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If War Should Come—

U. S. Air Force Would Try for Knockout

Planes, Probably Loaded With Atom Bombs,
Could Raid Key Industrial, Military Points

Third of a Series.

By DOUGLAS LARSEN, NEA Staff Correspondent

WASHINGTON, Oct. 27—In the air, if war should come: Within hours after war was officially declared, B-29s would be headed for the enemy, probably loaded with atomic bombs. Targets would be key industrial and military points. The goal of this initial action would be a quick knockout. This could end the war in a hurry, give the U. S. a chance to get on a more complete military footing.

If this "instant retaliation" doesn't end the war immediately, however, the phase of air warfare which would follow would be considerably different from what it was during World War II, as a result of scientific progress made in the development of weapons since then.

The 600-mile-per-hour jet fighters—the F-80, F-84 and F-86—might eliminate the aerial "dogfight" as a part of sky fighting. They fly too fast to get a shot at each other. Their turns are so wide because of the speed that it has been found in mock combat the planes lose each other. It is planned to use them in interceptors against enemy bombers, for reconnaissance and against ground targets.

It wouldn't take long for "instant retaliation" to use up America's present supply of B-29s. The improved version of that plane, the B-50, would probably become the main long-range punch of the Air Force. It is predicted the giant B-36, soon expected to have a 12,000-mile range, would be used for extremely distant mis-

No Mass Raids—Maybe

The much-publicized jet bombers would probably have limited use in supporting ground movements. The B-45 would be the first type to see action. Its extremely short range prohibits use for long-range strategic bombing.

If the A-bomb were used, last war's mass raids probably would not be necessary. Fewer bombers

would constitute a raid. Each strike would be much more carefully planned, with feints and diversionary tactics preceding them. Maximum fighter protection would accompany each bomber.

Refueling bombers in the air to give them longer range would also become a new part of the standard air operations.

New Types of Bombs

In spite of billions spent on guided missile research, the Air Force hasn't uncovered one that could be used against the enemy in a war in the near future. New weapons which are by-products of this research, however, would make the next war a big step closer to so-called push-button warfare.

Radio-controlled drones, pilotless planes, were used to a minor degree during the last war. They have been vastly improved since then. A B-29 drone loaded with an A-bomb could be dive-bombed into a target. A half dozen mother planes—each with the power to control the drone's flight in case one or the other should be knocked out—would raise the

odds of laying an A-bomb dead into a target.

New types of bombs have also been developed recently which give the bombardier limited control over its flight after the bomb is dropped. One has a tiny television transmitter in the nose. The bombardier can watch its direction all during the drop, see where it is headed, and guide it by remote control from the plane. In addition, a bomb has been invented which will automatically veer in the direction of concentrations of light, heat or sound. An open heart furnace, lighted city or a booming artillery battery would attract it.

It is believed possible that these steps toward actual push-button warfare might reduce casualties among the men who are fighting the war.

Tomorrow: At the Pentagon.

Editor's Note: This is a peace story—a factual description of the steps our government is taking to keep America strong in case the worst should happen. This dispatch, from NEA's correspondent on the Washington defense front, is the third of four telling of America's readiness on the land, on the sea, in the air, and at the Pentagon.

By DOUGLAS LARSEN, NEA Staff Correspondent

There have been improvements in anti-aircraft guns, but it is believed that the increased altitude at which the newest model planes can fly and their increased speed at least balance these refinements and perhaps outweigh them. Generally it is felt that an air offense in the next war would be deadlier than it was during the last war, in comparison to the effectiveness of the defense.

Supersonic speed planes which the Air Force has developed would not figure in an immediate war. It is doubtful whether super-

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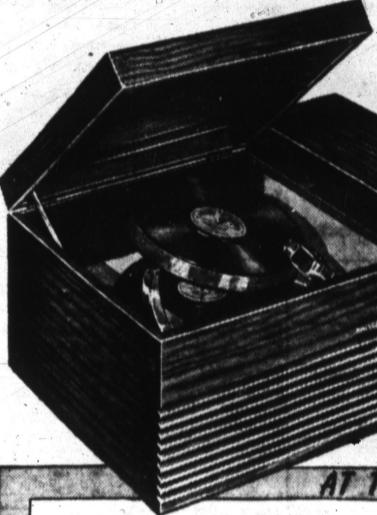
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