

U.S. And Russia Making Equal Cuts In Military Spending

WASHINGTON (UPI) — With the test ban treaty an example, the United States and Russia appeared—at least on the surface—to be headed today toward approximately equal reductions in military spending.

Against a Soviet slash of \$666 million for the coming year, President Johnson and Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara have announced the U.S. military budget to be submitted to Congress next month will be "several hundred million dollars" below the 1963 spending rate.

Pentagon experts were extremely cautious, however, in drawing conclusions from the Soviet budget figures announced Monday. They cited hidden factors and differences which can be either higher or lower in the purchasing power of U.S. and Soviet money.

The Soviets, they said, appeared to be able to keep 2.3 million men under arms on a budget substantially less than it costs the United States to keep 2.7 million men in uniform.

On the other hand, reports indicated the Soviets are spending almost as much as the United States in the fields of space, military industry and research. In advanced technology, their costs in dollar equivalents may

be equally high, or higher.

The Soviet military budget was placed at \$4 billion including hidden factors, against approximately \$30 billion for the United States.

But the Russian military budget is a much higher proportion of total Soviet output—16.1 per cent—as compared to 9 per cent in the United States. The Russians announced they were reducing their military spending by 4.4 per cent, but when the hidden factors are included this comes out as a cut of only 1.6 per cent, experts said.

Because the U.S. budget proposals are subject to debate in Congress and are usually trimmed at least moderately, the U.S. defense reductions may

be about the same percentage—around 2 per cent.

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