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Who Is This Secrecy Protecting?

In the great debate now taking place before the Senate Preparedness Subcommittee over the sufficiency of the Administration's defense budget, it probably is still necessary to reserve judgment.

Two conflicting factors must be kept in mind: On the one hand, no military man in all history ever figured that he had enough armaments or men. On the other hand is the Administration's almost psychopathic devotion to a budget surplus, and the fact that the generals and admirals who are critical of the budget limitations are risking the wrath of their Commander-in-Chief and perhaps their very reputations and careers.

THERE IS, HOWEVER, one point in connection with Monday's hearings upon which we have strong convictions. Sen. Stuart Symington apparently has Central Intelligence Agency reports which present the Russian missile threat in a much more serious light than the Administration has admitted.

The Senator has "threatened" to make these figures public. This brought a sharp complaint from Republican Senator Prescott Bush of Connecticut that "too many military secrets were being disclosed in the defense debate."

Let's analyze that a bit. What "secret" does Senator Symington threaten to disclose? That of Soviet missile production and capacities.

And who is this being kept a secret from? The Soviet? Of course not. It's the American people and apparently most of their representatives in Congress who aren't being let in on the secret.

THE CLOAK-AND-DAGGER conventional reply to this is that if the Soviet finds out our figures are accurate, they'll know that we have very efficient intelligence services and will tighten their security precautions.

But this is sheer nonsense. Since the time of Peter the Great, the Russians have been the most suspicious and se-



SENATOR SYMINGTON
curity-conscious people on earth. You can't fight what's tightened to the limit already.

If the figures Senator Symington has bear importantly upon this matter, then it is his duty to let the American people in on the secret. For it is certain that if there's any gamble between a budget surplus and inadequate defense preparations, the people won't hesitate a minute.