Weisskopf criticizes mounting arms escalation

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But how can they be so silly? We have half of our strategic nuclear bombs on submarines. So anyway, if you hit all the silos on land, the submarines are still there...

So why do we have land-based missiles? I would put all the deterrence force in submarines and in airplanes and reduce the number to a reasonable level well below the present one. Overkill is a danger, not a protection.

I think there's a lot of ideological stupidity, irrationality. A love of gadgets. You have an example in the neutron bomb.

Q: Do you think MIT in particular, even though it doesn't carry any classified research, contributed to this?

A: No, I really don't think so. Only perhaps by educating good scientists and engineers who might participate later in the armaments race.

Of course, there are military laboratories connected with MIT, such as the Lincoln Labs and the Instrumentation Labs, the Draper Labs, but the latter are no longer MIT.

Q: Several officials in the Reagan Administration have discussed limiting the flow of scientific information. Do you feel their comments present a concrete threat?

A: Any limiting of information is a vile thing, especially in an unclassified field. Clearly the actual assembly line of a nuclear weapon plant should be kept limited. Such information may be useful for the Russians. Not very. In general, actual unclassified research, as we do at MIT should not be limited.

I believe the more collaboration we achieve with Russian scientists the better. You see, the best part of Russia is the scientists. They understand the ideals of the west better than their politicians.

Much more than in this country, the independent people go into science, because that's the place they can do what they wish. Here a lot of very good people go into psychology, political science, and so on. Over there only the hard sciences are an independent kind of field, because in the other fields, you know, they are told what to do. And so I think the best part of the Soviet Union intelligentsia is in science. Much more than here. And therefore, we shouldn't lose contact with them.

Q: What do you think of the Reagan Administration's policies on scientific research?

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