

Services Will Get Improved Weapons

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President Johnson's new \$58.3 billion defense budget provides for some new advanced weapons — a multi-warhead Minuteman ICBM, an atomic-powered aircraft carrier, and a "SAM-D" anti-aircraft missile — while also carrying on the expanded Vietnam War.

But despite a \$4.1 billion increase in spending for fiscal 1967 over this year, there are cutbacks in other military projects.

Development of the Air Force's cherished Manned Orbital Laboratory (MOL), along with other space programs, is slowed down, and long deferred Navy proposals for other nuclear-powered surface warships are further postponed.

New Weapons

Most noteworthy of the new weapons developments provided in the new budget are the following:

- Procurement of a new version of the Minuteman intercontinental ballistic missile, labeled the Minuteman III, which ultimately will replace some of the 1000 Minuteman missiles either now in place or contemplated. No increase beyond this figure is contemplated.

Pentagon officials described the new missile as having the same propulsion system as the Minuteman II, but with "a greatly improved re-entry capability."

(Spokesmen would give no details, but it is known that among the improved capabilities is an ability to discharge multi-nuclear warheads—along with decoys—to bracket a target and thus both increase the chances of hitting the mark and avoiding anti-missile missiles.

- The Navy won part of its fight to resume construction of a nuclear-powered fleet.

The Navy now has four A-powered surface ships: The big four-reactor Enterprise carrier, one cruiser and a frigate in service and another

nearing readiness. Navy chiefs have pressed each year since 1961 for authorization of additional atomic powered frigates and a second carrier, to get along with what is considered the inevitability of a nuclear powered fleet.

New Ship Program

The 1967 program calls for building a two-reactor carrier, two conventionally powered guided missile destroyers, equipped with new "Tartar D" anti-aircraft missiles, five new nuclear attack submarines, ten new destroyer escorts and 33 other ships either to be built or to undergo major conversions. No further details were given.

While the new carrier and Minuteman are going into production, development of the new "SAM-D" anti-aircraft missile is just starting. It is expected to be used not only on Army battlefields, but also by North Atlantic Air Defense Command and aboard Navy ships. It is expected to be effective both against high and low targets, have both atomic and conventional warheads and be mobile.

The new defense budget is based on maintaining U.S. military manpower at exactly the same level as contemplated under the \$12.7 billion supplemental defense plan submitted to Congress last week and at a now anticipated — though unexplained but probably expanded — level of combat activity. Should fighting increase "dramatically", Pentagon officials said, further spending requests for men and materials may be expected.

Present plans now provide for expansion of the armed services to 2,987,341 by June 30 and to 3,103,069 by June 30, 1967. This latter increase will provide for: an Army of 1,233,693 men; Navy, 727,873; Marine Corps, 278,184; and Air Force, 853,359.

Heavy expenditures for procurement — from \$11.8 billion in fiscal 1965, to \$13.9 billion this year and to almost \$16 billion next year, are recommended.

It was reported that estimat-

ed spending from the Vietnamese "special support" war budget would total \$4.6 billion this year and \$10.3 billion next year. But Pentagon officials would not give an overall figure for the cost of the Vietnam War.

1673 Helicopters

The new budget provides for initial procurement of the planned FB-111, a bomber version of the TFX, along with continued development of the F-111A Air Force fighter. No mention was made of the Navy's version of the TFX — the F-111B — which has encountered weight and other problems. Officials indicated that limited funds are provided for research on "AMSA" — a long range strategic bomber.

No provision is made for a new interceptor, long urged by the Air Force, but the Air Force will start procurement of the Navy's A-7 subsonic ground force support aircraft. There have been reports that the Air Force preferred another plane.

Funds in the new budget will provide for 1673 new helicopters, mostly "Hueys" and Ch-47s, 1078 fixed wing aircraft, including the A-7 and



FB-111, a counter-insurgency plane as yet not selected and completion of the C-141 224-plane procurement program.

A total of 52,297 strategic and tactical missiles will be ordered, including the Army's Lance short-range surface-to-surface weapon to replace the Honest John and Little John and the Navy's Poseidon to replace some of the Polaris missiles aboard missile subs.

The Nike-X anti-missile system will be continued in development with some \$400 million to be spent on it, but no deployment is authorized. Also, the SRAM—short range air missile—for the FB-111 and possibly the B-52 will be pressed.

Officials were non-committal about the MOL, but it was clear that with no increase in funds for the military-man-in-space experiment over the \$150 million allowed in fiscal 1966, the program is being slowed down.

President Johnson said that proposals will be presented to Congress for the future expansion of medical care benefits now available to the dependents of military personnel. He also said that legislation is being prepared to modernize, simplify and make more uniform the laws governing the appointment, promotion and separation of military officers.