

## Editorial

### *War threat looms*

No one should take lightly the warning by Soviet Foreign Minister Shevardnadze that: "Unless a peaceful comprehensive political settlement is found to the Arab-Israeli conflict, developments in the region would follow a spiral wound by the logic of military confrontation. The region faces the threat of an arms race which sooner or later could degenerate into a nuclear face-off." Seen in the light of Shevardnadze's unique meeting with Ruhollah Khomeini and the letters he bore to both the Ayatollah and Iraqi President Hussein, at the very least the Soviets are making a major power bid in the region.

Couple this with the Salman Rushdie flap, and all the signs are present of a very dirty Anglo-Soviet deal. The infamous *Satanic Verses* has been in print since October of last year, so that the sudden uproar over the book is clearly staged. In fact, it was detonated in Pakistan in a manner calculated to particularly embarrass Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto.

Significantly, the protests which took place in that country targeted the offices of the U.S. Information Service rather than the British embassy, even though Rushdie resides in Britain. In fact one of the leaders of the demonstration, Maulana Kauzer Niazi, stopped by the embassy on the morning of the demonstration, ostensibly to pick up a visa for his daughter. With Afghanistan now targeted to become a center of Muslim extremism, the destabilization of Bhutto's government, becomes an extremely dangerous possibility.

Those who doubt a British-Soviet concordance in bringing the world once again to the brink of war, should ponder how the British have played balance-of-power politics twice in the past—leading to World War I and World War II.

The clear signs are there in the renewed popularity of German and Japanese bashing—albeit it is Anglo-American networks who are most vociferous in this. It would appear that the Anglo-Americans are making the disastrous blunder in discounting the Soviet danger as against the attractiveness, to them, of targeting their ostensible allies, whom they perceive to be rivals in the

global power game.

There are other reasons why a new Mideast war may indeed be in the offing. Suppose that such a war succeeded in eliminating a quarter of the world's oil supply. This would immediately benefit the British and Soviets, who have been hurt by the reduced price of oil, and it would give them enormous political leverage over the rest of Europe and Japan.

In Afghanistan, it is now broadly recognized that the Soviets have ostensibly evacuated their army, only to infiltrate ethnics in their place, while keeping major regular units at the border. The eruption of civil war in Afghanistan—particularly if it has fundamentalist religious overtones—coupled with the hysteria generated over the Rushdie book, makes the ingredients to plausibly upgrade terrorism in the West, such as the recent spate of civilian air accidents which all point to terrorism despite attempts at cover-up.

No doubt the British oligarchs think that they can stage-manage events to tilt the situation to their own advantage. They refuse to learn the lesson of their own past mistakes. We must take Shevardnadze's warning extremely seriously. From the Soviet point of view, it is meant as a warning to the West to fall in line, and allow the Soviets a major role in the Middle East. It is a warning to the Israelis and the Palestine Liberation Organization that the Soviets demand a role in any negotiations which will occur, a demand now being backed up by the British government, which has asked Shevardnadze to act as a mediator.

At the moment there seems to be a paralysis among those forces who might be expected to recognize the danger of allowing the British to dictate U.S. policy, and to vector it toward appeasement of the Soviets. We are fast reaching a point of no return. There is still time to act to put the United States back on track. One sure sign of the willingness to do this, is to force the Kissinger crowd to release LaRouche and his associates from prison, and reverse the political frame-up. At the moment, only LaRouche and his associates are drawing the appropriate conclusions from the Soviet threats.