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DON'T SINK ANY POSEIDONS

The American people would be shocked beyond words if the Soviet naval force were to sink one of our great Poseidon submarines with a torpedo. That isn't very likely; but it is a realistic possibility that the disarmament propagandists will do the job for the Soviets.

They won't come right out and say, "Let's help the Russians to sink a Poseidon." What they will say is, "We must comply with the SALT II Treaty; and it requires us to deactivate a Poseidon when we put a more advanced Trident submarine in the water."

But it amounts to the same thing. It would destroy one of our most effective and survivable strategic weapons. It should be tantamount to treason for Americans to deliberately sink a Poseidon, especially when the Soviets have 192 nuclear submarines and the United States has only 130.

One of the subceilings specified in SALT II is 1,200 ballistic missile launchers for multiple warhead missiles. When our seventh Trident, the Alaska, goes into the water later this year, it would put us over this limit by 14 and allegedly require us to deactivate a Poseidon.

The problem with this line of argument is that the United States doesn't have a shred of obligation under the SALT II Treaty. The Senate never ratified it because it was so lopsided against the interests of the United States.

SALT II and the hostages in Iran were the hallmarks of the failed foreign policy of the Carter Administration and two of the reasons why Jimmy Carter was defeated in 1980.

The SALT II Treaty allows the Soviets to have 308 heavy intercontinental ballistic missile launchers, their SS-18s (each with 10-14 warheads), but doesn't allow the United States to have a single one of that size and capability. SALT II doesn't require the Soviets to count their modern Backfire bombers (of which they now have 270), but does require us to count our B-52s (some of which are so old they are inoperable).

The counting of weapons in SALT II was disadvantageous to the United States in other ways, too. The treaty applies its limits to "launchers" instead of to missiles or megatonnage. The Soviets have rapid reload and refire capabilities for their ICBMs, but we do not; so they can fire more missiles from the same number of launchers.

SALT II set warhead limits so high that, since SALT II was signed, the Soviets have increased their total from 4,750 to 8,500. Since there is no way to verify how many warheads are on a missile anyway, the Soviets can do whatever they want with impunity.

Those are not all the reasons why SALT II was a very bad deal, but it's enough to show why the Treaty wasn't ratified and became an albatross around Carter's political neck.

But, says the disarmament lobby, Carter and Brezhnev both agreed unilaterally to abide by the terms of SALT II as though it had been ratified, and Reagan inherited this "no undercut" policy. Anyone who thinks the Soviets have abided by SALT II is really removed from reality.

The Soviets don't pay any attention to SALT II ceilings on the ground that the treaty was not ratified. SALT II set a limit of 2,250 on strategic nuclear delivery vehicles (SNDV). The Soviets have ignored that limit, continued with their building program, and now have 2,540 SNDVs not counting the 270 Backfire bombers not covered by the treaty. The United States has only 1,900.

SALT II permits only one new ICBM, and the Soviet SS-24 is that one. Yet, the Soviets have been developing and testing a second new ICBM, the SS-25. Other Soviet violations of SALT II include their encryption of most missile test telemetry and their deployment of SS-16 mobile missiles.

In January 1980, candidate Ronald Reagan said, "The Soviets only see weakness in a President who clings to the unilateral observance of the fatally flawed SALT II Treaty." On June 20, 1984, the U.S. Senate voted 99 to 0 that the United States has no obligation to comply with any agreement the Soviet Union is violating.

President Reagan will have the support of the big majority of Americans if he lets the SALT II Treaty expire at the end of 1985, as it is scheduled to do anyway, and keeps our powder dry on all the Poseidons and Tridents we have.