

Carter Plays His 'China Card'

CHINA

Apparently oblivious to the dangerous implications of such a policy, the Carter-Brzezinski Administration has reactivated the Rockefeller-Kissinger strategy of the "second front" threat against the Soviets eastern flank through the creation of a "Washington-Tokyo-Peking Axis," a Pacific-wide anti-Soviet entente.

Indications have proliferated in the last two weeks that the Administration desires to open negotiations with China leading to normalization of diplomatic relations at the earliest possible moment. The reason is indicated by Japanese Prime Minister Takeo Fukuda's deliberate alienation of the Soviet Union by his preparations to go along with China's anti-Soviet posture in the Pacific.

The timing of Fukuda's move reveals almost certain coordination between the U.S. and Japan, worked out during Fukuda's trip to the United States last month. Carter's conspicuous silence on the question of human rights in China, after his well-publicized provocations of the Soviet Union on this question, has been followed by the extraordinarily sudden announcement of a joint Congress-White House mission to China, organized within hours of the collapse of the Vance mission to Moscow.

The joint mission, which left for China April 7, was organized by the White House only on the previous Thursday and Friday, March 31 and April 1, just after the March 30 fiasco in Moscow. It is headed by Senator Schweiker (R-Pa) and Representative Brademas (D-Ind), who will be accompanied by eight other legislators, none of them with past experience in Far Eastern affairs. The haste with which the mission was assembled was such that one Senator was said to have "been startled to find out" he was going, and had already made alternate plans for the Easter recess; a Congressman's aide commented that the last-minute invitation "really is surprising." None of the designated Congressmen had an explanation for the lack of prior notice. It is known, however, that National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski, who was central in making the plans, holds the view that U.S. moves towards Peking can be used to extract concessions from the Soviet Union. Last week it was made apparent that he also believes gestures toward China can be punitive to Moscow as well.

The White House purpose in dispatching the team was made clear by the announcement that Michael Oksenberg, the National Security Staffer for China and a top aid to Brzezinski, will accompany the legislators. Oksenberg, who produced a detailed profile of China's new chairman, Hua Kuo-feng, after becoming Carter's

chief advisor on Chinese affairs last fall, is being sent to allow him to verify his profile. There is little doubt that Oksenberg, well known as a strong advocate of early normalization of U.S.-China relations, will also discuss with the Chinese means of removing the remaining obstacles to close Sino-U.S. relations, probably paving the way for an early visit to China by Secretary of State Cyrus Vance.

Carter personally certified that the trip is a major overture to the Chinese several days later with the announcement that his son Chip would also accompany the mission.

The indecent sprint to Peking is so obviously tied to developments in Moscow, in fact, that the *New York Times* felt called upon to rationalize it thusly: "However, last week's emphatic and harsh Russian rebuff of American proposals for the limitation of strategic arms ... would offer a plausible incentive for the United States to speed its efforts (for normalization)."

A further signal to Peking was the leaked story published in the *Times* April 6, on the eve of the delegation's departure, that UAW President Leonard Woodcock, fresh from his recent assignment to Vietnam and a supporter of normalization, might be appointed to head the U.S. liaison mission in Peking.

The *Times* sent yet another signal to Peking by revealing that the Carter Administration is refusing to sell Taiwan any of the arms it would need for even a minimal program of modernization of its equipment. Presently lacking adequate surface-to-air or surface-to-surface missiles, modern anti-submarine weapons and modern jet fighters, Taiwan's navy, shore batteries, and air force are sitting ducks should China decide to invade. While there are no prospects for a near-term invasion, the Carter Administration's apparent decision to stall on rearming Taiwan — and the publicizing of this move — represent a device through which to find agreement with China on the "Taiwan question," the primary issue preventing close U.S.-China ties.

The Japanese Connection

The Japanese participation in Carter's "second front" became clear in late March, when Japanese Prime Minister Takeo Fukuda suddenly revived the long-stalled issue of a "peace and friendship" treaty with China shortly after his return home from the U.S. On March 22 Liberal Democratic Party member and Dietman Hideji Kawasaki delivered a written message from Fukuda to Chou En-lai's widow, offering to send foreign minister Ichiro Hatoyama to China "if circumstance required it" for negotiations on the treaty. China, as well as Western diplomatic observers, interpreted the note as an offer to conclude the treaty on China's terms, which includes the notorious "anti-hegemony" clause directed against the Soviet Union.

At the same time, Chinese Communist Party Chair-

man Hua Kuo-feng personally informed top Japanese industrialist Toshio Doko, in China for trade talks, that China was ready to conclude long-term trade deals to exchange Chinese oil and coal for Japanese steel, machinery, and equipment. But China made it clear that they expected the treaty to be signed as an implicit part of the deal.

This stipulation is not supported by Japanese businessmen, who want trade with both China and the Soviets. The Fukuda and Chinese moves are in fact a squeeze play against both Fukuda's factional opponents within Japanese business and the Soviet Union. The Soviets wasted no time in responding to the provocation by almost literally kicking over the table in the sensitive fishery talks with the Japanese. It is an open secret in Japan that Fukuda's purpose is to break Japanese-Soviet business ties.

China's Leadership Remains Locked In Factional Battle

China's top leadership is deeply divided over the most basic questions that face China today. According to one analyst on the scene, *Le Monde's* Alain Jacob, the split is between what he terms the "continuity" faction and the "radicals of the right," and is so deep that a resort to use of the armed forces of the PLA, China's army, cannot be ruled out.

Direct recent proof of the persisting inability to resolve basic questions was provided April 5-7, the first anniversary of the anti-Maoist, pro-Teng Hsiao-ping demonstrations that shook the regime last year, and of the subsequent purging of then Deputy Premier Teng. Teng's failure to make an appearance confirms that his return to power is strongly opposed in powerful quarters, while Politburo-ordered prohibition of any kind of public manifestation on April 5, the traditional Ching Ming festival, reveals the regime's extreme fear that any spontaneous expression of popular sentiment would get out of hand.

Jacob's characterization of China's faction fight comes as close to the truth as the very meager presently available information permits. The "rightists," according to Jacob, seek a fundamental shift in China's basic orientation, away from the Maoist program of the last two decades, while the "continuity" group wants to maintain the aura of Mao and Maoism, and stop the process of reforms begun after the October purge of Mao's four closest Politburo allies.

The "radical" group is centered around Communist Party chairman Hua Kuo-feng, the "continuity faction" around Teng Hsiao-ping, who is said to be very active behind the scenes, and Hsu Shih-yu, his military protector and the commander of the Canton Military Region. The alignments of most of the other ten Politburo members are not known for certain, although Peking Mayor Wu Teh and secret police chief Wang Tung-hsing are definitely "continuator" while Defense Minister and

Should Carter's Fukuda gambit succeed, it would confront Moscow not only with a hostile China on its border, but with a hostile India-China-Japan-U.S. "rectangle" comprising the three greatest nations of Asia, a more formidable "second front" than weak China represents alone, and a configuration designed to elicit a paranoid Soviet "hardline" response, leading to war.

The new pro-Carter regime in India has already leaked that a "second front" is in store for China itself, belying any assurances of real friendship for China emanating from Washington. The ruling Janata Party sent a telegram to the United Nations asking for implementation of the dead-letter 1959 UN resolutions concerning Tibet. The revival of this long buried issue, by the same people who provoked the 1962 Sino-Indian War, augurs poorly for continued peace along the Himalyan border, and suggests that the recent stability in the region may soon die a premature death.

second ranking Party chief Yeh Chien-ying is known to be close to Teng. Jacob reported that there have been substantial troop movements in several parts of the country that appear to be more than just a response to the serious North China drought, and concluded by saying that for the moment the "continuity" group seems to have a slight upper hand. But the divisions are so profound that no compromise is possible, and the latter group — centered largely in the military — may resort to use of the army to change the power balance if needed, he added, raising the specter of civil war and general chaos.

Underlying the faction fight is the existence of the most profound crisis of Chinese society in the last half century. The "continuator" are those who owe their current positions to their obedience to Mao and his policies. The anti-Maoists are those who have opposed, blocked, or gone along only unwillingly with Mao. Mao's policies are the issue now. The continuation of many of these policies even after the purge of the Maoist "gang of four" ringleaders has turned the heady enthusiasm displayed in the streets last October into apathy, demoralization, weariness, unease, and redoubled cynicism about the entire regime and the Communist Party itself. Indefinite continuation of this situation will eventually threaten the very existence of the regime, not to mention its economic development program. The anti-Maoists know this.

Foreign Policy A Major Issue

Since foreign policy disputes are almost never revealed directly in China, the best gauge of foreign policy conflict is significant increases or decreases in the intensity of anti-Soviet vituperation. The last three weeks has seen a sudden escalation in this department, confirming that Mao's Soviet policy is a factional issue.

An anonymous top official, in an interview attended by *New York Times* columnist William Safire, in mid-