

President Carter tamed. The Russians, though clearly surprised by the behavior of the new American president, did not believe that it would last. Today it is quite different. Some of Mr. Carter's statements on human rights suggest that he is ready to risk a major confrontation with the Russians on this issue, and the Europeans are duly alarmed. The Russians themselves have begun attacking the President in a way normally reserved, if not for the Chinese, at least for West European conservatives.

The prepared western approach is to conduct exchanges "below the level of polemics", and to win a few more concessions from the Russians on human rights questions without making them feel that their very system is being undermined. That would not be easy at the best of times, but it is made more difficult in the evident tenseness of the Soviet approach to the meeting, and the tendency of President Carter to go farther on human rights than some of his allies would wish. The

West Germans for one, are especially nervous. They have had their own not unsuccessful policy of detente in Europe for a number of years.... Any quarrel in Belgrade which led to a hardening of Soviet policy would tend to be attributed to President Carter, and there would be a split in the western camp. It would be ironic indeed if the Conference on Security and Cooperation ended by setbacks to both, between allies as well as adversaries.

Le Monde, June 15:

It is hardly conceivable that, going against the concerns of its allies, the U.S. adopt an aggressive attitude that will lead to the failure of the conference and a return to the cold war climate which Helsinki was set up to prevent in the first place.... No one is innocent on the human rights question, one should sweep under one's own door before pointing at the neighbors....

Carter Administration Split Over Belgrade Policy

Even as the 35-nation Conference on Security and Cooperation (CSCE) in Europe convened in Belgrade, Yugoslavia, the Carter Administration appeared to be hopelessly split over two contending policy options for the meeting: all-out confrontation with the Soviet Union over alleged East Bloc "human rights violations," the policy espoused by National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski; and discreet compromise, advocated by Secretary of State Cyrus Vance.

In a speech to the Magazine Publishers Association June 12, and a press conference June 13, a Brzezinski-tutored Carter reiterated his intention to "aggressively challenge" the Soviets on human rights. "I have no second thoughts or hesitation about it," he said. Commenting on "the Soviets' reaction against me personally," Carter declared, "I believe that the pressure of world opinion might be making itself felt on them, and perhaps I'm kind of a scapegoat for that adverse reaction on their part."

Vance's plea for moderation was first heard over the weekend as informed international observers concluded that the Carter-Brzezinski "aggressive challenge to the Soviets" had backfired. "The Soviets have sensed an opportunity to use the Belgrade talks to drive a wedge between Washington and its allies," the *New York Times* warned June 14 on behalf of "former" *Times* board of directors member Vance.

The *Washington Post* today observed that West Europeans "have strong praise for the firm yet moderate tone of Secretary of State Cyrus Vance," but are "unsettled at the prospect that Carter may unleash another barrage aimed at Moscow during the conference." To many Europeans, the *Post* reported, Carter "appears unpredictable and emotionally involved in the human rights question."

Enter Kissinger

The success of pre-Belgrade Soviet diplomacy has prompted Nelson Rockefeller, flanked by former U.S.

Ambassador to Moscow Averell Harriman, to initiate fall-back options to mitigate Carter-Brzezinski recklessness. A highly placed observer with input into Belgrade policymaking circles this week revealed that the White House, National Security Council, and State Department are riddled with three competing groups: the Brzezinski "hardliners," Harrimanite "softies" who are working with West Europeans to defuse a Belgrade blow-up, and diplomatic "professionals," primarily in the State Department, who want to resurrect the "balanced diplomacy" of former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger. The observer, who is associated with Georgetown's Center for Strategic and International Studies, and recently met with Kissinger, the long-time protégé of Nelson Rockefeller, identified the negotiating "style" of Brzezinski as the U.S. "problem" at Belgrade.

"There is a definite difference of style between say Carter and Brzezinski on the one hand and Kissinger on the other," he confided. "I'd like to see an intelligent column on the absolutely critical importance of style." If Carter and Brzezinski "go all out, we are definitely back in the Cold War... (but) Europe does not want a real tough confrontation. They are worried about Carter. Quite frankly they are more interested in the 'baskets' dealing with trade, travel, economic cooperation and so forth. The key thing to keep in mind is that it would be a mistake to think that we can force a quick breakthrough with the Russians."

To avoid making such a mistake, he suggested, the Administration must call Kissinger back into active service. "I'd say that Henry is going to hold his water as long as he can, until he's called on... a call from the President or Cy (Vance)... 'til then he'll try to hold his water as long as he can."

Kissinger's re-emergence as the shopworn "globetrotting diplomat par excellence" was noted in other quarters in Washington, D.C. this week. A foreign policy aide to Senator Scoop Jackson (D-Wash) volunteered

that she was astonished to learn that the State Department had recently been printing and distributing to the press releases by the former Secretary of State.

Administration Shifts

Despite Carter's continued "moralizing" postures, Nelson Rockefeller's fall-back orders have not been lost on "professional" staffers anxious to retain their jobs at the State Department, the Washington, D.C.-based Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, and the NSC.

Meg Donovan, an assistant to Rep. Dante Fascell, chairman of the CSCE, remonstrated June 13, "If you go in (to Belgrade) with screaming and yelling and arm flailing, we will disrupt things too much and won't be set up for the second meeting in the fall...the non-aligned countries are angry over Carter's bloc-to-bloc confrontation....Nothing would be gained if the Soviets are forced to walk out or something equally disastrous." Only one week before, Ms. Donovan had gloated that the U.S. would succeed in provoking the Soviets into "storming out and going home."

A colleague at the Commission admitted, "there has been a subtle shift in our negotiating posture at Belgrade."

Commission chairman Fascell, echoing his staff, leaped to introduce a "moderate" resolution on Belgrade into Congress yesterday, after learning that Rep. Newton Steers and Sen. Hubert Humphrey were circulating a "tough" Brzezinski version among their colleagues which had already garnered 39 Senate and 52 House co-sponsors.

At a recent cocktail party in Washington, D.C., a former aide to Senator Ted Kennedy (D-Mass), who is now employed by Brzezinski's NSC, commented on his boss's Belgrade strategy: "It's going to backfire. Everyone knows there's a lot of ammunition the Soviets and Europeans can use against the United States on human rights...the racial issue, for example. We'll take a licking at Belgrade if it continues."

Vice President Mondale, quickest to scent the change in the air, tried to moderate the Administration's policy as early as June 8 in a speech to the Naval Academy. "This Administration is not going to be strident in our defense of human rights," he declared. "We're not seeking to throw down a gauntlet before any nation. Nor do we have any illusions that regimes which rule by force and terror will change overnight."

Whichever Administration policy prevails at Belgrade, the damage has been done, thanks to the Carter-Brzezinski provocations, and Europe is lost, according to *New York Times* columnist James Reston. Writing from Bonn, Reston reported that West European leaders, led by West German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt, are accusing Carter of reneging on an agreement reached at the London Summit to tone down the human rights rhetoric. "Instead, they insist, Mr. Carter has kept inciting the Congress and American public opinion on the human rights issue, and is making things worse on the eve of the Belgrade conference. Obviously there is a serious problem...between Mr. Carter and Mr. Schmidt. Their London agreement has broken down...."