

many of these requirements. He said he would like to see it called the Defense Testing Station -- and see it kept out of service politics.

Dr. Kistiakowsky went on to give a technical net evaluation of our relative position respecting the Soviets. As to the ICBM, he thought they were probably about one year ahead of us in propulsion, one year behind us in warhead development, and somewhat behind us in guidance, but with a much simpler operational concept based on a mobile rail-based system. He added that because of more powerful propulsion, they could have simply designed their weapon to carry the heavier, older-style warhead. In the medium range missile of 100-600 mile range, they are probably about three years ahead of us, having initiated troop training in 1953 and 1954. Their weapons are highly mobile, using track-laying and road vehicles. In guidance they are probably behind us, with a one-mile CEP for small weapons and a five-mile CEP for large. Their IRBM is a 1000-mile missile, which is probably a 600-mile missile with a lighter warhead.

The President said that in evaluating material of this kind it is necessary to consider relative probabilities. Until an enemy has enough operational capability to destroy most of our bases simultaneously and thus prevent retaliation by us our deterrent remains effective. We would make a mistake to credit him with total capabilities. Dr. York pointed out that an enemy who planned to make an attack could select a time for his attack and delay until he is ready.

Dr. Killian asked if the President thought all of this should be presented to Mr. McElroy, and the President said he thought it should, informally initially, but then put into document form. He thought it was very important to act in these matters in order to avoid wasting money and talent.

The group next discussed questions of outer space. Dr. Killian referred to discussions at the Leaders Meeting earlier that morning, and said there is great pressure in the Congress and elsewhere to have some space work done outside the Department of Defense. His thought was we should get down some objectives in our space program. He hoped to come in soon with this. It would cover scientific as well