PS1 for 6/11/87#ABM TREATY ""STARKIZES'' THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

In the outpouring of news about the surprise attack on our ship the (BF)U.S.S. Stark(end BF) by an Iraqi missile in the Mediterranean, one question must be asked until we have a satisfactory answer. Why didn't the (BF)Stark(end BF) fire any of its defensive weapons against the hostile missile in order to defend the ship and the lives of its crew?

The (BF)Stark(end BF) had an impressive assortment of defensive capabilities. It had an Mk 92 fire-control system that could guide an antiaircraft missile to intercept any incoming aircraft up to 90 miles away.

The (BF)Stark(end BF) had an Italian-made OTO gun that could fire 3-inch antiaircraft shells at 90 a minute, knocking down in sequence as many as three incoming missiles at a range of up to 12 miles.

The (BF)Stark(end BF) had rockets that could spray radar-attracting aluminum chaff and thereby divert incoming missiles. The (BF)Stark(end BF) had electronic defenses that could deceive attackers by generating fake radar images of the ship.

The (BF)Stark(end BF) had the six-barrel Gatling gun called the Phalanx, which could fire 3,000 rounds a minute of a metal twice as dense as steel and thereby create a wall of metal to block any attacking missile.

Yet, none of these defensive weapons was fired. Why not? Certainly, Americans believe that our servicemen should defend themselves.

If you had a loved one on that ship, you probably wouldn't rest until that question is answered. Was the (BF)Stark(end BF) caught by surprise? Did it have an equipment malfunction? Was human error the problem? Was our Navy straitjacketed by a diplomatic policy of not defending ourselves until after we are fired upon?

Naval and Congressional investigations will explore all these possibilities. Investigative teams will study the problem on location, and witnesses will be called for interrogation. All questions will be directed at WHY the Stark's defenses didn't function.

It will never occur to these investigators to consider the possibility that an American ship could have been traveling in dangerous waters without ANY way to defend itself. THAT would be patently ridiculous. Of course, every American ship must be assumed to have the means of defending itself against the enemy.

But all 240,000,000 American people today are ""Starkized,'' that is, completely defenseless against attacking missiles that could come out of the clouds in a surprise attack. We are all sitting ducks in the face of the Soviet missile force because the ABM Treaty of 1972 binds us NOT to defend ourselves against any missile attack.

Knowledge of the defenseless status of the American people has been carefully concealed from the American people. All public opinion polls show that the majority of American people don't know about our awful vulnerability.

Knowledge of this dangerous defenselessness has led 105 organizations to call for withdrawal from the ABM Treaty of 1972. Article XV gives both the United States and the U.S.S.R. the right to withdraw from the Treaty when either country decides that events ""have jeopardized its supreme interests.''

Certainly, the massive Soviet violations of the ABM Treaty have jeopardized our supreme interests. So also has the massive Soviet buildup since 1972 of numbers and types of offensive missiles. So also has the massive spending by the Soviets for their own SDI-type defensive system.

It makes the United States a laughing-stock in world opinion if we

continue to remain locked into an agreement at which the Soviets thumb their noses. Our people, our ships, and our planes, will continue to be made the target of attacks by other countries, and we will continue to be poked at by pirates and terrorists, until the United States makes it clear that we will take whatever action we deem necessary for our own national security.

When the ABM Treaty was signed 15 years ago, it was not subjected to a tiny fraction of the investigating energy plowed into the Irangate hearings. President Richard Nixon refused to answer any questions about the ABM Treaty, and his National Security Adviser Henry Kissinger refused to answer any questions under oath before Congressional committees.

Congress let Kissinger get by with this arrogant secrecy. Kissinger answered only a few easy questions in a staged event for Congressmen in the East Room of the White House, where no follow-up questions were allowed, and where the media were not allowed to sound-record Kissinger's voice.

This year's 15th anniversary of the 1972 ABM Treaty is a good time to ask the crucial question about the ABM Treaty. Who dares today to take responsibility for keeping America without any defensive system to shoot down incoming missiles? Who dares to take the responsibility for ""Starkizing'' the American people?