

## Editorial

# PD 59: Short fuse for November

Readers of the *EIR* should be apprised of two special features of Presidential Directive 59, the document which commits the United States military to a policy of retargeting the country's ICBM force for first-strike limited "counterforce" use against preselected Soviet "military" targets.

First, PD 59 was signed on July 25, when the multilayered pre-combat military deployments of the United States and China in the Persian Gulf and in Southeast Asia were completed.

Second, PD 59 seems to have a very peculiar bearing on the future course of the presidential election campaign. For over 10 weeks now the ominous report has persisted in the intelligence circles in the United States, Western Europe and the Middle East, that President Carter, once he secures the Democratic nomination, will push forward for a major strategic confrontation with the U.S.S.R. for the purpose of rallying the electorate.

According to current estimates, such a pre-meditated strategic confrontation, a "Carterflash," might occur sometime during the first two weeks of October. The location of the confrontation is likely to be either the Middle East/Persian Gulf area or Indochina. The United States has completed a three-tiered naval deployment in the Persian Gulf which could move into combat with up to a maximum of 20,000 ground combat troops.

This conventionally indefensible force is generally expected to draw an overwhelmingly superior Soviet deployment, which the White House expects to frustrate by means of tactical nuclear weapons already deployed in the area. It is expected that at this point the Soviets will assume that PD 59 is operative and they will draw their conclusions accordingly.

The situation in Indochina is similar. United States and Chinese forces, with the participation of Thailand, have completed a combined land and

naval deployment against Vietnam, involving an unusual U.S. naval deployment in the Sea of Siam. These forces are confronting a powerful Soviet-Vietnamese land-air-sea deployment which can be effective up to a point before it resorts to punitive strikes against inland Chinese targets. The area, if it erupts into actual warfighting, will answer the important question facing military authorities: is China protected by a U.S. nuclear umbrella?

The signing and public announcement of PD 59 was meant to address these two situations. The question is this: Is such a confrontation planned to be a "feint" in which the contestants will pull back in the last minute, or will it get out of control and blow us all up?

Available evidence so far indicates that such a confrontation, if in fact it gets off the ground, will be out of anybody's control, primarily because there are too many players participating in it. President Carter and the President's men, principally Zbigniew Brzezinski and Harold Brown, are in it to a large extent as a reelection ploy; ironically, numerous pro-Reagan principals hold various threads of the scenario, especially in the Iranian anti-Khomeini opposition, which is assigned a special role in triggering off the opening moves of a Persian Gulf end-game; pro-Reagan controllers are also evident in the Indochina theater of confrontation. The situation gets further complicated if one considers that the Begin-allied Mossad, the Israeli secret service, is also involved in various aspects of this crisis deployment.

Our readings in various capitals indicate that the governments of Western Europe are treating the situation with the utmost gravity. The Soviet government is also functioning in an emergency mode. It is very likely that Western Europe may take steps to administer some sort of effective shock to the Carter administration.