

EDITORIAL

Americans for peace

If the thousands, perhaps millions, of people in this country and in those of our Western allies who participate in anti-nuclear demonstrations believed efforts were being made by our leaders, with the approval and support of President Ronald Reagan, to negotiate with Russia and establish concrete and verifiable agreements to reduce nuclear weaponry, and to control the proliferation of arms, and to reduce the danger of war, would the marches, the meetings, the demonstrations, cease?

Probably not. And perhaps they should not. As long as the threat of nuclear war exists, potential victims have a right, if not a responsibility, to voice their concerns. If Russian populations were as well-informed as Western ones, and if Russia's people were permitted to demonstrate, to speak out, to voice their concerns freely, there is little doubt that they, too, would be meeting and marching and waving anti-nuke banners.

According to a recent **Letter to the Editor** of one of this country's most respected and prestigious daily newspapers,

from Robert M. Smalley, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Public Affairs, U.S. Department of State, the Reagan administration is involved in no less than four separate and high-level negotiating talks devised to reach agreements for arms reduction and weapon control.

"In intermediate-range nuclear force talks in Geneva, the President has proposed the complete elimination of an entire category of U.S. and Soviet nuclear weapons...

"In the Strategic Arms Reduction talks, President Reagan has called for a one-third cut in U.S. and Soviet warheads and for sharp reductions in other measures of strategic power...

"In the East-West Mutual Balanced Force Reduction talks in Vienna, the U.S. and its allies have put forth a new Western initiative aimed at reducing conventional forces in Central Europe to equal and verifiable levels...

"In the 40-nation Committee on Disarmament in Geneva, the U.S. has proposed a truly comprehensive ban on chemical weapons."

Mr. Smalley goes on to explain that in all these and in other

areas, the U.S. and our Western allies have proposed measures to enhance mutual confidence and to reduce further risks of war through accident or miscalculation.

Expanding on progress made and hopes for progress to come in the future, Smalley assures us of the negotiating seriousness on our part, and of creative American and Western arms-control initiatives. And he warns we can best encourage positive response from the Soviets by giving them no reason to doubt Western resolve.

Should we begin asking ourselves and the purveyors of political news and opinion in this country **why** broad coverage is seldom accorded the commendable efforts of the leadership of the United States, in cooperation with its allies, to reach peaceful accord?

And **why** the voice of the United States Department of State is heard, not in headlines from coast to coast, but in a **Letter to the Editor** column of the Christian Science Monitor (June 7, 1983)?

The American public merits better service.