

b) Communications Satellites

Introduction

Communications satellites play a vital role in the coordination of all super-power military activities. The United States depends far more on the use of these satellites than does the Soviet Union which has an extensive conventional communication system. For this reason, U.S. communications are particularly vulnerable to interception, both electronic and anti-satellite. An integrated and coordinated command system is facilitated by the use of these satellites which link overseas military bases, different naval posts, aircraft command stations and inter-continental ballistic missile bases. Moreover, communications satellites complement the information and images obtained from reconnaissance satellites by transmitting strategic data to the relevant ground stations.

Air Force Satellite Command System (AFSATCOM)

Both the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. have taken active steps in developing military navigation satellites. The U.S. Navy was initially concerned with the development of navigation satellites under the Navy Navigation Satellite System (NNSS) program. A series of satellites designated Transit were launched as early as 1959. Basically, the function of navigation satellites is to transmit signals that permit constant