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the HISTORY of the AIR FORCE FLIGHT TEST CENTER

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CHAPTER 4

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BOMBER WEAPON SYSTEMS: DEVELOPMENT AND TESTING

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The GRB-36D/RF-84F Composite Test

On 4 October 1955, the Air Force Flight Test Center firmed up a Phase IV Performance Evaluation of the GRB-36D/RF-84F Parasite Aircraft System which had been designated the FICON Project.[1]

In order to provide the Strategic Air Command with a greater capability in long-range photographic reconnaissance and bombing, an experimental project had been developed to determine the feasibility of an RB-36D carrying an RF-84F in flight. A GRB-36D* bomber was modified to carry an RF-84F** fighter as a parasite. The RF-84F could be released from the GRB-36D in flight, "perform its special mission, return and hook-up with the mother ship."[2]

The test program was "authorized by Air Research and Development Command Test Directive No. 5498-F1 dated 7 February 1955 and was amended by 5498-F2 and 5498-F3 dated 21 March 1955 and 14 December 1955 respectively".[3]

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The requirement for the Phase IV test "was cancelled by teletype RDZBG-3-253-E on 28 March 1956, but portions of the test which were feasible to perform during the structural test . . . were authorized and requested".[4]

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1. Hq, AFFTC "Project Assignment Directive 55-41: GRB-36/RF-84F Parasite Aircraft System (Nickname - FICON)", 4 Oct 55; see SD "F" in Vol. 2, The History of the AFFTC, Jul - Dec 55. (Hereinafter cited as AFFTC PAD 55-41.
2. Ibid.
3. Hq, AFFTC, "AFFTC-TN-56-17: GRB-36D Limited Phase IV Performance Evaluation", Jun 56, p. 1; see SD "TN" in Vol. 9, this history. (Hereinafter cited as AFFTC-TN-56-17.)

* Serial Number 49-2694.

** Serial Number 52-7258.