US

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

ANNUAL REPORT

FOR FISCAL YEAR

1966

Including the Reports of the

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

SECRETARY OF THE ARMY

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY

SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE

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frustrated. U.S. forces had clearly demonstrated their superiority in large unit combat and on many occasions U.S. firepower and mobility had proved to be more than a match for the stealth and cunning of the enemy. Communist safe havens, which in some cases had not been challenged for a quarter of a century, were no longer inviolate. The free world forces had forcefully demonstrated that the Viet Cong and their North Vietnamese allies will continue to pay a heavy price as long as they persist in their aggression.

II. Operational Forces and Programs

Fiscal year 1966 witnessed a major expansion in the armed forces of the United States. Active duty military personnel increased from 2,655,389 to 3, 094,058 during the year. Most of the increase took place in the general purpose forces, which are the forces primarily involved in our military effort in Southeast Asia. Notwithstanding the deployment of an additional 220,000 men to Southeast Asia during the year, other U.S. forces overseas were maintained at about the same level, the strategic deterrent was further strengthened, and the readiness of reserve components was raised to new premobilization levels.

Strategic Forces

These forces include the principal general nuclear war capabilities of the Nation, consisting of both offensive and defensive weapon systems. The civil defense effort is an integral part of this program.

Strategic Offensive Forces

The strategic offensive forces, because of their capability to destroy any attacker even after absorbing a surprise first strike, provide the major deterrent to a deliberate nuclear attack on the United States or its allies. While it is hoped that these forces will never have to be used, they are ready, if the need arises, to meet any challenge. During the year, continued improvements were achieved as new, more capable weapons became operational, and work was started to provide still greater effectiveness in the future, with particular stress being placed on increasing the capability of our weapons to penetrate any possible enemy missile defense.

Strategic Offensive Missiles

At the beginning of fiscal year 1966, all five wings of the MINUTEMAN I missiles were operational, and work was well under way on the construction of additional sites for the improved MINUTEMAN II missiles. This new missile provides longer range and/or larger payload, greater accuracy, and more operational versatility than its predecessor. By the end of the year, the first squadron of MINUTEMAN II's had become operational and a second was nearly ready. Work on upgrading the older MINUTEMAN I system to the im-

proved MINUTEMAN II system had also begun. By June 1966, a total of 880 MINUTEMAN missiles were operational.

While the goal of 1,000 operational MINUTEMAN still appeared appropriate in the context of the envisioned overall strategic force structure and in the light of the expected threat, further improvements in the MINUTEMAN'S performance became feasible. The new version, to be known as MINUTEMAN III, will include an improved third stage permitting an increased payload and an advanced reentry vehicle. Operational production of this missile will begin in fiscal year 1969. Ultimately all MINUTEMAN I silos will be usable by MINUTEMAN II or III missiles.

Since the ATLAS and TITAN I missiles were phased out of operation during fiscal year 1965, the 54 TITAN II's with storable liquid fuel remained as the only other land-based strategic offensive missiles. These missiles, deployed in hard silos, continued to be maintained on an operationally alert status throughout the year.

Eight more POLARIS submarines were commissioned during the year, raising the total to 37. The remaining 4 submarines in the currently authorized force of 41 were under construction and nearing completion, 3 having been launched by June 30, 1966. The entire force is scheduled to be fully operational by the first quarter of fiscal year 1968. Nineteen of the more recently launched submarines carry the long-range 2,500-mile POLARIS A–3 missile, as does one of the former A–1 ships retrofitted with the A–3. Thirteen submarines are equipped with the intermediate-range 1,500-mile A–2 missile. The remaining four of the five submarines originally deployed with the 1,200-mile A–1 missile were being converted to A–3's at the end of the year.

While the current force goal of 41 ballistic missile submarines continues to appear adequate, steps are underway to improve still further the capabilities of this force. Work was begun in fiscal year 1965 on the POSEIDON missile designed to have vastly greater accuracy, flexibility, and payload-carrying capability than any of current models. The increased payload will allow it to carry the sophisticated equipment needed to ensure penetration of heavily defended targets. During 1966, development work on the POSEIDON was accelerated in order to provide an earlier capability to begin production and deployment than was originally envisioned.

The stepped-up efforts to develop more capable and larger payload missiles (MINUTEMAN III and POSEIDON) are closely tied to the work being done in the area of penetration aids. In view of the possibility that our strategic forces may in the future face far more effective defenses, the incorporation of new penetration aids in our strategic missiles may become critically important to the success of

the nuclear deterrent. Although much work in this area had been done in recent years, a further acceleration was ordered during 1966.

The Post Attack Command and Control System (PACCS) provides an airborne launch control capability for the strategic retaliatory forces in the event that ground-based launch facilities do not survive the initial enemy attack. Several EC–135's were added to the PACCS force during the year, significantly improving the survivability of our command and control system.

Strategic Bombers

With the growth in the size and effectiveness of the strategic missile force during fiscal year 1966, the manned bomber force continued its long-planned phasedown. Starting the year with over 900 aircraft, the force had been reduced by June 30, 1966, to 680—600 long-range B–52's and 80 medium-range B–58's. Phased out during the year were the last five wings of B–47's, once the backbone of this country's strategic airpower superiority, and 30 of the oldest B–52's, whose high cost of modification and maintenance made their continued retention unjustified. In addition, the last of the old KC–97 refueling tankers were retired, being replaced by larger KC–135's.

During the year the size of the force on continuous airborne alert was reduced to the number that could be accommodated within the regular training program. This step was taken because of our much improved warning system, which virtually ensures that the ground alert aircraft can be launched in time to avoid destruction and because of the high survival capability of the hardened missiles which now represent such a large share of the total offensive force. About half of the B–52's were maintained on 15-minute ground alert throughout the period. In addition, a number of B–52's were modified to carry the considerably greater conventional bomb loads required for saturation bombing over South Vietnam.

The present force of B–52's and B–58's will ensure a manned bomber component in our strategic offensive forces until the early 1970's. In order to provide the option of having strategic bombers beyond that time, it was decided during the year to initiate the development and procurement of a strategic bomber version of the F–111. This aircraft, known as the FB–111, will possess dual-purpose performance characteristics so that it can be used for both strategic and tactical missions. For the more distant future, component development work was continued on an Advanced Manned Strategic Aircraft (AMSA). Current plans call for the phaseout of the older B–52's and the B–58's by fiscal year 1971, leaving only the 255 most recent B–52's and 210 FB–111's, or a total force of about 465 manned bombers.