



# Launch Pads For ICBMs Spread Through America

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Little towns like Plattsburg, New York; Altus, Oklahoma; and Moses Lake, Washington, are going to loom large on the ultra-modern American defense map of the 1960s.

In the event of all-out war, they and 13 other cities and towns will rank with Plattsburg, Washington and New York as prime targets for enemy attacks.

They are the sites selected to harbor America's super-weapons of the present and future—the Atlas and Titan intercontinental ballistic missiles.

While the halls of Congress echo to debate over a "missile gap," work is pushing steadily ahead on these installations and plans are being hatched for more.

Thus far, the United States has only one operational ICBM base: That's at Vandenberg AFB in Los Angeles, where three operational Atlas missiles stand duty.

Another Atlas station at Warren AFB near Cheyenne, Wyoming, is expected to be partly operational by spring and work is under way on installations at these sites:

Fairchild AFB, Spokane, Washington; Offutt AFB, Omaha, Nebraska; Forbes AFB, Topeka, Kansas; Lincoln AFB, Lincoln, Nebraska; and Schilling AFB, Salina, Kansas.

The choice of three other Atlas sites was announced late last month. They are Walker AFB, Roswell, New Mexico; Plattsburg

AFB, Plattsburg, New York; Dyess AFB, Abilene, Texas; and Altus AFB, Altus, Oklahoma.

When completed in two or three years, the bases will house 13 squadrons, each consisting of 10 missiles and nine firing positions or launching pads.

Long range pads also call for 14 Titan squadrons by 1965. Thus far five sites have been selected. Work already has begun on some but, like the Titan missile itself, none is operational.

TITAN SITES have been announced for Ellsworth AFB, Rapid City, South Dakota; Lowry AFB, Denver; Beale AFB, Marysville, California; Larson AFB, Moses Lake, Washington; and Mountain Home AFB, Mountain Home, Idaho.

The Atlas missile, which has a proven range of 6,325 miles, became operational last September. Improvement plans are under way to extend its range to 7,000 miles. The Titan, designed to have an eventual range of 9,000 miles, is

expected to reach the operational stage early in 1961. A recent successful test carried it 2,000 miles into the Atlantic.

Beyond the Atlas and Titan—and so far in the future that no bases have been selected for it

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## Compact Car Boom Revamps Industry

DETROIT (AP)—The compact car boom has exploded into a full-scale revolution in the auto industry.

Falcon, Corvair and Valiant, plus their slightly older companions Rambler and Lark, accounted for almost 25 per cent of all domestic cars sold in January.

This figure has added significance since January was the only month in the entire first third of the 1960 model year in which supplies of all cars were reasonably good.

"Everything is changing," says Ben Mills, Ford vice president whose Lincoln-Mercury Division is introducing still another compact, the Comet, next month. "A revolution is underway. Nobody knows where it will end."

The 1960 model year was bound to be confusing with the entry of four new cars — the three new compacts and the Dodge Dart—right at the start. It became even more so as steel shortages curtailed production and compounded distribution problems.

Many of the long-range questions, such as who will be hurt and whether foreign cars will dwindle into oblivion, remain unanswered. The only thing definite so far is the new size cars are selling.

The five compact lines sold about 101,500 cars in January against an industry total of 455,000. Rambler's total of 34,949 put it third among all cars with Falcon fourth, only about 2,500 cars behind. Among the five compacts, Corvair ran a distant third with only about half as many sales as Falcon. Lark was fourth and Valiant fifth.

With the Falcon booming, sales of the standard Ford have slumped sharply from year-ago figures. Falcon has more than taken up the slack, however, so Ford Division sold more cars this January than last.

Standard Chevrolet sales, while down from a year ago, are considerably better than those of the regular Ford. Like Ford Division, over-all Chevrolet sales are up.

At Plymouth the situation is a little different. Combined Plymouth-Valiant sales are only slightly above last year's Plymouth total. The standard Plymouth appears to be suffering competition from the Dodge Dart, another new Chrysler car right in Plymouth's price range. Dart sales in January ran almost 19,000 units compared with 22,839 for Plymouth.

The only standard-size car line showing any appreciable sales increase in January was Dodge, which more than doubled its 1959 totals. The sole reason for the Dodge spurt is the lower priced Dart.

Last August Rambler's George Romney, who finally convinced the Big Three that compact cars were profitable, sized up 1960 as a year in which the industry would sell 1,750,000 smaller U.S. built cars, including 500,000 Ramblers. Right now his figures look good.

Romney also predicted the medium-price lines would fall on their faces and the tide of im-

ports would be stemmed. In January the medium-price lines dropped 5 per cent from year-ago sales totals while the low-price lines, even with the addition of Dart, were 10 per cent below last year.

One month doesn't make a year, however, and when the medium-price lines bring out their own compacts, such as the Comet, things are sure to change. Lincoln-Mercury expects the Comet to cut into Mercury sales but declines to estimate to what extent.

Compact cars from Buick, Oldsmobile, Pontiac and probably Dodge will be along in the early fall.

Does all this mean standard-size cars are doomed? Nobody in Detroit thinks so, although Romney says compacts will make up 50 per cent of all car sales by 1963.

"There will always be a place for us," says James Roche, general manager of Cadillac. This sentiment is echoed by all the other makers.

Ford originally predicted total 1960 sales of Falcon, Corvair and Valiant at 750,000 to one million cars. Now Ford is talking in terms of 500,000 to 600,000 Falcons alone.

The Falcon, most conventional of the three, apparently has run into the fewest production bugs. Falcon owners usually report better gas mileage than the other two.

The Valiant, heaviest of the three, has had no major problems, but some owners have complained of interior finishing, particularly inside.

The Corvair had early troubles with carburetor icing and slipping fan belts. Chevrolet engineers believe they licked both of these problems during the steel shutdown and many dealers have offered to modify the pre-shutdown models. The Corvair generally runs third to the others in gas mileage, particularly in winter

weather when its gasoline heater is being used.

The Comet comes to market March 17. Basically it's a dressed-up Falcon inside with different exterior styling, priced less than \$100 over comparable Falcon models.

What happens from here on? Detroit doubts anyone is qualified to make an accurate prediction.

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