

International Intelligence

Europe

More NATO Pressures on Europe

New indications are beginning to emerge of the military pressure the U.S. has been putting on Western Europe, particularly since the crucial visit to the continent earlier this month of U.S. Defense Undersecretary Robert Komer. Komer, attending a NATO meeting at that time, had issued a series of ultimatums. Included were: (1) a 3 percent increase in European defense spending, (2) free use of civilian aircraft to ferry American soldiers into "hot spots," (3) a greater "division of labor" within NATO, meaning that Europe would have to replace the reinforcement troops the U.S. has assigned the European Allied Command, but which are now needed for a "rapid intervention force" for the "hot spots."

The U.S. has now issued a new order: European foreign ministers are to accompany defense ministers to the scheduled May 14 meeting of the NATO Defense Planning Committee. The London *Times* reports that Washington is doing this to ensure added political weight to the decisions taken at the meeting, and force the Komer proposals into implementation phase.

Middle East

METO militarization pact takes shape

According to Israeli sources, the Carter administration is in the process of hammering out a U.S.-Israel mutual defense pact to carry out military operations in

the Persian Gulf. The details of such a pact were discussed at length by President Carter and Israeli Prime Minister Begin earlier this month in Washington. Ezer Weizman, Begin's defense minister, is currently in the U.S. to fine-tune the plan.

During their talks, both Carter and Begin put forth ideas concerning the signing of a defense pact, including the use of Israeli airports, seaports, and bases by the United States; the stationing of U.S. Air Force units in Israel; and the holding of joint military maneuvers. Within the framework of the bilateral defense pact, the U.S. will provide "funds and know-how" for Israel's security, and will also assist Israel in jet-fighter construction.

The consolidation of a U.S.-Israel mutual defense arrangement is at the heart of the Camp David "peace" process. It constitutes one of the main pillars of a larger military axis, comprised of Egypt, several Persian Gulf states and Iran, along with Israel and the U.S. This axis is referred to by insiders as the Middle East Treaty Organization (METO).

Last week, in an interview with CBS, Begin stated that the U.S. is "making a mistake" if it does not station military forces in the Middle East to curb "Soviet expansionism." He pledged Israel's complete cooperation in setting up such a strike force.

Egypt is also bending over backwards to accommodate the METO militarization plans. The U.S. has already begun to use Egyptian air force bases for AWACS flights and U.S. Air Force operations in the Persian Gulf. Egyptian President Sadat, like Begin, has offered Egypt's services in a U.S. military move in the Gulf. To work out the details of this cooperation, Defense Secretary Harold Brown will soon visit Cairo.

The METO development is also encompassing the Gulf states. According to the Kuwaiti news agency KUNA, the emirate of Dubai has granted the U.S.

naval facilities there, a decision that has triggered a political crisis inside the United Arab Emirates, of which Dubai is a part. UAE President Sheikh Zayed denounced Dubai's decision and told the governor of the emirate, Sheikh Bashid, that he disapproves. KUNA says the decision was made after secret talks between the UAE ambassador to London and Hamilton Jordan, President Carter's chief of staff. The ambassador in question, Mahdi al-Tajir, is a leader of the Muslim Brotherhood, the organization behind Ayatollah Khomeini in Iran, which would also be pulled into METO after a resolution of the hostage crisis, which the Paris-based *Al-Mustaqbal* magazine calls a "fabricated crisis" and a "farce."

U.S.S.R.

Gromyko keeps the door open

Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko spent the day yesterday in talks with French President Giscard and Foreign Minister Jean François-Poncet in Paris. The talks were later characterized as "frank and serious." There was no joint statement afterward; the French did not issue any statement.

Gromyko later told the press that the Soviet Union will do everything possible to maintain detente, but that it is not the only factor in the situation. He said the Soviets hope that France will support their efforts. He then left for Bonn for talks with Helmut Schmidt.

Indicative of the fact that the Soviets are not yet ready to close the door on Europe is a Tass wire on the European foreign ministers meeting this week which capitulated to the Carter administration pressures. Tass stated that the Europeans adopted the measures they

did against Iran "under U.S. pressure," and concluded: "The (European) Nine nevertheless unequivocally disassociated themselves from Washington's threats to resort to armed force against Iran."

How long the Soviet Union can keep the door open to governments who now appear to be backing down, step by step, to U.S. pressures is the principal question. The Soviets have declared the Carter administration "incalculable" and "crazy." So have many European leaders. However, the Europeans continue to prove themselves susceptible to pressures and blackmail from "incalculable" and "crazy" people and so, at a certain point, for all intents and purposes, the Europeans will have to be considered just as "incalculable" from the Kremlin's standpoint.

Asia

Arms export debate erupts in Japan

A major debate has erupted within the Japanese business community on the subject of arms exports abroad. Currently banned by law, the arms export debate reflects the ever-growing pressure on Japan to expand its defense role in Asia.

Shiego Nagano, the president of the Chamber of Commerce and former chairman of Nippon Steel, has become the most prominent advocate of a new arms export policy. He is proposing that Japan export arms to the Middle East countries in particular, in exchange for oil. Moreover, he says, such a policy will help the Japanese economy because "production of weapons is the prime mover of technological progress."

Another leading proponent of arms exports is Hosai Hyuga, a leader of the business community in Osaka. Specifi-

cally, he is calling for Japan to expand its defense spending from .9 percent of the gross national product to 1.9 percent.

The idea of arms exports, though existent for many years in Japan, has gained special significance following the meeting of the Trilateral Commission in London last month. At that time, top Anglo-American policy planner George Ball proposed that Japan construct two naval aircraft carriers and "lease" them to China. This, Ball said, would be a major Japanese contribution to the western defense alliance. Another Trilateral Commission member, former Japanese foreign minister Kiichi Miyazawa, has endorsed this proposal.

This defense debate could reach a head late this month when Prime Minister Masayoshi Ohira travels to Washington. The Carter Administration is expected to put heavy pressure on Tokyo at that time, pushing the Japanese to cooperate with Communist China in an alliance against the Soviet Union.

Ohira, who is notorious for following Washington policy to the letter, has already indicated he will not disappoint the Carter officials on this issue. Last week he told foreign correspondents in Tokyo that "a steady increase" in Japan's defense preparedness is one of the pillars of the country's security policy. This was a dramatic change in Japanese policy, which traditionally emphasizes promotion of economic diplomacy as the key to the nation's security.

Since the Carter administration policy toward U.S. allies violates the national interest of those allies, including Japan, Carter must use blackmail. In this regard, he might tell Ohira that some Mexican oil will be allowed to flow their way, provided Ohira cooperates on sanctions policies toward Iran and the Soviet Union, and in other related matters like the military alliance with Peking. Such blackmail may carry weight, in as much as Japan is already suffering oil cut-off by Iran.

Briefly

● A RAND CORP. analyst complained, "I really don't know what to say about that. Lately, most of my predictions about Mexico have been wrong." He had been asked to comment on whether Carter had bribed Japanese Prime Minister Ohira to get Japan to support him on Iran with promised U.S. toleration of a Japanese agreement for Mexican oil.

● EEC COUNTRIES were angry over Japan's actions at the important summit of EEC foreign ministers this week, top sources in Europe report. At the meeting, the Japanese delegation functioned as a virtual arm of the State Department, publicly prodding the Europeans to support American sanctions against Teheran. "After this," one top source said, "there is no chance for any trust between Europe and Japan—at least as long as Ohira remains prime minister."

● "BRITISH Intransigence blocked the negotiations," according to *Le Figaro* in an article on the EEC foreign ministers meeting concerned with British contributions to the community budget. What's more, French President Giscard has again affirmed that unless prior agreement is reached at this pre-meeting, there will be no resolution at the April 28 summit.

● A MILITARY operation by the Carter administration to free the Iran hostages—leaving 8 GIs dead, and aborted when equipment failed—has produced shock in Western Europe. Carter had implicitly promised no maverick military action if Europe agreed to aid in his sanctions policy against Iran. A leading West German oil executive noted that Europe's capitulation last week at the EEC foreign ministers' meeting to Carter's strongarm tactics was the most foolish thing that Europe could have done.