

This realization that there is now no practical way to stop inter-continental or submarine-launched ballistic missiles has led to a conscious decision by each of the super-powers to counter the threat to its security by placing its own strategic forces in such a way that, even if the other power decided to attack first and was able to achieve maximum surprise, the country being attacked would be able to retaliate in such strength that it would be able to devastate the territory of the attacker.

Deterrence as a military concept is neither particularly new nor particularly difficult to understand. A power is deterred from launching a military attack when it believes that the consequences it will suffer, or the penalty it will pay for doing so, will be so serious as to outweigh or nullify the advantages it might expect to gain. What is new in the present strategic situation, and what, I believe, gives hope for something better in the more distant future, is that, as between the super-powers, deterrence is perceived to be mutual and it is perceived to be stable. Both sides now appear to believe that the consequences they would suffer from retaliatory attack nullify any possible advantage they might gain from initiating a nuclear attack. The core of our policy is that we believe that it is very much in our interest and, in fact, in the interest of the whole world, that mutual and stable deterrence continue until the need for it is, we hope, removed by better understanding and by meaningful negotiation. The agreements reached between the United States and the Soviet Union as a result of the first round of Strategic Arms Limitation Talks, and the fact that they have embarked on the second round, give encouraging evidence that they share this view.

Stable, mutual deterrence rests on the possession by both sides of strategic forces which satisfy three interrelated but essential conditions.

The first requirement is diversity in the composition of the strategic forces to ensure that weapons which may be capable of knocking out one component will not knock out other components. Both the United States and the Soviet Union have achieved this kind of diversity by including within their strategic forces such different components as land-based Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs) of various kinds, Submarine-Launched Ballistic Missiles (SLBMs), and long-range bombers.

The second essential condition is "survivability". Diversity, of course, contributes to survival. Both sides, however, have taken a variety of other measures to enhance the "survivability" of their strategic forces. These include such steps as putting the majority of their land-based missiles in well-protected silos, dispersal of missile complexes or bomber bases to widely-separated geographical locations, and concealment, particularly through placing missiles in nuclear-powered submarines. Because of their endurance and mobility, these submarines are capable of remaining concealed below the surface of the oceans for long periods.

The third condition is that of confidence. By this I mean the confidence of each of the super-powers that its capability to mount a devastating retaliatory attack is assured, and that it has denied, and has convinced the other super-power that it has denied to the latter, the possibility of achieving a decisive advantage by launching a large-scale surprise or pre-emptive attack. This confidence is the product of effective surveillance and warning systems and of the continuing watch which each side maintains in peacetime on the activities of the other side's forces to ensure it knows with reasonable certitude what they are capable of doing, and