

article in *Foreign Affairs*, "significantly increases Soviet bargaining power with West European and Japanese business and banking circles, and hence it provides an extra dividend. . . . The modernization and rationalization of the Soviet economy will be undertaken with de facto U.S. aid, thus reducing domestic pressures in the Soviet Union for needed reforms—which reforms eventually would have also had a political impact. Thus we are not only helping the Soviet economy but we are also buttressing the Soviet political system." As to the purely scientific exchanges, Brzezinski "suspects that Soviet access to American science is already much wider than the American to Soviet science."

The implication of these remarks is that too much is being given away by the United States; whether Brzezinski as national security adviser will recommend a restriction in the flow of science and

technology to the Soviet Union remains to be seen. Another indication of a hardening attitude toward the Soviet Union is suggested by Brzezinski's remarks about arms control, a subject in which in his writings he shows relatively little interest. In *Between Two Ages* he states that nuclear parity with the Soviet Union is acceptable because "American technological sophistication is sufficient to provide the necessary degree of ambiguity to the qualitative and quantitative power relationship between the two states."

But by 1974 he is criticizing the SALT I agreement for having conceded numerical superiority to the Russians "on the spurious argument of U.S. technological superiority," a remark which seems to contradict his earlier statement. Once the Russians have erased their technological inferiority, Brzezinski goes on to say, the only possible incentive for

them to accept real parity "will be a massive and very costly U.S. arms program."

Brzezinski's views of the value of American science and technology will probably lead him to follow Kissinger's policy of using technical assistance as a major implement of foreign policy (*Science*, 17 May 1974). But he could conceivably favor a break with the Kissinger policy of including science and technology in the détente package, just as he and Carter have abandoned the policy of making no comment on Soviet abuses of human rights. Brzezinski's views on the importance of science in social change and international relations, combined with Carter's background as a nuclear engineer, indicate that the new Administration will at least be predisposed to accord close attention to science and technology in its conduct of foreign policy.—NICHOLAS WADE

Briefing

Hopes for the Airbag on the Rise

Brock Adams, the new Secretary of Transportation, has given evidence in both word and deed that the department may throw out the cautious compromise on the airbag question that was worked out by Adams' predecessor, William T. Coleman, Jr.

Coleman in December ruled out mandatory installation of the safety devices in automobiles. He later approved a 2-year demonstration program involving half a million automobiles. He explained that, although airbags were effective in preventing injuries in car crashes, he didn't think the public was yet prepared to invest in the new technology.

But Adams said in a February appearance on "Meet the Press" that he intended to reexamine the Coleman decision, which he found hard to "rationalize." He observed that we will have to be building smaller, lighter cars in the future, and they will not be very safe without built-in safety measures.

Adams has since selected an ardent airbag advocate, Joan Claybrook, to be head of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Claybrook, a lawyer who logged 4 years at the Transportation Department in the 1960's as assistant to former auto safety director William Haddon, has been associated with the Ralph Nader organization since

1970. For the past several years she has lobbied for environmental and consumer legislation as the head of the Nader group, Congress Watch. The *Wall Street Journal* billed the appointment (assuming it is confirmed by the Senate) as Nader's "first major victory" in the Carter Administration. It could also very likely portend a major victory for the mandatory airbag.

—C.H.

Science Advisers Helped Avert Use of "Nukes" in Vietnam

The value of the White House science adviser may sometimes be debated, but one deed of indisputable merit is too little known. In February 1968, two former science advisers to President Eisenhower, George Kistiakowsky and J. R. Killian, helped avert a possible threat to use tactical nuclear weapons in Vietnam.

The occasion was the heavy siege by a North Vietnamese force of American troops at Khesanh. Amid rising concern for their safety, General William Westmoreland was quoted in the *New York Times* as saying that, if the situation got really tough, tactical nuclear weapons would be used to extricate the Marines.

Fearing that this was a trial balloon by the military, Kistiakowsky got Killian and physicist I. I. Rabi, both good friends of Eisenhower, to join him in sending a telegram to Eisenhower urging him to inter-

vene. Kistiakowsky, who first referred to the incident in an article in the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* last March, told *Science* he sent the telegram "because I knew from my own experience in the 1960's that Eisenhower was extremely emotionally involved against using nuclear weapons on the continent of Asia."

"We sent the telegram to Eisenhower who, not surprisingly, was playing golf at Palm Springs. It was incredible luck for us that Johnson was visiting Eisenhower a few days after our telegram."

"Apparently Ike lectured Johnson, because within 24 hours I and Rabi and Killian had a personal telephone call from [Secretary of Defense] McNamara, who said, 'I have been personally instructed by the President to assure you that there are no plans to use nuclear weapons.' We later had a letter from Eisenhower thanking us for the telegram."

Asked if the idea of using tactical "nukes" was nevertheless in the air, Kistiakowsky said, "I think it is solid enough that there were no contingency plans approved by the President. That the military brass had such plans there is not the slightest doubt."

What might have been the outcome if the telegram had not been sent? "Oh, I think probably nothing would have happened because the siege was relieved by B-52 area bombing," Kistiakowsky remarks. But even if the chances of a resort to nuclear arms were small, it was the small chance of a large disaster that the cable from the two science advisers and Rabi helped to avert.—N.W.