

Singlaub Challenge Begins To 'Draw The Line' On Carter War Policy

"We have to draw the line on what these people in the Administration can get away with. The situation is very dangerous, we're on the brink of nuclear war. Congress has to move to counter Carter's policies." This was the assessment of a ranking member of the House Armed Services Investigations Subcommittee May 25 following testimony by Major General John K. Singlaub on the Carter Administration's decision to remove all U.S. combat forces from Korea.

In the wake of the challenge by Gen. Singlaub, the now-ousted U.S. chief of staff in Korea, to the Carter Korea policy, the following facts have emerged:

*Singlaub's view that Carter's Korea policy will lead to war is almost universally the view held by senior U.S. military personnel, both in Korea and elsewhere.

*Singlaub's view on the war danger in the Carter policy is also shared by the U.S. embassy in Seoul, and by leading U.S. government specialists on Korea.

*There is sweeping discontent over broad aspects of Carter foreign and military policymaking — and fear it will provoke thermonuclear war — among leading layers of both Congress and the U.S. military, discontent which is making itself felt around Carter's handling of the Singlaub affair.

*Press commentary on the affair has overwhelmingly supported Singlaub against Carter.

Carter's ostentatious attempt to silence Singlaub by removing him from his post, dressing him down in person, and putting out the word, through the *New York Times* and Defense Secretary Harold Brown, that any other military leader who dares to express independent views on relevant matters of U. S. policy will be similarly treated, has clearly backfired and backfired badly on the President.

In a press conference May 25 following the Investigations Subcommittee hearings, Subcommittee Chairman Rep. Samuel Stratton (D-NY) declared that "Secretary of Defense Harold Brown's statement that once the Administration has made a policy, that then the military leaders have to shut up, is exactly what went on in Hitler's Germany. We don't operate that way in this country...I hope that other generals concerned about the nation's security will speak out when they think a policy endangers the security of the nation."

The next day Carter appeared testy and defensive at his televised press conference, as reporters grilled him on such questions as whether or not his Administration applied a double standard to senior military officers such as Gen. Singlaub and fast talking UN Ambassador Andrew Young. Carter unconvincingly parried questioners by charging that it was Gen. Singlaub who — by calling

public attention to the Carter policy — was inviting a North Korean attack.

Taken as a whole, the developments surrounding the Singlaub testimony have alerted the nation that the bipartisan "Whig" majority in Congress has moved to confront the Carter Administration head on, drawing the line on the Trilateral Administration's drive for thermonuclear war.

There can no longer exist either public ignorance or doubt that:

* the decisive showdown between Whig-constitutional forces and the Carter Administration has begun; and

* that the *near-term* outcome of this struggle, with the nation facing radioactive extinction, will determine the question of America's very existence.

Threat to Nation

Following the Singlaub testimony, Stratton announced that Singlaub's appearance before the Investigations Subcommittee was only the beginning of a full investigation into the threat to the nation posed by the Carter Administration. Stratton announced that he will call General George S. Brown, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, before his subcommittee, "as soon as he returns from Korea," to inform the subcommittee why "no explanations on the withdrawal policy were forthcoming from either the JCS or the White House to the U.S. Military Command in South Korea ...despite repeated requests for such explanations." Stratton also underscored that the investigation would encompass "the entirety of U.S. Far East policy," and that "many other generals and officials" would be called upon to testify.

In the latest development, the investigation has been broadened to include the participation of the full House Armed Services Committee, a move which informed Washington sources report will give added clout to the probe.

Cartergate Atmosphere at Hearings

Notwithstanding Atlanticist press statements that Singlaub had been "humbled" by a stern Carter, the general maintained at the hearings his estimate of the Administration's Brookings Institution-authored proposal to withdraw U.S. forces from South Korea. "The U.S. embassy has the same view," Singlaub said, "that the Administration's troop withdrawal policy will lead to war...There are no senior U.S. military officials or Republic of Korea officials who agree with the President's withdrawal schedule...The question of why (a withdrawal) has been asked by the U.S. military command and the embassy on several occasions...to both the White House and the JCS...We never received a reply."

The hearings were characterized by a mood of strong support for Singlaub from a majority of subcommittee members, balanced by outbursts in defense of "the President" from the pro-Carter Fabian minority that sounded eerily reminiscent of the congressional defenders of Richard Nixon during the Watergate hearings.

Rep. Robin Beard, ranking Republican on the Subcommittee, then began the questioning: "Did the fact that the President never answered you make your job difficult?"

Singlaub: "Yes, it made it extremely difficult."

Reps. Robert Legget (D-Cal) and David Treen (R-La) then denounced the Administration policy as "incompetent." At this point, Administration supporter Ron Dellums (D-Cal) began shrieking: "This hearing was designed to set up and embarrass the President. You're crippling the President's ability to make policy...Your comments hit right to the heart of the President's policies...as former Secretary of Defense Schlesinger said, 'There is no physical or military justification for the troops being there.'"

Singlaub: "That was at a time when others felt that way. Since then they've changed their minds (naming Generals Stillwell, Vessy, Hollingsworth — past and present U.S. commanders in Korea)."

Rep. Badham (R-Cal): "Regarding Mr. Dellums' charges...our constitutional mandate is extremely clear."

Rep. Lucien Nedzi (D-Mich): "Is it your belief that you're entitled to speak out as a military leader?...You have ambushed the President...(You should) follow orders."

Standard of Conduct Set at Nuremberg

Rep. Richard Ichord (D-Mo.): "The prosecutions by the U.S. at Nuremberg set the standard for responsibility and conduct of military officials for the policies they implement. That should answer your question, Mr. Nedzi."

Nedzi: "Nuremberg?! What's going on here?"

Chairman Stratton: "I believe Lieutenant Calley ran into the same problem...I don't believe this will hurt your career at all, General Singlaub."

Rep. Charles Wilson (D-Cal): "I'm no fan of Mr. Schlesinger. This is the same Secretary of Defense who went to China, got brainwashed, came back and now he wants to arm the Chinese."

Rep. Donald Mitchell (R-NY): "President Carter's broken many other promises, maybe he'll break this one too (uproarious laughter from the galleries)." At this point, pro-Carter Rep. Pat Schroeder could no longer contain herself and burst out with: "This is a kangaroo court against the President. He's being tried without being present."

Singlaub: "Let me answer that...I was ordered to appear by Secretary of Defense Harold Brown."

Rep. Daniel (D-Va.): "I hope, God forbid, if we fight another land war it won't be a State Department war...We've drawn on the first one(Korea) and lost the other (Vietnam)."

Singlaub: "At least the first time, in Korea, you could tell who your enemy was there."

Fabian Rep. Thomas Downey (D-NY), in almost a

shrill scream: "You aren't implying that the State Department is your enemy?"

The summation was then given by ranking minority member Beard and Chairman Stratton. "I hope we are going to get more people from the field to continue this investigation," said Beard. Stratton added, "We do intend to bring in more field commanders...One of the obvious things we are going to have to do is get someone from the JCS up here, as to why our field commanders cannot get explanations for policies they're asked to carry out."

U. S. Press Reports Dissent In Military Is Wide

Chicago Tribune, May 26, "Lashing A General Won't End Carter's Military Problems," by Chicago Tribune columnist, Jack Fuller:

Washington — Carter and his Defense Secretary Harold Brown have put together a civilian leadership in the Pentagon that does not please the brass. His new appointments have quite liberal, and to the brass, anti-military credentials. The brass won't get sympathetic hearings from bosses...

The temptation is to short circuit the chain of command, to go public, to make an anti-administration case on Capitol Hill. Seen in this context, the Singlaub comment appeared to the White House more than aberrant indiscretion. They were portents of things to come...The underlying tension between the brass and civilian leadership in the Pentagon and White House will remain to manifest themselves again.

Los Angeles Times wire service, appearing in the Los Angeles Times, Newsday, the San Jose Mercury (and others), May 26, "Fired General Says Dissent is Wide," by Norman Kempster:

Washington — The general who lost his job for criticizing President Carter's Korean policy said yesterday that every senior U.S. official in Seoul agrees with him that withdrawal of U.S. ground forces risks a new Korean war...

If Singlaub is even close to accurate in his assessment of the views of his fellow officers, it might explain why Carter moved so swiftly to discipline him. The Administration might have been able to shrug off the opinion of a lone dissenter, but not a chorus of criticism...

New York Daily News, May 25, "Korea: Silencing the General, Not the Debate," by James Wieghart:

Washington — ... I do not feel constrained to join in the hosannas for the misfortune visited upon the general... Singlaub clearly had no intention of being in the hubub that followed the *Washington Post* story.

But more importantly, there is a possibility that Singlaub's assessment is right and Carter's is wrong. There is no question that, next to the Middle East, the most dangerous place in the world today — in terms of potential conflict that could rapidly involve the major powers — is the Korean peninsula, with Tokyo, Peking, and Vladivostok less than one hour away by jet, Korea is obviously a strategic piece of real estate...

It would be unfortunate if the removal of Singlaub is taken as a signal that the debate and discussion over Carter's decision to pull out of Korea is now over.

Chicago Tribune, May 27, "Mr. Carter Flunks on Korea," editorial:

... General Singlaub told Congress that (Mr. Carter's) "explanation" didn't do the job. "We have not heard any rationale, any reason given," he said. "It is making our job extremely difficult."

He said requests by the American military in Korea to the Joint Chiefs of Staff for the reasons behind the policy had gone unanswered. The impression is left that the "explanation" the President referred to was in the nature of "this is what you're going to do, so shut up and get going." ... For all we know, his discussions with the military were as one-sided as his "explanation" to the people in Korea. And if we did learn of the opposition of

men like General Singlaub, this President who promised an open administration, didn't see fit to mention it to the American people...

There is now talk in Congress of summoning the Joint Chiefs of Staff to give their version of what happened when they were "consulted" about Korea. This should help to show whether Mr. Carter actually had any military support at all for his policy or whether he is simply carrying out an ill-informed promise he made as a candidate for the presidency. We need to know the truth.

Detroit News, May 27, "Withdrawal Decision Seen as New Threat to Peace," editorial:

... (Retired Army General and editor of the American Enterprise Institute's Defense Review, Richard G. Stillwell, said:... "U.S. forces in Korea are... essential assets... in strengthening the partnership with Japan... improving relations with the People's Republic of China, sustaining the region's economic equilibrium... and preventing nuclear proliferation...")

... The withdrawal decision, it is now confirmed, did not reflect the opinion of the U.S. Army officers on the ground, and was in effect, a campaign pledge that became policy with Mr. Carter's election.

Isn't that sufficient reason to be worried?

Vance Foiled Again In Geneva

U.S. Secretary of State Cyrus Vance was squashed for the second time in as many months following his May 18 Geneva summit with Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko to discuss strategic arms limitations (SALT). President Carter's latest try at convincing the Soviets to accept a "deep cuts" proposal in their national security occurred at the same time as his Mideast scenario backfired (see Mideast report) bringing the Likud electoral victory in Israel and lowering the threshold for nuclear war.

These events, according to highly placed, informed sources, prompted the Soviet representative at Geneva to point out to a shocked Vance that the Likud sweep had been interpreted by the Soviet leadership to signify the Carter Administration's final resolve to provoke a world war confrontation.

At the conclusion of the two-day Geneva meeting, the Western press blared "breakthroughs" and "gains" despite the fact that nothing of the kind was achieved. At his May 20 press conference upon departure from Geneva, Gromyko said unequivocally that while "certain progress" had been made, an agreement was still very much lacking and the U.S. side has not in any way renounced its intention to seek one-sided advantages to the detriment of Soviet security. "We have repeated this on more than one occasion and we will repeat again — we cannot accept such an agreement."

On May 23 a senior Tass commentator strongly reiterated Gromyko's attacks against U.S. attempts to

"diminish the security of the Soviet Union" and secure "an advantage to the American side."

Gromyko's statements embody exactly the same rejection of Carter's "deep cuts" proposal made by the Soviets at last month's Moscow SALT talks. The unacceptable "deep cuts" would mean a slashing of Soviet heavy missiles, while a full crop of NATO tactical nuclear weapons aimed at the Soviet Union from Western Europe would be maintained. The proposal also seeks to destroy Soviet Research and Development in nuclear technology — which currently forms the Soviet's marginal superiority in defense over the U.S.

The joint Geneva communique printed in *Pravda* May 22 confirmed the death of the "deep cuts." "They (Soviet Union and United States) studied in detail the matter of preparing a new agreement on limitation of strategic arms on the basis of the Vladivostok Accord...." This 1974 agreement provided a simple ceiling on strategic missiles and launchers which were acceptable to both sides.

Another proposal touted in the press as "Vladivostok plus," supposedly would force the U.S. to accept limits on their "cruise missile" and the Soviets to accept a concession on their Backfire bomber. This supposed lone "concession" which the press claimed was made by the Soviets, is actually a concession by Washington. According to the *Baltimore Sun*, the Soviets agreed to position their Backfire bomber in such a way that they could not reach U.S. territory; the Backfire will not in