

*President Richard M. Nixon, May 1972*

In any two-week period you mention.

*General Curtis LeMay, July 1986, when asked if the United State could have won in Vietnam.*

I never said we should bomb them back to the Stone Age. I said we had the capability to do it.

*General Curtis LeMay*

In war there is never any chance for a second mistake.

*Lamachus, 465-414 B.C.E.*

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6 Clausewitz, *On War*, 89.
8 Interview of Curtis LeMay by Manny-Ann Bendel, *USA Today*, July 23, 1986, 9A.
ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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Dr. Gary Joiner received a B.A. in history and geography and a M.A. in history from Louisiana Tech University and a Ph.D. in history from St. Martin’s College, Lancaster University in the United Kingdom. He is a professor of History at Louisiana State University in Shreveport and serves as the Chair of the Department of History and Social Sciences, where he holds the Mary Anne and Leonard Selber Professorship in History. He is the director at the Strategy Alternatives Consortium (SAC) LSUS and the Red River Regional Studies Center.

Dr. Joiner is the principal author of prior SAC LSUS White Papers, including OPERATION SENIOR SURPRISE: The Secret Squirrels and the opening of Operation DESERT STORM, 9/11: A Brief History and Case Study of America’s Worst Terrorist Attack, and Deterrence: A Brief History and a Case Study in Cold War Practice, Part I: 1945-1953. He is the author and editor of thirty-four books, including: History Matters, Shiloh and the Western Campaign of 1862, One Damn Blunder from Beginning to End, Through the Howling Wilderness, The Red River Campaign: The Union’s Last Attempt to Invade Texas, No Pardons to Ask or Apologies to Make, Little to Eat and Thin Mud to Drink, Mr. Lincoln’s Brown Water Navy, The Battle of New Orleans: a Bicentennial Tribute, Red River Steamboats, Historic Shreveport-Bossier, Lost Shreveport: Vanishing Scenes from the Red River Valley, Historic Haunts of Shreveport, Historic Oakland Cemetery, Wicked Shreveport, and Legendary Locals of Shreveport. Dr. Joiner is also the author of numerous articles and technical reports, and has served as a consultant for ABC, the Associated Press, A&E Network, C-SPAN, the Discovery Network, Fox News, HGTV, the History Channel, MSCBC, MTV, SyFy Channel, and Louisiana Public Broadcasting, among others.

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Ashley Dean received her B.A. in history and M.A. in Liberal Arts from Louisiana State University in Shreveport. She was the graduate researcher for SAC LSUS and is now the full time Assistant Director for the Consortium. She has co-authored and edited prior SAC LSUS White Papers, including OPERATION SENIOR SURPRISE: The Secret Squirrels and the opening of Operation DESERT STORM, 9/11: A Brief History and Case Study of America’s Worst Terrorist Attack, and Deterrence: A Brief History and a Case Study in Cold War Practice, Part I: 1945-1953. She recently published Victorian to Victorious: Women in the American Civil War in the 2016 edition of Janus, the journal of historical research published by the Department of History and Social Sciences at LSUS.
PREFACE

The Strategy Alternatives Consortium at Louisiana State University in Shreveport SAC LSUS) created a series of essays to commemorate the forty-fifth anniversary of the Operation LINEBACKER II, which, for America, all but ended the Vietnam War. These essays have been combined into a White Paper. All seven essays and the White Paper are available, free of charge, on the SAC LSUS website – www.lsus.edu/sac. The purpose is to assist professors, high school teachers, Air Force Association chapters, and ROTC units understand the campaign and put it in context of the time and the consequence it made in Air Force doctrine and subsequent political/military decisions.

Operation LINEBACKER II marked a seminal point in the Vietnam War. The campaign, sometimes referred to as “The Eleven-Day War,” brought the North Vietnamese, with sincerity, back to the peace talks in Paris and all but destroyed their ability to wage a defensive war against American Airpower. Most historians and strategists agree that LINEBACKER II was a tremendously successful endeavor. There are some dissenters, who point to a lack of significant targets.

This series of essays examines the literature, the role of participants, presidential administrations, and military commanders and planners to provide an overarching examination of LINEBACKER II. They also provide both orthodox and dissenting opinions so that the reader may make up his or her mind concerning the subject.

The chapters cover a brief examination of the campaign, a discussion of the political climate from the end of World War II to through the decisions to execute Operation LINEBACKER and LINEBACKER II, an examination of strategic bombardment theory from World War II to the early years of the Vietnam War, strategic assets and micromanagement of those assets between 1965 and 1972, Operation LINEBACKER I, Operation LINEBACKER II, and, finally, the consequences and change in strategic thought brought forward by the campaigns.

The authors, Gary D. Joiner, Ph.D. and Ashley E. Dean, wish to thank Lane Callaway, the Eighth Air Force Historian, the good folks who handle the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests at Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana and Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama, for their often as for requests, and Lieutenant General Robert Elder (USAF retired) for guidance in this project.

Gary D. Joiner
Director, SAC LSUS
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November 5, 2017
ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE LINEBACKER II SERIES

AAA- Anti-Aircraft Artillery
AAD- Anti-Aircraft Defenses
AAF- Army Air Force (United States)
AB- Air Base
ABM- Anti-ballistic Missile
ACC- Air Combat Command
ADC- Air Defense Command
AEC- Atomic Energy Commission
AFA- Air Force Association
AFB- Air Force Base
AFGSC- Air Force Global Strike Command
AFM- Air Force Manual
ALCM- Air launched cruise missile
ARVN- Army of the Republic of Vietnam (South Vietnamese national army)
BARCAP- Barrier Combat Air Patrols
BDA- Bomb Damage Assessment
BW- Bomb Wing (USAF)
CALCM- Conventional air launched cruise missiles
CENTCOM- Central Command (US)
CH- CORONA HARVEST
CIA- Central Intelligence Agency
CINCPAC- Commander US Military Assistance Command Pacific
COMUSMACV- Commander US Military Assistance Command Vietnam
CONUS- Continental United States
DEW- Defense Early Warning (radar system)
DIA- Defense Intelligence Agency
DMZ- demilitarized zone
DOD- Department of Defense
DOE- Department of Energy
DRVN- Democratic Republic of Vietnam (North Vietnam)
ECM- electronic counter-warfare measures
ELINT- electronic intelligence
EW- Electronic Warfare
EWO- Electronic Warfare Officer
FAS- Federation of American Scientists
HE- high explosive
ICBM- Intercontinental Ballistic Missile
IP- Initial Point
IRBM- Intermediate Range Ballistic Missile
ISIS (IS, ISIS, ISIL, Daesh) - Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
JCS- Joint Chiefs of Staff
LGM- laser guided munitions
MACV- Military Assistance Command, Vietnam
MAD- Mutually Assured Destruction
MAJCOM- Major Command
MiG CAP- MiG Combat Air Patrol
MIRVs- multiple independently targeted vehicles
MIT- Massachusetts Institute of Technology
NATO- North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NSC- National Security Council
NSM- National Security Memorandum
NVA- North Vietnamese Army (North Vietnamese communist national army)
NVN- North Vietnam
PACAF- Pacific Air Forces
PAVN- People’s Army of Vietnam (North Vietnamese communist national army)
PGM- Precision guided munitions
POL- Petroleum Oil and Lubricants
PRC- Peoples Republic of China
PTT- Post Target Turn
ROE- Rules of engagement
RP- Route Package
RT- Radar Troops
RTNAB- Royal Thai Naval / Air Base
SAC- Strategic Air Command
SAM- Surface to Air Missile
SAM-2- Surface to Air Missiles, model 2
SEA- Southeast Asia
SECAF- Secretary of the Air Force (U.S.)
SIOP- Single Integrated Operational Plan
SLBM- Submarine Launced Ballistic Missile
TAC- Tactical Air Command
TACAIR- Tactical Aircraft, Tactical Air, or Tactical Air Forces
TOT- Times on Target
UN- United Nations
UNSC- United Nations Security Council
USAAF- United States Army Air Force
USAF- United States Air Force
USS- United States Ship

USSBS- United States Strategic Bombing Survey
USSR- Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
VC- Viet Cong (guerilla communist force that cooperated with the PAVN/NVA)
WMD- Weapons of Mass Destruction
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PART 1:
SERIES INTRODUCTION: OPERATION LINEBACKER II

In December 1972, in what was hoped to be the final weeks of the Vietnam War, President Richard M. Nixon ordered a massive bombing campaign against North Vietnam. The military campaign had strictly political origins. The Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) recommended in 1964 that North Vietnam be bombed and determined 94 targets that would wreck their ability to wage war. President Lyndon B. Johnson, Secretary of Defense, Robert S. McNamara, and Secretary of State Dean Rusk balked at the idea, fearing a Chinese invasion as in Korea. This set the stage for civilian micromanagement of the military conduct of the war, troop strength, selection of targets, rules of engagement (ROE), and, to many commanders, observers and historians, the primary reason the war descended into the chaos that it became. McNamara, in his position since 1961 and never popular with the military, became a pariah to the JCS and the commanders who followed his orders.

North Vietnam invaded South Vietnam earlier that year using standard military tactics rather than guerrilla warfare. They hoped to take over the South Vietnamese government before U.S. forces, (deep into troop draw-downs) could hold them back. A series of long drawn out negotiations in Paris frustrated the Americans and the South Vietnamese. On December 13, North Vietnam suspended negotiations that attempted to establish a cease-fire agreement and return U.S. prisoners of war. At the same time, the U.S. Congress, tired of the political consequences of the war, determined to cut off funding for Southeast Asia military operations when members returned to Washington D.C. from their holiday recess in January 1973.

The bombing campaign, known as Operation LINEBACKER II, began on December 18 and lasted for 11 days. Air Force Strategic Air Command (SAC) B-52 bombers flew 729 sorties.

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12 Kohn and Harahan, Strategic Air Warfare, 121.
14 Henry Kissinger, White House Years (Boston, 1979), 717-744.
and U.S. Navy and Air Force Tactical Air Command (TAC) fighter-bombers flew 1,000 sorties.\textsuperscript{16} The SAC bombers, naval fighter-bombers, and TAC aircraft dropped 20,370 tons of bombs on North Vietnam.\textsuperscript{17} They destroyed command and control structures, power generating plants, railroad marshalling yards and trackage, and destroyed military airfields, surface to air missile (SAM) assembly and storage facilities. At the end of the campaign, North Vietnam was largely in the dark, very low on ammunition, and had exhausted its supply of SAMs.\textsuperscript{18} Although additional missions were planned and preparations made, President Nixon halted the bombing on December 29.\textsuperscript{19} North Vietnam, without replenishment from China and the Soviet Union, agreed to return to negotiations in earnest. The results were merely a formality. The cease-fire agreement was signed on January 23, 1973 by Henry Kissinger for the United States and Le Due Tho for North Vietnam.\textsuperscript{20}

Operation LINEBACKER II’s strategy and tactics remain the topic of discussion and planning today, forty-five years later. It proved that the Air Force commanders’ concept of ending the war in 1965 would work militarily, but largely due to the threat of Chinese intervention, was nullified. Once the JCS and Air Force commanders could set targets themselves and not answer to the White House staff (within reason), destruction of the North Vietnamese will and capacity to wage became evident. The operation also led to unanticipated consequences. SAC lost much of its prestige due to its inflexibility. Beliefs in bomber stream formation from World War II and Korea for conventional bombing missions proved problematic for SAC crews who were trained to follow orders blindly in their nuclear combat roles. Iron bombs soon gave way to precision guided weapons. The vulnerability of the B-52s to SAMs quickly led to changes in tactics, mission concepts, and a reduction in the numbers of the heavy bombers. More senior commanders were chosen from the ranks of the fighter pilots.\textsuperscript{21}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{16} James R. McCarthy and George B. Allison, \textit{Linebacker II: A View From the Rock} (Montgomery, Ala., 1979), 39-89.
\item \textsuperscript{17} Ibid., 91-167.
\item \textsuperscript{18} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{20} Henry Kissinger, \textit{White House Years} 740-744.
\end{itemize}
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PART 3:

Strategic Bombardment Theory Prior to Vietnam

Post Nagasaki

Strategic bombing theory following World War II continued the tenants of the early theorists, particularly the Italian pioneer Giulio Douhet and General William “Billy” Mitchell in the 1920s and 1930s. Both men, and others, theorized that aerial bombardment should be concentrated on major targets of economic and military importance. This could not be carried out by aerial bombing alone, but it tipped the balance on winning World War II. The post war United States Strategic Bombing Survey (USSBS) stated that strategic bombing “was decisive in the war in Western Europe.” The Pacific Theatre saw, under General Curtis LeMay, the wholesale destruction of Japanese cities, industrial complexes, military complexes, and the destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki with atomic bombs. This brought about surrender without an invasion by American ground troops. Strategic bombardment became an integral part of military planning and execution. Airpower advocates saw the atomic bomb, with America being the sole owner and operator, as the ultimate hedge against war. If a war did occur, it was expected to be against the Soviet Union.

General Carl A. Spaatz, who became the Army Air Force (AAF) postwar Commanding General and the first Chief of Staff of the U.S. Air Force in 1947, summed up this belief: "Air Power is not only our first line of defense, it is the only instrument using the third dimensional medium, the air; it is the only weapon which has the speed, flexibility, and versatility to cope with the cataclysmic forces yet to be released in the Atomic Age." Post War thinkers like Bernard Brodie brought the complex issues of the use of atomic weapons into sharp focus. He believed the existence of the atomic bomb required a complete reordering of military strategic deterrence doctrine: "Thus far the chief purpose of our military establishment has been to win wars. From now on its chief purpose must be to avert them. It can have almost no other useful purpose." The American military, in a joint exercise, exploded two atomic bombs near Bikini Atoll in the Marshall Islands in July 1946. Operation CROSSROADS was to establish the effect of atomic weapons on naval forces. The second test, codenamed “BAKER” used a 23-kiloton weapon suspended 90 feet below the surface of the water and yielded the following results:

The underwater fireball generated by the blast took the form of a rapidly expanding hot gas bubble, which reached the sea floor and the sea surface simultaneously. The result created a shallow crater on the seafloor 30 feet deep and nearly 2,000 feet wide. At the top, water burst through the surface like a geyser, creating a massive "spray dome" containing nearly

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two million tons of water. The expanding dome stretched into a hollow chimney of spray called the "column," 6000 feet tall and 2000 feet wide with walls 300 feet thick.

The space vacated by the rising gas bubble caused a tsunami which generated a wave 94 feet high. By the time the wave reached Bikini Island beach 3.5 miles away, a series of nine 15-foot waves tossed landing craft onto the beach and filled them with sand. Ten seconds after the detonation, falling water from the column created a 900-foot "base surge" which rolled over many of the target ships, painting them with radioactivity that could not be removed.27

![Figure 1. Operation CROSSROADS in July 1946. Note the capital ships that were destroyed in seconds. Image Source: U.S. Atomic Energy Commission.](image)

Observers from the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) reported that the destructive power of atomic weapons was so impressive that if "used in numbers," they could "nullify any nation's military effort" and "demolish its social and economic structures and prevent their reestablishment for long periods of time."\(^{28}\)

The difficulty in producing enough atomic bombs to meet planning needs took years to solve, and the question of how many nuclear-capable bombers was an added problem.\(^{29}\) The small numbers of atomic bombs led planners to assume that future conflicts would be fought with a combination of conventional and atomic weapons.\(^{30}\) President Harry Truman added to the Air Force’s frustration and confusion when he placed custody and control of nuclear weapons with the civilian-run Atomic Energy Commission (AEC), established by the Atomic Energy Act of 1946. The Berlin Crisis and the Korean War forced Truman to relinquish some control to the military. He allowed military custody of nuclear weapons, limited initially to nonnuclear components.\(^{31}\)

**SAC – Peace is our Profession**

The Strategic Air Command (SAC) became the long-range strike arm of the postwar Air Force. It formed, along with the Tactical Air Command (TAC) and the Air Defense Command (ADC), the three primary major commands (MAJCOMs) that composed the Air Force. SAC was also designated a “Specified Command” meaning that it reported directly to the JCS, making the Air Force their executive agent.\(^{32}\) This meant that SAC not only possessed a degree of independence from the Air Force, but it also became a separate line item in the Defense budget. As SAC’s needs and perceptions grew, so did its voracious budgets for the next three decades.

When the U.S. Air Force became an independent service, SAC possessed only one atomic weapons capable bomb group. This was the 509th, based at Roswell Field, New Mexico near the Sandia nuclear storage facility. This reflected the complex relationship among the AEC, The DOD, and SAC. The 509th flew Silverplate B-29s,\(^{33}\) each modified to carry a single atomic bomb weighing approximately 10,000 pounds.\(^{34}\) The remaining six groups fielded conventionally armed B-29s or B-17s as reconnaissance aircraft. B-29s had an unrefueled range of 3,250 miles. This meant that, in the post-war world, they must operate from forward bases in Europe or the Far East, which caused some serious security and political problems.\(^{35}\) SAC organized its air refueling tankers into squadrons in 1948. These consisted of modified B-29s designated as KB-29Ms. This greatly increased the bombers’ range since the KB-29Ms


\(^{30}\) Reardon, “U.S. Bombardment Doctrine,” 387.


\(^{32}\) JCS 1259/27 para 4, subj: Unified Command Plan, Dec II, 1946, and decision on December 12, 1946, RG 341, DCS/Ops, Dir of Plans, PO 323.361 (November 8, 1943), case I, sec 4, NARA.

\(^{33}\) Atomic Heritage Foundation. Project "Silverplate" was the code name that referred to a secret program within the Manhattan Project to produce a special version of the Boeing B-29 Superfortress bomber that could deliver the atomic bomb. [http://www.atomicheritage.org/history/project-silverplate](http://www.atomicheritage.org/history/project-silverplate)


\(^{35}\) Ibid.
could be stationed at forward air bases and meet the bombers on their way or returning from missions.\textsuperscript{36} SAC received its initially problem-plagued B-36 intercontinental bombers beginning in 1948. This increased the combat range to 8,000 miles.\textsuperscript{37}

SAC planners and targeters focused primarily on a war with the Soviet Union almost immediately following World War II and this continued throughout its existence. SAC concentrated targeting on 70 urban-industrial centers recognized as crucial to the Soviet war-making economy. These were the most easily-identifiable and easily-targetable sites, as there was no aerial reconnaissance until the U-2 was introduced.\textsuperscript{38} The plan established an imperative for a “paralyzing blow delivered within forty-eight hours, mainly against the Soviet Union’s transportation and petroleum production systems, it would incapacitate or at least slow the Soviet war machine while the United States and its allies mobilized.”\textsuperscript{39} SAC made its point very clearly during the Berlin Crisis of 1948-1949. It deployed B-29s to Great Britain to show how highly the West prioritized the situation. As a deception, the 509\textsuperscript{th} Silverplate B-29s were moved. The Soviets did not know if the B-29s in Britain were nuclear capable or not.\textsuperscript{40}

The Soviet Union exploded its first atomic bomb in September 1949. The reaction was predictably strong. President Truman announced that the United States would begin research and deployment of new weapon of mass destruction (WMD) using thermonuclear (hydrogen) it its design.\textsuperscript{41} President Truman asked his advisors to take a hard look at the state of the military following the detonation of the Soviet bomb. The result was National Security Council (NSC) 68, which estimated that by 1954, the Soviets would have both the atomic weapons and delivery systems to threaten the continental United States.\textsuperscript{42} When the Korean War began, President Truman began lifting the ceiling on defense spending.

SAC was the great beneficiary. SAC’s personnel and equipment in January 1951 consisted of 85,000 personnel and 1,000 aircraft. By the end of 1951, SAC expanded to 145,000 personnel and 1,200 aircraft, including 98 B-36s, 340 B-29s, and 219 B-50s, a longer-distance version of the B-29 with jet assist.\textsuperscript{43} SAC and the Air Force both requested far larger forces. The Air Force wanted 95 wings of both tactical and strategic aircraft. Congress mulled over increasing the force size to between 126 and 150 wings with one-third dedicated to SAC.\textsuperscript{44} This increase in Air Force strategic units was accompanied by a rapidly increase in the production of nuclear weapons. The AEC counted 299 atomic weapons at the beginning of the Korean War. By 1961, the total arsenal totaled 22,229.\textsuperscript{45}

\textsuperscript{36} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{37} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{41} Harry S. Truman, \textit{Memoirs: Years of Trial and Hope} (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1956), 309.
\textsuperscript{43} J. C. Hopkins and Sheldon A. Goldberg, \textit{The Development of Strategic Air Command, 1946-1986} (Offutt AFB, NB: Office of the Historian, HQ SAC, 1986), 21, 30.
The Dwight D. Eisenhower administration’s “New Look” policy saw a tremendous increase in strategic deterrence assets. These included not only offensive weapons such as bombers, but defensive early warning systems such as the Defense Early Warning radar system (DEW Line), dedicated nuclear missile armed fighter-interceptor squadrons, and air defense missile systems protecting cities and major military bases.46

Guiding all of this was General Curtis E. LeMay, SAC’s commander from 1948-1957. His personal stamp covered everything from airmen’s daily lives to targeting and aircraft procurement. He placed gifted men loyal to him and his theories of air warfare in high positions and many succeeded him as his career rose. He stressed excellence at level of his command: “In my opinion, SAC’s deterrent influence on USSR aggressive intentions can only be maintained by an effective force in being, properly manned, equipped and trained, at the proper time period, and whose combat capability is universally recognized and unquestioned.”47 LeMay led SAC to be the greatest deterrent force in history, with 200,000 personnel operating at 55 air bases in CONUS and overseas.48

Figure 2. B-52 D with SAC livery with anti-radiation white on lower surfaces and twin Hound Dog missiles on external pylons. Image Source: United States Air Force.

47 Cable, LeMay to Twining, subject: SAC Capabilities, May 15, 1953, LeMay Papers, box B-203, B-27106 folder, Library of Congress.
48 Hopkins and Goldberg, Development of SAC, 58.
SAC found that its piston engine propeller driven bombers could not keep up with the rapid advances in fighter jets. The result was a new medium bomber, the B-47 Stratojet. The six-jet engine swept wing jet entered service in 1951. This allowed for the replacement of the B-29s and B-50s, and the changeover to all jet bombers was complete by 1950. At that time SAC had 1,300 B-47s. The B-52 Stratofortress, an eight-engine jet bomber, entered service the same year, replacing the B-36s.\(^{49}\) The early A through D models, carrying four gravity-fall hydrogen weapons, had an approximate range of 6,000 miles, while the G and H models traveled 10,000 miles carrying eight H-Bombs.\(^{50}\) This included carrying Quail decoys and twin Hound Dog missiles with their own nuclear warheads.\(^{51}\) KC-135 jet tankers replaced the KB-50s and allowed the B-52s to have unlimited range.\(^{52}\)

SAC occasionally tested Soviet Air Defenses by flying parallel to their air space. Fifty aircraft flew over the port city of Vladivostok during daylight, unopposed, at least once.\(^{53}\) The implementation of the Lockheed U-2 high altitude reconnaissance plane allowed SAC to obtain real time intelligence for targeting. U-2s operated out of Beale Air Force Base and also forward bases in Europe and Asia with impunity until one was lost over Sverdlovsk and the pilot, Francis Gary Powers was captured in 1960. The CIA and the Air Force jointly operated the U-2 program.\(^{54}\)

\(^{49}\) Reardon, “U.S. Bombardment Doctrine,” 405.


The U-2s gave SAC much needed information on potential targets. SAC planners allocated their primary target status to military-industrial targets, and as the tradition of World War II and Korea demanded, major population centers were kept on the list. Even though the number of nuclear weapons and bombers were ever increasing, targets outmatched deliverability. Targets were often chosen by selecting multiple targets in clusters with higher yield weapons and multiple thermonuclear bombs dedicated to them if needed.\textsuperscript{55} SAC identified 1,700 targets within the Soviet Union in 1954. Of these 409 were airfields.\textsuperscript{56} A full attack on 118 of the Soviet Union’s 134 most populous cities would yield annihilation of between 75 and 84 percent of the Soviet population.\textsuperscript{57}

The Soviets made significant gains in the early 1950s toward jet bombers that could threaten SAC’s overseas air bases, NATO facilities and troop concentrations, and perhaps CONUS. The mainstay of the Soviet long-range bomber force was the Tupolev 95 Bear bomber. They also made rapid gains in IRBM and ICBM weapons. RAND Corporation performed research projects for the Air Force that described the vulnerability of the U.S. Mainland from a Soviet strike.\textsuperscript{58} This prompted SAC to withdraw many of its

\textsuperscript{56} Ibid., 18.
\textsuperscript{58} \textit{Special Staff Report: The Selection of Strategic Air Bases} (RAND R-244-S, Mar I, 1953) and A. J. Wohlstetter \textit{et al.}, \textit{Selection and Use of Strategic Air Bases} (RAND R-266, April 1954).
forward based bombers back to U.S. and increased its bases it currently used and added many more. Foreign bases typically retained KC-135 tankers.\textsuperscript{59}

This rapid increase in the technology of Soviet bombers and ICBM technology led President Eisenhower to ask the president of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), James R. Killian, to form a panel to investigate America’s vulnerabilities in case of attack.\textsuperscript{60} The panel presented their findings in 1955 to the NSC and Eisenhower in what is called the Killian Report. They believed that if the United States did not increase its strategic forces and home defenses that “For the first time in history a striking force could have such power that the first battle could be the final battle, the first punch a knockout.”\textsuperscript{61} The Killian Report stated that strategic offensive capabilities must be vastly upgraded and the United States homeland defenses must be upgraded to include early warning and air defense systems, more SAC base dispersal, particularly away from major population areas, and an increased emphasis on “high-technology intelligence gathering and on weapons such as ICBMs and land-and sea-based intermediate-range ballistic missiles (IRBMs) that could respond swiftly and effectively in an emergency with minimal prior warning.”\textsuperscript{62} SAC pushed for ICBMs and IRBMS, and an increase in the number of operational bases.\textsuperscript{63} Air Force, Department of Defense, and NSC planners and researchers began to fear of both bomber and missile gaps relative to the Soviets. Specifically, Trevor Gardner, at that time Special Assistant for Research and Development to the Secretary of the Air Force, urged for a rapid increase in the ICBM program.\textsuperscript{64} Although SAC rightly placed great significance in its bomber and tanker force, it embraced ballistic missiles if they were under its control.

Some in the administration believed that ICBMs were the answer to cost overruns. Missiles were relatively cheap, especially regarding the cost of SAC bombes and tankers, as well as tremendous infrastructure of bases.\textsuperscript{65} Eisenhower’s response was that “We must remember that we have a great number of bombardment aircraft programmed, and great numbers of tankers that are now being built, and we must consider how to use them.”\textsuperscript{66}

Late in 1957, the Soviets launched Sputnik 1, the Earth’s first artificial satellite. The delivery vehicle was, of course, an ICBM. This set of a frenzy off activity among American and NATO planners. SAC might be rendered obsolete. RAND Corporation’s Albert Wohlstetter and Fred Hoffman authored a

\textsuperscript{59} Hopkins and Goldberg, \textit{Development of SAC}, pp 72-73.

\textsuperscript{60} James R. Killian, \textit{Sputnik, Scientists, and Eisenhower: A Memoir of the First Special Assistant to the President for Science and Technology} (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1977), passim.


\textsuperscript{62} Ibid.; Reardon, “U.S. Bombardment Doctrine,” 413.


\textsuperscript{65} Col A. J. Goodpaster, Meeting of Nov 8, 1956, on Policy Questions Affecting Department of Defense, November 9, 1956, Eisenhower Papers, Whitman file, DOE Diary Series, box 19, November 1956 Staff Memos folder, DDEL.

\textsuperscript{66} Goodpaster, Meeting of December 19, 1956, on DoD Budget, Dec 20, 1956, DOE Diary Series, box 20, December 1956 Staff Memos folder, DDEL.
Shortly after John F. Kennedy’s election and before he took office in January 1961, The JCS approved its initial single integrated operational plan (SIOP) for 1961. It was a near copy of SAC operational doctrine.

71 Ibid.
72 Memo, Goodpaster, Conference with the President on November 4, 1957, November 6, 1957, Eisenhower Presidential Papers, Whitman file, DOE Diary Series, box 28, November 1957 Staff Notes folder, DDEL.
73 JCS 2101/284, December 4, 1957, RG 218, Modern Military Division, NARA.
75 Hopkins and Goldberg, Development of SAC, 89, 92.
76 Letter, General Power to General Twining: Command and Control of Polaris, Mar 6, 1959, Thomas D. White Papers, box 27, Command SAC folder, LC.
78 Reardon, “U.S. Bombardment Doctrine,” 422.
The Kennedy-McNamara Era

SAC’s doctrine hinged on its massive ability for overkill and to survive a Soviet first strike in a full out thermonuclear war. The new B-70 was in final engineering and early flight stages, and, as General LeMay stated: “to provide a decisive counterforce potential” in the coming decade and thereafter.79 John Kennedy was critical of the Eisenhower administration’s defense policy as a Congressman and Senator. He believed that the “missile gap” would be America’s undoing. He was suspicious of a world in which the United States had only one military option, that being massive nuclear counterstrike capabilities.80 He wanted wider options and the ability to fight conventional wars that might stop a thermonuclear conflagration. He stated: “We have been driving ourselves into a corner where the only choice is all or nothing at all, world devastation or submission – a choice that necessarily causes us to hesitate on the brink and leaves the initiative in the hands of our enemies.”81

Kennedy handpicked a team of bright intellectuals to carry out his beliefs and campaign promises. Among these was Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara. McNamara left the post of President of the Ford Motor Company to work in Kennedy’s cabinet. His specialty was data and statistical analysis. McNamara thought like an accountant, not like the civilian head of the United States military. To somewhat counter McNamara, the President brought General Maxwell Taylor, Eisenhower’s Army Chief of Staff, back to active duty and appointed him the Chairman of the JCS. McNamara and his team, known as the “Whiz Kids,”82 began auditing the United States’ defense policy. He reviewed SIOP from the standpoint of economic efficiency, not survivability or practicality.83 SAC pushed back stating that it did not want to be pushed backwards into a state of weakened deterrence and “perhaps make a thermonuclear war impossibly difficult to fight.”84 Kennedy’s NSC revised SIOP to focus on retaliation, not preemption, and to select second strike targets rather than preemptive targets with emphasis on reexamining aim points and timing rather than one massive assault. The theory was that if the Soviets did not kill the United States entirely in a first strike, U.S. retaliation might convince them to halt their aggression by not attacking in a single giant response.85 SAC’s commander, General Thomas A. Power, believed abandoning first strike options were foolhardy at best.86

After being in office for four months, McNamara told the North Atlantic Council in a secret meeting in Athens, Greece on May 5, 1962:

81 Ibid.
83 Goodpaster, Conference with the President, Kistiakowsky, et al., November 25, 1960, December I, 1960, Eisenhower Papers, DDEL.
The U.S. has come to the conclusion that to the extent feasible, basic military strategy in a possible general nuclear war should be approached in much the same way that more conventional military operations have been regarded in the past. That is to say, principal military objectives, in the event of a nuclear war stemming from a major attack on the Alliance, should be the destruction of the enemy's military forces, not his civilian population. In other words, we are giving a possible opponent the strongest imaginable incentive to refrain from striking our own cities.\textsuperscript{87}

McNamara, with the President’s blessing, began cost cutting measures. He increased the number of ICBMs to be built, increased the number of B-52s and KC-135s standing alert from one-third to one-half, accelerated the decommissioning of the B-47 fleet, and killed the Skybolt missile and B-70 programs.\textsuperscript{88} Air Force Chief of Staff, General LeMay told a Senate committee, “I do not think you can maintain superiority in this field with that sort of a program.”\textsuperscript{89} New online and launched CORONA satellites showed that the missile gap did not exist and that the Soviets had perhaps seventy SS-6 and SS-7 ICBMs.\textsuperscript{90}

McNamara controlled the SIOP. He retained several counterforce options, but limited them. He met heavy resistance from SAC. McGeorge Bundy, the President’s National Security Advisor, admitted “it would be much easier to control strategic procurement if he [McNamara] did not at the same time challenge SAC’s targeting doctrines.”\textsuperscript{91} McNamara refused to consider any hint of an American first-strike option under any circumstances. “Because we have a sure second-strike capability, there is no pressure on us

\textsuperscript{89} Thomas S. Power, Design for Survival (New York: Coward-McCann, 1966), 128.
\textsuperscript{91} McGeorge Bundy, Danger and Survival (New York: Random House, 1988), 354.
 whatsoever to preempt … our second strike is so sure that there would be no rational basis on which to launch a preemptive strike.” Author Steven Reardon sums up McNamara’s not so altruistic decision:

A number of considerations doubtless played a part in his thinking, but it seems clear that the crucial factor in McNamara’s decision to abandon counterforce was his dawning realization that the costs would be enormous, entailing ever-increasing new expenditures. As more weapons were made available, still more targets could be added to the SIOP, which in turn would require more weapons, not to mention more active and passive American defenses. Although Kennedy and McNamara both supported a more vigorous civil defense program, it never caught on either with a Congress that was lukewarm toward the idea or with an indifferent American public.

The Cuban Missile Crisis in October 1962 seemed to have solidified his views that neither the U.S. nor the Soviet Union would commit to thermonuclear war because it was a path to suicide. He introduced the

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92 Bundy, *Danger and Survival*, 355.
theory of assured destruction, or mutual assured destruction (MAD) into SIOP and the defense budgets throughout his tenure in the Kennedy and Johnson administrations.\textsuperscript{95}

After President Kennedy’s assassination, his vice-president Lyndon B. Johnson became president. Johnson retained all of Kennedy’s top aids and cabinet. McNamara convinced the new president to hold U.S. strategic assets to 41 SLBM submarines and 1,000 Minuteman ICBM launchers.\textsuperscript{96} McNamara also promised the Pentagon that the next year’s budget would include weapon refinements including hardened caps for warheads, multiple independently targeted vehicles (MIRVs), sea launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs) and some anti-ballistic missile (ABM) defense systems. The Pentagon, particularly SAC, realized that the bomber alert force, indeed the manned bomber program was marginalized.\textsuperscript{97}

\textsuperscript{95} For MAD, see Herman Kahn, \textit{On Thermonuclear War}, 2\textsuperscript{nd} ed. (New York: Free Press, 1960), passim; U.S. Commission on the Organization of the Government for the Conduct of Foreign Policy, \textit{Appendix}.

\textsuperscript{96} Hopkins and Goldberg, \textit{Development of SAC}, 110, 126; McNamara, \textit{Essence of Security}, 63-64; Enthoven and Smith, \textit{How Much Is Enough?} pp 251-262; McNamara, \textit{Essence of Security}, 63-64.

Table 1. Comprehensive list of all SAC bases, from 1946-1992, units attached by year, and whether the units were Host (H), Tenant (T), or Provisional (P).

Strategic Air Command Bases - 1946 – 1992

For ease of use, if the name of the installation changed, both the old and new name are listed:

Present name (Future name and date of name change), Location. (T) = Tenant, (H)=Host.

(Previous name) Present name and date of name change. Location. (T) =Tenant, (H)=Host.

United States

Abilene AFB, TX (Dyess AFB, 15 Dec 1956) (H)
- 341st Bomb Wing 1955–1956

Altus AFB, Altus, OK (H)
  - 96th Bomb Wing 1953–1957.

Amarillo AFB, Amarillo, TX (H)
- 461st Bomb Wing 1963–1968

Andrews AFB, Camp Spring, MD (T)
- Namesake: Lt Gen Frank Maxwell Andrews
  - Strategic Air Command HQ 1946–1948.
    - 311th Reconnaissance Group 1946–1948
Barksdale AFB, Bossier City, LA (H)

- Namesake: Lt Eugene Hoy Barksdale.
    - 311th Air Division 1949.
    - 91st Strategic Reconnaissance Wing 1949–1951.
    - 311th Reconnaissance Group 1948–1949
    - 376th Bomb Wing 1951–1957.

Beale AFB, Marysville, CA (H)

- Namesake: Brig Gen Edward Fitzgerald Beale.
  - Second Air Force 1991–1992,
    - 14th Air Division 1960–1962,
      - 9th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing 1966–1991,
      - 9th Wing 1991–1992,
      - 17th Bomb Wing 1975–1976,
      - 100th Air Refueling Wing 1976–1983,
      - 456th Bomb Wing 1972–1975,
      - 456th Strategic Aerospace Wing 1962–1971,
      - 4126th Strategic Wing 1959–1963,
      - 4200th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing 1965–1966,

Bergstrom AFB, Austin, TX (H)

- Namesake: Capt John August Bergstrom.
  - 12th Fighter Day Wing 1957–1958
  - 12th Fighter Escort Wing 1950–1953
  - 12th Strategic Fighter Wing 1953–1957
  - 27th Fighter Escort Wing 1950–1953
  - 27th Fighter Wing 1949–1950
  - 27th Strategic Fighter Wing 1953–1958
  - 67th Tactical Reconnaissance Wing 1971-1993
  - 131st Fighter – Bomber Wing 1951
  - 340th Bomb Wing 1963–1966
- 4130th Strategic Wing 1958–1963

**Biggs AFB, El Paso, TX (H)**

- Namesake: Lt James B. Biggs.
  - 810th Air Division 1952–1962
    - 95th Bomb Wing 1952–1966
    - 97th Bomb Wing 1948–1959

**Blytheville AFB, Blytheville, AR (Eaker AFB 26 May 1988) (H)**

- 42d Air Division 1973–1988
- 42d Strategic Aerospace Division 1963
  - 97th Bomb Wing 1959–1988

**Bolling AFB, Washington, DC (T)**

- Namesake: Col Raynal Cawthorne Bolling.
  - District of Columbia
    - Strategic Air Commands HQ 1946

**Buckley Field, Aurora, CO. (T)**

- 311th Reconnaissance Wing 1946–1948

**Bunker Hill AFB (Grissom AFB, 12 May 1968), Peru, IN (H)**


**Camp Carson, Colorado Springs, CO (T)**

- Namesake: Brig. Gen. Christopher "Kit" Carson

**Campbell AFB, KY (T)**

• SAC Special Activities Center

(Fort Worth AFB) Carswell AFB, 27 Feb 1948, Fort Worth, TX (H)

• Namesake: Maj. Horace Seaver Carswell, Jr.
• 8th Air Force 1948–1955
  • 7th Bomb Wing 1948–1991
    • 19th Air Division 1951–1988
    • 7th Wing 1991–1992
    • 11th Bomb Wing 1951–1957
    • 43d Bomb Wing 1960–1964
    • 4123d Strategic Wing 1957–1959

Castle AFB, Merced County, CA (H)

• Namesake: Brig. Gen. Frederick Walker Castle.
  • 47th Air Division 1959–1962
  • 47th Air Division 1963–1971.
    • 93d Bombardment Group 1946.
    • 93d Bomb Wing 1947–1991
    • 93d Wing 1991–1992

Chatham AFB, Savannah, GA (H)

• 22nd Bomb Wing 1949–1950

(Lake Charles AFB) Chennault AFB, LA 14 Nov 1958 (H)

• Namesake: Maj. Gen. Claire Lee Chennault
• 806th Air Division 1958–1960
  • 44th Bomb Wing 1958–1960
  • 68th Bomb Wing 1958–1963

Clinton County AFB, Wilmington, OH (T)

• 22nd Air Division 1959–1960
  • 4090th Air Refueling Wing 1958–1960
Clinton–Sherman AFB, Clinton, OK (H)

- Namesake: City of Clinton and the Sherman Iron Works.
  - 4090th Air Refueling Wing 1958–1960
  - 4123d Strategic Wing 1959–1963

Columbus AFB, Columbus, MS (H)

- 454th Bomb Wing 1962–1969
- 4228th Strategic Wing 1958–1963

Cooke AFB (Vandenberg AFB, 4 Oct 1958), Lompoc, CA (T)

  - 1st Missile Division 1957–1958
    - 704th Strategic Missile Wing 1957–1958

Davis–Monthan AFB, Tucson, AZ (H)

- Namesake: 1st Lt. Samuel H. Davis and 2d Lt. Oscar Monthan
  - 12th Air Division 1962–1971
  - 12th Strategic Aerospace Division 1962–1971
  - 12th Strategic Missile Division 1971–1973
  - 36th Air Division 1951–1960
    - 2d Bomb Wing 1947–1949
    - 40th Bombardment Group 1946
    - 43rd Bomb Wing 1947–1960
    - 100th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing 1966–1976
    - 303d Bomb Wing 1951–1964
    - 390th Bomb Wing 1953–1961
    - 390th Strategic Missile Wing 1962–1984
    - 444th Bombardment Group 1946
    - 4080th Strategic Wing 1969–1966

Dow AFB, Bangor, ME (H)

- Namesake: Lt. James F. Dow.
  - 6th Air Division 1961–1966
    - 132d Fighter Bomber Wing 1951
    - 397th Bomb Wing 1962–1968
• 506th Strategic Fighter Wing 1952–1955
• 4038th Strategic Wing 1958–1963
• 4060th Air Refueling Wing 1955–1963

(Abilene AFB) Dyess AFB 15 Dec 1956, Abilene, TX (H)

• 12th Air Division 1973–1988
• 819th Air Division 1956–1962
• 819th Strategic Aerospace Division 1962–1966
  • 7th Wing 1993–current
  • 96th Bomb Wing 1957–1962
  • 96th Bomb Wing 1972–1991
  • 96th Strategic Aerospace Wing 1962–1972
  • 96th Wing 1991–1992
  • 341st Bomb Wing 1956–1961

(Blytheville AFB) Eaker AFB 26 May 1988, Blytheville, AR (H)

• Namesake: Gen. Ira C. Eaker
  • 97th Bomb Wing 1988–1991
  • 97th Wing 1991–1992

Eglin AFB, Ft. Walton Beach, FL (T)

• Namesake: Lt. Col. Fredrick Irving Eglin. 
  • 39th Bomb Wing 1963–1965
  • 4135th Strategic Wing 1958–1963

(Mile 26) Eielson AFB, Fairbanks 4 Feb 1948, AK 20 Jul 1957 (T)

• Namesake: Col. Carl Benjamin Eielson
  • 6th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing 1988–1992
  • 6th Strategic Wing 1967–1988
  • 168th Air Refueling Wing 1986–1992
  • 4157th Strategic Wing 1962–1967
  • 97th Bomb Wing 1947–1948

(Rapid City AFB) Ellsworth AFB, 13 Jun 1953, Rapid City, SD (H)

• Namesake; Brig. Gen. Richard Elmer Ellsworth.
  • 12th Air Division 1988–1990
- 821st Air Division 1959–1962
- 821st Strategic Aerospace Division 1962–1971
  - 28th Bomb Wing 1955–1991
  - 28th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing 1953–1955
  - 28th Wing 1991–1992
  - 44th Missile Wing 1991–1992

Elmendorf AFB, Anchorage, AK (T)
- 4158th Strategic Wing 1963–1966

Ent AFB, Colorado Springs, CO (T)
- Fifteenth Air Force 1946–1949

(Spokane AFB) Fairchild AFB 20 Jul 1951, Spokane, WA. (H)
- 18th Air Division 1959–1962
- 18th Strategic Aerospace Division 1962–1968
- 47th Air Division 1971–1987
- 57th Air Division 1951–1956
  - 92d Bomb Wing 1951–1962
  - 92d Bomb Wing 1972–1991
  - 92d Strategic Aerospace Wing 1962–1972
  - 98th Bomb Wing 1947–1948
  - 99th Bomb Wing 1955–1956
  - 99th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing 1953–1955
  - 141st Air Refueling Wing 1976–1992

Fairfield–Suisun AFB (Travis AFB 21 Apr 1951), Fairfield, CA (H)
- 5th Bomb Wing 1955–1968
- 5th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing 1949–1955
- 9th Bomb Wing 1950–1953
- 9th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing 1949–1950
(Topeka AFB) Forbes AFB 1 Jul 1948, Topeka, KS (H)

  - 21st Air Division 1951–1962
  - 21st Strategic Aerospace Division 1962–1964
  - 311th Air Division, Reconnaissance 1948–1949
    - 40th Bomb Wing 1960–1964
    - 40th Strategic Aerospace Wing 1964
    - 55th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing 1948–1949
    - 55th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing 1952–1966
    - 90th Bomb Wing 1951–1956
    - 90th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing 1956–1960
    - 190th Air Refueling Wing 1978–1992
    - 308th Bomb Wing 1951
    - 310th Bomb Wing 1952
    - 376th Bomb Wing 1951

Fort Worth AFB (Carswell AFB, 27 Feb 1948), Fort Worth, TX (H)

- 8th Air Force 1946–1948
  - 7th Bomb Wing 1947–1948
  - 43rd Bomb Wing 1960–1964
  - 58th Bombardment Group 1946
  - 448th Bombardment Group 1946

Francis E. Warren AFB, Cheyenne, WY (H)

- Namesake: Gov. Francis Emroy Warren
  - 4th Air Division 1973–1988
  - 4th Strategic Aerospace Division 1971–1988
  - 4th Strategic Missile Division 1971–1973
  - 13th Air Division 1963
  - 13th Strategic Missile Division 1963–1966
    - 90th Strategic Missile Wing 1963–1991
    - 389th Strategic Missile Wing 1961–1965
    - 706th Strategic Missile Wing 1958–1961
    - 4320th Strategic Wing (Missile) 1958

Geiger Field, WA

• 141st Air Refueling Wing 1976

General Billy Mitch ANGB, WI
• Namesake: Brig. Gen. William "Billy" Mitchell
  • 128th Air Refueling Wing 1976–1992

Glasgow AFB, Glasgow, MT (H)
• 91st Bomb Wing 1962–1968
  • 4141st Strategic Wing 1958–1963

Grand Forks AFB, Grand Forks, ND (H)
• 4th Air Division 1964–1971
  • 4th Strategic Aerospace Division 1971
  • 42d Air Division 1988–1991
    • 319th Bomb Wing 1962–1991
    • 319th Wing 1991–1992
    • 321st Strategic Missile Wing 1964–1992
    • 449th Bombardment Group 1946
    • 4133d Strategic Wing 1958–1963

Grand Island AFB, Grand Island, NE
• 449th Bombardment Group 1946

Great Falls AFB (Malmstrom AFB 15 Jun 1956), Great Falls, MT (H)
• 407th Strategic Fighter Wing 1953–1956

Grenier AFB, Manchester, NH (T)
• Namesake: Lt. James D. Grenier
  • 82d Fighter Wing 1947–1949

Griffiss AFB 20 September 1948, Rome, NY (H)
• Namesake: Lt Col Townsend E. Griffiss
• 416th Bomb Wing 1962–1991
• 4039th Strategic Wing 1958–1963

(Bunker Hill AFB) Grissom AFB, 12 May 1968, Peru, IN (H)

• Namesake: Lt Col Virgil Ivan "Gus" Grissom
  • 305th Air Refueling Wing 1970–1992
  • 305th Bomb Wing 1959–1970.
  • 434th Air Refueling Wing 1987–1992

Hill AFB, Ogden, UT (T)

• Namesake: Maj Plover Peter Hill
  • 4062d Strategic Wing (Missile) 1960–1962

Homestead AFB, Homestead, FL (H)

• 823d Air Division 1956–1968
  • 19th Bomb Wing 1956–1968
  • 379th Bomb Wing 1953–1961

Hunter AFB, Savannah, GA (H)

• Namesake: Maj Gen Frank O'D. Hunter.
  • 38th Air Division 1951–1959
    • 2d Bomb Wing 1950–1963
    • 308th Bomb Wing 1951–1959

K. I. Sawyer AFB, Marquette, MI (H)

• Namesake: Kenneth Ingalls Sawyer.
  • 410th Bomb Wing 1962–91
  • 410th Wing 1991–92
  • 4042d Strategic Wing 1958–63

Kearney AFB, Kearney, NE

• 27th Fighter Wing 1947–1949
Key Field ANGB, Meridian, MS

- Namesake: Al and Fred Key
  - 186th Air Refueling Wing 1992

(Kinross AFB) Kincheloe AFB 25 Sep 1959, Kinross, MI (H)

- Namesake: Capt Iven Carl Kincheloe, Jr.
  - 416th Wing 1991–1992
  - 449th Bomb Wing 1962–1977
  - 4239th Strategic Wing 1959–1963

Lake Charles AFB (Chennault AFB, 14 Nov 1958), Lake Charles, LA (H)

- 806th Air Division 1952–1958
  - 44th Bomb Wing 1951–1958
  - 68th Bomb Wing 1952–1958
  - 68th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing 1951–1952

Ladd Field, AK (T)


Larson AFB, Moses Lake, WA (H)

- Namesake: Maj Donald A. Larson.
  - 71st Strategic Reconnaissance Wing Fighter 1955–1957
  - 462d Strategic Aerospace Wing 1962–1966
  - 4170th Strategic Wing 1959–1963

Laughlin AFB, Del Rio, TX (H)

- Namesake: 1st Lt. Jack Thomas Laughlin.
  - 4080th Strategic Wing 1960–1966

Loring AFB 1 Oct 1954), Limestone, ME

  - 45th Air Division 1954–1971

Lincoln AFB, Lincoln, NE (H)

- 818th Air Division 1954–1962
- 818th Strategic Aerospace Division 1962–1965
- 98th Bomb Wing 1954–1964
- 98th Strategic Aerospace Wing 1964–1966
- 307th Bomb Wing

Little Rock AFB, Jacksonville, AR (H)

- 825th Air Division 1955–1962
- 825th Strategic Aerospace Division 1962–1970
- 70th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing 1955–1962
- 308th Strategic Missile Wing 1961–1987
- 384th Bomb Wing 1953–1964
- 43rd Bomb Wing 1964-1970

Lockbourne AFB (Rickenbacker AFB 18 May 1974), Columbus, OH (H)

- 37th Air Division 1951–1952
- 801st Air Division 1952–1965
- 26th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing 1952–1958
- 70th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing 1955
- 91st Strategic Reconnaissance Wing 1957
- 301st Air Refueling Wing 1964–1974
- 301st Bomb Wing 1958–1964
- 376th Bomb Wing 1957–1965

Lowry AFB, Denver, CO (H)

- Namesake: A2c Wade Paul J Jr.
- 1st Lt. Francis Brown Lowry
- 451st Strategic Missile Wing 1961–1965
- 703d Strategic Missile Wing 1958–1961

MacDill AFB, Tampa, FL (H)

- Namesake: Col Leslie MacDill.
8th Air Force 1946

6th Air Division 1951–1961
  • 305th Bomb Wing 1950–1959
  • 306th Bomb Wing 1948–1963
  • 307th Bomb Wing 1947–1965
  • 311th Reconnaissance Group 1946
  • 311th Reconnaissance Wing 1946–1948
  • 498th Bombardment Group 1946

(Great Falls AFB) Malmstrom AFB 15 Jun 1956, Great Falls, MT (H)

Namesake: Col Einar Axel Malmstrom,
  • 22d Air Division 1960–1962
  • 40th Strategic Aerospace Division 1989–1991
  • 813th Air Division 1959–1962
  • 813th Strategic Aerospace Division 1962–1966
    • 301st Air Refueling Wing 1988–1992
    • 341st Missile Wing 1991–1992
    • 341st Strategic Missile Wing 1961–1991
    • 407th Strategic Fighter Wing 1956–1957
    • 4061st Air Refueling Wing 1956–1961

March AFB, Riverside, CA (H)

Namesake: 2nd Lt Peyton Conway March.
  • Fifteenth Air Force 1949–1992
    • 12th Air Division 1951–1962
      • 1st Fighter Interceptor Wing 1950
      • 1st Fighter Wing 1949–1950
      • 22d Air Refueling Wing 1982–1992
      • 22d Bomb Wing 1949–1982
      • 44th Bombardment Group 1947–1950
      • 44th Bomb Wing 1950–1951
      • 106th Bomb Wing 1951–1952
      • 320th Bomb Wing 1952–1963
      • 330th Bomb Wing 1949–1951
      • 452d Air Refueling Wing 1978–1992

Mather AFB, Sacramento, CA (T)

Namesake: 2nd Lt Carl Spencer Mather.
  • 320th Bomb Wing 1963–1989
  • 4134th Strategic Wing 1958–1963
McConnell AFB, Wichita, KS (H)

- Namesake: Capt Fred McConnell and 2nd Lt Thomas Laverne McConnell.
  - 42d Air Division 1959–1962
  - 42d Strategic Aerospace Division 1962–1963
    - 381st Strategic Missile Wing 1961–1986
    - 384th Air Refueling Wing 1972–1987
      - 384th Wing 1991–1992
      - 4347th Combat Crew Training Wing 1958–1963

(Pinecastle AFB) McCoy AFB 7 May 1958, Orlando, FL (H)

- Namesake: Col Michael Norman Wright McCoy.
  - 42d Air Division 1971–1973
  - 823d Air Division 1968–1971
    - 306th Bomb Wing 1963–1974
    - 321st Bomb Wing 1958–1961
    - 4047th Strategic Wing 1961–1963

McGhee Tyson ANGB, Knoxville, TN

- Namesake: Charles McGee Tyson (USNR)
  - 134th Air Refueling Wing 1976–1992

McGuire AFB, Wrightstown, NJ (T)

- Namesake: Maj Thomas Buchanan McGuire Jr.
  - 91st Strategic Reconnaissance Wing 1948–1949
  - 170th Air Refueling Wing 1977–1992

Merced County Airport, Merced CA (H)

- 444th Bombardment Group 1946.

Miami International Airport, Miami FL (T)

- 456th Troop Carrier Wing (Reserves) 1952–1972
Minot AFB, Minot, ND (H)

- 57th Air Division 1975–1991
- 810th Air Division 1962
- 810th Strategic Aerospace Division 1962–1971
  - 5th Bomb Wing 1968–1991
  - 5th Wing 1991–1992
  - 906th Air Refueling Squadron 1959-1991
  - 91st Strategic Missile Wing 1968–1992
  - 450th Bomb Wing 1962–1968
  - 455th Strategic Missile Wing 1962–1968
  - 4136th Strategic Wing 1958–1963

Moody AFB, Valdosta, GA (T)

- Namesake: Maj George P. Moody
  - 146th Fighter – Bomber Wing 1951

Mountain Home AFB, Mountain Home, ID (H)

- 5th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing 1949
- 9th Bomb Wing 1953–1962
- 9th Strategic Aerospace Wing 1962–1966

Naval Air Station, Dallas TX


O’Hare International Airport, Chicago, IL (T)

- Namesake: LCDR Edward "Butch" O’Hare.
  - 126th Air Refueling Wing 1976–1992

Offutt AFB, Bellevue, NE (H)

- Namesake: 1st Lt Jarvis Offutt.
  - Strategic Air Command HQ 1948–1992
    - 1st Air Division (Meteorological Survey) 1955–1956
    - 5th Air Division 1951
      - 55th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing 1966–1991
- 55th Wing 1991–1992
- 385th Strategic Aerospace Wing 1962–1964
- 544th Aerospace Reconnaissance Tech. Wing 1963–1979
- 544th Intelligence Wing 1991–1992
- 544th Strategic Intelligence Wing 1979–1991
- 3902d Air Base Wing 1979–1986
- 4231st Strategic Wing 1959–1962
- 4321st Strategic Wing 1959–1962
- 32nd Comm SQ Scribner air force 1964-1965<stationed there><site gone 1990

(Portsmouth AFB) Pease AFB 7 Sep 1956, Portsmouth, NH (H)

- Namesake: Capt Harl Pease Jr.
  - 45th Air Division 1971–1989
  - 817th Air Division 1956–1971
    - 100th Bomb Wing 1956–1966
    - 157th Air Refueling Wing 1975–1992
    - 509th Bomb Wing 1958–1992

Peterson AFB CO. (T)

- Namesake: 1st Lt Edward J. Peterson.

Phoenix Sky Harbor IAP, Phoenix, AZ

- 161st Air Refueling Wing 1976–1992

Pinecastle AFB (McCoy AFB 7 May 1958), Orlando, FL (H)

- 813th Air Division 1954–1956
  - 19th Bomb Wing 1954–1956
  - 321st Bomb Wing 1953–1958
  - 4047th Strategic Wing 1958–1963
  - 306th Bomb Wing 1963–1974

Pittsburgh ANGB, Pittsburgh IAP, Pittsburgh, PA

Plattsburgh AFB, Plattsburgh, NY (H)

- 820th Air Division 1956–1962
- 820th Strategic Aerospace Division 1962–1965
  - 308th Bomb Wing 1959–1961
  - 380th Bomb Wing 1953–1964
  - 380th Bomb Wing 1972–1991
  - 380th Strategic Aerospace Wing 1964–1972
  - 497th Air Refueling Wing 1963–1964
  - 4180th Air Refueling Wing 1960–1963

Portsmouth AFB (Pease AFB 7 Sep 1956), Portsmouth, NH (H)

- 100th Bomb Wing 1953–1956

Presque Isle AFB, Presque Isle, ME (T)

- 702d Strategic Missile Wing 1958–1961

Randolph AFB, San Antonio, TX (T)

- Namesake: Capt William Millican Randolph.
  - 4397th Air Refueling Training Wing 1958–1962

Rapid City AFB (Ellsworth AFB, 13 Jun 1953), Rapid City, SD (H)

- 28th Bomb Wing 1947–1950
- 28th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing 1950–1953

(Lockbourne AFB) Rickenbacker AFB 18 May 1974, Columbus, OH (H)

- Namesake: Capt Edward "Eddie" V. Rickenbacker.
  - 301st Air Refueling Wing 1974–1979
Robins AFB, Warner Robins, GA (H)

  - 19th Bomb Wing 1968–1983
  - 465th Bomb Wing 1962–1968
  - 4137th Strategic Wing 1959–1963

Roswell AFB (Walker AFB 19 Jun 1949), Roswell, NM (H)

- 33d Fighter Wing 1947–1948
- 509th Composite Group 1946–1947
- 509th Bomb Wing 1947–1949

Salt Lake City IAP, Salt Lake City, UT


Savannah AFB, Savannah, GA (H)

- 380th Bombardment Group 1947–1949

(Smokey Hill AFB) Schilling AFB 16 Mar 1957, Salina, KS. (H)

- Namesake: Col David C. Schilling.
  - 22d Air Division 1962–1963
  - 802d Air Division 1957–1960
    - 40th Bomb Wing 1957–1960
    - 310th Bomb Wing 1957–1962
    - 310th Strategic Aerospace Wing 1962–1965
    - 485th Bombardment Group 1946.

Sedalia AFB (Whiteman AFB 3 Dec 1955), Knob Noster, MO (H)

- 340th Bomb Wing 1952–1955

Selfridge AFB, Mt. Clemens, MI (H)

- Namesake: 1st Lt Thomas E. Selfridge
  - 56th Fighter Wing 1946–1948
• 500th Air Refueling Wing 1963–1964
• 4045th Air Refueling Wing 1959–1963

Seymour Johnson AFB, Goldsboro, NC (H)

• Namesake: LT Seymour Johnson, USN
  • 68th Air Refueling Wing 1986–1991
  • 68th Bomb Wing 1963–1986
  • 4241st Strategic Wing 1958–1963
  • 911th Air Refueling Wing 1958–1986

Sheppard AFB, Wichita Falls, TX (H)

• Namesake: U.S. Senator Morris E. Sheppard.
  • 494th Bomb Wing 1963–1966
  • 4245th Strategic Wing 1959–1963

Smoky Hill AFB (Schilling AFB, 16 Mar 1957), Salina, KS (H)

• 802d Air Division 1952–1957
  • 22d Bomb Wing 1948–1949
  • 40th Bomb Wing 1952–1957
  • 97th Bomb Wing 1948
  • 301st Bomb Wing 1947–1949
  • 485th Bombardment Group 1946

Spokane AFB (Fairchild AFB 20 Jul 1951, Spokane, WA (H)

• 92d Bomb Wing 1947–1951
• 90th Bomb Wing 1950–1951
• 111th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing 1951

Stead AFB, Reno, NV (T)

• Namesake: Lt Croston K. Stead
  • 3904th Composite Wing 1952–1954

Tinker AFB, Oklahoma City, OK (T)

• Namesake: Brig Gen Clarence L. Tinker
• 506th Strategic Fighter Wing 1955–1957.

Topeka AFB (Forbes AFB 1 Jul 1948), Topeka, KS (H)
• 311th Air Division, Reconnaissance 1948–1949
  • 55th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing 1948–1949

(Fairfield–Suisun AFB) Travis AFB 21 Apr 1951, Fairfield, CA (H)
• Namesake: Brig Gen Robert Falligant Travis.
  • 14th Air Division 1951–1960
    • 5th Bomb Wing 1951–1968
    • 5th Bomb Wing 1955–1968

Turner AFB, Albany, GA (H)
• Namesake: Lt S. Preston Turner.
  • 40th Air Division 1951–1957
  • 82d Air Division 1959–1966
    • 12th Fighter Escort Wing 1950
    • 31st Fighter Escort Wing 1950–1953
    • 31st Strategic Fighter Wing 1953–1957
    • 108th Fighter Bomber Wing 1951
    • 484th Bomb Wing 1962–1967
    • 508th Fighter Escort Wing 1952
    • 508th Strategic Fighter Wing 1952–1956
    • 4080th Strategic Recon. Wing 1956–1957
    • 4138th Strategic Wing 1959–1963

(Cooke AFB) Vandenberg AFB, Lompoc, CA 4 Oct 1958 (T)
• Namesake: Gen Hoyt Sanford Vandenberg.
  • Twentieth Air Force 1991–1992
    • 1st Missile Division 1958–1961
    • 1st Strategic Aerospace Division 1961–1991
      • 310th Training and Testing Wing 1991–1992
      • 392d Strategic Missile Wing 1961
      • 704th Strategic Missile Wing 1958–1959
      • 4392d Aerospace Support Wing 1961
      • 4392d Aerospace Support Wing 1987–1991
(Roswell AFB) Walker AFB 19 Jun 1949, Roswell, NM (H)

  - 47th Air Division 1951–1959
    - 6th Bomb Wing 1950–1962
    - 6th Strategic Aerospace Wing 1962–1967
    - 509th Bomb Wing 1949–1958

Westover AFB, Chicopee, MA (H)

- Namesake: Maj Gen Oscar Westover
    - 1st Air Division 1954–1955
    - 57th Air Division 1956–1969
      - 99th Bomb Wing 1956–1974
      - 499th Air Refueling Wing 1963–1966
      - 4050th Air Refueling Wing 1955–1963

(Sedalia AFB) Whiteman AFB 3 Dec 1955, Sedalia, MO (H)

- Namesake: 2nd Lt George Allison Whiteman.
  - 17th Air Division 1959–1962
  - 17th Strategic Aerospace Division 1962–1963
  - 17th Strategic Aerospace Division 1965–1971
  - 17th Strategic Missile Division 1963–1965
  - 100th Air Division 1990–1991
    - 340th Bomb Wing 1955–1963
    - 351st Missile Wing 1991–1992
    - 351st Strategic Missile Wing 1962–1991

Wright–Patterson AFB, Dayton, OH (T)

- Namesake: Orville & Wilbur Wright and 1st Lt Frank Patterson.
  - 17th Bomb Wing 1963–1975
  - 4043d Strategic Wing 1959–1963

Wurtsmith AFB, Oscoda, MI (H)

- Namesake: Maj Gen Paul Bernard Wurtsmith.
  - 40th Air Division 1959–1988
    - 379th Bomb Wing 1961–1991
- 379th Wing 1991–1992
- 4026th Strategic Wing 1958–1961

**U.S. Overseas (Outside CONUS)**

**Andersen AFB, Agana, Guam**

- Namesake: Brig Gen James Roy Andersen.
    - 3d Air Division 1954–1970
    - 3d Air Division 1975–1992
      - 43d Bomb Wing 1986–1990
      - 43d Strategic Wing 1970–1986
      - 72d Strategic Wing (P) 1972–1973
      - 92d Bomb Wing 1954–1955
      - 92d Bomb Wing 1956
      - 99th Bomb Wing 1956
      - 303d Bomb Wing 1956
      - 320th Bomb Wing 1956–1957
      - 509th Bomb Wing 1954
      - 1500th Strategic Wing (P) 1990–1991
      - 3960th Air Base Wing 1955–1956
      - 3960th Strategic Wing 1965–1970
      - 4133d Bomb Wing (P) 1966–1970

**Hickam AFB, Honolulu, HI (T)**

- Namesake: Lt Col Horace Meek Hickam.
  - 3d Air Division 1988–1992

**Ramey AFB, Aguadilla, Puerto Rico**

- Namesake: Gen Howard Knox Ramey
  - 55th Strategic Recon. Wing 1950–1952
  - 72d Bomb Wing 1955–1971
  - 72d Strategic Recon. Wing 1952–1955
Foreign Bases

Canada

Ernest Harmon AB, Newfoundland
- Namesake: Captain Ernest Emery Harmon
  - 4081st Strategic Wing 1957–1966

Goose AB, Labrador
- 95th Strategic Wing 1966–1976

United Kingdom

Diego Garcia, Indian Ocean
- 17th Recon. Wing 1982–1992
- 4300th Bomb Wing (P) 1990

RAF Alconbury
- 17th Reconnaissance Wing 1982–1991

RAF Bassingbourn, Royston
- 2d Bomb Group 1951
- 55th Strategic Recon. Wing 1951
- 97th Bomb Group 1950–1951
- 301st Bomb Group 1950–1951

RAF Burtonwood, Warrington
- 5th Strategic Recon. Wing 1950
RAF Brize Norton

- 11th Bomb Wing 1952
- 43rd Bomb Wing 1953
- 68th Bomb Wing 1958
- 92d Bomb Wing 1958
- 97th Bomb Group 1950–1951
- 301st Bomb Group 1950–1951
- 301st Bomb Wing 1952–1953
- 305th Bomb Wing 1953
- 320th Bomb Wing 1954
- 380th Bomb Wing 1957
- 384th Bomb Wing 1957
- 3920th Strategic Wing 1964–1965
- SAC REFLEX Base 1959–1964

RAF Fairford

- 5th Strategic Recon. Wing 1954
- 7th Bomb Wing 1952–1953
- 11th Bomb Wing 1952–1953
- 43d Bomb Wing 1954
- 55th Strategic Recon. Wing 1954
- 303d Bomb Wing 1954
- 306th Bomb Wing 1953
- 806th Bomb Wing (P) 1991
- SAC REFLEX base 1959–1964

11th Strategic Group 1979-1990

RAF Greenham Common

- 40th Bomb Wing 1957
- 100th Bomb Wing 1957–1958
- 303d Bomb Wing 1954
- 310th Bomb Wing 1956–1957
- 320th Bomb Wing 1956

RAF High Wycombe

- 7th Air Division 1958–1965
RAF Lakenheath

- 2d Bomb Group 1948
- 2d Bomb Group 1950
- 7th Bomb Wing 1951
- 22d Bomb Group 1948–1949
- 22d Bomb Group 1949–1950
- 22d Bomb Wing 1951
- 40th Bomb Wing 1955
- 42d Bomb Wing 1955
- 43d Bomb Group 1949
- 55th Strategic Recon. Wing 1954
- 68th Bomb Wing 1954
- 93d Bomb Wing 1952
- 97th Bomb Wing 1952
- 98th Bomb Wing 1955–1956
- 301st Bomb Group/Bomb Wing 1950–1951
- 307th Bomb Group 1948–1949
- 307th Bomb Wing 1956
- 321st Bomb Wing 1954–1955
- 340th Bomb Wing 1955
- 384th Bomb Wing 1957
- 509th Bomb Group 1949
- 509th Bomb Wing 1951
- 509th Bomb Wing 1952
- 705th Strategic Missile Wing 1958
- SAC REFLEX base 1959–1964

RAF Manston

- 12th Fighter Escort Wing 1951
- 31st Fighter Escort Wing 1951
- 91st Strategic Recon, Wing 1951

RAF Marham

- 2d Bomb Group 1950
- (22d Bomb Group 1949–1950
- 43d Bomb Group 1949
- 93d Bomb Group 1950–1951
- 97th Bomb Group 1948–1949
- 307th Bomb Group 1948
- 307th Bomb Group 1949–1950
- 509th Bomb Group 1949
RAF Mildenhall

- 2d Bomb Group 1950
- 2d Bomb Wing 1951
- 22d Bomb Wing 1951
- 55th Strategic Recon. Wing 1953
- 55th Strategic Recon. Wing 1954
- 93d Bomb Group 1950–1951
- 93d Bomb Group 1951–1952
- 97th Bomb Wing 1952
- 100th Air Refueling Wing 1992
- 306th Strategic Wing 1978–1992
- 509th Bomb Wing 1951
- 509th Bomb Wing 1952

RAF Scampton

- 28th Bomb Group 1948
- 301st Bomb Group 1948–1949

RAF Sculthorpe

- 2d Bomb Group 1950
- 5th Bomb Group 1950
- 5th Strategic Recon. Wing 1950
- 22d Bomb Group 1949–1950
- 22d Bomb Wing 1951
- 43d Bomb Group 1949
- 91st Strategic Recon. Wing 1951
- 92d Bomb Group 1949
- 97th Bomb Group 1950–1951
- 98th Bomb Group 1949
- 301st Bomb Group 1950–1951

RAF South Ruislip

- 7th Air Division 1951–1958
  - 705th Strategic Missile Wing 1958–1960
RAF Upper Heyford

- 2d Bomb Wing 1952
- 22d Bomb Wing 1953–1954
- 42d Bomb Wing 1955
- 97th Bomb Wing 1956
- 303d Bomb Wing 1954
- 310th Bomb Wing 1955
- 376th Bomb Wing 1955
- 509th Bomb Wing 1956
- 3918th Strategic Wing 1964–1965
- SAC REFLEX base 1959–1964

RAF Waddington

- 97th Bomb Group 1948–1949
- 97th Bomb Group 1950–1951

RAF Wyton

- 2d Bomb Wing 1951
- 97th Bomb Group 1950–1951
- 509th Bomb Wing 1951
- SAC Dispersal Base

Egypt

Cairo

- 1706th Air Refueling Wing (P) 1990

French Morocco

Nouasseur AB

- 4310th Air Division 1958–1963
Rabat

• 5th Air Division 1951–1954

Sidi Slimane AB

• 5th Air Division 1954–1958
  • 4310th Air Division 1958

Ben Guerir AB

Greece

Hellinikon AB

• 803rd Air Refueling Wing (P)

Denmark

Thule AFB, Thule, Greenland

• 4083d Air Base Wing 1959–1960
• 4083d Strategic Wing 1957–1959

Japan

Kadena AB, Okinawa

• 307th Bomb Wing 1952–1954
• 376th Strategic Wing 1970–1991
• 4252d Strategic Wing 1965–1970
Misawa AB, Misawa

- 12th Strategic Fighter Wing 1954
- 27th Fighter Escort Wing/Strategic Fighter Wing 1952–1953
- 31st Strategic Fighter Wing 1953–1954

Yokota AB, Tokyo

- 98th Bomb Wing 1953–1954

Oman

Seeb

- 1702d Air Refueling Wing (P) 1990–1991

Portugal

Lajes/Terceira Island

- 802d Air Refueling Wing (P) 1990

Saudi Arabia

King Khalid International Airport

- 1703d Air Refueling Wing (P) 1990–1991

King Abdulaziz International Airport, Jeddah

- 1701st Air Refueling Wing (P) 1991
- 1701st Strategic Wing (P) 1990
- 1708th Bomb Wing (P) 1990
• 1709th Air Refueling Wing (P) 1990

Riyadh

• 17th Air Division (P) Provisional 24 Aug 1990.
  • 1700th Strategic Wing (P) 1990–1991
  • 1711th Air Refueling Wing (P)

Spain

Madrid

• Sixteenth Air Force 1957–1958
  • 65th Air Division 1957
    • 7602d Support Wing 1957
    • 3977th Support Wing 1957–1958

Moron AB, Seville

• 801st Air Refueling Wing (P) 1990
• 801st Bomb Wing (P) 1991
• 3973d Strategic Wing 1964–1966

Torrejon AB, Madrid

• Sixteenth Air Force 1958–1966
  • 65th Air Division 1957–1960
    • 98th Strategic Wing 1966–1976
    • 3970th Strategic Wing 1964–1966

Zaragoza AB, Zaragoza
Thailand

U-Tapao Royal Thailand Navy Air Force Base (RTNAFB)

- 17th Air Division 1972
  - 307th Strategic Wing 1970–1975
  - 310th Strategic Wing (P) 1972–1974
  - 4258th Strategic Wing 1966–1970

Turkey

Incirlik

- 804th Air Refueling Wing (P) 1990
- 810th Air Refueling Wing (P) 1990–1991
- 807th Air Refueling Wing (P) 1990

United Arab Emirates

Abu Dhabi

- 1712th Air Refueling Wing (P) 1990

Dubai

- 1713 Air Refueling Wing (P) 1990

West Germany

Ramstein AB, Kaiserslautern

- 7th Air Division 1978–1992
  306th Strategic Wing 1976–1978
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