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James Rhyne Killian. Papers

U.S. Army Scientific Advisory Panel, 1953, 1956

Box 20/9

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FEB 13 1953

Dr. J. R. Killian, President
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Cambridge 39, Massachusetts

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by JAK
attached

FEB 11 1953

Dear Dr. Killian:

Mr. Pace and General Collins have informed me of the significant contributions made by members of the Army Scientific Advisory Panel since their initial appointment in November of 1951. I sincerely feel that I, too, shall need the advice and guidance of this group.

It is therefore my desire to prevail upon you to continue to serve in the capacity as chairman and spokesman for this panel. You will recall in the original terms of reference the scope of the problems confronting the Army. By and large these problems have not changed significantly.

The responsibilities of the Army are more varied and demanding than ever before. There has been no indication that the percentage of casualties sustained by our Army combat forces in action as compared to the other Services has grown less in the last year. We are, therefore, still faced with the imperative challenge and grave responsibility to reduce these losses. We must continue to examine and re-examine means by which the effectiveness and independence and the security of the ground soldier may be enhanced. Although we have made many advances, there still exists a vital need for better techniques and equipment. We must continue to mobilize and utilize the best scientific and technological resources of the nation in the analysis of these problems and in recommending the most promising means for their solution.

Continued increases in costs impose upon planning inordinately difficult considerations, judgments, and decisions. The program for maintenance of the Army in the field and at home for current operations and for projected plans involves high budgetary commitments. It is essential that the funds available to the Army are expended in such a way as to buy the most defense for the dollar. This presents a most challenging problem.

The thoughts which I have expressed above in regard to the fiscal picture are no less applicable to the field of personnel. This applies not only to the Army, but also to those external agencies upon which it must depend. Each project of magnitude must be examined not only with regard to its over-all influence on Army effectiveness, but upon the effectiveness of the sister services and upon other national programs. Within the Army structure itself, there are

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questions of balance. There is the continuing problem of relative allocation of effort involved in the prosecution of the Korean conflict and our other obligations. Finally, there is before us very critically the matter of judgment as to what funds and other resources should be devoted to the insurance of our future through the support of basic and applied research.

It is on problems of the character I have outlined that the Chief of Staff and I will wish to consult you and members of the panel.

In asking your counsel, the Chief of Staff and I wish to assure you that we take full responsibility for whatever steps may be taken as a result of your recommendations or opinions. Normally, we do not expect to ask the panel to act as a body or as a committee. Ordinarily we will call on the individual or individuals whose background is in the field of the particular problem at hand. In order, however, to assist the panel in those instances where it wishes to make representation or to operate as a unit, I will continue to ask you to act as spokesman. I expect, also, to continue to ask your assistance in the formation of ad hoc groups composed primarily of panel members.

Sincerely yours,

Robert T. Stevens

Robert T. Stevens
Secretary of the Army

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GENERAL STAFF, UNITED STATES ARMY
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

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Dr. James R. Killian, Jr., President
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Cambridge 39, Massachusetts

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Dear Dr. Killian:

I am inclosing herewith a brief report of our last meeting at Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

*JK has
seen this*

Since my return, I have had our people looking into the several problems brought to our attention while we were at Fort Bragg. In the meantime, consideration has been given to the ways and means of obtaining assistance from the Scientific Advisory Panel on the several very critical problems confronting my office that were brought to the attention of the Panel at Fort Bragg. In particular, missiles, BW-CW, and air mobility, all need a great deal more attention than they are now receiving. I sincerely hope that the Panel will be able to give me some assistance in these areas.

I am delighted that you were able to be with us and I sincerely hope that you will be able to attend our next meeting. We have not settled upon the exact time and place as yet. However, I will let you know as soon as we do.

With warm regards.

Sincerely,

James M. Gavin
JAMES M. GAVIN

Lieutenant General, GS
Chief of Research and
Development

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Report of Meeting

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CORRESPONDENCE.

[Redacted]

February 16, 1953

The Honorable Robert T. Stevens
Secretary of the Army
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I am glad to continue as a member of the Army Scientific Advisory Panel as suggested in your letter of February 11 and with the understanding that the Panel will operate as you outline in your letter. It will be a pleasure to have the opportunity of trying to be of some service to you and to General Collins.

There was one matter of unfinished business that carried over from our Panel as it worked under Secretary Pace, and that is the appointment of a civilian in the Chemical Corps. At the earliest opportunity I will talk with you about this and about the procedure to be followed in trying to obtain the appointment of the specific person who has been recommended by our ad hoc committee. General Kenneth Nichols is fully informed on this. I believe this is a matter of great urgency in the national interest.

In accepting further membership on the Army Scientific Advisory Panel, I would like to say, as I did to Secretary Pace, that the institution of which I am president has contractual relationships with the Army. It is my understanding that my position on the Advisory Panel will in no way be an improper one from the standpoint of the Army or from that of M.I.T. -- that I would in no way have any advisory responsibility whatsoever for the Army's contractual arrangements with the Institute. It is unlikely, as I understand it, that our Panel would have any contact with the actual awarding of contracts, but in the event that it should, then it would be my intention to withdraw from any deliberations that might affect any contractual arrangement with M.I.T. You may wish to refer to my letter of February 14, 1952 to Secretary Pace on this matter and his response dated March 7, 1952.

The Honorable Robert T. Stevens

February 16, 1953

May I take this occasion to extend my congratulations to you on your willingness to accept the Secretaryship and my hearty good wishes to you in carrying through its heavy responsibilities.

Yours sincerely,

J. R. Killian, Jr.
President

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WASHINGTON, D. C.

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OCT 9 1953

M.A.

Dr. James R. Killian, Jr.
President
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Cambridge 39, Massachusetts

Dear Dr. Killian:

As discussed during your recent visit, I would be very grateful if you would form a subcommittee of the Army Scientific Advisory Panel to study and review the program of the Army in combat developments. I feel that it would be appropriate for such a group to review the progress we have made to date in our combat development organization at Army Field Forces, and, as a result of this review, would make appropriate recommendations on ways that the program could be improved.

In accordance with your suggestion and in order to furnish you a background for the Army's interest in the establishment of a combat development organization, I am furnishing you a copy of the VISTA report with the Army's evaluation, showing the action the Army proposed to take on the recommendations of the VISTA report. Please return these papers as soon as they have served your purpose.

Sincerely yours,

Robert T. Stevens

2 Incls

1. VISTA Report (2 volumes)
2. Army Evaluation (4 ")

Robert T. Stevens
Secretary of the Army

*Returned by
Westover
Sec. courier
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OCT 9 1953

Dr. James R. Killian, Jr.
President
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Cambridge 39, Massachusetts

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Sincerely yours,

(Signed) Robert T. Stevens

- 2 Incls
1. VISTA Report
2. Army Evaluation

Robert T. Stevens
Secretary of the Army

Copy furnished:
Deputy Chief, Army Field Forces (Combat Dev)
DACofS, G-3 (RR&SW)
DACofS, G-4, R&D

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October 19, 1953

The Honorable Robert T. Stevens
Secretary of the Army
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Mr. Secretary:

This is to acknowledge your letter of October 9 with the request that I form a subcommittee of the Army Scientific Advisory Panel to undertake a study on the subject described in your letter.

The classified material which was sent to me along with your letter has been reviewed by me and is ready to be returned to you whenever it is convenient for a courier to pick it up.

I will write you later with regard to specific names of people for the new subcommittee.

Yours sincerely,

J. R. Killian, Jr.
President

JRK:pgt

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Westover
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Courier
10/26/53*

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LAFAYETTE, INDIANA

President's Office
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14 February 1953

FEB 16 1953

The Honorable Robert T. Stevens
Secretary of the Army
Washington 25, D. C.

My dear Mr. Secretary:

I have your cordial letter of 11 February with your invitation to me to continue membership on the Army Scientific Advisory Panel established in November 1951 by Mr. Pace and General Collins. I shall be very happy to continue to serve as a member of this Panel and will be glad to undertake, from time to time, such service as you desire in which I have some degree of interest and competence.

I understand fully that duty on the Army Scientific Advisory Panel is truly advisory and that the responsibility for decisions affecting Army problems rests, in the final analysis, in your office and that of the Chief of Staff.

I look forward to meeting you at an early date. In the meantime you have my cordial support in all matters pertaining to the improvement of our Army's effectiveness.

Yours sincerely,

Frederick L. Hovde
President

Copy to Doctor Killian