Se to the NEWS

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NEW YORK TIMES QUESTION

If you picked up a newspaper and read the screaming headline "Are We -- or Is Our Strategy -- MAD?", you would probably think you were reading a sensational tabloid. Would you believe - such a headline was recently splashed across the dignified NEW YORK TIMES?

The contents of the article were just as blunt. It came to grips with two life-and-death problems: the threat to the very survival of the United States from the tremendous buildup of Soviet military power, and whether U.S. national strategy for dealing with this threat might be totally wrong.

The NEW YORK TIMES quotes with respect, if not outright endorse ment, statements from the LONDON TIMES and LONDON ECONOMIST that the Soviet Union will have "valid strategic superiority by the end of .!!!!.!! year" and that the Kremlin leaders believe they could then destroy America without suffering unacceptable reprisals.

For the past 15 years, U.S. strategy has been based on the theory that the Soviets won't attack us because they know we would strike back and kill millions of Russians. This theory of deterrence was once accurately explained by Professor Henry Kissinger as the product of three factors: military power, the will to use it, and the assess ment of those factors by a potential aggressor. But please note: since deterrence is a product, not a sum, if any one of them is zero, deterrence fails.

d'7terrence

The; theory might have been true in 1962 during the Cuban Missile risis when we had an 8-to-1 lead in nuclear power. But 14 years later, the strategic balance is reversed, and the theory is perilously obsolete.

(more)

Many experts believe cause of Soviet bases in Cuba and our many cities which can be hit from Soviet submarines, the United :.t,n tes is at lee st ten tinn s as vulr':erable to nuclear attack as t.he t .;:::) .s .R. is today. Foy Kohler, o;;,1-r -form-er Ambassador in Moscow, summed it up like this: "Instead n 'bnlance of terror' which equally restrains both sides, the 'terror' would be mainly on the part of the Ln.lt.ed ::itates. ii

Bt'i titJh and Arnerican experts now say that the Kremlin leaders l)eU.eve they 'µdll this year havt1 enough military supc:riori ty, comll:in(;d. 1,11ith such elaborate civil !J.'i:'"ff.mfH installatious :a:i:td pr pa:ration.s, that they will be ab] to destroy _,:;_meric:c1 with.nut su1.fertng unacceptable, retaliation. If this is true, deterrence has failed, our strategy is indeed "mad," so are the architects ho devised it.

In the understatemen·t o'" the <'e1::rtu!"y, the TIME-3 concludes:

Surely the A\u11erican people have a right to 'tH:: in:f'or.,: t: .about the trutlA of the statemf':nts • • so that tlu,y ca:n dchate whethe r it, is noceGsar:v to revise our strategic assmnptions. Mere noth,11.Jl su.rvi val shoulij be the paramount issue of this autumn's election."

It's too bad we weren't told this early in the year, before 19 presidential primar1-es, so that the e,1ger ca:ndfrlates would h$ve all been :forcecI to present thei*x* stri1tegy for •'teal h.'1§• with this '"paramount issue. 11 However, wt• st:U.I have two months left r1c,fore the election, and it's notti)o late to f',:.n:-ce pol icy commi tnm11ts, :from r e candidates who remain in the raoe, on the matter of building adequate anti-missile a.wi civil defenses.

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