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Anti Ballistic Missile

CONGRESS WANTS MISSILE DEFENSE

Many Feel More Emphasis
By Johnson Is Needed

By HENRY L. TREWHITT

(Washington Bureau of The Sun)

Washington, Jan. 11 —Congress reacted cautiously today to President Johnson's cryptic treatment of the nation's anti-missile defenses in his State-of-the-Union message, and most members seemed to be waiting for elaboration.

Most outspoken was Representative Rivers (D., S.C.), chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, who said the nation must move ahead at least with preparations to deploy the Nike-X anti-missile system, despite the cost, and apart from general disarmament negotiations.

Representative Laird (R., Wis.), chairman of the Republican Conference, expressed "surprise and concern" that Mr. Johnson failed to deal with the subject in greater detail. He saw it as one of the major issues facing Congress.

Await Budget Proposals

Many other members, asked for comment, would say only that they were waiting with some impatience to see the President's budget proposals on anti-missile deployment.

"The Soviet Union has in the past year increased its long-range missile capabilities," the President told Congress and the nation last night. "It has begun to place near Moscow a limited anti-missile 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 our allies.

"That is why an important link between Russia and the United States is our common interest in arms control and disarmament. We have the duty to slow down the arms race between us, in both conventional and nuclear weapons and defenses."

Sign Of Postponement

The remarks were interpreted generally today as a clear sign that the President has decided to put off a decision on full scale deployment for another year. They also reflected indirectly the debate among United States defense officials over the extent of Soviet anti-missile deployment.

Administration Officials already have pledged efforts to dissuade the Soviet Union from carrying out full deployment of its own anti-missile system. United States analysts see it as a costly step in the arms race which would leave the two superpowers in the same relative strategic positions, at the end.

Government spokesmen today said the effort is being carried out at several levels.

Atom Agreement Denied

At the same time, the State Department denied reports that the Soviet Union and United States already have agreed on terms of a treaty against contributing to the spread of nuclear weapons to have-not nations.

Carl Bartch, acting chief press officer for the Department, said there still are "important problems" to be resolved and discussions are continuing.

The question of anti-missile defenses has become inextricably woven into more general discussions of disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

There still is a lively debate among American officials about the extent of Soviet anti-missile deployment. The presence of anti-missile missiles at installations around Moscow has been established—but there is considerable uncertainty as to the operational state of other sites throughout Russia.