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REPORT

OF THE

JOINT SENATE-HOUSE ARMED SERVICES
SUBCOMMITTEE

ON

CVAN-70 AIRCRAFT CARRIER

(Appointed pursuant to Sec. 402(a) Public Law 91-121)

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REPORT OF THE JOINT SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AND SENATE COMMITTEES ON ARMED SERVICES ON THE STUDY FOR THE CVAN-70

STATUTORY REQUIREMENT

This report responds to the requirement set forth in the Military Procurement Authorization Act for fiscal year 1970 (Sec. 402 of Public Law 91-121). The provision is as follows:

Sec. 402. (a) Prior to April 30, 1970, the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives and the Senate shall jointly conduct and complete a comprehensive study and investigation of the past and projected costs and effectiveness of attack aircraft carriers and their task forces and a thorough review of the considerations which went into the decision to maintain the present number of attack carriers. The result of this comprehensive study shall be considered prior to any authorization or appropriation for the production or procurement of the nuclear aircraft carrier designated as CVAN-70.

(b) In carrying out such study and investigation the Committees on Armed Services of the House of Representatives and the Senate are authorized to call on all Government agencies and such outside consultants as such committees may deem necessary.

BACKGROUND

The cited statutory study requirement resulted from a House-Senate conference agreement to delete, from the fiscal year 1970 procurement program recommended by the Department of the Navy, an item proposing the procurement of the long leadtime items required for the construction of a new nuclear-powered attack aircraft carrier, the CVAN-70.

SUBCOMMITTEE ACTION

Pursuant to the statutory requirement, the following members were appointed by the respective chairmen of the Armed Services Committees to serve on this special subcommittee:

From the Senate Committee on Armed Services: Senators John C. Stennis, Stuart Symington, Henry M. Jackson, Strom Thurmond, John G. Tower, and George Murphy.

The House members designated were Charles E. Bennett, Samuel S. Stratton, and Robert T. Stafford.

By unanimous consent of the group, Senator Stennis and Congressman Bennett served as co-chairmen.

The subcommittee in its desire to fully discharge its statutory responsibilities agreed to solicit the expert testimony of those individuals who by their previous identification with this complex subject matter, could make a meaningful contribution to the subcommittee's efforts.

These individuals, except in a few instances, accepted the invitation of the subcommittee to participate in this study and appeared as witnesses in the following order:

April 7, 1970—Hon. John H. Chafee, Secretary of the Navy; Adm. Thomas H. Moorer, Chief of Naval Operations; Rear Adm. James L. Holloway III, CVAN program coordinator.

April 8, 1970—Senator Walter F. Mondale and Congressman William S. Moorhead. Senator Case submitted a statement for the record.

April 10, 1970—Adm. Thomas H. Moorer, Chief of Naval Operations, and Rear Adm. James L. Holloway III, CVAN program coordinator.

April 13, 1970—Dr. Desmond P. Wilson, professional staff member, Center for Naval Analyses.

April 15, 1970—Gen. Earle G. Wheeler, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Vice Adm. H. G. Rickover, Deputy Commander for Nuclear Propulsion, Naval Ship Systems Command.

April 16, 1970—Dr. William W. Kaufmann, senior fellow, Brookings Institution, on leave as professor at Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

The testimony received by the subcommittee during its proceedings will be printed, and except for deletions made necessary by national security considerations, will be published in its entirety as a public document. The subcommittee, in fulfillment of its statutory obligation, has completed its hearings and study of the past and projected costs and effectiveness of attack aircraft carriers and their task forces, and the considerations which went into the decision to maintain the present number of attack carriers.

THE CARRIER STUDY AND ITS RELATION TO THE CVAN-70

The statute provides for a comprehensive review of the entire concept of naval attack carrier forces. The subcommittee recognizes that implicit in the study requirement is the necessity for determining whether to provide congressional approval for the ultimate construction of a nuclear aircraft carrier identified as the CVAN-70.

THE PRESIDENT'S RECOMMENDATIONS

The President, in his budget message to Congress for fiscal year 1971, specifically recommended that he be provided authority to procure long leadtime construction items for the CVAN-70 in the amount of \$152 million.

The presidential budget message contains the following statement with respect to the requested funds for long lead items:

The Budget also provides for additional large assault ships for our amphibious forces, together with funds for advanced procurement related to construction of the third nuclear-powered *Nimitz* class attack carrier. However, the advance procurement funds for the third carrier will not be obligated until completion of studies in progress to assess future requirements for attack carriers.

THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE'S RECOMMENDATIONS

The Secretary of Defense, in presenting to the Congress the fiscal year 1971 procurement program for the Department of Defense, strongly urged congressional approval of the President's request on the CVAN-70.

Subsequently, the Secretary of Defense, while recognizing the necessity for completion of the National Security Council review, has reaffirmed his support of the CVAN-70 in a letter to the chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee on April 3, 1970, when he said:

The requirements and commitments of the current strategy make it necessary, in my judgment, for this Nation to proceed with the construction of this final ship of a three-ship construction program first laid out in fiscal year 1967.

THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

The Joint Chiefs of Staff have unanimously endorsed construction of the CVAN-70 despite the fact that there exists a difference of opinion among the service chiefs as to the number of carriers we should have in our carrier force in future years.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE

As a consequence of the extensive hearings conducted by the special Senate-House subcommittee as directed by section 402 of Public Law 91-121, a majority of the Senate Members and all of the House Members strongly recommend that the Congress approve the request of the President for the funding of long leadtime construction items on the CVAN-70 for fiscal year 1971.

Findings on which the subcommittee's recommendations are based include the following:

ON ROLES AND MISSION OF CARRIER

The attack aircraft carrier has in the past and will into the foreseeable future, continue to perform a vital and indispensable role in insuring the control of our seelanes essential to our commerce. Our industrial operations could not last more than a very short time if our strategic materials were to be cut off from overseas.

In addition, carrier air forces are able to provide tactical air in support of land forces operating far beyond existing American air bases or where such bases have been rendered inoperative. In particular, with the current emphasis on reducing American commitments abroad in both Europe and the Pacific, the highly mobile carrier provides a unique means of providing American air power in distant locations without establishing bases and installations ashore.

MODERNITY OF CARRIER

The attack aircraft carrier, like every other major weapon system of our national defense, is subject to obsolescence induced by age and advancing technology. Therefore, like all other weapons systems, the attack carrier system must be modernized on a timely basis despite the significant costs involved.

The following table is an illustrative example of the relative capabilities of old and modern attack carriers, by class, reflecting single strike capabilities and air ordnance, jet fuel, and steaming endurances without replenishment:

	Hancock	Midway	Forrestal	Nimitz
Commissioning periods.....	1944-50	1945-47	1957-68	1972—
Single strike capability.....	1.0	1.3	1.6	2.0
Ordnance endurance.....	1.0	1.4	2.5	3.8
Jet fuel endurance.....	1.0	1.8	2.6	5.2
Steaming endurance.....	1.0	1.0	1.0	(1)

¹ Virtually unlimited.

COMPARATIVE COSTS OF CARRIER AND LAND BASED TACTICAL AIR

The subcommittee attempted to satisfy the statutory requirement for the study of past and projected costs of the attack aircraft carriers and their task forces. Several different analyses were presented to the subcommittee on this matter comparing sea-based tactical aviation with land-based tactical aviation.

It is significant that the Department of Defense advised the subcommittee that even though the comparative costs of the various alternatives have been under study for some time by the Department of Defense, there is no agreed-upon position within the Department on this matter.

To illustrate the difficulties encountered by the subcommittee in attempting to address this question, General Wheeler, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, stated:

Now this is an extremely complex problem, and the reason it is complex is that you have to figure out what you are going to charge off against the cost of land-based tactical air versus what you charge off against sea-based tactical air, and depending upon what you charge off, you come up with these varying figures.

I must say that I don't regard any of these studies myself as being definitive, and they certainly are not convincing to me as a basis for making a judgment as to the need for sea-based tactical air.

In view of these circumstances, it is evident to the subcommittee that there is as yet no acceptable formula for accurately quantifying and measuring the precise cost-effectiveness of land-based versus sea-based tactical airpower.

ON THE NUMBER OF CARRIERS

The Defense budget for fiscal year 1971 supports a force of 15 attack carriers plus the one additional CVS (antisubmarine warfare) carrier authorized for use as an attack carrier during the Vietnam war. Unless there is a substantial change in our international commitments and the Vietnam war, the subcommittee supports the number of carriers provided for in the President's budget for fiscal year 1971.

The subcommittee was unable to resolve the question of the number of carriers that should be provided to our Armed Forces in the 1975-80 time frame, an issue which will be influenced by the degree of

modernity of the carriers in being. This question also involves future foreign policy decisions which remain to be determined.

The subcommittee, in consideration of the full range of carrier capabilities including modernity and the exceptional advantages of nuclear power, is of the opinion that the long lead funds for the CVAN-70 should be approved.

SENATORS

John C. Stennis, *Co-chairman*
Henry M. Jackson
Strom Thurmond
John G. Tower
George Murphy

REPRESENTATIVES

Charles E. Bennett, *Co-chairman*
Samuel S. Stratton
Robert T. Stafford

ADDITIONAL STATEMENT OF SENATOR JOHN C. STENNIS

I fully support the concept of adding the CVAN-70 to our attack carrier fleet and personally think the leadtime items should be provided for in the fiscal year 1971 authorization bill. As stated before I will not be in a position to make a firm recommendation for including this additional carrier in the fiscal year 1971 authorization bill until there is a firm request therefor by the executive branch.

MINORITY VIEWS

One of the primary reasons for the establishment of this Joint Senate-House Armed Services Subcommittee on the CVAN-70 Aircraft Carrier (appointed pursuant to sec. 402 of Public Law 91-121) was the desire of the Congress to have a joint committee conduct a study and review of the entire matter of force levels and costs with respect to attack carriers. It was presumed that in connection with any new carrier the Congress would have a firm position from the administration. The budget message, however, states that "the advance procurement funds for the third carrier will not be obligated until completion of studies in progress to assess future requirements for attack carriers."

Without any clear direction from the executive branch, and because of (1) the high cost of this proposed additional nuclear aircraft carrier; (2) the possibility that a review by the National Security Council of strategic and tactical force levels will result in the recommendation of a future carrier force level which would not necessitate the construction of the CVAN-70 at this time for the 1975-80 time frame; (3) increasing evidence that we must give more recognition to such growing domestic needs as education, housing, control of various forms of pollution, and so forth; and (4) the growing financial crisis incident to further depreciation in the purchasing power of the dollar, I wish to withhold my decision with respect to recommending the authorization of long leadtime items for the CVAN-70 until we have the opportunity to review the results of this report from the National Security Council with respect to overall national strategy for the 1975-80 period, including the proper attack carrier force level.

Senator STUART SYMINGTON.

the basis of the evidence in point. This does not also involve future foreign policy decisions which remain to be determined. The subcommittee is confident in its ability to handle the matter. It is of the opinion that the bill should be approved.

REPRESENTATIVES

SENATORS

John C. Stennis (Chairman)
Henry M. Jackson
William T. Harrison
John C. Tower
George Murphy
Charles E. McNair
Robert E. Stafford
Charles H. McNair
Charles E. McNair

TESTIMONY OF SENATOR JOHN C. STENNIS

I fully support the concept of adding the OVA-70 to our stock market list and personally think the legislation should be passed. In the fiscal year 1971 authorization bill, I stated before I will not be in a position to make a firm recommendation for inclusion of this additional security in the fiscal year 1971 authorization bill. I will make a firm recommendation by the end of the year.

MINORITY VIEWS

One of the primary reasons for the establishment of this Joint Committee on the National Security Council is to provide a forum for the exchange of views and information between the two Houses of Congress. The Committee is composed of members from both Houses and is charged with the task of studying and reporting on matters of national security. The Committee has held several hearings and has received many suggestions and recommendations from the public. The Committee is currently studying the proposed legislation and will report back to the full Congress by the end of the year.

Without any doubt, the Committee is committed to the study and reporting on matters of national security. The Committee is currently studying the proposed legislation and will report back to the full Congress by the end of the year. The Committee is committed to the study and reporting on matters of national security. The Committee is currently studying the proposed legislation and will report back to the full Congress by the end of the year. The Committee is committed to the study and reporting on matters of national security. The Committee is currently studying the proposed legislation and will report back to the full Congress by the end of the year.

Senator Stennis