

# Hub of Defense Wheel Buried in Midwest

By Judy Harrington

The hub of our nation's air defense wheel is buried in the Midwest.

But it is not dormant by any means.

The central workings of the Air Force's Strategic Air Command lie beneath the ground, 11 miles south of Omaha, Nebraska.

Here, at Offutt Air Force Base, rests one of the most important instruments in the world — the famous SAC red telephone. From this phone every control room in the United States can be reached.

When dialed, it sets off a network of alarm bells and flashing lights. Within seconds the controller is able to order execution of any of the many emergency war plans already in the hands of combat wing commanders.

And in 3 to 15 minutes, aircraft carrying nuclear weapons will be wheels-up and flying to pre-determined targets in all corners of the world.

**All-Out War**

But while it is the duty of SAC's Commander, Gen. Thomas S. Power, and his 258,000-man force to be trained, alert and capable of waging all-out war, it is their hope that such will never come to pass.

It seems ironic that such important headquarters, vital to national defense, be on Nebraska's plains in the first place; for the Midwest constantly is chided for being slow, not quite in the swing of things, truant concerning items of national and international interest.

In earlier days the Midwest, inland as it is, assumed an isolationist's role. But today, when peace is as shaky as elm leaves in a strong Nebraska wind, this fertile farm land quaries the "iron fist" of the Free World — the 15-year-old Strategic Air Command.

What a visitor to the base would see would be an imposing, sand-colored building giving no hint of its powerful influence 45 feet underground.

**Modern Hermits**

In the event of war, upstairs occupants would scramble to the three-story sub-ground quarters where they would be sealed off like modern hermits equipped with air-filtering machinery and a 30-day supply of food. The war would be fought through a remarkable communications system.

Contact with bases around the world, in Japan, North Africa and Britain, is instantaneous from the control room. Detailed plans are at the military's finger tips, displayed on huge panels normally curtained. Global weather can be seen at a glance as well as the disposition of every one of SAC's 3,500 aircraft. Teletypes, closed circuit television and 8 international clocks keep ever-changing world conditions up-to-date.

Other phones, 60 of them, provide instant voice contact with each of the Command's numbered Air Forces — the 3rd Air Division at Guam, the 7th Air Division in England, the 16th Air Force in Spain, the 8th Air Force at Westover, Mass., the 2nd Air Force at Barksdale in Louisiana

and the 13th Air Force at Riverside, Calif.

This array of communication is designed for one purpose: at any hour of the day to account for the Command's potential to deter war.

The number is changing all the time, but at any hour SAC has an average of 211 planes in the air. Each crew has a pre-determined mission. The loss of any plane means that temporarily some area is not being covered.

**Flying Safety**

For this reason great emphasis is placed on flying safety. In 1958, the Command reported only 5 accidents per 100,000 flying hours. Gen. Power expects a personal explanation from a base commander who loses an aircraft.

SAC feels it must be alert and at full force because the next war, if it comes, will be a quick one. Everyone must be ready to go when the whistle blows. An airman on leave miles from the base may never get into the war. It could be all over by the time he reported in.

By the same token, a plane in the repair hangar might never fly a mission. For that reason, aircraft noted on the maps in the war room as out of service are not counted upon.

Alerts keep the men primed for that possible day of attack. At a signal, the crews on 72-hour alert shifts scramble to their posts. The first plane takes off three minutes after the whistle, the last in 15 minutes.

**Tough Punch**

Why the effort to get the force airborne in minimum

time? Because the Command believes that initiative provides a tremendous advantage. If opposing forces are equal, the one to hit first is expected to throw the toughest punch.

Another jump SAC has on obsolete war maneuvers is the power of "recall." Not only can the Command put its mighty machine in action in seconds and guide its weapons to destruction, but it can stop the entire plan in mid-flight by a recall system known as "Positive Control."

The inventory of this airpower has progressed from World War II left-over B-29's to an all-jet bomber command. The only non-jet aircraft is the KC-97 "Flying Gas Station," and it is being eased out by the all-jet engine KC-135 tanker.

Missiles on the inventory include the long range Minuteman, Atlas and Titan, all capable of being fired 6,300 miles. Smaller missiles are the intermediate-range Thor and Jupiter, and the Hound Dog, and Skybolt, which are launched from the bottom of the B-52 and B-47, respectively.

**Missile Bases**

Three Atlas missile bases with three missiles at each site are in the Omaha area. These, at Valley, Ia., are above ground. Also near Omaha, at Louisville, Neb. and Treynor, Ia., are two Nike-Hercules anti-missile aircraft bases.

Twelve Atlas missiles



MISSILE COMPUTER — Located at the Strategic Air Command Headquarters at Offutt Air Force Base, this computer, completed in 1960, is the targeting center for all intercontinental ballistic missile bases including the Atlas complex near Lincoln. It supplies trajectory and space data into the guidance systems of the 5,500 mile-range missiles.

stand watch around Lincoln — at Tecumseh, Brainard, Eagle, Wilber, York, Seward, Dorchester, Beatrice, Cortland, Nebraska City, Elmwood and Palmyra. They are the hard type, housed in concrete silos in the ground.

Two more Nike-Hercules bases are at Crete and Agnew.

When all are operational, they will form a complete air defense ring around the Lincoln-Omaha area.

The Lincoln Air Force Base itself is the only combat operational base in the state and one of the few two-wing bomber bases in the SAC Command.

In terms of worth, the entire Command is comparable to one of the biggest of America's businesses. Its payroll tops 224,000 men and women on 70 bases on 4 continents. It operates nearly a thousand more aircraft than all the airlines in the world outside the Iron Curtain.

**Enemy Knows**

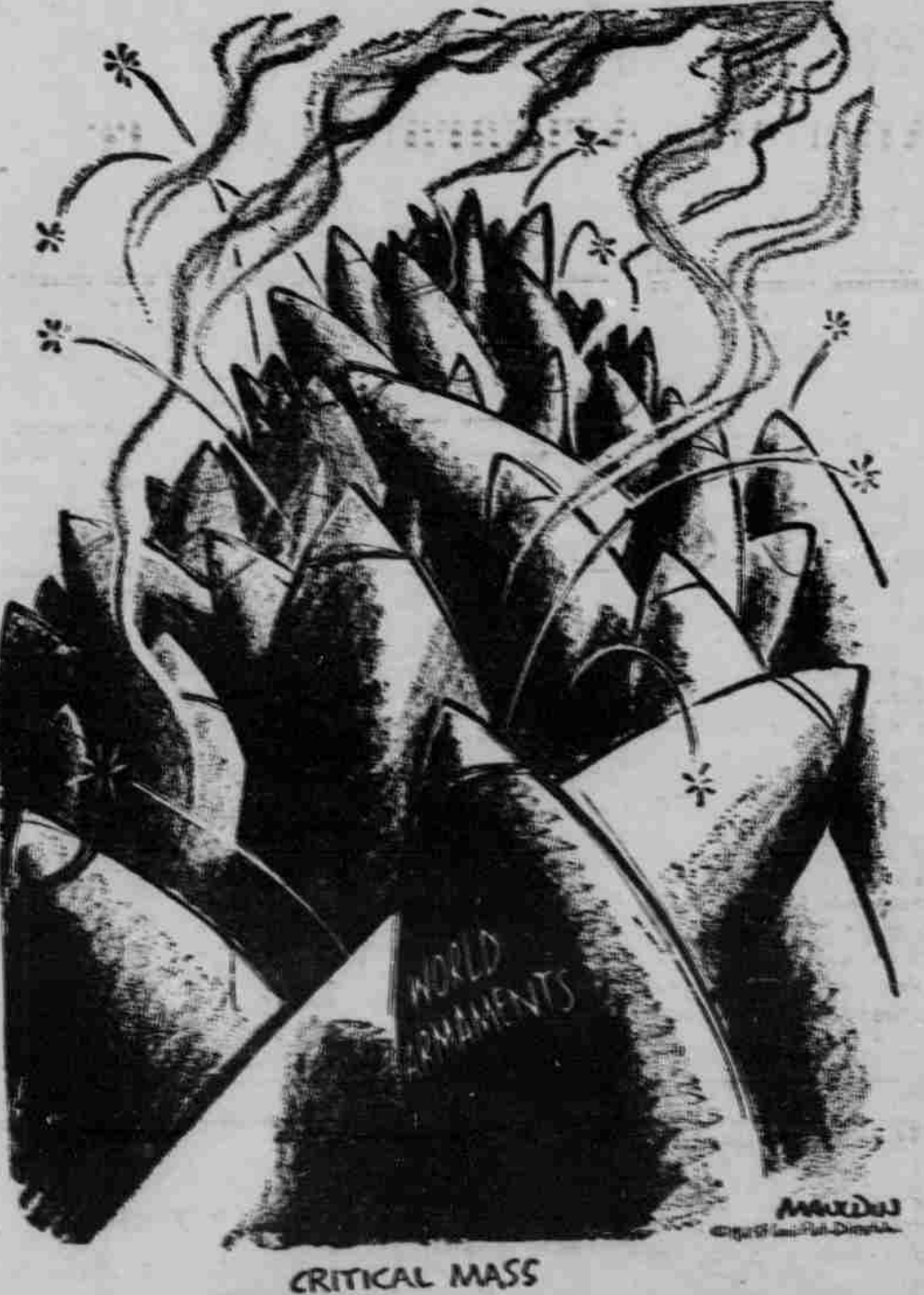
The enemy knows about Omaha and the striking

force it controls. It knows, too, that a war might mean elimination of all large cities, plus 100,000,000 casualties, if not total destruction.

But the day may come when the enemy will feel like a gambler, willing to tease or to test our strength.

In that event, the Strategic Air Command is here to order retaliation on the war-making potential of the enemy in one mighty holocaust of nuclear force.

This is the power on the plains.



## Love Library Staff Recommends General, Technical Space Books

A special list of recommended books in the fields of missile and space research and development has been provided by the Love Memorial Library staff.

These books include some easy reading, some technical works and some reference material on the subject of space and its allied studies.

Martin Caidin. **Countdown for Tomorrow.** The inside story of earth satellites, rockets and missiles and the race between American and Soviet science. This is an illustrated historical development of the space age. Many aspects of the space age are discussed but primary emphasis has been placed on missile launching. This is a non-technical account and could be readily understood by laymen. The author has had first hand experience in this branch of science therefore the information should be very reliable.

Richard Witkin. **The Challenge of the Sputniks.** With the Soviets parading a new scientific force before the world, several famous Americans responded with how America was meeting the challenge. Famous among those so reporting were former president Eisenhower, Clare Boothe Luce, Bernard Baruch, Eric Sevareid, Charles E. Wilson, and Thomas K. Finletter.

Arthur C. Clarke. **Going Into Space.** This is another illustrated, popularly written account of man's projected journey into remote space. The author has written space fiction as well as non-fiction. This one may have elements of both kinds, but primarily it is non-fiction.

Patrick Moore. **Earth Satellites.** Often the nonspecialist has found himself out of depth when reading the flood of technical information about space travel and missile development. The author's intent has been to give a general picture of what is going on so that after reading his account the interested onlooker will find it easier to understand more technical expostions.

Vincent F. Callahan. **Space Guide.** The National Aeronautics and Space Administration sets forth its present and future activities in this

guide. This new agency as created by Congress in July of 1958 as the civilian agency to conduct and coordinate U.S. research problems of flight within and without the earth's atmosphere.

**Advances in Astronautical Sciences.** 1959. This is an account of the fifth in a series of annual meetings sponsored by the American Astronautical Society. It has been written with the specialist in mind and basically the papers appear just as the authors wrote them.

Homer E. Newell. **Sounding Rockets.** This book describes some of the modern rockets that have been used in scientific research of the upper atmosphere and sun. These sounding rockets, as they are now called, penetrate regions otherwise inaccessible to man and make observations that cannot be made from the ground. Permission was obtained from the American Rocket Society to publish part of this material which was taken from the report of the Symposium on High Altitude Sounding Rockets.

Harry Stine. **Earth Satellites and the Race for Space Superiority.** The author has had intimate, first-hand experience in that he has participated in hundreds of rocket firings, including the record breaking Aerobee-HI research rockets. In this account he sets forth a plan for the conquest of space by posing such challenging questions as: Why is a man-made satellite vital to America? Can America survive without space superiority? What is our time-table to the moon? And can we have a manned space station by 1967?

More technical books on space travel and missile development follow:

M. J. Zucrow. **Aircraft and Missile Propulsion.** This is a textbook written for first year graduate students. In it are discussed the underlying principles of the technology pertinent to the following propulsion engines. The turbo-prop, the turbojet, the ramjet, the liquid-propellant rocket, and the solid propellant rocket. That the books were written for students is evidenced by the notations for chapters, large numbers of

Gold's

OF NEBRASKA

MADE IN THE U.S.A.

THE BREEZE-COOL

Arrow

Decton

5.00

This cool, summer-weight hushie of Dacron® polyester and cotton ignores wrinkles, wrinkles like a breeze, shows the iron. Styled with comfortable half sleeves. Glen or convertible busy collar. Sizes 14-17.

GOLD'S Men's Store . . . Street Floor

Want Ads

Need Extra Money?

Nebraskan Want Ads

5 cents a word: \$1.00 minimum. Ads to be printed in the classified section of the Summer Nebraskan must be accompanied by the name of the person placing said ad and brought to room 311, Burnett.

GOING HOME?

Is your car ready?

Have our mechanics look over your car and make adjustments that mean smooth motoring ahead.

GEORGE KNAUB MOBIL SERVICE

701 N. 10th HE 2-7960

Soft Shoulder Expressions

in CLAYTONE GABARDINE SUITS

New earth-tinted, shade-mated trendsetter for '61 . . . created by College Hall for the cosmopolitan man with a taste for well-bred, understated fashions. Shows here in the new Dacron and Worsted® 2/30 gabardine for the look and feel of quiet elegance.

\*55% Dacron Polyester Fiber, 45% Worsted.

The Captain's Walk

UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA • LINCOLN

1127 "R" Street Phone HE 2-2042