

clear attack. Some of your guests will be deploying these arguments, notably Dick Garwin, at the meeting tomorrow.

What is now proposed is to try to deploy, within about 10 years, a system which will give at least partial defence for American land-based nuclear missiles against a Soviet first strike. This intermediate objective is described by the State Department as enhancing deterrence, a very, very important shift of objective indeed.

I am personally a bit perplexed, or, at least, I would be if I had not been Defence Minister, by the United States' attempt to protect its land-based missiles by this extraordinarily expensive system of strategic defence, when it would be so much cheaper to follow the advice of the poet and put those missiles out to sea "where the real estate is free and they are miles away from me." As a politician, I know very well that the American attachment to the Triad is based basically on inter-service rivalry. The Air Force is not prepared to concede advantage to the Navy, although the CIA has told us all, that, while ICBMs are vulnerable now, there is no sign that submarines will be vulnerable in the foreseeable future.

I can understand the rationale of SDI in making that part of the American Triad less vulnerable to a Soviet first strike, but the trouble is, as I suggested earlier, that the Russians are bound to fear that the real purpose of SDI is to protect the United States missiles against a ragged response from Soviet missiles after the United States has carried out a first strike. The CIA has told us all, through the helpful mediation of the American Congress, that the Russians will have a serious window of vulnerability in about 10 years time when the Americans have the D-5 submarine-based missile, the MX missile and Midgetman in place and also, hopefully, some sort of defence against attack on the American ICBM force.

I discussed this issue recently with a leading American politician who was visiting Britain, and he said, "But this is really ridiculous. Why should the Russians fear this?" Of course, the Soviet fear is exactly the mirror image of a fear which has fuelled American defence policy for the last 20 years. Of course, if they want to, the Russians can point to Secretary Weinberger telling the Congress a few months ago, and I quote his words: "If we can get a system which we know can render their weapons impotent, we could be back in a situation where we were the only nation with a nuclear weapon." I think that prediction is nonsense, but it has been made by the American Secretary of Defense. The Russians have read the documents about American plans for strikes on the Soviet Union in