

Matter of Fact By Joseph Alsop

MID-RANGE MISSILE
Washington — The Defense Department leadership, and more particularly the able new Under Secretary, Reuben Robertson, is showing signs of taking Soviet progress in the world weapons race with a real seriousness which is long overdue.

The signs are of various sorts, but all point in the same direction. For example, something like an armed truce has at last been arranged in the bloody, internecine war that the Army, Navy and Air Force have been waging over the so-called mid-range missile.

This is a guided rocket of approximately 1,500-mile range. It is important in itself, and it may prove to be even more important as a precursor of the true ultimate weapon, the ballistic rocket with true intercontinental range. The Soviets successfully tested rockets of about 1,500-mile range considerably more than a year ago, and are now believed to be producing them in considerable quantities.

In this country, however, the mid-range missile has been hopelessly entangled in one of our customary inter-service disputes. The Air Force maintained that a mid-range missile was a mere interim weapon, and that effort should be concentrated on the far more difficult intercontinental missile. The Army and Navy pointed out, quite correctly, that one had to walk before one could run, and that building this interim weapon was likely to be an important and maybe an essential step on the road to getting the ultimate weapon. But the Army and Navy wanted mid-range missiles for their own use; and this at once raised the passion-charged issue of roles and missions.

So the fight continued until the Pentagon at last began to face the grim fact that the Soviets now have a substantial lead in missile development. As a result of this fact-finding, a mid-range missile project is now to be started, within the larger framework of the Air Force effort on long-range missiles.

The same unhappy process of fact-finding also seems likely to produce another kind of progress in the missile field. Under Secretary of Defense Robertson has recently returned from a careful tour of inspection of all the scattered American missile projects, research establishments and controlling headquarters. According to re-

port, Robertson has been impressed by the need that has long been obvious — the need to set up an organization comparable to the Manhattan District project to speed American missile development.

It is too much to hope, perhaps, that there will be a new Los Alamos laboratory which will preside over, coordinate and urge forward the whole vast job of missile development. But efforts are on foot to free work from the dead hand of "channels," to centralize the work a little more, and to pool the research assets of the three armed services much more completely than has been the base in the past.

In the same fashion, Under Secretary of Defense Robertson has also tackled the crucial problem of "lead time." It takes this country eight years, or thereabouts, from the decision that a new airplane type is needed to the actual production of the aircraft. In contrast, the Soviets took only four years to get their "Bison" long-range jet bomber into quantity production. In other words, Soviet lead time is only half as long as American lead time.

In order to lessen this very heavy handicap, certain important changes in American procurement procedures have already been made. For example, orders have now been given to jettison the "fly-before-buy" rule for aircraft procurement, which the Republican defense leadership introduced with sneers of scorn for the wastefulness of their predecessors. Perhaps more important still, Under Secretary Robertson has formed a special committee under his chairmanship to study the fantastically cumbersome and costly process by which this country now gets new weapons, and to prepare proposals for a root-and-branch reform.

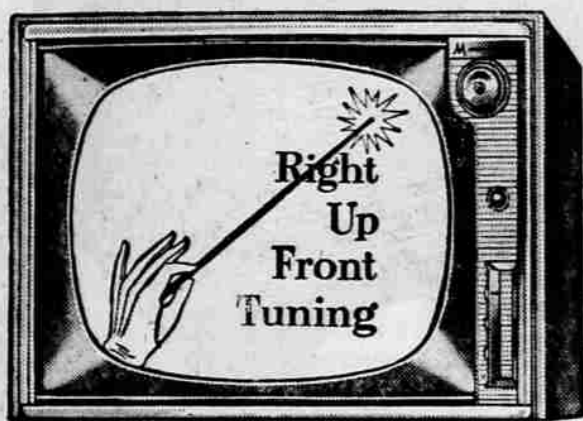
THE movement, in short, is in the right direction. Fact-finding is always the essential preliminary of effective action. Until last spring, when "Bisons," "Badgers" and "Farmers" appeared in large numbers in the Moscow skies, the notion that Soviet lead time could be shorter than American lead time was always pooh-poohed at the Pentagon as perfectly ridiculous.

The idea that Soviets were ahead of us in missile development was pooh-poohed until recently in just the same fashion. In this case, the turning point seems to have been reached with the historic special report prepared for the National Security Council by a group of experts under the chairmanship of the president of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Dr. James Killian. The experts said

the Soviets were very far ahead indeed.

But while facts are being faced, and the movement at the Pentagon is now in the right direction, one great question remains. Will the really painful thing be done? Will the resources and money be made available, to overtake the Soviets where they have passed us in the race? (Copyright 1955 New York Herald Tribune Inc.)

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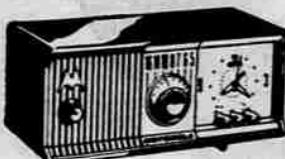


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Washington

By Roscoe Drummond

Washington — Sometimes a pretty fantastic idea gets so widely circulated that it begins to look better and more probable than it really is. I have

Waldport Blast Believed Aimed At Island Seals

Newport, Ore. — (U.P.) — A terrific explosion which rocked Waldport, Ore., early Friday morning was apparently intended to exterminate the seal population of Mays Island in Alsea Bay, state police said yesterday.

Police said an investigation revealed that a large charge of dynamite, perhaps 2½ cases, had been set off on the lower end of the island, which has become a haven for a growing colony of seals in the past several months.

Head Out to Sea
No estimate was made of the number of animals killed, but Waldport residents said between 50 and 75 seals were living on the island. Surviving members of the colony headed out to sea following the blast.

Residents of Waldport, which is largely a commercial and sport fishing town, have complained to the State Fish Commission in recent months about the seals, terming them a nuisance and a destroyer of fish.

Police said most Waldport residents expressed approval of the bombing, but denied knowledge of who was responsible for it.

Grange
Shady Cove Grange
The Shady Cove Grange will hold its regular social Grange meeting Wednesday, Oct. 26, with a potluck dinner at 7 p.m.

The officers are requested to attend as a practice will be held preparatory for visitation night at Live Oak Oct. 27. Cards will be placed during the evening.

Live Oak Grange
The annual booster night was observed at Live Oak Grange Thursday, Oct. 13. Members and friends attended a potluck supper prior to the booster night meeting.

After a brief business session the visitors were invited to see the Grange opened with the seating drill of officers and presentation of the flag.

Lecturer Frank Hall presented a varied and interesting program, including talks by Past Masters Carl Christenson and Cassie Golding. The Mothersingers under the direction of Mrs. Carl Christenson gave a series of musical numbers and a comedy skit entitled "I Like Mountain Music." They were accompanied at the piano by Mrs. Verlie Babcock, who also played for the dancing which followed the program. Pitt Penney presented a comedy skit.

Upper Applegate Grange
Upper Applegate Grange met for a regular business meeting Oct. 14 in the Ruch school cafeteria.

State Deputy Roscoe Roberts and Mrs. Roberts were present.

The chaplain reported that she had received a letter from John Dutton saying that he was much improved.

The members were distressed to hear that Clarence Meyer, known among us as "Dock", formerly a member of this Grange, has had a stroke. A letter received from Mrs. Meyer states that he has been ill for some time and it is indefinite as to whether he will be able to work.

Changing the location of the Grange hall was discussed. A resolution was submitted by the resolutions committee favoring acceptance of a plot of land offered by Harlan Cantrall, and erecting a hall thereupon.

It is expected that a vote will be taken at the Oct. 28 meeting to determine the location of the new hall.

WEATHER BY United Press
Northern California: Mostly fair today, except coastal fog and low clouds.

The number of tractors on U.S. farms has more than doubled since 1941.

Waldport Blast Believed Aimed At Island Seals

come onto such an idea numerous times in recent days in different parts of the country. It comes up in conversation with people who are not in politics and I have heard it earnestly discussed by some Republican politicians.

The idea is: That early next year Mr. Eisenhower will resign. That Vice President Nixon should take over the "duties and office" of President for the remainder of the term.

That this would give the Vice President the opportunity to show whether and/or how well he could handle the White House with all its authority and prestige behind him.

That, on the assumption Mr. Nixon would take good advantage of the opportunity, he would thus earn the Republican Presidential nomination and, as a result of being in the limelight of the Presidency, Mr. Nixon would give the Republicans the best chance of winning

next year's election. It isn't going to happen.

I HAVE checked on it at the two sources which count and it can be said without qualification: That President Eisenhower is not going to resign.

That Vice President Nixon wants no part in any such procedure.

There are those who suggest that if Mr. Eisenhower feels he will not be well enough to serve another term, he might feel—or be persuaded to feel—that he is not well enough to serve the last year of his present term. They suggest that the country ought, to have the services of a full-time President during 1956. They suggest that by giving the Presidency to Mr. Nixon for a year Mr. Eisenhower would almost certainly avert a bitter intra-party contest for the Presidential nomination and would give Mr. Nixon such a build-up as to enhance tremendously his prospects at the polls next November.

That fact is that without the

Vice President's consent—indeed despite his known views to the contrary—Mr. Nixon's over-eager, wishful-thinking, wishful-planning admirers in southern California are planting and nurturing the idea that Mr. Eisenhower would do the country—or at least the Republican party—a great service if he would resign.

THESE arguments do not appeal to President Eisenhower. There is no provision in the Constitution which authorizes him to pass the Presidency along to someone else if he gets tired of it or tired in it. He knows that the American people want the man they chose for the Presidency—and nobody else—to serve as long as he is capable of serving. He would not consider using the device of resigning his office for a partisan purpose, that is, to pre-empt the Presidential nomination for a particular candidate or to build-up a candidate for election.

The President doesn't favor it.

The Vice President doesn't favor it. It isn't going to happen.

MR. NIXON knows the best way he can advance his own cause is to discharge his Vice Presidential role with breadth of view, care and tact.

On the basis of his address to "The New York Herald Tribune" forum this week, it is evident that no one sees more clearly than Mr. Nixon himself that, now that he is within reach of the Presidency, he must establish himself as "the Vice President of all the people" and as a political leader whose first duty is not to the narrower partisan interests of his party.

Mr. Nixon has cancelled all purely partisan political speeches. And in his "Herald Tribune" forum address it struck me as noteworthy that he turned to the words of a Democratic President—Woodrow Wilson—to portray America's leadership in the cause of liberty and peace; in praising Democratic

policy in the last session of Congress, he was careful to bring in Sen. Lyndon Johnson as well as Sen. Walter George.

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