

# The SALT II Treaty

By Hugh Johnston

SALT (Strategic Arms Limitation Talks) have been proceeding since 1969. The first SALT Treaty was an attempt to limit Anti-Ballistic Missiles, for these ABM's could stimulate production of more missiles to counter them. Now, after six years of negotiating, a new SALT II treaty has been signed. It was drawn up with the understanding that an uncontrolled arms race would endanger the security of both the U.S. and the Soviet Union. The Reagan administration has put aside SALT II. Without this treaty of arms limitation we could find ourselves in a new arms race, with mounting

this limit there will be a sublimit of 1320 on all MIRV'ed (multiple independent targetable warheads) ICBM's, MIRV'ed SLBM's, and heavy bombers with cruise missile capability. Within the 1320 limit there is a sublimit of 1200 on all MIRV'ed ICBM's and MIRV'ed SLBM's. Finally, within this sublimit there will be a further sublimit of 820 on all MIRV'ed ICBM's. The limits on MIRV'ed are crucial because these missiles increase the chances of hitting multiple targets with a minimum of delivery vehicles. These limits will have the effect of forcing the Soviets to dismantle or destroy 320

on the neutron bomb by SALT II? In fact, the neutron bomb was never even discussed at SALT II. This weapon is considered tactical not strategic, for its purpose is to be used in Europe to counter Soviet land forces. There are no provisions in SALT II about the neutron bomb, and the government may build it at will.

The cruise missile, however, was a topic discussed at SALT. The SALT II treaty leaves the cruise missile option open and gives provision for its development during Protocol. After protocol there will not be any restrictions on the cruise missile.

good deal.

The US must not trust the Soviet Union to uphold SALT talks on their own. The US has the capability to monitor the number of strategic nuclear delivery devices using such high technology methods as satellite photography and advanced radar systems.

There is a provision in the treaty against concealment of weaponry, which is beneficial because it eliminates imperfect knowledge (both sides know what the other has). Developments in the reconnaissance field are strong disincentives against breaking this clause, for such concealed armaments can be easily found. Thus, with the ability to administer and police the treaty, the United States need not fear any loss in security.

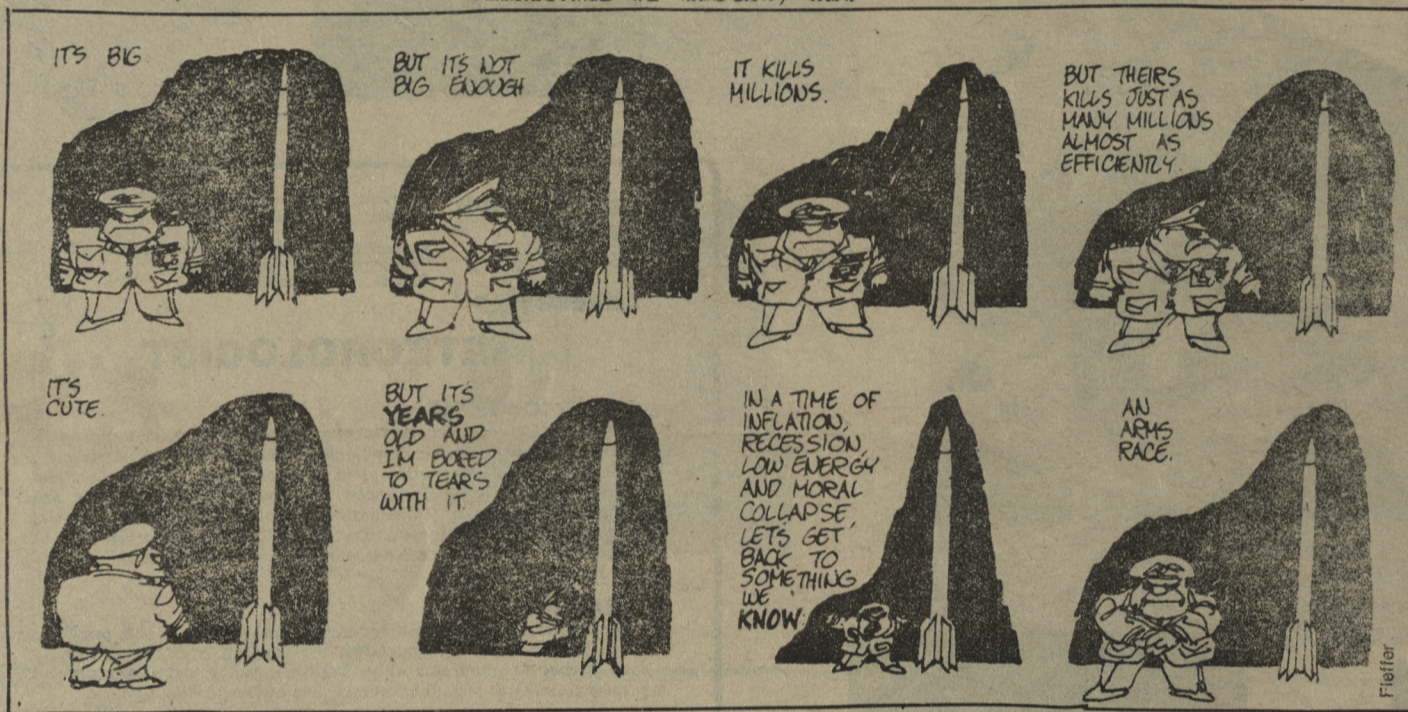
For various reasons the SALT II accord will improve American security. First off, it will place equal numerical limitations on overall US and Soviet strategic forces. Also it will hold the development of Soviet strategic forces to levels far below what they would be in the absence of the treaty. SALT II contains provisions ensuring that the Soviets uphold their end of the agreement. It will also allow the UN to have perfect knowledge of Soviet strategic armaments. These points sum up to make a treaty that increases American security.

Without SALT II there could be an all-out, uncontrolled arms race. With no constraints on the two countries, they would be free to develop any number of new strategic systems. The monetary cost of such an arms race would be a detriment to the US economy. It is true that there would be increased employment in the defense sector.

There will be a trend to a decreased standard of living due to the induced scarcity of consumer goods. Such is the case in the USSR now, with scarce consumer goods caused by intense capital production. An arms race over an extended period of time would undoubtedly harm the economy by decreasing social welfare, due to decreased emphasis on consumer good production.

An extended arms race could create enough des-

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tension and the distinct possibility of nuclear war.

At the present time both the US and the USSR are equal in strategic nuclear forces. In some categories the US is superior; in other the USSR is. The US at the present time has almost twice the number of strategic nuclear warheads than the Soviets have. They have more heavy bombers with greater readiness capability, and have more submarine launched ballistic missiles (ICBM's). They have superior air defenses and a distinct advantage in SLBM's. These factors tend to cancel each other out, leaving the two superpowers comparatively equal in strategic nuclear arms supply.

SALT II is a treaty that lasts until 1985, with a protocol (a rough draft period in the treaty) that expires in 1981. Under this agreement each country will be limited to a maximum of 2250 delivery systems (that is, all heavy bombers, ICBM's and SLBM's). Under

strategic systems, while the US would not have to alter any of theirs.

In light of the restrictions, and within the present levels of military technology, it appears that the stationary Minuteman missiles would be extremely vulnerable. This is not so. Before staging any attack on the Minutemen, the Soviets would have to examine the consequences of such an attack. Because of advanced warning systems, the US would have launched their Minutemen long before the Soviet missiles come crashing down on empty Minutemen silos. The Soviets would then have to be prepared for a counter-strike force from the US in the form of SLBM's and cruise missiles launched from heavy bombers. Since a direct attack on the Minuteman missile is not strategically feasible, the fact that the Minuteman is stationary does not make them vulnerable or inefficient as a weapon.

Another common question is "What limits are put

SALT II does not concede the option of cruise missiles.

The MX missile system, a highly debated issue in the United States, is not prohibited by SALT II. Although Protocol prohibits the development or testing of mobile ICBM's, it does not put any restrictions on the development of these systems. The duration would be much shorter than the time period needed to deploy these systems, and afterwards there would be no restrictions on mobile ICBM's. Therefore, SALT II does not restrict the use of the MX missile system.

The Minuteman, cruise, and MX missile systems, along with the neutron bomb, are vital advanced technology strategic weapons that have not been sidelined by SALT II. In keeping strategic weapons at present levels and not impinging on future development, SALT II measures up, from the US point of view, as a pretty