

Charan Singh takes offence, rift with PM widens

By Alok Mehta

NEW DELHI, Jan. 4—The gulf that separates the two top-ranking, individualistic, strong-willed leaders of the Ruling Party — Prime Minister Morarji Desai and Home Minister Charan Singh — is, unfortunately, widening instead of narrowing down. Indeed matters have come to a stage in which even an unmentioned slight or breach of protocol could cause a breach.

On such occasion arose during President Carter's visit here. It is stated that at the airport reception to the President on Sunday afternoon, when the Cabinet Ministers presented to Mr Carter and the other visiting dignitaries, the Home Minister was not accorded his due precedence as Number 2 as decreed by protocol. External Affairs Ministry sources say this happened because Mr Charan Singh came a little late and by the time he was led up to the reception point, some other Cabinet Ministers had gone before him.