

# The Third World War

By ROBERT E. SHERWOOD

Resulting from a terrible Kremlin miscalculation, it plunged a whole world into incredible horror. But the outcome was inevitable: a smashing victory for the West, and the promise of a better era

Since the end of hostilities in 1955 the UN Historical Commission has been preparing the history of the War with the U.S.S.R. The completion of this massive work is many years distant, but Collier's at this time has asked Robert E. Sherwood, one of the American delegates, to write a broad outline of the findings to date. THE EDITORS

Moscow, 1960

THE most unnecessary, most senseless and deadliest war in history—the third World War—reached the shooting stage at exactly 1:58 P.M. G.M.T., Saturday, May 10, 1952.

At that moment, Marshal Tito smiled benevolently at a delegation of 120 Serbian peasants whose leather-thonged moccasins scuffed on the forecourt of the White Palace in Belgrade as they rushed toward him cheering and singing: "Tito our little white violet."

They were peasants of the state farm at Bavaniste, one of the first collectives established in Yugoslavia. They were on hand to receive the marshal's personal thanks for their seven years of above-quota production.

Tito had been coming ever closer physically to the people. In recent public appearances he had often been engulfed by crowds of admirers—once at the opening of an art exhibit and again at the

ceremony celebrating the linking of two branches of the Youth Railway in Bosnia.

This had been a source of extreme worry to General Alexander Rankovic, the devoted officer who was responsible for Tito's security. But Tito scoffed at the general's fears and constantly sought to wave away the secret police when they intervened between him and the enthusiastic crowds.

Rankovic infiltrated several of his own policemen, dressed in peasant costumes, among the delegation from Bavaniste. He did not know that the MVD in Moscow had also infiltrated two of its secret agents into this crowd. They were Dushan Petrovic and Luka Borlic, Moscow-trained fanatics who knew only one god, and that one god was Stalin.

In the past four years they had been extremely clever in giving the Yugoslav secret police no cause whatsoever to suspect them. Their mission in life was the assassination of Tito. They were careful never to depart from the peasant routine. They came to Belgrade only when groups of other co-workers visited the capital. Then they made contact with their MVD liaison in Topcider, the park to which the people of Belgrade flock when the weather is good.

The Bavaniste delegation arrived in Belgrade on the evening of May 9th and were installed in the

Balkan Hotel in the center of the city. They were welcomed by Ministry of Agriculture officials and told to enjoy themselves in their week-end visit to the capital, the high point of which would, of course, be their reception by Marshal Tito himself.

Petrovic and Borlic persuaded several of their comrades to join them in a trip to Topcider's crowded restaurant. As the *slivovitz* flowed freely, Petrovic and Borlic left the table for the washroom, where they were hailed by a friend who greeted them warmly and gave them a handful of cigars, a rare luxury in Yugoslavia at that time. When the assassins returned to their table, they did not share the cigars with their comrades.

The following afternoon, as Petrovic and Borlic advanced toward Tito, two of these cigars, unlighted, were clenched in their teeth. There was nothing unusual about this. Other peasants who were lucky enough to have cigarettes or cigars were smoking as they carried baskets of fruit and vegetables for presentation to their leader. It was not considered social awkwardness nor a mark of disrespect.

The assassins maneuvered themselves into positions behind little Maria Serdic, eight years old, who had been selected from Bavaniste to present a bouquet of spring flowers to the marshal.

Rankovic's policemen were joining in the exuber-

## ◀ A-Bomb Mission to Moscow By EDWARD R. MURROW

Edward R. Murrow, noted CBS commentator, flew in the B-36 which A-bombed Moscow at midnight July 22, 1953. This was his 36th combat mission; he participated in the others as a war correspondent during World War II and in Korea. Here is an extract of the memorable broadcast he made on his return from the mission over the Soviet capital.

WE WALKED into the briefing room. No one looked at the map. The word was already around. At long last we were ready to retaliate for Washington, Detroit, New York, London—all those places which had been indiscriminately A-bombed by the Reds. This was to be a little less than 10,000 miles round trip . . . the tapes on the map led to Moscow.

The briefing officer droned on. Eighteen B-36s—nine from Limestone, Maine, and nine from Alaska . . . Navy jets, AJ-1s coming in off carriers to hit Murmansk and Leningrad about the time we crossed the coast . . . Four B-36s to have a bang at Leningrad and Gorki with conventional bombs, as a diversion . . . the job to be done by 14 B-36s . . . no formation . . . they were to come in on Moscow like spokes on a wheel . . . only two carrying A-bombs, the remainder to act as decoys and as a protective force . . . if the first one over dropped and hit, the second was to hit another target elsewhere . . . B-29 aerial tankers to meet us about 1,000 miles out . . . 30 Navy Banshee jet fighters off carriers, refueled over Finland, to provide cover . . .

When we took off, it was hot. The juke box in the officers' mess was wailing *I'll see you in my dreams*. Ground crews gave us "thumbs-up" as we rolled. I was thinking: This is the first mission I ever flew in a bomber without having seen what we are carrying. The security officer had said: "You got one . . . but you can't see it. Relax. If you're forced down, you don't know a thing."

The tankers met us on schedule. There were black clouds with fire in them off to the north. The fueling lines were cast off. The whole crew relaxed. The dull glow of the sun pursued us. There was nothing to do . . . radio silent . . . no talk on the intercom . . . not like a movie . . . chicken sandwiches and coffee . . . cloud formations creating castles and lakes and rivers.

The navigator said: "Enemy coast in 10 minutes." The aircraft seemed to shrink. The whole crew tensed. Then the guns were tested. We were alone and looking for those Navy fighters . . . our life insurance.

Time ceased to have a meaning. The sun was deserting us. And then the flak—blue and green, not red as it used to be at night over Berlin. We saw red tracers lancing the dull sky. Something started to burn and slide toward the ground. Their fighters were up, but we didn't know who was going down. It was so slow and obscenely graceful.

A blue-green searchlight grazed our side and then caught and held a Navy Banshee fighter. He put his nose down and there was red fire flowing from his guns. Jock Mackenzie, our pilot, said casually: "The Navy has arrived." The flak had let up a bit. I kept wondering what that thing we were carrying really looked like . . .

We were at 35,000, flying level and straight. The bombardier had taken over. A burst of flak under our right wing hardly shook the huge B-36. The engineer quickly made a damage check. Our guns roared and waded for 15 seconds, as though a great riveting machine had been let loose inside the plane. Must have been a night fighter astern. The fire-control officer said calmly: "Sorry. I missed him."

We were in the bomb run . . . almost 5,000 miles from home. Our ship carried the spare to be dropped only if

the first one was shot down or missed the target. The intercom said: "Bomb-bay doors are open." Jock replied: "Roger."

Another ship, about four miles away, started to burn and slide down the blue vault of the heavens. Ours, or theirs, no one knew. No one said anything. Jock looked at his watch, then down at the dirty gray clouds below. And then the words slammed into his ears. The first he had heard since crossing the enemy coast. The words were: ANGEL IS DOWN.

That meant the first plane. The first bomb had been shot down or the plane had aborted. We didn't know. It should have bombed two minutes ahead of us. Jock said: "It's up to us now."

The flak started again, as though the gunners knew we were carrying the second punch. The bombardier was looking down through the clouds. It was a radar job and very impersonal. Now it was quiet. No fighters. No flak. We were alone with only the steady voices of the engines and the not quite intelligible voice of the bombardier. Then he said, suddenly and clearly: "It's gone."

Jock took over, turned 45 degrees to port and ramed the throttles home. As we looked down through the overcast, I saw it—something that I can only describe as the flame of a gigantic blowtorch filtering through dirty yellow gauze.

We felt nothing. It was the most professional, nerveless military operation I have ever seen.

Jock asked for a new course from his navigator. Then he checked his 15-man crew, told them to keep alert until we crossed the enemy coast. We were heading home.

I sat beside him part of the way back. At times he took over from the automatic pilot. Once he said: "It's nice to be going home. My wife and two children lived in Detroit. I haven't heard from them for over a month."

I could see his knuckles turn white as he gripped the wheel when he said it. He seemed very tired and old—anything but exultant . . .



The nation's capital after the atomic blast. Bomb struck near left center of picture, battering down bridges, snapping off top of Washington

ant shouts of "Zivio Tito!" ("Long live Tito!") and the chanting of "Tito our little white violet." But they were keeping their eyes on the peasants around them.

When they were approximately 20 feet from Tito, first Petrovic, then Borlic tossed the cigars at the marshal and, as they did so, flung themselves to the ground.

Two explosions ripped the court and screams reverberated throughout the suburban Dedinje district which the White Palace dominates. The cigars which Petrovic and Borlic had obtained in the washroom of Topcider's restaurant were lethal Soviet adaptations of the so-called "Bouncing Betty" pocket grenades developed by the Nazis.

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In Belgrade's magnificent new broadcasting station, the Yugoslavian Symphony Orchestra had just completed the third movement of Beethoven's Fifth. As the sweeping second hand of the studio clock touched 2:00 P.M. G.M.T., six members of the orchestra left their seats. They were armed. One of them advanced to the microphone. The others took up strategic positions around the studio. At that same instant an armed man appeared in the engineering control room. Yugoslavia and monitors throughout the world heard this: "Tito is dead! Tito is dead! The Yugoslav people have arisen and

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## Washington Under the Bomb

(Note to editors: Following is the first eyewitness account of the A-bombing of Washington, D.C., early today by a Soviet plane. Associated Press columnist Hal Boyle sent his story out in a helicopter which evacuated congressmen from the stricken capital.)

By HAL BOYLE

Washington, May 10, 1953

The American capital is missing in action.

A single enemy atom bomb has destroyed the heart of the city. The rest is rapidly becoming a fire-washed memory. The flames are raging over 18 square miles.

Washington is burning to death. Communications are temporarily disrupted. Help of all kinds is urgently needed from the rest of the country—blood, drugs, bandages, doctors, nurses, food, transportation.

Uncounted thousands are dead. More thousands of injured lie, spread in untended rows, on hospital lawns and parks, or walk unheeded until they fall.

Civil defense has broken down. The few valiant disaster squads are helpless in this homeless flood of agony

and misery. Troops are moving in to restore order among maddened masses trying to flee the city.

Fright crowds the rubble streets and wears a blank face of awe. It couldn't happen here yesterday. It did happen here before dawn today.

The bomb exploded in southwest Washington, midway between the Capitol building and the Jefferson Memorial. It lighted the city as if it were a Roman candle.

For a radius of a mile from the center of the blast the devastation is utter—a huge scorched zero, as if a giant, white-hot hammer had pounded the area into the earth. Blast and fire then reached out in widening waves.

Most of the shrines that unite the American people are casualties. The Lincoln and Jefferson Memorials are in ruins. The top of the Washington Monument sheared off, but the main part of the shaft still stands.

The White House is gutted. The President and his family are safe. The Secret Service has escorted him from the capital to a secret destination.

The dome of the Capitol itself is a great white shattered teacup. The office building of the House of Representatives is flaming. The Smithsonian Institution, 1