PaSe to the NEWS

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BUILDING THE B-1

It is a customary occurrence for elected officials to undergo significant changes in attitudes between the time they are campaigning for votes and the time they make decisions after they are in office. Although this metamorphosis is usually disheartening, it can be a cloud with a silver lining.

One of the changes that may take place in President-elect Jimmy Carter is his attitude toward the B-1 bomber. During the campaign he called it a "wasteful" expenditure and he ran on the Democratic Platform which ominously called for being "tough-minded" about the decision to build it.

When Carter gets to the White House in January, it is very possible that he will come to the conclusion that the B-1 is essential to the defense of the United States.

The B-1 is a replacement for our B-52 bombers. The B-52s are great planes, but they are all at least 14 years old. We don't ask our President to drive around in an automobile that is 14 years old, and we shouldn't ask our pilots to depend on a plane that was mass-produced 14 years ago and represents the technology of nearly 20 years ago.

Everyone agrees that the B-1 is technically ready for production and has been for some time. The Ford Administration made a major contribution to U.S. defense with its decision to build three planes and to keep the B-1 program alive for the first five months of 1977 in order to give Carter time to make a careful decision.

When President Carter moves into the Oval Office, he will be

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able to review the massive evic!ence of what :Defense Secretary Donald Rwnsf eld calls 11ihe reality of an expanding Soviet ct;rpabtlity11 a:nd what Air Force Set:iretary 'fllomas Reed calls Hevery indication that the Soviets are striving for strategic superiority."

Another good piece of. bedslde reading for Presideut Carter would l,e a recent lJ。S. Jar li'orce ct,mpilation of soviet niil i tary writings called 11'r1Ae Soviet 'rheater Nu.clear Offe11:rnive. 11 It contains impressive documentation of the morbict preoccupation of Soviet :military theoreticians with bow a surprise :I:' irst strike ia th.e trm.ost important principle of military nrt."

If your cou:utry is plau:ning aggression, you can selirnt your thie and place of attack and lndh:I only the W'l':lapons r:3ys.teins ueeded :for use o:u specified targets. If youare not, planni:n.g on :'ii triking first, then you. must build a m.ix of wt1,apol'i1s systems anrl be ready on all fronts at all times. That costs more, but it is th• price of freedom a:nd inclepende:n(H1.

The B-1 is the most ·versatile of all our potential ·weapons because, un.lik.e miss:Ues, :i. t can lie recalled a:ftlir lm.mc.h tmd it targets can be changed aft• r laun.ch,.

Some poopl are t.rytug to co11:fmH'1 the lstn1e 'by tu:·guing tba.t w e should cancel t.h<a :S-1 and ,:ihoose tlui cirui ,J nii.es:U,1" :h:astead. r:ancfJ the cruise miaeile is 1.mtested technology, th J m t ef:fect of this IJ:roposal 1ou.ld be to delay the deciston t.:1 eouple mor i years.

This type of postpo:nement was a typical taetic of former Defense Secretary Uobert McNamara. He called it '1reserving his options. 11 He 1·eserved his option ma a new strategic bomb•Jr for the entire seiren years be was in office am:1 never did build oneo

The ruise inissilia is not a substitute for the H-1 ·but su1rple mentary to it. Tbe B-1 can carry the cruise missile aml launch it toward e11eu1.y targets without ever flyi.ng over enenw territory. The B-1 cruise-missile combination would give us the advantages of both aircraft andmissiles. As an extra bonus, the cruise missile can. fly low eno,1gh to elude enemy radar, which our ICBMs cannot.

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