

Editorial

The China card menace

Wining and dining the defense chief of the of China this week, the Carter administration concluded an open military alliance with a government that has repeatedly declared nuclear war "inevitable." The administration's flaunting of the China card is not only morally hideous—Peking is responsible for the murder of three million Cambodians—it is strategically insane.

Within a period of weeks or less, pre-emptive action by the Soviet Union could force the U.S. to initiate nuclear holocaust in China's defense—or suffer the greatest strategic humiliation in history.

The Kremlin—backing up its words with an occupation of Afghanistan that places armored divisions in position to strike Sinkiang—will never tolerate a Chinese military build-up under American-NATO sponsorship. They have informed the world's governments they will strike against China militarily before seeing Peking's nuclear weapons capability augmented.

Yet, after this week's consultations with Chinese Defense Minister Geng Biao, Assistant Secretary of State Richard Holbrooke announced the end of "evenhanded" dealings with China and the U.S.S.R. in favor of a plan to strengthen China economically and militarily. This will mean "the sale of carefully selected items of dual use technology and defensive military support equipment." This includes radar technology applicable to missile guidance, and other aids to Chinese "nuclearization."

Chinese Vice Premier Deng Xiaoping then declared: "We hope in China that not only the U.S. but Japan and Western Europe and the Third World countries unite to cope with Soviet hegemonism . . . The main danger of war comes from the Soviet Union."

Western Europe, however, spent the past week in full diplomatic mobilization, deepening communications channels and signing major economic agreements with the Soviet Union, and preparing for the June 22 OECD summit in Venice, where the French are expected to introduce a motion for a

new gold-backed monetary system. They are also promising to undertake their own Mideast peace initiative.

Europe has demanded that Carter not pursue the 'China card'. But in past months, China and the U.S. have collaborated in destabilizing the Gandhi government of India by provoking rebellion in the strategic state of Assam, and in increasing flows of funds and arms to the "Islamic fundamentalist," opium-grower rebels in Afghanistan. And in the past week came U.S. arms sales directly to China for the first time.

Administration policy has been accurately compared to Nazi "Blitzkrieg" tactics. By building an alliance between a freshly armed China, a rearmed Japan, and the Koreans against the Soviets in Asia, the administration seeks to drain Soviet troops into deployments on the Sino-Soviet border. It is proposed that in this fashion, the U.S. will gain superiority, without the modernization of American economic and military capabilities that would represent an actual strategic advantage in depth. The "China card" is a *Malthusian's* military policy and like the "Blitzkrieg," it is a potentially very bloody bluff.

Our European "allies" have reached the limits of their toleration. The Kremlin certainly has.

"The issue is, de facto, that Washington will give the material base for the aggressive policy of China," writes a Soviet military analyst in *Red Star* this week. Only a few months ago, Soviet President Brezhnev warned visiting French emissaries, if the U.S. augments Chinese nuclear capability, then "our missiles will rain down on Peking, and Washington will have 30 minutes" to decide between a policy-change, or total war.

In drastically foreshortening the timetable on its "China card" this past week, the administration may have committed us to an unwinnable game against a stronger power. If Soviet missiles rain down on Peking, or if Soviet armored divisions sweep into China's Western desert regions, the best we might hope for is a strategic humiliation.