

# Surviving the

By DAVID MAZEROLLE  
Features Editor

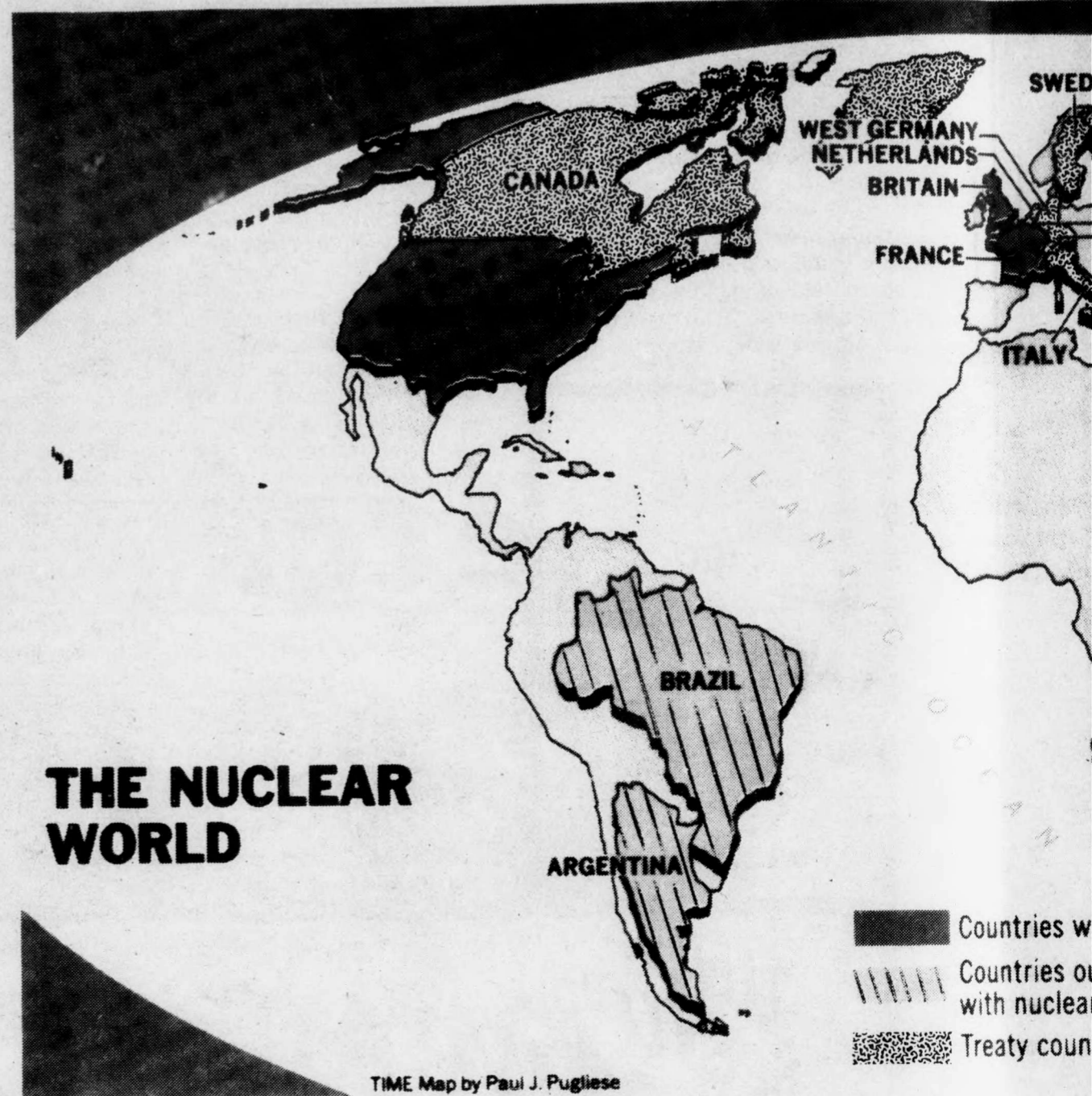
"Proliferation has already happened. The main problem of the late 1980's is not so much preventing the spread of nuclear weapons but making it survivable."

Those are the chilling words of a senior official of the Vienna-based International Atomic Energy Agency. Five countries formally possess nuclear weapons (the U.S., the Soviet Union, Britain, France and China) and other countries are ominously close: India's 1974 test explosion shows that it has learned to master the capacity to build them. Pakistan operates a "research center" and has been illegally buying high-tech equipment, all on the way to the Bomb.

It is the age of nuclear proliferation, and the power, knowledge and facilities to make nuclear weapons is coming into more and more unstable hands. Libya's Muammar Gaddafi's here-to-for unsuccessful bid for nuclear power — the stepping-stone to nuclear weaponry — is coming closer to a reality as he helps Pakistan toward their goal.

Nuclear weapons in the collective hands of any state are dangerous. The popular image of nuclear war results from the classic U.S.—U.S.S.R. conflict. The trouble may be, however, in the possibility of two smaller nations having a regional war turn nuclear. The devastation and radiation may cover an area much larger than the two combatants' countries. And, with the tradition of the superpowers to take opposing sides in regional conflicts, what guarantee is there that a small war can mushroom into a third world war? The Soviets and the U.S. are in agreement in this one area, deciding last November to meet twice a year "to come to an agreement before nuclear weapons spread to more and more countries that could involve us in a conflict," as a Soviet specialist said.

Nuclear weapon-making capability also makes terrorism of awesome proportions possible. The U.S. military has, since 1964, deployed the "back pack nuke," a bomb that one man can carry and can destroy dams, bridges and similar installations. It is also possible to make a 400-lb. bomb, capable of fitting into medium-sized car, that could destroy a medium-sized city.



An unstable regime like Gaddafi's, if they could steal or buy enough plutonium, could build a device slightly weaker than the one that leveled Hiroshima for a few thousand dollars. The horror is too close. According to **TIME Magazine**, June 3, 1985:

A new generation of nuclear powers, and would-be powers, is maturing. Known among experts as the "phantom proliferators, the countries are contributing the most significant uncertainties about the future of non-proliferation. The phantoms are India, Pakistan, Israel, South Africa and, to a lesser degree, Argentina and Brazil. All of them have mastered, or are well on their way to mastering, the skills to produce atomic explosives.

What to do? The United Nations is approaching a mid-life crisis that seems to be heading it toward a toothless dotage. The general population of Canada, to use one country as an example, has 58.6 percent