PS1 for 6/9/88#HOW THE SOVIETS PLAN TO SURVIVE NUCLEAR WAR

When the Department of Defense published this year's annual illustrated book called ""Soviet Military Power: An Assessment of The Threat, 1988,'' the national news media correctly headlined which of its 175 pages were the most newsworthy. They were the half dozen pages on strategic defenses, including ballistic missile defense systems, exotic future defense systems, and especially the underground facilities known as passive defenses.

The reason these systems are so significant, as compared with the many other strategic and conventional weapons systems described in this book, is that they prove the Soviet commitment to building the capacity to survive and win a nuclear war. That runs contrary to the prevailing ""wisdom'' that it is ""unthinkable'' for any country to try to survive and win a nuclear war.

The new booklet, issued under the imprimatur of Defense Secretary Frank Carlucci, describes and illustrates the below-ground facilities in which the Soviets plan to ensure the safety of their leadership in the event of nuclear war. This program includes the construction of deep underground bunkers, tunnels, secret subway lines, and other facilities underneath Moscow and other major Soviet cities, as well as the sites of military commands.

These underground installations are hundreds of yards below the surface and can accommodate thousands of people. This Soviet civil defense program, which has been going on for 40 years, is shrouded in total secrecy, and Carlucci's new report is the first authoritative look the American public has been given.

The purpose and progress of these facilities have remained unchanged through successive Kremlin regimes and through successive U.S.-U.S.S.R. treaties. Even the SALT I ABM Treaty of 1972 did not slow down the continuing construction of underground defenses built in

preparation for nuclear war.

The new Carlucci report says that a major expansion of these underground facilities started just about the time this ABM Treaty was signed. Another round of construction of these complexes began in the 1980s while Soviet leaders were publicly emphasizing that a nuclear war would be so catastrophic that it didn't make any sense.

The result of this 40-year effort is that Soviet bosses are prepared with a massive network of shelters that can house all the government ministries and a full-scale communications system. These installations are equipped with highly effective life support systems capable of protecting their leaders against chemical and biological attack.

In case of nuclear war, the Soviet leaders can go hundreds of yards below the surface, board secret subway lines, ride miles away from the heart of Moscow, then fly to remote facilities. The Soviets have fleets of aircraft, trains, and other vehicles that provide options for survival. The Soviets clearly expect to exercise national command and control through all phases of a protracted nuclear war.

The new Department of Defense report makes clear that the Soviets are working on all other aspects of strategic defenses, too. Around Moscow, the Soviets have the world's only operational ABM system. In addition, the Soviets have built a variety of detection and tracking installations that can be used for a nationwide territorial ABM system.

The Soviet SDI-type programs involve a much greater investment of plant space, capital and manpower than the United States is expending. They are spending more on research in laser, particle beam and kinetic energy weapons for anti-satellite and anti-missile defenses.

The new Defense Department book quotes Mikhail Gorbachev as admitting last November 30 that ""The Soviet Union is doing all that

the United States is doing, and I guess we are engaged in research, basic research, which relates to these aspects which are covered by the SDI of the United States.''

His statement certainly gives the lie to the pacifist propagandists in the United States who rail about our trying to ""militarize'' space. The Soviets have already done exactly that.

The new Carlucci report is a stunning antidote to the media pabulum dished out daily about how ""times have changed'' and Gorbachev has ushered in a new era. The facts in the book support the report's conclusion that, ""Rhetoric notwithstanding, Soviet defense spending has risen, not diminished, under Gorbachev's aegis.''

Ask your Congressman to send you a copy of this report. Better still, ask your Congressman to read it himself.