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## Best Peace Insurance—Tough Attitude . . .

CPYRGHT

It is unfortunate to have to make the observation just two days before celebrating the birth of the Prince of Peace, but there is considerable evidence supporting the thesis that the greatest risk of nuclear war in the years ahead may come from U.S. actions which convince Soviet leaders we lack determination in a crisis. In other words, in view of present world realities, a tough attitude may be our best peace insurance.

The observation is made now because of growing suggestions that we abandon South Viet Nam.

Isn't it contradictory to recommend the use of toughness to assure peace? Again, considering human nature and the goals of Communism and its leaders, we think not.

This thinking is supported in a study by Willard Matthias of the Central Intelligence Agency's Board of National Estimates. In brief, its conclusion is this: "Even extremely large numbers of high-cost weapons would provide no assurance of victory or even survival. Thus, if there is any valid and rational concept today

upon which to develop or measure a strategic military force, it is that of deterrence."

The study says that in very considerable measure, deterrence depends on how the enemy sizes up the determination and will of his opponent.

As an example, Matthias cites how the U.S., by seeming to be afraid of a confrontation, set the stage for the Cuban missile crisis of 1962. This confrontation came immediately after we chose not to run the political risks necessary to save the Bay of Pigs, after we accepted erection of the Berlin Wall with little more than verbal explosions and after we accepted the neutralist solution in Laos.

In other words, if we demonstrate weakness in South Viet Nam, we can almost certainly expect the Soviets to test our determination—or to probe for lack of it—elsewhere. This pattern has occurred over and over again.

The Matthias study has the "general approval" of the CIA Board of National Estimates, "though the attempt has been made to reach complete agreement on every point." We also agree.