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U.S. Defenses

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bers, but since the United States is doing just that, the Russians are building an air defense system much denser and more complete than its American counterpart.

Whereas a few years ago Soviet air defenses were concentrated around important areas and on the Western frontiers, today they extend over the entire extent of Soviet territory. The Russians have an air defense missile similar to our Nike Hercules, with a range of about 100 miles, carrying a nuclear warhead. They have also a shorter

range air defense missile that is mobile, uses an atomic warhead and which can move with the troops in the field for their protection.

Fighters with twice the speed of sound appeared in Soviet operational squadrons in 1957. These are MIG-21s and Sukhoi deltas.

The result of the Soviet air defense effort was cogently explained to Congress by Representative Clarence Cannon, (Dem., Missouri), who is chairman of the House Appropriations Committee has access to intelligence information. He declared: "It is merely a matter of time—and a short time—before the Soviet will have neutralized the S.A.C.

They are now building a new air defense system, using improved radar and anti-aircraft missiles with nuclear warheads with which they expect to block the S.A.C. bombers at the border.

"It is claimed," he added, "that very shortly the Soviet defenses will be made so effective that the first 100 B-52s or B-47s striking at Moscow would be shot down before reaching the target."

In spite of this, the Senate insisted on adding funds for another wing of B-52s. The Air Force is divided on this issue. Most Air Force officers believe that the money would better be spent to hasten production of the supersonic B-58 bomber and the B-70 2000-mile-an-hour intercontinental

bomber. Their high speeds will extend for a time the life of the bomber as a weapons delivery system.

Even today, Soviet air defenses may be so strong as to make bomber penetration too costly to be sustained. The Air Force is making every effort through counter-radar measures, distant launches of rocket propelled bombs and diversionary drones to prolong the life of the bomber. The effectiveness of these measures is agreed to be limited.

Bombers with speeds of 2000 miles an hour are not here yet. Before they arrive it is in the books that the subsonic B-52 and B-47 will not be able to live against Soviet air defenses. The third element of our relative military position, the capacity to survive all-out at-

tack, also favors the Soviet Union. Its vast distances, the decentralization of its industry and its armed forces, its limited dependence on a complicated rail and motor transport system, all place the Soviets in a position to continue to live in spite of heavy blows.

The opposite situation exists in the United States. Our industry is highly concentrated; our transport system, essential to our existence, is highly vulnerable; our cities are large and vulnerable.

Destruction will react over the whole country, scientists studying the question of survival for the Defense Department have told the Post-Dispatch. They fear that an attack that kills 40,000,000 people and disrupts our transport

system would also end our ability to resist.

The fourth element of relative military power, . . . the ability to repulse aggression against our allies, to fight small wars, means the ability to prevent the allies the United States has in the free world from being taken over one by one, until the United States is isolated.

The Air Force fixation on strategic bombing, together with the Navy and Marine desire to be the ready force, has combined to deprive the Army of the means of rapid transport by airlift to critical areas. The little job of transporting a single airborne battle group and supporting elements to Lebanon, together with the requirements of the tactical air strike force sent at the same

time, scraped the bottom of the barrel of our air transport.

The United States is far from the critical areas in Asia. The Soviet Union is close. Nevertheless, the Russians have a far greater airlift capability than the United States. They also have better aircraft for the purpose.

In the recent crisis, the Russians put on the greatest airlift in their history, to move airborne troops from Odesa to Bulgaria. Soviet airborne troops and the airlift to move them are organized into a single airborne command. A Soviet air marshal commands the air element and an army colonel, general has over-all command. In the United States the airborne troops are hitchhikers with a priority lower than

S.A.C. than T.A.C. and than important air freight.

This gloomy picture is how it looks to military men of all services. They will argue details and show various degrees of pessimism, but none are optimistic.

The Russians are spending more than twice as much as the United States on missiles. They are spending two and one-half times as much of their gross national product on armaments as is the United States. They are getting the results they want. They are rapidly outdistancing the United States in military power. What many ask, when the missile gap is real in three or four years, when our deterrent force is neutralized, will the Russian international line be then?

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