

squadrons. The permanent force remains at four divisions/aircraft wings (three active and one reserve).

The Marine Corps fighter forces will be maintained at about the current level.

The tactical air control (TAC) force, which is used to locate enemy targets and then direct the attack aircraft to them, is programed to remain at the present level.

In the transport helicopter category, we now plan to maintain the currently augmented active force level through fiscal year 1969, while simultaneously building our Reserve structure. When the Vietnam conflict ends the Marine Corps transport helicopter force will return to the planned permanent level.

In the light helicopter and observation category the total number of aircraft will be increased significantly in fiscal year 1968 through the temporary retention of O-1's and UH-1's previously scheduled to phase out after the new OV-10's are delivered.

Last year we undertook a major program to increase the fixed-wing combat readiness training capabilities of the Marine Corps. This program will be continued. We also undertook at that time, on a temporary basis, a program of combat readiness training for Marine Corps helicopter pilots. We now plan to make the combat crew readiness training program permanent and to expand the force level. Later, as the OV-10 enters the operating force, we plan to add some of these aircraft to the combat readiness training force.

The numbers of tanker/transport aircraft and of support aircraft are essentially unchanged from those presented last year.

Navy and Marine Corps Reserve forces

The Navy will continue to maintain a total of about 50 ships in the Naval Reserve. As more modern ships become available from the active forces, older ships will be phased out.

The Navy also maintains a large number of ships in the Reserve (or "mothball") Fleet, in either category B (Bravo) or category C (Charlie) according to their physical condition and readiness status.

As I noted last year, because of their relatively poor physical condition many of the Charlie ships would be usable only after extensive overhaul and modernization. Accordingly the Navy is continuously surveying these ships in order to identify those which have no further value. These ships are then scrapped or otherwise disposed of. As a result, the size of the Reserve Fleet has been progressively reduced.

The Naval and Marine Corps Reserve air units are programed for about 740 aircraft at the end of this fiscal year, and this number will be increased over the next few years.

Navy-Marine Corps aircraft procurement

The Navy and Marine Corps aircraft procurement program is shown on the classified table provided to the committee. In order to meet the requirements of the southeast Asia conflict and continue the planned modernization of the force, we propose to increase the fiscal year 1967 program from the original 620 aircraft to 1,047, and to buy another 680 aircraft in fiscal year 1968 instead of the 604 planned a year ago.

With regard to the modernization of the attack carrier fighter forces, we still plan to initiate F-111B procurement in fiscal year 1968.

To provide for combat attrition beyond fiscal year 1967 and com-