

Iron Fist

With its "democratic face" scenario at least momentarily stalled, the CIA has hastened to activate its hard-line military option. The CIA press, headed by UPI, has been highlighting the dispatch of an 11 ship flotilla of the U.S. Seventh Fleet from Subic Bay in the Philippines to an undetermined point off the Vietnamese coast in the South China Sea. While the Pentagon and State Department have vociferously denied any "emergency deployment," characterizing the maneuvers as "routine," the press has continually connected the presence of the fleet with the offensive in Vietnam and Cambodia. The deployment of the fleet, reportedly heading southwest for the Straits of Malacca and on to the Indian Ocean, raises the possibility of its deployment in the Persian Gulf area, a clear threat to the Soviets.

These events in Vietnam raise the possibility, admittedly remote and politically suicidal, of U.S. military intervention into Indochina. Less remote is the possibility that a red-scare about Soviet support for Indochinese Communists could be used to justify massive increases in arms shipments to Vietnam and Cambodia and increased arms production at home.

GANDHI OPENS ATTACKS ON FASCISTS IN INDIA

Jan. 8 (IPS)--India's Prime Minister Indira Gandhi has used the recent assassination of Railways Minister Lalit Mishra to launch an attack on right-wing CIA-directed fascists in India.

Gandhi laid the blame for the assassination squarely on the shoulders of CIA agent provocateur and fascist Jayaprakash Narayan, claiming "that the fascist forces out to destroy democracy had claimed their first victim."

Addressing a meeting yesterday held in memory of Mishra, Gandhi claimed that the assassination is part of a dangerous plan backed by certain foreign forces aimed at her. In recent weeks, Gandhi has spoken of CIA activities within India.

The Indian Communist Party, which has vigorously supported the moves by the Gandhi government to increase trade with the Soviet Union and East bloc, has also pinned the blame for the assassination on Narayan.

The assassination occurred in Narayan's organizing base, Bihar province. Mishra, notorious for his strike-breaking activities during last May's nationwide railway strike, was the central figure in Watergate-style corruption scandals being orchestrated by Narayan's forces.

The CIA has been attempting to wreck the Gandhi government to create total political chaos on the subcontinent. Within the ruling Congress Party, a liberal pro-American faction has emerged around Rockefeller agent and Finance Minister Subramanian. Subramanian has launched an attack on all attempts of the government to establish closer trade ties with the Soviet Union. From outside the government, Narayan forces have agitated for decentralized local control policies in an effort to discredit any semblance of governmental structure in a period of mass economic collapse.

Mishra's death is expected to trigger an intensification of all these attacks.