opinion

Freeze reasons explained

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policy is less a deterrent to Soviet conventional aggression than a potential cover for Western adventurism.

Another chilling thought is that while the US continues to threaten a nuclear response to any Soviet military action in Europe, the Soviets have virtually no incentive not to themselves launch a first nuclear strike, in the event that a conflict is under way.

Finally, however, the essential argument for US renunciation of its first-strike threat is a moral one. How can the nation with the world's largest nuclear arsenals appear responsible in the eyes of the world, while threatening to use those arsenals without nuclear provocation?

A US-Soviet nuclear freeze, and US adoption of a no-first-strike policy, are good ideas— but given the web of entrenched interests favoring perpetuation of the arms race, and especially the hawkish leanings of the Reagan Administration, they will require an enormous amount of determined effort for their realization. And where each one of us can contribute—by expressing our firm support for these measures to Congressional representatives and to the President, as a first step, and by working for disarmament with groups like the Cambridge Council for a Nuclear Freeze, High Technology Professionals for Peace, the Coalition for a New Foreign and Military Policy, Physicians for Social Responsibility, or any of several others. Whatever our other priorities may be, surely our first priority must be to reduce and ultimately eliminate the growing nuclear threat which looms over us, so that those other priorities may flourish.

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