# JeS® to the NEWS

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## IS NUCLEAR WAR WINNABLE?

On last year's Fourth of July, we celebrated our 200th Anniversary by parading 225 large sailing vessels up the Hudson River. But if we are to be free to celebrate future July Fourths, we must surpass all the new weapons our adversary is building -- not just dream of sailboats and muskets.

The Declaration of Independence, whose anniversary the Fourth commemorates was born in a time when our leaders were filled with the fervor of the Patrick Henry philosophy: "Give me liberty or give me death." To the Founding Fathers, it was self-evident that some values are worth fighting and dying for, and that among these are freedom and independence.

With the advent of the nuclear age, a contrary assumption came into vogue, namely, that war is now unwinnable, and that the winners, if any, will be no better off than the losers. The trouble with this is that it takes two to tango, and there is no evidence that the other superpowers believe it.

In a welcome breath of realism, a recent news story in the NEW YORK TIMES concedes that the Soviets are now convinced that a future war "can be won by the side that has nuclear superiority." Unfortunately, there is no indication that Cyrus Vance, Paul Warnke, or our other SALT negotiators understand this basic element of Soviet strategy, and they appear more interested in signing a SALT treaty t1an in what it contains.

In order '..o get an agreement, U.S. negotiators seem wi1ling to exchange substantial concessions on our cruise missile and B-1 bomber for meaningless restrictions on Soviet weapons.

U.S. negotiators pretend to seek a ceiling on Soviet long-range mobile missiles, while ignoring the fact that intermediate-range mobile missiles can

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be converted to long-range without anyone knowing it, and while concealing from Americans that we have no mobile missiles at all.

U.S. negotiators make a big thing about putting a so-called "ceiling" on Soviet production of the Backfire bomber, but that ceiling is far higher than the Soviets ever intend to reach. Our negotiators have even accepted the impudent Soviet assertion that the Backfire is a medium-range rather than a long-range bomber, and therefore should not be counted in the "strategic" weapons limit. This is unrealistic in view of the fact that most experts believe the Backfire can reach America even without refueling, and of course it can always land in Castro's Cuba.

Soviet negotiators are directing their efforts toward persuading us to limit the range of our cruise missile so that it can't hit Russia, and persuading us not to build the B-1 bomber at all even though the design of our present bomber, the B-52, is 20 years old.

The argument used against our building the new weapons systems we have ready for production is that we must not escalate the "arms race." However, Professor Albert Wohlstetter of the University of Chicago recently concluded that there is no such thing as an "arms race" because America long ago gave up racing. His statistics show that the U.S. budget in strategic weapons declined from a peak of $32 billion in 1952 to $7.7 billion in 1976.

In July 1977, Americans should ponder this fundamental question: is it possible to maintain our liberty and independence in a world in which the Soviets have remained in the arms race on the assumption that they can win a nuclear war, while our leaders have abandoned the arms race and seek only a paper agreement without substance or sanctions?

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