

Soviets Seek Asian 'Collective Security' Pact

Aug. 5 —The appropriation by the U.S. Congress of monies for expanding the U.S. air and naval base on the Indian Ocean island of Diego Garcia constitutes a serious challenge to the Soviet Union and the Soviet-allied and non-aligned countries which fringe the Indian Ocean. Moscow had vehemently opposed the base, raising the issue repeatedly in negotiating sessions with the U.S. and other officials, and conducting a major press campaign against it in 1974. The Senate go-ahead, in a marginal 53-43 vote, followed concerted Pentagon publicity about a chimerical "Soviet build-up" in African Somalia and the Indian Ocean generally.

The Soviet Union, however, is by no means stuck with the single alternative of military escalation to match the strategic post on Diego Garcia. Fresh off their victory in carrying the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) to its summit conclusion in Helsinki last week, the Soviets have already relaunched their policy of actively seeking a collective security arrangement for Asia.

The real principle of Helsinki — intertwining of security agreements and economic cooperation — is now at the center of Moscow's Asian policy. The limitation of military, especially nuclear, base construction in Asia and East Africa and of naval deployments into the Indian Ocean will serve as the "inviolability of borders" did for the CSCE: as the principal security terms for the agreement. U.S. think-tank sources admit that a proposal for naval limitations in the Indian Ocean would now find "receptive ears."

The economic complement to these terms will be consolidation of the Eurasian development bloc, with subsumed regional development projects as the Ganges-Brahmaputra River basin.

Besides targeting Diego Garcia and other U.S. encroachments, the Asian collective security drive will go after the interlocking CIA and Chinese networks in Asia. Soviet news media

have already begun to step up exposure of Peking's insidious operations involving terror gangs, emigre mafiosos, and drug and gun running in African and Asian countries around the Indian Ocean.

Support from Non-Aligned

During the Helsinki summit, where Soviet bloc speakers said from the podium that the CSCE summit should be considered the prelude to further initiatives, Moscow began to give the Asian security idea broad publicity. Pravda in an August 3 commentary, as well as repeated Radio Moscow broadcasts, called the CSCE exemplary for other areas of the world, particularly Asia and Africa.

Moreover, there will be no long wait for endorsement of collective security in Asia by leading non-aligned countries. East German radio in its CSCE roundups highlighted Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's favorable assessment of the European agreements. Conversely, the Helsinki meeting came up last week in bilateral talks between the Indian and Indonesian Foreign Ministers, who then issued a communique calling for the Indian Ocean to be a "zone of peace" — a concept from the lexicon of Soviet security proposals. Most immediately, Indian Ocean security and military expansion there have been put on the agenda of the conference of non-aligned countries scheduled this month in Lima, Peru.

The most recent detailed Soviet literature on Asian security declares a policy of supportive collaboration with the area's non-aligned countries. A. Segeev's "Problems of Collective Security in Asia" in the July issue of *International Affairs* (distributed world-wide in three languages) links the Soviet proposal to the basic tenets of the non-aligned movement, dating from its 1955 founding conference in Bandung. These principles, which in Segeev's presentation culminate in "broad development of economic and

other cooperation on the basis of full equality and mutual gain", are "by virtue of their universality, acceptable and attractive for all Asian states."

Defuse Chinese and CIA

For sane parties in the starved and debt-squeezed Indian Ocean countries, this attraction to development-security arrangements is irresistible. The political battle for collective security in Asia has now to be fought out against the increasingly rabid Chinese, the CIA, and governments deep under their influence. Here the Soviet Union's ability to supply preliminary economic aid and favorable trade terms is heavy ammunition.

Soviet maintenance of socialist Vietnam and aid to core non-aligned countries like India and Somalia is well known. Moving ahead, Moscow has begun to split Pakistan from the U.S. — with a \$500 million steel plant deal with provisions for training specialists — and deal with the Association of South East Asian (ASEAN) countries (Thailand, Philippines, Malaysia, and Indonesia).

The ASEAN countries, despite recent Thai and Chinese proposals to turn the group into a new military bloc, are extremely fertile ground for positive economic intervention by the Soviets. The Maoist Thai Communist Party has proposed by radio — as an attack on "Soviet social-imperialism" — that the Soviet Union has offered low-interest loans to Thai industry and helped finance new shipping lines for Thailand and Singapore. This represents powerful subversion of the Maoist and CIA operations in the region. The region's rapid acceleration towards collective security agreement will preclude Chinese-Japanese anti-Soviet military consolidation as an Asian option.

In the meantime, the Chinese are engaged in every effort to prevent the nascent Soviet initiative from taking shape. Thus Peking is supporting the most reactionary ASEAN governments, such as Thailand, for sake of maintaining the U.S. presence in Asia

to fend off the Soviet Union. Their intervention to block rapprochement between India and Pakistan has been exposed in Soviet papers, as has their arming and instigation of anti-Indian groups in Nepal and Bangladesh. In the latter case, as elsewhere in Asia and Africa, Peking follows the CIA modus operandi of cultivating and when possible detonating chauvinist and racist tendencies of national minorities in the countries where they want to

wreak havoc.

But Chinese, sensing that they haven't really a card to show against the Soviet and non-aligned initiatives, reacted to the European precedent with undiluted terror. Peking greeted the Helsinki summit with a wild-eyed press release linking it to the Soviet collective proposal for Asia and warning that the Soviets have already made diplomatic inroads in the area. True enough!