

General Curtis Emerson LeMay

(1906–1990)

Chief of Staff, U.S. Air Force

VITA

Born in Columbus, Ohio; graduated from Ohio State University and commissioned in the Army (1928); attended Air Corps Primary and Advanced Flying School (1928–29); served in 27th Pursuit Squadron (1930–34); assigned to 18th Pursuit Group (1934); operations and intelligence officer, 49th Bombardment Squadron, Air Force General Headquarters (1937–39); Air Corps Tactical School (1939); commanded B-17 (1940); operations and intelligence officer, 41st Reconnaissance Squadron (1940); commanded 34th Bombardment Group (1941); commanded 305th Bombardment Group in California and England (1942) and Third Bombardment Division (1943–44); commander, 20th Bombardment Command, Pacific (1944–45), and 21st Bomber Command (1945); served as deputy chief of Air Staff Research and Development (1945–47); commander of U.S. Air Force in Europe (1947–48); commander in chief, Strategic Air Command (1948–57); Vice Chief of Staff, U.S. Air Force (1957–61); Chief of Staff (1961–64); died at March Air Force Base, California.



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Portrait by Sandor Klein.

Even if centralization could provide an organization without competing centers of power, its advisability would be questionable. I do not believe a monolithic organization can consistently provide useful answers in a field as subjective as defense policy. Such a goal mistakes the very nature of national security policy. Policy must provide for varying judgments of both ends and means. To the extent that the Department of Defense organization fails to provide for the development, expression, and consideration of opposing views, and for a clear determination between them, policy formulation will suffer and the effectiveness of the Secretary of Defense will diminish.

—From *America Is in Danger* by Curtis E. LeMay