

Three Tough Tests For White House Foreign Policy

During the final one-third of April Jimmy Carter faces the toughest foreign policy test of his presidency. Three interlocked strategic issues will enter a decisive phase, and at stake in the outcome of these three there may well be the survival of the Administration itself. The first is the much endangered vote on the second Panama Canal

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treaty; second, almost simultaneously, Secretary of State Cyrus Vance will arrive in Moscow for negotiations on the second Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT II), which is known to be nearly concluded due to major Soviet concessions. Thirdly, these tests coincide with the daily escalation of the confrontation building up in southern Africa (see Third World Report).

There is a concerted effort to hand Carter a series of clamorous failures, discrediting the Presidency and thus undermining the U.S.'s capacity to act in its own national interests for policies of peace and development. Where this effort is coming from is not difficult to discern. The press of Great Britain and British-connected American media have led the way in portraying Carter as weak and vacillating. And Henry Kissinger, whose loyalties to Britain are merely underlined by his treacherous recent service to the Israeli government, has personally taken charge of gulling conservatives through their anti-Soviet profile into ensuring the defeat of the White House.

Such sheep are on the verge of bleating their way into a situation in which there are mass disturbances in Panama (already begun), war in southern Africa, totally deteriorated relations with the USSR — and an Administration reduced to a weak pawn of the weak but desperate British monarchy.

The British escalated their siege of the Administration when Tory "shadow cabinet" Minister of Defense Ian Gilmour made the most savage public attack against a U.S. President since the days of Lincoln when he ridiculed Carter's decision to delay production of the so-called neutron bomb. London's *Sunday Express* carried Gilmour's speech under a banner headline, "Carter... 'This weak, scared man.'" Playing to the Tory backbenchers, Gilmour ranted, "after an orgy of

weakness and vacillation, the wrong decision has finally been reached." On cue, West German Christian Socialist Union chairman Franz Josef Strauss went completely off the deep end in characterizing Carter as the first U.S. President "to cringe before a Russian czar."

In the U.S. itself, experienced observers could not recall any occasion since the Watergate days when the British-linked press had chorused the same line so blatantly. Front-page articles in the *Washington Post*, *New York Times*, and *Christian Science Monitor*, backed by editorials, and syndicated columns by the likes of Evans and Novak, uniformly described the Administration as bewildered, dangerously confused, and erratic.

Meanwhile, Henry Kissinger was doing everything in his power to insure that no sanity would be forthcoming from the GOP. Kissinger, who only a few weeks ago visited Capitol Hill to give the Senate Republican Policy Committee a secret briefing on the Cuban "menace," told Republican policy-makers in Williamsburg, Va., on April 8, "If the Cubans can go to Angola, then we can go to Cuba."

This was the climax of Kissinger's campaign to brainwash conservatives with visions of San Juan Hill. Just two days earlier Kissinger sounded the same theme on closed circuit TV at an address for 13 Republican fundraisers held around the country. Kissinger is also whipping up criticism of the Administration for not confronting the Soviet Union in Africa and Europe.

President Carter must now decide to fight for his foreign policy initiatives. He has to carry his fight to the American people to mobilize their support for a congressional majority for the right policies. Ironically, Carter is handicapped in winning support on these issues from the productive portion of the population because of his continued stupid adherence to his unpopular energy program. Carter has most recently cut his own throat by participating in Sun Day, an insult to American technology.

Isolated from U.S. popular support, Carter has shown a fatal tendency to compromise when he has been right, on foreign policy. This has given Kissinger and the press the opening they need to crush him. The danger now looms that he will fail the upcoming tests.

If a few key Administration officials and a handful of responsible Republican leaders would confront Henry Kissinger, the controlled environment could be cracked, and the crucial tests just ahead could be victories for the American System.

The Press Attacks Carter On:

THE NEUTRON BOMB...

Washington Post, *Evans and Novak column, April 10:*

President Carter's decision to put the neutron bomb in cold storage has created a dangerous leadership crisis not only in the Western alliance he is supposed to lead but at the bewildered highest levels of his own administration as well.... An attempt to trace what happened finds disconcerting answers. Although the decision-making process is chaotic, blame attaches directly to the President, not to his aides.

Sun, *Baltimore, editorial April 10:*

The end result was essentially a non-decision — a continued deferral of production while awaiting concessions the Kremlin promptly announced it would not make. This sorry record strongly suggests the President was not in control of a key issue that could endanger prospects for a second American-Soviet strategic arms pact (SALT II).

Christian Science Monitor, *Joseph Horsch, April 13:*

The main damage is probably to relations inside the alliance. The Western allies had been led to expect the decision to build ERW (the neutron bomb). They were dismayed by the sudden change. There was also damage in Washington. The appearance of Presidential vacillation on a military issue was fresh and welcome ammunition for the opponents of the Panama Canal treaties and of a SALT II agreement.

THE PANAMA CANAL TREATIES...

Washington Post, *editorial, April 13*

There is a limit to what even as hard pressed a President as Jimmy Carter ought to accept in bargaining with the likes of Dennis DeConcini. He blundered sorely in failing to anticipate the explosive Panamanian reaction to his acceptance of the DeConcini reservation the first time around....

VANCE'S MISSION TO AFRICA AND THE SOVIET UNION...

New York Times, *Bernard Gwertzmann, April 13:*

The dual mission of dealing with the Rhodesian crisis in Africa and making progress in the arms talks in Moscow faces major substantive obstacles. But in addition, the Vance mission has been burdened by other problems — what some see as a weakening of President Carter's stature abroad and disagreements within the Administration.

New York Times, *James Reston, April 12:*

There is a tendency now to mock Jimmy Carter, to suggest that he is not big enough for the job, that he is confused and "indecisive," just at the point when his beginning to negotiate a strategic arms limitation agreement with the Soviets and revive the negotiations for a compromise in the Middle east... Accordingly Mr. Carter is not only getting a bad press these days but getting into serious political trouble at home and abroad. Even his most enthusiastic supporters complain that he does the right thing many times but does it in the worst possible way.

Panama:

Canal Treaty— Round Two In Danger

Carter Juggling Act on Panama

The second Panama Canal Treaty, due to be voted on April 18, will be the first test the Administration will have to face in Congress since the escalated attacks began. The latest flap to endanger an affirmative vote on the treaty concerns a memorandum now circulating on Capitol Hill, which is based on notes of the meeting held between Frank Moore, the Administration's chief congressional liaison, and the Panamanian Ambassador.

In it Moore is described as agreeing to circulate an Administration-drafted counter resolution to the "De Concini reservation," already tacked on to the first treaty. The DeConcini reservation would allow U.S. intervention into the Canal zone after the year 2000 in the event of an emergency. The Panamanians have now stated quite openly that they doubt the Treaty, if sub-

jected to a new plebiscite, will be accepted in Panama. The DeConcini reservation "threatens Panamanian sovereignty," they argue, and they are worried about the establishment of limited sovereignty and are being urged by other Latin American governments, including Mexico and Colombia, to reject it. Now Senator DeConcini (D-Ariz.) is threatening to attach another reservation to the second Treaty giving the U.S. an immediate right to send troops into Panama to keep the canal open — a right which was renounced by the United States itself in 1936!

Senator Edward Brooke (R-Mass.) now complains that "the Carter Administration had misled the Senate by not conveying Panama's objections to Mr. DeConcini's first reservation."

According to Washington sources, Senator Paul Laxalt (R-Nev.), who has been leading the treaty opposition in