

The Missile Gap: A Moral Panic for an Atomic Age

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ABSTRACT

This research examines the nuclear arms race that dominated the 20th century, during which the United States manufactured and stockpiled a large number of strategic weapons. Using moral panic theory, the roles of the President of the United States and the media are examined in facilitating public interest in the manufacture of these weapons from 1955-1990. The project uses both time series and historical analyses to determine the extent to which the strategic nuclear weapons crisis was a moral panic created to insure public acceptance of such this massive defense sector expenditure. The time series analysis reveals that the President does have the ability to influence the public via the State of the Union Address, but that influence does not extend strongly to the media. However, what influence the President does have appears to be correlated to the use of substantive rhetoric, and the percentage of the speech dedicated to the issue. Finally, the historical analysis demonstrates that the moral panic moves through three phases. The first phase is characterized by grassroots concern over the technical gap represented by Sputnik 1's launch was utilized by interested actors to accomplish their goals. During the second phase, this concern transformed into an institutional technique utilized for deflecting institutional challenges when the moral panic moved into an interest group model. The final phase occurs during the rise of the "security state," when elites begin using the moral panic to achieve their own ends.

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Ch. 1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this research is to examine the role of the President of the United States and the media in facilitating public interest in elite concerns. This will be accomplished through an examination of the nuclear arms race that dominated the latter half of the 20th century. The United States spent a considerable amount of time and money constructing devices that, should they ever have been used on the projected global-scale, would have been devastating to friend and foe alike.

Over a period of several decades, the United States manufactured and stockpiled approximately 33,000 thermonuclear weapons; this number includes both strategic and tactical devices (Ball 1980;Garwin and Charpak 2001;Gertcher and Weida 1990;Prados 1982). Individually, each weapon was capable of unleashing levels of destruction previously undreamed of by Human civilization. Collectively our non-conventional arsenal had the potential to devastate the entire planet. Though even when it was being constructed there were some who questioned the arsenal's necessity, many regarded it as the only thing standing between our society and annihilation at the hands of the Soviet Empire.

This project is informed by research on moral panics, with a focus on the elite elements found therein. The crisis of the missile gap is here treated as a moral panic. Starting with President Truman's tenure, it is suggested that the Soviet threat was a folk devil for the purpose of maintaining a continuous war economy. Part of a larger program that involved expansion of the United States on the global stage, and as a way of making a return on investment in nuclear technology. The media is examined

as being a central component in the elite engineering of moral panics. As well as playing a role in creating and maintaining hegemonic domination of society by the elite.

The first step in the analysis will be a time series analysis, which will begin with a focus on confidence in the military. This is done to determine if the President (via the State of the Union Address) has an effect on public opinion and potentially the belief that more resources should be dedicated to the military. This equation establishes the central premise of the research: that elites are capable of influencing public opinion, and thus capable of generating an elite-engineered moral panic. From this it is possible to move to the next set of equations to determine if the President is able to influence the media. The final set of equations will be used to determine if the President is able to influence the media through specific types of rhetoric

The second step of the project is a historical analysis to provide the historic context for the events during this period. This will be accomplished using editorials and letters to the editors of the same newspapers relied on for the quantitative analysis. This analysis itself will be a yearly examination of these indicators to determine if a moral panic is present, and, if so, who is involved. During this period the analysis will make note of historic events and subsequent changes in the reactions of the various groups of actors. As well as changes toward strategic nuclear weapons, military spending, and other elements of the strategic weapons debate during the Cold War.

Ch. 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

In the latter half of the 19th century, Charles Mackay wrote:

Every age has its peculiar folly; some scheme, project or phantasy into which it plunges, spurred on either by the love of gain, the necessity of excitement, or the mere force of imitation. Failing in these, it has some madness, to which it is goaded by political or religious causes, or both combined. (Mackay 1892:1)

The quote is in reference to the European Crusades, but the reality is that the observation has a ubiquitous applicability. The prevalence of military Keynesianism and its products in the United States during the 20th century would be a more contemporary example.

Military Keynesianism is the political-economic philosophy that underlies the defense sector (Hooks 1990; Mintz and Hicks 1984; Reich 1972; Treddenick 1985). It is a sub-variant of regular Keynesianism, which works on the principle of government using economic policy to control the violent swings of capitalism. Whereas Keynesianism focuses on civilian projects (i.e. infrastructure construction and repair, as well as consumer manufacturing), military Keynesianism instead focuses on investing significant amounts of capital into defense concerns. The idea being that such spending will lead to diminishing levels of unemployment and increasing levels of economic prosperity.

However the dollar amount of resources consumed by the defense sector is rather staggering (Dye 2002; Hossein-Zadeh 2006; Melman 1970). For many years, the annual defense budget of the United States has run into the hundreds of billions of dollars. The collective figure for that spending passed into the trillions of dollars some time ago (Hossein-Zadeh 2006). Melman (1970) made the argument that the

cost of catering to the desires of the apparatuses of the defense sector is more than a question of dollar value. There is also the question of the losses that have been incurred in commercial manufacturing capability and innovation.

Nevertheless, it is true that defense spending does have palpable economic benefits. Consider the influence of the defense sector on unemployment and economic prosperity. In a 2010 study, Borch and Wallace found that those states with higher level of military spending were better equipped to stave off the more negative effects of economic recession. Reich (1972) argued that the United States economy (and the capitalist global economy by extension) could only have grown to present-day levels with military spending. Adams (1968) and Melman (1970), along with Derouen and Heo (2000), recognize the effects that the defense sector has on employment and economic structure; as well as the rather profound impact that this has on domestic politics. While Johnson (2010) described the creation and maintenance of the nuclear arsenal as one of the largest projects to fight unemployment undertaken by the United States, an idea to which Gertcher and Weida (1990) can attest.

It is this last product of the defense sector that concerns us here. As a weapon of mass destruction, the thermonuclear weapon is the logical development of an industrial society. Quigley (1983) examined a facet of social structure that is often left unaddressed: the waging of war. Specifically, how the structure of society shapes its tools and techniques of warfare. The thermonuclear weapon is the penultimate weapon development for an industrial civilization. Yet its existence is

dual-edged in that it can be used just as easily to destroy any and all industrial civilizations.

Nevertheless, the United States is the world's second biggest spender in terms of nuclear research (Balogh 1991; Garwin and Charpak 2001). France spends the most on its nuclear research, but these expenditures are into peaceful applications of nuclear power. For the United States, while power generation through the use of nuclear technology has been of interest, most of that research is for military application. Reactor research that focuses on the creation and improvement of naval engines being one form of application (Balogh 1991). The rest is done for the purpose of providing the fuel necessary for the non-conventional arsenal.

At the height of the Cold War in the late sixties and early seventies there were billions of dollars allocated to atomic energy projects within the yearly national defense budgets (Melman 1970). This money is required not only for upkeep and testing, but—in the case of defective units and treaty requirements—disposal as well. As well as research into improved designs and yields of nuclear weapons. Billions and billions of dollars invested in a technological system that operates through inaction. If ever deployed, it would incur social, political and economic penalties equivalent to its force multiplication compared to conventional arms. It is the idea, the threat of the device that provides its best utility. The economic implication of this point will be addressed further on.

The Growth of Military Keynesianism

The nuclear arsenal is a product of military Keynesianism. Military Keynesianism began with World War II, an outgrowth of the Keynesian policies that marked the New Deal. The policies and arrangements that coalesced into existence for fighting the war were beneficial to the political, economic and military elites. Ultimately those elites institutionalized military Keynesianism into the relationships that characterize the defense sector. However, there must be a legitimate reason for the existence of an institution, and the defense sector is no exception.

The defense sector has always been a part of the United States' post-war, semi-permanent war footing (Unger 2012). It is partially responsible for the nation's extensive network of bases and military holdings across the globe (Hossein-Zadeh 2006; Johnson 2010). While it is well and good to say that military spending is good for the economy, the citizens of the United States would require a rationalization for such spending. Especially considering that, before the World Wars of the early 20th century, the average American citizen was not of the militaristic mind-set. This was a country that was reluctant to go to war, and, when it did, was perfectly fine with returning to post-war levels of activity (Unger 2012). Before the World Wars, America had a tendency to withdraw from the stage of world affairs once matters concluded. For example, at the end of the First World War, the mood of the United States citizenry returned to one of isolationism. Industries that had been geared to providing war materiel returned once more to civilian production. The armed forces discharged their excess capacity of manpower, and many returned to their civilian lives.

The end of World War II changed that trend for the United States. At the end of the war, the United States had a population of roughly 140 million, and approximately 40 percent of its males were in the armed services. Many of those that were not in uniform had some attachment to the war industry (Unger 2012). Unger asserts that maintaining such levels of mobilization indefinitely was unlikely, both politically and economically. Leading up to 1947, the total number of servicemen had steadily fallen to 3 million. By 1947, that number had fallen to 1.6 million. Yet, that number was still five times the size of the nation's peacetime military in 1938. From 1951 until 1991, United States force strength remained above 2 million (Gertcher and Weida 1990;Unger 2012)

Federal spending also followed a roughly U-shaped trajectory over a contemporaneous period (Preble 2004;Roman 1995;Unger 2012). Directly after World War II, military spending met an even sharper decline. Though it fell by 90 percent from 1945 to 1948, it rebounded more robustly than force strength. It was the Korean War that provided the initial impetus to return military spending to more than half of its 1945 levels. There would have to be a legitimate reason to maintain force strength and military spending at heightened levels by the end of the Korean conflict.

Specifically there would have to be a constant, visible, but nebulous threat to the United States. The nebulous quality of the threat is key, as it allows for a more open interpretation of what is necessary for defense and deterrence (Gertcher and Weida 1990). To understand the dynamics of this threat we turn to the work of Goode and Ben-Yehuda (2009) on moral panics..

Moral Panics

At its most basic level, a moral panic occurs when “a condition, episode, person or group of persons emerges to become defined as a threat to social values and interests....” (Cohen 1972:9) Goode and Ben-Yehuda (2009) identify specific actors and elements associated with a moral panic. Of the former, there are: the press, the public, law enforcement, politicians/legislators, and action groups. During a moral panic, there is a tendency of the media to over-report and exaggerate the issues at hand. The public is important in that it must have some latent concern or fear that the moral panic triggers. During a moral panic, law enforcement finds itself taking on a greater role and increased activity in response to the perceived threat. Politicians and legislators propose and push for legislation to deal with the issue. Action groups appear seeking to provide some way of coping with the problem.

While those are the actors in a moral panic, the key elements are: concern, hostility, disproportion, consensus, and volatility. For a moral panic to coalesce, there must be a heightened level of measurable concern over the actions of certain groups or categories of people. While this concern does not always manifest as fear, the actors in a moral panic treat fear and anxiety as reasonable responses to a palpable threat. Concurrent with this concern is an increased level of hostility toward those groups engaging in the actions that cause heightened concern. Additionally, there must be a belief that there is a greater number of individuals engaged in the concerning behavior than there are in reality. There is also an

attendant element that the extent of the damage from the behavior is equally greater than it actually is.

If only a small number of society's members feel anxiety or a sense of threat, then it does not qualify as a moral panic. There must be a certain minimal measure of consensus, within the society or specific segments. Though there is no firm measure of the size of this consensus, it seems reasonable to aver that there must be enough individuals whose concerns cannot be ignored. Finally, moral panics are quite volatile in that they can erupt and subside suddenly. The caveat to this is that moral panics can exist in the background or beneath the social current for long periods, reappearing from time to time.

Folk-devils and the disaster analogy (Goode and Ben-Yehuda 2009) are two additional components of moral panics that are valuable to this present work. The former, the folk-devil, must be some "suitable enemy" that is threatening the public. These entities are the personification of evil to a society. Lastly, a moral panic involves preparations for disaster much like those taken in the face of natural disasters (Ex. hurricanes, tsunamis, earthquakes, et. al). There are predications of doom, conditioning to cues of danger, overreactions, institutionalization of the threat, rumor and speculation, and the occasional spate of mass delusion.

There are also three models of how moral panics coalesce: Elite-engineered, interest groups, and grassroots. Goode and Ben-Yehuda refer to the elite-engineered model as "the classic orthodox Marxist approach." (2009:54) Moral panics are fabricated using some nonexistent or trivial threat by the elites for the purpose of gaining some form of advantage. With the additional benefit of being able to divert

attention away from issues that potentially threaten elite interests. By the model's logic: the ruling elites profoundly influence public opinion through media domination, while maintaining control over the process and execution of legislation. The actors within an elite-engineered moral panic can be sub-divided into three distinct categories: military elites, political elites and corporate/industrial elites. Within the context of a missile panic, the primary motivations of these actors would be both the acquisition and retention of institutional power and resources. Though the expression of these motivations would differ depending upon the actor in question.

For example, military elites would be interested in using a moral panic based upon a nuclear threat as a justification for the high levels of resource consumption. Such a moral panic would also allow the institution of defense to maintain/justify its primacy within a civilian society, thus insuring accrued political, economic and cultural benefits. Whereas politicians may be motivated to direct portions of the national budget towards personal projects, their primary concern would be acquiring and retaining political power. Strategically using the conditions generated by the moral panic to remove opponents from key political positions through accusations of negligence or inaction. But of the two, corporate/industrial elites are more like military elites in that their chief goal is acquiring a greater share of resources. They wish to be the recipients of the political and military elites largesse, especially those corporate/industrial elites within the various divisions of the defense sector.

According to the interest group model, the mid-level holders of power in a society act independently of the elite. Expressing and maximizing their own ideologies and moralities, while simultaneously seeking the same advantages as the elite. Moral panics originate from neither the top nor bottom strata of society, rather somewhere near the middle. It is effectively the mid-level groups, organizations and associations that have the greatest control of society in this model. The central question within this model is: "who benefits?" Here the actors can be sub-divided into: scientific groups, corporations/defense contractors, and social movements. The motivations of both scientific groups and corporations/defense contractors can be described as resource acquisition and sometimes, though rarely, power (e.g. political and/or cultural) for its own sake. However, the origins of this motivation for each of these is quite different.

For example, it is a known fact that scientific research costs money, and the societal conditions generated by a nuclear weapon based moral panic provide opportunities to acquire that funding. Whereas for corporations that have heavily invested in resource-heavy nuclear technology, and defense contractors (which are a heavily specialized and therefore heavily subsidized industry), a moral panic provides opportunities and justifications for the resources necessary for survival to be funneled to these corporate entities. Conversely, while scientific groups and corporate/defense contractors focus more upon resources, social movements are more concerned with acquiring power and resources (to an extent) to accomplish specific social goals. Some social movements might be more concerned with the

national security threat generated by nuclear missiles, whereas others focus upon the existential threat created by a strategic arms race.

Finally, the grassroots model is, in a sense, the opposite of the previous two. It argues that activists and concerned citizens initiate moral panics from the bottom up. Unlike the elite engineered and interest group models, grassroots moral panics are spontaneous eruptions of anxiety about some given or possible threat. Consequently, these concerns are often contrary to the interests of an elite body whose main task in this model is to soothe the concerns of the panicked mass. The argument is that if top and mid-level power holders had as much control as is posited in the previous theories, then the scares that have disrupted society would never have occurred. The single actor within the grassroots model is that multitude known as the general public, which is expressed through the popular press. Whereas an actual concern towards any actual threat presented by strategic weapons is a component of the motivations of all the actors that have been previously mentioned, it is the primary motivation of the general public. It is the general public that would be the ultimate victim of the existential threat presented by strategic weapons, and this is a concept not lost on these actors. While the general public may be aware to varying extents of the national security, economic, political and ideological issues that are at the heart of the moral panic, it is the lingering danger posed by the existential threat that would be the greatest motivator.

It was during the post-war period that the elements and actors of a moral panic attained an almost continuous presence in society. It was through this

presence that it was possible for the United States to maintain high levels of military spending and force strength. But convincing the public of the necessity for a semi-permanent war footing did not happen generally or haphazardly. Concern with issues such as the missile gap acted as a stimulus. The missile gap itself finds its origins in very specific thinking that can be traced to an innocuous document: NSC-68. This will be explained further, but first some history must be given to place the document within the proper context.

The Post-War Period

Harry Truman had a vision of the United States after the Second World War. In that vision, the United States would have an expanded role and presence on the global stage (Unger 2012). That vision would require both increased force strength and a budget to match, though both were reduced immediately post-war. Truman did attempt to secure Universal Military Training, but Congress would only give him a selective service that it temporarily reinstated for two years during peacetime. During the waning years of the war and afterwards, a very interesting narrative began to develop. It was a narrative that would bring to focus the necessity of significant strength and funding to match.

Truman began to meld a sequence of serious, but separate disputes between the United States and the Soviet Union into a single narrative. Disagreements over post-war political settlements, spheres of influence, and security perimeters in Europe and Asia became incidents in a unified, global conflict that was analogous to war. It was undeclared to be sure, but it was a war that could very easily turn from

cold to hot. Unger (2012) asserts that, from the start, Truman used this narrative to justify wartime presidential powers and wartime constraints on the exercise of constitutional democracy.

Having evoked this global conflict, Truman went on to define the stakes in a universalized way. This served to muddy the distinctions between wars of ideological choice and wars of national necessity. Truman inflated the nature of the Soviet to acquire legislative authorization for the financing of Cold War policies. It was even Truman who authorized the start of research into the hydrogen bomb because of the threat posed by the Soviets (Winkler 1993). To actually carry out these policies, it was necessary to reorganize the military, international affairs, and intelligence branches of the United States along the lines of a national security state. NSC-68 contains both the justification and blueprint for that national security state.

In 1950, the National Security Council proposed a new global strategy in the document designated NSC-68. It declared that, as a matter of national policy, the ends of thwarting the Communist threat justified all possible means. The document states:

The assault on free institutions is world-wide now, and in the context of the present polarization of power a defeat of free institutions anywhere is a defeat everywhere...Thus unwillingly our free society finds itself mortally challenged by the Soviet system. No other value system is so wholly irreconcilable with ours, so implacable in its purpose to destroy ours, so capable of turning to its own uses the most dangerous and divisive of trends in our own society, no other so skillfully and powerfully evokes the elements of irrationality in human nature everywhere, and no other has the support of a great and growing center of military power (U.S. National Security Council 1950)

Directly, the document establishes that it will be either “us or them,” and in its entirety asserts that the United States must win this conflict. This culminated in the transformation of our former allies the Soviets into a relentless enemy. An enemy that wanted nothing but the complete and utter destruction of the United States and everything that it stood for.

The Soviet Union made a rather convincing opponent for the United States. While the nature of the Soviet threat was perhaps hazy and its extent exaggerated, they were a suitable enemy (Gertcher and Weida 1990; Prados 1982; Preble 2004; Roman 1995). Some of that was the work of Truman’s narrative creation, but once the United States began treating them as a threat the Soviets responded in kind. To be fair, before the United States began treating the Soviets as a threat, the Soviets demonstrated a willingness to be a threat. Stalin made attempts to cut off West Berlin from the rest of Berlin, while also setting up puppet governments in Eastern Germany and Hungary. When the United States began to respond to the Soviets as a threat, the Soviet responded by strengthening borders, increasing force strength, and attempting to build up their nuclear arsenal for maintaining competitiveness with the United States. In turn, such actions offered proof of Soviet intentions, to which the United States responded in kind (Gertcher and Weida 1990). While the totality of Soviet actions proved to be a concern for the United States, it was their nuclear buildup that caused the greatest distress. An idea illustrated by the missile gap crisis.

Reduced to its basic structure, the missile gap was a concern that the Soviets were more readily able to not only maintain, but also fabricate and deploy more

atomic (later, thermonuclear) devices than the United States. Furthermore, the argument was that these devices would have greater and more extended strike capabilities than anything the United States had so far developed. This concern began during the Eisenhower presidency. When Eisenhower attempted to reduce the Federal budget –especially in defense—the issue of the immanent Soviet threat posed by the missile gap appeared (Prados 1982;Preble 2004;Roman 1995).

Various intelligence entities (i.e. the NSC, the Director of Central Intelligence, and the National Intelligence Council) supplied reports stating the possible elements of the Soviet threat. Politicians and military actors used these reports to their advantage (Prados 1982;Preble 2004;Roman 1995). The fact that these were possible estimates should not be overlooked.

As it was, the intelligence gathered posed a strange picture. The National Intelligence Estimates were not always conforming to the intelligence data being gathered. Specifically, the estimates were usually always higher or inflated compared to observed data (Prados 1982;Preble 2004;Roman 1995). Analysts and policy makers combined inflated NIE projections with warning deficiencies, and applied the result to the nuclear force posture of the United States. In the process they produced worst-case scenarios. With the perception of this crisis came calls for increased spending on the part of both political and military actors (Prados 1982;Preble 2004;Roman 1995).

Despite his professional background, when Eisenhower attempted to reduce defense spending, a split formed between the president and his generals. Cast into that split was an imputation that Eisenhower was not doing enough to protect

national security. The 1957 launch of *Sputnik* only helped to amplify concern of the threats posed by the Soviets. The missile gap became a key tool of generals and politicians to criticize Eisenhower (Preble 2004;Roman 1995). It became the dominating theme in politics and strategic assessment during the late 1950s (Ball 1980;Prados 1982;Roman 1995). Once the split between the administration and the military over the budget became apparent to Congress, the military began to go around the administration to secure project funding (Prados 1982;Roman 1995). Political and military actors used the threat of the missile gap to push through funding for projects that went beyond ICBMs. An example would be a program for the development of a nuclear-powered aircraft. Given the project's technical problems, Defense Secretary Thomas Gates referred to it as "a national disgrace" (Roman 1995:143). But the project continued to receive low-level funding, given the political climate.

While there were many senators who were displeased with Eisenhower's handling of the Soviets, one stands out in particular. Senator John F. Kennedy was very critical of Eisenhower's perceived lack of pursuit in closing the missile gap (Roman 1995). On his road to the presidency, Kennedy made a point of promising to close that gap (Preble 2004). Kennedy, it should be mentioned, believed in the benefits of military Keynesianism on regional economics (Preble 2004). Though Kennedy (through defense secretary McNamara) did reduce the number of certain ICBM variants ordered for production, the number was still in the high hundreds (Prados 1982). However this does not count the thousand that had already been ordered and placed into production.

Eventually the Soviet threat was determined to be less dire than was previously estimated. As was stated earlier, intelligence collected found that predictions of Soviet threat were less than accurate (Ball 1980; Prados 1982). Additionally, there were elements of the intelligence picture that were incomplete at the time. As the incomplete portions of the intelligence picture were filled in, it became drastically apparent that the missile gap was no such thing. In fact it was the reverse of what had been believed all along; it was the United States that held a sizeable lead on the Soviets (Prados 1982). In fact the Soviets had known this the entire time, and had used the ambiguity of the United States' knowledge to play up their position of strength (Preble 2004; Roman 1995). This was a fact that was suspected by members of the intelligence community, the military, the presidents and their advisors (Prados 1982; Preble 2004; Roman 1995). So, how did the missile gap narrative gain so much influence, and result in the construction of many nuclear weapons?

Missile Gap as Moral Panic

The answer can possibly be found in the resemblance of the missile gap crisis to a moral panic. All the elements and actors that are generally recognized as being components of the phenomenon were present. The Soviets were the folk devil, and the behavior that generated anxiety was their supposed headway in constructing nuclear weapons. Though the media will be fully covered below, it was their reaction to the launch of *Sputnik* that helped catalyze the Soviet threat in the minds of the American public (Roman 1995). The military—the enforcement equivalent—

took on a greater role in an effort to protect the nation from the gap. It did this through demanding greater funding for research, development, construction and maintenance of nuclear weapons. When it could not secure that funding through the president, it went to a Congress that then made loud demands that something be done. Finally, the various intelligence branches, political committees and sub-committees, and other groups of political and military actors were the action groups desperately working to solve the problem.

That there was *concern*, *hostility* and *consensus* concerning the Soviets can be seen in NSC-68. Whether *consensus* was genuine or generated by the fear of the penalties of seeming sympathetic to the Soviets is (perhaps) of little consequence. From whatever source *consensus* was generated, there was enough to secure billions of dollars in funding for nuclear weapons and related projects. That the response generated was *disproportionate* is evidenced by the fact that the United States had produced enough nuclear weapons that it could successfully retaliate in the aftermath of a massive nuclear strike (Gertcher and Weida 1990; Prados 1982). That the missile gap was *volatile* is shown by the fact that it began in the later years of the Eisenhower presidency, and ended shortly in the years after Kennedy took office. Though the *concern* of the Soviets and their strategic strike capabilities continued to remain.

That the missile gap had a disaster analogy almost goes without saying. One of the problems created by the Soviet threat was that of nuclear crisis management (Roman 1995). Part of that crisis management was the aforementioned reactions, but another portion was to be found in the form of civilian defense. The amount of

content created on the issue of civilian defense against nuclear attack is almost overwhelming. Winkler (1993) gives us an idea in his descriptions of the civilian defense programs created during this period. Pamphlets and brochures were created and distributed by the millions. Hundreds of companies were created that had as their sole products items such as nuclear survival gear and the materials necessary for the creation of bomb and fallout shelters. Even the media was preoccupied more with the subject of creating shelters and preparing for nuclear war than questions regarding the evidence for the missile gap.

It therefore seems that the missile gap fits an elite-engineered moral panic. Yet, though this research is more elite-focused, there has to be a reason for the initiation of a moral panic, no matter which model is chosen (Goode and Ben-Yehuda 2009). It is neither helpful nor plausible that members of the military as well as the intelligence and political apparatus decided to declare a sudden emergency for no reason, even if it was not a single reason, but several that all managed to work together. For the purpose of this research, that reason is possibly found in the second major problem created by the issue of the Soviet threat: extended deterrence. According to Gertcher and Weida (1990), deterrence is an illusive concept, which means that clearly specifying military requirements is also difficult. Projects under the heading of deterrence are easier to defend as being necessary on a continuous basis. Here we begin to find a potential reason for the missile gap moral panic.

The Political Economics of Nuclear Technology

There is no hyperbole in suggesting the incentives that perpetuated the growth of nuclear arsenals were not altogether military in nature. There were numerous political and economic factors, as well as substantial constituencies that benefited from the development, deployment and maintenance of nuclear weapons. The sheer size of the facilities required in manufacturing and maintaining nuclear weapons and delivery systems dominate the economic and employment market in any community where these facilities are located. Gertcher and Weida (1990) reported that in 1988, the industry employed between 115,000 and 120,000 people. In FY88 the DOD budget for nuclear weapons was \$40-\$45 billion. The Department of Energy (employing 63,000 people) had a budget of \$6.5 billion for all of its facilities and assembly plants. According to the Center for Defense Information, the cost of preparing for nuclear war rose from \$29.8 billion in 1980 to \$51.8 billion in 1983, and to almost \$90 billion by 1987. This is equivalent to approximately 22 percent of all the funds spent on defense, or 6 percent of the entire Federal budget.

Recall that it was after the Korean War that Federal military spending began to resurge. Gertcher and Weida (1990) observe that it was after Korea that pork barrel projects switched from infrastructure to defense contracts. One of the best reasons for this is because it resulted in decisions to spend stated amounts of money in one or more well-defined regions (as a function of the operational manner of defense plants). However, this meant that projects that resulted from the spending did not leave behind infrastructure or facilities that could provide long-term economic benefit. Only a continuous series of projects could provide steady

economic stimulation, which means continually justifying a series of projects on an ever-expanding definition of military needs (Gertcher and Weida 1990).

Furthermore, the economic concerns (i.e. the benefit such contracts have on regional employment) eventually outweighed the national requirement for the weapon or—in the case of nuclear weapons—negative externalities that may accompany its production (Gertcher and Weida 1990).

Nuclear weapons are a special case in this regard given their status as weapons of deterrence. As was previously stated, it is the threat of the weapon not use of the weapon that acts to deter. But this makes the actual purpose of the weapon hazy. Its role and mission are not easily defined beyond “deterrence” and “strike capability.” Nuclear weapons have to be sold (in terms of their worth of production and use) vis-à-vis the value they will have in terms of economic benefit (Gertcher and Weida 1990). Selling weapons projects in such a manner makes it difficult to stop production or disband active units after the weapon’s time or mission (however defined) is passed. One of the examples of how this works out is given by Gertcher and Weida (1990) in the form of the decisions to build a nuclear fuel plant in Idaho.

There was no market-based way to determine an accurate demand for weapon fuel, instead demand was assumed through derivations from classified DOD requirements. Specifically, from a single document that was developed from guidance by the Joint Chiefs to establish the plutonium production necessary to support all warhead production and retirement schedules. These requirements were based on the idea of a potential Soviet breakout, and its authors wanted the

United States to be able to surge production of plutonium. This is despite the fact that the manufacturing base would not be able to handle a surge in the fabrication of weapons. It is worth noting that the single, known document upon which this is based was apparently NSC-68. At any rate, the plant itself was presented to the public on the basis of economic need as a replacement for facilities that had previously closed.

The Media and Nuclear Technology

In describing the Idaho fuel processing facility, Gertcher and Weida use the term “sold” to describe the process by which the facility was presented locally. That the public was convinced by economic rather than strategic necessity is perhaps significant. The fear of nuclear technology and radiation that Perrow (1984) observed in the public does not rule it out entirely, but it does suggest that the missile gap was not a grassroots scenario. Had strategic nuclear weapons been a grassroots concern, the public would not likely have to be convinced to working in a facility dedicated to uranium processing—a fairly dangerous profession—on economic grounds.

Furthermore, consider companies like General Electric that had invested heavily in nuclear reactors under the potential new uses of the technology (Balogh 1991; Lee and Solomon 1990). Especially in power plant applications that would be a potential foothold on the lucrative energy industry. Proactively, the already established energy companies raised barriers to prevent this entry, adding to the resistance towards nuclear power as a viable energy option (Balogh 1991). Perhaps

the biggest blow to the nuclear power industry was the incident at Three Mile Island (TMI). In Fischer's (1997) history of the International Atomic Energy Agency, it is recorded that nuclear power orders began to shrink in the latter half of the seventies. Fischer attributes this to TMI, which resulted in the cancellation of fourteen power reactors in 1979, and further cancellations of previously placed orders in the following years. What were the companies that had heavily invested in these technologies to do? The idea of operating at a loss, or taking a hit in terms of investment is antithetical to most businesses. Fortunately, nuclear reactor technology is dual-use; that is: it can have both civilian and military applications.

But there is a limit to the number of reactors that a company can build for military use. The output of reactor assemblies would be far in advance of the number of ships that could be built around them. While it might be possible to convert older, diesel ships to nuclear engines, it would still require time. Yet there is one applied output of nuclear reactors that can be utilized fairly quickly: the provision of nuclear fuel. But nuclear fuel is only needed if you are building nuclear weapons. And while Eisenhower's New Look deterrence policy made provision for nuclear weapons, it did not do so in the numbers seen after the missile gap was revealed. Gertcher and Weida (1990) divulge that competition for defense contracts is high given their nature. If a defense contract is not for a large number of units, it stands to reason that competition is even greater. For elites invested in this industry, expanding their business would be a sensible idea. But for this to work, these elites would need to get both the public *and* their elite peers to see the value in increasing construction and maintenance of nuclear stockpiles.

Short of an actual nuclear strike, the best method would be to use the media to transmit messages of the need for increased stockpiles. To refer back to the models of moral panics, this does bring up the question of which model is best suited for accounting for this particular panic? Though the media are present in both the elite-engineered and interest group models, they were not the originator of the Soviet threat. This research intends to demonstrate that the threat came from higher up (i.e. from the president and his cabinet), as a form of elite-engineered moral panic. The issues here are more suggestive of the symbiotic relationship between the power elite and the mass media, and less of the latter being an independent power (Bonn 2010;Goode and Ben-Yehuda 2009). Consider the following broad sketch of the role the media has played in these events.

When Eisenhower attempted to redefine the role of nuclear technology vis-à-vis national security as more than a weapon, it was the media that broadcast the benefits of civilian nuclear technology (Balogh 1991;Lee and Solomon 1990). As civilian reactor development faltered, *Sputnik* signaled a shift by the media to the threat its launch represented (Roman 1995). Finally, perhaps General Electric—concerned about the impact of strategic weapons limitations—began to once again see the value of civilian power. A position made somewhat difficult by the incident at Three Mile Island, but a value position that GE used NBC—one of its media acquisitions at the time—to broadcast to the public nonetheless (Lee and Solomon 1990).

It is not by chance that the media has taken such a role here and in other moral panics. The media plays a very central part in the perception of America's

affairs (Arendt 1972;Chomsky 1989;Chomsky 1997;Dadge 2004;Dadge 2006;Lee and Solomon 1990;Renz 2010;Sproule 1997). Consider the example of the Vietnam War, the last instance that the media were granted unlimited access to the frontlines. As the people back home consumed the images, they were soured on the affair (Arendt 1972). The elites would later solidify their influence on media, in terms of ownership as well as closer relations with the pentagon, and the intelligence services (Fritz 2004;Lee and Solomon 1990). Chomsky (1989) discusses how the media specifically portrays the Third World in such a manner as to make our interventions—military and economic—palatable to the American public. Information concerning the parties involved is either shaped favorably or ignored entirely. The most recent example of this particular problem within the media establishment being the behavior displayed leading up to the Iraqi War (Bonn 2010;Dadge 2004;Dadge 2006;Entman et al. 2010).

The media tend to bias the current power structures. For example, certain issues are more likely than others to be focused on by the media in the setting of the public agenda, and they are equally like to be reported on in manner biased towards the culture of the middle and upper classes (Glassner 1999;Mantsios 1998;McCombs and Shaw 1972). Furthermore, by contributing to the process of setting the public agenda, the news media reproduce (albeit imperfectly) the political world by influencing the public's definition of what is important (McCombs and Shaw). But they also help maintain those structures through mediocrity. Said another way: the media contribute to the increase in fatuous cultural content (Bennett 1988;Johnston 2000). Bennett (1988) asserts that the news has four

particular biases to it. The first is that the news becomes personalized, transforming political and economic struggles that are based in society's power structures and institutions into conflicts between celebrity individuals. Secondly, the news is dramatized in such a way as to play up the more exciting elements as opposed to the boring facts. Thirdly the news is fragmented, broken into easily digestible pieces. Resulting in the modification of the message. Finally the news is normalized in a manner such that potentially confusing, complex issues that arise in our society are overlaid with comforting, familiar images (Bennett 1988).

The end results of these four biases are news and a culture that have a biased—if not outright skewed—view of their surroundings. Though this is the more “benign” end of the scale, as Britto and Dabney (2010) found that most political talk shows tend to adopt a tone of advocacy as opposed to objectivity as the ideas and images being advocated being ones that are more conducive to dominant social ideologies.

The Agenda Setting Function of the Media

A core issue of this research is the role that media plays in setting the agenda for the public (McCombs 2005; McCombs and Shaw 1972). McCombs and Shaw (1972) assert that by choosing and displaying news, editors, newsroom staff, and broadcasters play an important part in shaping political reality. Readers learn not only about a given issue, but also how much importance to attach to that issue from the amount of information in a news story and its position (McCombs 2005; McCombs and Shaw 1972). The press does not necessarily tell people what to

think, but they do show some success in directing attention towards certain topics (McCombs and Shaw 1972).

There are three distinct consequences of agenda setting via the media for public: Opinion formation; priming an opinion about public figures through issue emphasis; and shaping an opinion through an emphasis on particular issue attributes (McCombs 2005). Both traditional agenda-setting effects and attribute agenda-setting effects involve the transfer of salience (McCombs 2005). The transfer of salience by the news media to the public is a key early step in the formation of public opinion (McCombs 2005). In the case of the missile gap, the defensive—as opposed to the purely scientific—attributes of *Sputnik's* launch were given greater attention.

According to McCombs (2005), there are also significant individual differences in the responses to the media agenda. These differences are explained in large measure by the concept of need for orientation (McCombs 2005). For a wide variety of public affairs topics, the news media provide this orientation (McCombs 2005). Both use of the press to follow public affairs as well as acceptance of the news media agenda generally increase with rising levels of need for orientation (McCombs 2005). A strong desire for orientation would be expected when the Soviets managed to accomplish an engineering and scientific feat that the United States had not. This would drive people to consume more news to understand what was going on, fueling the crisis in the process.

McCombs (2005) relates research that suggests most political agenda setting studies at least “implicitly claim that media coverage mechanically leads to political

attention. Political actors adopt media issues simply because they are covered.” (p.548) However this is not rote reproduction, it has to be something that the public actually attends to. This study will explore if issues that the president gives attention to are also issues that are given attention by the media. And in the process, make that issue something that the public pays particular attention to. At the same time, this process would give politicians not initially involved with national defense to become involved in concerns over the missile gap. When *Sputnik* launched, it created a demand for orientation that political actors took as an opportunity to pursue their own agendas. As demonstrated by the then Senator John Kennedy taking up the issue of the missile gap after *Sputnik's* launch, and then dropping the issue (even curbing the arsenal buildup) after his election to the presidency.

The Role of Hegemony

According to the elite-engineered model, the issues that are raised into focus by the media are not necessarily the right ones. Hall, Critcher, Jefferson, Clarke and Roberts (1978) assert that moral panics are about matters other than the seeming focus. The dominating themes of the panic act as a mechanism to construct definitions that serve the interests of the powerful. Hall et al. insist that this is not a conspiracy between elites, but the elites orchestrating hegemony. The elites manage to convince society that what is at issue is not the United States attempting to expand its global influence, or even the need of investors to expand their business. Instead what is at stake is the very survival of the nation in the face of a relentless enemy with a terrifying weapon.

Though only one of many, the media is still the major means by which a moral panic is transmitted and sustained (Goode and Ben-Yehuda 2009). It is conspiratorial—and impossible—to suggest that the entirety of the media is in the pay of the elites. Yet, as Hall et al. (1978) write, “the media come, in fact ... *to reproduce the definitions of the powerful.*” (Hall et al. 1978:57) How and why does this reproduction and service to elite interests occur?

Hall et al.’s use of the phrase “orchestrating hegemony” is significant, as hegemony was the focus of Antonio Gramsci. While there are numerous ways of interpreting and categorizing hegemony’s origins and meanings, Femia conceptualizes Gramsci as having posited three different types of hegemony in his work: Integral, Decadent, and Minimal (Ives 2004a;Ives 2004b). Though a Marxist, Gramsci developed his idea of hegemony substantially from concepts and concerns that he encountered in turn-of-the-century Italian linguistics (Bocock 1986;Gramsci 1988;Ives 2004a;Ives 2004b;Ives and Lacorte 2010). Gramsci’s approach to all language was that it produces meaning historically, which means that changes in meaning are as important as a term’s origins.

However, Gramsci made no firm demarcations between language and non-linguistic social structures (Ives 2004a;Ives 2004b;Ives and Lacorte 2010). He expanded the very definition of what is political by using language as a metaphor for how we conceive of the world (Ives 2004a;Ives 2004b). The intricate connection of language to how we think and make sense of the world therefore make it central to politics and hegemony. Gramsci argued that language and philosophy could not be divorced from politics and the operations of power (Ives 2004a;Ives 2004b).

The ideological power of the State and its elite managers comes from its ability to impose its language and attendant conceptions of the world upon the rest of society. This works through the processes of: reciprocal monitoring, reciprocal censorship, reciprocal teaching and mimicry (Gramsci 1988; Ives 2004a; Ives 2004b; Ives and Lacorte 2010). Society's institutions act as the hegemonic apparatuses that maintain these processes.

These include the familiar apparatuses of education (e.g. primary school to university), culture (e.g. libraries and museums), and information (e.g. magazines, daily papers, reviews). Gramsci regarded the press as that material organization that is most aimed at maintaining, defending, and developing the theoretical and ideological front of the dominant class. Though it is worth mentioning that he neither held nor treated it as the only one. Essentially, everything that directly or indirectly influences public opinion belongs to this ideological structure (Ives 2004a; Ives 2004b). Even architecture and street layouts can contribute to this structure of ideology formation and maintenance (Gramsci 1988).

Gramsci's hegemony answers the question of how the media reproduce the interests of the elite. As Gramsci elaborated, the elite act as the primary creators of reality through the processes of hegemony. The media access individuals among the elite, and consequently frame issues according to an elite *weltanschauung*. In the process, issues are reported (or taught) in a manner that meets with elite approval. How the issues are discussed is monitored, with any significant deviations from the

approved narrative censored.¹ *Sputnik* achieving orbit is a newsworthy first for all Mankind, the media query elite experts who then inform them of the worrying implications to national security, fears of a missile gap become public and widespread, and the solution is to increase warhead and fuel production to match the Soviets. Without meaning to, the media contribute to hegemonic domination by helping the elites achieve their goals.

Hegemonic leadership fundamentally involves producing a philosophical and moral outlook that other subordinate and allied social classes will accept. In its complete form, hegemony occurs when the intellectual, moral and philosophical leadership provided by the class, class alliance, and/or class faction successfully achieves the objective of providing the fundamental outlook for the whole society. As such, a successfully established hegemony is unnoticeable in day-to-day political, cultural and economic life. This is a setting that allows for the successful operation of elite-engineered moral panics.

My argument is that the crisis of the missile gap was an elite-engineered moral panic. This crisis was part of a larger narrative in which the Soviets were cast as the primary threat facing the West in general, and the United States in particular. When the Soviets became aware of this narrative their choice was to respond in kind. This narrative had the effect of providing the necessary rationale for increases in military spending and personnel levels. These are conditions that had to be

¹ For an example, consider the consequences of publicly denouncing the idea of the Soviet threat, or the existence of a missile gap during the crisis.

fulfilled if the United States was to project itself beyond its borders on a permanent basis.

The same can be said of the missile gap itself. It is true that U.S. companies that sunk research time and costs into nuclear technology had few options to recoup their profit. And companies in control of the power generation market stymied one of those options (e.g. using nuclear technology for civilian power generation). Conversely, it is just as true that the Soviets were regarded as a threat, and intelligence of their nuclear weapons capability was patchy, but worrisome nonetheless. The launch of *Sputnik* only acted as visible proof that Soviet science and technology was ahead of the United States that galvanized fears not only of Soviet delivery capabilities in the process, but also of what an imbalance in nuclear force projection would mean for the United States. The true intention of the involved parties is unknowable. But the end result was the investment of large amounts of time and capital into the United States' non-conventional arsenal.

It is outside the scope of this research to establish intent, but it is possible to examine possible influences that led to these outcomes. The missile gap was part of the narrative began by President Truman, which is an indication of the strength of that particular office of the State in setting the public agenda. Specifically, this project will focus on the effect that the president has in setting the public agenda via his annual State of the Union Address. Though it is true that the president makes more than a single speech in a given year, the SOTUA is fairly unique amongst all of them. Though Hoffman and Howard (2006) focus on the legislative effects of the SOTUA, they make a point of acknowledging it as a valuable source of data (See also:

Bonn 2010; Cohen 1995; Hawdon 2001; Hawdon and Woods 2014; Oliver 2002; Wanta et al 1989). They assert that the many functions of the president are on public display during the speech, touching upon his roles of: chief executive, by discussing current actions and possible future actions; chief diplomat, by addressing foreign relations; and commander-in-chief, by commenting upon the state of the armed forces. The speech is an opportunity for the president to be his most presidential. The president is able to take the bully pulpit, and simultaneously encapsulate the various roles of the president while demonstrating the symbolism of the office (Hoffman and Howard 2006).

Furthermore, the State of the Union Address allows the President to speak to—and thus influence—a large portion of the American public in a single instant. For example, President Johnson's 1967 SOTU address was watched by 59.6% of American homes with televisions (Macdonald 2009). And in 1993, Bill Clinton's State of the Union Address reached 44.3% of combined households (Nielsen 2015). Though this last statistic is outside the period analyzed, it is used here for comparative purposes. With the advent of cable television in the 1990s there came an increased number of viewing options, but Clinton achieved nearly half of the viewership. In 1967, before cable, Johnson achieved over half the viewership during a period when all available television channels would be dedicated to covering the President's speech. This would suggest that, more like as not, the State of the Union Addresses were viewed by a large number of people during the period in question.

Other studies have seen the analytical value of paying particular attention to the SOTUA as well. Cohen (1995) regressed data collected from the SOTUA on the

Gallup Poll's Most Important Problem Series. He found that the more attention that presidents give to policy areas (Ex. economic, foreign and civil rights policy) the more concerned that the public becomes with those policy areas. Oliver (2002) used a similar method as Cohen to demonstrate the impact of the presidential rhetoric used in the SOTUA on public opinion vis-à-vis crime as a national issue. Wanta, Stephenson, Turk and McCombs (1989) assessed the influence that the SOTUA has on directing the focus of the media to certain issues, so that those issues then become salient to the public. Much like this research, Bonn (2010) examined the use of presidential rhetoric for the use of framing issues in elite-engineered moral panics. Hawdon and Woods (2014) use SOTUA to test how presidential rhetoric focusing on generating fear of street crime was successfully used to undermine the welfare state and advance the neoliberal agenda and hegemonic narrative of the security state. And though his research does not focus on the SOTUA, Hawdon (2001) stresses and demonstrates that the president's position has a particularly strong influence over the public agenda.

Ch. 3 METHODOLOGY

The goal of this research is to test what extent the media influence public opinion by examining coverage of the issue of strategic nuclear weapons. This will be done by examining the reaction of the public upon reception of the president's State of the Union Address. As established in the above examples of previous research, the president of the United States plays an important role in the construction of both the national reality and setting of its agenda. According to the elite-engineered model of moral panics, presidential statements concerning the issue of strategic nuclear weapons should be transmitted to the public through the mass media. However going by the interest group model, we should expect to see a greater influence by those organizations that have a stake in the issue of strategic nuclear weapons. Finally, the influence of the grassroots model of moral panics would suggest that the issues of primary concern to the public would receive more focus.

There will be two techniques used in this research. The first will be a time series analysis, which will begin with a focus on confidence in the military. This is done to determine if the SOTUA have enough of an effect to influence public opinion and potentially the belief that more resources should be dedicated to the military. These equations are performed in a set order since the results of each equation build upon the equation previous to it. The initial equation is performed for the purpose of determining if the President (an elite) is actually capable of influencing the public's opinion of the military. This equation establishes the central premise of the research: that elite's are capable of influencing public opinion, and thus capable

of generating an elite-engineered moral panic. From this it is possible to move to the next set of equations to determine if the President is able to influence the media (which is here a proxy for public opinion due to its role in elite-engineered moral panics).

The next series of equations will be performed using the number of articles within *The New York Times* and *The Chicago Tribune* by SOTUA mention. The purpose of this analysis is to determine to what extent the elites may influence the media. The final set of time-series analyses will follow a similar pattern, with the exception that it will focus on specific elements within the SOTUA. While these final equations will be combined into unified tables, this is done only for the purpose of presentation. As explained in more detail later, each equation must be run separately in order to avoid problems of multicollinearity. However, each equation will be run while controlling for the same types of objective factors.

With the presence of elite influence determined through the first two sets of equations, the third set of equations attempts to determine a possible mechanism of influence via elite rhetoric. This brings us to the next series of steps in the analysis where the State of the Union Addresses are broken down into key components to determine their influence on the media. These components will include: aggressiveness, rhetorical position, nature of threat, and percentage of speech. The analysis will follow the same pattern as previously established. Each speech component will be analyzed in independent sequence.

Independent Variable List

State of the Union Address Mentions	The frequency of the President's use of certain keywords and phrases during a SOTUA. The keywords will include: Russia; Soviet Union/Communists; Nuclear/Atomic; Sputnik; Missile gap/Strategic nuclear threat; Strategic nuclear weapons/(Thermo-)nuclear weapon/Atomic bomb(s)/Hydrogen bomb(s); Nuclear war.
Aggressiveness of Language	Measured using the statements collected in the State of the Union Address Mentions, which have been determined to be of a bellicose (i.e. related to nuclear weapons, and the threat of the Soviets) as opposed to peaceful (i.e. related to the use of nuclear technology for power generation) nature.
Rhetorical Position	Statements collected in the State of the Union Address Mentions, examined to determine if the president's arguments used in connection with nuclear technology and/or the Soviet Union takes a substantive position (i.e. offers actual details concerning a policy, plan, or initiative), or if those comments are symbolic in nature (i.e. merely mentions the Soviets or nuclear technology in passing)
Nature of Threat	Uses the statements collected in the State of the Union Address Mentions to determine the amount of communitarian rhetoric present in the SOTUA. This is defined by who, specifically, is being targeted by the Soviet Union and/or threatened by nuclear weapons. This will be coded into tertiary independent variables to include: Military, National, Allied, Economic and Ideological Threats.

Percentage of Speech

A percentage generated from the statements collected in the State of the Union Address Mentions as a part of the SOTUA as a whole. Created by counting the number of words devoted to the issue of the Soviet threat, and constructing a percentage based on the total number of words in the speech as a whole

Dependent Variable List

Newspaper Mentions

This is the frequency of strategic nuclear weapons mentions that appear in *The New York Times* and *The Chicago Tribune* after the president has given his State of the Union Address. The variable is coded as any time *The New York Times* and/or *The Chicago Tribune* mentions any key word or phrase related to the missile gap crisis after the President's State of the Union Address. The keywords will include: Russia; Soviet Union/Communists; Nuclear/Atomic; Sputnik; Missile gap/Strategic nuclear threat; Strategic nuclear weapons/(Thermo-)nuclear weapon/Atomic bomb(s)/Hydrogen bomb(s); Nuclear war.

Confidence in the Military

This variable is derived from the General Social Survey, and is a percentage generated from the respondent's confidence in the military as a national institution. For this analysis, data covering the period from 1973 to 1990 is used. This variable is coded as "A great deal"; "Only some"; and "Hardly any."

Since the key to establishing a moral panic is to demonstrate that the threat is exaggerated in a manner that is disproportionate to the actual threat (see Goode and Ben Yehuda 2009), we must control in some way the amount of “actual” or “objective” threat. Only if the president’s mentioning of the Soviet threat in his SOTUA significantly influences public opinion when controlling for the objective threat that the Soviets posed or, at least, the threat that American elites realistically believed they posed, can we deem the arms race an elite-engineered moral panic.

Thus, I control for the following variables to serve as proxy measures of the Soviet’s “objective threat”:

Control Variable List

Plutonium Production	The total amount of plutonium produced in a year by both of the United States main reactor facilities (the Savannah River Site and the Hanford Site). The variable itself is constructed using data from a declassified report issued by the Department of Energy, outlining the amounts of plutonium produced at the nation’s primary reactor facilities.
U.S. Nuclear Arsenal Size	The size of the U.S. nuclear arsenal during the given period created using the best available information from reports issued by the United States’ Bureau of Arms Control.
U.S. Military Size	Constructed using the best available information from reports issued by the United States’ Bureau of Arms Control.
Soviet Union Military Size	Constructed using the best available information from reports issued by the United States’ Bureau of Arms Control.

In addition to the regression analyses used to determine if it is reasonable to assert that the SOTUAs are powerful devices to influence public perceptions above and beyond the objective threat posed by the Soviets, a historical analysis will be used to provide the historic context of the events. This analysis was performed due to a lack of sufficient data to conduct a direct analysis, which is why a series of proxy measures were relied upon. More evidence was needed to further illuminate the results provided by the quantitative analysis. To further enhance the picture provided by the quantitative analysis, a qualitative analysis of editorials and letters to the editors of the newspapers used in the quantitative analysis was done. Here, a year-by-year examination of the indicators of each actor will be used to determine if a moral panic is present, and, if so, who is involved. The measure of grassroots influence will be through the use of data from the Gallup Poll and letters from the general public published in the New York Times and Chicago Tribune. The indicator of interest group influence will be through editorials written by the editorial staff of both papers. Finally the indicator of elite influence will be through the various Presidents' SOTUAs, as well as editorials and letters written by scientists, defense industry representatives, professors and other professionals.

During this period the analysis will make note of historic events and subsequent changes in the reactions of the various groups of actors. As well in changes toward strategic nuclear weapons, military spending, and other elements of the strategic weapons debate during the Cold War.

Data Source

Data for this study comes from multiple sources. The first are the collected State of the Union Addresses from *The American Presidency Project* by Gerhard Peters at the University of California, Santa Barbara. Media data for this project will be drawn from the archived editions of *The New York Times* and the archives of *The Chicago Tribune*. Finally, public opinion and reaction data will be pulled from the Gallup Organization's Public Opinion Index—which is administered yearly at regular intervals—and the General Social Survey. Though the Gallup Organization's Public Opinion Index began in the early part of the 20th century—and continues to this day—they have made a point of standardizing their sampling and survey methods for the purpose of item comparison and trend tracking across decades. Items include (in no particular order): concerns about the atomic bomb; concerns about the neutron bomb; Nuclear disarmament; Star Wars; SALT I and II; Nuclear testing; Nuclear war; Nuclear weapons; and World War III.² The specific years covered by the questions include: 1937; 1945-1963; 1967; 1973; 1979-1988; and 1990. 1990 is selected as the endpoint since this represents the end of the Soviet Union as a major threat to the United States. While history would declare 1991 as the end of the Cold War, in 1989 the United States was already demobilizing its armed forces from their Cold War footing (Cohen 2000). Additionally, the estimates

² According to a research note written in the Gallup Organization's Political Index series, during the period being research, many Americans understood (or at least believed) that the next World War would inevitably result in a nuclear exchange between the United States and the Soviet Union. That is why that item is being included here.

of nuclear arms controlled by the United States and the Soviet Union began to decline in 1990 (Garwin and Charpak 2001).

Ch. 4 DATA ANALYSIS—TIME SERIES

The first step in the data analysis is to perform a set of time-series analyses using the variables outlined in the previous chapter. These analyses were performed to determine if the growth of spending was due to an elite-engineered moral panic. To that end, these equations were run to demonstrate the influence of Presidents on public concern in the presence of contrary, objective evidence. While data was not available to accomplish this over the entire period analyzed, a series of equations are run using proxy variables outlined in the previous chapter. These equations focus on three areas: presidential influence on public opinion of the military; Elite influence of the media; the influence of elite rhetoric on the media.

These equations are performed in this order as the results of each equation build upon the equation previous to it. The initial equation is performed for the purpose of determining if the President (an elite) is actually capable of influencing the public's opinion of the military. This equation establishes the central premise of the research: that elite's are capable of influencing public opinion, and thus capable of generating an elite-engineered moral panic. From this it is possible to move to the next set of equations to determine if the President is able to influence the media (which is here a proxy for public opinion due to its role in elite-engineered moral panics). With the presence of elite influence determined through the first two sets of equations, the third set of equations attempts to determine a possible mechanism of influence via elite rhetoric. I begin with the initial equation to determine the influence of the President on public opinion of the military.

Table 1 displays the results of the concern for nuclear technology and the Soviets displayed by *The Chicago Tribune* and the president in the SOTUA regressed on confidence in the military. The yearly amount of weaponized plutonium produced in two of the government's reactor facilities is also included. This variable was introduced for multiple reasons, the primary being that this type of analysis requires objective measures of threat. Previous control variables created for that purpose resulted in high levels of multicollinearity and autocorrelation across other variables in the analysis. Therefore, it was necessary to create another variable that was not so closely related to the other variables in the analysis, but was also able to provide some measure of the nuclear weapons industry.

However, the primary reason for the variable's creation and inclusion is that it acts as a proxy for private interest in the nuclear weapon program. The variable itself is constructed using data from a declassified report issued by the Department of Energy, outlining the amounts of plutonium produced at the nation's primary reactor facilities (Department of Energy 1996). While the United States government ostensibly owns both the Savannah River Site and Hanford, they were developed, built and operated by the DuPont Corporation. These were all services which the United States government compensated the DuPont Corporation for providing. Which means that, during the height of plutonium production, DuPont was being paid to process plutonium fuel, which suggests that the company would have had a vested interest in seeing that plutonium production remained at profitable levels, especially after the incident at Three Mile Island.

The Chicago Tribune is used in this model for two reasons. The first of these is that the *Tribune* is a major, national newspaper. Currently, its average weekday circulation is over 439,731, while its Sunday circulation is 789,915 (Channick 2014). Its widespread circulation suggests that messages from the press regarding concerns over the Soviet Union or nuclear technology would reach a wide audience.

The second reason for using *The Chicago Tribune* is a matter of analytical practicality. Other models with U.S. citizens' confidence in the military using *The New York Times* to measure the influence of the press resulted in large multi-collinearity statistics. This being the case, the decision was made to exclude that equation in favor of focusing on the equation using the *Tribune* to represent the press.

According to Model 1, there is no significant association with confidence in the military, and the amount of concern displayed in *The Chicago Tribune*; the State of the Union (SOTU); or of nuclear fuel produced by the United States. The addition of the control variables in Model 2 changes this by not only significantly improving the model fit, but also revealing a significant relationship among the key variables. When the yearly size of the United States' active military personnel and its total stockpile of nuclear weapons are taken into account, the State of the Union Address is correlated with a significant decrease with citizens' confidence in the military ($B = -.043, p < .05$). The number of active military personnel is also a significant predictor with a similar relationship with confidence in the military ($B = -.008, p < .05$). It is only the size of the United States' nuclear arsenal that has a positive, significant

relationship with the United States' citizens' confidence in their military ($B = .001$, $p < .01$)

In Model 3, the yearly size of the Soviet Union's active military personnel is added to the analysis. Its inclusion renders the correlation of the size of the United States' military non-significant. However, the significance ($p < .05$) and direction of the State of the Union Address ($B = -.043$) and the United States' nuclear arsenal ($B = .001$) carry over into this model. The adjusted R^2 s of Models 2 and 3 ($R^2 = .529$ and $R^2 = .484$ respectively) indicate that the inclusion of all control variables does not actually improve the explanatory power of the model when compared to the previous iteration.

While these results will be discussed in detail later, they will be discussed here briefly. According to these analyses, in the face of pronouncements made by the Soviet Union on the strength and capabilities of their own military and nuclear arsenals, counter-statements made by the president in the State of the Union appear to have a negative impact on American confidence in their own forces. Not even the size of their own military has a positive impact on the citizens' confidence level. Only the size of their own nuclear arsenal appears to provide the citizens of the United States with a feeling of confidence in the martial abilities of their military. While it cannot be examined with these analyses, the possible cause of this reasoning may be a belief that the non-conventional arsenal—in the event that the conventional forces should prove to be inadequate—provides more than adequate force multiplication ability.

Table 1: Regression of Confidence in the Military on Soviet Nuclear Mentions in *The Chicago Tribune* and State of the Union Addresses from 1971-1990

	Model 1 B (s.e.)	Model 2 B (s.e.)	Model 3 ^a B (s.e.)
<i>The Chicago Tribune</i>	-0.003 (.002)	-0.003 (.002)	-0.003 (.002)
State of the Union Address	-0.041 (.024)	-0.043 (.019)*	-0.043 (.019)*
Yearly Plutonium Production	.001 (.002)	-0.001 (.002)	-0.001 (.002)
US Active Military Personnel		-0.008 (.003)*	-0.009 (.004)
US Nuclear Weapons Stockpile		.001 (4.75E-4)**	.001 (5.37E-4)* ^b
Soviet Union Active Military Personnel			.001 (.003)
F (d.f.)	2.575 (3)	4.596 (5)	3.504 (6)
Adjusted R ²	.228	.529	.484
N	16	16	16

*p < .05 **p < .01 (two-tailed tests)

^a Durbin-Watson: 2.504³

^b VIF: 2.155

³ A Durbin-Watson of 2 is generally considered to indicate that there is no evidence of positive or negative autocorrelation.

The next step in the analysis is determining the relationship between statements made by the President and the media. This is done for the purpose of determining what influence elites may have on the media. Tables 2 and 3 display the analyses using each of the State of the Union Addresses and yearly plutonium production regressed on article mentions from *The New York Times* and *The Chicago Tribune*. Articles were selected on the basis of being concerned with some element of the missile gap moral panic. These elements consist of: the missile gap, nuclear weapons, strategic defense concerns, the Soviet Union and Communism. Plutonium production is correlated with a yearly increase when taking into account both the active personnel numbers of both the Soviet Union and the United States, as well as the size of the United States' nuclear arsenal (see Model 3, Table 2 and 3). Plutonium production is correlated to a significant increase ($B = .082$, $p < .001$) in nuclear technology and Soviet-related mentions in *The New York Times*. Articles from *The Chicago Tribune* are also correlated with a significant increase ($B = .132$, $p < .01$) in mentions with plutonium production. In Model 1 (Tables 2 and 3) the State of the Union Addresses are also correlated with an increase in mentions from *The New York Times*, as well as *The Chicago Tribune* ($B = 1.472$ and $B = 4.799$ respectively, $p < .01$ for both). However, this increase is no longer significant when the sizes of both the United States' nuclear arsenal and its active personnel along with that of the Soviet Union are taken into account. In Models 2 and 3 in both analyses, the adjusted R^2 indicates that the inclusion of the Soviet military size does not greatly improve the model fit ($R^2 = .689$ and $R^2 = .677$; $R^2 = .252$ and $R^2 = .227$ respectively).

Table 2: Regression of Soviet Nuclear Mentions in *The New York Times* on State of the Union Address from 1955-1990

	Model 1 B (s.e.)	Model 2 B (s.e.)	Model 3 ^a B (s.e.)
State of the Union Address	1.472 (.686)*	1.396 (.721)	1.387 (.734)
Yearly Plutonium Production	.083 (.010)***	.088 (.012)***	.082 (.021)*** ^b
US Active Military Personnel		.041 (.052)	.049 (.058)
US Nuclear Weapons Stockpile		-.013 (.008)	-.011 (.011)
Soviet Union Active Military Personnel			-.033 (.097)
F (d.f.)	32.466 (2)	17.034 (4)	13.168 (5)
Adjusted R ²	.685	.689	.677
N	29	29	29

*p < .05

***p < .001 (two-tailed tests)

^a Durbin-Watson: 1.469

^b VIF: 3.813

Table 3: Regression of Soviet Nuclear Mentions in *The Chicago Tribune* on State of the Union Address from 1955-1990

	Model 1 B (s.e.)	Model 2 B (s.e.)	Model 3 ^a B (s.e.)
State of the Union Address	4.799 (2.049)*	3.932 (2.181)	3.966 (2.219)
Yearly Plutonium Production	.089 (.031)**	.110 (.036)**	.132 (.062)* ^b
US Active Military Personnel		-.108 (.157)	-.141 (.177)
US Nuclear Weapons Stockpile		-.019 (.025)	-.027 (.032)
Soviet Union Active Military Personnel			.130 (.292)
F (d.f.)	6.172 (2)	3.44 (4)	2.706 (5)
Adjusted R ²	.263	.252	.227
N	29	29	29

*p < .05

**p < .01 (two-tailed tests)

^a Durbin-Watson: 1.198

^b VIF: 3.813

The previous analyses suggest that while the State of the Union Address can influence the media, the strength of that influence is reduced once objective factors are controlled for. This brings us to the next series of steps in the analysis where the State of the Union Addresses are broken down into key components to determine their influence on the media. Tables 4 and 5 report the combined results of bellicose, peaceful, substantive and statements found in the State of the Union Address. Each model represents the analysis using these statements found in the State of the Union

Address, along with controlling variables regressed on *The New York Times* and *The Chicago Tribune*. Both papers use a similar system of statements to identify the number of articles devoted to the threat presented by the Soviet Union. Once again taking into account the number of both countries' active military personnel, and the United States' nuclear arsenal, Model 2 (Table 4) indicates that yearly plutonium production correlates to a significant increase ($B = .080, p < .001$) in the number of nuclear and Soviet-related mentions in *The New York Times*. This is a slight decrease in correlation than what is found with the exclusion of the Soviet military size from the analysis ($B = .089, p < .001$), though significance remains the same. However the adjusted R^2 found in the model that includes this control variable indicates that the inclusion of the Soviet military does not significantly improve the model fit ($R^2 = .678$ and $R^2 = .668$).

Model 3 reports the results of using the number of substantive and symbolic statements found in the State of the Union Addresses, along with the total amount of plutonium produced in a year. In this analysis, a symbolic statement is a non-specific utterance (Ex. The national defense is strong) while a substantive statement is more specific (Ex. Spending on national defense will be increased). Overall, after taking in each nation's active personnel size and the size of the United States' nuclear arsenal, the total number of substantive statements found in a State of the Union Address are correlated with an increase in the number of nuclear and Soviet-related mentions in *The New York Times* ($B = 4.187, p < .05$). The year's total output of plutonium is positively related to the number of mentions found in *The New Times* ($B = .079, p < .001$). Including this variable results in an increase in correlation for both variables

in the model where the size of the Soviet military is excluded from the analysis ($B=4.129$, $p<.05$ and $B=.087$, $p<.001$ respectively). According to the adjusted R^2 between the models where Soviet military size is included ($R^2=.709$ and $R^2=.699$ respectively) the addition of Soviet military size does not improve the model's explanatory power.

According to Model 2 (Table 5), neither the presence of bellicose/peaceful language in each of the State of the Union Addresses, nor yearly plutonium production is correlated with nuclear and Soviet-related mentions in *The Chicago Tribune*. However, with the exclusion of Soviet military size from the analysis, the strength of the correlation with yearly plutonium production decreases, but becomes significant ($B=.115$, $p<.01$). The adjusted R^2 between models without and with the control variable indicates that the inclusion of Soviet military does not significantly improve the model fit ($R^2=.230$ and $R^2=.197$). In neither *The New York Times* nor *The Chicago Tribune* does the total number of bellicose or peaceful statements influence the number of nuclear and Soviet related mentions.⁴

According to the results of the equation using substantive/symbolic statements in Model 3 (Table 5), it is only plutonium production that correlates with an increase in nuclear and Soviet-related mentions in *The Chicago Tribune*. Though the correlation between plutonium production and mentions in the newspaper increases when Soviet military personnel strength is added to the analysis ($B=.132$, $p<.05$). The significance of that relationship actually decreases from the analysis in

⁴ Though the standard error for those variables is high, the measure of multicollinearity statistics for both bellicose and peaceful statements remains below 2 in both regressions.

which just the sizes of the United States' military and nuclear arsenal are included (B= .110, p< .01). According to the adjusted R² between Models that do and do not include the military control variable (R²= .218 and R²= .190 respectively) the addition of Soviet military size does not improve the model's explanatory power. Though they are correlated with increases in nuclear and Soviet-related mentions in the *New York Times*, at no point does the presence of substantive statements appear to have any correlation with the number of nuclear and Soviet related mentions in *The Chicago Tribune*; the presence of symbolic statements are not correlated with nuclear and Soviet-related mentions in either *The New York Times* or *The Chicago Tribune*.

Table 4: Regression of Soviet Nuclear Mentions in *The New York Times* on Peaceful/Bellicose and Substantive/Symbolic Mentions from 1955 to 1990

	Model 1 ^a B (s.e.)	Model 2 ^c B (s.e.)	Model 3 ^e B (s.e.)
Peaceful Statements		2.425 (2.328)	
Bellicose Statements		.915 (1.165)	
Substantive			4.187 (1.847)* ^f
Symbolic			-4.723 (3.737)
State of the Union Address	1.387 (.734)		
Yearly Plutonium Production	.082 (.021) ^{***b}	.080 (.022) ^{***d}	.079 (.020) ^{***g}
US Active Military Personnel	.049 (.058)	.059 (.063)	.048 (.056)
US Nuclear Weapons Stockpile	-.011 (.011)	-.009 (.011)	-.011 (.010)
Soviet Union Active Military Personnel	-.033 (.097)	-.054 (.108)	-.045 (.094)
F (d.f.)	13.168 (5)	10.706 (6)	12.249 (6)
Adjusted R ²	.677	.668	.699
N	29	29	29

*p < .05 ***p < .001 (two-tailed tests)

^a Durbin-Watson: 1.469

^b VIF: 3.813

^c Durbin-Watson: 1.514

^d VIF: 4.106

^e Durbin-Watson: 1.591

^f VIF: 3.872

^g VIF: 3.856

Table 5: Regression of Soviet Nuclear Mentions in *The Chicago Tribune* on Peaceful/Bellicose and Substantive/Symbolic Mentions from 1955 to 1990

	Model 1 ^a B (s.e.)	Model 2 ^c B (s.e.)	Model 3 ^d B (s.e.)
Peaceful Statements		7.065 (7.068)	
Bellicose Statements		2.383 (3.537)	
Substantive			4.671 (5.925)
Symbolic			1.791 (11.984)
State of the Union Address	3.966 (2.219)		
Yearly Plutonium Production	.132 (.062)* ^b	.125 (.066)	.132 (.064)* ^e
US Active Military Personnel	-.141 (.177)	-.112 (.190)	-.142 (.181)
US Nuclear Weapons Stockpile	-.027 (.032)	-.023 (.034)	-.028 (.033)
Soviet Union Active Military Personnel	.130 (.292)	.063 (.329)	.127 (.300)
F (d.f.)	2.706 (5)	2.189 (6)	2.134 (6)
Adjusted R ²	.227	.197	.190
N	29	29	29

*p < .05 (two-tailed tests)

^a Durbin-Watson: 1.198

^b VIF: 3.813

^c Durbin-Watson: 1.184

^d Durbin-Watson: 1.163

^e VIF: 3.856

The previous analyses suggest that bellicose, peaceful and symbolic statements have little influence on media mentions. It would appear that there is

some influence found in substantive statements, but that relationship holds for only *The New York Times*. Therefore, the analysis will now move to determine if other forms of specific statement made in the State of the Union Address have a greater impact on the media. Tables 6 and 7 display the analyses using the number of military and national threat statements found in the State of the Union Addresses, along with continued use of the yearly plutonium production amounts. When all elements of the analysis are accounted for (Table 6, Model 2), yearly plutonium production is correlated with a significant increase ($B = .085$, $p < .001$) in the number of nuclear and Soviet-related mentions in *The New York Times*. The correlation between yearly plutonium production and media mentions is greater ($B = .091$, $p < .001$) with the exclusion of the Soviet Union's active military from the analysis. The adjusted R^2 ($R^2 = .655$ with the exclusion of Soviet military size and $R^2 = .642$ with the inclusion of Soviet military size) indicates that while the inclusion of all control variables causes a slight decrease in the correlation coefficient, it does not actually improve the explanatory power of the model when compared to the previous iteration.

Analyzing the presence of national threat statements, while including the size of the Soviet and United States' active military personnel, as well as the latter's nuclear weapon stockpile (See Table 6, Model 2), indicates that there is a significant correlation ($B = .087$, $p < .001$) between yearly plutonium production and nuclear/Soviet-related mentions in *The New York Times*. The size of this correlation decreases from the model without Soviet military size ($B = .090$, $p < .001$) to the model with that variable. However, the adjusted R^2 change ($R^2 = .670$ for the model

without Soviet military size and $R^2 = .656$ for the model with Soviet military size) indicates that there was no great improvement to the model with the inclusion of Soviet military size.

Model 2 of Table 7 indicates that yearly plutonium production continues to be positively correlated with nuclear and Soviet-related mentions in *The Chicago Tribune* ($B = .145$, $p < .05$). This is an increase from the correlation from a previous model that did not include Soviet military size as a control variable ($B = .118$, $p < .01$). The adjusted R^2 between those models ($R^2 = .212$ for the model that did not include Soviet military size and $R^2 = .188$ for the model that did include Soviet military size) again indicates that the addition of the final control variable does not improve the explanatory power of the model. The analyses using *The New York Times* and *The Chicago Tribune* suggest that the presence of statements regarding potential military threats in the State of the Union Address is in no way correlated with Soviet nuclear mentions in the media.

Model 3 in Table 7 indicates that plutonium production continues to be correlated with increases in nuclear and Soviet-related mentions in *The Chicago Tribune*. According to the analysis, plutonium production is positively correlated ($B = .147$, $p < .05$) with an increase of mentions in the media. This is an increase over a previous model's correlation ($B = .115$, $p < .01$), however the adjusted R^2 between that model and Model 3 ($R^2 = .216$ and $R^2 = .195$ respectively) indicates that there is no increased explanatory power between the two models. In neither analysis does the presence of statements regarding threats to the nation in the State of the Union Address correlate with increased mentions in the media.

Table 6: Regression of Soviet Nuclear Mentions in *The New York Times* on Military and National Threat Statements from 1955 to 1990

	Model 1 ^a B (s.e.)	Model 2 ^c B (s.e.)	Model 3 ^e B (s.e.)
Military Threat Statements		1.405 (1.505)	
National Threat Statements			7.665 (5.581)
State of the Union Address	1.387 (.734)		
Yearly Plutonium Production	.082 (.021) ^{***b}	.085 (.022) ^{***d}	.087 (.021) ^{***f}
US Active Military Personnel	.049 (.058)	.034 (.061)	.037 (.060)
US Nuclear Weapons Stockpile	-.011 (.011)	-.012 (.011)	-.013 (.011)
Soviet Union Active Military Personnel	-.033 (.097)	-.030 (.102)	-.017 (.101)
F (d.f)	13.168 (5)	11.408 (5)	12.070 (5)
Adjusted R ²	.677	.642	.656
N	29	29	29

***p < .001 (two-tailed tests)

^a Durbin-Watson: 1.469

^b VIF: 3.813

^c Durbin-Watson: 1.454

^d VIF: 3.881

^e Durbin-Watson: 1.462

^f VIF: 3.896

Table 7: Regression of Soviet Nuclear Mentions in *The Chicago Tribune* on Military and National Threat Statements from 1955 to 1990

	Model 1 ^a B (s.e.)	Model 2 ^c B (s.e.)	Model 3 ^e B (s.e.)
Military Threat Statements		6.057 (4.428)	
National Threat Statements			24.254 (16.678)
State of the Union Address	3.966 (2.219)		
Yearly Plutonium Production	.132 (.062)* ^b	.145 (.064)* ^d	.147 (.064)* ^f
US Active Military Personnel	-.141 (.177)	-.175 (.179)	-.172 (.178)
US Nuclear Weapons Stockpile	-.027 (.032)	-.032 (.032)	-.033 (.032)
Soviet Union Active Military Personnel	.130 (.292)	.151 (.301)	.181 (.302)
F (d.f.)	2.706 (5)	2.341 (5)	2.408 (5)
Adjusted R ²	.227	.188	.195
N	29	29	29

*p < .05 (two-tailed tests)

^a Durbin-Watson: 1.198

^b VIF: 3.813

^c Durbin-Watson: 1.147

^d VIF: 3.881

^e Durbin-Watson: 1.106

^f VIF: 3.896

Tables 8 and 9 report the analyses using the number of statements addressing the issues of the economic threats presented by the Soviets, and threats that the Soviets posed to our allies found in each of the State of the Union Addresses. The analyses will also include yearly plutonium production. Model 2 in Table 8 indicates that increases in yearly plutonium production corresponds to a significant increase in nuclear and Soviet-related mentions in *The New York Times* ($B = .079$, $p < .001$). There is a decrease in the correlation found in a previous model ($B = .088$, $p < .001$) that does not include Soviet military size in the analysis. However, the adjusted R^2 between those models ($R^2 = .666$ without the presence of Soviet military size and $R^2 = .656$ including Soviet military size) indicates that there is no significant improvement to the model with the addition of Soviet military size to the analysis.

When allied threat statements are substituted for economic threat statements in the regression as displayed in Model 3 (Table 8), plutonium production significantly correlates with increases in nuclear and Soviet-related mentions in *The New York Times* ($B = .081$, $p < .001$). There is a significant increase in the coefficient of correlation ($B = .086$, $p < .001$) when the size of the Soviet military is not present in the analysis. The adjusted R^2 between those models ($R^2 = .672$ with the exclusion of Soviet military size and $R^2 = .660$ with the inclusion of Soviet military size) indicates that the addition of Soviet military size does not greatly impact the model's explanatory power.

According to Model 2 in Table 9, there is no significant correlation with any of the independent variables and nuclear/Soviet-related mentions in *The Chicago Tribune*. When Soviet military size is excluded from the analysis, yearly plutonium

production is positively correlated ($B = .110$, $p < .01$) with an increase in nuclear and Soviet-related mentions in *The Chicago Tribune*. The adjusted R^2 between models that do and do not include Soviet military size in the analysis ($R^2 = .191$ and $R^2 = .221$ respectively) indicates that there is no increased explanatory power with the addition of Soviet military size to the analysis. The presence of statements regarding economic threats in the State of the Union Address does not appear to be correlated with nuclear and Soviet-related mentions in the media.

According to Model 3 in Table 9, only yearly plutonium production is significantly correlated ($B = .129$, $p < .01$) with an increase in nuclear or Soviet-related mentions in *The Chicago Tribune*. When the size of the Soviet military is excluded from the analysis, plutonium production remains significantly correlated ($B = .104$, $p < .01$) with an increase in Soviet-related mentions in *The Chicago Tribune*. According to the adjusted R^2 between models that do and do not include Soviet military size ($R^2 = .194$ and $R^2 = .219$ respectively) the addition of Soviet military size does not greatly affect the model's explanatory power. Furthermore, the presence of statements regarding economic threats or potential threats to allies is not correlated with an increase in nuclear and Soviet-related mentions in either *The New York Times* or *The Chicago Tribune*.

Table 8: Regression of Soviet Nuclear Mentions in *The New York Times* on Economic and Allied Threat Statements from 1955 to 1990

	Model 1 ^a B (s.e.)	Model 2 ^c B (s.e.)	Model 3 ^e B (s.e.)
Economic Threat Statements		21.311 (15.673)	
Allied Threat Statements			5.151 (3.518)
State of the Union Address	1.387 (.734)		
Yearly Plutonium Production	.082 (.021) ^{***b}	.079 (.021) ^{***d}	.081 (.021) ^{***f}
US Active Military Personnel	.049 (.058)	.036 (.060)	.037 (.059)
US Nuclear Weapons Stockpile	-.011 (.011)	-.009 (.011)	-.011 (.011)
Soviet Union Active Military Personnel	-.033 (.097)	-.052 (.100)	-.028 (.100)
F (d.f.)	13.168 (5)	12.045 (5)	12.237 (5)
Adjusted R ²	.677	.656	.660
N	29	29	29

***p < .001 (two-tailed tests)

^a Durbin-Watson: 1.469

^b VIF: 3.813

^c Durbin-Watson: 1.437

^d VIF: 3.867

^e Durbin-Watson: 1.409

^f VIF: 3.822

Table 9: Regression of Soviet Nuclear Mentions in *The Chicago Tribune* on Economic and Allied Threat Statements from 1955 to 1990

	Model 1 ^a B (s.e.)	Model 2 ^c B (s.e.)	Model 3 ^d B (s.e.)
Economic Threat Statements		65.720 (46.944)	
Allied Threat Statements			15.215 (10.576)
State of the Union Address	3.966 (2.219)		
Yearly Plutonium Production	.132 (.062) ^{*b}	.122 (.064)	.129 (.063) ^{*e}
US Active Military Personnel	-.141 (.177)	-.176 (.178)	-.175 (.178)
US Nuclear Weapons Stockpile	-.027 (.032)	-.022 (.033)	-.029 (.032)
Soviet Union Active Military Personnel	.130 (.292)	.071 (.300)	.144 (.299)
F (d.f.)	2.706 (5)	2.365 (5)	2.395 (5)
Adjusted R ²	.227	.191	.194
N	29	29	29

*p < .05 (two-tailed tests)

^a Durbin-Watson: 1.198

^b VIF: 3.813

^c Durbin-Watson: 1.139

^d Durbin-Watson: 1.141

^e VIF: 3.822

Tables 10 and 11 report the analyses using the number of statements regarding ideological threats found in the State of the Union Address and the percentage of the speeches that are devoted to the Soviet threat. As mentioned earlier, the percentage of each SOTU address devoted to nuclear and Soviet-related statements is measured by counting the number of words devoted to those issues, and constructing a percentage based on the total number of words in the speech as a whole. Yearly plutonium production levels are also included. According to Model 2 (Table 10), plutonium production is significantly correlated with an increase ($B = .080, p < .01$) in nuclear and Soviet-related mentions in *The New York Times*. There is a slight increase in correlation ($B = .086, p < .001$) with the exclusion of the size of the Soviet military from the analysis. According to the adjusted R^2 between models that do and do not include the Soviet military control variable ($R^2 = .632$ and $R^2 = .644$ respectively) the addition of Soviet military size does not improve the model's explanatory power.

According to Model 3 (Table 10), the percentage of the speech dedicated to nuclear and Soviet-related statements is significantly correlated ($B = 8.547, p < .01$) with an increase in the number of nuclear and Soviet-related statements found in the *New York Times*. Additionally, yearly plutonium production is also significantly correlated ($B = .085, p < .001$) with an increase in nuclear and Soviet-related mentions in *The New York Times*. There is an increase in the correlation for both speech percentage and yearly plutonium production ($B = 8.373, p < .01$ and $B = .081, p < .001$ respectively) as compared to a model where the size of the Soviet military is excluded from the analysis. According to the adjusted R^2 between models that do

and do not include Soviet military size ($R^2 = .727$ and $R^2 = .737$ respectively) the addition of Soviet military size does not improve the model's explanatory power.

According to Model 2 in Table 11, neither the presence of statements regarding ideological threats nor yearly plutonium production is correlated with an increase in nuclear or Soviet-related mentions in *The Chicago Tribune*. When the size of the Soviet military is excluded from the analysis, plutonium production is correlated with an increase ($B = .104$, $p < .05$) in the number of nuclear and Soviet-related mentions in *The Chicago Tribune*. According to the adjusted R^2 between models that do and do not include Soviet military size ($R^2 = .132$ and $R^2 = .162$ respectively) the addition of Soviet military size does not greatly influence the model's explanatory power. Furthermore, the presence of statements regarding ideological threats to allies is not correlated with an increase in nuclear and Soviet-related mentions in either *The New York Times* or *The Chicago Tribune*.

Model 3 in Table 11 indicates that plutonium production is once again correlated ($B = .137$, $p < .05$) with increases in nuclear and Soviet-related mentions in *The Chicago Tribune*. This is greater than the correlation found in a model where the size of the Soviet military is excluded, however they are similar in significance ($B = .101$, $p < .05$). According to the adjusted R^2 between models that do and do not include Soviet military size ($R^2 = .198$ and $R^2 = .214$ respectively) the addition of Soviet military size does not improve the model's explanatory power. According to the analysis, it would appear that the percentage of the State of the Union Address devoted to the nuclear and Soviet-related statements is uncorrelated with Soviet nuclear mentions in *The Chicago Tribune*.

Table 10: Regression of Soviet Nuclear Mentions in *The New York Times* on Ideological Threat Statements and Speech Percentage from 1955 to 1990

	Model 1 ^a B (s.e.)	Model 2 ^c B (s.e.)	Model 3 ^e B (s.e.)
Ideological Threat Statements		7.179 (17.098)	
Speech Percentage			8.547 (2.919)**
State of the Union Address	1.387 (.734)		
Yearly Plutonium Production	.082 (.021)*** ^b	.080 (.023)** ^d	.085 (.019)*** ^f
US Active Military Personnel	.049 (.058)	.031 (.062)	.047 (.053)
US Nuclear Weapons Stockpile	-.011 (.011)	-.011 (.011)	-.012 (.010)
Soviet Union Active Military Personnel	-.033 (.097)	-.040 (.103)	.023 (.091)
F (d.f.)	13.168 (5)	10.955 (5)	16.429 (5)
Adjusted R ²	.677	.632	.727
N	29	29	29

p < .01 *p < .001 (two-tailed tests)

^a Durbin-Watson: 1.469

^b VIF: 3.813

^c Durbin-Watson: 1.387

^d VIF: 4.252

^e Durbin-Watson: 1.437

^f VIF: 3.821

Table 11: Regression of Soviet Nuclear Mentions in *The Chicago Tribune* on Ideological Threat Statements and Speech Percentage from 1955 to 1990

	Model 1 ^a B (s.e.)	Model 2 ^c B (s.e.)	Model 3 ^d B (s.e.)
Ideological Threat Statements		23.506 (51.287)	
Speech Percentage			14.453 (9.770)
State of the Union Address	3.966 (2.219)		
Yearly Plutonium Production	.132 (.062)* ^b	.123 (.069)	.137 (.063)* ^e
US Active Military Personnel	-.141 (.177)	-.191 (.186)	-.171 (.178)
US Nuclear Weapons Stockpile	-.027 (.032)	-.028 (.034)	-.031 (.032)
Soviet Union Active Military Personnel	.130 (.292)	.110 (.310)	.217 (.306)
F (d.f.)	2.706 (5)	1.882 (5)	2.428 (5)
Adjusted R ²	.227	.132	.198
N	29	29	29

*p < .05 (two-tailed tests)

^a Durbin-Watson: 1.198

^b VIF: 3.813

^c Durbin-Watson: .952

^d Durbin-Watson: 1.055

^e VIF: 3.821

Starting with predicting confidence in the military, these data suggest that the SOTUA does have an influence on public opinion, as well as potentially influencing the belief that more money should be spent on the military. However, when the analysis uses the number of articles dedicated to the Soviet threat, it would appear that the elites have some influence on the media, but that influence is mitigated when controlling for objective factors such as plutonium production. Breaking the SOTUA into its component parts, it would appear that the only variables that have an effect on the media are substantive statements and the percentage of the speech dedicated to the Soviet threat. But this effect does not appear across both newspapers. It would appear that substantive statements and the speech percentages are only correlated with increases in Soviet nuclear mentions in *The New York Times*. This result holds when the objective measure of plutonium production is included in the equation. Furthermore, the analyses would suggest that production levels have a greater influence on the media than elite rhetoric.

As was stated at the start of this chapter, the purpose of these analyses was to demonstrate the increase in spending on our nuclear arsenal was attributable to an elite-engineered moral panic. It was therefore necessary to demonstrate the ability of presidents to influence public opinion to generate concern in the face of objective evidence to the contrary. Through the analyses performed, there is clear support that presidents can influence public opinion. However while there is modest support that elites can influence the media, there is no real support that this influence can be accomplished through specific rhetoric.

In sum, these analyses indicate that Presidents do influence public opinion. This finding combined with the literature cited in the previous chapter concerned with Presidential influence indicates that the central premise of this research remains viable (Bonn 2010;Cohen 1995;Hawdon and Wood 2014;Hawdon 2001;Hoffman and Howard 2006;Oliver 2002;Wanta et al. 1989). I now move to the historical analysis in the following chapter.

Ch. 5 DATA ANALYSIS—HISTORICAL ANALYSIS

The previous chapter outlined in detail the quantitative analysis of news articles to determine what, if any, influence that elites have on public opinion. However, because I lacked sufficient data to conduct a direct analysis, a series of proxy measures were relied upon. Thus, more evidence is needed to further illuminate the results provided by the quantitative analysis. To further enhance the picture provided by the quantitative analysis, a qualitative analysis of editorials and letters to the editors was performed. Unless otherwise noted in the text, each paper's respective editors wrote all editorials, while all letters submitted were by regular citizens.

Using the data displayed in Figures 1 and 2, I intend to construct a narrative connecting the concern displayed in the press and the mentions made by the president in the State of the Union Addresses to then current events. For the sake of convenience, the periods are broken up by decade. The exception being the 1950s, only the latter half of which will be covered. Any spikes of concern in each decade that exceed the level established by the launch of the Sputnik satellites will be covered in greater detail. The results obtained by the qualitative analysis paint both a positive and negative picture (vis-à-vis the hypothesis).

In general, the analysis shows that newspaper editorials were in support of the main narrative underlying the strategic weapon moral panic. In *The New York Times*, this support begins to wane starting in the 1960s. While there were plenty of statements to the effect of the “evil” of the Soviet Union, the “good” of the United

States, and the necessity of strategic weapons, the presentation of the issue is complex. This research found three main themes within the moral panic presented by the editorials. We begin by reviewing these themes.

Themes of the Moral Panic Narrative

While *The New York Times* strongly supported nuclear weapons and the narrative of the moral panic, there have always been individuals who wrote in to the newspaper criticizing this stance (even during the height Cold War). Starting in the 1960s (but most strongly in the late 1970s and into the 1980s), *The New York Times* began to question the necessities of nuclear weapons. Despite the lack of complete ideological domination of the moral panic (i.e. given the change in editorial stance by *The Times*, and critical letters) the moral panic continued anyway. Stated another way, despite a moral panic narrative that defense sector and political elites presented by the media—that was not totally *believed*—decisions regarding strategic nuclear weapons were made anyway. Generally those decisions were ones that favored certain political and military sectors. Which suggests that while the media may have contributed to the issue, there were other institutional forces at work. This will be addressed later in the 1970s and 1980s, where it becomes particularly noticeable. As was stated previously, three themes associated with the issue of the Soviet moral panic (vis-à-vis nuclear weapons) are present within the period analyzed. Though the themes appear in the print media, they do not appear with as much detail as they do in any of the State of the Union addresses delivered

by the presidents. Further discussion for the potential reasons for the absence of the themes in said speeches will be given further on.

The first theme is rather simple despite its impossibility: **It would be possible for the United States to win a nuclear war.** To expand the thought: it would be possible for the United States to find a technological solution that would make it possible to use nuclear weapons as a viable form of warfare. “Viable” usually meant to mean completely defeating both the nuclear weapons of the enemy and his defenses, while also allowing the United States to maintain negligible casualties from counter-attack. This theme is rather curious for two reasons, the first being that it displays the intent to achieve first-strike capability. Though the United States had no officially stated policy against first-strike attacks, once the Soviets achieved retaliatory capability there was hesitation (on both sides) to initiate a first-strike. The second is the effect such announcements of achieving the technological ability to win a nuclear war had on our Soviet counterparts. Specifically, the likely impact it had on Soviet strategic technological development, as well as on disarmament negotiations.

The second theme usually appeared during our negotiations with the Soviets for reductions in strategic arms. **The United States must be allowed to have a strategic weapons arsenal advantage over the Soviet Union.** This often manifested as a standing demand, in one form or another, that the Soviets halt all testing and production of nuclear weapons while we continued to test and construct weapons to either gain or maintain our lead. Also associated with this theme was

issuance of such demands during negotiations. What makes this demand curious is that such demands were sure to stall or halt entirely the negotiation process. In their work on the bargaining model of warfare, Filson and Werner (2002) find that there are incentives to misrepresent private information in both the start and conclusion of wars. It is possible that if these motivations were actually present in the strategic weapons negotiation process, they could have represented a form of brinkmanship found in nuclear negotiations (Russell 1959; Schelling 1980). Furthermore there was a consistent refusal to acknowledge—or even attempt to understand—why the Soviets would not want to halt their weapon tests and construction while we continuously demanded strategic weapon dominance.

Finally: **The United States never sought to create a first-strike arsenal, our arsenal was only as large as it was because of the Soviets.** While we constructed and maintained what most observers agreed was an efficient first-strike arsenal, we consistently denied that we were doing so intentionally while taking offense (diplomatically) whenever the Soviets doubted the intended purpose of our weapons. Historically, our stance was that ours was an arsenal for defensive (second-strike, retaliatory) purposes. It would always and only be the Soviets that would attack first. Therefore, our arsenal had to be of the scope that it was to match their strength, deterring them from attacking in the process. This posturing clearly reflects balance of power theories of war, particularly neorealism (See Waltz 1979).

Let us now turn to the historic analysis in detail.

Ch. 6 Setting the Baseline: Grassroots Concerns: 1955-1959

Figure 1 reports the number of articles in the NYT and Chicago Tribune dedicated to the Soviets and the missile gap each year from 1955 through 1990. Figure 2 reports the number of times the president talks about the Soviets and the missile gap during each year's SOTU address. According to the data presented in these figures, the heightened levels of concern displayed during the 1955-1959 period for nuclear technology and the Soviets demonstrated by the media and President Eisenhower matches that recorded in literature covering this period. Multiple authors have recorded the initial levels of public and political concern generated both at home and abroad by the launch of the Sputnik satellites (See Marlin 1987;Morring 2007;Peoples 2008;Siddiqi 2003).

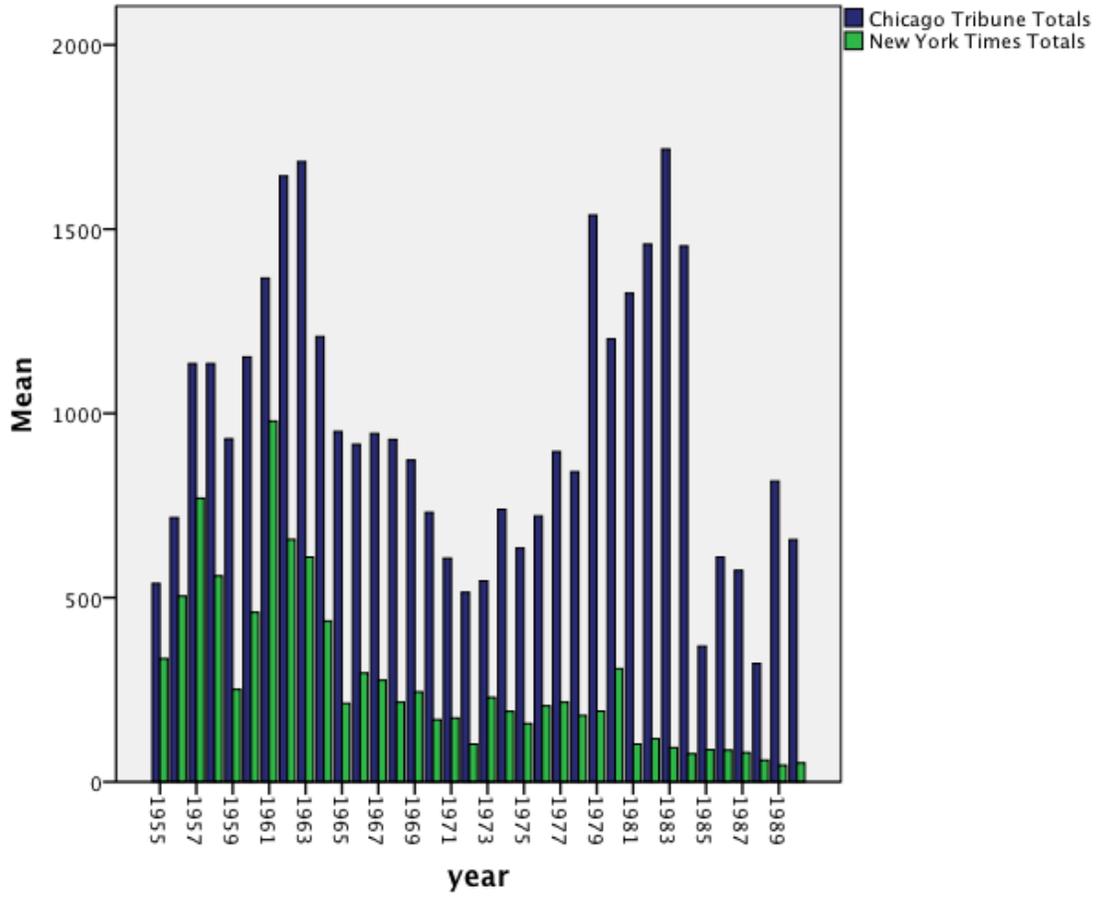


Figure 1:Media Concern

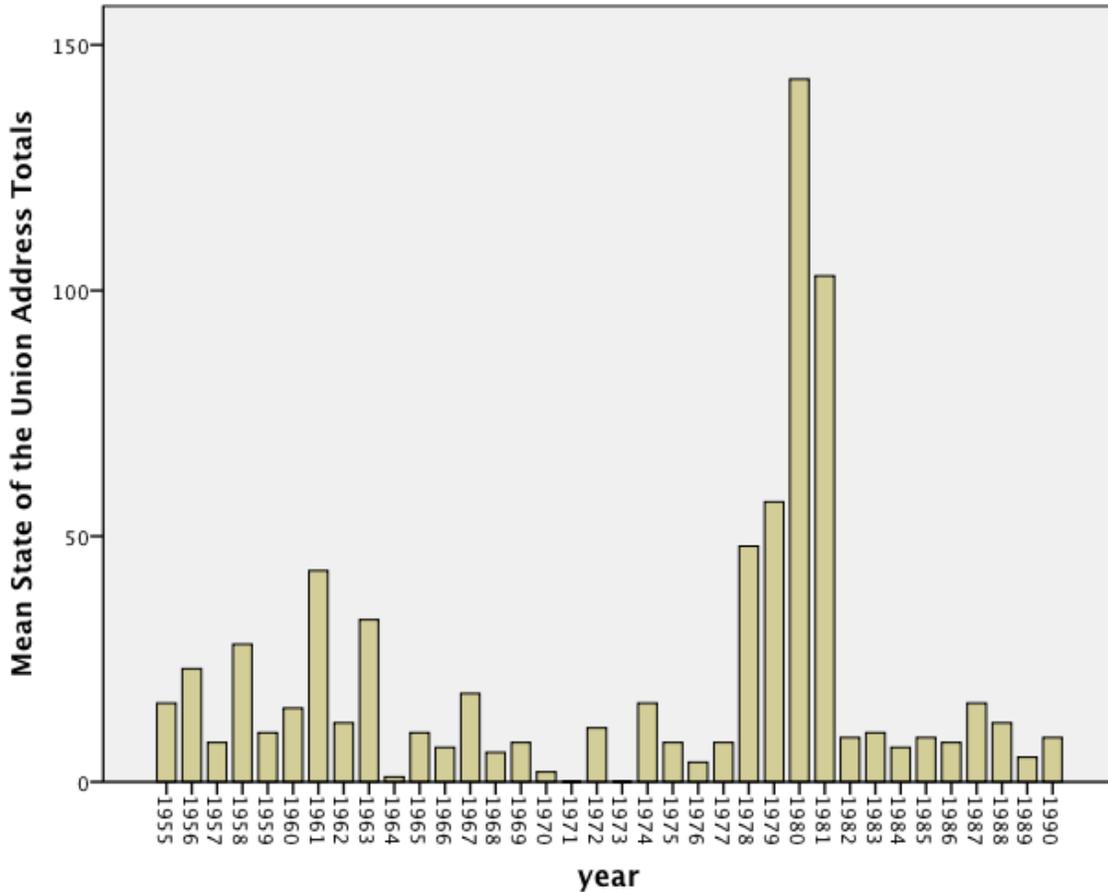


Figure 2: Presidential Concern

There were understandable reasons for the broad concerns the American public expressed toward the Soviets during this period. On the broad, historical level, 1955 saw the signing of the Warsaw Pact. This event further signaled the drawing of lines between the East and the West (Lewis 1982; Mastny and Byrne 2005). But at the same time, while the Soviet Union claimed to have tested a hydrogen weapon of their own, the United States still had a higher number of nuclear devices than the Soviet Union (Garwin and Charpak 2001). While President Eisenhower was not one to shy away from the idea of peace, in 1955 his statements

are pointed toward what threats the Free World faced. While Eisenhower discusses in his annual speech the threat presented by the Soviet Union, it is worth noting that the focus of that threat is not nuclear in nature. At no point does Eisenhower deny the threat presented by the military apparatus of the Soviet Union, nor does he deny the threat of their possession of nuclear weapons. But in keeping with his policy of controlling the size of the United States' nuclear arsenal, he focuses on conventional military power as a deterrent to Soviet aggression. Still, there is a portion of the Soviet moral panic narrative here in the description of the Soviets as an ambitious, militaristic power that seeks only to dominate the entire planet.

The massive military machines and ambitions of the Soviet-Communist bloc still create uneasiness in the world. All of us are aware of the continuing reliance of the Soviet Communists on military force, of the power of their weapons, of their present resistance to realistic armament limitation, and of their continuing effort to dominate or intimidate free nations on their periphery. Their steadily growing power includes an increasing strength in nuclear weapons. This power, combined with the proclaimed intentions of the Communist leaders to communize the world, is the threat confronting us today.

To protect our nations and our peoples from the catastrophe of a nuclear holocaust, free nations must maintain countervailing military power to persuade the Communists of the futility of seeking their ends through aggression. If Communist rulers understand that America's response to aggression will be swift and decisive--that never shall we buy peace at the expense of honor or faith--they will be powerfully deterred from launching a military venture engulfing their own peoples and many others in disaster. This, of course, is merely world stalemate. But in this stalemate each of us may and must exercise his high duty to strive in every honorable way for enduring peace. (Eisenhower 1955)

The Gallup Poll survey for 1955 suggests that Eisenhower's statements had some effect on the public at the time (See Table 12). A majority of the respondents (73%) were certain that the United States would enter another world war within

their lifetime. Though it is not explicitly stated, it can be assumed that most respondents would consider a world war during this period being one between the United States and the Soviet-Communist bloc. And again, much as it is described in the speech, many of the respondents do not regard the Soviets or their allies as being possessed of a significant—or significantly dangerous—number of non-conventional weapons. When asked if they thought that Russia had the edge on hydrogen weapons, an overwhelming 77% responded in the negative. Similarly, when asked if Russia could knock out the United States with a surprise hydrogen weapon attack, 70% considered it as not possible. However, that does not stop a majority of the respondents from feeling the use of the atomic bomb against Chinese Communists both possible and preferable. Though, curiously, said respondents were less positive when it came to the use of hydrogen weapons.

Table 12: *The Gallup Poll* survey 1955-544-K

	Positive Response	Negative Response
1955-1. Do you think we are likely to get into another world war in your lifetime	73%	18%
1955-14. Do you think Russia has the edge on the United States in atom and hydrogen bombs?	9%	77%
1955-15. Do you think Russia would be able, now, to knock out the United States with a surprise all-out atom and H-bomb attack?	20%	70%
1955-16a. If we should get into a war with Red China, do you think atom bombs will be used?	63%	25%
1955-16b. If we should get into a war with Red China, do you think hydrogen bombs will be used?	46%	36%
1955-17a. If we should get into a war with Red China, do you think we should use atom bombs?	55%	33%
1955-17b. If we should get into a war with Red China, do you think we should use hydrogen bombs?	44%	43%
1955-18b. Would you tell me what is meant by the "fall-out" of an H-bomb?	17%	9%

By 1956, the data would suggest that concern with atomic/nuclear weapons was high amongst the public, the media and the president (See Table 13). Events of that year solidified that concern. Given that 1956 saw the occurrence of the Hungarian Revolution and the Suez Crisis, it is not surprising that there would be an increase in tension. Both of these events played significant roles in stimulating U.S. concern about the Soviets.

Soviet Aggression and the Hungarian Revolution

During the Hungarian Revolution, what started as a student demonstration turned into a revolt that led to the collapse of the Hungarian government, and the rise of multiple militia forces that began engaging Soviet forces in Hungary (Lendvai 2008; Matthews 2007; Sebestyen 2006; Litván 1996). Prior to the revolution, Hungary's post-war economy was overburdened with having to pay reparations to the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia while simultaneously bearing the costs of Soviet garrisons (Litván 1996). This situation was not improved by the Five Year Plan imposed by Mátyás Rákosi in the wake of a purge that severely curtailed the ranks of the professional class (Litván 1996). However, economic reform was not the only issue that concerned the students, journalists and writers that were actively critical of Hungary's then government (Lendvai 2008; Litván 1996; Matthews 2007; Sebestyen 2006). There were demands for independence

from foreign powers, land reform, and entrance into the United Nations (Lendvai 2008; Matthews 2007; Sebestyen 2006; Litván 1996).

What began initially as a peaceful demonstration on October 23 turned into a multi-day confrontation with Soviet forces; this conflict ended eventually with a ceasefire arrangement on the 28, and the withdrawal of most Soviet troops from Budapest by the 30 (Lendvai 2008; Litván 1996; Matthews 2007; Sebestyen 2006). By November 1, a new government was declared and with it an announcement of Hungary's intention to withdraw from the Warsaw Pact (Lendvai 2008; Litván 1996; Matthews 2007; Sebestyen 2006). Initially, the Soviets were hesitant to intervene once more against Hungary and its revolutionary government for a second time. A decision influenced by factors such as the then concurrent Suez Canal Crisis, and a desire by Khrushchev to avoid making the same mistakes as the British and French (Mastny 2002). But as History shows, the Soviets did decide to intervene once more, but there is some historical debate as to what extent Hungary's decision to withdraw from the Warsaw Pact had on the Soviet decision to intervene once again (Sebestyen 2006). Though there is some indication that the alienation of some of the Party's more conservative elements in the wake of de-Stalinization would mean that many members would not tolerate non-intervention in Hungary in the face of an apparent increase in threats to Soviet influence in Eastern Europe.

As the case may be, on November 1, as the new Hungarian government was declaring its withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact, Soviet forces entered Hungary (Lendvai 2008; Litván 1996; Matthews 2007; Sebestyen 2006). In the early morning

of November 4, the Soviets launched a massive—17 division strong—operation to re-take Budapest (Lendvai 2008;Litván 1996;Matthews 2007;Sebestyen 2006). Between 4 and 9 of November the Hungarian Army was able to affect only a token resistance to the Soviet military force. These forces were no match for the elements sent to reclaim Budapest, eventually all resistance was either crushed or arrested. With the revolution quelled the Soviets installed a more favorable government that proceeded to suppress public opposition.

Escalating the Stakes: The Suez Crises and Staking Claims

The ostensible start of the Suez Crises began with the taking of the Suez Canal by Egyptian forces under the orders of President Nasser. Nasser declared the Canal as national property under Egypt's sole control, a decision executed following the withdrawal of an offer by Britain and the United States to fund the building of the Aswan Dam (Kissinger 1994). But the proximate source of that action was the combination of multiple, concomitant conflicts (Vatikiotis 1978). One of those conflicts was the United States and Soviet Union attempting to gain influence within Egypt (and the Middle East in general), a conflict in that Nasser used to play both sides against each other. A second conflict was that of Arab nationals against the British and the French, the last remaining colonial powers. The third conflict was that between the Arab world and Israel, while the final conflict was between the various Arab states for regional dominance. In an effort to win the fourth conflict,

President Nasser conducted raids against Israel to establish Egypt as the foremost anti-Zionist state (Vatikiotis 1978).

This antagonist position against Israel led the United States to refuse arms sales to Egypt, which in turn increased Egypt's friendliness towards the Soviet Union, who had no such qualms on providing weapons (Burns 1985; Gaddis 1998; Neff 1981). This closer relationship with the Soviet's led to Egypt's political recognition of the People's Republic of China in a deliberate snub towards the United States (Kissinger 1994). All of these events combined led to the abandonment of the Aswan Dam venture by both the United States and Britain (Kissinger 1994). The decision greatly angered both Britain and France, the latter of which was heavily economically dependent upon the canal (Eayrs 1964; Kyle 2003). On October 29, Israel—needing to reopen the Straits of Tiran for Israeli shipping as well as sensing an opportunity to weaken a hostile state—attacked Egypt (Herzog and Gazit 2005). Though Britain and France both issued orders for a ceasefire—which were ignored—both nations eventually joined the fighting on November 5. Though Egyptian forces were defeated, they managed to block the canal to all shipping. Eventually, under pressure from both the United States and the Soviet Union, both British and French forces withdrew their forces. Though Israel maintained a presence in the region before following suit.

While both incidents created tension for both the United States and the Soviet Union, Gaddis (1982) mentions that it was the former that challenged the credibility of Eisenhower's New Look policy (both at home and abroad to varying

extents). The Suez Crisis only helped to make an already tense moment in history drastically more so. Premier Bulganin's threats to send troops into Egypt to fight the Allies, and launch rocket attacks against Britain, France and Israel, gave many observers—including Eisenhower—the impression they were witnessing the opening acts of World War III (Alteras 1993;Shlaim 2001;Turner 2006).

The Baseline: Eisenhower and Public Opinion in the Immediate Pre-Sputnik Period

Eisenhower's 1956 SOTUA was delivered non-traditionally, he addressed what was the dominant theme at the time: Soviet Aggression.⁵ Though Eisenhower does not rule out the prospect for peace, he acknowledges that Soviet actions are not conducive to the process. Another subject that Eisenhower addressed in the 1956 speech is that of national defense. Though Eisenhower recognizes the need for a strong defense, there is not as much expressed pressure for an immediate and overwhelming defense in the State of the Union Address as there would be in the coming years. There is a very unhurried tone to Eisenhower's description of the United States' current and future defense posture. This lack of pressure was even present in the description of future weapons projects. There was recognition of the value of such technology, but there was no great impetus for crash development programs. The 1956 SOTUA is a perfect example of a pre-Sputnik and pre-missile gap panic United States in which the nation's defense capabilities are assured.

⁵ Eisenhower did not personally deliver a speech to the assembled Congress in 1956.

The July meeting of Heads of Government held out promise to the world of moderation in the bitterness, of word and action, which tends to generate conflict and war. All were in agreement that a nuclear war would be an intolerable disaster which [sic] must not be permitted to occur. But in October, when the Foreign Ministers met again, the results demonstrated conclusively that the Soviet leaders are not yet willing to create the indispensable conditions for a secure and lasting peace.

Nevertheless, it is clear that the conflict between international communism and freedom has taken on a new complexion.

We know the Communist leaders have often practiced the tactics of retreat and zigzag. We know that Soviet and Chinese communism still poses a serious threat to the free world. And in the Middle East recent Soviet moves are hardly compatible with the reduction of international tension.

... Because peace is the keystone of our national policy, our defense program emphasizes an effective flexible type of power calculated to deter or repulse any aggression and to preserve the peace. Short of war, we have never had military strength better adapted to our needs with improved readiness for emergency use. The maintenance of this strong military capability for the indefinite future will continue to call for a large share of our national budget. Our military programs must meet the needs of today. To build less would expose the nation to aggression. To build excessively, under the influence of fear, could defeat our purposes and impair or destroy the very freedom and economic system our military defenses are designed to protect. (Eisenhower 1956)

Within the context of a panic narrative, this last paragraph of Eisenhower's Address would not be considered to be representative of a panic voice. There is little in the way of exaggeration or sensationalism. Eisenhower is taking a balanced, relatively calm approach to the matter of the Soviets. Nevertheless, in the following paragraph he justifies spending on improved atomic weapons and new weapons systems.

We have improved the effectiveness and combat readiness of our forces by developing and making operational new weapons and by integrating the latest scientific developments, including new atomic weapons, into our military plans. We continue to push the production of the most modern military aircraft. The development of long-range missiles has

been on an accelerated basis for some time. We are moving as rapidly as practicable toward nuclear-powered aircraft and ships. (Eisenhower 1956)

Within *The Times*, the issue of testing and development of nuclear and atomic weapons is a prominent issue in the late 1950s. During this pre-Sputnik period, *The Times* is supportive of the idea of testing and developing new atomic devices, as displayed in this piece written by one of its then editors:

Mr. Stevenson makes his proposal on the ground that the tests constitute a menace by threatening to poison the world's atmosphere by their atomic fallout. ...[T]hat further tests are unnecessary because the existing hydrogen bombs are already powerful enough to annihilate whole cities and cripple an opponent. ...[A]n end to the tests would not damage our defenses because a ban on them by example or agreement would be self-enforcing. ... We believe that in all of these premises for his proposal Mr. Stevenson is mistaken. ... [W]e believe that the wisest course is to continue the policies pursued by both Democratic and Republican Administrations.... These policies...call for the reduction of all armaments and the prohibition of atomic and hydrogen weapons, but only under strict controls which [sic] the Soviets have thus far rejected.

... According to the best available evidence (a report of the National Academy of Sciences) the tests could be continued at the present rate over the next thirty years without even approaching our average exposure to medical X-radiations. ... Finally, even if we did detect such further tests, after stopping our own, the Soviets would by then be months and perhaps years ahead of us and could hold us and the world at ransom. On the other hand, the latest tests have already enabled us to make substantial progress along two lines. One is the production of both a cheaper and a 'cleaner' bomb which concentrates its destructiveness on military targets, with greater safety for the outlying civilian population and at the same time greatly reduces the fall-out. The other is the promising development of atomic defense methods. It would be folly to preclude further progress in these matters by abandoning further tests. (NYT 1956:34)

Given that this is the pre-Sputnik period, letters like the following are submitted and printed by *The Times* in response to its editorials. In this one the author strongly protests against the pro-arms race stance taken by *The Times* editor.

I strongly protest against your editorial.... It disregards the statements of our most prominent atomic physicists. It approves a catastrophic armaments race that may destroy the world. It does not say that the disarmaments plans of this Administration have little chance of ever being accepted, and that the alternative to the Stevenson proposal is a disastrous armaments race. ... I am sorry to say that I regard your stand as unimaginative, partisan and unrealistic. (NYT Oct 20, 1956:18)

The second letter, written by a physicist employed by the Argonne National Laboratory, criticizes the administration's position that disarmament is impossible, and that some great strategic advancement would be lost if testing were discontinued. The greatest value in both of these letters here is that it suggests an opposition to the idea of further weapons creation and the possibility of an arms race within a segment of the public.

...To justify the inaction the Administration insists that we seek the impossible, attaining in one step the final goal of real disarmament with complete inspection, and opposes what appears possible, a preliminary step of test cessation that does not require local inspection to be safe. Spokesmen even stoop to muddying the waters by confusing the two

It is pointed out that by continuing tests (including megaton H-tests) a break-through in defense technology might be achieved that would upset the balance of deterrence. It is claimed that this makes cessation of tests unwise. This refers to the fantastically unlikely possibility that the Russians might make a revolution in defense technology, complete and suddenly ready for decisive use, with a single surprise test

Effective defense is so enormously difficult that the only real likelihood of a technical break-through lies in a continuation of unlimited testing and development. This possibility constitutes a much greater threat to us than to the Russians, for if they should get the break they might well

seize the opportunity to attack and end the grim deadlock, whereas we know that we would not

A revolutionary idea is unpredictable. Even with maximum effort we could not be sure to get it first. Thus the possibility of a breakthrough in defense technology, contrary to the short-sighted Administration claim, is a strong reason for seeking to stop tests and thus bring development almost to a halt on both sides. (NYT Nov 1, 1956:38)

However, another type of letter that is seen during this period—even without the threat of Soviet intercontinental missiles—are letters such as these that support continued weapon production and development. Given that the Soviets were considered a threat even before the launch of Sputnik, that this type of letter was being submitted and printed by *The Times* does not seem unusual.

The abandonment of the hydrogen bomb tests... as proposed by Adlai Stevenson, would have disastrous consequences for us. They would be similar to the misfortunes of the victims of the unfortunate Yalta Agreement, to which Franklin D. Roosevelt's Administration was a party, due to lack of knowledge and experience in foreign and domestic affairs. Only by being prepared shall we avoid a second Pearl Harbor and a second Yalta. (NYT Oct 28, 1956:16)

It is worth noting that the author of the first letter references both Yalta and Pearl Harbor in comparison to Adlai Stevenson's proposal for weapon test cessation. It would suggest that before Sputnik was launched, atomic weapons were seen as the only deterrent for Soviet aggression. This sentiment is repeated, though phrased differently, in this second letter that was printed by *The Times*.

The Democratic candidates have been doing some wild talking in their campaign oratory, including their opposition to continuing research work on the H-bomb. This would obviously be dangerous for this country, since the bomb could be our prime defense weapon. It is

significant that Russia heartily agrees with the Democratic plan for the ban of the H-bomb. (NYT Oct 28, 1956:16)

What these last two letters suggest is that the threat of the Soviets had an impact on the popular consciousness. Even without the threat of Sputnik, the authors of these last two selections see a greater threat in ceasing testing and developing of nuclear weapons. This is in the face of any possible negative consequences resulting from continued tests (most of which the editorial board by way of the National Academy of Sciences dismisses as being negligible). Yet the hold of the Soviet threat is not so great on the popular conscious or the editorial board that letters written in protest of editorials are not composed, sent in and even published.

Though the letters submitted to *The Times* give some indication of public opinion in 1956, the data obtained from *Gallup* help paint a more concrete picture (Table 13). The split in public opinion as to the actual threat presented by the Soviets is suggested in the first item. Only half of the survey respondents thought it likely that there would be another world war within their lifetime. A greater percentage of respondents were more certain that hydrogen (i.e. nuclear) weapons would be used against the United States in the next world war. The implication being that respondents were more concerned about the use of nuclear weapons than the potential future threats posed by the Soviets.

Table 13: *The Gallup Poll* survey 1956-566-K

	Positive Response	Negative Response
1956K-17. Do you think we are likely to get into another world war in your lifetime?	51%	27%
1956K-18. If there should be another world war, do you think the hydrogen bomb will be used against us?	63%	17%
1956K-20. Do you think the area where you live would be wiped out?	43%	38%
1956K-21. Do you think you and your family would be likely to live through an atomic war?	29%	38%

1956 marks the periods immediately prior to the launch of Sputnik I in October of 1957. It can thus serve as a pre-panic baseline, as it demonstrates the strength of concern directed towards the Soviet threat. It serves as an example of a period when the United States would be concerned with the pre-Sputnik Soviet Union. This was demonstrated by the danger of Soviet expansion with the signing of the Warsaw Pact, which was reinforced by their invasion of Hungary in 1956. This concern over Soviet military capability as well as their expansionist tendency is further justified by their general occupation of Eastern Europe. The public and press recognize the Soviets as a threat, and Eisenhower's treatment of them as such meets little criticism. Yet, Eisenhower does not completely rule out the prospect of there being some form of peace between the two superpowers. Before their launch of

Sputnik in 1957, President Eisenhower will even go so far as to suggested it would be possible for the United States and the Soviet Union to reach mutually beneficial agreements to avoid mutual annihilation.

In his 1957 speech, Eisenhower is somewhat optimistic towards the idea of peace between the United States and the Soviet Union (if not the entire Soviet-Communist bloc):

A sound and safeguarded agreement for open skies, unarmed aerial sentinels, and reduced armament would provide a valuable contribution toward a durable peace in the years ahead. And we have been persistent in our effort to reach such an agreement. We are willing to enter any reliable agreement which would reverse the trend toward ever more devastating nuclear weapons; reciprocally provide against the possibility of surprise attack; mutually control the outer space missile and satellite development; and make feasible a lower level of armaments and armed forces and an easier burden of military expenditures. Our continuing negotiations in this field are a major part of our quest for a confident peace in this atomic age. (Eisenhower 1957)

What makes 1957 particularly of note is that it is the year when the Soviets launch their first Sputnik satellite. In that context, the speech seems rather mild given the response recorded in history to the launch of Sputnik. It must be recalled that Sputnik launched much later in the year—October to be precise—than when Eisenhower gave his SOTUA. Nevertheless, it is evident from the 1957 SOTU that the official position of the Eisenhower administration is not a desire for a nuclear arms race, despite the public's apparent belief that a world war involving hydrogen bombs through which they would not survive was imminent. This was all about to change suddenly.

Sputnik 1: An Objective Threat Is Launched

Sputnik 1, the Earth's first artificial satellite, was launched from Baikonur Cosmodrome on October 4, 1957. Sputnik's launch marked a key event in the Cold War, as well as the Space Race between the two superpowers (Hardesty and Eisman 2007; Cadbury 2006; Siddiqi 2003). The successful launch of Sputnik combined with the failure of United States' Project Vanguard to orbit satellites of its own greatly accentuated the perception that the United States was under threat from the Soviet Union (Siddiqi 2003; Roman 1995). The vehicle used to deliver Sputnik in to orbit was similarly capable of delivering a nuclear warhead to any planetary target within minutes (Siddiqi 2003; Roman 1995). This capability completely eliminated the oceanic and coastal defenses that the United States maintained as a buffer against invasion (Roman 1995).

The launch spurred a series of initiatives by the United States, ranging from defense to education in response to the new threat presented by the Soviet Union (Hardesty and Eisman 2007; Cadbury 2006). A clearer picture of American society's response to the launching of the Soviet satellites is best obtained from the editorials and letters written in the immediate aftermath of the event. One piece written by an editor for *The Times* addresses the matter thusly:

The essence of the matter, of course, is not the space satellite itself. It is rather in what the satellite implies. ... Rockets capable of performing the satellite feat must be assumed capable of delivering atomic and hydrogen bombs many thousands of miles. ... Is the world faced with a radical change in the military balance of power at that time, presumably to measured in months or a small number of years, when the Soviet Union has enough such missiles to place every major United States city and base under threat of annihilation? Our policy makers should also bear in mind, and so should all of us, that it is war itself

rather than any designated enemy against which we must now defend ourselves: we prepare for war in order to make war impossible. (NYT Oct 7, 1957:26)

Another piece written by another editor goes on to reiterate and reinforce the message with the following:

...The United States seeks peace with freedom and justice, and urges as a first step progressive disarmament to be carried out as rapidly as adequate controls can be established for each important step. The Soviets, on the other hand, still seek to impose a Soviet peace that would open the floodgates to Communist world domination, and the new weapons are to them merely instruments of a 'rocket diplomacy' to cow the world into submission. It is in this light that Mr. Khrushchev's bid for 'peaceful coexistence' must be viewed. For that bid is still based on the persistent Soviet effort to disarm the West, to break up the free world alliances and to swallow the individual nations one by one. (NYT Oct 9, 1957:34)

And a third drives home the belief that Soviet policies make it desirable and even necessary. The editor states,

... President Eisenhower frankly admitted that in some missile and special areas the Soviets are now ahead of us, and are obviously ahead in earth satellites. But he also made it plain that the free world is by no means defenseless, that its over-all military superiority is still such as to discourage rash Soviet adventures, and that there is no reason to surrender or, as suggested in some quarters, to change our policies in favor of paper agreements with the Soviets. ... President Eisenhower has emphasized anew that all our armaments are purely for defense, and that what the world needs more than a giant leap into space is a giant step toward peace. But it takes two to make peace, and until the Soviets are ready to make peace the free world will have to bear whatever burden is necessary to meet their challenge. (NYT Nov 9, 1957:21)

It is perhaps a historical footnote, but there is a coincidence of events prior to the launch of Sputnik. 1957 was also the year that the United States made many public assertions of having found a way to finally make better use of the atomic bomb in warfare (Gruson 1957;Raymond 1957a;Raymond 1957b). In 1956, one of

the reasons given for the need to continue testing nuclear weapons was to create cleaner weapons. This was mentioned in a following editorial used in this research from 1957 when the author says, "...We are told that our tests are developing cleanliness, so the tests will not be obnoxious. ...[T]he direct value of cleanliness is of course that it makes a more valuable military weapon, one of more predictable effect." It is especially significant in that it demonstrates a key element of one of the three themes found in the Soviet moral panic. As the editorial suggests, it would only be possible to develop clean, safe atomic weapons with continued testing. Despite a public stance towards deterrence, the idea of the United States developing "safer" nuclear weapons comes up multiple times in the media. A letter from 1957 takes a gentle critique of the idea of needing to develop weapons that can win a nuclear war is brought to public attention by institutional actors that have some vested interest in nuclear weapons.

Furthermore, these issues have a tendency to come publically to the fore when discussion or negotiations are being made on ceasing development or treaty matters.

Just now when, for the first time, there appears to be some likelihood of making a beginning in agreement on arms limitation by halting tests, great publicity has suddenly been given to the possibilities of developing relatively 'clean' and relatively 'small' H-bomb.... Very prominent scientific members of the feat to which we are indebted for our present lead in the arms race were marshaled before Congressional committees and before the President. ... [L]est the revelation should embarrass our negotiators, the belief was frankly expressed that tests should of course be continued. It is natural that those engrossed in promoting the development should want to see a continuation of the tests on which the development depends. ... We are told that our tests are developing cleanliness, so the tests will not be obnoxious.

...[T]he direct value of cleanliness is of course that it makes a more valuable military weapon, one of more predictable effect. (NYT 1957:26)

It is not a particular stretch of the imagination to think that the Soviets would react to American attempts to cow them with potential technologies by demonstrating their own, working threat. Especially considering that the American cultural image of Soviets was that of being less advanced. Consider the contrast between these two letters, the first was written by the then director of the Ocean Resources Institute before the launch of Sputnik and the second afterwards. The former suggests how the public viewed the Soviet Union, the general reaction and portrayal of what the Soviets had to do to beat the United States in orbiting a satellite. The second letter, written by an assistant professor of History from Fordham University, reflects the inherent doubt of Soviet scientific and technical capability that was present within the United States after the public became aware of Sputnik. Even though there is very clearly evidence that the Soviets achieved a technological coup, the cultural consciousness had some difficulty in accepting the matter as possible.

As Americans we proudly believe that we are spiritually, intellectually and industrially superior to the Soviets. (NYT May 19,1957:26)

This American naivety is contrasted with American denial.

The brilliant success of the Soviets in propelling a satellite into outer space has produced an understandable shift in American public opinion from an attitude of stubborn disbelief in Russian scientific and technological prowess to one of uncritical, almost hysterical, acceptance of all Soviet claims in the fields. ... Have we so quickly abandoned our reasonable distrust of Soviet methods that we accept everything they

assert—especially in regard to a question that we have no available scientific means of checking without Soviet cooperation? (Oct 9, 1957:34)

A piece written by another of *The Times'* editors from a decade later neatly sums the American reaction during this period:

... Sputnik 1 was so shattering to millions of Americans because, for the first time, it called into question their automatic assumptions about the total superiority of the United States and about the 'inevitability' of American victory in the cold war. (NYT Oct 2, 1967:46)

Previously with the Soviet explosion of the atomic and hydrogen bombs there were doubts concerning Soviet technical and industrial capability. But in this case, there was a decision to take this advance as being a Soviet development that acquired immediate attention.

After the launch of Sputnik, portraying the Russians as a backwards people would be a difficult prospect. The new image that began to make an appearance in *The Times* was one fashioned to meet the demands of a new era. Take, for instance, the writing of one of *The Times'* editors, who stated:

The coincidence of these two events makes clear that the rulers of the Soviet Union remain barbarians, even as they perfect their sputniks. At the level of relations among themselves and toward the rest of the world they behave in the infamous traditions of Ivan the Terrible and Boris Godunov. Yet those rulers also command terrible weapons of destruction, particularly the intercontinental ballistic missile, and they have serving them some of the world's ablest scientists and engineers. The threat implicit in this combination is obvious. ... Do we need to spend more money, perhaps much more money, and divert much more of our resources to the missile field? The warning given by Sputnik II suggests that the answer here is affirmative. The people of this country, we believe, are ready for sacrifices if the President will provide the needed leadership by enunciating policies and initiating actions appropriate to the crisis posed by barbarism armed with sputniks. (NYT Nov 4, 1957:28)

And another piece written by a *Times*' editor,

...[T]he Soviet system is not so much an ideological or economic or social system, resting on the consent of the governed, as a naked power system resting on armed force. It is a power system, first of all, for the control of the masses it rules. This control is achieved by an absolute and totalitarian concentration of all political, economic, social, educational and military power in the hands of a small clique of self-appointing and self-purging rulers in the Kremlin. ... But behind the military forces stands the dual control machinery of the Communist party apparatus and the police, which the Kremlin rulers use to build up their power by a forced industrialization for primarily military purposes. This system has enabled them to fling man-made moons into outer space, but it has left the masses ill-clad, ill-fed and ill-housed. The Soviet system is also a naked power system for conquest and the subjugation of other nations. ... [C]ommunism has been imposed by force, either by direct force of the Soviet armies or by Soviet-supported satellite forces. And wherever these forces conquered, freedom died and slavery took its place. ... And this is the threat now confronting the democratic world. (NYT Nov 8, 1957:28)

What comes after the launch of Sputnik is an active portrayal of the Soviets as a barbarous, dangerous technological power that rests entirely on tyranny. This conception of the Soviet people rests at the core of the missile panic, because in the face of such an enemy anything and everything must be done for the purpose of survival. Furthermore, within this is the logic that the Soviets were only successful through brutal application of Communist principles to force industrialization. The result is a malignant, ill-formed doppelganger to democratic/capitalist industrialization, one that leaves people suffering from want. However, the first editorial makes clear that Americans had so far been free from such burdens placed upon them. But to continue the idea that anything and everything must be done to

defeat such an enemy, sacrifices must be made. Those sacrifices are listed in the following written by another *Times*' editor:

Since Russia will not disarm, we cannot. Since she will not cease strengthening her arms and making the weapons of war more terrible, we cannot. But what a pity! The so-called government of the workers and peasants, the new democracy laid down by Marx and Lenin, is robbing the world by blackmail in these times of most of the fruits of civilization. Schoolhouses, libraries, hospitals, homes, all the happy and wholesome amenities of life must take second place because Russia throws across the midnight sky the blazing arrogance of her new weapons (NYT Nov 24, 1957:10)

It is worrying that any source would ask the citizens of any country (let alone the United States) to give up the very things that both enrich and define its populace. But by the logic of the missile panic's narrative, there could be no other option. This idea of sacrificing national goods will continue to appear later in the 1960s, when discussion begins concerning strains placed upon the nation's institutions for the purpose of funding the Apollo program. However, it cannot be overstated that what is being asked is that the citizens of a democratic republic willingly surrender those very institutions that make a democratic republic possible in order to defeat an empire of tyranny.

But perhaps what makes this notion of sacrifice questionable is a comment submitted to *The Times* regarding the economic effect that Sputnik had on certain areas of the defense sector:

For all practical purposes all the money so far spent by our Government has encouraged stock speculation, boosted these stocks as dividends' increased and filled the pockets of others. Only the speculator and the investor have profited from the work on missiles, at the expense of our security. (NYT Nov 8, 1957:28)

Despite the ideal of the necessity of national sacrifice to insure that the Soviets could no longer have the ability to threaten the US with its missile technology, there were still those who gained from the “crisis.” But it is important to consider that if the belief in the Soviet threat were genuine, there would have been fewer attempts to capitalize on the crash efforts to defeat the threat.

During these years, *The Tribune* writes many articles but few editorials that directly address the issues of the missile panic or Sputnik. Therefore, it is rather surprising that it was an editor for *The Tribune* and not *The Times* that wrote a piece concerning the manufacturing of alarm. It refers to a plan put together by political elites to arouse the sentiment of the citizenry of the United States. Specifically, these elites wanted to arouse sentiment towards the issue of Soviet threats and how those threats should be directly addressed.

A group of gentlemen with some experience in government work and public affairs suggests that a public committee be organized to sound a loud and continuous alarm bell. The alarm would din into the ears of the American public the dangers represented by the soviet union [sic].

Vice President Nixon was induced to meet with the group the other night at the Washington home of William C. Foster, foreign aid administrator and deputy secretary of defense in the Truman administration, who now has a job in industry. The committee’s proposals were also brought to the attention of Sherman Adams, Presidential assistant.

The members of this group appear to believe that a “selling job” such as put across the Marshall plan and mobilized sentiment for American intervention in World War II is necessary to arouse the public to soviet [sic] threats.

It is said that a new committee would operate as did the so-called Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies, which was originally headed by the late William Allen White, or the Committee for the

Marshall Plan, directed by the late Henry L. Stimson, a Republican agitator in crying up American participation in World War II.

This frank admission of the purposes and mechanics to be adopted by the proposed committee indicates that powerful interests think that the time has arrived to put over another intensive propaganda "snow job" on the public.

The White committee, of course, did not confine itself to the objective of sending aid to the British and other in order to keep the United States out of war. Its purpose was to commit the United States to such a degree in support of these nations that America could not avoid being hauled into war.

...Whether the present committee will stop short of seeking to promote a new war with Russia remains to be seen. Its present purposes call for vast new government spending and the continuance of foreign aid on an expanded scale. The tentative committee, for example, feels that Mr. Eisenhower was too easily discouraged last spring by resistance to his 72 billion dollar budget on the part of Congress and the people. It hopes to convince him that, by persistence, he can "exercise leadership" to achieve anything he wants.

...The American people can't say that they haven't been warned, for the members of the proposed committee make no bones about their plans. No organization is needed to "alert" Americans to communist intentions or potentialities, but a strong sense of caution is required to protect them from reckless spending, greater centralism of federal power, and dangerous military "crusades" justified by propaganda imperatives. From past experiences with the White and Stimson committee, they ought to know what to expect. (CT Dec 16, 1957:20)

This editorial suggests two very important things, especially at this point in 1957. The first of these is that, even in the face of Sputnik and of the missile gap, the public was divided on the issues of the Soviets and nuclear weapons. Public opinion could not have been so universally unified if political and industry elites felt the need to take the kinds of actions outlined in the editorial. That there was division is further suggested in a letter published by *The Tribune* that called for a complete and

total disarmament by the United States (Dudley 1957). The sanity and sensibility of the author are, perhaps, to be questioned, but the sentiment expressed must not have been altogether singular if the public needed to be “warned” in such a fashion.

The second inference from this editorial is that concerned elites felt the need to take a proactive role in fashioning concern. Put another way, the editorial demonstrates that political elites were not content to let the launch of Sputnik speak for itself. Instead they wished to get ahead of public opinion and direct it in very specific ways. This is rather the heart of the matter, as Sputnik provided elites with an input of energy that allowed for the accomplishment of certain goals. As the editorial states, they sought increased defense spending, and, when Eisenhower withdrew his budget, encouraged him that he could achieve anything he wanted through the proper exercise of leadership.

At this juncture it is worthwhile to make a simple but necessary clarification. Sputnik itself was not the moral panic, nor, to perhaps a lesser extent, was the very act of its launch. The true moral panic is to be found in the accusations of the missile gap that publicly surfaced in the wake of Sputnik’s launch. The primary event – Sputnik’s launch—was answered through a program of creating more advanced rockets. The moral panic generated by the missile gap—the missile panic—demanded not only new rockets but also greater numbers of warheads to challenge the suggested imbalance. Though numbers of warheads would eventually gain focus, the initial concern generated by Sputnik was that of a gap in rocket technology. This was not necessarily an element of panic because the fact that the Soviets could then

strike anywhere on the globe undeterred was an actual, objective and widely known threat.

The New World: Life After Sputnik 1's Launch

Unfortunately *Gallup* records no items that directly address any concerns the public had with the launch of Sputnik tied to nuclear weapons. But there are some inferences that can be made from the data that are available (See Table 14). The survey indicates that a majority of respondents felt that there was genuine danger from fallout, and that the United States should halt its testing program (assuming everyone else ceased as well). The implication is that though *The Times* published letters from individuals supporting the position of the defense sector (i.e. test often and ignore fallout), the survey suggests that many people did not approve of this idea. That is even in the wake of the launch of Sputnik. Furthermore, though respondents were uncertain that the Soviets had not gone further than the United States in developing nuclear weapons, they were less certain that the Soviets *had* done so. Though the question is worded differently from the 1956 survey, nearly half of respondents were certain that there *would not be* another world war in the next five years. Of course, the real possibility here is that the true social impact of the missile panic had not yet had time to influence public opinion. The survey data of 1958 would be a better indication of the impact of the missile panic on United States' public opinion, as that would give the messages and concepts time to filter properly into society.

Table 14: *The Gallup Poll* survey 1957-582-K

	Positive Response	Negative Response
1957K-5. Do you think there is real danger from “fall-out” of radioactive matter from the testing of H-bombs and A-bombs now being done or not?	52%	28%
1957K-6. If all other nations, including Russia, agree to stop making any more tests with nuclear weapons and H-bombs, should the United States agree to stop, or not?	63%	27%
1957K-7. Do you think Russia has gone further or not as far as the United States in developing H-bombs?	19%	33%
1957K-8. Everybody hopes there won’t be another war, but what’s your best guess—do you think there will be another world war within the next five years?	32%	49%
1957K-9. If there should be another world war, do you think the H-bomb will be used against us?	71%	16%

The Soviet technological coup achieved by the launch was two-fold. First were the successful creations of not one, but two devices capable of surviving the trip to and operation within a vacuum. A rather dramatic demonstration of engineering and science skill the world had yet to see (Siddiqi 2003). Yet secondly—

and more importantly to military observers—were the successful demonstrations of the world’s first intercontinental ballistic missiles in the form of the R-7 launch vehicles (*Encyclopedia Astronautica* 2014). That the first U.S. attempt to place a satellite in orbit the very same year ended with the rocket detonating on the launchpad would only have added to concerns (Cadbury 2006; Siddiqi 2003). Combined with the fact that the Soviet Union had, by this point, begun to make headway in producing its non-conventional arsenal (Pearson 1998).

Prior to the launch of Sputnik 1, President Eisenhower called for a two-year ban on nuclear testing. Eisenhower even suggested it would be possible for the United States and the Soviet Union to reach mutually beneficial agreements that would lessen the possibility of one or both nations suddenly being annihilated through nuclear attack. He very openly describes all of these actions as steps towards a “quest for a confident peace.” However after the launch of Sputnik 2, the Gaither Report called for more American missiles and more fallout shelters (Science Advisory Committee 1957). Meanwhile President Eisenhower had this to say in the months immediately following the launch of Sputnik:

The threat to our safety, and to the hope of a peaceful world, can be simply stated. It is communist imperialism.

This threat is not something imagined by critics of the Soviets. Soviet spokesmen, from the beginning, have publicly and frequently declared their aim to expand their power, one way or another, throughout the world.

The threat has become increasingly serious as this expansionist aim has been reinforced by an advancing industrial, military and scientific establishment.

But what makes the Soviet threat unique in history is its all-inclusiveness. Every human activity is pressed into service as a weapon of expansion. Trade, economic development, military power, arts,

science, education, the whole world of ideas—all are harnessed to this same chariot of expansion. The Soviets are, in short, waging total cold war. The only answer to a regime that wages total cold war is to wage total peace. This means bringing to bear every asset of our personal and national lives upon the task of building the conditions in which security and peace can grow.

Among our assets, let us first briefly glance at our military power. Military power serves the cause of security by making prohibitive the cost of any aggressive attack. It serves the cause of peace by holding up a shield behind which the patient constructive work of peace can go on.
(Eisenhower 1958)

Compared to his 1957 overtures towards peace with the Soviets, Eisenhower had returned to the 1955 position of the Soviets as being aggressive, expansionist tyrants. What makes this particular selection from Eisenhower's speech that year interesting are two particular items. The first of which is a contribution to the Soviet moral panic narrative that is repeated in the print media in varying forms. It is his portrayal of the Soviet Union as being a unique threat because it bends all areas of society towards a single goal: conquest. The media and other commenters usually build upon this idea by suggesting that such single-mindedness is the only way that the Soviet people were able to reach a scientific and military goal before the United States. Furthermore, suggestions begin appearing in the print media that the only way the American people will be able to defeat the Soviets is by doing the same thing. In the process, they would need to abandon certain "luxuries" that would be considered necessary in a democratic republic.

The second item that makes Eisenhower's speech particularly notable is the last segment. In it, he makes a brief but fairly thorough review of the United States' military power. Previously, the president was more than content to make basic

mentions concerning the United States' defense capabilities. It is a clear sign of responding to the political pressure being mounted using the missile panic as a vector of political attack. Eisenhower was clearly trying to transmit the message that, whatever imbalances in missiles may or may not have been present, the United States had not lapsed in its defense necessities.

In 1958, *The Times* fully believed in the ideas behind the missile panic, and transmitted the message to the public that the United States lagged behind the Soviet Union in defense. It reported the message of the grave dangers represented by an imbalance in strength between the two superpowers repeatedly, and evidence suggests this message came from defense sector elites. For example, the following editorial focuses on a report issued by a “distinguished panel of private citizens” that just happened to reach the same conclusions as a report issued by the Rockefeller foundation. To the credit of *The Times*' editorial board, they do rightfully point out one of the major—and potentially troubling—recommendations of the report. That is: the unifying of the DOD's command and staff structure into a monolithic entity that would have, as one of its effects, the weakening of civilian control over the military. *The Times* goes so far as to say that such a recommendation is disappointing when, in any context other than a missile panic, the idea of giving the military greater autonomy would be seen as anathema.

The first of a new series of reports, published in the news columns today, offers another good example of the healthy self-examination to which the United States has been forced by Soviet technical and political successes. This report on the military aspects of United States security represents the collective judgment of a distinguished panel of private citizens. It is a good example of public-spirited service

The report shows—and this needs to be said time and again—that we are not necessarily first in the world in weapons, in technology, in research and development—or even in that field in which we take such pride—as a nation of organizers. Our dwindling lead ‘in the military race’ may be completely eliminated in about two years’ time, the report states, unless we take corrective decisions immediately.

With one of the report’s principal ‘corrective’ recommendations—‘substantially increased defense expenditures of about \$3 billion annually for the next several fiscal years’—there should be little quarrel. President Eisenhower and his Administration apparently have reconciled themselves to such an increase. Money is not, of course, the sole yardstick of effective defense, and it is true—though that phrase is now derided—that a nation can spend itself into bankruptcy. But there is no doubt that the economy moves of recent years—the limitations on overtime, the reduction of aviation and naval fuel allowances, the cancellation or reduction of research contract, reduction of personnel in uniform and other failures of omission and commission—have reduced the combat effectiveness, present and future, of United States armed forces.

The logic of these sweeping and generalized recommendations is supported in the Rockefeller report by what has so long been obvious even to the layman—that the development of new weapons, and particularly of missiles, has caused the traditional roles and missions of the land, sea and air services to overlap. But the remedies suggested may be considerably worse than the disease of duplication and competition which they are intended to cure.

For, in effect, the collective measures recommended for the reorganization of the Pentagon would create a monolithic command and staff structure with tremendous policy authority concentrated—not in the Secretary of Defense or in the President, where it constitutionally belongs—but in a Super-Chief of Staff in uniform. The recommended Pentagon changes are, therefore, disappointing. We believe their net effect would be to weaken civilian control of military policy and the formulation of strategy without compensating benefit in efficiency. (NYT Jan 6, 1958:38)

Although the NYT rejects the notion, notice the call for a centralization of institutional powers of control that frequently mark a moral panic (See Becker 1973; Hawdon and Woods 2014).

The Times continues to publish letters that are critical of issues like continued nuclear testing and even disarmament. The following letter from the then acting chairman of the Federation of American Scientists questions the messages relayed to the public from defense sector spokesmen—in this case, Dr. Edward Teller—concerning the issue of disarmament verification. But what is really remarkable is that this is a letter that actually goes so far as to blame disarmament verifications problem not on science, but on political actions. Though the letter does it in a very subtle way, it placed most of the onus of problems of verification on the United States. It was the United States, not the Soviet Union that presented a plan of verification that was so complex that the other side was sure to reject it. With the unspoken implication being that rejection was the desired outcome.

A recent article by Edward Teller and Albert Latter in Life Magazine gives the impression that an agreement to stop nuclear testing is impractical because violations would be undetectable. An editorial by Eugene Rabinowitch in the January Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists says that monitored cessation of nuclear tests is technically feasible, but would be useless as a first step in disarmament.

The large group of competent scientists in the Federation of American Scientists, who have been giving careful consideration to these problems for the past twelve years, disagrees with both viewpoints. The Council of F.A.S. reaffirmed on Feb. 1 our conviction that the agreed cessation of nuclear testing, with adequate monitoring by a U.N. agency, is both technically feasible and urgently necessary as a significant step toward a slackening of the arms race and eventual larger steps in disarmament with inspection.

It is important that the public should understand that any statement on this subject, whether by Dr. Teller or by the F.A.S., involves political judgment as well as scientific knowledge and that the major differences of opinion are political rather than scientific.

Both the United States and the U.S.S.R. have agreed in principle to a system of inspection including their own territory; but the question of their good faith has never been put to the test because the disarmament packages proposed by the United States have been so complex that it was certain in advance that the U.S.S.R. would not agree to them.

The stopping of nuclear tests is a meaningful step in disarmament because no satisfactory weapons development program can be carried through without testing. Note that this affects both sides in the arms race!

The present state of nuclear armament of the United States and the U.S.S.R. is such that a nuclear war would mean something close to mutual annihilation. There must be some better response to this situation than a continuous stepping up of the armaments race. While it does not come anywhere near to being a solution of the problem, the monitored cessation of nuclear testing is an important first step that must be taken right away (NYT Mar 4, 1958:28)

One of the key takeaways from both editorial and letter was a division in public opinion. There were parts of the United States that felt that the only thing that really needed to be focused on were issues of defense. While other segments felt that it was necessary to slow the creation of nuclear weapons, even in the face of a highly publicized gap in military strength. Some of this division in public opinion can be seen in the results of the 1958 *Gallup* survey. A comparison of the results from the 1957 and 1958 surveys (See Table 14 and Table 15, respectively) demonstrates both public division as well as the effects of the missile gap on the popular consciousness. People are less sure about the safety effects of continued nuclear testing on future generations. But the influence of the missile panic is very

much present because there was a strong majority (60%) of respondents that felt the United States should not stop tests with nuclear weapons. It is perhaps the clearest suggestion of the possible influence of the grassroots concern that respondents were not sure about future health concerns, but were very aware of the present danger implied by the missile gap. Respondents were so concerned about the missile gap that they were willing to risk the health of future generations to defend against the Soviet threat.

Table 15: *The Gallup Poll survey 1958-598-K*

	Positive Response	Negative Response
1958K-31. Do you think continued testing of hydrogen bombs will likely result in a threat to the health of future generations?	46%	27%
1958K-28a. Do you think the United States should stop making tests with nuclear weapons and H-bombs?	29%	60%
1958K-30. Do you think that the hydrogen bomb will be used against the United States in another world war?	75%	13%

A selection from Eisenhower’s 1959 SOTUA effectively demonstrates not only what the sacrifices of the American people have purchased, but the gains made by the defense sector as well. Eisenhower dedicates a significant amount of his speech to enumerating the ways in which the United States is a powerful

conventional military power to be reckoned with. He also details the great military-scientific achievements that the United States has made and its ability to place five satellites into orbit (with a tangential assertion of the superiority of our ICBM program). Eisenhower also discussed the reorganization and centralization of the Department of Defense under the Secretary of Defense. This is significant, as it mirrors the same call for a centralization of state control that was discussed in an editorial from *The Times* in 1958. These calls for state centralization are often a goal of elite-engineering moral panics (Goode and Ben-Yehuda 2009). Finally, he caps his description with a mention of how much the United States has been willing to spend—with the unspoken reasoning being to respond to the Soviet threat—and how its economy is able to bear such a burden. He concludes with almost a footnote that we should be wary of over-spending and duplications of efforts.

To achieve this peace we seek to prevent war at any place and in any dimension. If, despite our best efforts, a local dispute should flare into armed hostilities, the next problem would be to keep the conflict from spreading, and so compromising freedom. In support of these objectives we maintain forces of great power and flexibility. Our formidable air striking forces are a powerful deterrent to general war. Large and growing portions of these units can depart from their bases in a matter of minutes. Similar forces are included in our naval fleets. Ground and other tactical formations can move with swiftness and precision, when requested by friendly and responsible governments, to help curb threatened aggression. The stabilizing influence of this capacity has been dramatically demonstrated more than once over the past year.

Our military and related scientific progress has been highly gratifying. Great strides have been made in the development of ballistic missiles. Intermediate range missiles are now being deployed in operational units. The Arias intercontinental ballistic missile program has been marked by rapid development as evidenced by recent successful tests. Missile training units have been established and launching sites are far along in construction. New aircraft that fly at twice the speed of sound

are entering our squadrons. We have successfully placed five satellites in orbit, which have gathered information of scientific importance never before available. Our latest satellite illustrates our steady advance in rocketry and foreshadows new developments in world-wide communications. Warning systems constantly improve. Our atomic submarines have shattered endurance records and made historic voyages under the North Polar Sea. A major segment of our national scientific and engineering community is working intensively to achieve new and greater developments. Advance in military technology requires adequate financing but, of course, even more, it requires talent and time.

All this is given only as a matter of history; as a record of our progress in space and ballistic missile fields in no more than four years of intensive effort. At the same time we clearly recognize that some of the recent Soviet accomplishments in this particular technology are indeed brilliant.

Under the law enacted last year the Department of Defense is being reorganized to give the Secretary of Defense full authority over the military establishment. Greater efficiency, more cohesive effort and speedier reaction to emergencies are among the many advantages we are already noting from these changes. These few highlights point up our steady military gains. We are rightfully gratified by the achievements they represent. But we must remember that these imposing armaments are purchased at great cost. National Security programs account for nearly sixty percent of the entire Federal budget for this coming fiscal year.

Modern weapons are exceedingly expensive. The overall cost of introducing ATLAS into our armed forces will average \$35 million per missile on the firing line.

This year we are investing an aggregate of close to \$7 billion in missile programs alone. Other billions go for research, development, test and evaluation of new weapons systems. Our latest atomic submarines will cost \$50 millions each, while some special types will cost three times as much. We are now ordering fighter aircraft which are priced at fifty times as much as the fighters of World War II. We are buying certain bombers that cost their weight in gold.

These sums are tremendous, even when compared with the marvelous resiliency and capacity of our economy.

Such expenditures demand both balance and perspective in our planning for defense. At every turn, we must weigh, judge and select.

Needless duplication of weapons and forces must be avoided. We must guard against feverish building of vast armaments to meet glibly predicted moments of so-called "maximum peril." The threat we face is not sporadic or dated: It is continuous. Hence we must not be swayed in our calculations either by groundless fear or by complacency. We must avoid extremes, for vacillation between extremes is inefficient, costly, and destructive of morale. In these days of unceasing technological advance, we must plan our defense expenditures systematically and with care, fully recognizing that obsolescence compels the never-ending replacement of older weapons with new ones. (Eisenhower 1959)

There is an unfortunate dearth of editorials or letters to get a proper judge of public opinion in 1959. This shortage potentially indicates a relative consensus on the nature of the threat presented by the Soviets. The shortage may also indicate a level of satisfaction with the efforts taken by governmental authorities. There is, however, a single item from *Gallup* that fortuitously has the same wording from when the question was asked in 1957. When asked if they thought there would be another world war within the next five years, 60% of respondents replied in the *negative* (See Table 16), compared to 49% in 1957 (See Table 14). This is probably from a number of factors. Given that one of the issues that then Senator John Kennedy rode towards the Presidency was that of the missile gap, it is possible that the public felt confident that the issue had gained significant political relevance, and that the situation would be addressed in such a manner as to hold Soviet aggression at bay. But there is a very good chance that that sort of public thinking is more long-term and less immediate.

The factor that possibly had the most immediate effect was that of Eisenhower stressing that the United States was not a militarily weak nation. There were many public declarations that had as their prime message that the United

States was belligerent and advancing further in its military science (Roman 1995). That combined with public announcements of increased defense spending probably saw to any immediate fears that the populace may have had that United States weakness would invite Soviet aggression.

Table 16: *The Gallup Poll* survey 1959-619

	Positive Response	Negative Response
1959-1. Do you think we are likely to get into another world war in the next five years?	18%	60%

In the latter half of the 1950s, prior to the launch of Sputnik, the Soviet Union demonstrated that it was a credible threat, with a capable military force. That they were regarded and treated as such is evident in Eisenhower's SOTUA, editorials presented by the press, and by letters submitted by the public as well as responses to survey data. Nevertheless, there was no great pressure or impetus placed on the United States defense posture or technology. The launch of Sputnik I changed many of the ways the citizens of the United States perceived the Soviet Union. It forced the United States to recognize the possible technical and nuclear superiority that was previously believed to be solely the domain of the United States. Within the model of a moral panic, the launch of Sputnik and its technical implications were a period of justified concern towards a legitimate threat. However, that threat combined with a lack of information disclosure on Eisenhower's part (due to the classified nature of the information) appears to have created a grassroots concern that was utilized by political elites to achieve their goals. In the following decades we will see how this

grassroots concern transforms first into a period dominated by interest groups, then later by elites.

Ch. 7 Interest Groups: 1960-1978

Referring back to the figures at the start of this historical analysis, Figure 1 reports the number of articles in the NYT and Chicago Tribune dedicated to the Soviets and the missile gap each year from 1955 through 1990. Figure 2 reports the number of times the president talks about the Soviets and the missile gap during each year's SOTU address. According to the data presented in these figures, levels of concern are heightened at the start of the 1960s. Over the course of the decade, there is a decreasing amount of concern from both the media and the Presidents with the start of the 1960s. Yet with the 1970s, a change begins to manifest in the levels of concern demonstrated in the preceding decade.

The decade starts with an increased level of concern by the media and—to some extent—the president as well. *The Chicago Tribune* shows a return to levels of concern first demonstrated during the Sputnik incident. Whereas *The New York Times* shows levels of increased concern that are greater than those displayed in 1959, but less than those displayed when Sputnik was launched. Similarly, President Eisenhower displayed an increased amount of concern over the Soviets in his State of the Union Address, but not nearly as much after Sputnik's launch.

President Eisenhower's final SOTUA is comparatively optimistic compared to the speech given in 1959. He made no direct mention of the "Soviet threat."

Eisenhower did make a point to discuss the United States' defense posture, as well

as its progress in long-range missile technology. There are a couple of reasons why Eisenhower omitted any direct references posed by the missile gap. The most basic of those reasons is that this was Eisenhower's last SOTUA. There was no politically strategic reason to directly reference the narrative of the missile panic. What is more likely is that this omission was a reflection of the message that Eisenhower had been trying to communicate all along. The crux of that message being: while the Soviets and their missiles were a threat, they were not a threat that required the United States to throw its defense sector into a paroxysm to best the Soviets in some alleged missile gap. Eisenhower's part within the missile panic was to struggle *against* it. Eisenhower was aware of the nature and capabilities of the threat that the Soviets represented to the United States. As such, he was aware that while the Soviets had an advance in rocket technology, they were behind in both bombs and missiles (Roman 1995). Therefore, his messages would not align with the ideas of the missile panic, beyond reassuring the citizenry that things were being done. Hence his last message wouldn't be made to address the moral panic. Eisenhower is in effect saying the same thing he'd been saying beforehand: the United States is strong and there's no need to panic.

America possesses an enormous defense power. It is my studied conviction that no nation will ever risk general war against us unless we should be so foolish as to neglect the defense forces we now so powerfully support. It is world-wide knowledge that any nation which might be tempted today to attack the United States, even though our country might sustain great losses, would itself promptly suffer a terrible destruction. But I once again assure all peoples and all nations that the United States, except in defense, will never turn loose this destructive power.

During the past year, our long-range striking power, unmatched today in manned bombers, has taken on new strength as the Atlas intercontinental ballistic missile has entered the operational inventory. In fourteen recent test launchings, at ranges of over 5,000 miles, Atlas has been striking on an average within two miles of the target. This is less than the length of a jet runway--well within the circle of total destruction. Such performance is a great tribute to American scientists and engineers, who in the past five years have had to telescope time and technology to develop these long-range ballistic missiles, where America had none before.

...[O]ur military missile program, going forward so successfully, does not suffer from our present lack of very large rocket engines, which are so necessary in distant space exploration. I am assured by experts that the thrust of our present missiles is fully adequate for defense requirements. (Eisenhower 1960)

As was previously stated, *The Tribune* and *The Times* have returned to pre-Sputnik levels of concern. The more basic explanation for these reduced levels is that of temporal proximity. While the Soviet threat would still be present in the minds of the public in 1960, the immediate cause for alarm presented by Sputnik would be three years old by this point. This reduction in concern could possibly have received at least some influence not only from the defense appraisal provided by Eisenhower's speech, but potentially the knowledge that Kennedy—who vowed to completely overhaul and improve the United States' defense sector—would be taking office. The combination of the influences of both time and politics perhaps lead to a cooling down moment in the missile panic. If that is the case, there should be some indication within the public opinion data that indicates a public that is still concerned with the Soviet threat, but not nearly as concerned when Sputnik was orbited.

As a measure of public opinion, many of the letters submitted to *The Times* would indicate that there continues to be a divide in public opinion. Very specifically, there would appear to be continued division over the issues of disarmament and test moratoriums. The letters would indicate that there were segments of the public that were disappointed and in disagreement with the United States government on issues of verification and inspection when it came to nuclear weapons. Existing alongside a drive to arm, there was also a desire to reduce the risk posed by creating more nuclear weapons in pursuit of arms superiority. What this suggests is that despite the threat of the missile panic, there were segments of the public that were concerned more with the superpowers having *fewer* of the weapons in their collective possession. An important note is that these are not letters being written by cranks, they are usually intelligent individuals who have provided thoughtful, alternative analysis and critique of the government's actions during this period. Consider the following letter written by the then Socialist party leader and chairmen of the Post-War World Council:

What concerns me is the increasing evidence given by this episode and some of the discussion of scientists...that it will be practically impossible to devise such completely "foolproof" controls through inspection as most of the military, some scientists of the Teller school and some Senators will demand. If such a system can't be worked out for tests, certainly it can't be worked out for a general disarmament agreement.

We must face the fact that we are confronted with a balance of risks. No conceivable strengthening of international authority through the UN, in control of any practicable system of inspection, can itself prevent an evil government from aggression with weapons which [sic] it had concealed. But proper strengthening of the UN and the establishment of reasonable controls and systems of inspection can enormously reduce that risk.

These institutional provisions, supported by the general concern for peace which had brought them into being, would leave us confronted with a risk incomparably less than the risks inherent in indefinitely continuing the cold war

It must be remembered that distrust and suspicion now operate on both sides of the cold war. We cannot expect the world to believe that the only bad faith in accepting disarmament would be in Moscow. Necessary as are control, our fundamental ground for confidence must be acceptance of universal disarmament of a discernible sort under a UN possessed of some police power to back up a substitution of law for war. That can be sabotaged forever by an impossible insistence on an unattainable 'fool-proof' system of inspection. (NYT Jan 3, 1960:8)

Contrasted to this position, a professor of Philosophy from New York

University wrote:

Professor Riesman, I am sorry to say, is raising a red herring in implying that those who advocate his policy of trust are fearful of being thought "soft' on communism."

Softness or hardness toward communism has nothing to do with the matter. This is a twisted rope standard.

What is wrong about his position is not that he is soft toward communism, but in his sense of history.

Well, Khrushchev is not [a madman]! All the more reason, therefore, not to surrender our deterrent until we have a guarantee that agreements about testing and disarmament will be lived up to. After all, the USSR has violated more treaties and agreements than the Third Reich ever did.

Nor is Professor Riesman on any sounder ground when he asserts, "Reliance on deterrence leads in all countries to a garrison state." This is an echo of the old cry that if we fought fascism we would surely succumb to it ourselves. Our powers of deterrence are stronger at present than previously: we are less of a garrison state now than then.

Those who disagree with Professor Riesman want peace every whit as much as he does, including the Atomic Energy Commission and their "civilian satellites." But they want freedom, too, and are not prepared to buy peace at the price of freedom. On the basis of history, common sense

and knowledge of the theory and practice of communism, they believe that Professor Riesman's policy is unwise. For by placing trust in the untrustworthy, it gambles not only with the freedom of our own country but with the freedom of all nations of the world. (NYT Apr 5, 1960:36)

Another letter penned by a regular citizen says,

With hundreds of undetectable submarines lurking in ocean waters, or under polar icecaps, what difference will it make whether we have three annual inspections, as the Soviets have proposed, or twenty, as the United States has demanded?

Our country has blocked every disarmament proposal with a rigid call for "foolproof" inspection. Now the demand for inspection is as dead as the dodo. This is a frightening prospect, for where do we go from here? Can it be that we are driven at last to the point where we shall have to trust each other or face an uncontrolled arms race and eventual nuclear disaster?

Step by step, with terrifying deliberateness, we are allowing the open doors to be closed. One after another the critical opportunities are being destroyed by the relentless weapons race. There is no more safety in the new submarine missile than there was in the atom and hydrogen bombs. Without doubt the Russians already have this weapon or will have it within a matter of months. What it has done is to destroy one more handle that might have been grasped to achieve a halt in the drift toward nuclear war. (NYT Aug 3, 1960:28)

The *Gallup* survey for 1960 (See Table 17) does not ask questions that allow for a necessarily direct query of the public mood at this point. In fact, the data collected from respondents in 1960 paints a seemingly contradictory picture of a public opinion. According to the data, the public had mixed feelings on the issue of shelter construction. Compared to 1960, there is an increase in the number of respondents certain that there will be another world war within five years. But the results indicate division as to the likelihood of another world war being possible

within that time period. More respondents were certain that there would be no world war within the next half decade.

These responses are curious within the context of a society that was firmly within a Cold War setting. But interpreting these data as the result of a de-escalation of a possible missile panic places them in a different light. That there was a strong concern about the threat of Soviet ICBMs is still present within the public conscious is apparent by a majority of respondents (71%) being in favor of communities being required to build public bomb shelters. Yet these same respondents also did nothing to prepare for a possible Soviet nuclear strike, or of considering construction of a home bomb shelter (89% and 79% respectively). A possible explanation for this contradiction is that respondents regarded such preparations as futile in the face of devastation by an atomic attack. Though this explanation is somewhat mitigated by the fact that at this point in history, nuclear drills were still being practiced in schools. Furthermore, the data suggest that the very fact that public responded so strongly to the notion of community bomb shelters makes the assumption of fatalism on the part of the respondents seem dubious. An explanation coming from the position of a de-escalating moral panic would seem to more closely fit the facts.

Eisenhower and Kennedy both made public declarations of the renewed and expanding strength of the United States. *The Times* and *The Tribune* by 1960 have eased on their coverage of the threat presented by Soviet missile technology. In an editorial from the following year, *The Times* examines the message of the necessity for shelter building that has been done by President Kennedy and Dr. Teller (Reston

1961). Primarily the editor focused upon the industry that grew up in the wake of this urging, but the article also discusses the impact of there being no real plan or statement from the government other than saying that citizens should build shelters. The threat presented by the Soviet missiles is still present at this point—hence an acknowledgement of the need for shelters—but if these data are accurate, even with the urging of the President, that threat did not seem so great within the minds of the citizenry as to necessitate committing personal resources. Which would potentially explain why less than half of respondents (38%) were even interested of building personal shelters that would cost less than \$500. While President Kennedy gives a general, undetailed mention of the necessity of shelter building—ostensibly the level of concern a president must display to the citizens—it is other specialists and politicians like Dr. Teller—who have connections to the defense sector or the shelter building industry—that are more pressed to sell the necessity of a shelter system. When Kennedy became aware of the true extent of the Soviet threat by gaining access to classified documents and the collective wisdom of the entire U.S. intelligence community, his concern and message of the desperate danger the Soviets posed was adjusted. But it would appear that those groups that had a more vested interest in maintaining concern toward the threat made no such adjustment, despite the president’s change in tone

However, the editorial makes two observations about the rushed message of shelter building present during this period. As was stated previously, one of these observations is that the government provided no real details beyond an urging that

shelters should be built. The other was that the industry that grew up around this shelter building was known for a door-to-door sales method that involved using movie reels of atomic devastation to convince potential customers of the necessity of purchasing a shelter. It is possible that these two factors are what cause the general lack of concern for personal shelter building seen in the survey data.

The final indication that this was potentially a de-escalation of the missile panic was the lack of strong feeling on the part of respondents as to the possibility of a third world war. We should expect to see some indecision in the public about the possibility of conflict related to the Soviet threat if it has lost its immediacy. Almost half of the respondent (46%) indicated that they felt that there would be another world war within the decade, whereas an even lower percentage (34%) felt the opposite. A de-escalated missile panic would potentially create a situation where the possibility for the threat generated by the missile panic could occur, but that possibility is decreased. That would possibly create within the public the belief that yes, the threat generated by the missile panic's folk devil (i.e. the Soviets) is possible, but the probability of that threat occurring is less certain.

Table 17: *The Gallup Poll* survey 1960-627/628-K

	Positive Response	Negative Response
1960K-4. Suppose you had the warning that enemy bombers and missiles with nuclear weapons were heading toward many points in the United States—Have you done anything to prepare for this kind of emergency?	11%	89%
1960K-5. Would you favor or oppose a law that would require each community to build public bomb shelters?	71%	19%
1960K-6. Have you given any thought to building a home bomb shelter?	21%	79%
1960K-7a. Suppose that a home bomb shelter could be built for under \$500. Would you be interested in paying to have one built for you and your family, or not?	38%	50%
1960K-52. Do you think we are likely to get into another world war in the next five years?	34%	46%

The immediate question is: if there really were a missile panic, why would that panic begin to de-escalate? The most likely answer to that question was that it was no longer needed. Recall that the panic was not the launching of Sputnik, that event provided an actual threat—from which was born grassroots concern—in the

form of rockets that could strike anywhere on the globe. It was the transition from Sputnik's launch to a perception by the public that there was an imbalance in Soviet-United States rocket and bomber numbers that was the actual moral panic. This perception was fostered by political elites like Kennedy, who were then able to use the missile gap to ascend from the Senate to the Presidency (Preble 2004; Roman 1995). Those elites with defense sector interests certainly got what they desired vis-à-vis budget expenditures, at least based on Eisenhower's speech in 1960 as well as Kennedy's in 1961, both of which clearly indicated defense sector gains within the budget. Kennedy especially devoted a great deal of his first SOTUA to describing the steps that the United States would take to strengthen its military, despite Eisenhower having pointed out in 1960 that the United States' already had an enormous defense power.

Our greatest challenge is still the world that lies beyond the Cold War-- but the first great obstacle is still our relations with the Soviet Union and Communist China. We must never be lulled into believing that either power has yielded its ambitions for world domination--ambitions which [sic] they forcefully restated only a short time ago. On the contrary, our task is to convince them that aggression and subversion will not be profitable routes to pursue these ends. Open and peaceful competition-- for prestige, for markets, for scientific achievement, even for men's minds--is something else again. For if Freedom and Communism were to compete for man's allegiance in a world at peace, I would look to the future with ever increasing confidence.

One must not overshadow the other: On the Presidential Coat of Arms, the American eagle holds in his right talon the olive branch, while in his left he holds a bundle of arrows. We intend to give equal attention to both.

First, we must strengthen our military tools. We are moving into a period of uncertain risk and great commitment in which both the military and diplomatic possibilities require a Free World force so

powerful as to make any aggression clearly futile. Yet in the past, lack of a consistent, coherent military strategy, the absence of basic assumptions about our national requirements and the faulty estimates and duplication arising from inter-service rivalries have all made it difficult to assess accurately how adequate--or inadequate--our defenses really are.

I have, therefore, instructed the Secretary of Defense to reappraise our entire defense strategy--our ability to fulfill our commitments--the effectiveness, vulnerability, and dispersal of our strategic bases, forces and warning systems--the efficiency and economy of our operation and organization--the elimination of obsolete bases and installations--and the adequacy, modernization and mobility of our present conventional and nuclear forces and weapons systems in the light of present and future dangers. I have asked for preliminary conclusions by the end of February--and I then shall recommend whatever legislative, budgetary or executive action is needed in the light of these conclusions.

In the meantime, I have asked the Defense Secretary to initiate immediately three new steps most clearly needed now:

First, I have directed prompt attention to increase our air-lift capacity. Obtaining additional air transport mobility--and obtaining it now--will better assure the ability of our conventional forces to respond, with discrimination and speed, to any problem at any spot on the globe at any moment's notice. In particular it will enable us to meet any deliberate effort to avoid or divert our forces by starting limited wars in widely scattered parts of the globe.

(b) I have directed prompt action to step up our Polaris submarine program. Using unobligated ship-building funds now (to let contracts originally scheduled for the next fiscal year) will build and place on station--at least nine months earlier than planned--substantially more units of a crucial deterrent--a fleet that will never attack first, but possess sufficient powers of retaliation, concealed beneath the seas, to discourage any aggressor from launching an attack upon our security.

(c) I have directed prompt action to accelerate our entire missile program. Until the Secretary of Defense's reappraisal is completed, the emphasis here will be largely on improved organization and decision making--on cutting down the wasteful duplications and the time-lag that have handicapped our whole family of missiles. If we are to keep the peace, we need an invulnerable missile force powerful enough to deter any aggressor from even threatening an attack that he would

know could not destroy enough of our force to prevent his own destruction. For as I said upon taking the oath of office: "Only when our arms are sufficient beyond doubt can we be certain beyond doubt that they will never be employed."

I have already taken steps to coordinate and expand our disarmament effort--to increase our programs of research and study--and to make arms control a central goal of our national policy under my direction. The deadly arms race, and the huge resources it absorbs, have [sic] too long overshadowed all else we must do. We must prevent that arms race from spreading to new nations, to new nuclear powers and to the reaches of outer space. We must make certain that our negotiators are better informed and better prepared--to formulate workable proposals of our own and to make sound judgments about the proposals of others. (Kennedy 1961)

Yet Kennedy's final paragraph is paradoxical. After discussing all the ways the United States would seek to expand and improve its very defense programs, he then mentions the need to disarm as well as making a brief mention as to how costly the arms race is. An interpretation of that paragraph goes toward an explanation as to why a potential panic would still exist if those elites who benefited therefrom already have what they wanted. Of course the Soviet threat still existed, but any threat presented by a gap in armaments between the two superpowers was becoming steadily less likely. It would be possible to say that if there were a missile panic, though it was de-escalating, it was being kept around because it had proven to be useful. An alternative explanation—that would account also for Kennedy's aforementioned statement—would suggest that the cause is found in social inertia.

Slowing the Tide of Public Opinion

Before he acquired the Presidency, then Senator Kennedy was one of a group of politicians that was critical of Eisenhower's defense policies in the wake of Sputnik's launch (Preble 2004; Roman 1995). These individuals formed an investigative committee to determine what lapses had been made by President Eisenhower in the defense sector. It was determined that there was a massive gap in bombers and warheads between the two superpowers that Eisenhower had allowed to come in to being (Preble 2004; Roman 1995). This was not a revelation that was kept quiet, as the committee was quite public with its findings. As was stated previously, Eisenhower was aware of the true nature of the Soviet threat, and his defense policies reflected that awareness (Preble 1995). Nevertheless, that did not stop Kennedy from using the public perception of a supposed military gap between the two superpowers during his campaign for the Presidency (Preble 2004; Roman 1995).

Though the launch of Sputnik signified a shift in strategic capabilities, there was energy put into convincing the United States public that a lag in rocket effectiveness translated into a lack of raw rocket and bomber numbers (i.e. the missile gap). It is unlikely that such a movement of public opinion could be stopped instantaneously or even easily. Kennedy could not have entered office and immediately said the missile gap was no longer a problem. In order to maintain political and social effectiveness he would have to continue along the path indicated by the predominant social opinion (that he had a part in cultivating). The final paragraph in his first SOTUA could possibly be interpreted as an attempt to apply a

measure of “braking force” to bring the reaction created by a missile panic under control.

The patterns displayed by *The Tribune* and *The Times* reinforce the impression that the 1960s were a cooling off period of the Soviet moral panic. At first glance, the opposite appears to be true. In 1961 there are increased mentions regarding the Soviets and nuclear weapons found in both *The Tribune* and *The Times*. There are two possible explanations for this increased concern from these two media outlets during a period when it seems the missile panic may be losing its intensity. The first of these is fairly mechanical, and relies on the previously discussed concept of inertia.

Though an elite spread moral panic requires the media to spread its messages that does not suggest that the elites have the media in an iron grip. The elite may have achieved most—if not all—of their objectives, it would be difficult to completely silence media concerns surrounding the moral panic. The people would still “want to know” and/or “have a right to know”; providing such information produces boosts to both readership and revenue. It would be in the best interest of any news reporting organization to continue focusing on the issue for as long as it is profitable. This is very similar to the Interest Group model posited by Good and Ben-Yehuda (2009), in which those organizations and interested organizations have their own stake—independent of the demands or desires of the elite and grassroots—in bringing an issue to the fore. What I am suggesting here is that,

during this particular period, the moral panic moves from being one located within the grassroots, to being helmed by various interest groups.

Consider the fact that the launch of Sputnik and the missile gap would have been roughly four years out-of-date by this point. The media would need a fresh input of energy for their readers. This is the second explanation for the increased media mentions seen in 1961: an energy input of an immediate threat. In this case it would be the construction of the Berlin Wall, followed by the standoff between Soviet and American tanks in October of that year. Though the standoff itself only lasted from the 27th of October to the 28th, the superpowers were facing each other over the line waiting for one side to blink. This combined with the knowledge that the Soviets were willing—though the question of ability is suspect—to retaliate against any armed provocation by the West over Western Berlin only heightened tensions (Thackeray 2004; Pearson 1998).

That *The Times* was operating within the narrative generated by the missile gap is apparent in its editorials and published letters. A concept found in editorials of this period is that of “sacrifice”; that there is a price that must be paid by the American people to win the Cold War. Such editorials (as the one that follows exemplifies) are usually closely related to explanations of the ability of the Soviets—generally regarded as weak in civil society, intellect and industry—to match the United States in military and scientific endeavors. The editorial position was that Soviet society was willing to forgo every comfort and benefit of civilization (i.e. schools, hospitals, libraries, etc.) to keep their military and science effort at a pace

with ours. Beyond that, the editorial also demonstrates an example of the glorification of the collective discussed by Hawdon (2001).

It is not an easy life that lies before the American people. As a nation we are rich in the comforts, amusements and protections of a civilized existence. We are fortunate enough to inherit the material and spiritual estate of many generations of painful evolution. We could fall back into the abyss or we could be thrown back if we weaken in purpose. The amenities of our existence and the resources at our command must also remind us of the responsibilities that weigh upon our shoulders—and will continue to do so for uncounted years to come. (NYT Nov 19, 1961:8)

As Kennedy demonstrated at the final end of his speech, there were still efforts to restrict the numbers and sophistication of strategic nuclear weapons. These disarmament efforts were concomitant with other efforts to build more and better strategic weapons as a result of the missile panic. A key issue of such disarmament was that of testing. The surest way to develop and test newer, better strategic weapons is through test detonations. The “where” and “how” of these detonations (i.e. in atmosphere, buried beneath the earth, or high altitude) was a contentious issue. The issue of Peace notwithstanding, the greatest reservation still stemmed from both civilian and scientific concern over the amounts of fallout that were being released into the environment with each subsequent test.

The Times wrote more editorials in 1961 over the issue of disarmament, as well as the cessation of nuclear weapon tests. Its editorial reaction to the resumption of testing after a brief test moratorium further suggests that the imagery that was integral to the narrative of the missile panic guided the editorial writers. Consider the following editorials that are referents to editorials written in

the late 1950s that portrayed the Soviets as barbarous, aggressive tyrants. The language in these selections demonstrates the general conception of the Soviets: Aggressive imperialists who sought to dominate all other (ostensibly free) nations. The only thing that could possibly stop such reckless aggression was the United States, and the only way that peace could be maintained was through sheer strength achieved through strategic nuclear superiority. There could be no understanding, no negotiation, only surrender or war. In such an ideological climate, it is unsurprising that so many people would have rather fought a nuclear war than live under Communist rule (See Table 18).

In an action that shocks the world and edges it closer to the brink of atomic holocaust, Premier Khrushchev announces that the Soviets are resuming nuclear testing to produce monstrous super-bombs capable of being dropped at any point on the globe from space. This marks another climax in the Soviet ruler's campaign to terrorize the world and cow it into submission to his plans for world domination. ... [T]he Soviet Caesar displays the utmost contempt for world opinion. His attempt to shift the blame for his own action on those who would resist his efforts to "bury" them is ludicrous and hypocritical that it is repudiated everywhere outside the Communist-dominated world. (NYT Sep 1, 1961:16)

Other editorials demonstrate a less critical evaluation of the Kennedy Administration's challenge to the Soviets concerning the resumption of tests. Yet the editorial does not entirely let this challenge to the necessity of testing pass without any sort of comment. This takes the form of a simple statement that the United States already has a stockpile capable of destroying both Russia and China. In a way, this editorial parallels Kennedy's 1961 SOTUA in its assertion of the necessity of testing, while also suggesting there may be no necessity to continue testing. It also makes a subtle challenge to the ideas of the missile gap. Though it makes no

reference to that term (missile gap), the editorial asserts that there is no longer a disparity in strategic nuclear weapons that favored the Soviets.

The United States has told the Kremlin that 'in view of the ease of clandestine nuclear testing ... national security and defenses of the free world do not allow the risk' of forgoing nuclear testing indefinitely.' According to the figures on testing given out by the Atomic Energy Commission in 1959, the total yield of testing both fission and fusion (hydrogen) devices ... was 170 megatons, namely, the equivalent of 170 million tons of TNT. Over 72 percent of those were accounted for by the United States and Britain, most of them by the United States. These figures indicate that on the basis of tests alone, and hence in knowledge and technology in respect to the design of nuclear weapons ... the United States is way ahead of Russia. We now have a nuclear stockpile of great variety, great enough to destroy Russia, and China as well, many times over. (NYT Jun 19, 1961:26)

As always, the biggest question is how the public reacted to all of this. *Gallup* did not address the issue of disarmament and testing in its 1961 poll, but the issue did not escape the notice of the public. Letters sent to *The Times* indicate that this was still an issue that the public felt strongly about. The following response was written by the associate director of the University of California's Radiation Laboratory, in favor of the resumption of testing:

...The development of nuclear explosives in the United States was steady and rapid between the years of 1945 and 1958. In 1958 the moratorium made further experimentation impossible and brought our development effectively to a halt. Our knowledge of Russian developments between 1945 and 1958 is sketchy and unreliable. But what little we know is sufficient to indicate clearly that in 1958 our advantage had not been very great. Thus there cannot be any doubt about the speed and vigor of the Soviet development. ... Under these conditions it is essential that work on our nuclear explosives should receive adequate support. The most essential requirement is a well-planned, continuous effort. ... Some answers can be obtained only with the help of atmospheric tests. ... These tests need not result in any considerable increase in world-wide fall-out. Actually the danger of such fall-out, if any, is quite small compared to the obvious and imminent danger of Soviet power.

It is only by continued strength that we can safeguard the peace. Without the development of nuclear explosive [sic] in the coming months and years our strength will be inadequate. (NYT Nov 12, 1961:8)

As suggested by the length and content in the second letter, a professional connected to the strategic weapons program wrote this particular response. The letter was submitted by Dr. Edward Teller, who was well known for his connections to the Department of Defense as well as his advocacy for strategic weapons (Teller and Brown 1962). It is worth noting that Dr. Teller continued to spread the message about the dangers of any sort of gap in arms between the Soviets and the United States. Note that during the period covered by the missile gap, Dr. Teller admitted neither wrongness nor correctness regarding the hysteria over strategic arms discrepancies. He only acknowledged that it was not very clear what the Russians were doing during this period, and that though we had a lead it was not that great of a lead.

To return to the issue of gauging public opinion by letter, a caveat is that: if there were very many letters sent to *The Times* in 1961 that questioned the missile panic, they were not all necessarily published. That the editorial board held to some idea of balanced commentary from its readership is demonstrated by its publication of at least some of the letters that were critical of statements such as those made by Dr. Teller and editorial writers. Hence the publication of responses written by individuals with fewer attachments to the DOD; responses that questioned the ideas put forward by proponents of testing. The following letter submitted to the editorial

board of *The Times* by an atomic physicist and published author would be an example of the critical approach *The Times* begins to take, starting in the latter part of the 1960s. The author also subtly criticized the third theme that is found in the missile panic narrative. Furthermore, the author addressed the issue of the United States having tested a vast amount of explosives in the process of developing new weapons. But as the author points out: the kinds of tests demanded by proponents of testing were for a warhead-type that was not necessarily within the guidelines of our policy of retaliatory striking.

Proponents of test resumption stress the military value of probable and possible improvements in nuclear weapons. Even though the United States has tested nuclear explosives equaling eighty times the total weight of all explosive bombs dropped on Germany in World War II, nuclear weapons can be improved. The development of a more powerful [high yield, light weight] warhead for the Polaris and Minuteman ballistic missile is a case in point.

... The Polaris weapons system is designed to hold hostage the hundred largest cities of the Soviet Union. That is to say, it is a deterrent aimed at imposing unacceptable penalties upon the USSR should the latter strike first. The Soviet Union is assumed to attach great significance to a first-strike capability. ...Thus the Soviet Union—not the United States—has a greater requirement for developing high yield, light-weight [sic] warheads. (NYT Jun 21, 1961:36)

Much like the 1960 survey, the 1961 *Gallup Poll* did not directly address many of the issues surrounding the missile panic (See Table 18). But also like the 1960 survey, some possible inferences can be made from the data that are available. Immediately it is apparent that the public was still concerned about the threat presented by Soviet ICBMs from the very first question presented by the poll. Interest in the construction of community shelters increased between 1960 and

1961, suggested by the number of respondents that would be willing to help in their construction (81%). But it is apparent that some of the ambivalence seen in the previous year's survey is still present. Though many respondents (60%) considered what life in a fallout shelter would consist of, very few of them (12%) had actually done anything to prepare their families in case of nuclear attack. Admittedly the item concerning changes made in the home to prepare the family against nuclear attack is rather ambiguous. It does leaves open the possibility that respondents had already made these changes, and would therefore have no need of further changes. The only refutation of this possibility comes from the 1960 survey; respondents were not overly concerned about the construction of home shelters. Assuming the mood of the public had not swung wildly in the opposite direction during the intervening time, it would probably be safe to suggest that most respondents had not made any further preparations against nuclear attack.

For the most part, these data suggest the same picture of a de-escalating moral panic as the data from the 1960 survey. The only item that brings this idea into question is the increased number of respondents (53%) that are certain another world war will occur within the next five years. This 19% difference between public opinion in 1960 and 1961 would suggest the possibility of the moral panic's de-escalation as a temporary artifact of the 1960 data. Yet I argue that this is not the case, instead this rise in the 1961 data is a result of the events surrounding the construction of the Berlin Wall. That this may have indeed been the case is further suggested by all of these data being collected from September through

November of that year. After the events themselves began in the summer of 1961, with their culmination in the standoff of October. The Berlin Wall crisis and the standoff would have resulted in heightened tension, but these events were not necessarily as tense as the launch of Sputnik or the Cuban Missile Crisis. They provide a source of imminent threat, and act as a reminder that the United States and the Soviet Union are two powers that are at enmity with one another. This would account for the fact that while there was an increase in the number of respondents certain of an imminent nuclear war, it is barely half of total respondents.

Table 18: *The Gallup Poll* survey 1961-652/650-K

	Positive Response	Negative Response
1961K-50. Suppose it was decided in your community to build a public fallout shelter. Would you or your husband (wife) be willing to work a day or two on weekends or to give one or two days' pay to help build it?	81%	19%
1961K-34. Have you given any thought to what living in a fallout shelter would be like?	60%	40%
1961K-33. Do you plan to make any changes in your home to protect yourself or your family in case of a nuclear weapons attack?	12%	88%
1961K-34. Do you think we are likely to get into another world war in the next five years?	53%	47%
1961K-7. Suppose you had to make the decision between fighting an all-out nuclear war or living under communist rule—how would you decide?	81%	6%

1962 is curious vis-à-vis media reaction to the events of the 1960s. 1962 was the year of the Cuban Missile Crisis, another tense moment in the timeline of the Cold War, but while *The Tribune* shows an elevated number of articles, numbers in *The Times* are reduced compared to their 1961 levels. There is no recorded reasoning for this reduction in numbers. While *The Times* is nearly as conservative in its political perspective as *The Tribune* during this period, it takes a more liberal stance as time increases from Sputnik's launch and the original missile gap. It is possible that there is a curious phenomenon at work in this scenario. There is no doubt that the Cuban Missile Crisis was an extremely tense period within the Cold War, and the threat presented was both credible and real. Both the elite-engineered and interest group models of moral panics have the media as key components within the process (Goode and Ben-Yehuda 2009). What essentially separates the two is that in the former, it is the elite (through hegemony) that focus the attention of the media and thus public opinion, whereas in the latter it is the media as an entity itself that self-directs its focus.

I would argue that this is a holdover from the initial efforts of elites to use the launch of Sputnik and the missile gap as a way of increasing their institutional power. Again, the Cuban Missile Crisis was a credible threat, but those elites would be using the media to hammer home the point that they are still a necessary component of society, and that they require massive inputs of resources because the Soviets are very obviously a clear and present threat. Because of the nature of the relationship between the media and the elites, as well as the nature of the threat

presented by the Cuban Missile Crisis, the elites would not have to do much to generate the appropriate reaction (i.e. increased coverage) from *The Tribune*. Within an interest group model, *The Tribune* is already in a position to cover the event as much as possible. Whereas *The Times* is no longer so tied towards the elite narrative, instead shifting to a position where the paper itself will determine what its focus will be as would be expected in the interest group model. Thus, while it covers the Cuban Missile Crisis and the Soviet threat, it does not do so to the same extent as *The Tribune*. If this were indeed the case, what it would suggest is that what we are seeing in the media data for this year is two-fold. Firstly, while it is not a moral panic, it is a possibly an indicator of the shift towards an interest group model. Secondly, it is an artifact of the panic generated during the initial missile gap with the more conservative paper sticking closer to the elite narrative, while the other paper begins to move away from that narrative.

The Great Struggle: To Test or to Disarm?

Before taking a closer look at what *The Times* editorials are focusing on, it is first necessary to establish what priorities Kennedy set in his 1962 SOTUA. The year's speech is much like its 1961 incarnation: A discussion of the steps taken to improve the United States' military posture, followed by remarks on the necessity of disarmament. It would appear that Kennedy has not given up in his previously discussed efforts to bring the tide of public opinion concerning the missile gap under control.

Our moral and physical strength begins at home as already discussed. But it includes our military strength as well. So long as fanaticism and fear brood over the affairs of men, we must arm to deter others from aggression.

In the past 12 months our military posture has steadily improved. We increased the previous defense budget by 15 percent--not in the expectation of war but for the preservation of peace. We more than doubled our acquisition rate of Polaris submarines--we doubled the production capacity for Minuteman missiles--and increased by 50 percent the number of manned bombers standing ready on a 15 minute alert. This year the combined force levels planned under our new Defense budget--including nearly three hundred additional Polaris and Minuteman missiles--have been precisely calculated to insure the continuing strength of our nuclear deterrent.

... In the coming year, our reserve programs will be revised--two Army Divisions will, I hope, replace those Guard Divisions on duty--and substantial other increases will boost our Air Force fighter units, the procurement of equipment, and our continental defense and warning efforts. The Nation's first serious civil defense shelter program is under way, identifying, marking, and stocking 50 million spaces; and I urge your approval of Federal incentives for the construction of public fall-out shelters in schools and hospitals and similar centers.

... But peace in space will help us naught once peace on earth is gone. World order will be secured only when the whole world has laid down these weapons which seem to offer us present security but threaten the future survival of the human race. That armistice day seems very far away. The vast resources of this planet are being devoted more and more to the means of destroying, instead of enriching, human life.

*But the world was not meant to be a prison in which man awaits his execution. Nor has mankind survived the tests and trials of thousands of years to surrender everything--including its existence--now. This Nation has the will and the faith to make a supreme effort to break the log jam on disarmament and nuclear tests--and we will persist until we prevail, until the rule of law has replaced the ever dangerous use of force.
(Kennedy 1962)*

With Kennedy's continuing focus on disarmament, this should be an issue that finds its way into the editorials of 1962. In fact, this is what is found within the

papers during that year. The first editorials take an almost reluctant tone at the announcement that the United States resumed its weapons testing program.

In issuing the orders [to resume testing] to the Defense Department and the Atomic Energy Commission, the President had to weigh the inexorable requirements of both national and free world defense against the many protests voiced not only by the Communists but also by neutralist statesmen, 'peace marchers,' and even United Nations Secretary General Thant. With deep reluctance and regret, which we share, he decided that our own and free world preservation demands the tests; and nobody who is not privy to the secret military and scientific considerations that went into the decision can gainsay it.

Now it is more urgent than ever to explain once again to all humanity that the United States stands for a peaceful world ruled not only by force, but by law, and that it has made innumerable efforts, sacrifices and concessions to attain that goal. (NYT Apr 25, 1962:38)

The second editorial very specifically refers to the sadness brought about by the decision to resume the testing of nuclear weapons. The second editorial also addressed the previously established idea of the sacrifices that must be made if the people of the United States are to remain free of Soviet tyranny.

In fact, war does not belong to the soldiers any more. The burden would be borne indiscriminately by civilians, by both sexes, the old and the young, by the innocent as well as the guilty. But the sacrifice would be heavier and the fate of humanity even less promising if we failed to develop our own atomic weapons and had to choose between the destruction of millions of our people and the loss of all our liberties.

We turn from this speech with sadness in our hearts. No American President and no generation of American people have had a harder choice to make. But president and people are for peace by whatever road it may be approached. It cannot be brought nearer by real or apparent weakness. (NYT Mar 4, 1962:10)

But no matter how much regret might have been felt at the time, all three editorials regard as necessary the resumption of the tests and the consequent development of new nuclear weapons.

The President conceded that we were ahead of the Russians in the arms race. The new United States tests are designed to restore the original margin of our lead and this, of course, implies a policy of permanent United States military supremacy, which Khrushchev is not likely to accept if he can avoid it. (NYT Mar 4,1962:10)

Using the letters submitted to *The Times* on the subject of testing would give one the impression that the public was in full favor of resumed testing. Such letters would also indicate that popular opinion was on the side of the United States to the source of the hindrance to the disarmament and peace process. It was Soviet paranoia at espionage on the part of the United States during inspections that was holding up the process. Authors such as this regular citizen of the state of New York were suspicious—rightfully so—of Soviet motivations,

Completely disregarded is the fact that the Soviet nuclear arms tests provided data with which the Soviets might not only close the gap but take the lead, unless we also resume testing, and once again increasing our knowledge.

We must test if we are to keep our arms lead.

Daniel Shanefield's letter, in The Times of the same day, fully explained how we only achieved peaceful coexistence by possession of stalemating arms power. This we will lose if we do not test

We must resume nuclear arms testing if we are to continue to have peaceful coexistence. (NYT Apr 25, 1962:38)

A sentiment echoed by a citizen of the city of New York,

Why are no passionate pleaders for peace protesting Russia's refusal of international inspection to prevent nuclear testing? Why are they not

telling the world that Russia could have prevented our present tests—and indeed could at this moment stop them—by agreeing to the same inspection (by the United Nations) which the United States is willing to undergo—no more ‘espionage’ there than here? (NYT May 2, 1962:36)

Though it is not seen as much in these letters than in others that will be presented afterwards, it is heavily implied that the United States would never resort to such low tactics. As such since the United States was considered to be an honorable country that would not be so low as to use espionage, to suggest otherwise was merely a ruse on the part of the Soviets to keep their nuclear weapons.

But these letters do not constitute the whole of public opinion. The next set of letters submitted to *The Times* would suggest that public opinion was not unified on the subject of nuclear weapons testing. There were commenters who took notice of the complexity and nuance of the disarmament process as well as decisions to resume testing. Instead of placing blame squarely on the shoulders of the Soviets, or scientific necessity, these writers actually focused on institutional actors and processes at work. Authors such as the citizen who penned this letter:

The decision to test was primarily political, not scientific. Such a decision clearly results from an interplay of domestic political pressures, scientific and engineering judgment, interservice [sic] rivalry, intelligence estimates, rival theories of cold war strategy, chance circumstance, world political considerations and vested interests, desire to save face, emotional involvement and other assorted human frailties. It is sophistry to suggest that ‘secret scientific and military considerations’ determine a unique course of action necessary for our preservation. It amounts to saying that Big Brother knows best. Let us admit to ourselves that the decision to test is merely a victory for the school that favors vigorous prosecution of the cold war and a defeat for the more responsible elements who see other facets than the military one to the problem of ‘our own and free world preservation. (NYT May 2, 1962:36)

The next letter, written by another citizen of the state of New York, addresses the unaddressed, strategic reality of Russia opening her borders to inspection.

Repeatedly Russia has rejected arbitration based on inspection. Why? We have an atomic arsenal capable of destroying every one of her atomic sites if we knew their location. Russia would not have the ability to retaliate. On the other hand, if they struck first, we could retaliate and destroy all of Russia. Surely, we cannot expect Russia to accept a position that places her at our mercy. (NYT May 2, 1962:36)

The last letter, penned by a published author and New York state citizen, further elaborates the idea presented in the previous letter.

The Communists say that we must have complete, total disarmament, immediately and without any controls. We say that first we must establish effective international controls before we can disarm. The absurdity of the Soviet proposals has been effectively demonstrated by the governments of the Western powers.

The tragedy is that we do not realize that the Western proposals are just as fallacious. International control of the production of atomic bombs or other heavy weapons is unrealistic and impractical because: In totalitarian countries such control would be unreliable. In democratic countries such control is contrary to the practices and habits of competitive enterprise. Only if the nation-states grant each other complete freedom of industrial and military espionage (which is hardly conceivable) could such control be effective. (NYT Mar 4, 1962:10)

Though *The Gallup Poll* did not spend much of its 1962 survey on the issue of nuclear weapons, what it did spend is of value here. The question asked by *Gallup* in 1962 was whether or not respondents felt that the United States should resume its in-atmosphere tests of nuclear weapons. With commentary divided in the newspapers, it would be expected that results of the survey would be divided as well. The data displayed in Table 19 indicates otherwise, the majority of respondents (66%) were in favor of in-atmosphere tests.

The caveat to this result is that the poll was taken *after* the 1962 Geneva Conference, where the United States, United Kingdom and Soviet Union failed to reach an accord on banning nuclear tests. The results to the question are much more ambivalent in Table 20, which displays data taken from before the 1962 Conference concluded without an agreement. I would suggest that this drastic change in public opinion is another indicator of the necessity of a proximate threat, and therefore was not necessarily a moral panic. When there was the possibility that the United States would be able to keep the Soviets from reaching parity, the moral panic—and by extension the impetus to test—was not as strong (See Table 20). Once it became possible that the Soviets might re-take the lead, public opinion became positive towards the idea of test resumption.

Table 19: *The Gallup Poll* survey 1962-656-K

	Positive Response	Negative Response
1962-26a. What is your opinion—do you think the United States should or should not resume tests in the atmosphere? (1962/3/8-13)	66%	25%

Table 20: *The Gallup Poll* survey 1962-656-K

	Positive Response	Negative Response
1962-27a. Do you think the United States should or should not resume tests in the atmosphere? (1962/1/11-16)	46%	43%

According to the data, 1963 was the last year that there was a reduction in the number of articles concerning nuclear weapons and the Soviets in *The Times*

without a similar reduction in *The Tribune*. Historically it is significant in that this was the same year that the United States Senate ratified the Limited Test Ban Treaty (LTBT). The LTBT was designed to prohibit the test detonation of nuclear devices (either for peaceful or military purposes) both in and out of the atmosphere as well as underwater (U.S. Department of State 1963). Ostensibly, the treaty was intended to slow the arms race by forcing nuclear detonations underground. However, as proceeding editorials observe, much was discussion was made during the drive to ratify the treaty that underground testing would not disrupt the United States' nuclear weapons development. Though on the face of the LTPT would appear to be a setback for the defense sector, the fact that the only way the treaty could be ratified was through the assurance that it would have no impact on weapons development suggests that the treaty was more of an inconvenience than a serious set-back.

Nevertheless, 1963 is more widely remembered as the same year that President Kennedy was assassinated. Kennedy was able to deliver one last SOTUA before his assassination, and it was similar to his previous two. What made it unique was that he spent a greater portion of his speech discussing the benefits and appeal of disarmament, and less focused on the issues of the missile panic.

Finally, what can we do to move from the present pause toward enduring peace? Again I would counsel caution. I foresee no spectacular reversal in Communist methods or goals. But if all these trends and developments can persuade the Soviet Union to walk the path of peace, then let her know that all free nations will journey with her. But until that choice is made, and until the world can develop a reliable system of international security, the free peoples have no choice but to keep their arms nearby.

This country, therefore, continues to require the best defense in the world--a defense which is suited to the sixties. This means, unfortunately, a rising defense budget--for there is no substitute for adequate defense, and no "bargain basement" way of achieving it. It means the expenditure of more than \$15 billion this year on nuclear weapons systems alone, a sum which is about equal to the combined defense budgets of our European Allies.

But it also means improved air and missile defenses, improved civil defense, a strengthened anti-guerrilla capacity and, of prime importance, more powerful and flexible nonnuclear forces. For threats of massive retaliation may not deter piecemeal aggression--and a line of destroyers in a quarantine, or a division of well-equipped men on a border, may be more useful to our real security than the multiplication of awesome weapons beyond all rational need.

But our commitment to national safety is not a commitment to expand our military establishment indefinitely. We do not dismiss disarmament as merely an idle dream. For we believe that, in the end, it is the only way to assure the security of all without impairing the interests of any. Nor do we mistake honorable negotiation for appeasement. While we shall never weary in the defense of freedom, neither shall we ever abandon the pursuit of peace.

In short, let our adversaries choose. If they choose peaceful competition, they shall have it. If they come to realize that their ambitions cannot succeed--if they see their "wars of liberation" and subversion will ultimately fail--if they recognize that there is more security in accepting inspection than in permitting new nations to master the black arts of nuclear war--and if they are willing to turn their energies, as we are, to the great unfinished tasks of our own peoples--then, surely, the areas of agreement can be very wide indeed: a clear understanding about Berlin, stability in Southeast Asia, an end to nuclear testing, new checks on surprise or accidental attack, and, ultimately, general and complete disarmament.

For we seek not the worldwide victory of one nation or system but a worldwide victory of man. The modern globe is too small, its weapons are too destructive, and its disorders are too contagious to permit any other kind of victory.

To achieve this end, the United States will continue to spend a greater portion of its national production than any other people in the free world. For 15 years no other free nation has demanded so much of itself.

Through hot wars and cold, through recession and prosperity, through the ages of the atom and outer space, the American people have never faltered and their faith has never flagged. If at times our actions seem to make life difficult for others, it is only because history has made life difficult for us all. (Kennedy 1963)

The editorials from this period—especially those from *The Times*—maintain the same pattern that has been seen in the preceding years. Much like Kennedy's SOTUAs, as more space was dedicated to the idea of peaceful negotiation and disarmament, the more inclined *The Times* was to be more accepting of moving away from the missile panic in its editorials. In previous years, the editorials had their criticisms of the missile panic narrative bound with a general agreement to that narrative. But in the editorials of this year, there appears to be a split between those praising the LTBT and those still suspicious of Soviet motives.

The treaty signed in Moscow yesterday does not outlaw even a 100-megaton nuclear bomb. It does not stop underground testing. As Secretary Rusk said, "it is only a first step." West Germany does not want to sign for the present. France and Communist China are planning some atmospheric tests. The all-important ratifications are yet to come. Yet, taking everything negative, everything depreciatory that can be stated in argument, it is still a fact that the signing of the treaty was an event of historic significance. (NYT Aug 6, 1963:30)

Another editor for *The Times* echoed the hopeful tone established by the previous editor.

...A listener to last week's Senate hearings on ratification of the test-ban treaty might be forgiven if he thought at times that what was under discussion was a proposal for intensifying both the arms race and the cold war. The treaty's objective, of course, is just the opposite, and the objective should not be obscured by all the stress Administration witnesses are putting on the vastness of our atomic arsenal and on how much more progress in weaponry we expect to make through legal underground tests.

Ever since V-J Day, under both Democratic and Republican Presidents, the United States has sought dependable devices to reduce this incubus of terror. Now for the first time there is reason for hope that shifts in the world balance and in the thinking of Soviet leaders make possible a beginning along the road to peace. The partial test-ban treaty is the initial expression of that possibility. The Senate is properly concerned about the danger that it may contain hidden defects injurious to our national welfare. But, while continuing its search for such flaws, it must also be concerned about the danger that in our zeal for an unattainable perfection in security we will destroy any real chance of further movement along the path that leads away from nuclear annihilation.
(NYT Aug 18, 1963:8)

These previous editorials are an example of those editors who take a more positive position towards the LTBT. The second editorial adds to this by its demonstration of mild criticism towards the strategies used by the Administration in pursuit of Senate ratification. In order to get the treaty passed, more focus had to be put on how the treaty could be bypassed via the legal use of underground tests, with extra reassurance concerning the size of our arsenal. The editorial did not contain a critique per se, but it did make a gentle observation that an obsession over perfection in security (an idea that can include both treaties and devices) can lead to the exact opposite. The second editorial was also critical of the limited nature of the treaty. But that did not stop the author from praising the treaty as an historic agreement, given that it was made between two superpowers that still held deep suspicion of one another.

The following editorial approached the LTBT in a different way. The editor was not critical of the treaty, but still maintains a healthy dose of suspicion to the motives and actions of the Soviets. The editor states,

...The hard fact is that Soviet Russia's signature on the treaty does not mark the end of its drive toward a Communist world triumph, though it may now pursue that goal by means short of nuclear war. In fact, both the treaty and the "nonaggression pact" Russia wants may become weapons in the Soviet "peace" arsenal—to line up Asia and Africa against the "warmongering" Chinese Communists and to soften up the West for political settlements that would impair its alliances. As Mr. Khrushchev told the Chinese: "The struggle for peace, for peaceful coexistence, is organically bound up with the revolutionary struggle against imperialism. It weakens the front of imperialism, isolates its more aggressive circles from the masses of the people and helps in the struggle for national liberation." The West is warned.

Furthermore, the treaty itself can be abrogated if "extraordinary events" jeopardizes "the supreme interests" of any of its signatories. The Russians insisted on this reservation, over a narrower definition proposed by the West, as an obvious safeguard against nuclear armament by other powers. They may have Germany in mind and certainly they are concerned about Communist China, which boasts that it will soon break the "white" nuclear monopoly. They may also mean France, busily building its own nuclear force. (NYT Jul 28, 1963:8)

Though they do not do so perfectly, all these editorials are collectively modeling the ideas held forth in Kennedy's final SOTUA. Unfortunately, *Gallup* does not directly (or indirectly) address any of these issues in its 1963 poll (See table 21). But letters sent to *The Times* indicate that elements of the public were actually in favor of the LTBT. As well as—in the case of the first letter penned by an ordinary citizen of New York—critical of what appeared to be efforts on the part of the United States government—or actors therein—to violate the spirit of the LTBT. These writings suggest that whatever grip the missile panic may have had on the populace still is challenged by a desire to be rid of nuclear weapons.

The United States has conducted an underground nuclear test only one short week after the limited test-ban treaty was signed in Moscow. While this test is not in violation of the specific terms of the treaty, it

seems to be ill-timed and expresses the antithesis of the spirit that was shown by the respective heads of state at this historic meeting.

It is inconceivable that this test was so vital to our security that it could not have been postponed to a more opportune time. Coming on the heels of the signing, it mocked what may very well be the start of a more peaceful world to live in. (NYT Aug 18, 1963:8)

The second letter was written by a physics professor at the University of Pennsylvania and continues the criticism of the resistance to the test ban negotiations by actors within the United States government.

As the test ban negotiations move ahead beyond initial agreement, it is strange to see the reluctance, if not opposition, to make such an agreement shown by some members of this Government.

Why is there any question as to whether such a ban is in the interests of the United States? I believe the opposition is due primarily to two mistaken attitudes. First, there are those who believe that this country can better achieve security by further developing nuclear weapons development rather than by "trusting" the Soviet Union to adhere to the air-space-water ban.

...The second mistake made by opponents of a test ban has to do with simple distrust of the other side. ... Why should the "other" side want a test ban unless it is to their advantage, and consequently, it is implied, to our own disadvantage? (NYT Jul 28, 1963:8)

The 1963 *Gallup Poll* only has two items that address issues related to the focus of this project. Both are questions previously asked on the survey, and both indicate a change in the public opinion over the intervening years. Between 1957 and 1958, the number of people that believed that hydrogen weapons would be used against the United States increased from 71% to 75%. By 1963 that number had dropped to 60%. While it allows us to infer very little about public opinion regarding the LTBT, what it potentially suggests is that respondents believed that

the treaty would have some impact. Though there is also the possibility that the conclusion of the Cuban Missile Crisis had an effect on respondents' opinions. Whatever the case may be, overall it goes further toward a picture of the missile panic no longer having the same socio-political impact in the United States in 1963 that it once did.

Table 21: *The Gallup Poll survey 1963-668-K*

	Positive Response	Negative Response
1963-28a. If there should be another world war, do you think the H-bomb will be used against us?	60%	23%
1963-29. If we should happen to get into an all-out nuclear war, what do you think your own chances of living through it would be?	5%	52%

1964 marks the beginning of a general decrease in concern over the Soviets and nuclear weapons by both *The Tribune* and *The Times*. It should be noted that this reduction in attention from both newspapers came one year after the signing of the LTBT. Though discussions concerning the missile gap would continue through the decade, I would suggest that the signing of the treaty signaled an end to the moral panic that the missile gap represented to the media. This was not due to any conception that the treaty itself would somehow halt or even end nuclear weapon production on the part of the Soviets, though such thinking may have contributed to the overall perception. Instead, it was the fact that one of the key points to get the

treaty ratified was “proving” –to some extent—that the United States’ strategic arsenal was superior to that of the Soviets, and that superiority could be maintained in the face of the treaty. Though there is a proximate threat maintained in the form of the Soviets and their missiles, the main concern of the moral panic was effectively nullified through the ratification of the LTBT. This nullification would have been reinforced by the successful conclusion of the Cuban Missile Crisis.

The Missile Panic Begins to Recede

For his part, Johnson continued the same themes and goals of his predecessor in his SOTUA. Much like Kennedy, Johnson still maintained the old lines about the strength of the defense sector, as well as being prepared to meet the challenges of the Soviets. But Johnson still championed the cause of strategic weapons control and eventual disarmament.

First, we must maintain—and our reduced defense budget will maintain—that margin of military safety and superiority obtained through 3 years of steadily increasing both the quality and the quantity of our strategic, our conventional, and our antiguerrilla [sic] forces. In 1964 we will be better prepared than ever before to defend the cause of freedom, whether it is threatened by outright aggression or by the infiltration practiced by those in Hanoi and Havana, who ship arms and men across international borders to foment insurrection. And we must continue to use that strength as John Kennedy used it in the Cuban crisis and for the test ban treaty--to demonstrate both the futility of nuclear war and the possibilities of lasting peace.

Second, we must take new steps—and we shall make new proposals at Geneva—toward the control and the eventual abolition of arms. Even in the absence of agreement, we must not stockpile arms beyond our needs or seek an excess of military power that could be provocative as well as wasteful.

It is in this spirit that in this fiscal year we are cutting back our production of enriched uranium by 25 percent. We are shutting down four plutonium piles. We are closing many nonessential military installations. And it is in this spirit that we today call on our adversaries to do the same. (Johnson 1964)

A piece written by one of *The Times*' editors provides an example of the paper following with a hopeful spirit of peace and cooperation with the Soviets. The editorial does not take the position that the United States' willingness to open one of its reactor facilities was a challenge to the Soviets to prove how dedicated they are to the path of peace. The tone of the article takes more of the position that this was a way for the United States to show good faith on its part. This is a notable departure from the suspicious and challenging stance held by the newspaper towards the Soviets. That there was a change in the editorial tone further suggests that the immediately perceived danger of the missile gap has passed.

The United States announcement that one of this country's largest nuclear reactor plants will be put under the inspection and control of the International Atomic Energy Agency opens a new door to world peace.

If the Soviet Union, in the spirit of Premier Khrushchev's proposal for a "policy of mutual example" to spur peace, will now take similar action, a major breakthrough could be achieved in the deadlocked disarmament talks. Moscow's resistance to outside inspection and control has thus far been the most basic single impediment to progress in these talks; the American move should help neutralize Soviet fears on this key issue.

The immediate purpose of this step, which applies primarily to the "atoms for peace" program rather than disarmament, is to develop a worldwide control system to prevent the misuse of nuclear power reactors for the secret production of nuclear arms. This is in line with President Johnson's call for agreements to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons. Practical methods for a curb on misuse are being developed at three smaller American reactors already under I.A.E.A. control. Their extension to the much bigger plant—a privately owned reactor at Rowe,

Mass.—will not only help to perfect these methods but will also demonstrate their effectiveness in controlling larger reactor facilities.

...As the American delegate emphasized at Geneva, international inspection of reactors is not derogation of anybody's national sovereignty. Certainly, the United States again makes plain that it is willing to accept all the inspection and control it proposes for other. Moscow's first reaction is negative, but this may not be its last word in a situation so basic not only to world peace but to world survival. (NYT Mar 6,1964:30)

Another example of the steadily decreasing grip of the missile panic on the United States is the following editorial concerning the space program. It relays an attempt to *cut* funding from the program that was once seen as vital in the United States' efforts against the Soviets.

Senator Fulbright's proposal for a 10 percent cut in the 1965 budget for Project Apollo—the manned lunar expedition—came within four votes of passage. The narrowness of the margin may be illustrated by the fact that if there had been abstentions by the Senators from even three of the states having direct economic interest in the most rapid prosecution of the moon race—say, California, Texas and Florida—Senator Fulbright's amendment would have been adopted.

The Senate vote indicated an increasing disposition in the nation to question the wisdom of the expensive drive to send an American to the moon by 1970. ...[S]oviet economic difficulties have raised skepticism that Moscow can now engage in an all-out drive to beat us to the moon.

Senator Fulbright noted that there are important and unmet domestic needs—in such fields as education and transportation—which could usefully employ part of the almost \$3 billion requested for the moon race next year. (NYT Jun 30, 1964:32)

While the editorial did not outright announce its approval of Senator Fulbright's attempt, it did not upbraid him for endangering national security by attempting to seek funding for domestic, non-security needs. As an aside, the motion to redirect 10 percent of the aerospace budget away from a program that provided

thin gains for the whole nation was defeated by a very narrow margin. The votes in disagreement came from the bare handful of states that were receiving direct benefits from the Apollo project.

It is not possible to fully gauge public opinion this year from *The Gallup Poll*, as there are no survey items for 1964. However, if previous letters from *The Times* can be used as a general gauge of the public mood, then it would be safe to say that a segment of the public at least approved of disarmament efforts. The following letter written by a professor of Law and International Relations from the University of Denver in 1964 would suggest that there were parts of the public that felt that the United States was not doing *enough*. Furthermore, the author asserts that the United States was not being entirely honest by opening a civilian facility to inspection, while expecting the Soviets to open their military facilities.

... We would all like to think that the United States gesture has opened 'a new door to world peace.' ...Even if the Soviet Union decides to follow suit, an act which would admittedly constitute a significant and most welcome departure from its usual opposition to the idea of international inspection on its territory—such a decision would still be a far cry from permitting similar inspection over national nuclear military establishments.

... [I]t is rather to emphasize the immense differences between types of inspection and control systems not only in regard to their composition but also in terms of the authority they exercise over certain designated people, resources and institutions. ... Thus there is hardly a parallel between subjecting a nation's peripheral interests and innocuous establishments to international control and of doing the same in regard to a country's vital national security interests—the paramount factors determining nation-state policies in this age of ours. (NYT Mar 22, 1964:8)

Data from 1965 indicate that *The Tribune* and *The Times* reduced the number of articles dedicated to the missile panic within their respective pages. The drop in the number of articles in *The Times* dedicated to the missile panic and the Soviets is especially sharp compared to 1964. This decrease in interest from both newspapers can perhaps be attributed to Johnson's first SOTUA after his election to the office of President. His statements concerning the issues of disarmament and defense were fairly brief in comparison to past SOTUAs. Yet the general pattern of those comments remains as they had been for the past five years: a general recognition of the Soviets as a threat, but also a stated commitment to both peace and disarmament.

In this period we have taken more steps toward peace--including the test ban treaty--than at any time since the cold war began.

In this period we have relentlessly pursued our advances toward the conquest of space.

Yet we still live in a troubled and perilous world. There is no longer a single threat. There are many. They differ in intensity and in danger. They require different attitudes and different answers.

With the Soviet Union we seek peaceful understandings that can lessen the danger to freedom. (Johnson 1965)

Though Johnson briefly mentioned the progress of the space program in his SOTUA, that particular issue took up an increased amount of concern in *The Times'* editorials. Once again we return to the issue of sacrifice within the pages of *The Times*. But what was different was that the idea of sacrifice, especially vis-à-vis the space program, was no longer seen as being as appealing—or even necessary—as it was prior to the signing of the LTBT. While previous years saw a more enthusiastic

approach towards the United States' space program, the latter half of the decade saw the cost and gains of the program being questioned. As the following editorials indicate, those questions arose both domestically *and* abroad.

A significant side result of the Gemini 4 trip is the appearance abroad of voices, including that of at least one newspaper in Communist Czechoslovakia, asking why it is necessary for the United States and the Soviet Union to engage in the present enormously expensive and wasteful space rivalry.

The flight of Gemini 4 will have beneficial results far beyond expectations if it should convince Soviet policymakers that the United States is breathing down their necks in the aspects of space flight that make the best propaganda, and that therefore they also may have something to gain by turning the effort to reach the moon into a joint venture. (NYT Jun 8, 1965:30)

A second piece written by another of *The Times'* editors emphasizes this new idea of cooperation as opposed to wasteful competition between the two superpowers in their space endeavors.

...[A]n increasing chorus—ranging from a Vatican magazine in Italy to a Communist newspaper in Czechoslovakia—called for a halt to that race and its replacement by Soviet-American cooperation in space. ...

[I]t is no secret that more than a few of those active in the American space effort regard the whole idea as a fantasy. They have silently applauded Russia's unresponsiveness to the Presidential pleas. Any signs of genuine Soviet interest, however, would activate these opponents quickly.

...[T]hey note that the whole basis of space research now is the ability of powerful rockets to put heavy vehicles in orbit or to send them to the moon and beyond. Rockets, however, are also the basis of Soviet and American capability for sending nuclear-tipped missiles against each other. How, these skeptics ask, can there be cooperation in anything involving these major instruments for delivering mass death?

...[I]t seems to be forgotten that the enormously powerful boosters required for manned space exploration of the moon are far beyond the

range of what is militarily relevant on this small planet. Both the Soviet Union and the United States have long had the rocket capability to send enormously destructive hydrogen bombs upon each other's heads, but the far more powerful moon rockets are in another class entirely (NYT Jun 14, 1965:32)

These “skeptics” that the editorial referred to are particularly interesting, given that this was a direct reference to the institutional forces that they represented within the United States government. The second editorial tangentially addressed the intentions of those institutional forces vis-à-vis the moral panic narrative. The editorial suggested the existence of a desire to stymie efforts of cooperation between the United States and the Soviet Union. The space program was perhaps the most noticeable place for this behavior as it was a project meant to directly compete with the Soviets. This behavior—a resistance to the idea of cooperation between the two superpowers—appears to manifest in those moments when a project underwent public (or political) scrutiny due to resource allocation concerns. Such scrutiny was challenged on the basis of “new” intelligence that the Soviets intended to direct a great amount of effort—or made a startling advance—in some technological aspect related to the program being scrutinized. Thus, it would have been foolhardy to redirect funding from said project, as it would have presented the Soviets with an opportunity to make strategic gains on the United States. The following is a continuation of the previous editorial, it demonstrates that this is what happened when it came to the space program, but not nearly on the same scale as the defense sector.

...[I]n a recent House Government Operations Committee report. It argued that the Russians are far ahead of the United States in research aimed at the military utilization of space, and it pointed to the impressive Soviet Voskhod flights as evidence. The House committee wants an intensive effort to catch up with Moscow and it sees the Pentagon's manned orbital laboratory project as a venture requiring top priority. A military space race, if it does develop, could make all past arms races on earth seem picayune. (NYT Jun 14, 1965:32)

Though the editorials reported on concerns about the resources going into the space rivalry between the United States and the Soviet, this does not mean public opinion was unanimously on the side of cooperation. As the following letter—written by a member of Columbia University's School of Engineering and Applied Science—demonstrates, there were those amongst the public who were not entirely convinced the two superpowers could set aside the entirety of their differences in all areas.

It seems to me that at least once The Times could acknowledge the awesome achievements of our space program without also using the opportunity to criticize the present lack of Russian-American cooperation in space. Even as incredible a feat as the flight of Gemini 4 can apparently be discussed only in the context of an 'expensive and wasteful space rivalry' and a 'frenzied effort' to reach the moon.

It would therefore be well for The Times to modify its strident and inflexible call for a 'joint moon venture,' and at very least I would hope that this call would not be a mandatory part of all congratulations to our superb astronauts, NASA official and scientists for their astounding successes thus far. (NYT Jun 14, 1965:32)

Johnson's SOTUA of 1966 made almost no mentions concerning defense against the Soviets or strategic weapons. He devoted a single sentence to nuclear disarmament. Meanwhile within the pages of *The Times*, little editorial space is devoted to issues concerning the missile panic. *Gallup* provides no data on public

opinion regarding this issue. Fortunately, though there was little public input on the anti-ballistic missile issue at this point, there was some. What public input there was would suggest that segments of the public did not see the necessity of focusing on ABM. The author of the following letter viewed the ABM project as a folly. One that would lead inevitably to the stockpiling of more nuclear weapons in order to defeat any ABM system.

An antimissile defense cannot afford either nation lasting protection; it can only encourage the other side to stockpile a greater number of missiles, so as to be able to penetrate the defense. Eventually, stalemate would again be achieved, but each country would have many more weapons aimed at targets in the other

Billions would have been spent by each side merely to regain the balance of power that now in fact exists. And since offensive strategy would have to plan on penetrating an antimissile defense, a future war would involve the use of many more bombs than would a war today. Both sides would suffer more damage, particularly from additional fallout. (NYT 1966:13)

It is perhaps fitting that the next critical issue that should appear following the missile gap would be that of anti-ballistic missiles. By this point in history, though, some progress had been made in general disarmament; the missile gap itself no longer had the driving force it did in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Furthermore, gains in the space program combined with space successes that went unchallenged by the Soviets indicated that the space race was no longer as critical as once thought. With so much effort having been focused on building offensive missiles, it would only be logical that the next concern would be some sort of defense against all those units constructed by the other side.

The issue of ABM defense systems is briefly addressed in Johnson's 1967 SOTUA. Though his previous speeches focused little on defensive threats, there was a content shift in this SOTUA that signals the shift to ABM issues. Note that Johnson's speech still maintains an outward desire for disarmament and control, going so far as to suggest that an additional race would be wasteful to both nations. However, what is unsaid in the first paragraph is an intention to thwart Soviet long range and anti-missile capabilities. By the doctrine of Mutually Assured Destruction, the only true way to make an attack on the United States irrational would be to match capability in kind. Thus, signaling our own ABM program's beginning in earnest.

The Soviet Union has in the past year increased its long-range missile capabilities. It has begun to place near Moscow a limited antimissile defense. My first responsibility to our people is to assure that no nation can ever find it rational to launch a nuclear attack or to use its nuclear power as a credible threat against us or against our allies.

I would emphasize that that is why an important link between Russia and the United States is in our common interest, in arms control and in disarmament. We have the solemn duty to slow down the arms race between us, if that is at all possible, in both conventional and nuclear weapons and defenses. I thought we were making some progress in that direction the first few months I was in office. I realize that any additional race would impose on our peoples, and on all mankind, for that matter, an additional waste of resources with no gain in security to either side. (Johnson 1967)

With Johnson discussing the ABM issue in his SOTUA, it is by now expected that the issue should find its way into the editorials of 1967. *The Times* no longer followed the same behavior displayed during the missile panic. It would be expected that, with the revelation that the Soviets were developing ABMs to render ICBMs less effective, that this would spur the same kind of reaction seen during the missile

panic. Yet, *The Times* actually criticizes the need for such devices, actually going so far as to quote those experts who suggest that a push for such weapons would be self-defeating.

Pressure from Congress and the Joint Chiefs of Staff for a heavy antiballistic-missile (ABM) system oriented to defense against Soviet attack reflects an old military weakness: preparing to fight the last war. Technology has overtaken the ABM. The United States already has developed an effective antidote to it—sophisticated multiple warheads for the new offensive missiles, Minuteman III and Poseidon, which are to be deployed in the early 1970's. Official estimates indicate that the Soviet Union can do the same in five to seven years.

Whatever the case for a 'light' ABM defense against primitive Chinese missiles, arguments for either superpower to build a \$40-billion missile defense to protect its cities against the other are now as dated as the Billy Mitchell bomber-vs-battleship fight.

But now, before substantial ABM systems have been deployed on either side, rapidly advancing technology has vaulted Washington and Moscow into the offensive missile race that was feared for the post-ABM period. And this race is far more dangerous and difficult to control than the race in missile defenses which the US has been trying to head off.

The vast increase in offensive warheads that MIRV can provide will spur fear by each that the other is achieving first-strike capability that permits pre-emptive attack.

...Early in the ABM debate, Secretary McNamara predicted that the Soviet Union and the United States would respond to the other's ABM deployment, if undertaken, by improving offensive capabilities. "All we would accomplish," the Defense Secretary said, "would be to increase greatly both their defense expenditures and ours without any gain in real security to either side." But now, before substantial ABM systems have been deployed on either side, rapidly advancing technology has vaulted Washington and Moscow into the offensive missile race that was feared for the post-ABM period. And this race is far more dangerous and difficult to control than the race in missile defenses which the US has been trying to head off.

... The tragedy is that both the United States and the Soviet Union, according to secretary McNamara, already have strategic nuclear

arsenals 'greatly in excess' of their present security needs. And 'we're planning another big increase' in offensive capability that will be able to overcome 'the most powerful defenses the Soviets could build,' Mr. McNamara has warned. (NYT Oct 9, 1967:46)

At this point in the ABM debate, these remarks by both Johnson and the writers at *The Times* would constitute the opening preamble. The debate does not truly take off until 1969, proceeding on into the 1970s, but it is worth noting that before the issue of ABMs truly becomes a part of the second missile panic of the 1970s, *The Times* was criticizing the issue from the start. But for the most part, the space race is still the lead topic. As such, *The Times* continues to focus upon the issues of the space race and what it was costing the United States.

What has evaporated in the last decade of course, is the national smugness and sense of superiority to the Soviet Union that ruled here before Oct. 4 1957. Sputnik 1 was so shattering to millions of Americans because, for the first time, it called into question their automatic assumptions about the total superiority of the United States and about the 'inevitability' of American victory in the cold war.

Today the atmosphere is quite different. The United States has accomplished more than enough in space to assure itself and the world that there is no danger of a Soviet monopoly in the cosmos. And the Soviet propaganda line of the late nineteen-fifties and early nineteen-sixties—that the Kremlin's spectacular space feats 'proved' the superiority of socialism over capitalism—is relegated to the archives.

But the cost to both countries of their ten years of space rivalry has been enormous. In monetary terms, their total spending on space is probably approaching \$50 billion. And behind that figure is the reality that both nations have invested in this area substantial proportions [sic] of their best and scarcest scientific and engineering talent.

The economic benefits of the space age are still comparatively small.

... Militarily, a new dimension has been added to intelligence activities by the availability of spy satellites—both Soviet and American—which keep the entire surface of the earth under surveillance.

Impressive as these and other gains have been, however, the question remains: Was it really necessary to spend so many tens of billions of dollars in so short a period? What lends special poignancy to this question is the evident fact that much of the Soviet and American effort was pure duplication. (NYT Oct 2, 1967:46)

Finally, with the issue of disarmament also present in Johnson's 1967 speech, *The Times* is sure to have given the issue some coverage. It does so by focusing upon the then difficulties of securing a proper nonproliferation treaty in Geneva between the Soviets and the United States. Again, in a change of tone from previous editorials on similar subjects, this editorial did not blame the Soviets as being the sole roadblock by virtue of being unreasoning tyrants. Instead, the editorial approached the issue in a more diplomatic manner. Instead, past mistakes were viewed as being the result of both superpowers overstepping themselves vis-à-vis the other, smaller powers. While current impasses are seen as depending on Moscow's choices, but are not directly depicted as barbarous intransigence. This change in tone and focus further suggests that the original narrative of the missile panic had little hold within the pages of *The Times* at this point.

Hopes that a nuclear nonproliferation treaty could be concluded before the end of the year have proved illusory. The long, difficult seventeen-nation negotiations in Geneva have adjourned until mid-January; Soviet-American talks will continue.

The irony is that in the one remaining point of disagreement, the article on inspection, virtually all differences hang on one word. The American draft article, worked out in consultation with the five non-nuclear Euratom nations—West Germany, Italy and the Benelux countries—provides that "international safeguards" shall be applied to both signatory nations and regional organizations such as Euratom. Moscow insists that the phrase read "IAEA safeguards."

...It should not be beyond the ingenuity of diplomats to find a compromise in this dispute. The one thing the United States cannot do is to attempt to force the hand of its allies. It did that last year by seeking agreement with Moscow without consulting its allies in advance. The agreement, which the Euratom countries refused to sign, was not worth the paper it was written on, since West Germany's signature was Moscow's chief objective. The legacy of distrust that incident has left may not sour American relations with its allies indefinitely, but it undoubtedly limits American influence on the issue right now.

Essentially, whether or not there is to be a joint U.S.-U.S.S.R. draft nonproliferation treaty acceptable to Euratom increasingly depends on Moscow. The Soviet Union has obtained 98 per cent [sic] of what it has been after from the start—to commit West Germany against acquisition of nuclear weapons. If it continues to fight for the last 2 per cent [sic] the whole world may be the loser. (NYT Dec 18, 1967:46)

Though it was not his final SOTUA, Johnson's fourth speech is distinct for doing something that had not been done before. In 1968, Johnson dedicates more space to the discussion of peace and negotiation with the Soviets, whereas the issue of defense receives only a few lines. It would appear that Johnson was more concerned with the issue of Peace than he was with war. It would also suggest that Johnson (as opposed to his successors such as Reagan) understood the contraindication of talking about disarmament while calling for an increase in the size of the arsenal. But this is yet another—if not the best—sign that the missile panic is no longer of great, national concern. Though the United States maintained constant surveillance on the Soviets, Johnson's positions indicate that the consensus was that the former was currently superior to the latter. That Johnson insists that this superiority merely needs to be maintained is further proof that the original objectives of the missile panic had been achieved.

Because we believe the nuclear danger must be narrowed, we have worked with the Soviet Union and with other nations to reach an agreement that will halt the spread of nuclear weapons. On the basis of communications from Ambassador Fisher in Geneva this afternoon, I am encouraged to believe that a draft treaty can be laid before the conference in Geneva in the very near future. I hope to be able to present that treaty to the Senate this year for the Senate's approval.

We achieved, in 1967, a consular treaty with the Soviets, the first commercial air agreement between the two countries, and a treaty banning weapons in outer space. We shall sign, and submit to the Senate shortly, a new treaty with the Soviets and with others for the protection of astronauts.

Serious differences still remain between us, yet in these relations, we have made some progress since Vienna, the Berlin Wall, and the Cuban missile crisis.

But despite this progress, we must maintain a military force that is capable of deterring any threat to this Nation's security, whatever the mode of aggression. Our choices must not be confined to total war-or to total acquiescence.

We have such a military force today. We shall maintain it. (Johnson 1968)

In 1968 *The Times* dedicated very little space towards the missile panic, defense, or the Soviet threat. Though Johnson makes a point to discuss disarmament and peace, *The Times* does not focus on that. Instead *The Times* continues to focus on the last area of competition between the two superpowers that it has for the past few years declared to be a wasteful enterprise. Despite letters sent to the paper disparaging it for its criticisms of the space program, *The Times* continued to address the waste of vital resources that the space program represented.

Yet even this moment of deserved celebration and jubilation a disquieting thought must come to all who ponder the deeper significance of this rocket leap to the moon. What Apollo 8 did was

made possible by a great mobilization of talent and energy, financed by what at times seemed like a blank check on the United States Treasury.

Why cannot the same kind of mobilization of resources be utilized to meet the nation's real problems here on earth, if it is possible to send men to the moon, is it not possible to give all our people decent housing, adequate schooling and proper medical care, to cleanse the nation's air and water of pollutants, and to save the natural wonders of forest, stream, and canyon now threatened by the voracious appetite of an expanding population (NYT Dec 28, 1968:26)

Though *The Times* focused more upon the problems generated by the space program, letters submitted that year indicate that the issues of ABMs and disarmament were of greater concern to the public than resource wastage. Professors of Political Science and International Law and Organization from the University of Michigan penned the following letter:

In our judgment the United States Government has gone beyond the limits dictated by its own interest in seeking to impose certain aspects of the nonproliferation treaty draft upon the Western Europeans.

The inspection formula which, according to your report is now acceptable to the Euratom countries, is certainly a sensible and workable compromise. We wholeheartedly agree with you when you say "the one thing the United States cannot do is attempt to force the hand of its allies" still further.

The Soviet Union's interest in the nonproliferation treaty is at least as acute as ours. In fact, the Soviet Union has already gained considerable "by-product" benefit from the disagreement which the draft has caused within the Western alliance. The time has come for the Soviet Union to make the necessary minor concession and to agree to the text that is acceptable to the Euratom countries.

This text, as reported in your editorial, would serve as a perfectly adequate basis for a negotiated arrangement between Euratom and the International Atomic Agency and would provide the necessary assurance to all parties that the Euratom inspection system is operating effectively. (NYT Jan 1, 1968:14)

Additionally, sentiment was not entirely on the side of the funding of an ABM defense system, as indicated by this letter written by a citizen of the state of New Jersey.

I was very disturbed by the fact that Congress has approved development and deployment of an antiballistic missile system which will, according to projected costs, run in the area of \$50 billion.

It is unconscionable that the government ordered the closing of "Resurrection City" on the same day it chose to approve this monumental waste of money. The Government seems very concerned with the enforcement of the law requiring the vacating of this park property upon the expiration of a permit, but is not at all concerned with attending to the just complaints of the poorer section of the American society.

The idea of spending a fantastic sum of money while ignoring the cry of the people that the bulk of the population would like to pretend does not exist is shameful.

An expenditure of this amount of money for a system most experts regard as technically unfeasible in the face of domestic, and even more basically human, problems borders on the immoral. This, coupled with the cost of the Vietnamese war (roughly \$28 billion a year) causes me to doubt the wisdom of the Federal Government and the goals of the society in which we live. (NYT Jul 7, 1968:11)

The second letter is the most important indicator of both social opinion as well as the institutional dynamics that continued to operate in the United States after the end of the missile panic. In the case of the latter, it indicates that it was still possible for the defense sector to acquire funding for projects through even tangential references to the missile panic (i.e. the impact that ABMs would have on current arsenal levels). This is in spite of Defense Secretary McNamara's warnings as reported by *The Times* of what affect building an ABM system would have on the balance of power between the United States and the Soviet Union (See the October

9, 1957 editorial). From a moral panic perspective, this does not contradict earlier statements concerning the slow decline of the missile panic. What I am suggesting is that this approval of funding signified a lingering institutional power acquired through the use of the moral panic by defense sector elites that allowed the achievement of desired objectives (i.e. acquiring funding for a purely theoretical technology). I would further suggest that this institutional power was far more potent as it could be used to achieve goals that elements of civil society (i.e. the press and the public) had no general interest in.

Finally, the letter presages the initial effectiveness that the attempted second missile panic will have on civil society. The author is clearly unmoved at the peril faced by the Soviets developing an ABM system. Instead, he is more concerned with and criticizes both the spending of vast sums of money on fruitless pursuits, as well as the attempt by society to pretend that the people who need help the most do not exist.

The 1960s are closed out with a final SOTUA in 1969 by Johnson, in which he made no mention of the defense sector. Instead, Johnson focused more on the issues of nonproliferation and disarmament, as well as the hope of lasting peace between the United States and the Soviet Union.

The quest for a durable peace, I think, has absorbed every administration since the end of World War II. It has required us to seek a limitation of arms races not only among the superpowers, but among the smaller nations as well. We have joined in the test ban treaty of 1963, the outer space treaty of 1967, and the treaty against the spread of nuclear weapons in 1968.

This latter agreement--the nonproliferation treaty--is now pending in the Senate and it has been pending there since last July. In my opinion, delay in ratifying it is not going to be helpful to the cause of peace. America took the lead in negotiating this treaty and America should now take steps to have it approved at the earliest possible date.

Until a way can be found to scale down the level of arms among the superpowers, mankind cannot view the future without fear and great apprehension. So, I believe that we should resume the talks with the Soviet Union about limiting offensive and defensive missile systems. I think they would already have been resumed except for Czechoslovakia and our election this year. (Johnson 1969)

Despite the fact that Johnson made no mention of them in his SOTUA, the 1960s ended with a focus on ABMs. As was previously discussed, this is the period when ABMs began to come into greater focus, especially considering funding for the AMB project was secured in 1968. Defense Secretary McNamara and the author of the letter written in 1968 decrying that funding decision make observations that went overlooked in missile defense discussions. That is: the very act of discussing the possibility of being able to create technologies that would thwart the arms race leads to the manufacture of more nuclear weapons to defeat purely *theoretical* technologies. ABM systems are a difficult technology to create today using the most advanced technology (Postol 2014). The likelihood of the United States being able to create a missile that would even remotely be useful in an interceptor role using the technology of the 1960s is, at best, a thought experiment in high velocity math. As was previously inferred by editors and authors writing in response to their editorials: defense and deterrence of Soviet attack was not the point of the ABM.

The great antiballistic missile debate centers on lives, not dollars. The pivotal question for President Nixon in the decision he is to announce this week is whether the deployment of a Sentinel missile system will not

in fact contribute to national insecurity by intensifying the nuclear arms race, already at the overkill stage. But the unpredictable eventual cost of a 'thin' or thick ABM system directs fresh attention to the economic burden of maintaining a huge military establishment and the difficulty of ever lightening that burden. (NYT Mar 10, 1969:44)

Similarly, another professor of physics from the University of Pennsylvania wrote in to say:

Many of the knowledgeable proponents of the Safeguard ABM do not even argue that Safeguard will itself give any protection, but only that we must get started so as to learn how eventually to build a large system that might be effective. One could not argue strongly with this position if the ABM were to cost us only money. ... But the ABM and MIRV promise to cost us dearly, and the Russians too. These devices bring no security to either country. ... If we pursue ABM and MIRV, then even though the present leaders of the two countries may state their judgment that these weapons are nonproductive, or necessary, or inevitable, the net result will nevertheless be that each side will view the other with more uncertainty and more distrust.... The ABM is a step in the wrong direction—for us just as for them. MIRV by itself is even worse; and the combination of MIRV and ABM together would bring us all a dangerous destabilization. (NYT letter editor 1969:30)

As the previous letter suggests, the sentiments held by *The Times'* editors were not singular. Public approval towards ABMs had not improved between 1968 and 1969. The following letter from a Massachusetts citizen is another example of that opinion:

...To what ultimate end will the battle of semantics over "superiority," "sufficiency," or "parity" lead? The crucial fact of international political life today is that both the United States and the Soviet Union possess the capabilities or defensive damage limitation capabilities inevitability requires a suitable reaction on the part of the other side. Thus we get the vicious circle known as the arms race. The decisions to proceed with deployment of multiple warheads, an advanced bomber aircraft, and in particular with the notorious Sentinel anti-ballistic missile system provide positive assurance that the Soviets will respond in kind to each of these new threats. The ensuing action-reaction cycle will be the all too familiar spiraling of arms at enormous costs. But who can maintain

the position that either side gains in security from such developments?
(NYT Feb 12, 1969:38)

There are two ostensibly unintended consequences to the pursuit of missile defense technology (as well as technology to defeat anti-anti-missile defenses such as the MIRV). As Defense Secretary McNamara stated earlier, the introduction of the ABM or any other missile defense into the strategic weapons debate injects energy into the arms race. Both sides may reach a stalemate in arms at which point building more or less becomes a trivial matter. But once one party announces a technology that defeats or reduces the effectiveness of the current arsenal, it sets off a chain reaction of new weapon construction. The second unintended consequence is that, just as missile defense technology destabilizes the equilibrium of the arms race, it also destabilizes negotiations surrounding disarmament. All of sudden, it is not just the old arsenal that is being debated, it is the question of limits on new technologies, how those technologies will be deployed, how many of those new technologies can be tested and developed etc. To return to the bargaining theory of war, such actions would further complicate and occlude the negotiations, thus increasing the possible threat of war.

The 1960s began with increased levels of concern from both the media and the President, though these levels began to decrease as the decade wore on. With the decrease in concern also came a de-escalation in the missile panic, as the public no longer felt the level of grassroots concern that sustained efforts by the elites to achieve their political and defense sector goals. Though the Presidents—starting with Kennedy and continuing with Johnson—made efforts to

apply a measure of braking force to bring the public reaction utilized in the missile panic under control. At the same time, we see the media continued its coverage and commentary on the missile panic; the media thus demonstrated the slow transition of the grassroots concern to an interest-group missile panic in which the needs and goals of the media as organizations fueled missile panic coverage. Eventually the elites also began using the threats within the missile panic as a technique for the acquisition and maintenance of institutional power. By the end of the decade, we see these elites and other institutional actors using the Soviet nuclear threat as a means to deflect challenges and critiques from projects such as the Space Race and ABMs. The following chapter will demonstrate how these efforts by elites and institutional actors to defend the gains provided by the original missile panic took on an increased level of activity in the next decade.

Ch. 8 1970-1979

To refer back to the original Figures used to start this analysis, Figure 1 reports the number of articles in the NYT and Chicago Tribune dedicated to the Soviets and the missile gap each year from 1955 through 1990. Figure 2 reports the number of times the president talks about the Soviets and the missile gap during each year's SOTU address. According to the data presented in these figures, the 1970s are a mirror image of the 1960s as far as media concern. The decade starts with decreased levels of concern from the media and President. Over the course of the decade, these levels will increase from both the media and the Presidents (though, in the case of the latter, this is at the end of the decade).

At the start of the decade, data from *The Times* and *The Tribune* indicate that the steady decrease of interest seen in the 1960s continues into the 1970s. In his first SOTUA, President Nixon covered the issues that have become familiar. There are however a few modifications to these old positions. One of the bigger modifications is Nixon's inclusion of the Chinese (Communists) in his overtures to peace with the Soviet Union. But for our purposes here, what is notable was how Nixon addressed the issue of defense. He makes the point that though the United States was still strong militarily, it would no longer be supporting the military needs of other nations. The logic being that these once developing or decimated nations had built or rebuilt their strength, and could now handle their own defenses. This was no idle declaration, it appears Nixon was both justifying and attempting to make more palatable the cuts to defense in his budget. Though he does not outright discuss it in his SOTUA, the fact that Nixon would even consider cutting the defense budget would suggest that any lingering institutional power afforded by the first missile panic has dissipated.

We have based our policies on an evaluation of the world as it is, not as it was 25 years ago at the conclusion of World War II. Many of the policies which were necessary [sic] and fight then are obsolete today.

Then, because of America's overwhelming military and economic strength, because of the weakness of other major free world powers and the inability of scores of newly independent nations to defend, or even govern, themselves, America had to assume the major burden for the defense of freedom in the world.

In two wars, first in Korea and now in Vietnam, we furnished most of the money, most of the arms, most of the men to help other nations defend their freedom.

Today the great industrial nations of Europe, as well as Japan, have regained their economic strength; and the nations of Latin America-- and many of the nations who acquired their freedom from colonialism after World War II in Asia and Africa--have a new sense of pride and dignity and a determination to assume the responsibility for their own defense.

That is the basis of the doctrine I announced at Guam. Neither the defense nor the development of other nations can be exclusively or primarily an American undertaking.

The nations of each part of the world should assume the primary responsibility for their own well-being; and they themselves should determine the terms of that well-being.

If we are to have peace in the last third of the century, a major factor will be the development of a new relationship between the United States and the Soviet Union.

I would not underestimate our differences, but we are moving with precision and purpose from an era of confrontation to an era of negotiation.

Our negotiations on strategic arms limitations and in other areas will have far greater chance for success if both sides enter them motivated by mutual self-interest rather than naive sentimentality.

It is with this same spirit that we have resumed discussions with Communist China in our talks at Warsaw.

Our concern in our relations with both these nations is to avoid a catastrophic collision and to build a solid basis for peaceful settlement of our differences. (Nixon 1970)

As expected, reductions in the defense budget—and any implied losses in institutional power— combined with a renewed push on a strategic weapons moratorium were not events that would go unchallenged by the defense sector. *The Times* ran an editorial detailing exactly the kind of pushback Nixon received from the defense sector. The editorial even went so far to assert that then Defense

Secretary Laird was using elements of the missile panic purely in an effort to sway public and Senatorial opinion. I would suggest that Mr. Laird's actions are very clearly the work of an institutional actor attempting to stem any loss of power using previously successful techniques.

It is worth taking note of two particular items. The first is subtle, and may not have been entirely on purpose, but it is the manner in which *The Times* demonstrated an awareness of the nature of the original missile panic by referring to the launching of a satellite by China. The editor asserts that Mr. Laird would attempt to use the launching of that satellite as part of specious reasoning for the need of ABMs. This would not be unlike the launching of Sputnik that was followed by reasoning for the first missile panic.

Secretary Laird's missile rattling last year brought him two successive Presidential admonitions in the form of copies of Mr. Nixon's inaugural address with underlining beneath the words, "We cannot learn from one another until we stop shouting at one another...." It would be interesting to know if a third copy was sent to the Defense secretary after his release of scare pictures of Soviet MIRV multiple warheads and other intelligence data and his latest scare speech in New York.

Both the speech and the intelligence data warn again of the possible emergence of a Soviet "first-strike" capability (without using the words) and urge a further vast build-up of American offensive and defensive nuclear missiles. Neither will aid the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) in Vienna, which supposedly are trying to halt the Soviet-American missile race.

The Defense Secretary's purpose clearly is to sway American opinion and a hostile Senate, which has just urged the President by a 72 to 6 vote to seek an immediate Soviet-American moratorium on further deployment of strategic weapons to give the SALT talks a chance. Mr. Laird's chief instrument in this campaign is selective declassification of headline-making secret information that seems to support the Pentagon's case, while data that challenge it remain concealed on

“national security” grounds. It’s an old dodge, and the level of sophistication to which Senate debate has risen on strategic arms issues during the past year makes it of doubtful utility now.

Mr. Laird acknowledged in his New York speech that a Soviet desire for a deterrent “comparable” to that of the United States was “legitimate” Despite the recent Soviet build-up, he said, “if their strategic posture could be expected to stay at the operationally deployed posture which exists today, I believe we would have a tolerable situation.”

Yet Mr. Laird has strongly recommended against proposing an interim Soviet-American moratorium on further deployment of strategic weapons to give the SALT talks a chance to freeze the nuclear balance at the present level. He is clearly less interested in halting the Soviet build-up than in continuing the American build-up of defensive antiballistic missiles (ABM’s)—for which China’s satellite will now give him a new, though specious, argument—and even more, the build-up of offensive MIRV multiple warhead missiles.

... At Vienna, the United States evidently is proposing intrusive on-site inspection if MIRV is to be banned, something it knows the Soviet Union will not accept. Meanwhile MIRV deployment is going ahead, with Minuteman III missiles scheduled to become operational starting in June and Poseidon missiles starting in January.

Once MIRV deployment begins, it will become increasingly difficult to turn back to a ban. Yet the Administration denounces proposals for a delay in deployment as “unilateral disarmament,” while it unilaterally plans to take MIRV out of the Vienna negotiations, in effect, by deploying it. The SALT talks, in these circumstances, are unlikely to get beyond limited agreements, acceptable to the military on both sides, which would serve as a cover for a continuing arms race. (NYT APR 26, 1970:12)

It is a credit to the changing political position of *The Times* that included with this editorial concerning Mr. Laird was a second editorial effectively deflating any attempts by defense sector elites to blow the Chinese satellite launch out of proportion, thereby attempting to derail any attempts to stymie negotiations

between the United States and the Soviet Union, or any attempts to initiate a second missile panic.

The Chinese People's Republic and its scientists have successfully orbited their first satellite, making China the fifth member of the international space club. The Chinese feat is in the tradition of that country's brilliant history of contributions to astronomy, a science in which observations made by China's astronomers more than a thousand years ago still provide important data.

Of course the first Chinese satellite has political and military as well as scientific significance. The feat proves that technological progress has continued in China these last few years despite the turmoil of the cultural revolution [sic]. Moreover it is self-evident that to orbit a sputnik of almost 400 pounds, the Chinese must have developed a powerful rocket, one probably capable of being employed as an intercontinental ballistic missile. Since Peking already has atomic and hydrogen bombs, its first satellite must be regarded as public notice that it has the capability of delivering nuclear weapons to any point on the earth's surface.

This latest Chinese advance does not materially change the world balance of military power. Peking may now have a few long-range missile, but Washington and Moscow have hundreds. A Chinese Government so incautious as to attempt offensive use of rocket-borne nuclear weapons would invite overwhelming devastation upon its land its people

Nevertheless, this latest sign of China's expanding military capability emphasizes the need to bring Peking back into the world community, and to make China a party to the basic international treaties governing nuclear weapons and space. Fortunately, direct Peking-Washington negotiations have been renewed in Warsaw, and these have already improved the atmosphere between the two countries. China's first satellite only strengthens the case for more frequent Warsaw meetings and for greater efforts to normalize Peking-Washington relations. (NYT Apr 26, 1970:12)

The final paragraphs of the first editorial are somewhat prescient, as Nixon's decision regarding MIRVs in the early 1970s eventually prove detrimental later on. But it is worth noting that while *The Times* appeared to be mostly in favor of Nixon's

disarmament negotiations, the author was willing to criticize actions on the part of the Administration that hampered the process. Furthermore, the article's observations regarding how the decisions made would only be a cover to a continued arms race suggest an awareness of the principles that were at work in the first missile panic.

Yet, the second editorial also suggested that while *The Times* can be critical of Nixon and his Administration, it is still in some ways synced with it. The veritable praise that the editorial ascribes to Chinese engineering and science are stark contrasts to what was written about the Soviets. This would seem unusual if it were not for the fact that Nixon in his SOTUA took a more open stance to China. It could possibly be a simple case of the paper attempting to defer attempts by defense sector elites to use the launch to initiate a new missile panic therefore disrupting the strategic weapon negotiations. However, it cannot be discounted that Nixon's discussion—and actions—aimed at improving relations with the Chinese filtered down to the press.

Editorials written by *The Chicago Tribune* are a startling contrast. Whereas *The Times* questioned the motives of individuals such as Secretary Laird or the American Security Council, *The Tribune* accepted their statements or analyses uncritically. Usually these statements dealt with the United States falling behind the Soviets in terms of missiles, and that the Soviets were participating in disarmament and limitations negotiations merely to find the perfect moment to strike. The Tribune writers preferred instead to critique any action that stalled the construction

of more missiles and weapons to match the Soviet threat, with a very subtle suggestion that the method of pluralistic debate—one of the tenets of Democratic society—was to blame for the United States falling behind the Soviets. There is no way to gauge the true intentions, but it is very close to referencing the old idea started in the 1950s that the United States and its citizens would have to sacrifice certain elements of their society to compete with the Soviets.

Last week, while the experts bickered, two developments in their respective countries dramatically demonstrated the gap that separates the nuclear giants in their approach to the problem. Moscow tested a powerful new method of delivering nuclear bombs from outer space, while Washington acted to limit the effectiveness of its only antiballistic missile defense. The two events occurred within 24 hours.

The Soviets staged the latest test firing of the bomb they can sneak in from outer space exactly one day after Congress ended its bitter debate about America's own Safeguard defense against a missile attack. Debate ended when Senate-House conferees agreed on a bill to limit deployment of the controversial Safeguard ABM system, conceding victory of a sort to its opponents.

President Nixon, acutely aware of Russia's growing nuclear power and the Kremlin's ceaseless drive to dominate the world, sought funds to start work on six new Safeguard sites. These would be in addition to the two original ABM positions now under construction.

Instead, the conferees approved funds for only two new sites, an action that stripped away some bargaining tools from the American SALT delegation, which might have wanted to trade away some of our future ABM sites against Russia's powerful SS-9 super missiles. The congressional compromise also ignored the more serious threat posed by the dominating position in nuclear power held by the Soviet Union.

Last April Secretary of Defense Melvin S. Laird disclosed that in terms of missile delivered nuclear power as measured by megatons [the explosive force of one million tons of TNT], the Soviet Union had soared to a four to one advantage over the United States. This megatonnage margin has now jumped to six to one, according to the American Security Council, a private group of industrial and military leader. Neither estimate

includes FOBS, the orbiting delivery system that can hurl a nuclear bomb from outer space against an unsuspecting and unprepared American target.

In the nuclear arms race, the Soviets just keep plugging methodically ahead, unhampered by the fine distinctions of congressional debate, unencumbered by any anti-ABM clique. (CT Oct 10, 1970:20)

It is worth noting that in the preceding editorial, *The Tribune* reports that Nixon eventually sought funding for more ABM sites in addition to the ones whose funding had already been secured. Again, recall that this would be the requisitioning of more units of a *theoretical* technology in addition to the sites that had not been constructed yet. And that is despite the knowledge of the impact that these sites would have on negotiations with the Soviets. The possible explanation for this is that the institutional power of the moral panic was not initially strong enough to resist Nixon's initial budget cuts, but managed a resurgence that allowed it goals such as this. It would appear that while the media and other elements of the public – to be discussed in following paragraphs—were not entirely convinced of Mr. Laird's sudden strategic revelations, the very act of making said revelations required Nixon to take some sort of action. Which is unsurprising, the political difficulties Eisenhower encountered in the wake of Sputnik's launch (Ex. generals going around their commander-in-chief to directly petition senators) were a prime example that a lack of visible action on missile gap issues was a sure way to encounter political difficulties.

Unfortunately, the survey data from *Gallup* still does not ask the kind of in-depth questions that would help ascertain the public's position on the subject in

1970. The closest *Gallup* comes is a survey in 1973 that asks respondents the likelihood of nuclear weapons being used in the next world war (See Table 30). But there are still the letters sent in to *The Times* as a secondary source. It is apparent that by this point the public does not fully accept the missile panic as much as it did in previous years.

All of the letters seem to be aware of—or at least address—the concept of the defense sector using missile panics for their own benefit. Whether securing funding for defense contracts or even for the purpose of sabotaging disarmament negotiations, but gone are the days when the defense sector and its allies are viewed through a lens of complete trust. The author of the first of these letters demonstrated awareness by the public that the first missile panic was by then known to be baseless. The author is quick and to the point on the matter:

It is ironic that the Democrats during the 1960 Presidential campaign accused the Eisenhower Administration of a dangerous missile gap between the United States and the Soviet Union in the latter's favor—an accusation which subsequently proved groundless. ... (NYT Feb 22, 1970:13)

The author of the second letter—a regular citizen of the city of New York—challenged the growing argument concerning the necessity of ABMs. In the final paragraph, the author also rather subtly pointed out that this argument concerning imminent Soviet attack—and thus the need for more ABMs—just happens to occur before a hopeful moment in the SALT talks. More than anything, this letter was especially poignant in that it joined a chorus of voices—both public and in the press—that have become suspicious of the motives of the defense sector.

The logic of C. L. Sulzberger's recent argument that an extensive American AMB system is necessary to preserve NATO is questionable.

Even if a substantial number of US troops now in Europe are withdrawn in the 1970's, it hardly follows that a 'massive retaliation' policy will be any more credible or desirable than it was in the 1950's. Mr. Sulzberger warns that the alliance may disintegrate unless we return, via ABM-protected ICBM's, to a strategy of inflexible response.

But do nuclear weapons reliable deter anything but their counterparts? In the whole post-war period—even after German rearmament—there has never been a force of ground troops strong enough to check a Soviet assault for more than 48 hours. Why, then, would an ABM system make NATO any more or less credible after a reduction of conventional strength?

If American willingness to risk nuclear war is questioned in Europe, it is difficult to see how military precautions in this country could reassure our far-away allies, who rejected "massive retaliation" from the outset.

In the end, the Sulzberger judgment of "what NATO needs" rests on the assumption that a Soviet attack on Western Europe is more than a remote possibility. It is this that has not been demonstrated from the standpoint of either sword or shield in recent years, particularly at this tangentially hopeful moment prior to the SALT negotiations. (NYT Mar 3, 1970:17)

The author of the third letter directly addressed this suspicion of motives.

This letter, along with the two that precede it, suggesting a more distrustful—if not cynical—position on the part of certain segments of the population when being addressed by institutional actors concerning these issues makes a rather poignant critique of the motives behind Mr. Laird's assertions concerning the Soviets.

Defense Secretary Melvin Laird's assertion that the Soviet Union is strengthening its nuclear strike capability is a typical example of the way in which our Defense Department consistently overestimates the "Soviet threat" in order to convince us that billions of our tax dollars should be used for the development of more deadly and insane weapons systems. At present over 60 percent of our Federal taxes, so desperately

needed for health, education, welfare and other programs are used for war.

It is indeed interesting that Secretary Laird's assertion about a Soviet missile build-up directly contradicts reports from senior Administration officials, which state that the Soviet Union has constructed no new sites since last August. But let's assume for a moment that Mr. Laird's assertions, though extremely vague, are correct. If this is the case, an important question to ask is why the Soviet Union is enlarging its nuclear arsenal. The United States today has the largest conglomerate of military and economic power in the world. Therefore, the military policy of our Government has a profound influence on other countries, including the Soviet Union. Since World War II, Soviet military build-ups have consistently followed those of the United States.

The United States today has the largest conglomerate of military and economic power in the world. Therefore, the military policy of our Government has a profound influence on other countries, including the Soviet Union. Since World War II, Soviet military build-ups have consistently followed those of the United States.

... For the past 25 years, the United States has had considerable superiority over the Soviet Union in nuclear weapons, despite frequent assertions of 'missile gaps' by Defense Department spokesmen.

Our present deployment of MIRV could seriously obstruct the crucial Strategic Arms Limitation Talks currently being held in Vienna. These talks may represent the last real opportunity to end the insane escalation of the arms race. ...

Deployment by the United States will most certainly give their defense department an excuse to develop one. Though the further development of nuclear weapons means increased profits for the companies who receive the defense contract, it will continue to decrease the security of the United States as well as the rest of the world. (NYT Jul 26, 1970:11)

Taken together, all of these letters indicate that the preliminary efforts to restart or restore the missile panic by defense elites were coming up short in 1970. Newspapers like *The Tribune* seem dedicated to supporting defense sector elites, especially by repeating with the air of credulity messages such as those provided by

Mr. Laird. But another fact that these letters suggest is that, despite what the media may report or how the public truly feels about it, when it comes to issues like those found in the missile panic, it is the institutions that have the most power. Consider the fact that the public—at least segments of it—is no longer actually convinced of the threats presented by the defense sector. This is coupled with the fact that there was a major newspaper like *The Times* consistently writing editorials that question the motives and actions of the defense sector. Yet, the Defense Secretary merely by declassifying intelligence that is favorable to his position is able to get six more ABM sites constructed. Recall that it was only in 1968 that funding was approved for an initial set of sites, and—according to *The Tribune*—those sites had not yet been finished before the defense sector was able to convince Congress and the President that more needed to be built. This would suggest that though the old tactics of the missile panic were being used with apparently little effect on public opinion, influencing public opinion was no longer necessary (or, at the very least, there was a belief that public opinion was no longer necessary).

As displayed in Figure 2, Nixon does not devote much space in his SOTUAs to issues concerning the Soviets or nuclear weapons. In 1971, he neglects these issues altogether. This lack may possibly also have contributed to the declined interest seen in both newspapers. By 1971, the levels of concern displayed by the media continued to descend to levels lower than those seen before the launch of Sputnik. Though *The Times* continues to publish editorials focusing on the same issues as the previous year, *The Tribune* does not. The following from one of the paper's editors

demonstrates that *The Times* has not modified its position on these issues, it continues to stress positions and ideas displayed earlier.

The five months of Summit exchanges ended with agreement to concentrate this year on completing a treaty limiting defensive antiballistic missile (ABM) systems. This was the original American proposal in 1967, which the Soviet Union finally put forward itself last December.

But the Nixon Administration, meanwhile, had gyrated into the 1967 Soviet position, insisting on simultaneous restraints on offensive nuclear weapons, especially the big Soviet SS-9 ICBM's. While Moscow refused to make this commitment in advance, face was saved all around by agreeing to negotiate concurrent restrictions on some offensive weapons in this year's interim accord—which will probably end up with a numerical ceiling on land-based ICBM's as a while.

This would not halt the nuclear arms race in MIRV multiple warheads, submarine-launched missiles and qualitative improvements. But with antimissile missiles held to token numbers and mutual deterrence assured, neither side would have great incentive to waste vast sums on the further build-up of offensive missiles, which would just add to overkill.

By April, 40 holes had been discovered, presumably for a new missile or an improved SS-9 to carry MIRV multiple warheads that could threaten the us Minuteman force. By early May, when Mr. Nixon had to make his decision on the new SALT work plan, there appeared to be more than 60 big holes. Two were at the test site where, the Pentagon predicted, the new mystery missile would soon be given its first trials.

But a few days after Mr. Nixon decided to go ahead with the SALT plan, risking the discontent of his Congressional-military-industrial constituency, new intelligence arrived. Two-thirds of the strange new holes turned out to be for small ICBM's of the SS-11 dimension. There was a growing consensus that the big holes themselves were for reinforced SS-9 silos, a stabilizing factor, and that what was to be tested soon was the new silo not a new missile.

Mr. Nixon's decision to give priority to an ABM agreement was encouraged by Soviet concessions at the fourth round of the SALT talks, which had resumed in Vienna March 15. The Soviet negotiators had indicated a willingness for the first time to consider restricting ABM

radars in the Moscow area as well as to limit antimissiles to 100. They also appeared to acquiesce to a new American proposal to continue with Safeguard ABM defense of one or two Minuteman sites in Montana and North Dakota, instead of scrapping those sites to defense Washington.

... Limitation of offensive land-based ICBM's to existing numbers also involves problems. The fact that it would leave the Soviet Union with about 1,500 ICBM's to America's 1,054 poses no immediate difficulty; the United States is ahead in MIRV multiple warheads, long-range bombers and submarine-launched missiles, which would be limited only in second-stage negotiation. But the Soviet Union insists on a right to 'modernize' its decade-old SS-7 and SS-8 ICBM's by replacement with SS-9's or other new missiles that are much larger and may be able ultimately to carry many more multiple warheads. The American Minuteman III is about the same size as the Minuteman I and II it will replace.

More difficult problems lie ahead for a second-stage SALT agreement—which would seek to limit MIRV, missile subs and bombs and, perhaps, reduce missile numbers. But there is no technical reason why the first-stage SALT accord now outlined should not be concluded this year or early next, if the political will exists at the top to achieve it. That it does exist in the Kremlin as well as the White House is Mr. Nixon's conviction now. And he reportedly is prepared to go to Moscow, not to negotiate it, but to sign it once the draft is ready. (NYT May 24, 1971:31)

The editor writing the preceding piece makes a point to mention how the Soviets had moved to an old U.S. negotiating position, while the United States had moved to an old Soviet position during the 1971 round of talks. While it is impossible to assign motivation and meaning, as the piece points out this transformation of opinions led to an initial refusal from the Soviets. If any inferences could be made about this particular turn of events, on the face of things it seems odd that the United States would move away from its original position into one that led to Soviet refusal. Of course, the problem of hindsight must be considered, and it is entirely possible that the entire sequence of events was a “comedy of error.”

Another interesting observation that the editorial makes is the intelligence discoveries made while President Nixon was to make his decision on the new work plan for SALT. More interesting still is how that intelligence was revised after the decision to proceed with the SALT plan. Again, only some inference can be made from this sequence of events, and it is probably impossible to tell what decisions were made or changed with the revelation of the intelligence, or what political pressure was applied. It is, however, another example of the timings of intelligence revelations with important political decisions of this nature. To continue on, the second editorial perhaps best demonstrates the change by *The Times*. Not just as a matter of the content, but by who wrote the piece: a Muscovite political commentator for the Novosti Press Agency

American strategic nuclear policy has been dominated in recent years by an idea called "assured destruction." This concept is that the dominant task of the U.S. strategic forces is to be able to mount a nuclear attack that would reliably destroy a substantial fraction of the Soviet society, even after a major Soviet strike on American forces. Recent public statements of the Nixon Administration have emphasized a doctrine called "strategic sufficiency." Although published formulations of this doctrine are ambiguous, it is clear that something like the concept of "assured destruction" still dominates American strategic policy, even if the terminology itself is no longer used in official statements.

This domination extends to strategic arms-control matters. It is widely argued that the most peaceful, stable, secure, cheap, and generally desirable arrangements is one in which we and the Soviets maintain a 'mutual assured destruction' posture, in which no serious effort is made by either side to limit the civilian damage that could be inflicted by the other. Most of the opposition in the West to substantial systems of missile defense for cities and some of the opposition to the Safeguard ABM system derives from the alleged benefits of such a posture. This is pertinent to the forthcoming Soviet-American negotiations on offensive and defensive forces announced by President Nixon last Tuesday.

I believe that the concept of mutual assured destruction provides one of the few instances in which the obvious acronym for something yields at once the appropriate description for it; that is, a Mutual Assured Destruction posture as a goal is, almost literally, mad. MAD.

If the forces of technology and international politics provided absolutely no alternative, one might reluctantly accept a MAD posture. But to think of it as desirable—for instance, as a clearly preferred goal of our arms-control negotiations, as many current proposals automatically assume—is bizarre. ...

...[S]omething must be wrong with MAD as a way of life. However, one can discuss the problems of MAD directly. There are at least three interrelated problems.

The first is that, in spite of our best efforts, a major nuclear war could happen. An institutionalized MAD posture is a way of insuring, now and forever, that the outcome of such a war would be a nearly unlimited disaster for everybody. While technology and politics may conspire for a time to leave us temporarily in such a posture, we should not welcome it—we should rather be looking for ways out of it. And they can be found.

The second fundamental difficulty is, in essence, political: The body politic of the United States did not create a Department of Defense for the purpose of deliberately making us all hostages to enemy weapons. The Government is supposed, according to the Constitution, to “provide for the common defense,” and plainly most Americans would revolt at the idea that a mined-city system is a sensible way to do this. They would be quite right. The Defense Department should be more concerned with assuring live Americans than dead Russians.

The third fundamental difficulty is moral. We should not deliberately create a system in which millions of innocent civilians would, by intention, be exterminated in a failure of the system. The system is not that reliable. If we accept a MAD posture as an interim solution, we should be seeking ways out of it, not ways to enshrine it... (NYT May 24, 1971:31)

Though Nixon makes no mention of disarmament or the Soviets in his 1971 SOTUA, some things can be inferred from editorials written during that year. The

first is that Nixon was overtly committed to the disarmament negotiations. Nevertheless, he did not allow (or was not allowed to let) that commitment impede the deployment of ABM facilities or the construction of MIRVs. While it is apparent that some limitations were accepted on the former, editorials from this and previous years indicate that limitation on the latter were not. I postulate that this particular position vis-à-vis ABMs and MIRVs are signs of a weakened yet potent interest group moral panic. As was previously stated, missile interception is a highly difficult engineering project. While it is true that ABM systems such as Safeguard and Sentinel worked, the systems' successes were all under controlled circumstances. The system had never been tested under live fire, and the creation of devices like MIRV—not to mention the problems posed by mass-produced ICBMs—only served to decrease the effectiveness of any then-current ABM defense system. Nevertheless, the original push was to put money into building more of these sites as opposed to further developing the technology.

In such a scenario, treaty concessions on ABMs were not a demonstration of a loss of power by the defense sector. Instead they were a strategic retreat that allowed defense sector elites to concentrate their power on acquiring a more viable technology: MIRVs. While ABMs were a theoretical technology, MIRVs were an extension of reliably proven systems. While the defense sector was able to secure funding for the original ABM sites, the letters and editorials in *The Times* indicate that this was not an entirely popular move. Though the defense sector was not a unified power block (defense contractors continued to compete amongst

themselves for defense contracts) they possessed a measure of influence within the political sphere. Therefore, focusing that political power on a proven technology to build what is in effect a more advanced ICBM would be more expedient. Even with negotiations going on, it would be easier to get these MIRVs funded as opposed to ABMs.

Consider the disparity in numbers mentioned in the first of the previous editorials. Normally such unevenness in the favor of the Soviets would trigger another missile panic—and that is not to say that efforts to that effect were not being made—however that disparity was seen as being addressed by the United States' advances in MIRVs. It would be easy enough to pitch the MIRV as a necessary technology that would help keep the disparity of arms in check, even in the case of a moratorium. In addition, the doctrine of sufficiency mentioned in the second editorial provides further justification for the construction of more MIRVs as opposed to ABMs. Thus, the MIRV would be a technology for the defense sector to put its weight behind in the face of diminished institutional and cultural power.

That the cultural power of the defense sector continued to decline in the early 1970s is suggested by the decline in defense spending that was occurring with the winding down of the Vietnam conflict. It is suggested further still by the following editorials. Though the second is more focused within its analysis of the MAD doctrine, both editorials question the institutional motivations of the defense sector. It is unfortunate that there is little in the way to gauge public opinion in 1971. But it is likely that public opinion would not have swung widely from the

positions taken in 1970 and 1968. Which would suggest the possibility that in 1971 public sentiment was not as totally controlled as the defense sector would have preferred.

But even that being case, Nixon's 1972 SOTUA would be another indication that the defense sector did not require popular public sentiment to achieve its ends. In his 1972 SOTUA, Nixon made a point of addressing the quest for peace in general, and with the Soviets in particular. What makes this speech particularly noteworthy is that it only took two years for Nixon to reverse his previous position on the defense budget.

As our involvement in the war in Vietnam comes to an end, we must now go on to build a generation of peace.

To achieve that goal, we must first face realistically the need to maintain our defense.

In the past 3 years, we have reduced the burden of arms. For the first time in 20 years, spending on defense has been brought below spending on human resources.

As we look to the future, we find encouraging progress in our negotiations with the Soviet Union on limitation of strategic arms. And looking further into the future, we hope there can eventually be agreement on the mutual reduction of arms. But until there is such a mutual agreement, we must maintain the strength necessary to deter war.

And that is why, because of rising research and development costs, because of increases in military and civilian pay, because of the need to proceed with new weapons systems, my budget for the coming fiscal year will provide for an increase in defense spending.

Strong military defenses are not the enemy of peace; they are the guardians of peace.

There could be no more misguided set of priorities than one which [sic] would tempt others by weakening America, and thereby endanger the peace of the world. (Nixon 1972)

Nixon made the point of wanting to create a generation of peace, yet spends a significant amount of his speech justifying his increased defense budget. This contradiction is one that many commentators will score Nixon on as time progresses. But the very contradiction is quite fascinating in that this section opens with how the United States has ended its involvement in Vietnam. There is even a paragraph concerning the reduction of arms that has been achieved by reducing the level of defense spending. Yet, Nixon insists that the United States must maintain its defense in order to deter war (which obviously does not include incidents like the Vietnam War). Nixon goes on to suggest that weakening America—through defense cuts—would be a misguided priority that would endanger the peace of the world. One wonders if Nixon would have considered, in retrospect, his original cuts to the defense budget to have been a misguided action that threatened world peace. One possible interpretation of this selection from Nixon's SOTUA is that the defense sector was able to leverage its institutional power to effectively correct Nixon's cutting of its funding. Or, alternatively, Nixon made adjustments to the defense budget according to varying calculations, before he took office and later during his term.

According to the data, 1972 is the lowest level of interest observed in *The Times* during the decade. Therefore, the editorials on these subjects are found in *The Tribune*. It is no surprise that the paper maintained its previously established

positions. *The Tribune* continues to transmit the messages of the defense sector to the public. In the process, the paper contributed to the defense sector's attempts to use its old techniques to generate a second missile panic by insisting that there was a grave disparity in weapons between the Soviet Union and the United States. *The Tribune* does not let this fact go uncommented upon, and instead suggested that more weapons should be built purely for the necessity of having more weapons.

But if the President's special adviser on national security is optimistic, other Washington analysts are correspondingly concerned that the Soviets may have an unpleasant surprise for Mr. Nixon before he leaves. This would be their test of the world's most powerful nuclear weapon, a new intercontinental ballistic missile that dwarfs the Soviets' own SS-9. With its 25 megaton warhead, the SS-9 is already the most potent operational ICBM in any nation's arsenal.

Testing the new ICBM on the Soviet's Pacific Ocean missile range before Mr. Nixon's trip would strengthen the Kremlin's bargaining position on arms limitation and on a host of other issues. It would answer, the analysts say, some of the President's own "get tough" attitudes toward the Soviet Union.

In its Washington Report last November, the privately financed American Security Council noted that the U. S. S. R. had 600 ICBMs [including fewer than 100 SS-9s] in 1960 when the administration announced that it would talk with the Soviets about limiting strategic arms. By the time the first round of SALT talks began in late 1969, the Soviet long range missile force had grown to 1,200 ICBMs. The longer we talked, the more missiles the Soviets built—until at the last count the U. S. S. R. had nearly 1,600 ICBMs, including 300 of the SS-9 monsters. It is also rapidly narrowing the gap in submarine-launched missiles, and now has some 580 SLMs.

So far as numbers go, our own missile hasn't moved. In 1968 we had 1,054 ICBMs and 656 SLMs. We still do. However, we have upgraded the quality by starting to replace Minuteman I and II ICBMs with No. III, Polaris missile launching submarines with Poseidon, and individual warheads with the independently targeted MIRVs. Our emphasis on quality rather than quantity has probably been wise; but there comes a time when sheer quantity may tip the scales, and some American

analysts fear that this time may come in mid- 1973 unless American defense policy changes or SALT produces a miracle agreement.

If the Soviet Union continues to produce ICBMs at the present rate, say the experts, it will have twice as many as the United States by mid-1973. By then, too, the Russians will have equaled or exceeded our force of 41 missile launching submarines. And if it turns out that the new bird sitting on its test launching pad at Tyuratam can carry four or five MIRV warheads, then all bets are off on the defense of our Minuteman silos. They could be placed at risk by late 1973, years earlier than the time when Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird estimated the U. S. would be placed in a "second-rate strategic position." (CT Apr 29, 1972:10)

Both of these editorials from *The Tribune* have at their core an advancement of the principles and ideas of the missile panic. The over-arching theme being that the United States did not have enough missiles—even if it has the most advanced missiles—and that the Soviets had the ability to completely neutralize the United States' defense capacity.

Sen. McGovern argued that the United States has sufficient nuclear warheads to reduce Communist Russia and China to ashes 20 times over. This is a dubious postulate in view the strategic arms limitation agreement which freezes the Soviet Union into perhaps as much as a 2 to 1 superiority in land-based missiles and nuclear-armed submarines and a vastly greater superiority in warhead megatonnage. But Sen. McGovern is content with constructing verbal, instead of actual, weapons systems.

If we are to take the pronouncements on Soviet Navy Day of Adm. Sergei Gorshkov at face value, the Russian navy can now detect and destroy an enemy vessel in any part of the world's oceans. American experts are quoted as saying that the appraisal of the Soviet fleet commander is probably accurate. If so, the defensive capacity of the United States is rendered even more ominous. (CT Aug 4, 1972:12)

To continue with the analysis, Nixon's term of office was unique among the Presidents of the analyzed period due to the causes behind his foreshortened

tenure. Nixon's 1973 address to the public and Congress are quite different than what had been delivered before. Yet, he made no mention of defense budgeting, nuclear weapons, or relations with the Soviets. The same applies to the editorials written by both newspapers. Fortunately, *The Times* did publish the letters sent to it during that year, which means there is at least some sense of public opinion in the absence of Presidential and media messages. According to these letters, the trends previously observed in the public continue into 1973. One of the biggest changes in both of these letters was that they question Nixon's policies.

The promise of arms limits and even reduced stockpiles bring great hope to us all. However, we must be assured the prospects are not just illusory.

...After all, both sides already have the means to extinguish all life many times over. Are "improvements" really necessary?

It is said the Soviet economy especially would benefit from reduced arms spending. At the same time, it is no secret that US heavy industry derives a great stimulus from arms production. ...[P]erhaps we can rechannel [sic] our so far misdirected trillion-dollar arms race to a trade and friendship race. By the way, to belong to a "peace and friendship" organization was branded subversive by Mr. Nixon twenty years ago.

Let us hope the charming display of summitry we are being treated to represents a true change in heart, and not just "good public relations" on the Administrations part. (NYT Jul 4, 1973:14)

Both of these letters were written post-Watergate, so it is possible that the degradation of Nixon's reputation influenced the writers. In the first letter this is suggested by the author's reference to "good public relations." Whatever the case may have been, the second letter—the second of which was written by the then Chairman of the World Citizens League—made a point of critiquing Nixon's

Orwellian doublespeak that refers to a “generation of peace” while increasing nuclear buildup.

A recent British study provides substantial evidence that the arms race is not slowing down but continuing to escalate.

Behind President Nixon’s rhetoric of a ‘generation of peace’ is a massive arms build-up, including a crash project to deploy multiple nuclear warheads on our land-based and submarine missiles. Many submarines have already been converted to the multiple warhead system (MIRV). ...

The immediate plans are to convert forty of our current submarines to MIRV and 1,000 of our land-based missiles (500 have already been partially completed). But this is not enough for the exponents of genocide and profit who control the military establishments and the armament industry.

The multibillion-dollar plan of the Pentagon (and the eager contractors) is to build a Trident submarine fleet in which each submarine is capable of launching over 500 individually targeted nuclear weapons. All of this even though we no have tens of thousands of nuclear weapons stockpiled, amounting to an overkill capacity estimated at ten to twenty times every human being on this planet.

...As long as the pentagon and business/imperialistic world perspective is allowed to control the foreign policy of this nation—as it has for so many years—the current military stranglehold on the world community will only be tightened. We will be faced with increasingly huge military expenditures for new genocidal weapon systems, and every right-wing government, no matter how corrupt or oppressive, will be propped up by the United States with money, napalm and CIA-paid armies.

The only current obstacle to this policy is the peace movement, such as it is, and this explains why the Nixon Administration has spent so much of its time and energy to discredit and subvert it. (NYT Sep 25, 1973:42)

Though *Gallup* did poll the public on the matter of nuclear weapons, its 1973 survey only includes one item (See Table 22). There is very little that can be inferred from this single question, but the change displayed in the data from previous surveys does yield some possible information. According to the survey a strong

majority of respondents (68%) were convinced that nuclear weapons would be used in the next world war. Unfortunately, this data point cannot be compared to previous survey items because, while the wording is similar to previous surveys, it is not exactly similar. This difference between questions makes the comparability of the results uncertain.

But there are some possible explanations from this singular bit of data. Referring back to the defense sector, this could be an indication that the messages concerning a new missile gap were having an effect on the population. That would suggest that the segment of individuals both critical and skeptical of the defense sector's new missile panic message was significantly smaller than those that were not. The second explanation is that this was a reflection of the public's lack of confidence in the results of negotiations and treaties between the United States and the Soviet Union. Unfortunately, it is only one question and so its utility for gauging public opinion is limited. The most that can be reliably said of this data is that the public was concerned that nuclear weapons would be used in the next world war.

Table 22: *The Gallup Poll* survey 1973-878-K

	Positive Response	Negative Response
1973-4. If another world war were to break out, do you think nuclear bombs and weapons are likely to be used or not	68%	23%

The Nascent Signs of a Second Missile Panic

In 1974 Nixon delivered his last SOTUA as the President of these United States. The speech itself was merely a continuation and expansion of the concepts outlined in the 1972 speech. Nixon continued to overtly discuss peace, but insisted that the only road towards that peace was through a strong defense. Though Kennedy and Nixon delivered the message differently, both had a similar theme in their SOTUAs. Recall that Kennedy devoted much of his speech to the question of defense, but would also discuss the prospect of peace. As I previously suggested, this was Kennedy trying to lessen the social inertia created by the missile panic. I would suggest that a return to a similarity of language used in Nixon's 1972 and 1974 SOTUAs indicates a nascent—if not resurgent—missile panic. Given Nixon's unique presidency, it is somewhat difficult to attribute his motivations. But to his credit, Nixon did at least appear to have a genuine interest in maintaining peaceful relations with the Soviets and the Chinese. In the case of the latter, that attempt to maintain peace was represented by Nixon's formal normalization of relations with the People's Republic of China, which was historic given the United States' relationship with that country after its civil war in 1955. Therefore, it is possible that his discussion of peace served the same purpose that it did for Kennedy. It

signaled that while he was performing in accordance to the pressures of a missile panic, he was still interested in securing his earlier objectives.

But by the same token, Nixon may have been merely using talk about peace as a way of assuaging the criticisms of people like the editors and letter writers at *The Times*. By this point in history, instead of crusading against the Soviets, peace and non-proliferation had been agitated for forcefully. Very clearly a segment of the United States populace was dedicated to the idea of ending the doctrine of MAD, and ending the prospect of total annihilation. While there were many organizations dedicated to the anti-nuclear cause, there were a few that stood out for their Nobel Laureate founders and members. Organizations such as the Union of Concerned Scientists, the Federation of American Scientists, and the Committee for Nuclear Responsibility represented a growing opposition to nuclear weapons among elite scientists. Nixon, rapidly losing popularity for certain activities on his part, may very well have included what that segment wanted to hear to maintain some level of approval with these groups. In the end, it could very well have been a combination of all these motivations.

In the past 5 years, we have made more progress toward a lasting structure of peace in the world than in any comparable time in the Nation's history. We could not have made that progress if we had not maintained the military strength of America. Thomas Jefferson once observed that the price of liberty is eternal vigilance. By the same token, and for the same reason, in today's world the price of peace is a strong defense as far as the United States is concerned.

In the past 5 years, we have steadily reduced the burden of national defense as a share of the budget, bringing it down from 44 percent in 1969 to 29 percent in the current year. We have cut our military

manpower over the past 5 years by more than a third, from 3.5 million to 2.2 million.

In the coming year, however, increased expenditures will be needed. They will be needed to assure the continued readiness of our military forces, to preserve present force levels in the face of rising costs, and to give us the military strength we must have if our security is to be maintained and if our initiatives for peace are to succeed.

The question is not whether we can afford to maintain the necessary strength of our defense, the question is whether we can afford not to maintain it, and the answer to that question is no. We must never allow America to become the second strongest nation in the world.

I do not say this with any sense of belligerence, because I recognize the fact that is recognized around the world. America's military strength has always been maintained to keep the peace, never to break it. It has always been used to defend freedom, never to destroy it. The world's peace, as well as our own, depends on our remaining as strong as we need to be as long as we need to be.

In this year 1974, we will be negotiating with the Soviet Union to place further limits on strategic nuclear arms. Together with our allies, we will be negotiating with the nations of the Warsaw Pact on mutual and balanced reduction of forces in Europe. (Nixon 1974)

Nevertheless, there is an event in strategic doctrinal history that took place under Nixon during his last years in office that makes any assessment of his commitment to peace questionable. As the following editorial from *The Times* rightly points out, there was a *major* change in United States strategy that challenged contemporary notions of arms control and global security.

For some two decades, since the advent of the Soviet H-bomb, the dominant concept in American military planning has been that there could be no winners, only losers, in a strategic nuclear war with the Soviet Union. The central aim of Presidents Eisenhower, Kennedy and Johnson was "deterrence."

To deter Soviet use of nuclear weapons against the United States and its allies, a "second strike" strategic offensive force was built. Capable of

absorbing a Soviet surprise “first strike” and retaliating to inflict unacceptable damage on the aggressor’s industry, population and urban centers.

A fundamental change in this strategy has now been set in motion by President Nixon. Since last summer, as Defense Secretary Schlesinger has now disclosed, the Pentagon has been retargeting strategic missiles to give Mr. Nixon, at his request, the option of fighting a nuclear war, rather than simply deterring one.

... A change of this kind—which affects momentous issues of national strategy, arms control and the future security of not only Americans but of the whole civilized world—warrants a great national debate, especially since Congressional opposition to this course has long been expressed.

Such a debate is vital because of the immediate impact of the new strategy on Soviet military planning, on the strategic arms limitation talks (SALT II) and on the opportunity that still exists to halt a new arms race in MIRV multiple warhead missiles. Mr. Nixon’s decision could become irreversible once both sides test and deploy new counterforce warheads of greater yield and accuracy. The Soviet reaction, moreover, might be based on the assumption that the American capability is designed for a massive, surprise, pre-emptive attack

Mr. Schlesinger insists that the retargeting of Minuteman and projected deployment later of more accurate missiles would not constitute a true “first strike” capability, since the United States would only be able to destroy some, not all, of Russia’s ICBM’s. But Soviet analysts, using traditional military “worst-possible-case” estimates, may see the American capability differently and press for a matching Soviet “first strike” force. The advantages of shooting first in a crisis would be so great that both sides might become trigger happy. (NYT Jan 15, 1974:36)

With a missile panic continuing to gain ground in the political sphere, it is difficult to determine how much of the change in doctrinal strategy was purely Nixon’s decision. But, though the request was made by Nixon to the Pentagon, there is no way to discount the possibility that pressure from defense sector elites helped make that request happen. Whatever the case, the editorial considers the

retargeting of nuclear weapons for the purpose of fighting a nuclear war as opposed to deterring one a change in strategic doctrine. For decades the United States portrayed itself only as a defender of the peace, but the retargeting of the arsenal placed the United States into what commentators such as the editor from *The Times* considered a new, aggressive posture.

... Instead of responding to a Soviet nuclear attack against American missiles with a blow against Soviet cities, which would bring down Russia's remaining nuclear warheads on American cities, President Nixon has asked for the option of making a limited counterforce response against the remaining Soviet missiles first.

The trouble with this approach is not only that it requires enormous numbers of new, highly accurate warheads, making a new round in the strategic arms race probable and dooming SALT II, but it could increase rather than decrease the likelihood of strategic nuclear war. If the consequence of using nuclear weapons is a limited enemy counterattack against military installations—on the dubious assumption on both sides that rapid escalation into an all-out nuclear exchange could be avoided—the inhibition against use of nuclear weapons would be much reduced. (NYT Jan 15, 1974:36)

Though the editorial itself effectively glosses over it in favor of focusing on the issue of re-targeting, it does make mention that the source of the newest arms race is found in the MIRV. Recall, near the end of the 1960s and the ABM debate when SoD McNamara predicted that trying to develop anti-missile systems would only lead to further competition and the creation of weapons to defeat those ABMs. Advance to the 1970s, when Nixon refused to negotiate on the subject of MIRV numbers. In 1974, the end result was almost exactly as McNamara predicted. The MIRV was created to defeat the ABM, and in the process created a new race between the Soviets and the United States that Nixon helped foster by refusing to negotiate

on the devices. As editorials in both *The Times* and *The Tribune* reported, it is differences in numbers and Soviet attempts to build their own MIRVs that lead actors such as SoD Laird to claim that a new missile gap was underway. This would be the source of the new missile panic.

As I have previously asserted, there was division in the public concerning the second missile panic. As the previous editorial suggested, when it came to points of strategic doctrine there was even division among the political elites. The old institutional technique of the missile panic did not have the same unifying power it did in the later 1950s and early 1960s. But, that still did not prevent the defense sector from achieving its institutional ends. The continued construction of MIRVs was significant enough, but Nixon even reversed a *decade* of strategic and cultural thought about the United States as a nuclear power. It is hard to untangle how much of these decisions were the influence of the missile panic, and how much was just raw institutional power. But the former would certainly have been of benefit to the latter.

On the subject of public opinion, it would be a safe assumption that the retargeting of nuclear weapons did not go unchallenged by the public. The following letters would suggest that those segments of the populace that were opposed to strategic buildup were less than pleased about this change. But there is more to these letters than simple outrage and indignation at Nixon's actions. The first of the letters criticizes Nixon's actions; however, it very specifically targets the defense sector (i.e. the Pentagon and the RAND corporation) as being the true originators of

this change in policy. Furthermore, the author very firmly asserted that this defense sector influence had only increased as time passed. At the end, the author challenged the very notion that these organizations that have at their very core identity warfare were in any way truly concerned about peace.

This can only be a policy of terminal madness.

To see this new "strategy," if one indeed can so dignify it, as the product of the Nixon Administration alone is to miss the point entirely. The proposed gunfight at the OK corral implied by this retargeting must be seen as the logical result of steady Pentagon influence in the political sphere.

It is highly unlikely that any nuclear exchange, once begun, would be limited to a single missile on each side. ...

One MIRV fired would produce a war hysteria in America, and that is exactly the phenomenon our "military planners" are counting on.

It is impossible to believe that people can spend their entire adult lives thinking about war, planning of war, designing and deploying nuclear weapons—and still want peace. Their entire livelihood is focused on weapons, the deployment of weapons and policies built on weapons.
(NYT Jan 28, 1974:26)

Finally, the second letter is significant because it refers to a missile gap developing under Nixon's administration. This is important because though the term has been thrown around earlier in the 1970s, 1974 is historically regarded as the declaration of a second missile gap (See Barry 2004; Wohlstetter 1974).

A considerable head of steam is being assembled behind the general proposition that the Nixon Administration's approach to arms-control negotiations might be described as one of being "soft on Communism." It seems increasingly possible that a major issue of the 1976 Presidential election will be the Democratic insistence that the military budget must be increased, and quickly, because of a Nixon-created "missile gap."
(NYT Aug 5, 1974:22)

My argument is that 1974 is when it became officially declared as a missile gap/panic, but the issue had been building since 1972 when Nixon reversed his defense budget decisions. That one of Nixon's accused failings was allowing for a gap to occur lends credence to previous discussion regarding the influence of the defense sector on his political decisions. It strongly suggests that the source of that influence was through the defense sector's use of a new missile panic.

With Nixon's exit from the Oval Office came Ford's assumption of the duties of President. Ford gave his first SOTUA in 1975, however he devoted very little of his speech to either defense or negotiations with the Soviets. Ford dedicated little more than a paragraph to a combined mention of both in his SOTUA.

...Military strength alone is not sufficient. Effective diplomacy is also essential in preventing conflict, in building world understanding. The Vladivostok negotiations with the Soviet Union represent a major step in moderating strategic arms competition. My recent discussions with the leaders of the Atlantic community, Japan, and South Korea have contributed to meeting the common challenge. (Ford 1975)

On the face of it, this paragraph—compared to others—is innocuous. There is no hint of there being any worries of a missile gap or a missile panic in 1975. But an editorial from *The Chicago Tribune* serves as a demonstration that a missile panic was working its way through segments of society. The editorial focused on the immaterial notion of “death rays,” but the material core is a strong concern of the Soviets getting ahead in a technology that lacked strategic viability. The editorial reminds the readers of how the Soviets demonstrated their superiority with Sputnik, while simultaneously reassuring that both superpowers were then

currently even in the race. The unsubtle thrust of the message being that more money would have to be spent in this particular field of research to insure that the Soviets would be unable to outpace the United States with a weapon. Keep in mind, the idea that the technology could even properly be used as a weapon had not even been established, but the possibility that the Soviets could use such a technology for martial purposes demanded that more funds be put into the research.

I would suggest that the usage of theoretical technologies—especially the fear that the Soviets might gain some advantage through them—is very much a hallmark of a missile panic. Recall the fanciful projects that were in no way viable such as the atomic powered plane during the first missile panic. Later there was the development of the ABM, a system that worked but primarily under theoretical conditions. Missile panics offer perfect opportunities for the funding of defense sector pet projects, no matter how strategically viable they may be. Though high-energy lasers are today viable pieces of technology, they are not necessarily viable enough to upset the strategic balance. It is highly doubtful that the Soviet work on the technology in the 1970s would have presented anything remotely resembling an actual strategic threat. But, within the context of a missile panic, it is a credible threat that can only be beat through increased funding, thereby sparing the United States any future global embarrassments or strategic imbalances such as those presented by the launch of the first Sputnik.

To place second in this could well be disastrous. As James Canan points out in his book "The Superwarriors," [sic] this high-energy laser "abruptly will upset the balance of today's offensive and defensive tactical and strategic weapons, superseding all of them as the

penultimate defender and destroyer, capable of turning men into messes of mush, their machines into molten metal."

With a weapon like that, the answer to "Who's ahead?" can offer reassurance or destroy all hope. At the moment, it does neither. Malcolm Currie, U.S. director of defense research and engineering, told Jane's that the two superpowers are running about even. We haven't lost the race, but neither have we won.

We thus can escape the agonizing months through which we went after the Soviet Union launched Sputnik and we were led to believe Moscow had outdistanced us in the development of the long-range nuclear missile. If it had indeed done so, our position would have been precarious.

This time our intelligence systems are more sophisticated and can provide us with some assurance, as Dr. Currie's response shows. We have heard much recently about the bad side of Intelligence operations; now we can appreciate the good side, too. The Central Intelligence Agency reported to the Pentagon In 1974 that the Soviets were spending an estimated \$1 billion a year on laser research.

Armed with estimates like that, Dr. Currie was able to get a favorable hearing in Congress on research needs for the laser program, tho [sic] the figures were deleted from the transcript of testimony. But, in general, the Pentagon has felt that too little money is being spent on "pure"—as differentiated from "applied"—research. It is through basic research—which may seem aimless to some—that the unexpected may be discovered, perhaps the undreamed of weapon that can change the world balance. With all that could be at stake, it is essential not to shortchange this type of research. (CT Dec 30, 1975:6)

Nevertheless, no matter how successful the missile panic may have been in securing funding for various pet projects, it was still unpopular with the public. *The Times* by then had begun a slow decrease in the number of editorials it ran concerning the missile panic. However, it still published letters from the public. Many of those continue to indicate that popular opinion was against the pursuit of continued competition in the nuclear arms race with the Soviet Union.

When the Pentagon itself releases figures estimating that some 100-million Americans would be killed should an atomic attack be launched against our cities, and when we can assume that something similar would happen in Russia in the event of a comparable blow, even the simplest citizen can see that what we now need is not more talk about "limited" nuclear capacity, but a single-minded effort to stop the whole nuclear arms race and outlaw nuclear weapons entirely. Nothing could be more important than for the American and Russian negotiators to explore in their current discussion how to get the SALT talks moving toward genuine nuclear disarmament.

We have all lived too long in the fantasy world of defense through nuclear bombs. (NYT Sep 25, 1975:42)

In 1976, Ford continued to dedicate the same amount of space to these issues in his SOTUA as he did in his previous speech. Though there are parts of the speech that exhibited positions that would later be espoused by Reagan in the 1980s. Ford asserted in 1976 that the surest way to properly insure negotiations with the Soviets would proceed apace was to have a nuclear arsenal strong enough to make progress at the negotiating table.

...A strong defense posture gives weight to our values and our views in international negotiations. It assures the vigor of our alliances. And it sustains our efforts to promote settlements of international conflicts. Only from a position of strength can we negotiate a balanced agreement to limit the growth of nuclear arms. Only a balanced agreement will serve our interests and minimize the threat of nuclear confrontation. (Ford 1976)

When comparing the SOTUA of 1975 and 1976, it is amazing what a difference a year makes. Ostensibly, Ford is still discussing diplomacy in both of his SOTUAs, but the way he goes about it has changed. In the first SOTUA, defense is acknowledged as being necessary, but the real goal is a diplomatic solution. In 1976, that position changed to one where the only way that diplomacy can be achieved is

through (military) strength. As was stated earlier, he sounded faintly like Reagan in the 1980s, which might lead one to suspect that Reagan was ultimately imitating Ford's position on the matter. But it is the opposite that is true: Ford was imitating Reagan, even in 1976. The change in Ford's tone can best be understood via an editorial written by *The Times*.

Ronald Reagan has charged that the Soviet Union outspends the United States by 50 percent on weapons and that its army, navy and nuclear missiles exceed ours in numbers. 'The evidence mounts,' Governor Reagan claims, 'that we are Number Two.' Going on the defense, President Ford and his Cabinet leaders say that despite a power increase, the Soviet Union remains far behind the United States and its allies in military, economic and technological strength. But the exigencies of the campaign have led Mr. Ford to call for gradually increased Pentagon expenditures over the next five years.

Some Democratic aspirants who started out as critics of the huge defense budget ended up avoiding the issue, mainly because of the jobs argument and also because Governor Reagan scored by advertising American military inferiority. Jimmy Carter, former nuclear submarine officer, no longer talks of cutting \$5 billion in defense spending. Even longtime critics of arms budgets in Congress, some up for re-election, are not pressing the point of advocating the traditional ideal that billions for weapons take away money from social programs

... Admiral La Rocque and several of his analysts were working on arguments against the record defense budget. They said that to justify it, an artificial crisis had been created about American security echoing John F. Kennedy's 'missile gap' alarms of the 1960. The United States, with 2,500 for the Soviet Union, cannot be considered 'second best' in this important respect, says Admiral La Rocque.

'The narrow image of the role of the United States in the world,' Admiral La Rocque says, 'fosters the mistaken belief that national security can be measured only in terms of raw, naked military power, and that in order to maintain our card-carrying status as a super-power, the United States must have the ability and willingness to intervene in any local conflict—no matter how small or peripheral to American interests.' In the process, he adds, the arms race here only stimulates the Soviets to build more of their own weapons which [sic] will, in turn, be used to

justify larger defense budgets in a self-defeating cycle. (NYT Jun 15, 1976:37)

By 1976 it would appear that a second missile gap and attendant missile panic were fully underway, with political and military elites taking full advantage of the benefits provided thereby (as exemplified by the increased Pentagon expenditures mentioned in the editorial). It is perhaps no coincidence that also by this point in history, United States defense spending had hit a post-1950 low. Thus, the pressure was upon every political actor—including President Ford—to demonstrate that they were taking the appropriate steps to meet any real or perceived challenges. Particularly those challenges in the area of defense—posed by the Soviets. At the same time, any politicians who wanted to advance themselves within the political arena could do so by suggesting that their ideological opponents were not doing *enough* to meet the threat upon which the Soviet moral panic was built. Furthermore, the missile panic was referenced by Admiral La Rocque's assertion that an "artificial crisis" had been created to justify the record defense budget. While *The Times* appeared to be working against this artificial crisis, *The Tribune* maintained its role in the affair. Consider the conclusion reached—in the first paragraphs no less—in its analysis of Soviet civil defense.

The Soviet Union is pressing civil defense preparations so feverishly that North Atlantic Alliance officers report a major advance in the Soviet ability to survive a nuclear war.

Inasmuch as the United States appears morally opposed to launching such a war, and inasmuch as Communist China will not be strong enough to do so for many years, a rather chilling question arises: What are the Russians getting ready for?

And an answer comes quickly to mind: They are getting ready to survive a blow hurled at them by the U.S. in retaliation for a first strike made against us by Moscow.

There may, of course, be other explanations for the Soviet sense of urgency. It's possible that their leaders believe that we might strike first, though we doubt it. We incline toward the view of a prominent American who returned from Moscow recently with the impression that the Russians regard us as politically musclebound [sic] and are not averse themselves to starting a nuclear war—and that they want to be sure of protecting their own people in such a war.

The scope and speed of their civil defense preparations strengthen that impression. The NATO analysts say these moves include the dispersal of new industrial plants, the building of underground headquarters, the storing of wheat in submerged silos, and participation in compulsory civil defense training by the workers. (CT Oct 19, 1976:34)

Scattered throughout this editorial are some of the themes that are prevalent in the narrative of the missile panic in regard to the depiction of the Soviets. Recall the previous image of the post-Sputnik Russians as aggressive, irrational and barbarous tyrants whose only goal was global conquest. At the very end of the editorial, the writer asserted that Soviet leaders were callous enough to regard 11 million deaths as “acceptable.”

These thorough efforts seem to contradict the prevalent American assumption that nuclear war is unthinkable because the destruction of both sides is assured. This concept of mutually assured destruction [known in the Pentagon by the fitting acronym MAD] has been to some extent responsible for our own lack of interest in civil defense. Beyond testing the air raid sirens at 10:30 a.m. every Tuesday, we have done almost nothing.

The NATO analysts point out that the Soviets never bought the MAD concept. Some of these experts believe the Soviet goal is the ability to destroy the U. S. while receiving only acceptable losses in return. Western analysts believe the Soviet losses might total 11 million people. And to creatures as hard as some Kremlin leaders, 11 million deaths are presumably acceptable.

It behooves us to think seriously about the civil defense imbalance between our two countries. Arms control experts believe a situation becomes dangerous when there are imbalances. We'd best remedy this situation—and soon—by increasing our own civil defense preparedness or by doing more to persuade the Soviets that they cannot knock us out without unacceptable damage to themselves. Or both. (CT Oct 19, 1976:34)

With such imagery in mind, it is unsurprising that, as far as the author was concerned, the only reason why the Soviets would possibly start a program of civil defense would be as a prelude to imminent attack. To his credit, the writer briefly touched upon the possibility that the Soviets could be preparing for the United States to strike first. This position, however, was immediately dismissed as folly; instead, what was asserted was that the Soviets regarded us as having been so strong as to be almost impotent. This impotence would provide them the perfect opportunity of starting and winning a nuclear war. At no point did the author even begin to suggest the fact that Nixon's earlier decision—while he was still president—to retarget a portion of the nuclear arsenal could have been taken as preparations for a potential first strike.

With political elites and segments of the media attempting to convince the United States' public about the new threat posed by the Soviet Union, the question is one concerning the impact on public opinion regarding the matter. In 1976, *Gallup* asked more questions on the subject of defense spending and the shelter program. These shelter questions are important because they are an indirect way of gauging how seriously the public took the threat of a possible nuclear war, or the idea of even surviving one. Both of these are especially the case since, noted figures such as

Dr. Teller continued to be very adamant concerning the necessity of improved civilian defense programs (Garrison 2006; Teller and Brown 1962); especially as how those programs could be used for the purpose of survivable nuclear war. Much as the argument seen in *The Tribune*, the thinking was that the Soviets had never really believed in the MAD protocols. Thus, many felt that the United States' lackadaisical approach to civil defense unwise at the time. Particularly given that the narrative of the crisis that was being generated during this period was a reiteration of an old idea: That falling behind the Soviet Union in the arms race would make the United States a target too tempting to bypass. If any of these messages of concern and necessity—or the core ideas of the crisis—found purchase within the public, then there should be some evidence found in the responses.

According to the results displayed in Table 23, the elites were not entirely effective in impressing upon the public the crisis presented by the Soviets. Barely fewer than half of the respondents actually agreed with those political actors whose charge was that the United States was not spending enough on its civil defense programs. Conversely, a larger percentage of respondents felt that the United States did not need to increase its current civil defense spending.

The same lackluster results can be seen in the further measures of the public's opinion regarding civil defense in the form of bomb shelters. Despite the impetus placed upon the need for such things, the public appeared to be less than impressed by discussions of civil defense. As the data show, a strong majority of

respondents were not only unaware of the nearest bomb shelter (74%), but they were also opposed to personal shelters paid for by the Federal government (56%).

There is one final piece of evidence that suggests the public was not especially moved by claims of a new missile gap. It comes in the form of a letter written to *The Times* from the then executive director of the World Federalists Association. The letter addresses the very artificial nature of the missile gap. Furthermore, the author is another example of individuals who have begun to suspect that crisis like the missile panic come around for the purpose of propping up certain arguments. Such as the argument as for the constant necessity of high defense spending, even when such spending projects are economically detrimental in the long term.

It is becoming increasingly clear, as Labor Department statistics have shown, that military projects are among the least productive of employment, as well as being highly inflationary.

The President-elect rejects the idea that our young people, our civilization, our hopes for the future are doomed.

Yet precisely at this moment of his debut comes the "discovery" that the Russians are "pulling ahead of us."

The timing of his "discovery" is no accident.

Remember the famous 'missile gap' of the 1960 election?

President Kennedy after that election, stated that he had learned that the 'missile gap' never did exist. Yet it was used to terrify millions of people who took the word of the military and intelligence community on faith. The ploy was used to advance Pentagon interests on the most fraudulent and cynical terms.

The timing of the present campaign suggests we have another "missile gap," another huge campaign to head off anticipated Carter economies and peace initiatives. (NYT Dec 22, 1976:28)

Table 23: *The Gallup Poll* survey 1976-964-K

	Positive Response	Negative Response
1976-1. Russia is said to be spending many times as much protecting its people from nuclear attack as the United States is spending. Do you think we should do more than we are doing, do less, or do you think our present efforts are about right?	44% (We should do more)	9% (We should do less)
1976-2. Do you happen to know whether or not there is a civil defense organization in your community?	35%	20%
1976-3. Do you happen to know where the nearest public bomb shelter is?	26%	74%
1976-4. Do you think your city or community might be a target for nuclear attack?	41%	50%
1976-5. It has been proposed that every new house built in the United States be required to have a bomb shelter, with the federal government paying most of the costs. Do you favor or oppose such a plan?	39%	56%

Of course the “crisis” generated by the second missile gap of the mid-1970s did not end in 1976. Nor did the United States’ political process end on that year, but in Ford’s outgoing 1977 SOTUA, there is a marked change in how he addressed the

issues of defense and strategic weapons. Most notable is the amount of his speech dedicated to the issue of defense relative to his previous speeches. He addressed—and in the process confirmed—the issue of growing Soviet military strength against a backdrop of declining United States military spending (which translates to military strength). Ford asserted that he made an effort to arrest this decline, and that the only challenge was one of national will (silently invoking the old missile panic theme of national sacrifice for the purpose of defeating the Soviet threat).

...Our survival as a free and independent people requires, above all, strong military forces that are well equipped and highly trained to perform their assigned mission.

I am particularly gratified to report that over the past 2 years, we have been able to reverse the dangerous decline of the previous decade in real resources this country was devoting to national defense. This was an immediate problem I faced in 1974. The evidence was unmistakable that the Soviet Union had been steadily increasing the resources it applied to building its military strength. During this same period the United States real defense spending declined. In my three budgets we not only arrested that dangerous decline, but we have established the positive trend which [sic] is essential to our ability to contribute to peace and stability in the world.

The challenge that now confronts this country is whether we have the national will and determination to continue this essential defense effort over the long term, as it must be continued. We can no longer afford to oscillate from year to year in so vital a matter; indeed, we have a duty to look beyond the immediate question of budgets and to examine the nature of the problem we will face over the next generation.

The United States can never tolerate a shift in strategic balance against us or even a situation where the American people or our allies believe the balance is shifting against us. The United States would risk the most serious political consequences if the world came to believe that our adversaries have a decisive margin of superiority.

To maintain a strategic balance we must look ahead to the 1980's and beyond. The sophistication of modern weapons requires that we make

decisions now if we are to ensure our security 10 years from now. Therefore, I have consistently advocated and strongly urged that we pursue three critical strategic programs: the Trident missile launching submarine; the B-1 bomber, with its superior capability to penetrate modern air defenses; and a more advanced intercontinental ballistic missile that will be better able to survive nuclear attack and deliver a devastating retaliatory strike. (Ford 1977)

There is very little direct data to be used in the analysis of the impact of Ford's speech on the United States' press and public in 1977. The single piece of data from the year is a letter submitted to *The Times* from a Stanford University professor of physics who was also the then deputy director of the Stanford Linear Accelerator Center. The article itself focused on the neutron bomb and the author's concern with its development as well as its possible deployment.

The furor caused by the recent US decision to continue development of the so-called neutron bomb stems from two causes. One is the perception that technically it is a radical new weapon designed to kill people but save buildings. The other is that once such weapons are deployed they are more likely to be actually used than the current more indiscriminately devastating nuclear weapons. I believe that the technical issue has been grossly misstated. However political implications of this decision may in the long run be of major significance and should be carefully weighed.

Although the neutron bombs presently being discussed would have negligible effect on our military posture, I perceive a major political danger in a decision to continue their development. Eventually and inevitably such weapons refinements, which require a continued program of underground nuclear war. But is it in our interest destructive and less radioactively dirty nuclear weapons and hence to a diminished gap between non-nuclear and nuclear war. But is it in our interest—or anyone's—to diminish this gap? I think not, particularly since some may find such a transition to nuclear conflict more tempting. Once a conflict becomes nuclear, and amidst the confusion, the uncertainties, and the errors of actual battlefield information, what would keep it limited and prevent it from escalating to a devastating nuclear holocaust as the participants dig deeper into their vast nuclear arsenals?

It is precisely on the issue of creating the illusion that the neutron bomb is acceptable and distinct from other nuclear weapons that I see the danger of continuing the neutron bomb programs and the importance and need for a comprehensive test ban treaty (CTBT) stopping all nuclear bomb testing. (NYT Aug 1, 1977:13)

There are some possible inferences that can be made regarding the state of play of any potential missile panic during this point. The first of these deals with the return of one of the primary themes of the missile panic: finding a way to make it practical to wage a nuclear war. Recall that the idea of a so-called “clean bomb” had been around since the mid-1950s. The neutron bomb was the logical outcome of that research, and would ultimately become a semi-successful, viable product of the concept. That the research into the clean bomb—in the form of the neutron bomb—continued into the 1977s infers that the missile panic was still continuing at that point. More to the point, those institutional actors that were invested in the missile panic were still able to get their pet projects funded. In this case by developing a weapon that would potentially be seen by United States’ politicians and the public as being more acceptable for use in warfare than regular nuclear weapons.

This is the second inference from the letter: that the politicians and public would see the neutron bomb as an acceptable tool in the use of warfare. The author asserts that this is dangerous because it would make the use of such weapons more likely. I would go further and suggest that the neutron bomb provided the institutional actors within the missile panic with two critical things needed to achieve their goals, both foreign and domestic.

The first of these goals was acquiring public consent, or increased public approval. It is apparent that while the political actors were very keen on the idea of a second missile gap, the public was less sure on the subject than it was in the past. I would suggest that the source of this lack of surety on the part of the public stems from the relative size of each country's arsenal. Since each country had an arsenal of such destructive magnitude, it would be harder to convince the public that a few hundred nuclear weapons—either way—would be of particular importance if the Doomsday Clock ever struck midnight. But, if it were possible to convince the public that a new technology had been developed that could be used in lieu of a nuclear weapon that was “safer,” it could possibly have peaked public interest once again. Here was a weapon that could turn the tide, win the war, and finally settle the imminent conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union once and for all. But, if the United States knew how to make a neutron bomb, than it would be easy enough to suggest that the Soviets were working along similar lines. Potentially reigniting the fear of the missile panic in the hearts of the public using the threat of the possibility of a war using the neutron devices.

The second goal of the neutron bomb could potentially have been an unintended consequence of the technology. It is entirely possible that the only purpose of the technology was to further advance the idea of suing for peace using the sword. Not necessarily by using the technology against the Soviets, but by making it more imperative for them to come to the bargaining table. The potentially unintended consequence was that it would extend the arms race, while having a

chilling effect on further negotiations. The Soviets would be unable to see the development of the neutron bomb as anything less than the United States taking further steps towards a first strike posture. The neutron bomb combined with the MIRV would force the Soviets to focus more on defense than diplomacy. Such a posture would be of vital importance to the defense sector and its elites for reasons that will be discussed later in the conclusion.

Finally, the last inference that can be made from the letter itself is that there were still segments of the public that did not proscribe to the second missile panic. Furthermore, those elements were concerned with decisions being made and actions taken during the second missile panic. Overall, while we cannot gauge to what extent the objection to the missile panic and its creation of devices like the neutron bomb was in 1977, we can at least be certain that support for these things was not universal.

Unlike his predecessor, President Carter dedicated very little of his 1978 SOTUA to the issue of defense. Instead, he spent a great amount of space discussing the issue of strategic arms negotiations. Though it had been a difficult process, Carter projected hope that the Soviet Union and the United States would come together on this issue. In fact, unlike the idea of negotiation via strength posed by Ford in 1976, Carter approaches the problem from a more peacefully diplomatic position.

The strategic arms limitation talks have been long and difficult. We want a mutual limit on both the quality and the quantity of the giant nuclear arsenals of both nations, and then we want actual reductions in

strategic arms as a major step toward the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons from the face of the Earth.

If these talks result in an agreement this year—and I trust they will—I pledge to you that the agreement will maintain and enhance the stability of the world's strategic balance and the security of the United States.

For 30 years, concerted but unsuccessful efforts have been made to ban the testing of atomic explosives—both military weapons and peaceful nuclear devices.

We are hard at work with Great Britain and the Soviet Union on an agreement which will stop testing and will protect our national security and provide for adequate verification of compliance. We are now making, I believe, good progress toward this comprehensive ban on nuclear explosions. (Carter 1978)

Yet the absence of defense and a focus upon negotiation appears in the more public SOTUA speech. In Carter's *written* SOTUA, delivered to members of Congress, there is a definite focus on the issue of defense. Along with assertions that while negotiations were taking place, strategic arms projects were to be continued.

The defense budget that I am recommending to Congress will fulfill our most pressing defense needs. I am requesting increases in defense spending that more than compensate for inflation. They are needed to maintain an adequate military balance in the face of continued Soviet military efforts.

As we negotiate with the Soviets over strategic arms, we are continuing to preserve essential equivalence in strategic nuclear strength. Here our technological advantage over the Soviet Union is most apparent. We are building cruise missiles, which together with upgraded B-52s will assure the capability of this element of our Triad. We are continuing to develop the M-X missile system in case we need to deploy them. In this budget, I am requesting funds for continued increase in our Trident submarine force, which is our most important strategic program because submarines are so hard for any enemy to destroy. (Carter 1978)

Though a president's written SOTUAs are publically available, in all likelihood the general public would only fully consume his SOTUA speech. There is the possibility of receiving small bits of the written SOTUA in the newspaper, but there is no real guarantee that the written SOTUAs would be as widely consumed as the broadcasted speech. Assuming this to be true, including these statements only in the written SOTU suggests that the more detailed messages there are meant for political and institutional actors, and that the messages concerning the defense budget were meant as a reassurance to any anxious listeners. Given the facts of the matter, this does fit rather neatly. During his campaign for election, Carter promised (and *The Times* would later criticize him for failing to do this) to reduce the defense budget as well as the number of nuclear weapons in the strategic arsenal. Upon his election to the office of President, he was placed in the position of having to satisfy the expectations of two different audiences: the voting public that elected him and the governmental actors he would be working with for the next four years. To placate the advocates of the second missile panic's existence, Carter would have to address the issue of defense; specifically, he would need to at least imply that there would be no threats of resource reductions for the defense sector.

Unlike 1977, there is a little more data to help establish how the public was reacting to the missile panic during this period. The fact that Carter felt it necessary to exclude discussion of defense from the more public SOTUA would suggest that the public was dissatisfied to some extent with the increased defense spending caused by the missile panic. Letters like the following and others submitted to *The*

Times lend credence to this idea through their demonstration of the public's understanding of the missile gap. It would also appear that the public—or at least segments of it—had an increasing understanding of the web of action-reaction that constituted the arms race further reducing the effectiveness of the missile panic in motivating the United States' public to action.

Ever since the so-called missile gap controversy, allegations have been tossed back and forth regarding the relative military strengths of the USA and the USSR. W. Scott Thompson, for example, refers to a study which alleges that the United States was 'indisputably ahead' of the Soviets in 'strategic forces and capabilities across 21 indices' at the time of the Cuban missile crisis.

In this contest of claims and counterclaims, one may allege that the Russians viewed the alleged United States superiority at that time as a direct threat to their security. One then may further allege that Moscow decided to go all out to overcome this alleged disparity and to forge ahead. Now the above-mentioned report, according to Professor Thompson, alleges that the Soviets have surpassed the United States "in at least" 31 of the indices, and the alleged gap is presumed to be widening. Thus Professor Thompson alleges that the Soviets represent a grave military threat, which means that the United States must now embark on a crash program to catch up and, one hopes, become number one.

And when the United States will have allegedly moved ahead in military power, the Russians will allegedly regard this development as a menace to their security and will therefore accelerate their drive to out-distance the United States. In turn, their alleged response will compel us to allege that their military power is a threat and that we must meet it with a new arms buildup. (NYT Aug 2, 1978:20)

While the letters published by *The Times* suggest that the public had an understanding of the principles of the missile panic, the data collected by *Gallup* presents an interesting picture of public opinion (See Table 24). Once again, the data provided by the respondents suggests a very divided opinion on the second missile

panic. The poll itself focused once more on issues of shelters. From the data, it appears that respondents' attitudes have changed very little since 1976. There is a very distinct lack of concern when it comes to shelter policies. Less than half of the respondents have any knowledge of public bomb shelters or of their community's civil defense organization. What indicates that this is a lack of concern (and not the result of a lack of information) on the public's part is that less than half of the respondents indicated approval of requiring that every house in the United States should have a bomb shelter. It could be suggested that this result is from reluctance to have the Federal government covering the costs of those shelters, with the possibility being that respondents would prefer that to be a private cost. Yet, if individuals were concerned about bomb shelters, there should be some indication of knowledge of public shelters. It would be a stretch to think that respondents would view public shelters as being unnecessary if private shelters existed. It would be safe to assume that most individuals knew they would not always be near or have access to a private shelter.

What is truly confusing in the data is the result obtained from the last question asked of respondents. When asked if the United States should be spending more on protecting its citizens from a nuclear attack (even in the face of increased Soviet spending), 82% of respondents agreed. According to Table 24, this was an increase of 38% from the last time the exact question was asked in 1976. The increase would suggest the influence of the second missile panic on public opinion, but the disagreement between the data is anomalous. The possible explanation for

this disconnect can be found back in the 1960 survey (See Table 17). On that survey, *Gallup* asked similar questions about shelter construction, and overwhelmingly respondents were in favor of public shelters. Conversely, when asked about building private shelters, respondents were less enthusiastic. I would suggest that a similar situation is present in the 1978 data where the people are in favor of public—as opposed to private—shelters.

As was stated earlier, this result would suggest that by 1978 the second missile panic was having a perceptible impact on public opinion. Given the similarity of responses (a distinct lack of concern with the particulars of civil defense matched with an increased concern *for* civil defense), I would propose it is the inverse of the situation in the early 1960s. When the original missile panic was cooling down, the public was concerned but not overly concerned. In the late 1970s, we have a situation where a second missile panic was ostensibly fully established. However, though public opinion demonstrates that individuals were concerned during this period, they were not so frightened of the potential of Soviet destruction that they felt the need for both public and private shelters. Concomitantly, people may have also understood the pure futility of the shelters in the face of the massive destruction that would be unleashed during a nuclear exchange. But that understanding might also suggest why the missile panic's message of a deficit of a hundred missiles did not immediately grab the public's attention. In either case, this suggests that while the second missile panic held some of the public's attention, they were not totally gripped by the second missile panic. This analysis is based off of

this data, but also those letters from *The Times* that demonstrate an increased reluctance on the part of the public to be fully taken in by missile panic histrionics from public officials.

The second question that arises from this data is what happened between 1976 and 1978 to cause such a dramatic increase in concern over civil defense. Between those years, nothing of negative or particular noteworthiness had happened between the United States and the Soviet Union. Quite the opposite in fact, the United States and the Soviet Union during this period made strides towards increased peace between each power. Though the superpowers quibbled with one another over issues such as human rights, the Apollo-Soyuz project was an example of the both countries showing a willingness to work together (Ezell and Ezell 1978; Lapennal 1977). Though the Apollo-Soyuz may in hindsight be considered minimal, it still was a moment of cooperation between the two nominally competing superpowers. It required a coordination of launch times between the two space programs so that vehicles from each could perform a docking maneuver (Ezell and Ezell 1978). Afterwards, the two groups of astronauts performed a series of experiments, as well as a symbolic exchange of gifts and flags.

Because of this lack of notable events to explain the swell in public opinion in favor of the second missile panic, I assert it demonstrates the inertial nature of the missile panics. Without a clear and present danger to present to the public, it was not possible to achieve the same public reaction as was seen with the launch of the first Sputnik. The second missile panic was started with the publication of a report

questioning relative arsenal size that was eventually picked up by political and defense sector elites. It lacked the same immediacy of the orbiting of Sputnik, but that did not stop the defense and political sectors from continuing to reference the second missile panic. Though there was no immediate threat, continuous repetition of the same message would eventually cause *some* change in public opinion.

While all of this was going on, a potential factor that perhaps helped this change in public opinion was Afghanistan's regime change. Though the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan would not happen until 1979, pro-Communist rebels overthrew and executed President Sardar Mohammad Daoud's regime in 1978. It is possible that the United States public took this as a further sign of Soviet Union aggression within the context of the continuous proxy warfare that made up the state of détente between the superpowers. This would possibly account for the rather strong approval respondents displayed at the idea of equipping our allies with neutron bombs (despite President Carter cancelling the project). With the possible thinking being that the bombs could be used to help turn back large incursions of Soviet forces into allied territory, or remove invasive forces that had established themselves in a region. It is worth noting that the fear of the 1977 letter author—that the neutron bomb would be seen as more acceptable—appears to have been grounded in reality to some extent.

The decade begins with the decreased levels of concern that carried over from the previous decade. These levels begin to rise over the course of the decade in both the media and Presidential data. Concomitantly, the decade starts

with Nixon's announcement of a reduction in the defense budget and a renewed push for a moratorium on strategic weapons. With the implied loss of institutional power represented in these announcements came challenges from the defense sector to sway public and senatorial opinion on the matters. At the same time, we see *The Times* beginning to more fully address the possibility that these institutional actors were more concerned with using the Soviet nuclear threat as a method of maintaining institutional power. The 1970s also marks the historical declaration of a second missile gap, as well as efforts on the part of institutional actors to generate a second missile panic. Yet it is during this period that we see that the influence on the public within a missile panic is minimal compared to the power of institutions. The following decade will demonstrate the process by which the transition to a security state lead the interest group generated missile panic to transform into one that was elite-engineered.

Table 24: *The Gallup Poll* survey 1978-101/118-G

	Positive Response	Negative Response
1978-3(101-G). Do you think the United States should or should not proceed to equip our armed forces and our allies with the neutron bomb?	79%	21%
1978-1(118-G). Do you happen to know whether or not there is a civil defense organization in your community?	32%	22%
1978-2(118-G). Do you happen to know where the nearest public bomb shelter is?	24%	76%
1978-3(118-G). It has been proposed that every new house built in the United States be required to have a bomb shelter, with the federal government paying most of the costs. Would you favor or oppose such a plan?	35%	56%
1978-4(118-G). Russia is said to be spending many times as much protecting its people from nuclear attack as the United States is spending. Do you think we should do more than we are doing, do less, or do you think our present efforts are about right?	82% (We should do more)	7% (We should do less)

Ch. 9 Re-enter the Elites: 1979-1990

According to Beckett and Sasson (2000), the social unrest of the preceding decades brought in to question the welfare state hegemonic strategy previously used to legitimate the system. Slow economic growth combined with the various movements of the 1960s (i.e. Civil Rights, anti-war, women's movement, et. al) posed a hegemonic crisis for the elites. According to Hawdon and Wood (2014), this leads the neoconservative and neoliberal elements to unite against what they considered a common threat, and the result of that unification was the creation of what Beckett and Sasson termed the "security state." One of the primary precepts of which was an emphasis on security from foreign and domestic threats (Beckett and Sasson 2000; Hawdon and Wood 2014).

This outcome is of value here because of the impact it had on how issues of strategic nuclear weapons and missile gaps were treated. Furthermore, it would suggest that any possible moral panic surrounding the missile gap would be an elite-engineered moral panic. There are some indications that this was possibly the case during this period. The first of which was an increased use of fear rhetoric in Reagan's speeches (see, for example, Hawdon 2001; Hawdon and Wood 2014). A second would be the response of the two papers used in this research. *The Times* does not venture much in terms of opposition to Reagan, while *The Tribune* operates in virtual lock step. Both of these are the types of phenomenon that would be expected in an elite-engineered moral panic (Good and Ben-Yehuda 2009)

However, the complete unification of elite interests has not yet occurred by 1979. Elite interests do not truly merge until Reagan assumed the Presidency and

began his programs of “reform” by strict adherence to the ideas of corporate capitalism. But that does not mean that the elites did not have any influence over what was occurring. Consider the dual nature of Carter’s SOTUA, one in which the public is convinced that everything is fine, while in another Congress is being convinced to shift more resources towards the defense sector. It is not that Carter is either a neoliberal or a neoconservative. Carter is a politician, and is thusly aware of what must be done if he is to win re-election.

Carter’s 1979 SOTUA is focused primarily on his efforts to convince the public and—perhaps more importantly—the political apparatus of the value of SALT II. While Carter appeals to a sense of diplomacy, he very clearly indicates that the treaty is one of rational self-interest for both the United States and Soviet Union. He very pointedly described the treaty as not being based upon “sentiment.” Carter even went so far as to assure both the public and the political apparatus that even with the treaty, the United States could—with but a fraction of its might—completely obliterate the Soviet Union. This speech is a further example of the kind of Orwellian construction present in SOTUAs when there is a missile panic. There is a discussion of peace, but there is always a very clear description of overwhelming defense capabilities. That Carter would even have to resort to such tactics within his SOTUA to ostensibly convince the citizens and politicians of the United States that a treaty designed to lessen the danger of nuclear weapons would not decrease the threat of the United States’ nuclear arsenal would strongly suggest that the second missile panic was present during 1979.

Ten years ago, the United States and the Soviet Union made the historic decision to open the strategic arms limitations talks, or SALT. The purpose of SALT, then as now, is not to gain a unilateral advantage for either nation, but to protect the security of both nations, to reverse the costly and dangerous momentum of the nuclear arms race, to preserve a stable balance of nuclear forces, and to demonstrate to a concerned world that we are determined to help preserve the peace.

The first SALT agreement was concluded in 1972. And since then, during 6 years of negotiation by both Republican and Democratic leaders, nearly all issues of SALT II have been resolved. If the Soviet Union continues to negotiate in good faith, a responsible SALT agreement will be reached.

It's important that the American people understand the nature of the SALT process.

SALT II is not based on sentiment; it's based on self-interest—of the United States and of the Soviet Union. Both nations share a powerful common interest in reducing the threat of a nuclear war. I will sign no agreement which does not enhance our national security.

SALT II does not rely on trust; it will be verifiable. We have very sophisticated, proven means, including our satellites, to determine for ourselves whether or not the Soviet Union is meeting its treaty obligations. I will sign no agreement which cannot be verified.

The American nuclear deterrent will remain strong after SALT II. For example, just one of our relatively invulnerable Poseidon submarines—comprising less than 2 percent of our total nuclear force of submarines, aircraft, and land-based missiles—carries enough warheads to destroy every large- and medium-sized city in the Soviet Union. Our deterrent is overwhelming, and I will sign no agreement unless our deterrent force will remain overwhelming.

A SALT agreement, of course, cannot substitute for wise diplomacy or a strong defense, nor will it end the danger of nuclear war. But it will certainly reduce that danger. It will strengthen our efforts to ban nuclear tests and to stop the spread of atomic weapons to other nations. And it can begin the process of negotiating new agreements which [sic] will further limit nuclear arms.

The path of arms control, backed by a strong defense—the path our Nation and every President has walked for 30 years—can lead to a world

of law and of international negotiation and consultation in which all peoples might live in peace. In this year 1979, nothing is more important than that the Congress and the people of the United States resolve to continue with me on that path of nuclear arms control and world peace. This is paramount. (Carter 1979)

Once again, it is surprising that *The Tribune* would come to the heart of the matter in one of its editorials. In this case it was the very obvious “sell job” that Carter was making to the Senate over SALT II. For his part, the writer at *The Tribune* maintains the same position on the subject of any strategic imbalance between the United States and the Soviet Union that the paper has assumed in past editorials.

President Carter has reportedly decided to increase the defense budget for the next fiscal year by about \$10 billion, keeping his promise to NATO allies and overruling liberal arguments that the money would be better spent on social programs.

He has also speeded up plans to deploy a new generation of land-based ICBMs—the so-called MX—in a mobile form designed to frustrate the increasing precision of Soviet missiles aimed at our existing, stationary silos. Meantime, the strategic arms limitation talks with the Soviet Union crawl fitfully toward a treaty.

It is no coincidence that President Carter has been acting-hawkish on defense as the arms control negotiations near an end. He wants to sell the treaty in the Senate, and by all predictions that will not be easy. Its opponents, in general, fear that SALT II will weaken the U.S. in comparison with the Soviet Union, and President Carter feels he must show that he will not let such a thing happen. (CT Jan 2, 1979:16)

To convince the Senate of SALT's value, Carter had to do what is only hinted at in his SOTUA: he had to act more hawkish. In this case, that meant increasing the amount of the defense budget and accelerating plans to deploy the MX system. These actions were taken to allay the fears of the political apparatus that the SALT II treaty would weaken the United States' nuclear deterrent capability. This further implies that a

missile panic was working its way through the political institutions of the United States during 1979.

Arms limitation treaties do not eliminate the military competition between the two superpowers, but they can shape and moderate that competition. Because new technologies of destruction and defense inevitably arise outside the limits of the treaties—indeed the limits provide an incentive for the research that leads to new limits—no single agreement is more than a partial, temporary step.

The Soviet Union can be counted upon to develop new weapons vigorously, and the United States can do no less if balance in the world is to be maintained. But the process of negotiated limitation, coupled with U.S. vigilance and investment in defense, can help preserve a balance of power—and thereby deter the use of each frightening new weapon as it is developed. This is of ultimate importance to civilization, and not something that can be measured in dollars. (CT Jan 2, 1979:16)

As can be inferred from *The Tribune* piece, the greatest concern over SALT II was that it would widen the newest missile gap between the United States and the Soviet Union. In the following editorial, *The Times* asserted that not only would the new treaty not create an imbalance, SALT II would actually have no effect on then current DOD missile programs.

Republican and conservative critics argue that President Carter's treaty would lock the United States into "strategic inferiority" because the Soviet Union possesses more and bigger intercontinental missiles. But that "inferiority" was established in the Kissinger-Nixon treaty, SALT I, in 1972. The United States had a big lead then in warhead, bombers and missile accuracy, and Mr. Kissinger argued correctly that this lead made the two strategic forces essentially equivalent.

But SALT I did not bar Moscow's effort to narrow or overtake the American lead. That effort would result only in more overkill were it not for an American invention that now could threaten American security—MIRV multiple warheads. ... So by the mid-1980s, a third of the Soviet ICBM force might in theory be able to wipe out the bulk of America's 1,000 Minutemen in a surprise first-strike.

It was President Nixon who opened the way for this vulnerability. He refused to seriously discuss a MIRV ban in SALT I and pressed ahead with MIRV deployment that Russia was certain to imitate. Belatedly, in late 1973, Mr. Kissinger tried to limit Soviet MIRV deployments in ICBM's to a few hundred missiles. But Moscow refused, and in November 1974 Mr. Kissinger and President Ford settled for high but equal SALT II limits on missile-launchers and bombers.... (NYT May 21, 1979:18)

Here we see the editor from *The Times* challenging the criticism of SALT II serving only to widen the gap between the two superpowers. The editor here has asserted that the current imbalance was due to the previously discussed refusal on the part of Nixon to consider a ban on MIRVs in SALT I. Perhaps in hindsight the sequence of events is unsurprising, but given the dynamics of the arms race between the two superpowers, there should have been some realization of the consequences that would come from keeping MIRVs out of SALT I negotiations.

...While restraining Russia's buildup, SALT II puts no real restrictions on present Pentagon programs for bigger or more accurate missiles, including 3,000 cruise missiles and a mobile replacement for Minuteman triple its size. Defeat of the treaty, however, would probably rule out the replacement that SALT critics favor—the "shell game" type of mobile land missile, each with 20 launching sites. For without SALT II, Moscow could add more warheads faster and more cheaply than the United States could build more launching sites.

The real issue posed by SALT's critics does not, in fact, lie in the treaty. That is whether the country would carry out the strategic programs needed to avoid the feared "missile gap" of the mid-1980s. "The euphoria always generated in the United States by signing a treaty," says the Coalition for Peace Through Strength, "might well produce further cutbacks, as was the case after SALT I."

But the Carter Administration does not intend to repeat the Nixon-Brezhnev embrace of 1972. It warns against the illusions of détente and sees Soviet-American competition continuing alongside a growth in cooperation. It is this rivalry that makes it essential to put a cap on the nuclear arms race, even at a high level, and to begin the process of

missile reduction and qualitative constraints. SALT II will do that....
(NYT May 21, 1979:18)

Much like other elements of the second missile panic, public opinion was divided over the perceived benefit of SALT II. A Sterling Professor of Law at Yale wrote the following letter, which was very much against the treaty. The author's basis being that it would impact the United States' second-strike capability. Which is mildly interesting given that the United States, by 1979, had acquired such a great second-strike capability that it had years ago began shifting to a more first-strike capability. Yet, the author contended that the loss of our second strike capabilities was slowly removing the option of using conventional force against the Soviets. All of which, taken together, was leading to doubts among allied powers; requiring them to disassociate with the United States and accommodate the Soviet Union. Yet this was another manifestation of the same conservative, missile panic logic that was making the rounds through the political apparatus.

...The issue is not "parity" versus "superiority" but the preservation of a clear and evident American second-strike capability—an altogether different matter, as your recent editorials on the vulnerability of our fixed land-based ICBM's recognized.

Doubts about the effect of SALT II on our second-strike capability, and therefore on our capacity to use conventional force in limited conflicts, are spreading rapidly in Europe, Japan, China and other areas of the world vital to our security, Saudi Arabia, for example. These doubts about the efficacy of the American nuclear umbrella encourage movements for dissociation from the U.S. and accommodation with the Soviet Union, especially because the impending strategic arms control treaty does not deal with the SS-20, the Backfire bomber and other weapons that threaten our allies and China even more directly than they threaten the U.S.

Doubts of this order, both about the implications of SALT II for our allies and about the adequacy of the Carter Administration's foreign and defense policy generally, have fortified the impulses of neutralism, both in Europe and elsewhere.

...The change in the nuclear balance makes it more and more difficult for us to use or threaten to use conventional force effectively, as the recent history of Lebanon and our current silence about Soviet transfers of planes and submarines to Cuba attest.

Because of the bipolar character of the nuclear weapons problem, alliance solidarity can be organized and brought to bear on world politics only if the United States retains its second-strike capability and plays its full part in such coalitions.

It follows that we should put SALT II on the shelf; rebuild our nuclear and conventional deterrent strength and proceed with the Soviets to negotiate on the basis of the agenda for SALT III, utilizing the positive results of the SALT II negotiating experience and announcing our determination with our allies to insist on reciprocal respect for the rules of the Charter of the United Nations regarding the international use of force.

Such a course would be the most prudent and promising way to protect the interests of the nation in peace, while there is still time to do so. The course of drift recommended by your editorial and the Carter Administration would increase the risk of miscalculation by the Soviet Union, and therefore of war. (NYT May 21, 1979:16)

Whereas other letters were very much in favor of SALT II, and unlike the previous letter, many of the letters in favor of the new treaty were accurately more aware of the dynamics at play both within and without the United States. By now it has probably been noticed that this is a particular trait of letters that are critical of the arms race. There is a greater awareness of the motivations of the institutions and actors involved, as well as an awareness of how and why the Soviet Union would be interested in building increased numbers of nuclear weapons. As a caveat, it is true that the writers of these letters do not know with certainty the true

motivations of the actors involved. But the letters demonstrate a segment of the public's awareness of alternate narratives other than the one provided by the narrative of the second missile gap. The first of these letters addressed the loop in which the arms race placed both nations. The second of the letters addressed the impact that the increased budget demands of the second missile panic were having on the United States' economy.

...History shows very clearly that the separate efforts of nation-states to make themselves secure cannot be reconciled because they always define their security in terms requiring other states to be insecure.

Critics of SALT II assert that the agreement made after years of negotiation gives the Soviet Union greater security than that given to us, that it must be amended to make us secure and the Russians insecure. It is a hopeless dilemma and requires that we spend and spend and make our weapons increasingly destructive until our deterrent power frightens the Russian into accepting our understanding and our solutions of the problems facing us. The Russians, however, cannot live with a sense of insecurity any more that we can; so they will spend and spend until their power to destroy makes us submit to their policies.

*Fear will thus dominate the growing hostility of our relations until a minor incident like the shots fired in Sarajevo in 1914 will be the unplanned prelude to humanity's greatest catastrophe.
...It will be the end of the government, the economy and the freedoms we always seek to protect. (NYT May 26, 1979:18)*

The first of these pieces likens the arms race into the same type of geopolitical situation that resulted in World War I from the assassination of Duke Ferdinand. And at the root of it is what the author names fear. But also, subtly, is the demand by the United States that its strategic interests take precedence over those of the Soviets, without a corresponding understanding of why such a demand is tacitly untenable in the case of nuclear weapons. The unforeseen consequence of the

assassination of Duke Ferdinand was the initiation of a massive conflict. The conflict that could result from the unforeseen consequences when dealing with nuclear weapons would be—to borrow a term from a previous editorial—“picayune.” The second letter submitted to *The Times* also demonstrates a similar direction in public opinion,

The worst problem facing the nation is our severe and continuing inflation, which Business Week calls “the worst, most prolonged and most pernicious” in our history. The primary cause is, as Seymour Melman of Columbia University has stated, the enormous military expenditures of the U.S. Department of Defense. The 1979 military budget has risen to \$137 billion, and the Pentagon is demanding \$172.2 billion by 1982. President Carter has also given the go-ahead for the mad MX missile program which will cost at least \$40 billion.

...America’s ever-increasing military budgets, instead of strengthening our defenses, are steadily weakening our economy through inflation. Clearly, the cure is drastic reduction of our armaments budgets and cooling of the arms race. The first steps are ratification of SALT II by the Senate, followed by the Administration starting an all-out drive for worldwide reduction in both conventional and nuclear weapons. (NYT Oct 2, 1979:22)

This letter approached the issue of strategic weapons negotiations by focusing more on the economic consequences of rising budgets. The writer attempting to present the threat posed by unchecked defense spending. In 1979, *Gallup* had items in its survey to gauge public opinion on SALT II. Given the division in opinion displayed by the newspapers and the public letters submitted thereto, we should expect to see a division in respondents’ views. But as data in Table 25 demonstrate, nothing could be further from the truth. We see that half of the survey respondents (of the 59% that had heard of SALT II) were in favor of the Senate

ratifying the treaty. Yet, we are presented with a quandary when we compare the results of this survey with the data in Table 26.

The survey in Table 25 was administered in March of 1979, but was administered again in September (Table 26). Immediately, the first noticeable difference is that 81% of respondents had by then heard of the SALT II treaty. But it appears that as knowledge of the treaty spread, there was a *decrease* in the percentage of respondents who were in favor of the Senate ratifying the treaty. It is in this survey that we see the division of public opinion suggested from the newspaper selections. The difference between the two groups (those who did and did not want to see the treaty ratified) is only one percent. Again, the immediate question would be what caused such a shift in public acceptance of the treaty?

The first answer is the obvious answer: that when people initially heard about the treaty, the bare outlines of it sounded like a good thing. But, as time passed and people learned more about what would or would not be included in the treaty, they perhaps lost some of the confidence they originally had for it. This is entirely plausible and in any other circumstance would probably be a closer interpretation. Yet, this same pattern is repeated often in the data, especially during this particular period in the analysis. It is possible that this is occurring over and over again, but it more likely that a deeper interpretation using the lens of missile panic would be more useful.

The alternate interpretation of the data, formed through the lens of the missile panic, starts first with the number of respondents that had heard of SALT II.

When the survey was first administered, the number of respondents who had heard about the treaty was low. There is a high chance that those individuals who were keeping up with SALT II at that stage were those who had an interest in such matters, effectively professionals and specialists. Using the letters sent in to *The Times* as a gauge of the sentiments of those two groups in regard to matters of disarmament suggests that they were more in favor of SALT II. Of course, as the paper demonstrated, they were not unified on the subject; nevertheless, there were individuals from the professional and specialist groupings that were very much in favor for the arms race. But, based on the data, we can infer that those individuals were a minority compared to those who favored disarmament.

As time passed more people in the general public learned about the treaty, as indicated by the increased number of respondents seen in the second survey. Concomitantly, this passage of time also gave those defense and political apparatus actors the opportunity to spread their message of the missile panic and the danger posed by SALT II. What is more, the fact that public attitudes shifted in such a way against the treaty would suggest that those messages were absorbed and internalized by a fairly sizeable segment of the public. The fact that this same voting public would later elect Reagan (who was publically disdainful of SALT II in favor of diplomacy through increased numbers of nuclear weapons) to the Presidency would indicate that the defense sector and political apparatus were very successful in fomenting a second missile panic within the public.

Table 25: *The Gallup Poll* survey 1979-1124-G

	Positive Response	Negative Response
1979-6a. Have you heard or read about SALT (Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty II), the proposed nuclear arms agreement between the U.S. (United States) and Russia?	59%	41%
1979-6d. Everything considered, would you like to see the U.S. (United States) Senate ratify (vote in favor of) this proposed treaty (Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty, or SALT II)?	51%	18%

Table 26: *The Gallup Poll* survey 1979-1139-G

	Positive Response	Negative Response
1979-3a. Have you heard or read about SALT (Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty II), the proposed nuclear arms agreement between the U.S. (United States) and Russia?	81%	19%
1979-3d. Everything considered, would you like to see the U.S. (United States) Senate ratify (vote in favor of) this proposed treaty (Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty, or SALT II)?	34%	35%

1980-1989

I refer once more to the original figures that started this historical analysis. Figure 1 reports the number of articles in the NYT and Chicago Tribune dedicated to the Soviets and the missile gap each year from 1955 through 1990. Figure 2 reports the number of times the president talks about the Soviets and the missile gap during each year's SOTU address. According to the data presented in these figures, both newspapers show an increase in the amount of concern seen at the start of 1980s. But as the decade continues, only The Tribune will maintain those heightened levels of concerns

By 1980, the potential missile panic would appear to have continued to influence the Carter Administration's decisions. Extending the Nixon Administration's position that a nuclear war could be fought and won, President Carter issued Presidential Directives 58 and 59. Presidential Directive 59 declared that the response to a Soviet attack would no longer be a bombing of Russian population centers and cities primarily (Burt 1980). Retaliation would now take the form of killing the Soviet leadership followed by an attack on military targets, in the hope of a Russian surrender before total destruction of the United States and the Soviet Union (to a greater or lesser extent in the latter's case). This modified strategic doctrine was seen as a winnable nuclear war, while still maintaining the possibility of assured destruction for at least one party.

Recall that the Nixon Administration had previously ordered the retargeting of some nuclear warheads to focus on Soviet military assets. President Carter's Directive is notable in that it shifted the United States' stance to an explicit attack on

the Soviet political system. Yet, Carter issued the directive in anticipation and reaction to Governor Reagan and the Republican challenge that the United States had not gone far enough in its efforts to deter the Soviet Union from launching a nuclear strike (Burt 1980). Intriguingly, included with Presidential Directive 59 was Presidential Directive 58, which ordered greater protection of U.S. civilian and military leaders in the event of a nuclear war. The entire purpose of which was an effort to prove to the Soviets our capability of engaging in an extended nuclear conflict. This was a further shift away from the idea of civilian casualties being the means by which nuclear war was deterred.

But what is most fascinating of all is that none of these actions or political positions was even hinted at in Carter's 1980 SOTUA. Carter went so far as to state that *preventing* nuclear war is the supreme responsibility of the superpowers, when PDs 58 and 59 are actions taken in preparation of *fighting* a nuclear war.

Preventing nuclear war is the foremost responsibility of the two superpowers. That's why we've negotiated the strategic arms limitation treaties—SALT I and SALT II. Especially now, in a time of great tension, observing the mutual constraints imposed by the terms of these treaties will be in the best interest of both countries and will help to preserve world peace. I will consult very closely with the Congress on this matter as we strive to control nuclear weapons. That effort to control nuclear weapons will not be abandoned.

...We've increased annually our real commitment for defense, and we will sustain this increase of effort throughout the Five Year Defense Program. It's imperative that Congress approve this strong defense budget for 1981, encompassing a 5-percent real growth in authorizations, without any reduction. (Carter 1980)

Though he dedicated very little space to either issue, Carter's tone is fairly even in both statements regarding strategic weapons and defense budgeting. Keep

in mind that this is during the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Yet, the same technique that Carter used in a previous SOTUA is used in 1980. Wherein the written speech directed towards institutional actors, contains a deeper discussion on all of these issues. Carter placed more emphasis on maintaining strategic superiority as well as raising defense spending. Furthermore, Carter's discussions of SALT were less positioned as a necessity for peace and safety, but more as a way of achieving strategic superiority over the Soviets, and that SALT itself would in no way impact current strategic strength in light of continued projects such as the MX missile system.

[T]he decline in defense spending has been reversed; defense spending has increased at a real rate of over 3% in 1979, and I am proposing a real increase in the defense spending level of more than 20% over the next 5 years;

... Defense Department Authorizations and Appropriations—I will be proposing a defense budget containing a 3.3% real growth in outlays. It is essential that the Congress support an increase of that amount if we are to strengthen our defense capabilities.

... During my Administration, the expenditures for Federal space programs have increased by 75%. Much of this increase is to meet the increasingly operational nature of our space activities. Nearly half of our expenditures are now for defense purposes; photo-reconnaissance satellites, for example, are enormously important in stabilizing world affairs and thereby make a significant contribution to the security of all nations. And my new initiative to establish an oceanic satellite system will provide invaluable ocean data for both the civil and defense sectors, thereby avoiding unnecessary duplication.

... [W]e will continue, as we have over the past three years, to build America's military strength and that of our allies and friends. Neither the Soviet Union nor any other nation will have reason to question our will to sustain the strongest and most flexible defense forces.

For many years the Soviets have steadily increased their real defense spending, expanded their strategic forces, strengthened their forces in Europe and Asia, and enhanced their capability for projecting military force around the world directly or through the use of proxies. Afghanistan dramatizes the vastly increased military power of the Soviet Union.

The Soviet Union has built a war machine far beyond any reasonable requirements for their own defense and security. In contrast, our own defense spending declined in real terms every year from 1968 through 1976.

We have reversed this decline in our own effort. Every year since 1976 there has been a real increase in our defense spending—and our lead has encouraged increases by our allies. With the support of the Congress, we must and will make an even greater effort in the years ahead.

The Fiscal Year 1981 budget would increase funding authority for defense to more than \$158 billion, a real growth of more than 5% over my request for Fiscal Year 1980. Therefore, requested outlays for defense during Fiscal Year 1981 will grow by more than 3% in real terms over the preceding year.

The trends we mean to correct cannot be remedied overnight; we must be willing to see this program through. To ensure that we do so I am setting a growth rate for defense that we can sustain over the long haul.

The defense program I have proposed for the next five years will require some sacrifice—but sacrifice we can well afford.

The defense program emphasizes four areas:

(a) It ensures that our strategic nuclear forces will be equivalent to those of the Soviet Union and that deterrence against nuclear war will be maintained;

(b) It upgrades our forces so that the military balance between NATO and the Warsaw Pact will continue to deter the outbreak of war—conventional or nuclear—in Europe;

(c) It provides us the ability to come quickly to the aid of friends and allies around the globe;

(d) And it ensures that our Navy will continue to be the most powerful on the seas.

We are strengthening each of the three legs of our strategic forces. The cruise missile production which will begin next year will modernize our strategic air deterrent. B-52 capabilities will also be improved. These steps will maintain and enhance the B-52 fleet by improving its ability to deliver weapons against increasingly heavily defended targets. We are also modernizing our strategic submarine missile force. The first new Trident submarine has already been launched and will begin sea trials this year. The second Trident will be launched in the spring of 1980. The first of our new Trident missiles, with a range of more than 4,000 miles, have already begun operational patrols in Poseidon submarines.

The new MX missile will enhance the survivability of our land-based intercontinental ballistic missile force. That is why I decided last spring to produce this missile and selected the basing mode best suited to enhance its capability. Further the MX will strengthen our capability to attack a wide variety of Soviet targets.

Our new systems will enable U.S. strategic forces to maintain equivalence in the face of the mounting Soviet challenge. We would however need an even greater investment in strategic systems to meet the likely Soviet buildup without SALT.

... The most prominent of our nuclear arms control efforts is, of course, SALT II.

The signing of the Treaty brought to an end painstaking negotiations carried out under three administrations of both parties.

—SALT II is in our mutual interest; it is neither an American favor to the Soviet Union nor a Soviet favor to the United States.

—Ratification of the SALT II Treaty would represent a major step forward in restraining the continued growth of Soviet strategic forces.

Because SALT II reduces superpower competition in its most dangerous manifestation, this Treaty is the single most important bilateral accord of the decade:

—SALT II will permit us better to maintain strategic equivalence in nuclear weapons and devote our defense increases more heavily to our highest priority needs for conventional force improvements;

—Without it, the Soviets can add more power to their forces and better conceal from us what they are doing;

—Without SALT II, and the beginning of SALT III, deeper cuts would take many more years to achieve;

—Without SALT II, our efforts to control the proliferation of nuclear weapons will be more difficult.

I believe that the Senate will ratify SALT II because the Treaty is, in its simplest terms, in the interest of our Nation's security.

But I do not believe it advisable at this time to bring up the Treaty for consideration on the Senate floor. The Congress and the Executive Branch must first deal with the pressing matters arising from the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. (Carter 1980)

The positions outlined in Carter's written SOTUAs continued to be completely opposite to the principles that Carter campaigned on before his election. It must be addressed that an alternative hypothesis is that it is possible that what happened to Kennedy also happened to Carter. Only in Carter's case, upon gaining access to the classified information that only the President is privy to, he learned that the Soviets were further ahead of the United States than was generally known. Yet Kennedy's discovery of how far the United States was compared to the Soviet Union is knowledge that has since been revealed to the public. As of this writing, no such documents have been revealed that indicate that any such revelation of classified knowledge changed Carter's perspective on Soviet capabilities. Therefore, while it is possible that such an event did occur, there is no way to prove or disprove

its occurrence. We are forced therefore to rely on the empirical facts that we have available to us.

While Carter once stressed a need to decrease defense spending and reduce the size of the strategic arsenal, near the end of his presidency he quite thoroughly does the exact opposite. Though there was no public indication of the strategic position that would lead to the declaration of PD 59 later in the year, the public would not let the presidential directive go without comment.

Under the guise of increasing the US deterrent and providing the ability to limit a nuclear war, it [PD 59] represents a radical departure from the philosophy of deterrence based on a massive retaliatory second-strike capability, and confirms the de facto strategy of a first-strike capability implicit in the proposed MX mobile missile system.

...Do we as a people want to now confirm a presumed willingness to initiate a nuclear holocaust by acquiescing to a first-strike strategy as a national philosophy and a statement of US military policy?

It is admittedly uncharitable to question Mr. Carter's motives and vision in issuing a first-strike directive. Several factors, however, make his reasons suspect. First, in 1976, President-elect Carter stated in the Times that he did not believe the US and USSR could fight a limited nuclear war; now it is deemed necessary to be able to wage a prolonged limited nuclear war.

Second, President Carter asserted in his 1979 State of the Union Message that our nuclear deterrent is "overwhelming," citing the fact that the warheads on a single Poseidon submarine could destroy all large and medium-sized Soviet cities; now the US deterrent is deemed to be inadequate.

Third, there has been a strong pressure for this strategy for several years, but the directive was only issued after it became clear that Mr. Carter's Republican challenger would be one who strongly espouses such a strategy. [emphasis added]

Fourth, there is strong opposition to this directive among liberal Democrats, and it was planned to delay its announcement until after the Democratic convention

Fifth, on the basis of his record, Secretary Muskie would have been expected to oppose the decision, and he was neither fully briefed nor consulted. If there is substance to the appearance of Presidential self-interest, is this an ethical acceptable basis for a decision affecting US security?

Presidential Directive 59 raises other questions. Is it justifiable to divert from pressing social needs the billions of dollars required for new weaponry and reconnaissance gear? Can the economy withstand the rate of inflation which [sic] will be created by such massive expenditures on non-productive and non-capital forming weapons systems? Are we willing to forgo the SALT process in favor of an uncontrolled arms race? Can we afford to let go unchallenged a political and military concept which [sic] equates a first-strike offensive capability with national defense? Is it valid to define national security only in terms of military objectives? (NYT Aug 18, 1980:22)

Editorials written by *The Chicago Tribune* were for the most part supportive of the unspoken (i.e. written) portion of Carter's positions. The first editorial was written in the aftermath of the maintenance accident that resulted in the detonation of a Titan II missile in its Kansas silo. Nevertheless, the editorials written demonstrate a knowledge of there needing to be some form of negotiation, and though not necessarily in the form of the SALT treaties. But they were in full agreement with the missile panic narrative of the Soviet Union being an implacable aggressor whose suddenly revealed superior military strength must be swiftly countered by a stronger, more aggressive United States.

Another question that arises from the Titan II accident is: Do we need them? The short, unhappy answer is: Yes, for the present we do. Without the U.S. strategic missile force, the world would be vulnerable to the

Soviet SS-17s, SS-18s, and the SS-19s that slumber in their Siberian launch tubes....

...[I]t is necessary to keep the Minuteman missiles, the submarine missiles, the bombers, and even the Titan IIs for a little longer; it will also be necessary to build new weapons, such as the MX. (CT Sep 22, 1980:2)

The next piece, written by another one of *The Tribune's* editors,

focuses on the nature of the threat presented by the Soviets:

...Soviet missiles are being equipped with warheads of a technical sophistication that would enable them to destroy U.S. forces in a surprise first strike. At the same time, the Kremlin's planners have developed civil defense systems, command bunkers, and site-hardening techniques that are obviously intended to protect the population and essential politico-military structure from U.S. retaliations. Such developments constitute a denial of the "balance of terror" concept of preventing nuclear war, and an affirmation of Soviet intentions to fight and win such a war.

Such a strategy can only be countered by a U.S. doctrine that promises to destroy Soviet war-fighting and war-winning capacity if the Kremlin chooses to launch a nuclear war. Only thus can devastating nuclear war be deterred, and deterrence remains the central objective of U.S. policy.

So if this new U.S. approach "looks to the other side very provocative," as Mr. Gerasimov believes, perhaps he and his comrades should have a look at the results of two decades of Soviet war preparations from this side of the ocean. During a period when the United States severely restrained its strategic construction, in the mistaken belief that détente had some meaning, the Soviets carried out an unprecedented buildup. It is America that has been provoked, and at long last we are responding to the provocation. If the Soviets genuinely wished to prevent "a further spiral in the arms race," as Mr. Gerasimov writes, they should not have set off the spiral in the first place. (CT Sep 2 1980:2)

The final editorial hints at Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative plans.

...What Mr. Reagan wants is to threaten the Soviet Union with an all-out nuclear arms race—in the cause, of course, of peace and restraint.

...The only strong argument used against SALT II had nothing to do with the technical provisions of the agreements, nor about the restraints it imposed upon the United States in building up its forces. It was rather that the United States might fail to recognize the risk of its own complacency—that the agreement might lull the country into a false sense of security. The United States recognizes the risk now, feels it as a chill to the very marrow. The public generally accepts the need for increased defense spending in conventional and nuclear arms. The problem now is how best to allocate the extra money the public seems willing to provide.

Dollars that go into a nuclear arms race—and Mr. Reagan evidently wants to build something SALT II would not allow him to build—will be unavailable for spending on conventional weaponry. Since SALT II forbids none of the programs the United States needs to counter the Soviet buildups, the only purpose of these extra projects would be to scare the Soviets. (CT Oct 4, 1980:10)

It is worth noting that few of these editorials were directly addressed to the actions of President Carter. It is then-Governor Reagan who receives so much attention. From the perspective of *The Tribune* this is understandable as he strongly represented the strategic value positions taken by and reported on by the newspaper; whereas for *The Times*, Reagan represented a more hawkish strategic position that the paper had moved away from in the 1980s. In contrast to the previous editorials, the following from *The Times* questioned Reagan's actions and assumptions. The editor focused on the need of negotiation and of the SALT agreements to achieve the goal of security, as opposed to increased military spending.

Lock stock and protocol, Ronald Reagan is now committed to scrapping the pending arms control treaty. He thinks that SALT II endorses a huge "missile gap" and that a new buildup would frighten the Soviet Union into granting a more favorable treaty. These are sad and dangerous miscalculations.

... The only way to achieve real arms control is to keep this process going, not to abandon it. Indeed, SALT II is in limbo today because Jimmy Carter, too, began by trying to bypass a good agreement for the sake of a better one. The Russians balked and the delay left diplomacy three more years behind technology.

The essential fallacy in Mr. Reagan's view of nuclear arms is that the Soviet Union stands on some kind of strategic superiority. That leads to the further error of thinking that without a treaty the United States could threaten to make itself superior instead. It is all science fiction.

...Scuttling SALT II, in sum, would let the Russians race ahead and cause a frenzy of American catch-up programs. It would further delay talks about real arms reductions. And it would complicate verification and therefore security. (NYT Oct 7, 1980:18)

This particular editorial elicited an immediate response from a retired Air Force lieutenant general that was a member of the National Strategy Committee of the American Security Council. The author's background provides some explanation as to the nature of the reply. It should be no shock that the author wrote back criticizing *The Time's* position vis-à-vis deterrence strategy and Reagan's position on nuclear weapons.

What Governor Reagan perceives—but the editorial does not—is that the Soviets rejected MAD from the outset, labeling the theory “bourgeois naïveté.” The Soviets have maintained that a combination of strategic offensive and defensive forces can be acquired which will permit them to fight and win a nuclear war. Reagan further knows that this is precisely what the Soviets have been doing—creating offensive nuclear forces to kill U.S. weapons and strategic defenses, which sharply limits the damage from surviving U.S. weapons. So the Soviet war-winning doctrine is not to be dismissed as rhetoric.

While there is in fact a “missile gap” in that the Soviets outnumber the United States 3 to 2 in strategic missiles and 5 to 1 in deliverable megatonnage, the most important problem is the “strategy gap.” So long as we persist in MAD theories and the Soviets persist in their inexorable quest for nuclear war-winning capabilities the dangerous

imbalances in military power will grow and SALT treaties will continue merely to codify those imbalances. (NYT Oct 16, 1980:30)

Yet this letter is contrasted with two other letters, though neither one of which was written in response to the previous editorial published by *The Times*. They were both written independently of the previous letter, and from individuals from two separate organizations. The first was from the then director of the Center for Defense Information.

Debates about U.S. military weakness tend to go in cycles.

One year the obsession is the strengthening of NATO. The next year it is with the vulnerability of land-based missiles. Then we are on to the necessity for real increases in military spending, followed by the urgency of new forces for distant military intervention.

...There is a grain of truth in all these military fads, but we should take care not to embrace any of them blindly. Overstatements of problems usually lead to overreaction and most frequently to "solutions" that offer no real solution. What usually happens is a few years of very expensive spending to create the impression of visible hustle, and then we are on to the next obsession. (NYT Oct 16, 1980:30)

The second letter came from the then director of the World Citizens International Registry,

...Even more ominous is that the MX missile is a potential first-strike weapon because of the extreme accuracy with which it is being designed: capable of delivering its warheads to within 100 yards of their target after an 8,000-mile journey. The only purpose of this pinpoint accuracy is to provide the capability to destroy the other side's missiles in their silos—something possible only by attacking first.

If allowed to be deployed, potential first-strike weapons will place both sides on a hair-trigger alert. This will change the current policy of launch-after-attack to launch-on-warning, thus greatly increasing the odds on a nuclear war starting by accident or miscalculation.

...The MX, and all new nuclear weapons systems, must be stopped. To reverse the arms race and move toward controlled disarmament with security requires the involvement of all thinking people. Ratification of SALT II and immediate movement toward a more meaningful SALT III are essential steps toward this goal. There is no rational alternative.
(NYT May 31, 1980:22)

It would not be a great leap to suggest that the retired general and the two directors are writing from the positions held by their particular institutional backgrounds. The same could be said about the differences in position taken by the editorial writers of *The Chicago Tribune* and *The New York Times*. The differing opinion of the media regarding the second missile panic reflected and helped create the lack of general consensus amongst the public on the issue.

In 1981, *The Chicago Tribune* saw an increase in its number of mentions. However, there were reductions in *The New York Times* and the SOTUA compared to the levels seen in 1980. Figure 2 shows that the number of mentions in the SOTUA remained elevated when measured against the entire range of years being examined. In 1981 the United States and the Soviet met in Geneva to negotiate the reduction of intermediate range nuclear weapons in Europe. President Reagan's valuation of those negotiations can be estimated from his 1981 speech. It is apparent that while he was willing to do some negotiating, Reagan was more concerned with increasing military spending for the purpose of redressing a perceived imbalance in forces between the United States and the Soviet Union.

I'm sure there's one department you've been waiting for me to mention, the Department of Defense. It's the only department in our entire program that will actually be increased over the present budgeted figure. But even here there was no exemption. The Department of Defense came up with a number of cuts which reduce the budget

increase needed to restore our military balance. These measures will save \$2.9 billion in 1982 outlays, and by 1986 a total of \$28.2 billion will have been saved—or perhaps I should say, will have been made available for the necessary things that we must do. The aim will be to provide the most effective defense for the lowest possible cost.

I believe that my duty as President requires that I recommend increases in defense spending over the coming years. I know that you're all aware—but I think it bears saying again—that since 1970 the Soviet Union has invested \$300 billion more in its military forces than we have. As a result of its massive military buildup, the Soviets have made a significant numerical advantage in strategic nuclear delivery systems, tactical aircraft, submarines, artillery, and anti-aircraft defense. To allow this imbalance to continue is a threat to our national security. Notwithstanding our economic straits, making the financial changes beginning now is far less costly than waiting and having to attempt a crash program several years from now.

We remain committed to the goal of arms limitation through negotiation. I hope we can persuade our adversaries to come to realistic balanced and verifiable agreements. But, as we negotiate, our security must be fully protected by a balanced and realistic defense program. (Reagan 1981)

Though Reagan gave a speech in 1981, Carter still had one more message to deliver. He delivered another written SOTUA to Congress, and much of the content within that speech was very similar to the one given in 1980. The major change is his listing of the codified presidential directives outlined for specific strategic threats. Again, though the information is public, it was not necessarily for public consumption because it was delivered as written text rather than the widely consumed spoken SOTU.

...[R]eversing previous trends, real defense spending has increased every year since 1977; the real increase in FY 1980 defense spending is well above 3 percent and I expect FY 1981 defense spending to be even higher; looking ahead, the defense program I am proposing is premised on a real increase in defense spending over the next five years of 20 percent or more;

First, we will continue, as we have over the past four years, to build America's military strength and that of our allies and friends. Neither the Soviet Union nor any other nation will have reason to question our will to sustain the strongest and most flexible defense forces.

...We must have both the military power and the political will to deter our adversaries and to support our friends and allies.

We must pay whatever price is required to remain the strongest nation in the world. That price has increased as the military power of our major adversary has grown and its readiness to use that power been made all too evident in Afghanistan. The real increases in defense spending, therefore probably will be higher than previously projected; protecting our security may require a larger share of our national wealth in the future.

...For many years the Soviets have steadily increased their real defense spending, expanded their strategic forces, strengthened their forces in Europe and Asia, and enhanced their capability for projecting military force around the world directly or through the use of proxies. Afghanistan dramatizes the vastly increased military power of the Soviet Union.

The Soviet Union has built a war machine far beyond any reasonable requirements for their own defense and security. In contrast, our own defense spending declined in real terms every year from 1968 through 1976.

We have reversed this decline in our own effort. Every year since 1976 there has been a real increase in our defense spending—and our lead has encouraged increases by our allies. With the support of the Congress, we must and will make an even greater effort in the years ahead.

The Fiscal Year 1982 budget would increase funding authority for defense to more than \$196 billion. This amount, together with a supplemental request for FY 1981 of about \$6 billion, will more than meet my Administration's pledge for a sustained growth of 3 percent in real expenditures, and provides for 5 percent in program growth in FY 1982 and beyond.

The trends we mean to correct cannot be remedied overnight; we must be willing to see this program through. To ensure that we do so I am setting a growth rate for defense that we can sustain over the long haul.

The defense program I have proposed for the next five years will require some sacrifice—but sacrifice we can well afford.

The defense program emphasizes four areas:

It ensures that our strategic nuclear forces will be equivalent to those of the Soviet Union and that deterrence against nuclear war will be maintained;

It upgrades our forces so that the military balance between NATO and the Warsaw Pact will continue to deter the outbreak of war—conventional or nuclear—in Europe;

It provides us the ability to come quickly to the aid of friends and allies around the globe;

And it ensures that our Navy will continue to be the most powerful on the seas.

We are strengthening each of the three legs of our strategic forces. The cruise missile production which will begin next year will modernize our strategic air deterrent. B-52 capabilities will also be improved. These steps will maintain and enhance the B-52 fleet by improving its ability to deliver weapons against increasingly heavily defended targets.

We are also modernizing our strategic submarine force. Four more POSEIDON submarines backfitted [sic] with new, 4,000 mile TRIDENT I missiles began deployments in 1980. Nine TRIDENT submarines have been authorized through 1981, and we propose one more each year.

The new M-X missile program to enhance our land-based intercontinental ballistic missile force continues to make progress. Technical refinements in the basing design over the last year will result in operational benefits, lower costs, and reduced environmental impact. The M-X program continues to be an essential ingredient in our strategic posture—providing survivability, endurance, secure command and control and the capability to threaten targets the Soviets hold dear.

Our new systems will enable U.S. strategic forces to maintain equivalence in the face of the mounting Soviet challenge. We would however need an even greater investment in strategic systems to meet the likely Soviet buildup without SALT.

This Administration's systematic contributions to the necessary evolution of strategic doctrine began in 1977 when I commissioned a comprehensive net assessment. From that base a number of thorough investigations of specific topics continued. I should emphasize that the need for an evolutionary doctrine is driven not by any change in our basic objective—which remains peace and freedom for all mankind. Rather, the need for change is driven by the inexorable buildup of Soviet military power and the increasing propensity of Soviet leaders to use this power in coercion and outright aggression to impose their will on others.

I have codified our evolving strategic doctrine in a number of interrelated and mutually supporting Presidential Directives. Their overarching theme is to provide a doctrinal basis—and the specific program to implement it—that tells the world that no potential adversary of the United States could ever conclude that the fruits of his aggression would be significant or worth the enormous costs of our retaliation.

The Presidential Directives include:

PD-18: An overview of our strategic objectives

PD-37: Basic space policy

PD-41: Civil Defense

PD-53: Survivability and endurance for telecommunications

PD-57: Mobilization planning

PD-58: Continuity of Government

PD-59: Countervailing Strategy for General War

These policies have been devised to deter, first and foremost, Soviet aggression. As such they confront not only Soviet military forces but also Soviet military doctrine. By definition deterrence requires that we shape Soviet assessments about the risks of war—assessments they will make using their doctrine, not ours.

But at the same time we in no way seek to emulate their doctrine. In particular, nothing in our policy contemplates that nuclear warfare could ever be a deliberate instrument for achieving our own goals of peace and freedom. Moreover, our policies are carefully devised to provide the greatest possible incentives and opportunities for future progress in arms control. (Carter 1981)

There is a dearth of editorials and letters indicating the reaction of the press and public (respectively) to either speech or statement from Presidents Reagan or

Carter. Fortunately an answer as to the possible effect these messages had on the public is displayed in *The Gallup* survey of 1981. According to the responses provided to the survey items presented in Table 27, respondents were not eager to push strategic arms negotiations to the side in favor of unlimited arms construction. There were many respondents who approved of meeting with the Soviet Union to negotiate on disarmament (80%), and who favored an agreement between the United States and the Soviet Union that would result in no future nuclear weapons being built (72%). There is even indication of awareness of the global problems and concerns that arose from nuclear weapons that would be held by citizens of foreign nations. 68% of respondents felt that the United Nations should hold a global referendum that would permit individual citizens of a nation to decide on the issue of disarmament.

But it is apparent that Reagan's messages still had an effect upon public opinion. Respondents were in favor of referendums, negotiations and agreements to halt future weapon production. Concomitantly, they were less sure if they would actually vote for disarmament in a global referendum (59%). Respondents also showed little approval at the idea of the United States and the Soviet Union destroying their current nuclear arsenals (47%). Much of that lack of approval perhaps is to be found in how little belief respondents had that the Soviet Union would abide in any agreements between it and the United States. However, this disbelief demonstrates two things, the first is that it suggests that with a divided message on the part of the elite comes a divided response on the part of the public.

The second is that the missile panic narrative—wherein the Soviets are cast as aggressive, untrustworthy barbarian tyrants—still held sway in the public consciousness.

Beyond arms reductions attempt, 1981 is also significant in nuclear weapon studies for the succession of Ronald Reagan to the office of the President. Reagan had been a vocal critic of the principles of MAD as well as the SALT treaties. His Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) was intended to be the final solution to the question posed by nuclear weapons (*Encyclopedia Britannica* 2014). Though the SDI program was not formally proposed and announced until 1983, preceding years saw the beginning of precursors to the program (Broad 1992;Graham 1995;Shultz 1993). Since the 1960s, the United States and the Soviet Union had been working on their own Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) systems, work that continued through the 1970s and into the 1980s. Along with these developments came increased recognition of the value of improved civil defense systems.

Table 27: *The Gallup Poll* survey 1981 173-G

	Positive Response	Negative Response
1981-1. Would you like to have the United Nations call for a referendum to be held in every nation of the world to permit the people of that nation to vote on the question of nuclear disarmament?	68%	19%
1981-2. If such a referendum, were held in the United States, how would you vote—for or against nuclear disarmament?	59%	29%
1981-3. Do you think the United States should or should not meet with the Soviet Union this year to try to reach an agreement on nuclear disarmament?	80%	13%
1981-4. Would you favor or oppose an agreement between the United States and the Soviet Union not to build any more nuclear weapons in the future?	72%	20%
1981-5. How likely do you think the Soviet Union would be to abide by such an agreement?	33%	60%
1981-6. Would you favor or oppose an agreement between the United States and the Soviet Union to destroy all nuclear weapons that have already been built?	47%	44%

1981-7. How likely do you think the Soviet Union would be to abide by such an agreement?

20%

73%

By 1982, the numbers of nuclear technology mentions in both *The Times* and the SOTUA decreased substantially, while the number of mentions increased in *The Tribune*. But for both *The Times* and *The Tribune*, the amount of editorial and letter space dedicated to the issue of nuclear weapons had been decreasing. This may be partially attributed to the lack of attention that Reagan gives to the issue of strategic weapons, or the decreased use of the missile panic in his 1982 SOTUA. Consider this selection from the speech that provides a brief reasoning before detailing the newest plans for the military:

In the last decade, while we sought the moderation of Soviet power through a process of restraint and accommodation, the Soviets engaged in an unrelenting buildup of their military forces. The protection of our national security has required that we undertake a substantial program to enhance our military forces. (Reagan 1982)

While Reagan courted the Soviets with negotiation, his objective during this period was a continuing buildup of the United States' conventional and nuclear forces. Of the two newspapers, editorials in *The Tribune* addressed the duality of efforts almost in lockstep with Reagan's ideas. Though one of the editorials made a critique of Reagan's position that all citizens insisting on a nuclear freeze just wanted to make the United States weak for the Soviets, it did agree with his position on building more weapons while negotiating for disarmament.

As we have said repeatedly on this page, the supporters of a “mutual and balanced freeze” on Soviet and American nuclear weapons don’t understand the problem very well; if they did, they would abandon the freeze campaign and support the administration’s efforts to negotiate reductions in the superpower arsenals.

But if the freeze advocates misunderstand the problem, they are in good company. President Reagan doesn’t seem to understand it very well either.

...The President and those around him apparently believe—and persist in stating—that Soviet strategic superiority is the crux of the problem. In fact, there is no agreement among the experts on who is superior to whom. Such organizations as the International Institute for Strategic Studies can discern no essential superiority on either side (except that in the European theater the Soviets are superior in both conventional and nuclear weapons). In the strategic balance between the superpowers, the nuclear arsenals are so different in deployment and design as to make comparison difficult. The Soviets have more megatonnage, but the U.S. has more warheads. The Soviets have more missiles in ground-based silos, but the U.S. has more in submarines and bombers.

So the Soviets cannot be said to be definitely superior. The problem is rather one of instability.

...That is why the goal of the President should be just what it is: to negotiate reductions in the kinds of weapons that cause the instability. That is also why a freeze would be worse than useless—it would lock the superpowers into this condition of instability. The idea is to get out of the predicament, not negotiate ourselves more deeply into it.

Incidentally, the pro-freeze argument that the superpowers must freeze immediately and then reduce is naïve and unrealistic. Nothing in arms negotiations is immediate. A freeze, like any arms agreement between hostile and suspicious powers, must be worked out in exquisite detail. It must contain foolproof guarantees of verifiability, for example, that take months and years to negotiate. Better to go for reductions from the start than to dally over a freeze—which would, in any event, be part of any reduction agreement.

In the meantime the United States must continue arms development to deter, as best it can, any Soviet use of nuclear weapons. For the U.S. to freeze without a mutual (and verifiable) freeze by the Soviets would amount to gradual unilateral disarmament, with unknown but

potentially catastrophic results; hence the plan's appeal to the Soviets. Deterrence, however frail and uncertain it may seem, has worked since World War II. Unilateral disarmament has never worked, from the time of the cave man to the present.

So the President is right, and the nuclear freeze advocates are wrong. It is too bad that neither seems to understand why. (CT Oct 7, 1982:22)

The second piece written by an editor for *The Tribune* continues to emphasize the danger presented by the nuclear freeze, this time focusing on a ballot question presented to the citizens of Chicago. While neither editorial questioned the honesty of the motives of nuclear freeze advocates, they were not above questioning the logic of those who believed in the value of the nuclear freeze. But both editorials were clearly in favor of continued weapons development, as well as giving some attention to pure negotiations. The second editorial voiced some concerns of how effective negotiating with the Soviets will be, though it laid the blame for any ineffectiveness not on any actions made by the President, but on those who had been calling for a nuclear freeze. However, a truly interesting statement can be found in the third paragraph of the first editorial.

The two nuclear freeze questions on the Nov. 2 ballot—one in Chicago and one in Cook County—look as safe and as worthy as motherhood, apple pie and Old Glory. With a broad base of support ranging from old-line pacifists to business executives' groups, they are almost certain to win overwhelming approval. Who, after all, is opposed to ending the arms race?

But there are hidden dangers in the seemingly high-minded resolutions, and thoughtful voters should reject them.

...Because of the instability problem, a freeze is not even desirable. Both the Soviet Union and the United States now possess weapons that could be used in a preemptive first strike. During the time that a freeze would be negotiated, the inventories of those weapons would increase still

further. To freeze nuclear arsenals in such an unstable condition would be dangerous folly.

Another problem with the freeze movement is that it actually hinders the Reagan administration's efforts to negotiate reductions in destabilizing weapons. The Soviets already are showing signs of foot-dragging in arms reductions talks because they hope that the freeze movement in the West will compel governments to unilaterally halt weapons programs, especially the deployment of modernized Pershing II and Cruise missiles in Europe. That would leave the Soviets, with their hundreds of SS-20 mobile missiles, in a condition of strategic superiority in Europe. As long as they have a hope of that happening, they will stall on the reductions talks.

Of the two possible goals in arms talks—a freeze or reduction in unstable weapons—reduction is by far the more desirable. A resounding “No” to the freeze resolutions is the best way the citizens of Chicago and Cook County can help bring about that desirable goal. (CT Oct 26, 1982:22)

While the picture that Reagan and the defense sector tried to paint during this period was the missile panic narrative of unquestionable superiority of the Soviets over the United States, here is *The Chicago Tribune* printing what it declares to be the mixed evaluation made by other experts.

The question of how the public perceived these messages from the president and *The Tribune* on the ideas of negotiating while continuing to develop nuclear weapons is best answered via a letter sent to *The Tribune* from a member of the American Friends Service Committee's Disarmament Staff:

President Reagan's proposal to reduce now and freeze later permits the development of a dangerous first-strike nuclear weapons capability, thus bringing the superpowers closer to unleashing a nuclear holocaust. The freeze is calling for negotiations based upon an immediate halt to the nuclear arms race; advocates of the freeze believe that this would foster a climate of trust rather than suspicion and hostility during the course of negotiations.

By contrast, the President's plan calls for negotiations against a backdrop of an escalating nuclear arms race; this would seem guaranteed to foster a climate of hostility and suspicion and failed negotiations.

A third point revolves around the issue of verifiability. It is widely accepted that there are sophisticated national technical means available for purpose of adequate verification. Any problems with this system are no greater for the freeze than for any other type of arms agreement. (CT Oct 26, 1982:22)

*The Gallup data from 1982 suggest that the sentiments expressed in that written response were held by a number of those surveyed. According to the survey responses seen in Table 28, political and defense sector elites were not very successful in convincing the people of the dangers of a nuclear freeze. A large number of respondents (71%) were in favor of an immediate, verifiable freeze on nuclear weapons. This could possibly suggest that the missile panic message that the Soviets were clearly ahead of the United States was entirely internalized without question by the public. Concomitantly, the populace could have rejected that message, and instead believed that the United States was ahead. With a freeze, in the latter case, being a way of maintaining that lead. The respondents here would appear to mirror this uncertainty of Soviet versus United States superiority that *The Tribune* discussed. The division in public opinion suggested by the editorial and past data is still present here in the relative percentages of respondents on the subject of which nation was actually ahead in terms of nuclear weapons. The second missile panic's message was not entirely having its intended effect if less than half of the respondents thought the Soviets were ahead of the United States. Furthermore, it also appears that the defense sector's message of the necessity of increased*

spending also failed to convince the public. Less than half of the respondents failed to align with the President's idea that increased military spending was what the United States needed at the time.

Finally, it is worth noting that less than half of the respondents felt that it would be impossible to create a system of checking Soviet compliance with any weapons freeze. This is significant, as was suggested in the letter sent to *The Tribune*, because of the old argument that the reason why any freeze or disarmament would fail would be because of the inability to properly surveil the Soviets to insure they were being honest. Though many scientists had argued it would be possible to do so for decades, it would appear the publics' understanding and awareness was catching up with the science and technology that would make such inspection possible. Despite possibly catching up, the division in public opinion is still apparent in the division in responses to the question of the possibility of a workable verification system.

Table 28: *The Gallup Poll* survey 1982 204-G

	Positive Response	Negative Response
1982-1. Would you favor or oppose an agreement between the United States and the Soviet Union for an immediate, verifiable freeze on the testing, production, and deployment of nuclear weapons?	71%	21%
1982-2. At the present time, which nation do you feel is stronger in terms of nuclear weapons, the United States or the Soviet Union—or do you think they are about equal in nuclear strength?	22% (The United States)	30% (The Soviet Union)
1982-3. Do you think it would or would not be possible to set up a system for verifying or checking whether the Soviet Union is living up to the terms of a nuclear freeze agreement?	39%	47%
1982-4. There is much discussion as to the amount of money the government in Washington should spend for national defense and military purposes. How do you feel about this? Do you think we are spending too much, too little, or just enough?	41% (Spending too much)	16% (Spending too little)

During 1983, there were very few mentions of nuclear technology in *The Times* and the SOTUA. *The Tribune* had the highest number of mentions in 1983 as compared to the overall period in question. The levels are approximate to those seen during the first missile panic, which would be expected in the post-Détente, second missile panic period. For his part, President Reagan appeared to have shifted his position vis-à-vis the question of arms negotiation in his 1983's SOTUA. He made a point of dedicating space to the issue of arms reductions negotiations. Reagan almost had a tone of hopefulness that it would be an issue that the United States and Soviet Union could come together to achieve.

For our part, we're vigorously pursuing arms reduction negotiations with the Soviet Union. Supported by our allies, we've put forward draft agreements proposing significant weapon reductions to equal and verifiable lower levels. We insist on an equal balance of forces. And given the overwhelming evidence of Soviet violations of international treaties concerning chemical and biological weapons, we also insist that any agreement we sign can and will be verifiable.

In the case of intermediate-range nuclear forces, we have proposed the complete elimination of the entire class of land-based missiles. We're also prepared to carefully explore serious Soviet proposals. At the same time, let me emphasize that allied steadfastness remains a key to achieving arms reductions.

With firmness and dedication, we'll continue to negotiate. Deep down, the Soviets must know it's in their interest as well as ours to prevent a wasteful arms race. And once they recognize our unshakable resolve to maintain adequate deterrence, they will have every reason to join us in the search for greater security and major arms reductions. When that moment comes—and I'm confident that it will—we will have taken an important step toward a more peaceful future for all the world's people.
(Reagan 1983)

Worth noting is that Reagan does not devote a significant amount of speech time addressing the issue of perceived imbalances in the United States defense

sector. All and all, he has only this bit of praise to give concerning the improvements in military funding and operations:

As we begin our third year, we have put in place a defense program that redeems the neglect of the past decade. We have developed a realistic military strategy to deter threats to peace and to protect freedom if deterrence fails. Our Armed Forces are finally properly paid; after years of neglect are well trained and becoming better equipped and supplied. And the American uniform is once again worn with pride. Most of the major systems needed for modernizing our defenses are already underway, and we will be addressing one key system, the MX missile, in consultation with the Congress in a few months. (Reagan 1983)

Of course, after securing the funding and changes he desired, it would perhaps be natural for Reagan to spend less time on matters of defense in his speech. Though even when he was negotiating for peace in the first segment, he did so with the clear allusion that the only reason why the Soviets would see arms reductions as the best policy was because of the United States' strength. But the key point here is that from the perspective of Reagan's speech, the United States was once again a strong, military power.

That is why the results seen in the 1983 *Gallup* survey (See Table 29) are slightly paradoxical. There was an increase in the number of respondents that were favorable to the idea of a freeze in nuclear weapons production by the United States and the Soviet Union (from 71% in 1982 to 77% in 1983). But, less than half of the respondents believed that the Soviet Union had a clear advantage over the United States in terms of strategic weapons. Compared to 1982, the amount of confidence that the United States was the clear leader in nuclear arms *decreased* by 7%.

Partially related to that statistic was a clear belief—though held by less than half of

respondents—that the Soviet Union has been doing more to prepare for a nuclear war vis-à-vis a shelter system than the United States. It is odd that these results would be obtained in a year where the President is no longer stressing the military weakness of the United States in his SOTUAs.

As I have suggested in previous sections, there is the possibility of a lag effect in the messages being transmitted and internalized by the public. Though Reagan and sympathetic media outlets like *The Tribune* had been circulating missile panic messages of Soviet nuclear superiority over the United States that did not necessarily mean that the messages instantly impressed themselves upon the entirety of the public consciousness. But, like a marketing advertisement, constant repetition—in the media and by the president in his other speeches—gave the ideas the time to eventually find purchase. To reiterate an earlier point: potential explanation for the lack of response in the public—as compared to its reaction with the launch of Sputnik—would be the lack of a clear and present threat. Sputnik presented the threat of a possible attack that the United States would be unable to properly respond to. Whereas, at its very core, Reagan’s argument was that the United States was short a couple hundred missiles compared to the Soviet Union. For a public that was well aware of the concept of “nuclear holocaust,” it is possible—and even highly likely—that for most people that discrepancy lacked the same impact as a clear threat such as Sputnik.

This explanation would actually go some way towards explaining another unexpected result in the 1983 survey data. In the 1978 *Gallup* survey (Table 24), a

large percentage of respondents (82%) felt that the Soviet Union was doing more than the United States in preparing for nuclear war. This was the message that was propagated by Dr. Teller and others, and this was an idea that Reagan as well as other defense analysts used as proof of imminent Soviet attack (Broad 1992; Teller and Brown 1962). Flash forward five years to when *Gallup* included the item on its survey once more. Less than half of respondents (42%) polled indicated a belief that the Soviets were ahead of the United States in civil defense.

When Reagan announced SDI, it is possible that the message of the actual necessity of that program (along with traditional civil defense measures) may have not had the expected impact on the public consciousness. The public had for years heard about the necessity of civil defense, but when no actual threat appeared, the heightened tension kindled in the public guttered. A moral panic does require a folk devil that the public can coalesce around, but at some point, someone has to provide some evidence that the devil's threat is credible (Goode and Ben-Yehuda 2009). At the same time, if the threat presented by the devil is relatively minimal (i.e. the folk devil has 300 nuclear weapons compared to our 256), then it might present a threat, but an equivocal threat. To impress upon the public that an equivocal threat is still a threat, agents and institutions must continually remind the public of that fact (Becker 1963; Hawdon 2001).

But, I would be remiss if I did not point out a second, perhaps obvious, explanation for the data seen in this particular survey. It is possible that the announcement of the Strategic Defense Initiative itself is the cause for the data

reported by *Gallup* in 1983. Announcement of SDI may very well have lead the public to reconsider its knowledge of which arsenal was truly superior, which would explain the United States needing to deploy such a complicated anti-missile shielding system. Reagan and defense sector rhetoric surrounding SDI would also explain why nearly half of respondents (40%) thought that a nuclear war was likely within the decade. Whereas belief in the purported abilities of SDI—and its ability to make impotent Soviet nuclear weapons—would account for why over half (53%) of those respondents thought nuclear war unlikely. That same belief in the effectiveness of SDI would possibly make respondents view investment in shelter and civil defense systems as wasteful investments in outdated protection measures.

Unfortunately, because of the nature of the questions, there is no possible way to probe more deeply into the reasoning of the respondents to these questions. It is possible that knowledge of SDI influenced their opinion on these issues. But there is one item in this survey that raises the possibility of the Strategic Defense Initiative as not having undue influence here. If respondents had such great faith in the protection of the Strategic Defense Initiative, then there is little likelihood that such a large percentage of respondents (69%) had such little belief that they would survive a nuclear war.

Table 29: *The Gallup Poll* survey 1983 211/227-G

	Positive Response	Negative Response
1983-1. At present time, which nation do you feel is stronger in terms of nuclear weapons, the United States or the Soviet Union—or do you think they are about equal in nuclear strength?	15% (The United States)	42% (The Soviet Union)
1983-2. Would you favor or oppose an agreement between the United States and the Soviet Union for an immediate, verifiable freeze on the testing, production, and deployment of nuclear weapons?	77%	13%
1983-3. Do you favor or oppose a freeze on the production of nuclear weapons whether or not the Soviet Union agrees to do the same?	22%	68%
1984-4. How likely do you think we are to get into a nuclear war within the next ten years?	40%	53%
1985-5. If we should happen to get into an all-out nuclear war, what do you think your own chances would be of living through it?	3%	69%
1986-6. Russia is said to be spending many times more on civil defense to protect its people from		

nuclear attack than the United States is spending.		
Do you think we should do more than we are doing now, do less, or do you think our present efforts are about right?	42% (We should do more)	4% (We should do less)

1984 is the last year that increased mentions of nuclear and Soviet concerns can be seen in *The Tribune*. Though it was announced in the previous year, 1984 is the year that SDI is formally organized. In his 1984 SOTUA, President Reagan returned once more to warning against complacency in—and consequently the need for—defense spending.

Now, some insist that any further budget savings must be obtained by reducing the portion spent on defense. This ignores the fact that national defense is solely the responsibility of the Federal Government; indeed, it is its prime responsibility. And yet defense spending is less than a third of the total budget. During the years of President Kennedy and of the years before that, defense was almost half the total budget. And then came several years in which our military capability was allowed to deteriorate to a very dangerous degree. We are just now restoring, through the essential modernization of our conventional and strategic forces, our capability to meet our present and future security needs. We dare not shirk our responsibility to keep America free, secure, and at peace. (Reagan 1984)

This call is not unexpected bearing in mind the considerable price tag attached to SDI. Though there is little editorial, letter or survey data to gauge public opinion, there is one particular survey item (See Table 30) that is valuable here. In 1984, *Gallup* asked respondents how they felt about developing the SDI system, and less than half of respondents approved (40%). A greater percentage of those

surveyed (47%) actually *opposed* the idea of the system on the basis of its cost and likelihood to escalate the arms race.

Table 30: *The Gallup Poll* survey 1984-84231

	Positive Response	Negative Response
1984-12. Some people feel that the U.S. should try to develop a space-based "Star Wars" system to protect the U.S. from nuclear attack. Others oppose such an effort because they say it would be too costly and further escalate the arms. Which view comes closer to your own?	40%	47%

This division in opinion would possibly account for Reagan's repeated call for increased defense spending in his 1985 SOTUA, coupled with a reassurance of the necessity of SDI. Note that in the final paragraph of the selection, the reappearance of another of the techniques found during a missile panic. The results from *Gallup* would indicate some social division along the lines of the cost and potential for escalation that SDI would have represented. Reagan responded to this challenge with the threat that the Soviets had research covering roughly the same areas. Recall back in the 1960s when the Apollo program was under attack for being a draw on resources, when very suddenly defense analysts came forward with information that the Soviets were on the verge of militarizing space. The same logics were applied here with SDI.

Second, we must not relax our efforts to restore military strength just as we near our goal of a fully equipped, trained, and ready professional corps. National security is government's first responsibility; so in past years defense spending took about half the Federal budget. Today it takes less than a third. We've already reduced our planned defense expenditures by nearly a hundred billion dollars over the past 4 years and reduced projected spending again this year.

You know, we only have a military-industrial complex until a time of danger, and then it becomes the arsenal of democracy. Spending for defense is investing in things that are priceless—peace and freedom.

Since 1981 we've been committed to seeking fair and verifiable arms agreements that would lower the risk of war and reduce the size of nuclear arsenals. Now our determination to maintain a strong defense has influenced the Soviet Union to return to the bargaining table. Our negotiators must be able to go to that table with the united support of the American people. All of us have no greater dream than to see the day when nuclear weapons are banned from this Earth forever.

Each Member of the Congress has a role to play in modernizing our defenses, thus supporting our chances for a meaningful arms agreement. Your vote this spring on the Peacekeeper missile will be a critical test of our resolve to maintain the strength we need and move toward mutual and verifiable arms reductions.

For the past 20 years we've believed that no war will be launched as long as each side knows it can retaliate with a deadly counterstrike. Well, I believe there's a better way of eliminating the threat of nuclear war. It is a Strategic Defense Initiative aimed ultimately at finding a nonnuclear defense against ballistic missiles. It's the most hopeful possibility of the nuclear age. But it's not very well understood.

Some say it will bring war to the heavens, but its purpose is to deter war in the heavens and on Earth. Now, some say the research would be expensive. Perhaps, but it could save millions of lives, indeed humanity itself. And some say if we build such a system, the Soviets will build a defense system of their own. Well, they already have strategic defenses that surpass ours; a civil defense system, where we have almost none; and a research program covering roughly the same areas of technology that we're now exploring. And finally some say the research will take a long time. Well, the answer to that is: Let's get started. (Reagan 1985)

After announcing and forming the SDI program, interest in nuclear weapons by *The Tribune* effectively dropped to a level not seen since 1955. While there were brief spikes in interest by *The Tribune* once or twice in the proceeding years, the levels came nowhere close to those seen in late 1970s and early 1980s. Furthermore, *The Tribune* devotes little to no editorial space to the subject, though *The Times* continues to run editorials but not with the same frequency of previous decades.

Fortunately *Gallup* had more items on its 1985 survey to gauge public opinion on these subjects (See Table 31). Though the data are curious because they would indicate that within a year's span, the percentage of people that approved of the SDI project increased to 61%. Though that number only represents the 61% of respondents that had been following the SDI program. Across most of the survey items, a high percentage of respondents indicated a belief that SDI would be a benefit, and a way to make the world safer from nuclear weapons. The only areas where there is any division in responses are the possibility of SDI increasing the likelihood of the United States reaching a deal with the Soviet Union, what would increase the chances of a nuclear war, and the question of which nation was stronger in terms of nuclear strength. In the case of the latter, a greater percentage (40%) of respondents were certain that both nations were roughly equal.

Here I would like to apply the same principles used when there was disparity in responses found in the SALT II data of 1979. The 1984 survey represents the responses of professionals and specialists that followed such matters. Editorials and

letters taken from proceeding years indicate the same division among these groups that was seen in other issues such as disarmament. But, with time and the continued repetition of the missile panic and SDI marketing messages of supportive defense sector and political elites, the greater public became aware of—and subsequently internalized—the ideas. This led to the change in public opinion measured by *Gallup*, where the rest of the public and not just of a specialist minority is included. A public that has continuously heard the benefits of SDI, of the dangers of the Soviet Union, and how the program would provide some protection vis-à-vis the nuclear weapons problem eventually came to believe it.

What is significant within all of these data is the result obtained when respondents were asked which nation was stronger in terms of nuclear weapons. There is division to the answer, but again the largest percentage of respondents indicated the belief that both nations were equal. This is key because the entire basis of the second missile panic was an imbalance in terms of which nation was strategically stronger. Though the public had finally come around to the necessity of SDI, the program is predicated on the social context of there being a missile panic to create the condition to approve of another high cost, highly theoretical defense system. What we would therefore predict to see through the rest of the decade is a decrease in approval for SDI.

Table 31: *The Gallup Poll* survey 1985 258-G

	Positive Response	Negative Response
1985-1. How closely have you followed the administration's so-called "Star Wars" proposal—that is, its proposal to develop a space-based defense against nuclear attack?	61%	46%
1985-2. Would you like to see the United States go ahead with the development of such a program, or not?	61%	28%
1985-3. In your opinion, would the U.S. developing this system increase or decrease the likelihood of reaching a nuclear arms agreement with the Soviet Union?	48%	36%
1985-4. In your opinion, would developing this system make the world safer from nuclear destruction, or less safe?	58%	29%
1985-5. In your opinion, which of the following increases the chances of a nuclear war more—a continuation of the nuclear-arms build-up here and in the Soviet Union, or the U.S. falling behind the Soviet Union in nuclear weaponry?	45%	33%
1985-6. At the present time, which nation do you	21% (The United States)	27% (The Soviet Union)

feel is stronger in terms of nuclear weapons, the United States or the Soviet Union—or do you think they are about equal in nuclear strength?

The Slow Decline of SDI

In 1986, Reagan continued with the idea that had been present through all of his SOTUA. His focus is on that of defense, and despite five years of increased defense spending, he asserts that the United States remained behind the Soviets. Therefore, the only way to insure continued peace was to increase spending again (and again), until the Soviets understood that the only reason that the United States would cease spending increased amounts on defense is because the Soviets themselves ceased to spend so much of their budget on defense. It would only be through this method that peace and security could truly be secured, one way or the other.

I mentioned that we will meet our commitment to national defense. We must meet it. Defense is not just another budget expense. Keeping America strong, free, and at peace is solely the responsibility of the Federal Government; it is government's prime responsibility. We have devoted 5 years trying to narrow a dangerous gap born of illusion and neglect, and we've made important gains. Yet the threat from Soviet forces, conventional and strategic, from the Soviet drive for domination, from the increase in espionage and state terror remains great. This is reality. Closing our eyes will not make reality disappear. We pledged together to hold real growth in defense spending to the bare minimum. My budget honors that pledge, and I'm now asking you, the Congress, to keep its end of the bargain. The Soviets must know that if America reduces her defenses, it will be because of a reduced threat, not a reduced resolve. (Reagan 1986)

Though he did not mention it in his 1986 SOTUA, Reagan is still committed to the idea of SDI. So much so that he refused to give ground to the Soviets during negotiations in Reykjavik over the program. *The Times* maintained its old positions vis-à-vis Reagan and SDI, criticizing the president's decisions in one of its editorials. It is quite clear that the newspaper does not believe in the benefits of SDI, nor of the logic that led to the program's foundation.

...The President and Mikhail Gorbachev broke some enormous pieces off the rock of arms control. The gains were conditional on the Soviet side, but they might yet become elements in a spectacular breakthrough.

Nevertheless, the President, when confronted with a choice between these remarkable advances and giving ground on his Strategic Defense Initiative, chose Star Wars. He may truly believe in the vision of an antimissile umbrella; or he may be one tough poker player who thinks he can extract a still higher price before bargaining it away as a chip.

The Russians put a great deal on the other side of the scale in Reykjavik. On Euromissiles, testing and strategic weapons, the two sides had long been stalemated. Largely on the basis of Soviet concessions, sweeping agreements were struck on the first two issues. By all accounts, they were approaching an even more remarkable agreement on the third when the summit conference broke down.

The Russians agreed to Mr. Reagan's original zero-zero option for intermediate-range nuclear forces: no American or Soviet nuclear missiles in Europe. The Russians abandoned their long insistence on a moratorium on nuclear weapons testing. They accepted the American emphasis on verification procedures, leading toward a reduction in number and yield of tests, with an eventual ban. On strategic nuclear weapons, both sides say they agreed to cut their nuclear arsenals in half over five years. It was in discussing what would happen afterward that things broke down. (NYT Oct 15, 1986)

Perhaps the most interesting part of this editorial is the shift that it makes from older pieces writing about negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union. There was a time when the Soviet Union was generally characterized

or criticized as being the central impediment to nuclear weapons negotiations; but by 1986, the editor is very clearly suggesting that it is President Reagan and his SDI project that was the primary stumbling block in negotiations.

...Mr. Reagan spoke of the elimination of ballistic missiles, Mr. Gorbachev of the elimination of both sides' nuclear arsenals. However defined, the Russians insisted on linking the reduction to the Strategic Defense Initiative and on allowing nothing more than laboratory research.

That, President Reagan said Monday night, meant "killing S.D.I." Yet it is not clear that the crux of the issue - how to define research - was ever seriously negotiated. Mr. Reagan contended that research, development and testing should proceed, with deployment possible at the end of 10 years, a proposal that puts no practical restraints on the program. When the two sides left, they seemed more firmly entrenched in opposing positions than ever.

...What appears to have happened in Iceland is this: Mr. Reagan had the chance to eliminate Soviet and U.S. medium-range nuclear weapons in Europe, to work toward a test ban on his terms, to halve nuclear arsenals in five years and to agree on huge reductions later. He said no.

S.D.I. as a shield remains utopian, inconceivable without one miraculous technical breakthrough after another. Perhaps an argument can be made that this visionary bird in the bush is worth the sacrifice of the Soviet bird in the hand. But so far, the President has not made the case, only asserted it. (NYT Oct 15, 1986)

Much like the data in the 1984 *Gallup* survey, the public's reaction to this particular editorial was mixed. One letter from the public was aghast that *The Times* would commit the same naysaying of SDI heard in the rest of the media. Especially given that the Soviets were so obviously concerned about the system itself. There are two relevant takeaways from this letter: the first is that the second missile panic is still influencing public opinion since the possibility of a non-nuclear solution to the missile gap was still seen not only as favorable, but also a necessity. The second

is that despite there being public approval of SDI, it was not as celebrated by the press as a whole. Lack of unity on message as to SDI would split public opinion concerning SDI.

I had high hopes you would not fall prey to the same muddleheaded thinking that can be seen over President Reagan's refusal to yield to the Soviet Union on the Strategic Defense Initiative. I was, alas, disappointed.

In your Oct. 15 editorial "The War Over Star Wars," you state that "S.D.I. as a shield remains utopian, inconceivable without one miraculous breakthrough after another." I surmise you believe such breakthroughs to be extremely unlikely, if not impossible.

Could you then explain why a system doomed to failure should cause the Russians so much consternation? If your assessment of S.D.I. is correct, the Politburo should rest easier knowing that the United States is willing to divert so much of its defense budget toward such folly. It has never ceased to amaze me that while the Western media have almost uniformly decried S.D.I. over the last three years, the Russians have taken it quite seriously. (NYT Oct 16, 1986)

The split in public opinion is demonstrated here by a relatively rapid response challenging the position adopted in the previous letter. The author explained that SDI system combined with a disarmament cut would confer strategic superiority. Furthermore, such a position would have allowed the United States to maintain a monopoly on usable ICBMS. A monopoly which—when tied together with previous modifications to United States' strategic policy—would only have served to further imply that the United States was positioning itself to use a first-strike on the Soviet Union.

The answer is that if the Strategic Defense Initiative were combined with the deep reductions in intercontinental missiles discussed by President Reagan and General Secretary Mikhail S. Gorbachev at Reykjavik, it might confer nuclear superiority on the side that had it.

Most scientists agree that S.D.I. can at best provide a very leaky shield against a massive attack, and that enough missiles could get through to destroy us.

However, with only a small missile force on each side, a Strategic Defense Initiative defense might be able to cope. In such a case, our missiles could be launched behind an effective shield against retaliation, and we would have a monopoly on usable intercontinental missiles.

The Russians aren't likely to develop an equivalent "Star Wars" system, since it is much less expensive for them to develop countermeasures. These countermeasures require holding on to or increasing their missile force, so that the Strategic Defense Initiative bars nuclear-arms reduction. If Mr. Gorbachev had negotiated a drastic reduction in intercontinental missiles at Reykjavik while agreeing to our S.D.I. program, he would have made a greater contribution to the potential effectiveness of the S.D.I. than a fistful of technical breakthroughs. (NYT Oct 27, 1986)

According to a special telephone survey conducted by *Gallup* in 1986 (See Table 32), however the public may have felt about defense spending and SDI, the public still put some value in treaties between the United States and the Soviet Union. But according to the data, there is a split in public opinion as to the value of those treaties. Though a larger percentage of respondents agreed that the arms control talks decreased rather than increased the possibility of nuclear war, it was less than half of respondents. Furthermore, the same thinking is seen when respondents were asked how they felt most people in the country felt when it came to the arms talks, although it is possible that so many respondents did not know how their fellow citizens felt might suggest an awareness of the division of collective opinion on these matters.

But the key question in the 1986 data is that of the public's opinion on SDI. The percentage of individuals that approved of the development of SDI decreased from the previous year (61% to 52%). Though the previous year's survey filtered respondents on the basis of having followed the SDI program, it would be reasonable to suggest that within a year's time that number would have increased. Assuming this to be true suggests that, even with an increased number of respondents that were aware of SDI, the percentage of respondents that actually approved of SDI decreased over time. As was stated previously, it would appear that the last question on the 1985 survey concerning the difference in arsenal size has presaged this development. Without a missile panic to provide a justification for it, there would appear to be little support for SDI.

Table 32: *The Gallup Poll Special Telephone Survey and 849 1986*

	Positive Response	Negative Response
1986-1(STS). How important do you think it is that the United States and Soviet Union sign an arms control treaty within a few years from now?	67%	33%
1986-2(STS). Have you heard or read about the resumption of arms control talks between the leaders of the Soviet Union and the United States?	78%	19%
1986-3(STS). Do you think the arms control talks between the United States and Soviet Union have increased or decreased the chance of a nuclear war, or has remained the same as a consequence of these arms control talks?	36%	45%
1986-4(STS). Not counting your own ideas about this, do you think that most people in our country feel that the chance of nuclear war has increased, decreased, or has remained the same as a consequence of these arms control talks?	16%	26%
1986-5(849). Some people feel the U.S. should try to develop a space-based "Star Wars" system to protect the U.S. from nuclear attack. Others	52%	42%

oppose such an effort because they say it would be too costly and further escalate the arms race. Which comes closer to your view?

In Reagan's 1987 SOTUA, he continued to press for more and more defense spending while also lamenting the fact that in the face of increased Soviet spending, Congress cut defense requests over the previous three years. With defense spending being cut in the face of Reagan's constant calls for increased spending suggests that the second missile panic's hold over the political apparatus had lessened to some degree. Yet, it could be argued that only cutting \$85 billion over those three years suggests that the influence of the second missile panic, though waning, was still strong within the political apparatus.

Reagan also mentions his decision to hold on to SDI during the 1986 Iceland negotiations with the Soviet. The fact that Reagan spent so much of his speech on the necessity of the system—when compared to a tangential mention in 1986—would suggest that he came under some criticism for holding on to a theoretical system in the face of actual diplomatic gains. However, Reagan asserts that such an agreement would have been detrimental to the United States, and he categorically refuses to support any effort that would threaten national security

And now, ladies and gentlemen of the Congress, why don't we get to work? I am pleased to report that because of our efforts to rebuild the strength of America, the world is a safer place. Earlier this month I submitted a budget to defend America and maintain our momentum to make up for neglect in the last decade. Well, I ask you to vote out a

defense and foreign affairs budget that says yes to protecting our country. While the world is safer, it is not safe.

Since 1970 the Soviets have invested \$500 billion more on their military forces than we have. Even today, though nearly 1 in 3 Soviet families is without running hot water and the average family spends 2 hours a day shopping for the basic necessities of life, their government still found the resources to transfer \$75 billion in weapons to client states in the past 5 years—clients like Syria, Vietnam, Cuba, Libya, Angola, Ethiopia, Afghanistan, and Nicaragua. With 120,000 Soviet combat and military personnel and 15,000 military advisers in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, can anyone still doubt their single-minded determination to expand their power? Despite this, the Congress cut my request for critical U.S. security assistance to free nations by 21 percent this year, and cut defense requests by \$85 billion in the last 3 years.

In Iceland, last October, we had one moment of opportunity that the Soviets dashed because they sought to cripple our Strategic Defense Initiative, SDI. I wouldn't let them do it then; I won't let them do it now or in the future. This is the most positive and promising defense program we have undertaken. It's the path, for both sides, to a safer future—a system that defends human life instead of threatening it. SDI will go forward. The United States has made serious, fair, and far-reaching proposals to the Soviet Union, and this is a moment of rare opportunity for arms reduction. But I will need, and American negotiators in Geneva will need, Congress' support. Enacting the Soviet negotiating position into American law would not be the way to win a good agreement. So, I must tell you in this Congress I will veto any effort that undercuts our national security and our negotiating leverage.
(Reagan 1987)

What is most apparent is that Reagan was still trying to sell the idea of a defense sector pet project born during the second missile gap as a tool of peace. The fact that Reagan had to continuously sell this to the political apparatus and the media again implies that the second missile panic still did not have the same impact as the first. It is true that the second missile panic was able to secure funding for a technology that was truly theoretical. But in 1987, the fact that Reagan was being criticized by segments of the media, the public and the political apparatus over this

technology suggests that the effectiveness of the second missile panic was fully on the wane.

Further proof of this decline in influence can be inferred from the following editorial from *The Times*. The editorial is concerned with an attempt to begin an early deployment of SDI's space-based systems. The editor points out that such an action would have required a "broader" interpretation of the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty of 1972.

The Antiballistic Missile Treaty of 1972 is in peril. Almost alone among arms control agreements, it has helped prevent nuclear war, sharply curtailing the development of a dangerous mix of defensive and offensive forces. Now President Reagan appears ready to launch a double-barreled attack against the treaty. He could do no greater harm to his own stated goals for arms control or to American national security.

Defense Secretary Weinberger urges early deployment of a partial space-based defense system. The recommendation flatly contradicts the President's pledge to Mikhail Gorbachev in Reykjavik to delay deployment for 10 years. There's a worse problem: the pure waste of rushing ahead with questionable Star Wars programs while overall Pentagon spending is being cut, forcing other military priorities to be sacrificed.

Worse still is the undefined purpose of the mini-Star Wars system Mr. Weinberger urges. Would it simply be to defend against an accidental launch? If so, much cheaper alternatives can be found. Is it to defend American land-based missiles? Again, it would be cheaper and less threatening to deploy mobile missiles that don't require such protection. Would the system defend cities, rather than missiles? That would ominously lead to what strategists call war planning: a first strike against the other side's nuclear forces and a defense to blunt his weakened retaliatory blow. (NYT Feb 6, 1987)

Though done subtly, the author manages to tie together the dangers of mixing offensive and defensive weaponry—the crux of Reagan's security policy and

SDI ideas—and how the ABM Treaty of 1972 prevented nuclear war by curtailing the mixing of such technologies. The editor also made a subtle critique that Reagan's pledge to protect lives could very easily lead to the loss of everything. Yet, what truly indicates that the political apparatus was no longer as convinced to the benefits of SDI or of the dangers of the second missile panic was an unwillingness to violate the treaty in any fashion.

...This contradicts the very name and purpose of the treaty. It contradicts 15 years of precedent by Moscow and Washington and testimony given by American negotiators to Congress. It ignores the very language of Agreed Statement D, which begins: "In order to insure fulfillment of the obligation not to deploy ABM systems . . ." To insist on a looser reading now would destroy any chance for a new arms treaty.

Secretary of State Shultz is now said to favor the broader interpretation. That would be unfortunate. But he also is said to insist that the decision on early deployment be taken only in concert with Congress and the allies. That would be encouraging. The responses from these quarters are already pouring in. Almost all carry the same urgent message: Don't do it.

Perhaps the double attack on the treaty is just a stratagem to put new negotiating pressure on Moscow, as some Administration officials contend. If so, let them demonstrate their sincerity by also making some constructive new proposals. Until then, the Administration stands exposed as indifferent in its pursuit of arms control and confused in its pursuit of strength. (NYT Feb 6, 1987)

Gallup once again conducted a special telephone survey in 1987, and some of the responses from interviewees would suggest that the missile panic appears to have fully run its course (See Table 33). The first of these indicators is an awareness among a large percentage of the surveyed public (65%) that further increases in numbers or technical improvements would have given neither super power an actual, strategic advantage. This is another concept that forms the basis of the

missile panic, and according to this data, the public no longer places value in the idea that more missiles would be an advantage.

Another indicator is that 44% of respondents felt that there would be an increase in conventional warfare if nuclear weapons were eliminated. This particular idea has always been one of the sub-topics of the missile panic. That reductions, eliminations and/or discrepancies of strategic arsenal size would lead to increased conventional hostilities. But, by 1987, only 16% of respondents considered such an outcome to be possible.

Finally, the biggest indicator that the missile panic had run its course was the change in opinion over SDI. As was previously suggested, with there no longer being a motivation with the existence of a missile panic would come a decrease in approval of high cost, highly theoretical technologies. When asked in 1987, the percentage of respondents that approved of SDI had decreased further to 44%. Almost mirroring the data recorded in the 1984 survey when the question was first asked.

The rest of the data in the survey is, for the most part routine. There is a possibility that such a large number of respondents indicated that both superpowers would be destroyed in an all-out nuclear war was the result of a complete public turnaround on how useful SDI really would be. Furthermore, while it is expected that respondents would have very little faith in the Soviets to not commit a first-strike, it is mildly surprising that respondents were less sure that the United States would not commit a first-strike. In fact, slightly more respondents

were certain that the United States would indeed be the ones to use a first-strike. It would suggest that the carefully cultivated image of the United States as maintaining only a defensive, retaliatory arsenal was unable to withstand all the strategic decisions that placed it into a first-strike position.

Table 33: *The Gallup Poll Special Telephone Survey and 487 1987*

	Positive Response	Negative Response
1987-1(STS). There would be no winner in an all-out nuclear war; both the United States and the Soviet Union would be completely destroyed.	84%	13%
1987-2(STS). Further increases and improvements in nuclear weapons would not give either the United States or the Soviet Union a real advantage over the other.	65%	27%
1987-3(STS). The chances of conventional wars between the East and West would increase if nuclear weapons were eliminated.	16%	34%
1987-4(STS). The total elimination of all nuclear weapons is quite possible.	66%	61%
1987-5(STS). The United States will never be the first to use nuclear weapons.	41%	47%
1987-6(STS). The Soviet Union will never be the first to use nuclear weapons.	21%	66%
1987-7(487). Some people feel the U.S. should try to develop a space-based "Star Wars" system to protect the U.S. from nuclear attack. Others	44%	42%

oppose such an effort
because they say it would
be too costly and further
escalate the arms race.
Which comes closer to
your view?

Reagan's final SOTUA in 1988 made no real deviation from the pattern he established in previous speeches. He continued to request defense funding, while simultaneously lamenting the jeopardy in which all of the United States' gains were placed due to decreased real spending over a short period. Furthermore, Reagan was still not entirely sold on the idea of strategic arms reduction treaties with the Soviets. All of that is fairly standard, but the biggest change was his approach to requesting funding. That he even had to request funding for the project would strongly suggest that the sway held over the public and political apparatus by the second missile panic has been severely curtailed; but, it is the tone of the speech and the wording that truly conveys how by that point the tide had turned on the idea. One almost gets the sense that Regan is approaching the Congress hat in hand desperately trying to convince them to continue funding the divisive project.

Yet even as we work to expand world freedom, we must build a safer peace and reduce the danger of nuclear war. But let's have no illusions. Three years of steady decline in the value of our annual defense investment have increased the risk of our most basic security interests, jeopardizing earlier hard-won goals. We must face squarely the implications of this negative trend and make adequate, stable defense spending a top goal both this year and in the future.

...In addition to the INF treaty, we're within reach of an even more significant START agreement that will reduce U.S. and Soviet long-range missile—or strategic arsenals by half. But let me be clear. Our approach is not to seek agreement for agreement's sake but to settle only for

agreements that truly enhance our national security and that of our allies. We will never put our security at risk—or that of our allies—just to reach an agreement with the Soviets. No agreement is better than a bad agreement.

As I mentioned earlier, our efforts are to give future generations what we never had—a future free of nuclear terror. Reduction of strategic offensive arms is one step, SDI another. Our funding request for our Strategic Defense Initiative is less than 2 percent of the total defense budget. SDI funding is money wisely appropriated and money well spent. SDI has the same purpose and supports the same goals of arms reduction. It reduces the risk of war and the threat of nuclear weapons to all mankind. Strategic defenses that threaten no one could offer the world a safer, more stable basis for deterrence. We must also remember that SDI is our insurance policy against a nuclear accident, a Chernobyl of the sky, or an accidental launch or some madman who might come along. (Reagan 1988)

Unsurprisingly, *The Times* viewed SDI's changed political fortunes as a positive event. The following piece outlined the events that led to the project slowly being spun down from the grand technological work it was originally envisioned to be. The piece also made a point of reiterating the same logic that had once ruled under McNamara's tenure as Defense Secretary when the original idea of ABM technology came onto the scene. The deployment and development of such a technology would only lead to a race to create systems that could blind and defeat SDI, as well as the creation of new, improved offensive delivery systems. SDI, far from creating safety, would only create a new type of arms race.

In case you haven't noticed, President Reagan's notorious Strategic Defense Initiative has fallen into money, political and technological trouble - not just in the Democratic Congress or with traditional opponents but even among devout Star Wars advocates.

The program is by no means dead. But declining confidence in a space-based missile defense and slackening pressures for its early deployment

mean that a new President could more easily limit the program to sensible, long-term research.

The Soviet Union has made the United States' development and deployment of such a defense a major obstacle to a strategic weapons reduction treaty. The substantial delays S.D.I. almost certainly faces therefore may enhance prospects for Start.

The most serious blow to S.D.I. was dealt by the Defense Science Board, an independent scientific panel convened by the Secretary of Defense, Frank C. Carlucci. Though S.D.I. contractors are heavily represented on the board, it recommended scaling back spending and substantially slowing deployment. (NYT Jul 14, 1988)

The opening paragraphs of the piece instantly suggests that any influence the missile panic may have had in the initial decisions to approve of the SDI program have steadily evaporated by 1988. So much so that support for the program has dried up even among its initial supporters. A further indication of the declining institutional power provided by the missile panic was that, even though SDI/defense contractors were heavily represented on the Science Defense Board, recommendation for scaling the project back were approved.

...The Science Board caustically criticized the Reagan Administration's efforts to reinterpret the ABM treaty to permit advanced Star Wars testing. The reinterpretation has backfired, the report declared, causing Congress to cut back funding and impose testing restrictions to keep the S.D.I. within the previously accepted limits of the ABM treaty.

Mr. Carlucci is believed to be in general sympathy with the Science Board's recommendations, not least because of Congressional budget restrictions, technological difficulties and arms control pressures. Little progress, for example, was made at the Moscow summit meeting on resolving United States-Soviet differences on the ABM treaty and on testing strategic defenses; partly for that reason, the Start treaty also made little progress.

After two years of research substantially aided by the Pentagon itself, the Congressional Office of Technology Assessment also has reported that U.S. deployment of a space-based missile defense would quickly provoke Soviet countermeasures to destroy American weapons and sensors in space. The Russians would make extensive efforts, moreover, to overwhelm the U.S. defense with offensive weapons, forcing a new arms race in space.

This study also concluded - as has virtually every non-Pentagon assessment - that Mr. Reagan's original vision of a space-based shield over U.S. cities "seems infeasible." Even the computer software for such a defense is not available and, if developed, might not work under actual attack conditions.

... The Senate staff study concludes, moreover, that first-phase S.D.I. defenses would stop only about one-sixth of incoming warheads from reaching their targets. That hardly seems worth the \$171 billion the researchers suggested that the first phase might cost. (NYT Jul 14, 1988)

That a piece in *The Times* would be virtually praising the end of SDI is of no surprise. Yet, this piece is noteworthy because it is more proof that the influence of the second missile panic had lost its potency within the political apparatus. SDI was a purely theoretical system and—as the article points out—was more optimistically presented by researchers *within* the defense sector. This has been the case with both missile panics that, when they come along, purely theoretical defense sector projects come along, only to be shelved after the dissipation of their motive force.

This marked decline in the second missile panic's influence is further suggested by The Science Board's reaction to the event that spurred the decision to begin shelving SDI. The Reagan Administration's attempt to reinterpret the 1972 AMB treaty ultimately backfired, the primary consequence of which was apparently the decision to shelve the project. That action, as well as the renewed understanding

of a realization made by McNamara in the 1960s, would not have been fully possible—or accepted—in a climate in which a second missile panic informed political and strategic decisions.

Contributing to the data suggesting that the influence of the second missile panic was at an end is *The Tribune*. More valuable than a demonstration of the divergent position of the two newspapers is a piece concerning Reagan's actions to insure Bush's election to President. One of Reagan's actions to accomplish that goal was to veto a defense budget, against the better wishes of his cabinet that indicated the veto would lead to a more restricted budget bill being returned. Whenever a missile panic is in place, should a President suggest that a bill did not have enough money, it would have been politically disadvantageous—potentially even impossible—to return a bill with even less spending. That such a thing would even be considered within the possible spectrum of political actions truly indicates that the second missile panic was done by 1988.

...Saying it undermines his Strategic Defense Initiative, Reagan vetoed the defense bill despite advice from top Cabinet officials that it was the best he was likely to get from the Democrat-controlled Congress. Now he runs the risk of being sent a bill that could contain even less money for the space-based missile defense system—and that may include stiff new procurement procedures for the Pentagon.

That, of course, would be a way of raising the issue of whether there was bad management of the military under Reagan and his vice president that led to allegations of massive fraud and bribery among defense contractors and consultants. (CT Aug 7, 1988:4)

At the close of the 1980s, *Gallup* is focusing less and less of its energy in gauging public opinion on issues of nuclear weapons. In 1989, it asks only two questions that

are of particular interest here (See Table 34). The first of these would indicate that after eight years of Reagan's particular brand of dealing with the Soviets, the majority of the public felt that the highest priority of the next administration should be negotiating further arms limits. That the public has gone from being convinced that more nuclear weapons would be the answer, to such a large percentage wanting to negotiate is likely another indicator that the second missile panic had ended by this point. This is further indicated by the fact that half of respondents disapproved of continuing with SDI. That even 38% of respondents held approval for the program is a testament to the persistence of the ideas of the second missile panic after it was no longer a real motivating force in society.

Table 34: *The Gallup Poll Special Telephone Survey and 70788 1988*

	Positive Response	Negative Response
1987-1(STS). How much priority should the next administration give to negotiating further arms reductions with the Soviet Union?	90%	8%
1987-2(70788). Some people feel the U.S. should try to develop a space-based "Star Wars" system to protect the U.S. from nuclear attack. Others oppose such an effort because they say it would be too costly and further escalate the arms race. Which comes closer to your view?	38%	50%

With Bush's first SOTUA-like speech to the public, he brought nothing new to the table. Much like his predecessor, he continued to address the theme of defense and the need for spending. But, in an example of the changed political climate for defense spending, he did not make the same sort of demand for increased spending that a politician with the fear of the second missile panic at his disposal. In a sign of how changed the political climate of the second post-missile panic period was, Bush discussed an actual freeze in defense spending. Though the SDI is mentioned in his speech, Bush does so in passing. It is clear at this point that because of the political and social climate in the absence of the second missile panic, that the project has been all but shelved. Finally, Bush's discussions of peace are of the more diplomatic type seen during those years when a missile panic was not fully in control of the political apparatus. There is the acknowledgement of the continued disagreement between the United States and the Soviet Union, but it is no longer being couched as a relationship that can only be solved with the threat of overwhelming force.

I should be clear on the conditions attached to my recommendation for the coming year: The savings must be allocated to those priorities for investing in our future that I've spoken about tonight. This defense freeze must be a part of a comprehensive budget agreement which meets the targets [sic] spelled out in Gramm-Rudman-Hollings law without raising taxes and which incorporates reforms in the budget process.

I've directed the National Security Council to review our national security and defense policies and report back to me within 90 days to ensure that our capabilities and resources meet our commitments and strategies. I'm also charging the Department of Defense with the task of developing a plan to improve the defense procurement process and management of the Pentagon, one which will fully implement the

Packard commission report. Many of these changes can only be made with the participation of the Congress, and so, I ask for your help. We need fewer regulations. We need less bureaucracy. We need multiyear procurement and 2-year budgeting. And frankly -- and don't take this wrong -- we need less congressional micromanagement of our nation's military policy. I detect a slight division on that question, but nevertheless.

Securing a more peaceful world is perhaps the most important priority I'd like to address tonight. You know, we meet at a time of extraordinary hope. Never before in this century have our values of freedom, democracy, and economic opportunity been such a powerful and intellectual force around the globe. Never before has our leadership been so crucial, because while America has its eyes on the future, the world has its eyes on America.

And it's a time of great change in the world, and especially in the Soviet Union. Prudence and common sense dictate that we try to understand the full meaning of the change going on there, review our policies, and then proceed with caution. But I've personally assured General Secretary Gorbachev that at the conclusion of such a review we will be ready to move forward. We will not miss any opportunity to work for peace. The fundamental facts remain that the Soviets retain a very powerful military machine in the service of objectives which are still too often in conflict with ours. So, let us take the new openness seriously, but let's also be realistic. And let's always be strong.

There are some pressing issues we must address. I will vigorously pursue the Strategic Defense Initiative. The spread, and even use, of sophisticated weaponry threatens global security as never before. Chemical weapons must be banned from the face of the Earth, never to be used again. And look, this won't be easy. Verification -- extraordinarily difficult, but civilization and human decency demand that we try. And the spread of nuclear weapons must be stopped. And I'll work to strengthen the hand of the International Atomic Energy Agency. Our diplomacy must work every day against the proliferation of nuclear weapons. (Bush 1989)

In the final year of the analysis there is very little data to be obtained from either newspaper or *Gallup*. With the election of Bush and the end of the second missile panic, interest in these issues has effectively died down, but there is one

letter from *The Tribune* that neatly sums up public opinion in the United States after years of defense spending paroxysms inspired by these missile panic events.

Reports say that President Bush, while holding pre-Malta press conference, became testy when the phrase "peace dividend" was used to describe the benefits Americans might expect from restructuring of federal spending away from military toward civilian needs.

"It is premature to talk about 'peace dividend' in the sense of taking volumes of money out of defense and applying it to some worthy cause," snapped Bush. "We cannot do that." Reports have also said that the President feels he can't reduce military spending because the threat to world peace, democracy, the free world, our NATO allies, or whatever, is still too great to spend more on butter and less on guns. Naturally the media are swallowing this nonsense.

Either the media take the American people for simpletons, or being a simpleton is the first qualification for covering the President and military-industrial matters. The reason the President can't restructure federal spending for civilian needs is because his real constituency isn't the American people, but the massive, vested, institutionalized interest of those who benefit from military spending—not the 'free world' and certainly not 'world peace,' but corporate America. And though we the people would benefit from civilian spending (say on food, housing, education, improved productive technologies and other real but neglected needs) we have no one at the Capitol or the White House who represents us. Nor who would dare to. (CT Dec 18, 1989:18)

With the unification of neoconservative and neoliberal elements at the start of the 1980s came the rise of the "security state." Concomitantly we see the transition of the missile panic to an elite-engineered moral panic model. This is indicated by an increased presence of fear rhetoric used by President Reagan in his SOTUAs, as well as the media response to that rhetoric. The decade is marked with the use of the missile panic as justification to fund defense projects such as SDI, actions that were seen as reasonable by some segments of both the public and the media. However the decade is also marked with a steady

decrease in the impact that the second missile panic had on the public.

Eventually both popular and political support for Reagan's defense projects waned as the decade wore on, ultimately signaling the end of the second missile panic that was started by the second missile gap. This was a result of there being no legitimate threat present in the second missile panic to match the one posed by Sputnik 1 during the first missile panic.

Ch. 10 DISCUSSION

That there were two periods in United States history where a missile gap was attributed to be a threat to the nation is a matter of record. That there was a missile panic (i.e. missile gap focused moral panic) during the first of those missile gaps (created via the grassroots concern generated by a legitimate, proximate threat) is suggested by the fact that the missile gap allowed actors within the political apparatus and defense sector to acquire desired objectives (Day 2006;Young 1968). In the case of the former, it allowed political actors like John Kennedy to acquire the Presidency. For the latter, the concern created support for increased defense funding and approval for pet projects of dubious utility. But, does this mean that with the second missile gap there was an attendant missile panic? I would say that according to the data used in this analysis, the answer to that question is: yes. But the nature of the second missile panic was different from the first.

As stated previously: I argue that even after the first missile panic had passed, the political power it provided the defense sector as well as the techniques for acquiring that power were institutionalized, thereby transforming the original

grassroots concern into *an interest group moral panic*. This is why we see defense sector representatives like Laird and Sulzberger using the old techniques (i.e. publicly declaring missile disparities, suggesting that the Administration was not taking proper action in the face of evidence, revealing and speculating wildly on Soviet constructions, asserting the immanence of Soviet attack, et. al.) to achieve the ends of the defense sector. The ends of that defense sector would be to maintain the institutional power acquired during the missile panic, as well as discourage any threats to that power; that discouragement would be directed towards any political actor, up to and including the President. That the defense sector would attempt to acquire and maintain large inputs of resources is not unusual, this is perfectly normal behavior for any organization (Hillman, Withers and Collins 2009; Pfeffer and Salancik 1978).

An interest group moral panic would have given those organizations that form the collective institution of national defense immense power and resource. Any pet defense project that an elite wanted funded could be done so with a reference to the missile panic and the Soviet threat. No organization or set of organizations would ever willingly relinquish such awesome political and economic power. As the original missile panic evaporated along with the vast well of political and popular support, it is no surprise that the defense sector would do its level best to maintain its gains. Even the defense sector's response is a textbook example of institutional behavior. It relied on the old techniques of the original missile panic—which had

obviously been successful in the past—to solve the problem of reduced resource inputs.

But old institutional problem-solving techniques do not always have the same effect that they did in the past. The editorials of *The Tribune*, some of the letters from *The Times* and some of the *Gallup* data indicate that those old techniques did work in certain segments of society. But, the editorials and letters of *The Times* also indicate that those techniques were not *universally* effective in either the media or the public. Nevertheless, they were certainly effective within the *political* sphere, as suggested by Nixon's decisions to hold MIRVs off the negotiating table, and his reversal of his original decision on defense spending. Furthermore, it is rather interesting to note that it was the political apparatus that reacted to the techniques of the defense sector before the general public. Public opinion did change over time, but that was long after defense budgets had been increased, missiles had been retargeted, and other decision had been made. This pattern of reaction would suggest that the political sphere is perhaps more important than civil society (i.e. public opinion) within a missile panic.

But this brings up a very interesting perspective on the previously discussed notions of the missile panic as an institutional technique. I previously asserted that the actions of those organizations associated with the defense sector would use the techniques of the missile panic to maintain and/or reacquire political and economic power. While that may be viewed as a “selfish” goal, it is worth considering that those organizations would also be using the missile panic purely as a survival

mechanism. If an organization's core identity revolves around the detection and protection of threats, then it will always need a threat in order to maintain relevancy within society. This is a phenomenon outlined by Becker (1973), in which a moral crusader's preoccupation with writing wrongs can sometimes become that person's occupation. That the success of a moral crusade leaves the crusader without a vocation, and as such will become a "professional discoverer of wrongs...." (Becker 1973:153). The same is true when a moral crusade produces a large organization devoted to the cause of that crusade, with officials being more likely than solitary individuals to search out new reasons for their organization to exist. This is a core, organizational idea: organizations are formed for specific purposes, and they continue to exist as long as the purpose for their creation exists. It is possible for organizations to diversify, but a highly specialized organization that loses its purpose for being very rarely remains in existence (Albert and Whetten 1985; Burgelman 1991; Collins and Porras 1994; Daft and Weick 1984; Gioia, Schultz and Corley 2000; Kjægaard 2009). What organizations are more highly specialized than those of the defense sector?

This puts the return of the missile panic in a different light, and serves to augment the reason why the defense sector would attempt to revive the missile panic. True enough, the missile panic allows for the accretion of political and economic power. But it also provides a *reason* for the organizations of the defense sector to continue existing. It is a reminder to the public and political spheres that would cut funding and dissolve branches of the defense sector that it is still needed.

Taken from this perspective, the missile panic is both *offensive* and *defensive* technique to insure organizational survival.

To return to the issue of the value of the public within the missile panic, we must first go back to President Carter and his dual SOTUAs. I would assert that the dual nature of Carter's SOTUA—one for the public and one for the institutional actors—combined with data culled from editorial letters and *Gallup* data point to a singular phenomenon. Rather ironically, *The Times* addresses the subject peripherally in an editorial about Defense Secretary Laird, but it is *The Tribune* in its 1979 editorial that comes closest to the subject. *The Tribune* made the keen observation that Carter was upselling the strategic strength of the United States in order to sell SALT II to the Senate. It is very clear that that selling continues in the 1980 written SOTUA, but the focus of his pitch is not the public, it is the political apparatus.

The picture of the world in 1980 painted by all of the data is one in which the second missile panic influenced public opinion/perception, but that influence was still not universal. The exact extent of the disagreement with the second missile panic is unknown, but we can infer that it was sufficient enough to get Carter—who once spoke of decreased defense spending and reduced nuclear arsenal size—elected as President. I argue that public concern in the second missile panic was *immaterial* because Carter was forced to increase the defense budget and issued PD 59. To be sure, public opinion is valuable, but only so much as it is able to bring pressure on the true targets of the second missile panic: the political apparatus (i.e.

Congress, the Senate and the President). As *The Times* tangentially pointed out: Laird's missile rattling was directed more at convincing the Senate than the public.

Consider that in the United States' system of representative democracy, the general public's sole role in any of these issues is to vote. This is a similar principle that is described in the survey data, where professionals and specialists would more closely follow certain issues because these are the foundations of their work. The input of the general public is only occasionally considered, whereas individuals within the political apparatus must deal with these issues on a daily basis.

Therefore, in an elite-engineered moral panic the impact of convincing individuals within the political apparatus of the existence of a missile panic is a more important objective than convincing the general public. True conviction as to the existence of a second missile panic is not even necessary. As soon as the idea can be cultivated in the institutional culture that there *is* a missile panic (and that there are political consequences for ignoring it), a form of institutional-cultural conformity insures that members of the political apparatus will behave as if there is a second missile panic. *The Times* demonstrates this phenomenon in action in an editorial that mentions how democratic aspirants had changed their tone on defense during the second missile panic. If individuals within the political apparatus wanted to keep their positions, they would have to demonstrate their conformity to the institutional-culture. If they did not, their opponents could use that lack of conformity as a tool against them. The true value of the public within the missile panic is the directing of their voting power for the purpose of political maneuvering.

The selective value of the public is seen in Reagan's success over Carter. Carter's messages concerning defense and strategic weapons were primarily directed towards institutional players. Reagan's public charge that defense spending was not adequate was an accusation that Carter met in his *written* SOTUA that continuously outlined defense increases; but, this was not a message that was continuously transmitted to the public via his normal SOTUA.

In conclusion, the editorial and survey data collected suggest that there were a series of moral panics that occurred over the period analyzed. The first moral panic began with grassroots concern that coalesced in response to the threat presented by the Soviet Union. From there it slowly transformed into a moral panic centered on interest groups. With the rise of the control state in the 1980s, elites would appear to have become the dominant factor within the moral panic. But, the data indicate that the public did not react as swiftly to the second missile gap as it did the first. Nevertheless, public opinion was turned enough that Reagan—whose primary solution to the missile gap was to build more missiles and develop a highly theoretical defense system—managed to acquire the Presidency. That lack of immediate response from the public can be attributed to the lack of an immediate threat. But with elites in control, the second missile panic behaved more as an organizational technique, directed first towards influencing individuals within the political apparatus, and then influencing the general public.

While the method of this research is informed by moral panic theory, at its heart is a question concerning military Keynesianism. Specifically: how does a

society convince its members to commit a significant portion of its resources to defense interests? At the start of this research I asserted that the United States' nuclear arsenal is a product of military Keynesianism. And that it, along with the greater defense sector of which it is a part, has for some time had been a part of the United States' post-war, semi-permanent war footing. What is suggested by the findings of my research is that the defense sector or—at the very least—the nuclear arsenal did not attain their dominance in the United States' by chance. Instead it would appear that decisions that benefit the defense sector are made as a result of the influence of an institutional survival technique. That technique is that of the moral panic (here the missile panic), but for it to be truly effective the moral panic must itself be based upon some legitimate, immediate threat. The first missile gap was so effective and led to the interest group moral panic model because the Soviets presented a legitimate, immediate threat in the form of superior throw weight as demonstrated by Sputnik 1's launch. Interested defense and political sector elites were able to utilize the grassroots concern generated by that threat to further their institutional goals. I would suggest that military Keynesianism succeeds when the public can be convinced that there is a greater, more immediate benefit in allocating a significant amount of resources to the defense sector. That conclusion seems immediately obvious, but the historical analysis adds nuance by suggesting that institutions and elites will utilize the public's concerns to achieve their own goals.

The quantitative analysis suggests that the President, as an elite, is able to influence the opinion of the citizenry. Furthermore, that the President is able to

exert a certain amount of influence upon the media. The core idea of this research was that the strategic nuclear crisis of this period was a purely elite-engineered artifact that was itself an example of hegemonic leadership. Yet the historical analysis would suggest that a more nuanced interpretation of those historical events is in order. When Sputnik 1 revealed the critical disparity in throw weight between the United States and the Soviet Union, the public's reaction was a source a legitimate grassroots concern towards what had been identified as a threat. Certain actors were able to utilize that concern to further their own objectives. But as time moved forward, it was more the institutions in the defense and media sectors that benefitted from the original grassroots concern. Thus these institutions had their own interests in maintaining the public's awareness of the missile gap and the strategic nuclear crisis it represented. Though there are elements of elite hegemonic reproduction here, the media's reproduction of elite interests coincides not only with the media's institutional interests, but also the institutional interests of the defense sector. Furthermore, while *The Tribune* reproduced the hegemonic positions of the defense sector uncritically, *The Times* (which echoed the grassroots concerns after the launch of Sputnik 1) gradually began to question the motivations of those institutions and institutional actors that benefited from the missile gap.

It is not until the 1980s when we see the rise of the security state and the unification of the elites against hegemonic threats presented in the preceding decades. It is at that point, during the second missile gap, that the attendant moral panic is more of the elite-engineered variety. We also see the hegemonic

reproduction (via the reproduction of fear rhetoric as well as the identification and contemplation of threats both foreign and domestic) that would be expected during an elite-engineered moral panic during this period by the media. Though it is true that *The Times* does not endorse President Reagan's actions during this period, it is also true that they do not spend a great deal of editorial space questioning and criticizing those actions. I would suggest that a lack of action could just as easily be interpreted as a method of supporting a hegemonic viewpoint as it represents a lack of resistance to those forces attempting to reproduce the dominant hegemonic thought.

Taken as a whole, it would appear that interest groups can use grassroots concerns and elites to justify expensive (even unpopular) policies. These concerns can be exploited even after they begin to dissipate. The nature and direction of the concern can be used and manipulated by interest groups to justify their continued importance and maintain a social environment that maximize their profits. Once these concerns become institutionalized, elites are able to use them when needed. They are even able to rely on these concerns to change the very hegemonic strategy on which their power is legitimated.

Ch. 11 CONCLUSION

The original purpose of this research was to determine if increases in spending made to the United States' nuclear arsenal could be attributed to an elite-engineered moral panic. The first step in establishing this was through the use of a

time-series analysis on a set of proxy variables. The three main objectives of the quantitative analysis were: To determine if it is possible for the President (an elite) to influence public opinion in the presence of contrary objective evidence; to determine if the President could influence the media; and to establish some of the mechanisms of the President's media influence vis-à-vis the components of the State of the Union Address.

According to the analysis, it would appear that the President is able to influence public opinion using the State of the Union Address. This finding correlates with the body of literature that focuses on the President's ability to influence policy and public opinion via the State of the Union Address (Bonn 2010;Cohen 1995;Hawdon and Wood 2014;Hawdon 2001;Hoffman and Howard 2006;Oliver 2002;Wanta et al. 1989). The next set of analyses focused on the President's ability to influence the media using the State of the Union Address. This variable was used as a proxy measure for public opinion because of the role that it plays in an elite-engineered moral panic (Goode and Ben-Yehuda 2009). Yet the data indicated only modest support for the President being able to assert influence over the media. But the data does not indicate that the President is able to influence the media through specific forms of rhetoric.

These findings in no way void the role of the media as a component of elite-engineered moral panics, or as a proxy measure for public opinion. While there was only modest support for Presidential influence, the greater source of influence over the media would appear to be the total amount of plutonium produced per annum.

As plutonium production is handled by another segment of elites, this finding suggests that they have a greater impact on both the media and public opinion by extension.

After establishing the ability of the President to influence public opinion and (to an extent) the media, I then proceeded to perform an historical analysis using editorials, letters to the editor and Gallup Poll data to supplement the time-series analysis. The use of proxy variables allowed me to perform a fairly thorough set of time-series analyses, but historical analysis helps provide a more granular picture of public opinion during the period in question. Each analysis on its own only paints a part of the picture, but taken together they provide greater insight.

From a reading of the historical data, I found that the artificial nature of the missile gap allowed actors within the political apparatus and defense sector to use the missile gap to acquire desired objectives (Day 2006;Young 1968). This suggests that there was widespread grassroots concern that was utilized during the first of the missile gaps. After the grassroots concern had passed, the political power it provided the defense sector as well as the techniques for acquiring that power were institutionalized, thereby transforming the original grassroots concern into an interest group moral panic.

With the transition to an interest group moral panic model also came large amounts of institutional power, which lead to certain types of recognized institutional behavioral patterns. As the original missile panic evaporated along with the vast well of political and popular support, the defense sector did its level

best to maintain its gains. These attempts on the part of the defense sector to maintain the large inputs of resources acquired during the original missile panic would be considered normal behavior for any organization (Hillman, Withers and Collins 2009; Pfeffer and Salancik 1978). As outlined by Becker (1973), this is especially the case when it comes to moral crusades that produce large organizations devoted to the cause. Such organizations will seek out new reasons to justify their existence and material costs as a matter of survival.

This put the return of the missile panic in a different light, and served to augment the reason why the defense sector would attempt to revive the missile panic. Therefore I argued that the nature of the second missile panic was different from the first. True enough, the missile panic allowed for the accretion of political and economic power. But it also provides a *reason* for the organizations of the defense sector to continue existing. I also argued that public concern in the second missile panic was immaterial because Carter was forced to increase the defense budget and issued PD 59. To reiterate a statement made in the conclusion, public opinion is valuable, but only so much as it was able to bring pressure on the true targets of the second missile panic: the political apparatus (i.e. Congress, the Senate and the President).

I further assert that in an elite-engineered moral panic the impact of convincing individuals within the political apparatus of the existence of a missile panic is a more important objective than convincing the general public. As soon as the idea can be cultivated in the institutional culture that there *is* a missile panic

(and that there are political consequences for ignoring it), members of the political apparatus would behave appropriately. If individuals within the political apparatus wanted to keep their positions, they would have to demonstrate their conformity to the institutional-culture. If they did not, their opponents could use that lack of conformity as a tool against them. The true value of the public within the missile panic is the directing of their voting power for the purpose of political maneuvering.

The findings in this research support Goode and Ben-Yehuda (2009) argument concerning the influence that elites have over public opinion and the media in the face of contrary, objective evidence. Concomitantly, it supports that body of work concerned with the role of the State of the Union Address, and the effect that it has on the American public. Furthermore, the historical analysis would suggest support for the assertion made by Becker (1973) regarding moral crusades that create organization dedicated to the problem. Finally, the historical analysis would suggest that a moral panic could begin in one of the recognized models, but—with changing time and conditions—a reorganization of the actors around the issue leads to a change in moral panic model.

Taken all together, the implication of this research is that it is entirely possible for elites (and interest groups) to take an objective, actual threat, and use it to further their own societal goals. In the process allowing both to institutionalize their power and resource acquisitions within society as a whole. But because this process does not (perhaps cannot) last indefinitely, there will be a need for some threat for these groups to coalesce around. Given the historical data presented

concerning the Soviet Union and the strategic missile issue, I would argue that an actual, objective threat works as a better focus point than an imaginary one.

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