

McNamara Book Urges Arms Limit

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The United States and Soviet Union through miscalculation of each other's intentions in the past have built far more nuclear weapons than they need, former Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara writes in a book urging an arms control agreement.

McNamara said rather than continue this action-reaction pattern in weapons building, both sides can afford to enter into "a realistic and reasonably riskless agreement" to limit strategic weapons.

This would guard against, he indicates, a situation that occurred in 1961 when the U.S. overestimated how many ICBMs the Soviets would

build and thus built too many of its own in response.

McNamara implies that mechanical safeguards like observation satellites would insure against a surprise deployment of any new weapon.

"The intelligence gathering capability of each side being what it is," McNamara writes, "and the realities of lead time from technological breakthrough to operational readiness being what they are, neither of us would be able to acquire a first strike capability in secret."

A first strike capability is the ability of one nation to knock out the nuclear weapons of another before they could be fired in retaliation. Neither the U. S. nor the So-

viet Union has that capability, McNamara said. Thus launching a nuclear attack is tantamount to committing national suicide.

Each side is building a second-strike force—one which assures the destruction of the nation which fired first. McNamara said both the U. S. and Soviet Union would continue to "maintain a maximum effort" to preserve this "assured destruction" capability.

That statement, made in the same paragraph in which he discusses the desirability of an arms control agreement, suggests that McNamara favors freezing the deployment of new weapons but allowing research and development on them to continue.

This is the pattern of the U.S.-USSR agreement banning the deployment of weapons of mass destruction in outer-space. The Soviets, in testing the fractional orbital bombardment system, did not violate the treaty since development and not deployment was involved.

Because the U.S. and Soviet Union "each now possess a deterrent in excess of our individual needs, both of our nations would benefit from a properly safeguarded agreement first to limit and later to reduce both our offensive and defensive strategic nuclear forces," McNamara writes in his book, "The Essence of Security: Reflections in Office."

Look Magazine is publishing an excerpt from the book in its Sept. 3 issue.