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TIME TO RENOUNCE THE ABM TREATY

The SALT I Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, signed in 1972, comes up for its second five-year review this month. It is time to renounce the treaty according to the procedure set forth in its own terms.

Article XV states: "Each Party shall, in exercising its national sovereignty, have the right to withdraw from this Treaty if it decides that extraordinary events related to the subject matter of this Treaty have jeopardized its supreme interests." We would merely have to give six months' notice and say how our supreme interests are jeopardized.

Certainly our supreme interests are gravely jeopardized by the tremendous buildup of Soviet offensive weapons since the treaty was signed. Since SALT I, the Russians have deployed a whole new generation of "heavy" SS-17s and SS-19s, plus their reload capability based on their cold-launch technique.

For nearly two centuries, our federal government's highest responsibility has been to "provide for the common defense." Yet the SALT I ABM Treaty prohibits our government from providing for the common defense. Explicitly and specifically, the SALT I Treaty prohibits our building any anti-missile defense to shoot down enemy missiles coming at us.

SALT-seller Henry Kissinger used a graphic expression to describe this effect of the 1972 treaty: he said it gives Russian missiles a "free ride" into our country. An even more colorful expression was coined by Lt. General Arthur G. Trudeau, former Army Chief of Research and Development: he said we are "the world's greatest nuclear nudist colony."

Since 1969, the ability of the United States to produce a workable system to shoot down enemy missiles has not been open to question. Throughout the 1960s, we successfully tested the intercepting of a missile with a missile, which is the most difficult part of the ABM; our rate of progress in the development and testing of all elements of the ABM system was impressive and ahead of schedule.

The chief reason why the Soviets were so eager to negotiate and sign the SALT I Treaty was to stop deployment of a U.S. ABM system. They knew that our ABM system was designed to protect our Minuteman missile force, and the Soviets didn't want to lose their

$30 billion investment in "heavy" SS-9 and SS-18 missiles whose only rational use is to destroy U.S. Minuteman missiles.

The SALT I Treaty put the United States in an ABM Freeze. The treaty stopped dead in its tracks the one system which could have protected American cities and civilians from massive nuclear destruction.

How were the Soviets able to persuade the United States to accept an ABM Freeze that would prevent us from defending our people? More importantly, how were U.S. officials able to persuade the American people to accept an ABM Freeze that would keep our cities naked and defenseless to attacking nuclear missiles?

The 1972 ABM Freeze was put over on the American people primarily because they believed that our government must have some way to shoot down enemy missiles. That's the kind of faith the American people have in our government's responsibility to provide for the common defense.

A confidential survey was made in 1964 by the National Opinion Research Center of the University of Chicago and kept secret until discovered by an enterprising reporter for Missiles and Rockets *and published on August 16, 1965. It revealed that 80% of Americans believed that we should have a system to shoot down missiles attacking our cities (which is what an ABM would do); but that 66% believed that the United States already had an anti-missile system (which, of course, we did not).*

In the ten years since the 1972 treaty, we have remained in the ABM Freeze, since that was mandated by SALT I. But there has likewise been no change in public awareness or attitudes, largely because the liberal media did not report our vulnerability.

A public opinion survey conducted by Singlinger and Company this year showed that 66% of the American people are unaware that the United States now has no means of defending ourselves from incoming ballistic missiles; that 80% are concerned about our lack of a defense against incoming missiles; that 86% are in favor of deploying an anti-missile defense; and that 73% would not even consider cost as a major factor in that decision.

It's time that the American people come out of their cocoon and face the facts of life in the nuclear-space age. When we achieve public awareness that America has absolutely no way to shoot down enemy missiles coming at us, the people will demand that our government fulfill its constitutional duty to provide for the common defense.