

Congress challenges Carter war doctrine

by Barbara Dreyfuss

“Many serious questions and uncertainties arise as a consequence of this shift in strategic policy” to Presidential Directive 59’s military doctrine. “We are deeply distressed that this policy seems based on the assumption that nuclear war is limitable,” stated an Aug. 26 letter to President Carter signed by 27 U.S. Congressmen.

“We believe, however, that since it is extremely unlikely that nuclear war can be limited, this policy has precisely the opposite effect intended: it creates the illusion of flexible response, when in reality any decision to use nuclear weapons would have the same cataclysmic consequences as a total nuclear strike,” the letter states.

“I don’t think we should stick our necks out,” said Republican Congresswoman Millicent Fenwick, one of the letter’s signatories, at the close of a House Foreign Affairs subcommittee hearing on the Carter administration’s decision to establish a U.S. military base in Somalia.

The administration’s buildup in the Horn of Africa and Indian Ocean is widely perceived in Congress as a commitment to stage a regional confrontation with the Soviet Union. In the wake of Defense Secretary Harold Brown’s Aug. 19 declaration that limited nuclear war is now official U.S. policy under Presidential Directive 59, and that Washington is prepared to meet any “conventional aggression” from the U.S.S.R. with a first nuclear strike, Congressmen further perceive that such a confrontation could spin into a world war the United States would lose.

Columnist Jack Anderson’s charges last month that

the administration plans an incursion into Iran to bolster Carter’s electoral support have contributed to the unusual concern expressed by liberals and Democrats on the Hill, as well as conservative Republicans—a concern generating a series of Congressional hearings. Rep. Samuel Stratton this week warned against Carter’s abuse of strategic military information for “political” reasons; this, he said, motivated his call for Defense Secretary Brown to testify on both military “leakage” and the rumored Iranian raid plan.

Foreign affairs hearings

Preliminary action has come from the House Foreign Affairs Committee. On Aug. 26 its subcommittee on African affairs, chaired by New York Democrat Rep. Stephen Solarz, held hearings on the Brzezinski commitment to establish a military base in Somalia. Testimony came from former State Department official Leslie Gelb, an opponent of the PD 59 doctrine who asserted that such bases would lead to a potential U.S. conflict with the Soviets. Also testifying was a CIA representative who warned that the Somalians still have troops in Ethiopia, whose government is Soviet-allied, and the U.S. could rapidly be drawn into a future conflict between the two. A subcommittee staffer commented: “Indirectly, through proxy forces, the U.S. and U.S.S.R. could become engaged. Seven of the eight members of our subcommittee are opposed to a base there for that reason. They will send a letter to Muskie. They will also try to block funding for the base in the

appropriations committee.” Congresswoman Millicent Fenwick commented afterward to *EIR* that, pending a convincing demonstration that a base is vital to U.S. defense, the Somalian move would be “like putting your hand into a nest of red ants.”

At the same time, the Foreign Affairs subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs chaired by Rep. Lester Wolff (D-N.Y.) opened hearings on the ramifications of a U.S. alliance with China. The subcommittee heard from former Ambassador to the Soviet Union Malcolm Toon, who warned of dangerous Soviet responses to such an alliance. At the hearings Banning Garrett, formerly of the Institute for International Studies at the University of California, detailed the activities of a small group of policymakers intent on forging a U.S.-China military alliance, and what he characterized as the dangers of such a global alliance.

Leslie Gelb followed his Aug. 26 testimony to the House Foreign Affairs subcommittee with a strong warning that PD 59 could be triggered over Chinese actions. In an Aug. 31 article in the *Miami Herald*, Gelb declared, “To plan on making a nuclear attack against Soviet armies after they have moved into Western Europe or China, allied or friendly countries, is bizarre.”

The Iran question

The likelihood that a U.S. military move in Iran would go totally out of control has prompted extraordinary Congressional monitoring of the White House and National Security Council. “The House Armed Services Committee is watching Carter very closely in terms of any maneuvers he might pull that could point toward deployment of an expeditionary force,” said a committee staff member this week. Warnings against such action have repeatedly come from congressmen.

Subcommittee chairman Samuel Stratton is demanding to know why top Pentagon officials leaked information about the so-called Stealth technology that would allow aircraft to fly undetected by Soviet radar. Stratton has stated that he intends to see “if the Defense Department does take seriously the question of safeguarding its most secret documents.” He warned that the leaks about the new technology were “designed to make the Pentagon look good.” Last week Senator John Tower, a Texas Republican, went further, charging that the President is “jeopardizing national security to advance his reelection prospects.”

Stratton will also question Brown about leaks to columnist Jack Anderson on secret Carter-Brzezinski plans for an Iranian invasion. The committee has strongly expressed its opposition to such adventures in the wake of this spring’s invasion scandal, on the grounds of military unpreparedness.

Documentation

‘The illusion of flexible response’

The following letter from members of Congress for Peace Through Law appeared in the Aug. 26 Congressional Record.

Dear Mr. President:

As Members of Congress long interested in and still committed to controlling nuclear arms, we are writing to express our deep concern over recent reports regarding your decision to implement a new strategic policy for the United States, reported as Presidential Directive No. 59. . . .

We are deeply distressed that this policy seems based on the assumption that nuclear war is limitable. As we understand the new doctrine, its purpose is to allow for nuclear options short of a total strike—thereby enhancing our credibility in the use of nuclear weapons. We believe, however, that since it is extremely unlikely that nuclear war can be limited, this policy has precisely the opposite effect intended: it creates the illusion of flexible response, when in reality any decision to use nuclear weapons would have the same cataclysmic consequences as a total nuclear strike.

Moreover, we question whether, by providing ourselves with other, more “palatable” choices than assured destruction, we present a more effective deterrent to Soviet aggression. We can foresee circumstances which, under this doctrine, our nuclear deterrent would in fact be weakened. Suppose the Soviets were preparing an invasion of Western Europe. Fearing that such an invasion might provoke us into an attack upon their nuclear arsenal, they would be forced to fire their missiles in order to avoid losing them. And the mere suspicion that the Soviets might behave in this way would force us into the same “use or lose” syndrome, in which the pressures compelling us to launch our own weapons might well prove irresistible. . . .

We request a full accounting of Presidential Directive #59 at the earliest possible time, and ask that its effective date be deferred until the Congress, the State Department, and the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency have had ample opportunity to consider and debate its implications.

Signators were:

Jonathan Bingham (D-N.Y.), George Brown, Jr.

(D-Calif.), Shirley Chisholm (D-N.Y.), Silvio Conte (R-Mass.), Robert Drinan (D-Mass.), Bob Edgar (D-Pa.), Don Edwards (D-Calif.), Edward Forsyth (R-N.J.), Robert Garcia (D-N.Y.), Benjamin Rosenthal (D-N.Y.), John Seiberling (D-Ohio), Paul Simon (D-Ill.), Louis Stokes (D-Ohio), Fortney Stark (D-Calif.), Bruce Vento (D-Minn.), James Weaver (D-Ore.), Tim Harkin (D-Iowa), Harold Hollenbeck (R-N.J.), Elizabeth Holtzman (D-N.Y.), James Johnson (R-Colo.), Robert Kastenmeier (D-Wisc.), William Lehman (D-Fla.), Andrew Maguire (D-N.J.), George Miller (D-Calif.), Richard Ottinger (D-N.Y.), Ted Weiss (D-N.Y.), Jerry Studds (D-Mass.)

'Making the Carter administration look good'

EIR's Barbara Dreyfuss interviewed Rep. Samuel Stratton (D-N.Y.), chairman of the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Investigations, on Sept. 3, 1980.

Q: What was your main concern in calling Secretary Brown to testify in regard to the leaks from the Pentagon about the Stealth technology?

A: My concern is what the Defense Department is doing or not doing to protect its secrets.

Q: Do you think that the release of the information about Stealth was politically motivated?

A: As far as the release of the Stealth technology, there seems to be no other explanation than to make the Pentagon look good regardless of what we do vis-à-vis the Soviets. They are not worried that we may have compromised major secrets.

Q: I understand you will look into why the leaks were made about a possible U.S. invasion into Iran, the leaks that Jack Anderson made public.

A: This is the same problem. The question is why all this information is able to get out so easily. Why are we so sloppy with major secrets?

Q: What do you plan to do once the reasons become clear, what actions do you plan to take?

A: We will see whether some major changes in the Pentagon structure are necessary. I have the impression from Admiral Murphy's testimony last week that they are very casual about it, that in a democracy, they feel, there will be leaks anyway. With the Stealth question it was not until we decided to hold hearings that they looked into the leaks. We're going to find out why we are failing—if reorganization is necessary or additional legislation.

From an EIR interview with Congressman Millicent Fenwick (R-N.J.), member of the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on African Affairs:

Q: You signed a letter to Secretary Muskie about your concern over the U.S. building bases in Somalia and were at the House Foreign Affairs subcommittee hearings on this last week. What is your concern over this?

A: I think that it is like putting your hand into a nest of red ants. There would be a tremendous buildup of arms. . . . If the Defense Department says that it is essential for the defense of the country, but if it is not that necessary, if it is just another cozy spot, then I don't think we should stick our necks out.

Q: There is a lot of fear, I understand, that a U.S. base in Somalia could lead to a U.S.-Soviet confrontation by proxy.

A: What happens if we build something and then leave a skeleton crew? They will be military men, and then MIG-15s come piloted by Cubans or Ethiopians. I don't like it and until I am told that the country's defense depends on it

Q: I thought it was important that there was a bipartisan agreement on the letter and concern over the bases.

A: It is a relief that somebody is thinking of the country and not political gains. I don't think we should placate powerful politicians. There is not room for games. I am not interested in games to impress somebody or to placate somebody.

'An embrace at any price with the PRC'

Paul McCloskey (R-Cal.) inserted the following statement into the Congressional Record, Aug. 21:

Jack Anderson does a public service in these articles even should he be overly pessimistic or even dead wrong . . . someone in the Carter administration obviously feels that the President might take overly aggressive action or the contingency plan information would never have reached Jack Anderson. President Carter [should] consider the fact that many Americans consider him capable of putting political interests ahead of the national security. . . .

Rep. Thomas Tauke (R-Ia.) said Aug. 22 in the House:

It is quite clear that the President reacted to Soviet adventurism throughout the world by rushing pell mell into an embrace at any price with the People's Republic of China. That certainly did nothing to improve the image of the United States in the world or to demonstrate the stability of our foreign policy.

The men behind the China card

On Aug. 26 the Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs carried out the second of a series of hearings on the U.S.-China relationship under the direction of subcommittee chairman Rep. Lester Wolff. We excerpt here the most important testimony at the hearing, given by Banning Garrett, a researcher at the Institute of International Studies at the University of California (Berkeley). Garrett is completing a book—The “China Card” and its Origins.

Within the government, . . . the strategic relationship with China has been the subject of intense debates for the last seven years, including a vehement struggle over whether to go public with the issue of establishing military ties with China. Emerging from the struggle has been a series of detailed plans for establishing such a defense relationship with China—a policy perceived by both its proponents and its opponents as having potentially profound repercussions on our relations with the Soviet Union. In spite of the known risks, however, the Carter administration has nevertheless come to embrace this policy. The Republican Party platform speaks of transferring to China technology with “offensive military applications” and Ronald Reagan four years ago termed U.S. arms sales to China a “natural development.”

In short, we are developing a military relationship with China which is acknowledged to have far-reaching global implications for the United States, and this relationship is likely to be continued regardless of who occupies the White House next January. Yet, there has been little public discussion of this strategic realignment. . . . Probably no other issue has been more sensitive or more closely held. . . .

Before going any farther, I would like to note that the term “military ties” covers a very broad spectrum of developments, ranging from selling China computers with potential military applications or exchanging military attachés, to a full NATO-like alliance relationship. . . . Just which type of military ties should be implemented has usually been the focus of debate. . . . Finally, the notion of establishing some sort of military ties with China has been the essence of the “China card” as commonly referred to. . . .

As I have implied, the plan for developing a military relationship with China was not the invention of Presi-

dent Carter or his National Security Adviser, Zbigniew Brzezinski. Although one may question the wisdom of the policy or the way it has been implemented, the emerging military relationship with China cannot be explained as simply a knee-jerk reaction to Afghanistan or the Soviet combat brigade in Cuba. My study shows that the plan . . . dates back seven years and has been addressed in hundreds of classified studies and plans in the years since 1973. And cautious, halting steps toward military ties with China have been taken since 1975, with many of the same actors pushing the policy then who are behind it in the Carter administration.

. . . These people, although a small group, by no means form a clique. There are many sharp differences and personal animosities among them. Many of them will be familiar to this committee, and you will see that they are not confined to one political party or one administration, and that they include career consultants and political appointees. Remarkably, not only is the number of participants small, but the number of key positions in the government is even smaller and these people often have replaced each other in the key jobs.

One of the most mysterious and secretive players in this drama, Michael Pillsbury, who is now a defense policy adviser to Ronald Reagan, testified before at your last hearing held in July. From reading his testimony, Mr. Chairman, I would say he told you far less than he knows about the policy issues behind the speech by Assistant Secretary of State Richard Holbrooke, which he analyzed for this committee. This is an indication of the obstacles you are up against. . . .

Pillsbury, whose name recurs again and again in this story as a tireless lobbyist for military ties with China in the 1973-76 period, is not the only Reagan campaign name involved. Former CIA analyst Roger Glenn Brown and former CIA National Intelligence Officer for China, James R. Lilley, were involved in the earlier years of this debate. They are currently Bush campaign advisers, and Lilley, who worked for George Bush in Beijing in 1974-75, spent last week in China with the Republican Vice-Presidential nominee.

On the Democratic side, one key figure, who published the most important articles on the subject before he joined the Carter administration, is Richard Holbrooke. Another Carter appointee who left the administration a year ago but before that had drafted a key section of the only interdepartmental study on military ties with China, Presidential Review Memorandum 24 (PRM 24), is Leslie Gelb. And Michel Oksenberg, who was not involved until he joined Brzezinski's NSC staff in 1977, wrote important implementing documents before he returned to his teaching post at the University of Michigan last year.

The permanent bureaucracy also has been important, with GS-15 and GS-16 officials involved from the Office

of the Secretary of Defense, including Frank Tapparo, Lynn Rylander, and the current Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Air Force, Willard Mitchell. Another participant who is well-known to this committee is our current ambassador to Thailand, Morris Abramowitz, who sponsored several key studies when he served as Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs, East Asia, and the Pacific. Also involved have been Gelb's replacement at the State Department, Reginald Bartholomew, who worked for Abramowitz in the Pentagon at one point and later at the NSC, and Richard Holbrooke's current deputy, Michael Armacost. Armacost began following the issue of military ties with China in 1974 for Winston Lord, who was then head of policy planning in the State Department. Armacost later served on the NSC, then took Abramowitz's job at the Pentagon when the latter went to Thailand, and finally returned to the State Department.

Another crucial factor in the drama is Richard Solomon, a leading academic specialist on China who served on Kissinger's NSC staff from 1971 to 1976 and then replaced Pillsbury as Rand's chief China expert. And, finally, a latecomer to the game who nevertheless has become a key player in the last year, is the Undersecretary of Defense for Policy, Robert Komer. . . .

The basic plan and rationale for establishing a military relationship with China was completed in March 1974 and was called "L-32." It was written by Michael Pillsbury, then a Rand analyst. These sources agree that Pillsbury had proposed the idea six months earlier in a short memo that had attracted enough interest in the Pentagon to get funding for L-32. But they disagreed about the contents of L-32, some saying it was similar to an article by Pillsbury published later, and others saying that the Rand study included significant and "explosive" material never published.

It is highly significant to note that Pillsbury's plan was proposed at a time when he was holding secret monthly meetings with senior Chinese military officials at the United Nations. Pillsbury sent memorandums about those meetings to about 20 key officials at the Pentagon, CIA, NSC, and State Department. These quasi-official meetings with the Chinese representatives of the People's Liberation Army General Staff, including the equivalent of two generals and an admiral, apparently demonstrated serious Chinese interest in military intelligence sharing with the United States, and in purchasing sophisticated military equipment and technology from the United States—this in 1973! . . .

Although we thus remain largely in the dark about this mysterious L-32, an article that sources agree was based on L-32 was published in September 1975 by Richard Holbrooke, then editor of *Foreign Policy* magazine. . . .

. . . Unknown to key middle-level officials at the State Department, the CIA and NSC, publication of the article in *Foreign Policy* was encouraged, perhaps for different reasons, by both Secretary of State Kissinger and Secretary of Defense Schlesinger.

When L-32 was first distributed in the spring of 1974, it provoked considerable interest and controversy within the government and led to quiet Pentagon sponsorship of a number of other studies on the subject over the next several years. . . .

The L-32 plan

I was told by several sources that Consolidated Guidance Number 8 . . . was a rehash of these earlier studies, especially the Rylander studies. CG 8 was done last year and excerpts of it were leaked to the *New York Times* last October 4, shortly after it was leaked that Secretary of Defense Brown would be going to China. According to the *Times* and my interviews, CG 8 explored the possibilities of U.S. wartime aid to China, joint contingency planning with the Chinese, including the possibility of stationing U.S. warplanes, naval vessels or even ground forces in China during a crisis. Among the details addressed in CG 8 were pre-positioning of munitions and equipment and plans for supporting base structures for U.S. forces in China. The type of potential military cooperation with China described in CG 8 is remarkably similar to U.S. military agreements with NATO allies.

Administration officials were quick to publicly dismiss CG 8 as a "think piece" when it was revealed. But I hope subsequent events—and my testimony—will convince the committee that CG 8 and other documents I have mentioned should be taken very seriously. The record shows that many of the specified moves outlined in the earlier studies have already been implemented, including: approval of allied arms sales to China, approval of transfer of selected items of U.S. high technology with potential military applications; approval of sales of selected items of nonlethal military equipment; exchange of military academy delegations and exchange of visits of defense ministers. As far as I know, such steps as joint contingency planning or stationing of U.S. forces in China are very far from immediate options, but the logic of the past suggests that they are steps that may be taken farther down the road we currently are on.

The U.S.-China military relationship has momentum and a structure. It is developing so far in a direction which has specified, preplanned steps that lead eventually to an alliance-like security relationship, whether it is called such or not. My study also suggests that focusing solely on the issue of U.S. arms sales to China as the litmus test of how far we have gone with the Chinese may miss the point of what is already going on or may not be too far down the road. ■