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new land-based ICBMs with MIRV capability and greater power.

Let us place Alsopian reality in perspective.

First. The Soviet's presently deployed 1500-mile submarine-based missiles can strike U.S. targets with impunity fully as happy as that of the new SSN-8. The SSN-8's longer range serves only to protect Soviet missile submarines against some possible future breakthrough in American anti-submarine technique. Thus it merely preserves the present Soviet submarine-based retaliatory capability, and is of no significance to us unless we contemplate initiating nuclear war with the Soviet Union, which we do not.

Second. It is possible, though far from certain, that the new Soviet ICBMs will eventually be capable of destroying our ICBM force on the ground. But there would be nothing the Soviets could do to prevent immediate retaliation by our own submarine-based missiles which would obliterate Soviet society several times over, and by our manned bombers which a few hours later would re-obliterate it several additional times.

Thus, the very expensive Soviet missile effort has done them no good. The strategic balance of mutual deterrence remains as before. A similar effort on our part, as urged by Mr. Alsop, would be similarly fruitless.

The Soviets have no shortage of foolish ideas. Their basic system of government is one; their bank-breaking missile program is another. We would not be so gullible as to adopt the first just because they have done so; neither should we be gullible about the second.

ROBERT SHERMAN.

Alexandria.

### *Asleep at the Peddle?*

We all have had the experience, I feel sure, of an arm or a leg going to sleep if kept in one position for too long a time. It has happened several times to me, now that I am Rose Mary's age—which is "middle." Could it not be that this happened to Rose Mary and the 18 minutes' hum on the tape was Rose Mary's foot snoring?

CORONA HAYDEN.

Washington.

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### *Alsop in Perspective*

Once more Joseph Alsop has designed to favor us with a glimpse of reality as only he can see it. After a warm-up column dealing with the ability of Soviet destroyers armed with 30-mile missiles to overwhelm our aircraft carriers armed with 400-mile Phantoms, he next informs us, "if drastic measures are not taken soon, (the Soviet Union) will, in fact, enjoy potentially decisive nuclear-strategic superiority by the fairly early 1980s."

According to reality as revealed to Alsop, the Soviets have a new submarine-based missile, the SSN-8, which has a 4000-mile range enabling their submarines to "lie in protected areas like the Bering Sea, there to lob their missiles at almost any major U.S. target with happy impunity." Moreover, he tells us they are developing four