

A new Cuban Missile Crisis

As in 1962, U.S. is playing a 'chicken game' with the USSR

At this very moment, the United States is committed to a confrontation with the Soviet Union. The crisis in the Persian Gulf, the threat of a Chinese invasion of Vietnam, and the official response of the U.S. government should remind anyone who lived through October 1962 of the Cuban Missile Crisis that nearly brought the world then to thermonuclear World War III.

All too few Americans have adequately grasped the situation. During the visit of China's Vice Premier Teng Hsiao-ping and with even more haste after Teng's departure, the British agent hierarchy of the Carter Administration have, in their collective insanity, steered a course as vivid and ominous in real terms as the staged escalation that preceded the Cuban Missile Crisis.

Today, as in the summer and fall of 1962, the United States is locked into a day-by-day pattern of escalation-counterescalation with the Soviet Union — a Rand Corporation scripted thermonuclear chicken game. The policy, as U.S. Defense Secretary Harold Brown told the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee on Feb. 7, is to foment surrogate wars throughout the world against the Soviet Union. The nation's military strategic policy has shifted to a "countervailing" strategy of "limited nuclear war" against the Soviet Union. The intention is not to fight off Soviet surrogate forces, but to force a Soviet military intervention in any one of a number of hot spots around the Soviet border — like Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Vietnam — as the pretext for launching a "limited" nuclear strike against the USSR.

This is National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski's scenario for an "arc of crisis" around the southern rim of the Soviet Union. It is also the Schlesinger counterforce doctrine for a limited first strike against Soviet missile sites — a doctrine which has received an official Administration policy endorsement.

Now look back at 1962 when the nuclear chicken game began by the signal of a British-loving Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara publicly espousing the same counterforce doctrine as Kennedy Administration policy. McNamara's infamous Ann Arbor speech of June 1962 set

into motion the response-counterresponse pattern that culminated in the Cuban Missile Crisis.

The U.S. is headed for a new Cuban Missile crisis. The countdown of the past six days is all too clear.

—Konstantin George

The countdown

Tuesday, Feb. 6: from Moscow, Soviet Premier Alexei Kosygin meets with Carter's Science and Technology Advisor Frank Press and says that the Soviet Union views as a "declaration of war" the "outrageous statements of Chinese Vice-Premier Teng in the United States." Kosygin expresses "surprise and disappointment that the U.S. has not commented on or refuted" Teng. It is in the interest of world peace that the U.S. disassociate itself from Teng's statements, says Kosygin.

Wednesday, Feb. 7: from Moscow, Carter's advisor Frank Press responds to Kosygin with a point-blank rejection: "We cannot muzzle foreign leaders."

Wednesday, Feb. 7: in Washington, D.C., Defense Secretary Brown testifies before the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee that "we have to find a way to help other countries fight off surrogate Soviet forces, like the Cubans in Africa." He tells the subcommittee that the United States had made a \$200 million arms pact with Saudi Arabia to assist North Yemen against the government of South Yemen. Questioned on alleged Soviet takeovers of countries in the so-called arc of crisis, Brown said: "You're right. But there's another side to this picture. We win some and we lose some. The USSR has lost ... China and Japan."

Thursday, Feb. 8: from Washington, D.C., Defense Secretary Brown says, according to Richard Burt of the New York Times, that the United States has shifted its military strategic posture to a countervailing strategy of "limited nuclear war" against the Soviet Union.

Friday, Feb. 9: from Washington, D.C., an ABC national

today

TV commentary by John Scali, who played a major mediating role in the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis, declares that Soviet troop movements have begun along the Sino-Soviet border and the CIA satellite analysis indicates that this is not a traditional type of maneuver. The Soviets, he says, are in a position to strike China should the Chinese make a move against Vietnam.

Friday, Feb. 9: from the Soviet Union and Poland, the foreign ministries issue a joint statement warning against "Peking's attempts to interfere in the internal affairs of Vietnam and Cambodia."

Friday, Feb. 9: from the Soviet Union, the foreign newsweekly *New Times* (No. 6 for 1979) hits the newsstands with a warning to China not to "overstep the forbidden line" into Cambodia or Vietnam. *New Times* calls upon "international opinion" to issue a "timely warning to Peking."

Late Friday, Feb. 9: in Washington, D.C., Harold Brown makes a statement to the press prior to his departure for the Middle East that "Soviet control of the vital oil-producing regions of the Persian Gulf, in particular, could destroy the cohesion of NATO and perhaps NATO's ability to defend itself... If the Soviets were to move to an attack ... their intervention could include a U.S. response."

Saturday, Feb. 10: from the United States, the press, through its correspondents who are in contact with "high State Department officials," leaks that "the Administration feels a Chinese attack on Vietnam is probable within the next weeks."

Saturday, Feb. 10: from Washington, D.C., President Carter officially endorses Harold Brown's (and Schlesinger's) "counterforce" doctrine.

Saturday, Feb. 10: from Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, the first stop of a 10-day tour of the Middle East, Defense Secretary Brown addresses Saudi Arabian ministers, officers, and

How it was in 1962

The current escalation of provocations being directed against the Soviets by the Carter Administration has a close parallel in the escalation steps that led to the 1962 Kennedy-Khrushchev showdown over Soviet missiles in Cuba in October 1962. In repudiating his administration's 1962 policy in July 1963, nine months later, a more mature President John Kennedy reflected: "And above all, while defending our own vital interests, nuclear powers must avert those confrontations which bring an adversary to a choice of either a humiliated retreat or a nuclear war. To adopt that kind of course in the Nuclear Age would be evidence only of the bankruptcy of our policy — or of a collective death wish of the world."

The missile crisis

U.S.: Following a U.S. announcement that it had achieved a four to one superiority in intercontinental ballistic missiles, Defense Secretary Robert McNamara declared on June 16, 1962 in Ann Arbor that the U.S. had adopted a counterforce policy against the Soviet Union, claiming the U.S. would maintain the option of "controlled thermonuclear war" — in effect, a declaration of a U.S. "first strike" policy.

USSR: On July 10 at the World Conference on General Disarmament and Peace, Nikita Khrushchev responded: "The U.S. press says that McNamara's statement had the approval of the White House, and interprets it as a sort of proposal to the Soviet Union on 'rules of conduct' for a nuclear war... It is a monstrous proposal filled from beginning to end with a misanthropic disdain for mankind, because it seeks to legalize nuclear war and thereby the murder of millions upon millions of people." He accused the U.S. of plotting "preventive war" under the cover of "taking the initiative."

In the summer of 1962, the Soviet Union sent SAM antiaircraft missiles to Cuba.

U.S.: The CIA assessment was that the SAMs presented no threat to U.S. national security.

On [redacted] bamboozled by Bundy and McNamara, Kennedy went on national television to announce the existence of the ground-to-ground missiles in Cuba, imposing an immediate "quarantine" on the island. He had, however, rejected an NSC plan for a "surgical strike" against Cuba.

USSR: The Soviet government released a statement warning of "catastrophic consequences for all mankind" if war should break out, promising to "frustrate the aggressive purposes of the American imperialist circles."

An Oct. 26 Red Star editorial declared that "the ruling circles of the United States, having decided to go for broke, are taking practical measures that could plunge the world into an atomic catastrophe... The policy of appeasing the aggressors has always lead to tragic consequences for the people."

cadets, promising U.S. aid "including the use of armed force if necessary — to help Saudi Arabia resist an external military threat... We can provide the best training and equipment in the world," and "we will do so... The Middle East faces the possibility of aggression from outside the region, probably supported by the Soviet Union...." Brown warns the Saudis against making even peaceful overtures to the Soviets, saying that "in Afghanistan, a government already friendly to the Soviets was overturned by an even more avidly pro-Moscow regime.... Just following a pro-Soviet line is no protection against a Soviet-backed coup."

Sunday, Feb. 11: in the United States, Senator Henry Jackson (D-Wa) says on CBS's "Face The Nation" that the sole purpose of Brown's trip to the Mideast is to "lay the foundation for a mutual defense pact between Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Israel which would be backed 100 percent by American financial aid and arms." He delivers a "threat" to the Saudis that it would be "very easy" for an "armed force of only 250 men" to "disrupt the Saudi oil fields." "Anyone who knows the area knows that."

Monday, Feb. 12: in Washington, D.C., President Carter, in response to a question at his press conference, refuses to repudiate the Chinese statements about the Soviet Union. Carter also endorses the new Iranian government of Ayatollah Khomeini and then predicts a worsening economic situation in the U.S. due to the "oil crisis."

Monday, Feb. 12: in Washington, D.C., Hodding Carter III gives a State Department briefing echoing Harold Brown's statement of Feb. 9: "The Soviet Union has lost China. The Kremlin is now debating exactly who lost China."

Monday, Feb. 12: from Amman, Jordan, Harold Brown demands the establishment of a "Persian Gulf Joint Command," the expansion of the U.S. strategic nuclear base at Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean, and the creation of an American airborne strike force for the Persian Gulf region.

Monday, Feb. 12: from the Soviet Union, in a broadcast on Iran, Radio Moscow states that "there are reports that the U.S. 82nd Special Task Force Paratroop Division is on full alert, although this has been denied by the Pentagon... U.S. troops in Europe are also said to be on alert."

Monday, Feb. 12: in Kuwait, Britain's Queen Elizabeth arrives on the first leg of a three-week trip to six states on the Arabian Peninsula. This is the first trip to the region by a British sovereign. "Like Harold Brown during his current visit to the region," says New York Times Mideast correspondent R. W. Apple, Jr., "the British Secretary (David Owen, who is accompanying the Queen) is expected to urge the Arab countries to maintain their decidedly pro-Western attitudes and not to conclude from the Iranian experience that the U.S. and Britain are unreliable friends in times of crisis. He will also emphasize the finer points of British weapons. ...

Brown gives Saudis the royal treatment

In strategically coordinated trips, Defense Secretary Harold Brown and Queen Elizabeth II descended on the Middle East last week to consolidate a regional anti-Soviet, NATO-style military pact. To blackmail moderate Arab nations into this scheme, both Brown and the Queen are further provoking the crisis in Iran. They warn of "Soviet-backed" Muslim "revolutions" spreading throughout the region.

Their target is Saudi Arabia. While in Riyadh, Brown tried to pressure the Saudis into dropping their opposition to Camp David and to instead throw their weight behind a regional defense pact, known by insiders as METO, the Middle East Treaty Organization. The core of METO would be Israel, and, should the Camp David accords be realized, Egypt as well.

The Saudis expressed little interest in getting involved in such a scheme. Brown's glowing reports of his "friendly" talks with Saudi officials notwithstanding, Brown's mission was a flop, reported Radio Moscow. Brown said the Saudis

China threatens war against Vietnam

Chinese Vice Premier Teng Hsiao-ping's warning that China would "punish" Vietnam are proving to be more than just tough words. A massive Chinese buildup of troops and materiel along their border with Vietnam has begun with reports of new armed incursions on a battalion scale by Chinese troops into Vietnam. According to reports from the region, on Feb. 8 a Chinese unit occupied a strategic hill inside the Vietnamese border and fortified it, prompting a quick Vietnamese demand that China withdraw "all its occupationist troops."

The Vietnamese charged that the Chinese incursion was a "serious, dangerous, and premeditated step by the Chinese authorities in their criminal hostility toward Vietnam which, if continued, undeniably proves the correctness and urgency" of a strong Vietnamese appeal to the United Nations (see below).

The tense situation in Indochina represents a grave threat to world peace, with the prospect of a Chinese attack on Vietnam leading to Soviet action in support of their Vietnamese allies with whom they have a treaty. The Baltimore Sun this past week quoted an anonymous military analyst in Hong Kong saying "a misstep now could mean the start of World War III." The Vietnamese, in a statement in the Vietnamese Communist Party daily Nhan Dan (excerpted below) and in their message to the United Nations, warned