

## Euromissiles and an arms buildup

# The quest for 'limited war'

by Konstantine George

President Carter, in a speech before the Business Council in Washington, D.C. Dec. 12 announced that the U.S. defense budget will rise to \$157 billion next year, an increase 5.6 percent above the rate of inflation. Carter pledged a floor on defense spending equal to a rate of 4.5 percent over inflation for the next five years.

Close up examination of administration policy statements, and the statements of their British prompters, around the speech reveal a policy fraught with the implication of national suicide, should a second Carter term occur.

The speech was delivered just prior to the arrival of British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher for talks on "strategic arms control, strategic arms, test ban, NATO theater nuclear forces, international energy and economic policy, Iran, the Mideast, Zimbabwe, the Caribbean"—in short, everything. Carter and the British "iron lady"—who demands a confrontationist policy toward the Soviet Union in both Europe and the Third World—emerged from their talks announcing they had no disagreements on anything.

Carter's defense speech was also timed for delivery with the NATO Foreign Ministers' vote Dec. 12 in Brussels for production and deployment of Pershing II and ground cruise missiles of intermediate range. The NATO ministerial meeting represented a victory for British-Thatcher policy, reflected directly in Carter policy. In particular, it revealed that West German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt had abandoned all leadership in Western security policy to Washington, by voting for a missile "modernization" scheme that is a thin cover for preparing for "theater limited," "tactical nuclear war"

in Europe. That is the heart of the policy pronouncements linking Thatcher's Dec. 18 speech before the Foreign Policy Association in New York, Carter's Dec. 12 defense-spending speech, and the NATO ministerial vote the same day.

The guts of the policy, with presidential public-relations camouflage removed, were announced by National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski, shortly before the Carter speech. Brzezinski made clear that the present and potential second Carter administration would be run on the premise that a so-called "limited" or "regional" nuclear war with the Soviet Union is not only possible, but acceptable. In complete contravention of the ABC facts pertaining to U.S.-Soviet nuclear conflict, Brzezinski asserted: "the United States will have the capability to ride out a Soviet first strike and respond in a manner that is flexible, rather than having the option of only an annihilatory response."

Brzezinski, in delivering such pap as administration policy, assumes a Soviet nuclear strike targetting U.S. missile sites. Such a hypothetical nuclear strike is termed "counterforce." Counterforce went out of the window with the advent of ready-fueled ICBMs, meaning that long before the arriving missiles ever reached the opponent's silos, the opponent's missiles would be in flight.

The cornerstone fact in understanding the potential nuclear war conduct of the Soviet military is that they would not be so stupid as to deploy ICBMs to destroy empty missile silos.

In conjunction with the doctrine of "limited" nuclear war, Brzezinski clearly defined Carter administration policy, presently, and hypothetically into the 1980s, as

actively seeking regional "hot spot" confrontations with the Soviet Union around the Third World, beginning with the Persian Gulf region, any one of which could serve to trigger the global nuclear conflict. Brzezinski hailed the Iran crisis as "the end of the post-Vietnam era," signaling "unpleasant decisions ... as the world is undergoing the most profound transformation in the international system since the Thirty Years War." The period of the Thirty Years War, 1618-48, resulted in the decimation of Europe's population and economy.

### **Providing 'hardware'**

The specific contents of the Carter defense budget and the contents of the NATO decision are intended to provide the "hardware" required for this administration policy. The components of the increased outlays are structured as follows:

1. Priority funding for the establishment of a strike force and its logistical components for third world interventions, to a tune of \$9 billion additional funding. The new programs to be funded include the CX military air transport (successor to the Lockheed C5A), 16 new naval supply ships, known as "Maritime Prepositioning Ships," to be stationed as logistical support vessels in the proximity of crisis areas. The moderation of an earlier proposed force reduction of the Marine Corps by 10,800, now scaled down to a cut of 3,800.
2. Increased allocations, the specifics of which will be worked out during 1980, for military construction and supply build-ups at existing U.S. bases such as Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean-Persian Gulf region. A Department of Defense delegation headed by the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs (ISA), is currently touring the Indian Ocean littoral for this purpose, as well as conducting negotiations with Saudi Arabia, Oman, Somalia and Kenya towards U.S. procurement of additional military bases in the region. A similar Congressional tour is scheduled for January, headed by House Armed Services subcommittee chairman, Samuel Stratton (D-NY).
3. \$5 billion funding for production of the Pershing II and ground cruise missiles of intermediate range to be stationed in the European NATO theater, as per the agreement reached by the NATO Foreign Ministers at their Dec. 12 Brussels meeting.
4. The immediate development of the MX missile program. Under this program, tens of billions would be spent on a missile system designed to "safeguard" the United States from the Soviet "counterforce" missile strike that would never occur.

5. The final go-ahead was given for production of air-launched cruise missiles to commence in 1980.

The decisions announced by Carter stem from a series of policy decisions reached by ruling London circles no later than December 1978. The Royal Institute for International Affairs (RIIA), a high-level policy mouthpiece for London's inner core policy-makers, convened its annual conference on Dec. 11, 1978. U.S. Secretary of State Cyrus Vance was the keynote speaker. Vance outlined a three part policy, summarized as "passage of SALT II," "modernization and expansion of theater nuclear weapons forces (TNF)," and the creation of crisis intervention strike forces.

Two of the three "goals" outlined have now been met. The third (SALT II) is being pursued. A private discussion held three weeks ago, and leaked into the press, between Henry Kissinger and Defense Secretary Harold Brown, exemplifies the point. The substance of the Brown-Kissinger talks became clear when, following Carter's speech, Kissinger was quoted saying that, given the scope of the defense increases proposed, he would now consider lending his support to the passage of SALT II.

### **Brown unveils strike force**

In a little-noted press conference delivered at the Pentagon on Dec. 14, Defense Secretary Harold Brown underlined the immediate priority of the quick strike force. Brown announced that a multi-service task force, drawn from the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps, would soon be created to "plan for the rapid deployment of Army and Marine Corps units to the Middle East or elsewhere ... (the strike force) will play a major role in the 1980s."

Brown's remarks specified that task force headquarters would be set up at MacDill Air Force Base, Florida, "to plan for a range of contingencies ... the forces earmarked will constitute a very large fraction of U.S. conventional forces ... including the 82nd and 101st Airborne Divisions and the great bulk of the U.S. Marine Corps."

Thus, the overwhelming majority of U.S. ground forces, not stationed or earmarked for either NATO or South Korea, are now committed as strike forces south of the Tropic of Cancer. The Carter administration's support for the genocidal "conditionality" policies of the IMF-World Bank, ensure that U.S. military deployment will occur in the capacity of enforcers of IMF doctrine.

Administration string-pullers like Britain's Margaret Thatcher have been fond of calling the 1980s the "dangerous decade." A second Carter term guarantees the truthfulness, indeed the extreme understatement, of that phrase.