

## Soviets Reject 'Unserious' SALT Package; Carter Seeks Confrontation Course

Within 24 hours after the collapse of the strategic arms limitation talks in Moscow, Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko convened an extraordinary press conference to denounce the Carter Administration's SALT proposals as "false," "unrealistic," and designed to give unilateral advantage to the United States.

In unequivocal language, Gromyko repulsed the Carter Administration's efforts to seduce the USSR into transforming SALT negotiations into Rand Corporation-scripted psychological warfare games leading to superpower confrontation. "It seems to us," Gromyko said, "that in international affairs, including relations between the United States and the Soviet Union, it would be better to consider the problems on a more realistic and more honest basis. The more of a game you make of it, the more cunning, the more attempts you make to step on the foot of your partner, the greater the difficulties."

According to the pre-packaged National Security gameplan conceived in Washington before his departure, U.S. Secretary of State Cyrus Vance deliberately provoked a breakdown in the SALT talks last week in order to push the Soviets into a "hardline" posture, leading to "Cuban missile crisis" scenarios for confrontation. Gromyko accused the Carter Administration of mounting a self-serving propaganda campaign in the West by presenting publicly disarmament plans it knew Moscow could not accept, and then blaming Moscow for the failure of the negotiations. The Kremlin spokesman warned that the USSR would oppose anything that threatened either Soviet security or detente, rejecting Vance's Cold War initiative.

How the U.S. Congress and population respond to Gromyko's forthright reaction to Carter's provocations may very well determine whether the superpowers slide into an irrevocable collision course. Within hours after the SALT talks broke down, Carter began to mobilize a "powerful domestic aura of consensus" for confrontation, "explaining" that the Kremlin was "just testing" the new Administration.

At hearings of a Senate Appropriations subcommittee on Defense, March 31 a spokesman for the U.S. Labor-Party warned that Congressional complicity, silent or otherwise, in Carter's policy will lead to war. A member of the party's Research and Development Staff told the Committee that Carter's efforts to induce the Soviet leadership to freeze all technological development as the fundamental premise of a SALT agreement was the outcome of the Administration's decision to forfeit domestic capital investment in research and development in favor of a bailout policy for the New York banks. "Recent Soviet breakthroughs in electron and laser beam fusion research and in coherent particle beam production — all of which could have advanced weapons systems implications" leave the Carter Administration with little choice but to try to bluff its way through SALT negotiations, the spokesman charged. "Further and

more important, this committee must ask if the Administration's SALT negotiating posture is merely another means to end scientific progress, to deindustrialize this country."

At his Moscow press conference, a visibly angered Gromyko singled out the Carter Administration proposals for limits on the modernization of weaponry as "irresponsible and unserious." Knowledgeable observers concluded the Soviet leader was referring to the disclosures last year of Soviet fusion program director Rudakov, who informed his U.S. counterparts that Soviet fusion technology advances also provided the basis for a war-winning edge in strategic weaponry. Gromyko also attacked the U.S. demand for the elimination of "half the Soviet missiles that are called in the U.S. 'too heavy' as 'a dubious, if not a cheap, move.'" (A spokesman for the U.S. National Security Council today confirmed that the Carter Administration proposals were premised on ending technology development by the USSR.)

### *The Alternative*

The West German government, a traditional staunch ally of the U.S., rebuffed Carter's confrontationism and offered cooperation with the USSR on disarmament and economic issues. Chancellor Helmut Schmidt endorsed a proposal originally made by Social-Democratic leader Herbert Wehner on Wednesday for a leading West German role in European armed forces reduction talks. Wehner had called for Mutual Balanced Force Reduction talks in Vienna to move rapidly into the negotiating phase and include discussion of the Kremlin's longstanding proposals for pan-European cooperation in the fields of energy, transportation, and the environment. In addition, Wehner proposed negotiations on the Warsaw Pact's proposal to ban the first use of nuclear weapons.

The Carter Administration to date has studiously declined to recognize the West German proposals, which have yet to be reported in the U.S. media. Confirming his Administration's determination to pursue a confrontation course, Carter convened emergency meetings with Congressional leaders within hours of the SALT talks collapse in Moscow to declare he would "hang tough." Seeking a bi-partisan Congressional mandate for his Cold War posturing, Carter told the assembled legislators that the Soviet leadership was "testing" his Administration, and the Congress must rally round his leadership in the interests of national security.

On cue, both Senate Majority Leader Robert Byrd and Minority Leader Howard Baker issued statements in support of Carter. Byrd announced on the Senate floor that "it's common for the Soviet Union to test each new President ... I'm sure Carter can be firm and show his mettle.... the Soviets are now getting a taste of their own medicine."

At the same time, Carter boosts Sen. Henry Jackson

(D-Wash) and Jacob Javits (R-NY) were telling their colleagues that if they all "hang tough" the Soviets "will inch toward the U.S. position." Dorothy Fosdick, a longtime assistant to Jackson with close ties to the Rockefeller family, predicted in an interview that in time, Soviet Ambassador Dobrynin will start "sneaking into a side of the White House, asking Carter to resume negotiations on SALT."

"This is Khrushchev and Kennedy all over again," commented one anonymous Congressional observer, a conclusion widely touted in the American press. The analogy is floated in the hopes that like Kennedy, Carter can successfully muzzle his opposition in conservative and military circles — opposed to his deindustrialization and energy policies — by playing the national anthem, and forcing them, according to profile, to jump to their feet and salute.

In his comments March 30, Wehner drew a more appropriate historical parallel: "I hope that President

Carter will spare us from what happened with his predecessor Kennedy in his discussions with Khrushchev in Vienna, and what occurred afterwards with the Cuban missile crisis, leading us to the brink of catastrophe," Wehner said.

Leading conservative spokesmen of both parties in Congress have maintained a discreet silence, with the single exception of House Minority Leader John Rhodes. In a speech in Jacksonville, Florida March 31, Rhodes attacked Carter's foreign policy, without specifically mentioning the aborted SALT negotiations.

"After just two months," the House Minority Leader said, "many of us in Congress are quite concerned about the spray-show foreign policy that already seems to have developed. Mr. Carter seems to believe that bombast, bluster and campaign-style rhetoric can be carried over into the intricacies of foreign policy....His actions to date have damaged, not helped, the cause of human rights around the globe."

## Schmidt Makes Wehner Proposal Official

The following are excerpted press reports on a press conference held March 30 by West German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt, centering on his approval of the two-week-old proposals by Social Democratic parliamentary leader Herbert Wehner for a rapid and mutually satisfactory conclusion of the Mutual and Balanced Force Reduction (MBFR) talks in Vienna, and further realization of the Helsinki accords.

*Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, March 30* - Schmidt supported Mr. Wehner's proposal for the MBFR talks to finally be brought to the stage of political negotiations. He agreed that the formation of permanent commissions was worthy of consideration.

*Süddeutsche Zeitung, March 30* — Schmidt stated that the federal government is working on its own proposals for MBFR. Wehner's remarks on the Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) might as well have come from him. MBFR must also be seen in connection with the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT). If SALT shifts onto a positive course, this would further improve the prospects for Vienna. In addition, Schmidt supported the formation of a "standing joint commission for energy and environmental policy." He demanded that "East European states should not only assume responsibility on energy and raw materials questions, but also should be drawn into the North-South dialogue between the industrial states and developing countries."

*Die Welt, March 30* — Schmidt agreed that the negotiations, which are currently on the level of experts, must be brought to a higher political level. Wehner's remarks on a "balanced reduction of troops" do not call into question the Atlantic Alliance's goal of "parity." At the London Summit meeting, Schmidt will discuss his

proposals with U.S. President Carter, and will do the same during the summer visit to West Germany of Soviet party leader Leonid Brezhnev.

*Die Welt, March 30, "Bonn Must Take Over a Leadership Role for Economic Growth"* — Schmidt wants to draw the East Bloc more strongly than ever before into taking international responsibility for world economic questions. He will motivate this at the May 7-8 London meeting. The federal government favors a "satisfactory employment policy," which is the precondition for constant growth and increases in investment. Internationally and nationally, trust must be created in future economic developments and the ability of governments to act effectively. Progress in price stability and payments balances are necessary. Countries with strong payments balances must assume a leadership role; the others must reduce inflation and their own deficits. The federal government counts the following points as the major tasks for the economic summit: (1) All trade restrictions are to be resolutely opposed; (2) Demands for countries with weak payments situations to pursue a restrictive course must not be exaggerated, since otherwise there would be a danger of social tensions and political-economic collapse; and (3) Countries with a strong payments situation must be prepared to provide assistance within the framework of monetary arrangements within reasonable bounds.

*Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, March 30* — Concerning West Germany's nuclear technology deal with Brazil, Schmidt once again emphasized his government's unaltered position. The U.S.A., he noted, knows what West Germany thinks about this, and if they have other thoughts, he would prefer to hear it from the U.S. itself, and not from the press.