

fiscal year 1969 requirements, based on current prices, will be about the same.

In the logistics area, studies were made last year as to the relative costs of shipping rockets preloaded in their launchers versus shipping rockets and launchers separately, as we are doing now. We concluded that there were definite monetary advantages to shipping preloaded launchers, providing they were protected by a shipping container.

However, these savings had always been offset by certain operational considerations, particularly pertaining to reliability, maintainability, and flexibility.

Accordingly, however, we have decided to initiate a field test at selected bases in SEA—to be identified by PACAF—to determine if, because of our monthly consumption, that for the duration of the Vietnam conflict we should preload LAU-3/A launchers.

Of particular interest to us—and which we feel most germane, as an item of discussion here—is the very promising Navy development of the LAU-70/A and 71/A rocket launchers at the Naval Weapons Center, China Lake, Calif., which we are seriously contemplating as replacements for our LAU-59/A and 3/A. As the Navy expects to have a competitive procurement data package in September of this year, and since these new launchers have outstanding potential as standard Air Force, Navy, and Marine Corps launchers, they may well be the only items procured for the Air Force in the fiscal year 1970 program.

I would comment here, Mr. Chairman, that this depends as the Navy has stated, on how well the testing, how well the developments work out at their China Lake operation.

In reference to the decision for a single manager for the 2.75-inch rocket launcher, the Air Force concurs with the Army's being given such an assignment, with responsibility comparable to those now assigned to that service for the 2.75-inch rocket.

We will be ready to answer any questions, sir.

Mr. ROBACK. Let's take the last item first, the last paragraph.

Mr. WITT. Yes, indeed.

ROCKET DEVELOPMENT AND TEST

Mr. ROBACK. Does that mean that the Air Force retains, in the rocket area, development responsibilities?

Mr. WITT. This is correct.

Mr. ROBACK. To what extent do you have development responsibilities for the rocket?

Mr. WITT. We have development responsibilities now for the rocket. There is a very close liaison, Mr. Roback, between the services.

Mr. ROBACK. Do you let the development contract, for example, on your own for the rockets?

Mr. WITT. Yes. We would handle our own development contracts, yes.

Mr. ROBACK. You do the testing of the rockets?

Mr. WITT. Yes.

Mr. ROBACK. And the Army takes over only after you have an accepted standardized item and they buy it for you; is that right?