

Editorial

Pakistan: what kind of ally?

Pakistan's dictator, Gen. Zia ul-Haq, the director of a regime under which all political activity is banned and thousands have been sent to jail without trial, is planning to visit the United States in December, to consummate the strategic alliance designed by the pro-Chinese geopolitical schemers in the Anglo-American foreign policy establishment.

The visit, like the alliance it represents, is a travesty. Gen. Zia ul-Haq's regime in Pakistan is the active repudiation of the most basic principles of human dignity, morality, and political rights the American republic was founded to defend. Over the past five years, after Zia's military had overthrown and subsequently murdered the democratically elected Premier, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, on Henry Kissinger's orders, the Zia regime's crimes against Pakistan have been widely documented in the West.

Today Zia is cynically toying with the life of former Premier Bhutto's widow, Begum Nusrat Bhutto, leader of the Pakistan People's Party founded by her murdered husband. Mrs. Bhutto is suffering from complications that arose out of successive prison terms during which she has been physically and mentally tortured. She has urgent medical needs, and has requested from the government of Pakistan a passport and permission to travel to Europe for treatment. For more than a month now the authorities of Pakistan have refused to respond to her request, evidently out of sheer political vindictiveness. Mrs. Bhutto recently communicated to her sister in London her conviction that Zia ul-Haq wants to see her die.

The case of Mrs. Bhutto is not an isolated one. It is the norm for General Zia's military dictatorship, a regime that, as *EIR* has documented, benefits massively from the flow of heroin into the streets of America. General Zia's regime is so inimical to the needs and interests of the Pakistani population that it has to be protected behind a fortress of what the entire world, were it given the facts, would condemn as fascist law. The suspension of all democratic rights, including elections, was only the beginning. At the end of September a new law was proclaimed: the death penalty will be imposed on all political and other

prisoners retroactive to July 5, 1977, when Zia took power and imposed martial law. The death penalty will also be imposed against anyone who "provides protection to persons guilty of such activities as creating public instability or a sense of insecurity among the people." *The onus of proving innocence will lie with the accused.*

It is a sad fact that General Zia's dictatorship has been supported and guided from brutality to brutality by advice, funding, and weapons from the American government. Zia has been glad to trade a military base, an electronic listening post, or even port facilities to facilitate NATO's "out-of-area" deployments into the Middle East and sub-continent in exchange for protection, from his own people and world opinion alike. American policy defies not only morality in this matter, but logic: can the State Department and National Security Council seriously believe that a leader without a nation behind him will provide the kind of geopolitical advantage they seek?

We join in endorsing National Democratic Policy Committee Chairman Warren Hamerman's appeal to President Reagan to use his moral and political power to ensure that General Zia acts promptly and Mrs. Bhutto gets the medical treatment she requires.

We further endorse Mr. Hamerman's recommendation to the President that he owes it both to himself and to the American people to disassociate the United States from financial, military, and political support of Pakistan's Zia ul-Haq regime.

Will President Reagan, an ardent promoter of human rights and the democratic freedoms we cherish to in America, stoop to shake the blood-drenched hand of the petty tyrant Zia ul-Haq? Will he welcome a man earning the money to silence his own population by shipping tons of heroin to American cities, to kill America's future?

We agree with the NDPC that President Reagan's refusal to do so would find overwhelming support from the American population. We also think it urgent that other nations and individuals follow suit in bringing the full moral and material pressure to bear to assure Mrs. Bhutto's life, and to free the people of Pakistan.