By Alain d’Heurle

As new strategic scenarios and weapons systems are adopted, the danger of nuclear war is increasing, warned MIT Physics Professor Bernard Feld, editor in chief of the Bulletin of Atomic Science.

Feld noted that, in view of recent statements by Soviet leaders, the US should not escalate into an all-out exchange, but instead initiate talks. SALT II negotiations should be started if progress is needed in this direction.

There are no rational arguments to explain why a limited war would not escalate into an all-out exchange in order to avoid destabilizing developments in the arms race which will be extremely difficult to reverse. "Time is critical," he said, "We have a few months but not a few years."

Feld noted, in particular, that when the US strategy is perceived as "strategically unstable," balance, he said, is to the advantage of the one with the stronger first-strike capability, in the last case, speaking on campus last Thursday.

It is imperative, Feld asserted, that SALT II be ratified to stabilize relations. The arms race would be extremely difficult, he said, to reverse once underway.

SALT II is not reversible, as President Ford said, which would mean that the prospects for arms limitations are bleak enough in the advent of Carter’s reduction. As to whether Carter can deliver SALT II through the Senate, Feld said that he is a "little less pessimistic" since public opinion has shown renewed concern for disarmament and ratification of SALT II. Feld also asserted that the only reasonable policy is for the administration to deal directly with the Senate, rather than wait for the first strike.