United States, Russia in nuclear balance

By Jim Elson

Neither the Soviet Union nor the United States will have a disarming first-strike capability for the foreseeable future, predicted Professor of Political Science Wil- liam Kaufmann Friday afternoon at a Seminar on Tech nology and International Security sponsored by Center for International Studies.

Kaufmann, a high-ranking Pentagon analyst for nearly six- teen years, spoke to nearly sixty persons in the "US/USSR Technology and Strategic Balance." He forecast that the strategic nuclear balance will probably hold for at least a decade for any combination of offensive measures, because of the substan tially irrecoverable forces of intercontinental and submarine-launched ballistic missiles on each side.

He stated, however, that American defense analysts are concerned about trends that may alter the balance. "The full con sequence of US intelligence communities," asserted Kaufmann, "is that the Soviets have amor tization in 'mutual assured destruction' (guaranteed mutual annihilation, the American deterrence doctrine) but rather in war-fighting capability." This emphasis does not imply aggressiveness nor can we make any other significant inferences about Soviet intentions, he added.

Among the disturbing areas of Soviet activity listed were: a new generation of missiles, offensive defense, and passive defense point to a damage-limiting posture. Kaufmann maintained. Thus, "it is possible to put together a fairly scary story for the future—the Soviets could reduce their own fatalities to 5 per cent of their population while producing 50 per cent of US fatalities and 80 per cent destruction of US industry," he said. This calculation, he pointed out, is a "fragile" and "extreme.""I set no great store by it"—but some analysts are triggering a variety of dentals for US counter measures. In response to a later question, Kaufmann admitted that a Soviet adviser could pro duce a similar scare story, espec ially considering developments in US offensive capabilities.

On the technological side, Kaufmann saw no alarming or surprising trends. Though there has been a maturing and evolu tionary upgrading in the quality of Soviet technology, while the US has been "coasting," America is maintaining an important lead in areas that are militarily significant, Kaufmann reported. This lead is naturally more substantial in areas of research, as the Soviets catch up to where we are running into diminishing returns from research; the Soviet edge, Kaufmann noted, lies in the fact that "they are more insatiable, more per sistent, they are producing, hardware we haven't, with technology both of us know."

Five potential military problems for the future were raised: the strategic balance; buildup of Soviet forces in East Germany; the Soviet jump on the US Navy, especially in antisub ship armament; a "power projection" capability of the Soviets (including airlift and amphibious capabilities) and Impressive Soviet investment in production plants and facilities. The problem for the future, Kaufmann concluded, is what to do if the Soviets are going for a damage limiting capability.

Review

Rock group overshadows unimpressive Patti Smith

By Claude Perry

Patti Smith, who must be the most absurd spectacle in rock today, slapped a bill that included Reddy Teddy and Sparks at the Orpheum Theater Saturday. Smith's poetry is far more interesting than her music. Her style is best suited to small clubs. Her attempts to reach the whole hall were a ludicrous and pitiful sight.

Even more pathetic were Red dy Teddy, the latest Aerosmith. Instead of coming down the pike, they leaped and flailed about to no useful end. The lead singer screamed and shouted and had no sense of phrasing or contro1. At the end of the set, they threw copies of the group's new album into the audience. It was quite a surprise to see that no one threw them back.

Sparks, already one of the most refreshing acts in rock, seemed even more so after Reddy Teddy's inept performance. Making their Boston debut with a new band, their part of the evening was unquestionably the most successful. The sound system even rose to the occasion for a few numbers, showcasing Russel Mael's maniac soprano admirably.

Sparks are engaging performers who have successfully survived numerous producer and label changes. Their concert consisted mainly of material from their debut album for Columbia, Big Beel. The album represents a slight change of style for them. They have, however, carried it off while losing none of the wit and style that has endowed them in a large following in Europe and a rabid cult in the States.

After dedicating her perfor mance to Garry Gilmore and sug gesting that "channel our doing to the members of Bob Marley and the Wailers who had been shot in Jamaica, Smith did several songs from her albums, Horses and Radio Ethiopia. These cuts were at best, undistinguishable. If they hadn't turned the lights off at the end of each song, one would hardly be able to tell where one song ended and the next began.

She ruined her only adequate moment, a parody of Mick Jagger's "Time Is On My Side," by being with the Who's "My Generation." One of the more dramatic moments in rock when performed by the Who, her ver sion was a low-budget apocal ypse. Smith ended the number by ripping the strings off her guitar, an act that scarcely compared with Pete Townshend's guitar-smashing spectacles.

Both Patti Smith and Reddy Teddy prorably match Sparks' degree of professionalism. The B-1 bomber's problems could be solved by gaining experience and originality. If Saturday's performance was any indica tion of her talent, Patti Smith would do well to look for another profession.