

FMC Corporation and the War

A leading manufacturer of vehicles and weapons that are being used in the War in Southeast Asia will be recruiting at Stanford on Friday, February 26. The FMC Corporation, which has its corporate headquarters, its Ordnance Operations, and its Defense Technology Labs located here in Santa Clara County, receives about 20% of its income from the Defense Department for the development and production of weapons systems. At present it ranks "number one in the United States in the production of armored vehicles."

FMC's biggest moneymaker is the M113 Armored Personnel Carrier, which was in the news recently after 52 of them spearheaded the invasion of Laos. It was also the vehicle used by the National Guard in the February 8th assault on a church in Wilmington, North Carolina.

Since FMC received the first contract in 1959, the M113 has been the company's "largest defense program". It is the most widely used armored fighting vehicle in the "free world", with over 30,000 supplied by FMC to the armies of the United States and 30 other countries. In addition to the basic M113, which carries three machine guns and 13 soldiers, variations include cargo carriers, mobile command posts, self-propelled flamethrowers, mortar carriers, ammunition carriers, and carriers for the Vulcan anti-aircraft gun and the Lance, Chaparral, Hawk, and Pershing missile systems.

In Vietnam, the M113 is used extensively by mechanized Infantry battalions, armored cavalry units, and the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment for the "firepower and mobility [which the M113] has successfully demonstrated in its counterinsurgency role." Concludes Jane's Weapons Systems, the authoritative publication in the field, there is "no doubt that the M113 has been one of the most successful vehicles ever in the US Army service, and has proved especially valuable in the special circumstances of the Vietnam War."

FMC's current contract calls for delivery of 4,452 of its M113 armored personnel carriers at a cost of \$98.3 million. Production, expected to last through the end of 1971, is at FMC's Ordnance Operations, located at 1105 Coleman Avenue in San Jose. Also manufactured there are supporting systems for the Minuteman ICBM and the LTVP-7 amphibious assault vehicles for the Marines.

According to Armed Forces Management magazine, the LTVP-7 "is to be used in amphibious operations to transport landing forces, their supplies and equipment from ship to shore, through open seas and high surf zones to inland objectives, and for subsequent tactical operations ashore. FMC is currently manufacturing the LTVP-7 under a contract calling for 942 vehicles at a cost of over \$78 million.

FMC's Defense Technology Laboratories (DTL), located at 333 Brokaw Road in Santa Clara, are engaged in "research, design, development, production engineering, and production of specialized weapons systems and munitions." DTL's recruiting brochure, entitled

"Weapons Technology", states "Experience of design and engineering personnel encompasses nonnuclear ordnance from concept through production, including: explosive subsystems for missiles, artillery projectiles, aircraft dispenser munitions, warheads and weapons systems, chemical-biological weapons, perimeter defense weapons, analytical studies, and ordnance specialt..."

One of DTL's most successful products currently in use in Vietnam is the Beehive artillery projectile. Three years ago it was used to kill 344 Vietnamese in an attack during the New Year's truce. Reported United Press International: "Each 'beehive' shell exploded into hundreds of half-inch darts that shredded the Viet Cong." When questioned about the use and manufacture of the Beehive at a stockholders' meeting, the FMC Chairman replied, "The weapon was developed by the government and is manufactured by FMC as a patriotic contribution to defense."

Another patriotic contribution was the lethal VX nerve gas, manufactured from 1959 to 1968 at an Indiana chemical plant built and operated by FMC. This was first discussed at Stanford during an open meeting of the Stanford trustees on March 11, 1969, when William R. Hewlett, a Stanford trustee and a director of FMC, denied that FMC was manufacturing the nerve gas. (Subsequently he admitted that they had been producing it.)

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FMC's Ordnance Division intends to use the facilities of the Stanford Placement Center on Friday, February 26. They need trained engineers to continue their development and production of weapons and vehicles employed "successfully" throughout ten years of war in Southeast Asia.

Earlier this month, FMC's armored personnel carriers rolled across the border into Laos. Denying it the right to come to Stanford will impair FMC's ability to continue to provide material support of the War.

Sources: San Francisco Examiner, January 2, 1968; San Jose News, September 23, 1970; San Jose Mercury, January 22, 1971; New York Times, February 9, 1971; Armed Forces Management, October 1968; Infantry, Sept.-Oct. 1968, July-Aug. 1969; Armed Forces Journal, October 5, 1970; Jane's Weapons Systems, 1970; Seymour M. Hersh, Chemical & Biological Warfare, 1969; FMC annual reports and recruiting literature