

The Afghan government statement coupled a possible withdrawal of Soviet forces with an end to Pakistan's hostile attitude and a cessation of the U.S.-sponsored military buildup of that country. The statement concluded that "The limited contingent of Soviet troops will withdraw as soon as the cause for inviting them ceases to exist under a *credible guarantee*."

The immediate response of the regime of Pakistani military dictator General Zia is reported to be a refusal to enter into talks with Afghanistan until all Soviet troops are withdrawn.

However, according to informed Indian sources, the result of the Gromyko visit will be seen not in moves from Moscow but in further initiatives coming from the Afghan government. These initiatives, the source revealed, are aimed not so much at the Zia regime which is firmly tied to the U.S. and China, its principle backers, but at the Pakistani population which supports neither Zia nor his war provocations and alliance with the U.S. According to this view each initiative refused by Zia will find him in deeper trouble at home.



China

Is the U.S. building Peking's nuclear capability?

by Daniel Sneider

Among the circles of China experts in the United States, particularly those who watch their defense establishment, there is one question above all being asked: What did Harold Brown *really* give the Chinese? For at least one top expert on the Chinese military, the fear is that the Defense Secretary delivered significant inputs in terms of both military and military-related technology and strategic guarantees by the United States for the defense of China.

This question is usually accompanied by another question which has popped up of late in the press: Will the Soviets decide to launch a preemptive strike against Chinese nuclear facilities in response to the evidence of a de facto U.S.-China military alliance? That they will is the interpretation given the reported remarks of Soviet President Brezhnev to visiting French dignitary Chaban-Delmas. "Believe me," Brezhnev is reported saying, "after the destruction of Chinese nuclear sites by our missiles, there won't be much time for the Americans to choose between the defense of their Chinese allies and peaceful coexistence with us."

The London *Guardian*, which reported this, cited the Soviet view that "the most dangerous U.S. move of all has been to encourage China and play the 'China card' to the extent of offering military cooperation." The Soviets are weighing options on how to respond to this danger. "The most serious of all," the *Guardian* says, "would be a preemptive strike against China and there are odd hints coming from Moscow that some thought is being given to that."

Crossing the threshold

According to experts the threshold for the Soviet Union is defined by U.S. augmentation of Chinese strategic nuclear weapons capability, particularly the development of their ICBM delivery systems and the targeting and thrust of those missiles. In this area, the reports from the Brown trip are already disturbing. The already agreed on technology and the mooted further sales of technology are what are called "grey technology," technology that can do a lot for Chinese military capability without directly qualifying as military technology.

One good example of this is the LANDSAT satellite system which Brown agreed to give the Chinese access to through a U.S.-constructed ground station. While the LANDSAT is supposedly for agricultural purposes, providing geographic and similar data, experts say it would give the Chinese a "quantum leap" in the targeting of their missiles into the Soviet Union. At this point, the Chinese are dependent on data mostly from Soviet geographic guides, some of which is deliberately falsified to mask the location of potential targets.

Another example cited is oil exploration gear which contains sonar equipment readily convertible to antisubmarine warfare uses.

As for ICBM capability, there is already considerable evidence that the Chinese have the booster sections of an ICBM available and capable of delivering a nuclear warhead payload into the Soviet Union. The CSS (Chinese Surface to Surface) X-4 has already been used for sending Chinese space vehicles into orbit, including a January 1978 satellite launch which featured the successful return by soft landing of a camera pack. A recent British visitor to China, Sir John Keswick, is also reported to have confirmed that the Chinese have developed a solid fuel system allowing them to replace the antiquated liquid fuel systems which are much easier to detect in pre-launch mode and hit with preemptive strikes.

Another recent development, again according to U.S. experts, is evidence that the Chinese are working on tactical nuclear weapons. In March of 1978, they carried out a test of a nuclear device with a yield less than 20 kilotons, the yield of a tactical weapon that could be mounted on existing Chinese jet aircraft or heavy howitzers for delivery against Soviet conventional tank and infantry assault.

In the non-nuclear areas the Chinese are also accelerating weapons system development. One noted area is anti-tank missiles. After a period of attempting to purchase this technology in the West, from the French for one, the Chinese have dropped out of the market. The evident reason is that they are now producing their own version of the Sagger anti-tank missile, a Soviet weapon which is much simpler and easier to produce and was reportedly provided to the Chinese by the Egyptians. The evidence that this is already in production was provided by a September issue of the Chinese Peoples Liberation Army pictorial magazine which showed Chinese soldiers using what was clearly a Sagger weapon in maneuvers, with the claim that these weapons were made in China. While this may be a bluff, showing weapons in fact provided by Egypt, nevertheless there is a good possibility that production is underway.

The Egyptians have similarly provided Mig-23 jet fighters, which are being used to produce an upgraded version of the standard Mig-21 fighter which has been in the Chinese arsenal since the 1950s, and also T-62 tanks, which are well beyond the more antiquated T-54s now used by Peking.

Even without this, however, augmented nuclear capability, with evidence of U.S. aid to that capability, is enough to bring the Soviets into considering that they cannot sit back and passively watch this process. One signal of Soviet anger is a Radio Moscow report that the Israelis have sold China missile systems. Whether this is true or not, the source of the accusation is significant in itself.

At this point the question then comes back—have the Chinese indeed crossed the threshold of Soviet toleration? It should be noted that without ICBMs, the Chinese cannot put their warheads into the European part of the Soviet Union—presently existing IRBM (Intermediate Range Ballistic Missiles) which are stationed in the western Sinkiang region, Tibet and in northeast China, cannot travel that far.

It is far from clear whether these questions are being asked or even considered by people such as Harold Brown and Zbigniew Brzezinski. It is interesting to recall that the Chinese were able to construct their bomb, and make subsequent rapid progress in their missile systems, only through the presence of some 80 top Chinese scientists trained in the U.S. and Britain who went back to China in the 1950s. Many of the best of these, including their top rocket man, H.S. Tsien, were trained and worked at the California Institute of Technology, Brown's location before joining the Carter administration. We may speculate perhaps about what kind of new contacts are being made, or reestablished, between these former residents of the United States, and U.S. scientific and defense technology personnel.



W. Germany

Chancellor Schmidt presses NATO for detente policy

by Rainier Apel

President Carter's foreign policy is "highly incalculable" and has proceeded without consultation with America's European allies, charged West German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt before a closed-door meeting of his party's parliamentary grouping Feb. 14. Schmidt's blunt assessment was reported widely throughout the European press, and reflects the predominant consensus of opinion in Western Europe concerning the Carter presidency.

The Schmidt leak, together with interviews given by his Defense Minister Hans Apel and Apel's remarks at the 17th International *Wehrkunde* meeting taking place over the past weekend, indicate the continuing sharp differences in conception of the Western alliance between Bonn and Washington. Apel's message at this international gathering was that if NATO is to guarantee peace, it has to follow a policy of detente and cooperation, instead of confrontation as the U.S. and Britain urge.

In an interview given to West German television late last week, Apel explained the issues quite bluntly: "We are not here to play around with figures. What we have to take care of is the question of how to make practical defense decisions. It is by no means useful to our alliance if we are continuing to blame each other instead of consulting each other."

Apel issued a sharp rebuke to former U.S. defense secretary James Schlesinger, who toured West Germany for two weeks in an effort to convince the authorities in Bonn they must "increase their defense budgets, build up their armed forces." Said Apel, "Mr. Schlesinger's opinion is certainly of interest, but he is a private person, and in the present situation we can only take into account what official persons, that is, governments, have to say, and not what private persons think."

Elsewhere in the interview, Apel simply refused to discuss an increase in the military budget, in the number of combat troops, or deployment of Bundeswehr naval and ground forces to "hot spots" abroad. West German forces will stick to their constitutionally defined area of