

## PENTAGON

*Pentagon*, a new novel by Allen Drury, is worth reading. It is entertaining and it is a good introduction to one of the reasons that America has been unable to build homeland defenses.

We are not unique as a civilization in being threatened by a well-armed "evil empire". We are not either unique in being threatened by terrorists and accidents, although nuclear weapons do present a rather spectacular variation on this age-old problem.

The American people are not fools. Regardless of the rantings of the appeasement and surrender groups, the fear tactics of the elitists, and the often foolish and sometimes biased presentations of the media, an overwhelming majority of Americans (repeated polls have shown) are concerned about the nuclear threat and desire sensible protection from it.

Each year the 535 elected congressional representatives of the American people debate the defense issue and then, in accordance with the wishes of their constituents, vote to spend about \$300 billion (1987 dollars) on their national defense.

This nearly one billion dollars per day is given to the United States Department of Defense which then proceeds to fritter the whole amount away without providing any significant defense for the American homeland against nuclear explosions - the only real threat which is an immediate and continuing risk to the American people.

Recently, I was discussing the food reserve problem with one of our top civil defense experts. He and I concluded that the most expensive version of this essential civil defense measure would cost about \$10 billion.

"Wow!" he exclaimed, "That is 100 times as much as our entire current civil defense budget." "Yes," I replied, "*but it is only 12 days of our current defense budget.*" Whereupon this scientist began to grumble about the "military - industrial complex."

The Department of Defense is a serious problem. *They are taking our \$300 billion per year and they are not defending us.* Moreover, this gargantuan budget pays for tens of thousands of people whose full time job is to lobby in one way or another for this gigantic, wasteful operation.

Thousands of special interests are feathering their own nests with the money that is supposed to be defending our homes and families.