PeS. to the NEWS

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MOBILE MISSILES NEEDED

Mobile missile production is probably the best way that the United States could shore up our sagging strategic power in the face of the continuing Soviet nuclear buildup. That's why top Defense Department officials are urging President Carter and Defense Secretary Harold Brown to ask Congress for $250 million to go into full-scale development of a mobile land-based missile system.

But Secretary Brown said he wouldn't give the President his recommendations until after a November meeting of his Pentagon panel. That timetabie will please the disarmament-at-any-price advocates because it means no mobile missile appro priations can be forthcoming this year.

The principal mobile missile plan under consideration calls for hundreds of missiles to be mounted on trucks and shuttled among thousands of concrete-lined launching silos all over the United States. Because the Soviets would be unable to target the location of the missiles, the Soviets would have no assurance they could knock them out in a surprise first-strike.

The steady improvement ;n missile accuracy means that the day is approaching when fixed-base ICBMs will be obsolete because they can be so easily targeted. Mobile missiles will become the only reliable land-based weapons.

In the 1960s, the Unite States considered mobile ICBMs so desirable and practicable that we invested many millions of dollars in research and development of a mobile Minuteman type. Just prior to production the project looked so valuable as a strategic system that then Defense Secretary Robert McNamara cancelled it - just as he did all other programs that would have retained U.S. nuclear superiority.

The SALT I Agreement signed by our President in 1972 gave the Soviets the legal and moral right to continue to produce and deploy land-mobile launchers and missiles in any numbers, in any type, and in any size they choose. They have the

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capability of having produced at least 2,000 land-mobile launchers and missiles since SALT I was signed.

The "Unilateral Declaration" by the U.S. SALT delegation that the United States would consider the deployment of mobile launchers as "inconsistent with the objectives of the agreement" never had any legal effect whatsoever. It could not possibly make illegal the Soviet exercise of a right accorded them by the agreement itself and that they specifically refused to give up.

The frightful record of how much our military power has declined in the last ten years in comparison with the Soviet Union's was recently described by Air Force General and Senator, Barry Goldwater. "In intercontinental missiles, we have gone from over 200 ahead to over 400 behind. In Polaris-type submarine missiles, we have dropped from 600 ahead to about 150 behind.

"In intercontinental bombers, we have fallen from 500 ahead to 300 behind. In tactical aircraft, we have dropped from 1,000 ahead to about l ,000 behind. In ground force divisions, we have dropped from 125 behind to 150 behind.

"In major surface ships, we have fallen from 120 ahead to 60 behind. In tanks, we have dropped from 28,000 behind to 39,000 behind.

"The Soviets are deploying a new, advanced strategic bomber -- the Backfire, which with refueling could devastate the heartland of America. Meantime, with spit and bailing wire, we keep our aging B-52 bombers aloft and relegate the powerful B-1 to the other end-of the President's deep freeze."

The bottom line was stated recently by General V. H. Krulak: "The Russians are spending at least 20 percent of their Gross National Product on arms for themselves and their satellites. We spend less than 5 percent."

Mobile missiles are the best answer to national survival in an increasingly dangerous world. There is no time to lose in starting to build them.

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