

**South and East Asia**

Highly sensitive to previous U.S. involvement in South-east Asia, the Carter Administration initially sought to de-emphasize the U.S. presence there. In fulfillment of his campaign pledge, Carter immediately began to withdraw troops from South Korea until the Japanese indicated their displeasure. Also, ASEAN indicated to the Administration that it needed the commitment of U.S. presence in Asia. As a result, the Carter Administration found itself faced with responsibilities in Asia that Carter had strongly criticized during the presidential campaign. This inconsistency, although primarily due to the realities of power, damaged the Carter image. In addition, the lack of forceful human rights criticism of the Asian countries, including allies, hurt the Administration's credibility. Apart from the military assurances, the Carter Administration had paid little attention to South and East Asia.

**Soviet Union**

The Carter Administration's policy towards the Soviet Union has generally been unfortunate, despite the recent SALT II agreement. The Administration started with a misperception of the Soviet world role and, as a result, misread Soviet intentions. Beginning with a false sense of strength and superiority vis-a-vis the Soviet Union as a result of the legacy of *détente*, the Administration virtually ignored it except to make periodic human rights pronouncements and to settle the major issues through the comprehensive SALT negotiations. Yet problems in Soviet-American relations have occurred apart from the SALT negotiations, in various African, Middle Eastern and Asian areas. Because the Carter Administration's world order policy for matters other than strategic ones was based on a doctrine of trilateralism, the SALT issue was seen as a goal in itself without immediate relevance to other events. The Soviet image held by the Carter Administration and conveyed to the American public – and to the Soviet Union – indicated the confusion in attitudes towards the Soviets within the Administration. On one hand, the Soviet Union was considered the major partner in building a strategic world order through the SALT agreements. On the other hand, it was seen as a perpetrator of gross human rights violations. There is no doubt that the accusations of human rights violations have had some influence on the recent increase in numbers allowed to emigrate. However, the over-all effect of this dual policy has been to give an impression of inconsistency. The Carter Administration has recovered in part from this shaky beginning; and Carter's tough Annapolis speech in June, 1978, can be seen as a watershed.

**Arms Control**

The Carter Administration has a mixed record on arms control. Its greatest success is the SALT II

agreement, which offers sufficient advantage to certain American interests. The Administration jeopardized the negotiations at first by sending Vance to Moscow immediately with major new proposals, which the Russians refused. It recovered rapidly, however, from this mistake and has since proceeded more cautiously. The Administration has expressed lofty sentiments regarding non-proliferation, but the results of its initiatives in this area have been poor. The Germans and Brazilians, in particular, have been greatly alienated by the Administration's approach. The Carter Administration has also had a mixed record on arms sales. In contrast to previous administrations, they linked arms sales to the purchaser country's stand on human rights. To an extent they achieved some positive results, but their inconsistency in carrying out this policy was unfortunate.

**Defence**

The Carter Administration has generally sought to exercise U.S. leadership through political and economic initiatives rather than through military threats. It has maintained traditional global military commitments, but created some confusion because it lacked a clear definition of vital interests. In response to what was perceived to be the "lesson of Vietnam," the Administration drew back from global military involvement at first and then began to restructure its defence commitments in terms of more limited objectives. However, it has become clear that the continued existence of certain vital strategic interests limits any radical changes in defence policy. The failure to consider the strategic implications of a total withdrawal from Korea and the zig-zag decision on the deployment of neutron bombs in Europe have contributed to an image of confusion.

**Foreign Aid**

The Carter Administration has proclaimed extremely high standards for its foreign-aid program, but has not lived up to them. Despite its declared intent to establish a foreign-aid program that would further American moral interests, the Administration has yet to come up with concrete criteria and objectives for foreign aid. Continuing traditional U.S. policy, the Carter Administration has not changed the proportion of aid to the poorer nations as opposed to that given a few developed ones. It has made little effort to sell foreign-aid programs to Congress and the public.

**Human Rights**

President Carter must be given credit for the influence he has had on the worldwide interest in human rights, merely by publicizing the issue. It is difficult to assess the precise impact of the Carter rhetoric, but it is clear that the level of awareness of the issue of human rights has increased. The Administration has undoubtedly had a positive influence on