

INSTITUTE'S BOOK UPHOLDS THE ABM

Reply to Volume Backed by Kennedy Asserts Missile Wouldn't Upset Soviet

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The next big missile in the controversy raging around the Safeguard antiballistic-missile program will be a book by analysts of the Hudson Institute. The book favors the project.

The new book, titled "Why ABM" and written by 12 nuclear analysts at the nonprofit "think factory," is frankly designed as an answer to the anti-ABM book recently written by other scientists at the behest of Senator Edward M. Kennedy, Democrat of Massachusetts.

Herman Kahn, director of the Hudson Institute, who wrote two chapters in the newest book, describes it as "an attempt to redress what has become a rather one-sided public discussion" over the Nixon Administration's proposed Safeguard system.

Three Key Questions

The publication, due later this month by Pergamon Press, will come at a time when Congress nears a vote on whether to deploy the antimissile system and when the war of words has been stepped up by those wishing to influence the debate.

By and large, the Hudson book concentrates on substantive arguments on such questions as whether an ABM would help or hinder efforts for an arms control agreement, whether it would work as advertised and what effect it would have on the strategic policies

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of Russia and Communist China.

The authors argue that a light American antimissile system would not frighten the Soviet Union because the Russians have always been defense-minded, spending about 3 to 1 or 4 to 1 for defense over offense.

They also say that the Russians would not want to sign an arms agreement that would leave their country vulnerable to small-scale attacks from Communist China and other secondary nuclear powers.

To expect the American Congress and people to accept an agreement that would permit Russia to have a light ABM, but would deny the same protection to America, would be unthinkable, the authors argue.

They also contend that the Safeguard system is a result of the most comprehensive, highly financed research and development effort in American history and should work as designed.

But even if it is not perfect they argue, the Russians must assume it is and therefore this would add a very large factor of uncertainty if they considered a first strike.

Such a system would also prevent the Chinese or other new nuclear nations from considering nuclear blackmail against the United States and could easily contend with an accidental launching of a few missiles from Russia, instead of triggering an all-out nuclear exchange, the book holds.

But despite such arguments over substance, Mr. Kahn could not refrain from gibing at some of the authors of the Kennedy-inspired book and particularly at Prof. Jerome B. Wiesner, an early radar expert who played a large advisory role in helping to build an expensive bomber defense in the United States.

Without mentioning any names, Mr. Kahn declared: "One of the startling things about the ABM debate today is

how many of these civilian 'defense intellectualists' who today oppose ABM were willing in the fifties to play an instrumental role in persuading the United States Government to spend about \$5-billion a year on air defense.

"Some of us at the time thought that they were much too enthusiastic about the possibilities of defense then and as a result both oversold their case and ignored or de-emphasized many important issues.

"Recently it seems to us that many of these same people have overshot the other way and, since they are still as persuasive, it seems likely that their arguments will not result in a failure to deploy things that may work under reasonable circumstances or otherwise contribute to national security."

In addition to seven Hudson Institute analysts, the book includes chapters by Prof. Albert J. Wholstetter of the University of Chicago, a leading nuclear strategist, and Dr. Charles M. Herzfeld, former director of the Pentagon's Advanced Research Projects Agency, now an executive of the International Telephone and Telegraph Corporation.