

Carter's Asia Policy

In the week since the fall of the Gandhi government in India, syndicated columnists Joseph Kraft and William Safire have called on the U.S.A. to create a new "triangle" of nations to contain Soviet influence in Asia. These suggestions have fallen on receptive ears in the Carter Administration, which has signaled it wants to bring about a new India-China "detente" based on the anti-Soviet tendencies of the ruling governments of both countries.

The Soviet Union's setback in India can result in additional strategic gains for the Carter Administration only to the extent that pro-development leaders in other Asian countries — Pakistan's Prime Minister Bhutto, Indonesian President Suharto, and Sri Lanka's Prime Minister Bandaranaike — are forced to end their resistance to World Bank demands and friendship with the Soviet Union. Within a week of Mrs. Gandhi's ouster, these governments have come under heavy attack. The Carter policy for Asia is war, to be brought about by such

"allies" as the Janata Party in India, the CIA-trained Pakistani military establishment and even the remnants of Maoists in China.

The deterioration in the Indian situation is reflected in recent developments regionally. In Pakistan, Bhutto is under pressure from the military establishment to quit. A spokesman for the Sri Lankan foreign ministry has announced that Sri Lanka is receptive to Carter's Indian Ocean demilitarization proposals — even without the full dismantling of the U.S. base in Diego Garcia. If this is the case, it would make a mockery out of the non-aligned group's proposal to turn the Indian Ocean into a zone of peace and development.

What follows is an analysis of two key Asian situations — India and Indonesia. If Safire and Kraft's "scenarios" for U.S. intervention are followed up, these two countries will be the first targets. Instability there spells chaos, communal wars, hunger and famine on a scale never before witnessed.

Desai's Program: Domestic Misery, Regional War

INDIA

Only one week in office, India's new Janata Party government has already moved to reverse in all domestic and foreign policy areas, the fundamental commitments made by the Gandhi government. Prime Minister Morarji Desai has announced a major reappraisal of India's friendly relations with the Soviet Union. His new finance minister H.M. Patel has halted all new state sector development projects, freezing India's Five Year Plan and announcing that the government will henceforth embark on a new economic program favoring deindustrialization, ruralization, self-reliance and slave-labor "full-employment."

These policies are behind the fear in many informed circles that, within weeks, India will face working-class rioting, strikes and chaos in its northern states, and a major North-South confrontation provoked by the fanatical northern Hindu sect Jan Sangh, part of the ruling Janata Party. Apprehensions in India's southern states, where the Janata Party lost by large margins to the Congress Party, were substantiated last week when the Jan Sangh initiated no-confidence motions, strikes and walkouts to force secular Congress Party state administrations out of office.

The most optimistic Asian scholars give Desai only an outside chance of lasting out the year. A desperate conglomerate of four or more parties, with conflicting ideologies, the landlords, "socialists," rich peasants, moneylenders, and monetarist business backers of the Janata have unified around deindustrialization policies that will surely set off massive unrest in India's huge industrial workforce. Religious chauvinism, explicitly espoused by the Jan Sangh Hindu supremacists, violates the concept of India as a secular, stable nation, the basic commitment of the Congress and Mrs. Gandhi that the Janata has now moved to eradicate. Regional chaos is merely one step beyond.

Foreign Policy

The reversal of Mrs. Gandhi's policies of peace and development is most clearly seen in the string of outright provocations against the Soviet Union and the non-aligned movement evident in Morarji Desai's first foreign policy statements. According to the *London Times*, "Desai has emphasized that the (Indo-Soviet) treaty could not be dissolved but should it ever hurt India's interest it would be for the Soviet Union to do what they want in the light of India's 'non-aligned' stance." Promptly thereafter Desai accepted the resignation of Planning Commission chairman P.N. Haksar, one of the leading pro-socialist development planners involved in