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# Letter From The Editor

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA was founded on July 4, 1776, and this year the bicentennial anniversary is being commemorated in a manner befitting the richest and mightiest power the world has yet known. The national emblem of the USA is the bald eagle (chosen in preference to the wild turkey which is another uniquely American bird). The bald eagle is only found in the North American continent. Commenting on a documentary film on the bald eagle entitled **Eagle Come Home**, the *Christian Science Monitor*, had stated: "As the bald eagle goes, so goes America? Uniquely American, the bald eagle is unknown anywhere else in the world. The grace and beauty of this mystic and majestic bird has always been a symbol of power and purpose—from the time of the native American Indians to the present. Paralleling the waning influence of America, the bald eagle for a time seemed on the edge of extinction due to the encroachment of civilisation and all its debilitating 'advances'. Forest breeding ground gave way to housing developments, DDT sprays found their way into the birds' systems and weakened the shells of their eggs. Power lines electrocuted unsuspecting eagles as they swept by. Now throughout the country, organised groups and individuals are making a stand. The American bald eagle must survive. The 7,000 pairs in Alaska seem to be safely on their way to a prosperous future. But the 700 pairs in the rest of the country still require care and study and succour. **Eagle Come Home** was the story of that effort. It was a sad yet beautiful documentary—recording the soaring eight-foot wing spans, the 20-year nesting habits, even explaining the dynamics of eagle flight. Human activities and eagles don't seem to mix well anywhere—and the only human activities that eagles can survive are those specifically designed to help them to survive. . . . . Man has finally joined the battle for survival which, till now, has been a losing battle for this singularly American creature. What the documentary made very clear is that of all these activities on behalf of the eagle are tied directly to the survival of mankind as well as of wildlife. When Americans breed bald eagles in captivity, the obvious hope is that the birds will be released into a new, cleaner environment. Otherwise, the bald eagle will hardly be the only species doomed to extinction. . . . ."

This attempt to help the bald eagle to survive symbolises the contemporary efforts of the American people to regain and restore some of high ideals and objectives of the founding fathers of the USA. The struggle to end the inglorious war in Vietnam, the Watergate cleansing of the Augean stables in the White House which had reached the heights of depravity during the second term of President Nixon and heroic attempts to eliminate (at least minimise) excesses of the FBI, CIA and other Security agencies of the Administration, all demonstrate that the human spirit which had produced the first revolt against the colonial rule of Britain is still alive among the people of America. There is a new ferment and upsurge in the USA which has even begun to challenge the power of the multinational corporations and the big trusts. The bicentennial celebrations of the USA is taking place at a critical time in its history—critical also for every country in the world (and for the whole world itself). The presidential elections have brought to the surface new and powerful trends which are likely to dominate the politics of the USA in the coming years. Though Kissinger is under attack both at home and abroad, the spirit of detente which he helped to set in motion is a force that has gained validity and currency in the entire world. The future of Kissinger may be in the balance but the compelling urge for detente, politically and militarily, continues to grow, (In the economic sphere detente seems far away and unreal at the moment, as competition between countries and systems grow fiercer). For a long time, the American administration seems to have forgotten the art of making friends and influencing people—relying too long on dictatorships, military blocs and other dying and decadent elements. There are, however, indications that there is a new American desire to establish a dialogue with real people who already matter or will matter in the present and coming era, in Asia, Africa and everywhere else. **ON THE COVER**, we have a picture of the Ceylon Sea Eagle—white-bellied and grey. It is found all along the sea coasts of the dry zone areas and also in some of the tanks in the dry zone. A very large number of countries in the world have one variety or another of the eagle as their national emblem, but Sri Lanka has a stylised and symbolic lion as its national emblem.

# TRIBUNE

Founded In 1954

A Journal of Ceylon and  
World Affairs

Editor S. P. Amarasingam

Every Saturday

July 3, 1976

Vol. 21 No. 4

TRIBUNE  
43, DAWSON STREET,  
COLOMBO - 2  
Telephone: 33172

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## EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Sri Lanka's Economy  
And The World

THE ECONOMIC SITUATION in the island of Sri Lanka at the moment is not a happy one. One of the weakest links in the economic sector is that the level of investment or capital formation, which is the key to development—in the private and the public sectors—is too low. This has been pointed out by many economists and also by the Governor of Central Bank, Mr. Herbert Tennekoon, in a speech to the Chamber of Commerce at the end of April this year. He had drawn attention to the fact that the lack of a clear-cut policy in regard to the private sector was responsible for a great deal of sluggishness in economic development. However, Mr. Tennekoon had pointed that despite the uncertainties, there was an increase of 24 per cent in 1975 as against the 19 per cent in 1974 in regard to investment in the private sector. When public enterprise and corporations were taken together, there was an increase of 36 per cent in gross fixed capital formation while the private sector showed a increase of 20 per cent.

He said that unless the economy advanced fast enough, the unemployment problem would be a remaining and disturbing feature. One of the most essential requirements today was objective thinking which almost by definition should lead to conclusions usefully acceptable, individually or collectively, but there were serious practical obstacles to this.

"The first is over-valuation of political activity. We are suffering from a veritable plague of politics and may easily come to resemble Athenian democracy at its worst. The second of the three goals of objective thinking is the extension of the current time perspective and the third of the three tasks of objective social thinking is the first action against obstruction," he added.

He said that in Sri Lanka the problems we faced were grave and it was essential for us to bend our energies towards a solution of them. Time would not wait

for us. Man and his government were human and imperfect but our government and our times also showed imperfections. For the elimination of the errors remaining we might hope and work, but the government needed economically no drastic dosing.

On the industrial front, there are many factors that hamper industrial production in Sri Lanka. Among them more important are the shortages of foreign exchange, cost restrictions on imports of industrial inputs market imperfections and deficiencies in capital and skills. A significant problem which the manufacturers are confronted with is the excess capacity on the under-utilisation of the capacity. Although under-utilisation has fallen to some extent in 1975, the percentage of under-utilisation is still high at 46 per cent.

The take-over of the estates owned by public companies in 1975 is a significant event in Sri Lanka's economic history. The extent of land vested in the land reform commission in 1975 is roughly 188,000 acres of which tea estates amounted to 57 per cent and rubber and coconut land to 23 per cent and 2 per cent respectively. The change of ownership is only the beginning of a major task ahead and its effects can be properly ascertained only in the long run. In view of the vital importance of the plantation sector in the national economy, it is essential that the efficient running and good management of these estates are ensured on a continuing basis under state ownership. The latter could be achieved by setting up in place of the agency houses an efficient and effective organisation for their management and by seeing that the estates are under the supervision of experienced and competent men at all levels. This is all the more significant because up to now the plantation sector has earned the bulk of the country's foreign exchange and produced the major portion of the surpluses to sustain extensive welfare services and meet the overall deficits in other state run enterprises. The contribution of this sector to the fiscal revenue is a key factor which cannot be ignored.

CONTINUING, Mr. Tennekoon said: "The continuing adverse movement in the terms of trade

has to a large extent tended to belittle Sri Lanka's achievements in the field of income distribution because it has tended to depress the real income of those in the lowest income bracket thus nullifying their gains in income." He said that one of the most important economic aspects of country's activities depended on international trade. Over the last 20 years Sri Lanka had experienced difficulties in the balance of payments and the balance of trade. In 1975 while earnings from exports increased by 13 per cent payments for imports rose more sharply by 15 per cent. As a percentage of total export earnings this deficit represented nearly 34 per cent.

He added that if one took the rate of growth as envisaged in the Five Year Plan as the yardstick to measure the performance of Sri Lanka's economy, the country's economic progress during the last few years had not been satisfactory. The plan expected a minimum rate of growth of 6 per cent but actual performance had been below this. The average rate of growth during the period 1971/75 was only 2.8 per cent. In 1975 it was slightly higher but during the earlier five-year period, it was substantially above this at 5.1 per cent. The chronic payments imbalance had required the country to rely heavily on foreign finance to meet deficits in the recent past. Consequently, the outstanding external debt had nearly doubled during the past five years and service payments had been rising rapidly. A noteworthy feature in 1975 was that the entire increase in external debt was on account of long term loans, he said.

He added that the rate of increase in inflation had been a threat not only to economic development and stability but also to the standard of living in many developed and developing countries in the world. As far as Sri Lanka was concerned, this inflation was partly imported and partly domestic. The chronic payment imbalance had required the country to rely heavily on foreign finance to meet deficits in the recent past. Consequently, the outstanding external debt had nearly doubled in the past five years and service payments had been rising rapidly. He said, "a noteworthy feature in 1975 was

that the entire increase in the external debt was on account of term loans. Mr. Tennekoon said that if one takes the rate of growth as envisaged in the Five Year Plan as the yardstick for measuring the performance of the economy of Sri Lanka the country's economic progress during the last five years had not been satisfactory. The plan expected a minimum rate of growth of six per cent but actual performance had been below this. The average rate of growth during the period 1971-75 was only 2.8 per cent. In 1975, it was slightly higher but during the earlier five-year period it was substantially above this (5.1 per cent).

THE CHAIRMAN of the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce, Mr. Victor Wirasinha, in his report said that in 1975 the country exported more in terms of rupees than in any previous year. The aggregate export earnings of Rs. 3,933 million represented an increase of 13.2 per cent over the figure of Rs. 3,472 million for 1974. The most spectacular increases were in tea (Rs. 571 million) and gems (Rs. 71.5 million). Rubber and coconut products suffered a decline (in the content of the world-wide recession) of Rs. 35 million and Rs. 45 million respectively. The reduction in earnings from those products was all the more saddening that the lower receipts were derived from a large volume of exports.

Mr. Wirasinha said the value of our imports in 1975 increased more steeply than the value of our exports and the adverse balance of trade in 1975 was the highest on record at Rs. 1318 million. Our food import bill in 1975 amounted to half the value of all imports. Imports of rice alone which were one and a half times the quantity imported in 1974 cost us Rs. 1062 million. This steep increase was necessitated largely by the prevailing adverse weather conditions. He said that the country's continuously increasing trade deficit had gravely hampered development.

He said that there were two important principal requirements for improvement of the country's economy. First the reduction of our dependence on imports of food, and second, the securing of better terms of trade for our exports. In recent years there had

been vast progress in agriculture especially in the production of our entire requirements of certain subsidiary foodstuffs such as red onions and chillies. But the production of rice in particular has been severely limited by the insufficiency of irrigation facilities in the Dry Zone. The situation had worsened from time to time because of drought.....

THE SITUATION IN SRI LANKA, however, is not peculiar to this country alone. Some of the mistakes made and other avoidable factors have undoubtedly accentuated certain evil aspects of the economic situation, but it must be realised that the state in which Sri Lanka finds herself today is common to a large number of developing countries. The sharp decrease in the prices of primary products (as compared to the drastic increase in the prices of manufactured goods) in the context of the global economic slump is undoubtedly the main cause for the ballooning of the foreign trade balance deficits of many developing countries—making it essential for them to obtain additional financial assistance. Reports indicate that the deficit had increased by \$ 14 billion and reached the astronomic figure of \$ 45 billions. (There are varying estimates of the borrowings by the developing countries especially the non-oil producing developing countries, but all estimates are astounding enough to cause mental shock). "According to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), a \$ 35 billion deficit in 1975 was financed as follows: development assistance plus direct investment of \$ 17 billion, drawing down of reserves by about \$ 3 billion, borrowing of about \$ 2 billion, mainly from the Fund, and net borrowing through private banks abroad of \$ 14 billion. Mr. William Dale, deputy managing director of the Fund, in a speech early this year in Washington raised the question whether the developing countries would find the financing necessary for the projected current deficit of \$ 31 billion in 1976. This projection itself could be on the high side, if the recovery in the industrial countries became stronger than forecast. But, he noted, such favourable possibilities could not be assumed in the existing uncertainty. The external reserves of the oil-importing deve-

loping countries fell in 1975 in absolute terms, even more in comparison to their imports. Their high level of borrowing in the past two years, Mr. Dale said, might have reduced their capacity to make net borrowings in the future.

"The Fund's oil facility in 1974 made available credits totalling \$ 2.6 billion SDR (the value of SDR is determined on the basis of exchange rates of sixteen currencies). Of this 1.1 billion SDR or 43 per cent was used by the less developed countries. Out of 4.3 billion SDR available under the 1975 oil facility (including 464 million SDR carried over from the previous year facility), 37 member-countries had drawn a total of 3482.36 million SDR till the end of February 1976. Of this, one billion SDR had been drawn by developing countries. The oil facility will lapse after the balance in it has been drawn, largely by developing countries. The Fund is to establish a special Trust Fund out of the profits of the proposed sale of 25 million ounces of gold. While the price arrangements for the Trust are under discussion—and it might take several months before technical details on the sale of the gold are sorted out—the resources would be available to poorer countries for temporary balance of payments needs but would have to be accompanied by suitable policies, of balance of payments adjustment," Mr. Dale indicated.....

In this situation that there has been much talk in international circles—especially in the West—that the world monetary system was being restructured so that developing countries could have "expanding possibilities" to obtain financial resources. But, in actual practice, it has become more and more difficult for developing countries to obtain the necessary finances for development. Take the case of the Asian Development Bank. At a session of the Board of Directors of the Bank in April 1976 the participants had to acknowledge two sad facts. First, the needs of developing countries in regard to additional financial resources cannot be satisfied in view of a "disastrous depletion of bank funds" second, developed countries—members of the Bank—have no desire

to assist in solving this task by making new contributions while referring to "budget and financial difficulties due to the recent economic depression."

IT MUST BE REMEMBERED that the USA had a controlling share in the fixed capital of the Asian Development Bank, and many had believed that the USA would be interested in strengthening the Bank to achieve its objective of helping the developing countries in Asia. But this year the US Congress has cut down US contributions to the Asian Development Bank (ADB). This has caused major disappointment not only in Asian countries but also in all developing countries of the world. Many in the West do not seem to realise that the resistance to Kissinger's proposals at UNCTAD IV in Nairobi about an International Resources Bank (although it was much advertised as the "American hand extended to the Third World") was due to suspicions in the Third World regarding US reliability in these matters. The US had proposed that the Resources Bank would have a capital of \$ 10 billion with the first one billion dollars contributed by the USA. The principal aim of the Bank was said to be as follows: to assist developing countries to obtain credits from developing countries for the development of mining resources and the like and at the same time to enable developing countries to secure raw materials they required and which would be set-off against the credits.

It must be noted that Kissinger himself was opposed by certain circles in the US itself in regard to his proposal about the Resources Bank. Many had regarded it as a "costly venture", and others had felt that the developing countries would be compelled by circumstances to "share" their mineral resources even without establishing such a Bank. However, Kissinger had stubbornly supported his scheme of "flexible" methods to bring the developing countries into the orbit of the world capitalist system. This International Resources Bank proposed by Kissinger, seems to have been regarded by most developing countries as being a method of neutralising the "common raw material programme" proposed by the developing countries.

May developing countries were also disturbed that the USA had come out strongly against the "Charter of Economic Rights and Duties" adopted by the UN General Assembly in December 1974, which among other things, had stipulated that developing countries may unilaterally nationalise foreign companies. This really centres around the question of multinational corporations which are the backbone of USA's economy. Understandably, the USA is opposed to this and this brings her into sharp conflict with the developing countries.

In this connection, developing countries had also noted that the reforms suggested to the Charter of the International Funds (IMF) published on April 8, 1976. These reforms were adopted at the Interim Committee session of the IMF in Jamaica in January 1976. The new proposals, many countries of the poor Third World feel, are aimed at supervising the domestic and foreign economic policies of the developing countries which seek assistance from the Bank. The Bank also hopes to acquire profits by selling part of its gold reserves, but this money is to be apportioned proportionally among leading members on the basis of quotas whilst the "special programme" to render assistance to the low-income members does not seem to enjoy any priority. There is no doubt that poor developing countries will obtain some benefits from the profits expected from the sales of the 25 million ounces of IMF gold, but they are minimal.

The undercurrent of antagonism to the USA at Nairobi and elsewhere among the developing and Third World countries is that they regard the US as the chief architect of the policies of the IMF and IBRD which they feel are unrealistic so far as poor countries are concerned. In the IMF itself the USA holds 20 percent of its votes (US Secretary of the Treasury Simon had stated in an interview in the *US World and News Report* in January that the USA had enough votes to veto any undesirable proposals in the IMF). Secretary of State Kissinger and Treasury Secretary Simon have been greatly disappointed at the response they got in Nairobi from the developing countries. They

jointly issued a statement which revealed the extent of US disappointment.

THE STATEMENT had stated: "The United States went to UNCTAD IV at Nairobi in a serious and co-operative spirit. In preparation for the conference, we conducted a thorough review of US international economic policies in which all agencies of the government participated. There was agreement on a series of proposals of special relevance to the developing countries, which we presented at UNCTAD. We were represented by the most senior delegation in the history of UNCTAD meetings, and, for the first time, the United States position was set forth in an opening statement by the Secretary of State. In that statement the United States put forward its proposals to deal with the problems of the developing world, including proposals directly related to commodities, and at the same time indicated that there were certain proposals that we could not accept. Throughout the four week meeting, the United States co-operated with other nations and important progress was made on a number of matters before the conference. In our review of international commodity policies in preparation for the UNCTAD meeting, and otherwise, we have tried to find ways of meeting the concerns of the developing countries, within the framework of an efficient international market system. As we have made clear at the UN conference, we are prepared to participate in a case-by-case examination of arrangements to improve the functioning of the international commodity markets through a broad range of measures appropriate to specific commodities, but we have opposed mechanisms to fix prices or limit production by inter-governmental action.

"One of the most significant of the US proposals addressed the problem of increasing investment in mineral development. For that reason, the United States, in an effort to meet the interests of the developing countries and the world economy at large, proposed an international resource bank to facilitate the continued flow of essential capital, management and technology for the development of new resources in the develop-

ing countries. As the conference progressed a senior interagency group in Washington reviewed all proposals before the conference with a view to accepting as many as possible of the suggestions being made by the developing countries and other countries consistent with our basic principles. At the final plenary session a LDC resolution on commodities was adopted by consensus. The interagency group authorized reservations about parts of this resolution, which were read at the conference. Nevertheless, we joined the consensus because we wanted to contribute to the spirit of harmony in the closing sessions of the conference and because the resolution contained a number of elements of our own comprehensive approach which had been agreed in his address to the conference three weeks earlier. As our reservations indicate, we did not believe that all aspects of the LDC proposals were practical and feasible. However, we committed ourselves to the search for concrete practical solutions to commodity problems that will be in the interests of both producers and consumers.

"It is all the more regrettable, therefore, that the resolution proposing further study of the international resource bank was defeated by two votes with 31 votes in favour. Ninety countries at the last minute abstained or absented themselves. A substantial number of the 33 votes against were the socialist countries whose contribution to the development of the poorer countries of the world is negligible. Forty-four countries co-operated in this effort by abstaining on the international resource bank and forty-six absented themselves—almost all of whom were the developing countries. This does not augur well for the future of the dialogue of the worldwide development effort. The United States, whose role is so vital, does not expect when it makes major efforts to co-operate, that its proposals will be subject to accidental majorities. If the dialogue between the developing and developed countries, to which we attach great importance, is to succeed, suggestions put forward by the developed nations, such as the IRB at UNCTAD, must be treated on the merits and with serious consideration. The deve-

loping countries must not lend themselves to parliamentary manipulation by those states who contribute nothing to the development of the poor nations of the world....."

**US disappointment is real. But, the US government seems to derive some comfort from the fact that a large number of developing countries had "abstained" at the time of voting and seems to think that "red" and "socialist" pressure had made many act in this way. Sri Lankans who were in Nairobi say that these countries did not want to oppose the mighty US openly, but that they had abstained not because of "socialist pressures" but because of genuine disenchantment with current US economic policies.**

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## INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

BY THAMBAPANNI

### India In The Era Of The Ford Doctrine

LAST WEEK, discussing the Ford Doctrine, it was pointed out that ten years ago, the US administration had regarded China as its main adversary in Asia whilst regarding the highly industrialised Japan and the developing India as America's principal friends. Japan still remains Washington's friend and ally in Asia while in all other respects US policies in this region have undergone fundamental changes and some of them directly the opposite of what they were before.

The main feature of the new US policy in Asia is the change of attitude to China. While Nixon had envisaged a kind of detente with China in a wait-and-see game, Ford has gone one step further and for the first time has extended to China the status of a special kind of "partner" in a Presidential Doctrine, no doubt with the view to helping the USA to maintain a balance of forces in Asia and the Pacific Ocean. What the Ford Doctrine means is that the US President has frankly declared that in spite of all the differences between the USA and China—poli-

tical, ideological and economic—there was a common area in which the self-interest of the two countries coincided in geopolitical imperatives.

This common convergence of interests stemmed from the fact that Soviet Union has become a naval power in the Pacific as much as, it has in the other Oceans of the world. Though there is an uneasy detente between the USSR and the USA, political as well as military, there is no doubt that USA, is anxious to circumscribe and limit Soviet potential in the vast Pacific. China has for some years now openly denounced Russia as its main enemy (just as earlier it was US imperialism). The USA, in order to get China to vibrate on the same wavelength as herself, has adopted the Chinese slogan about "hegemony" into its own political vocabulary. China, on her part, sees in this new offer of geopolitical collaboration by the USA a chance to contain what China regards as the "hegemonistic" ambitions of Russia. China's anxiety on this score has increased with the emergence of Vietnam as a military power which is believed to tilt more to Moscow than to Peking. It is for this reason that China has welcomed US presence in Asia, in the Pacific and even in the Indian Ocean.

As mentioned last week, this increased collaboration between Washington and Peking has created grave apprehensions in New Delhi. It has been argued by Indian commentators that if the Ford Doctrine was really a scheme to ensure peace and stability in Asia, a big Asian country like India could not have been excluded from playing a role. India has therefore developed fears that the Ford Doctrine would give China a new edge to China's proclaimed claims in the Himalayan states in the Indian sub-continent and also give added strength to Pakistan. Furthermore, the large-scale delivery of arms to Pakistan by the US and China has generated even greater fears in India. It is believed that Pakistan has not only made up its losses of armaments which it had suffered in 1971 but has also laid the foundations for increasing its military strength even to the point of acquiring nuclear weapons.

Apart from US expanding its military installations in the Indian Ocean in Diego Garcia which India believes is directed at her, the support which the US and China have extended ASEAN countries (not to speak of Australia and New Zealand) has also stirred New Delhi to fresh diplomatic activity to make friends among the ASEAN nations in a bid to minimise and neutralise US-China collaboration with these nations. Peking has gone so far as to call Philippines President Ferdinand Marcos, through the recently appointed Chinese Ambassador in Manila, "the leader of the developing nations". This is certainly a blow at countries like India (and several others who have so far played leading roles in the politics of the Third World of developing countries).

**In this situation, it is not difficult to understand why India has sought to fall back on the Soviet Union which has extended a helping hand to India in the most trying times in recent years.**

Even the rather conservative paper, the *Madras Hindu*, commenting on the recent visit of the Indian Prime Minister to the USSR and the Joint Declaration she had signed in Moscow, in an editorial on June 15, had declared: "WHILE THE PRIME MINISTER'S visit to the Soviet Union has been a successful one in many respects, of special note to Mrs. Gandhi and the Indian nation is the unprecedented scale, spontaneity and lavishness of the welcome she received wherever she went. Among the follow-up steps, the entire basis of the Friendship Treaty of 1971 is to be expanded through more frequent meetings between the leaders of the two countries. Successful economic and trade co-operation predates the Treaty by many years, and there will be more determined efforts now to extend industrial and commercial operations bilaterally as well as to third countries. In all this what has been emphasised that is of particular significance to India, belittled by some carping critics as a client of a big power, is the reference in the joint declaration to the mutuality and equality in the relationship between India and the Soviet Union, two sovereign countries which do not follow an identical political and social system. They have pledged themselves to work to create a stabler

and peaceful world and a more equitable international order. India has been outspoken in welcoming the Soviet initiative to promote *detente* with the US and West Europe. The Soviet Union for its part has wholeheartedly hailed India's recent diplomatic *démarches* in search of stability and peace in the Indian sub-continent.

Apart from the joint declaration, during the talks Mrs. Gandhi had with Mr. Brezhnev and other Soviet leaders laudatory references were made to India's recent negotiations with Pakistan which pave the way towards the normalisation of relations between the two countries. And if there had been any misgiving in some quarters as to how exactly the Russians felt about the breakthrough in India-China relations, frozen for the last 15 years—India is sending an Ambassador to Peking—it should be noted that this point was frankly discussed at the highest political level in Moscow and Mrs. Gandhi has stated at her press conference that the Russians harbour no misunderstanding on this count. The joint declaration pointedly welcomes steps for "the transformation of Asia into a continent of durable peace." As for keeping the Indian Ocean region free from foreign pressures Mr. Brezhnev has said that the Soviet Union has no intention to build military bases in the Indian Ocean. The question is whether he will stick to this policy even if such bases are established by other big powers. The non-aligned summit conference is slated to take place in August, and India and other countries would naturally be keen to know if, and how, the Soviet Union, which has always been appreciative of the desires and needs of the non-aligned nations, intends to make progress in solving this problem."

While it can be said that the Hindu has been supporting Mrs. Gandhi and the ruling Congress, the Indian weekly *Himmat* has always taken a very critical attitude to Mrs. Gandhi. The *Himmat* is a Moral Rearmament paper with a solid pro-West approach in all matters. In its issue of June 11, R. M. Lala who writes regularly on international affairs reviewed the current policies of Mrs. Gandhi.

Excerpts are published to show how a pro-west Indian weekly sees Indo-Soviet relations: "Mrs. Gandhi has gone to Moscow soon

after settling the exchange of ambassadors with Peking. While her visit returns Mr. Brezhnev's of December '73, she will also explain to Soviet leaders India's recent moves to normalise relations with her neighbours and ally any misgivings they might have on this score. There seems to be an indication that the Indian Government will adopt a more independent and equidistant policy towards its Communist neighbours in the years ahead. India's recent rapprochement with Peking created the first ripples in the otherwise stagnant pond of South Asian diplomacy. Within a few days of taking this action India announced its readiness to negotiate with Pakistan. Technical-level talks in Islamabad produced a quick agreement to resume diplomatic relations between the two countries. The speed with which diplomatic activity is emanating from New Delhi indicates that a decision was taken earlier this year to go on the diplomatic offensive, with the aim of securing India's relations with her neighbours. Bangladesh's drift away from India may lie at the root of India's initiatives.

With regard to China, the *Himmat* reviewed recent developments as follows: "With China, India started negotiations early this year. Three months of patient work resulted in the agreement to exchange ambassadors after a gap of 14 years. China's attitude to India has been coloured by new Delhi's proximity to Moscow in recent years. Clause IX of the Indo-Soviet friendship treaty of 1971 calls for immediate consultations between the two signatories. This clause made China furious and, to earlier soundings by India, Chou En-lai had indicated that until that clause was scrapped there was little hope of improving relations. Chou En-lai's death has meant that China can abandon this stand without a "loss of face." On its part India agreed to the Chinese position that India should send its Ambassador first. What is more significant is that China's acceptance of India's hand of friendship is the first international indication that the new rulers of China are following their distinctive foreign policy unaffected by internal upheavals.

"What worries India's defence planners is the possibility of a Sino-Soviet *detente* after Mao's death. Mao can neither talk, according to recent visitors to China, nor can



he walk unaided. What worries China is the prospect of a US-Soviet War. The new British Foreign Secretary Anthony Crossland was given this view with great conviction. The Chinese told him that the larger part of Soviet might was concentrated on West Europe. The rest in the East, they said, was aimed mostly at the US and Japan. This is a somewhat new assessment because earlier they had always indicated that they were the target of the Soviet Union. In the event of a Soviet attack they still feel confident they will weather it with their larger population and massive underground precautions. Whatever their relations with the Soviet Union, the Chinese obviously feel the time has come to mend fences with their large southern neighbour, India. Together the two nations constitute a third of the human race."

On India's relations with Pakistan, the Himmat stated: "On Pakistan, Mrs. Gandhi was quick to take the opening Mr. Bhutto gave her with his offer to withdraw Pakistan's complaint to the International Civil Aviation Organisation about India barring Pakistani overflights. Abandoning the earlier stance that outstanding issues should be settled first, India immediately offered to discuss what had been close to Mr. Bhutto's heart at Simla—the resumption of diplomatic links. Though progress between India and Pakistan tends to be slow, a beginning has been made. Mr. Bhutto, however, is still waiting for Kashmir to be discussed. Mr. Bhutto is scheduled to visit the United States shortly. Having taken some steps towards detente in the subcontinent, he goes to Washington with an air of sweet reasonableness. In 1973, during his American visit, he told the State Department: "I want red hot weapons, not spare parts." They cooled his ardour. The US has since lifted the arms embargo on Pakistan, but major deliveries of offensive weapons have not been reported. He had also pleaded for parity between India and Pakistan, a plea Dr. Kissinger rejected saying that since the Bangladesh war India had a pre-eminent position in South Asia. Mr. Bhutto's insistence on parity is to obtain arms from America. Mr. Bhutto's visit seems ill-timed for his own benefit because President Ford is harassed by primaries and Dr. Kissinger is talking of bowing out; so they are not exactly in a position to reverse their earlier policy. India apprehends that Mr.

Bhutto may get the American arms he wants via the Gulf states. Though he is reported to have sought tie-ups with Gulf countries to finance the setting up of sophisticated armament factories in Pakistan, his efforts to become a military power supplying weapons to West Asia have not been too successful."

And commenting on Iran's role vis a vis India and Pakistan, the Himmat pointed out that "Mr. Bhutto's immediate insurance may have been provided for by Iran who has promised help if Pakistan is threatened with dismemberment. But the Shah is shrewd enough not to have placed any weapons at Pakistan's disposal to date. He has thus given Pakistan a sense of security without giving its flamboyant Prime Minister any opportunity of flaunting weapons. In fact Iran's policy is the stabilisation of the subcontinent. Since 1973, Iran's relations with India have taken a turn for the better, as shown by agreements on oil credit and joint setting up of projects in both countries. The Shah sees India as a reservoir for technical manpower—nuclear scientists, doctors, engineers. With his new-found wealth and power the Shah wants to assert Iran as an independent power. Acceptance by India helps him with other developing countries. India in turn needs the friendship of this emerging power in the Gulf and the Arabian Sea."

**Not everybody will agree with Himmat's analysis, but it is interesting how very different Indian pro-west opinion is from the opinions currently predominant in ruling circles in Western capitals.**

MRS. GANDHI has been sharply critical of the western press and politicians in recent times. It was made out by the West and her recent trip to the Soviet Union constituted a sell out to the Russian and that she had been pressed into accepting Brezhnev's Asian Collective Security Scheme before the Colombo non-aligned summit in August.

It is interesting, in this connection, to examine Mrs. Gandhi's views on some of the controversial matters. According to the *Samachar*, the Indian Prime Minister, Shrimati Indira Gandhi, replying to a question on a security system for Asia, at a crowded press-conference in Moscow on June 11th, prior to her departure, observed that

the way to strengthen security in Asia lies in bolstering the stability, independence and economic might of each individual country in the region and developing co-operation among them on a bilateral and multilateral basis. She said the problems of the Asian Continent were complicated and varied and it was necessary to do every thing possible to strengthen security and stability in the area through consolidation of economic and political independence of every country. The Prime Minister stressed that India's position on the matter remained unchanged. Turning to the problem of the Indian Ocean, Shrimati Gandhi said India, like all the other littoral states in the region, wants this area to be made a zone of peace and co-operation. She pointed out that there was a great difference between the transit of ships and their constant presence in the Indian Ocean area, if strengthened by military bases specially nuclear ones.

She was severely critical of the Western media which she said distorted the picture of India and carried untruths and calumny about her. These were forces which had never been friendly to India, she said. They mourned alleged demise of democracy in India; but supported—politically and militarily—those very regimes around the world which suppressed democracy. The emergency proclaimed in her country, she said, was to defend democracy. Asked by a TASS correspondent to comment on Western press reports claiming that democratic principles had been flouted in India in the course of the past year, Shrimati Gandhi said that everything that was being done in her country was the business of the Indian people and those who write now about the suppression of democracy in India had never supported it either before or after the declaration of the Emergency; neither before nor after India achieved Independence. She said there was a slander campaign against Mahatma Gandhi, against her father, Jawaharlal Nehru, and there was now a slander and hate-campaign against her.

An American correspondent asked if India's views on the issue of Asian collective security had changed. She replied that India's views were the same as before.

The problems of Asia she said were extremely complex. Everything should be done so that there was greater stability. The economic position of each country should be strengthened and independence of each safeguarded. Shrimati Gandhi spoke highly of the Soviet Union's commitment to peace and the "important initiatives" taken by the Soviet Government, when a question was put to her on the Soviet peace programme. She told a questioner that the coming Non-Aligned Summit was referred to in passing in her talks with the Soviet leaders. India's point of view was

that the criteria decided upon in Belgrade for admission of new members should be adhered to. The Prime Minister explained India's efforts to move towards self-reliance and the role of Soviet help, in certain crucial areas, which came when no one else was ready to assist India. As the country advanced, its needs also changed. And its needs were in the more sophisticated areas.

Answering a question on domestic situation, she spoke of some people (whom the Western press lionised) have themselves in the past spoke of democratic dictator-

ship, partyless democracy, violent revolutions and the like at various times and were today being represented as champions of democracy.

Whatever angle from which one looks on international affairs, there is no doubt that India is an important factor not only in South Asia, but also in Asia itself. Sri Lanka, being one of her immediate neighbours, must be alive to all the trends, fundamentals, nuance and zig-zags of India's foreign policies.

## SRI LANKA CHRONICLE

## June 16 — June 17

A DIARY OF EVENTS IN SRI LANKA AND THE WORLD  
COMPILED FROM DAILY NEWSPAPERS  
PUBLISHED IN COLOMBO.

CDN—Ceylon Daily News; CDM—Ceylon Daily Mirror; CO—Ceylon Observer; TOCSL—Times of Ceylon Sunday Illustrated; DM—Dinamina; LD—Lankadipa JD—Jananama; VK—Virakesari; ATH—Aththa; SM—Silumina; SLD—Sri Lankadipa; JS—Janasathiya.

**WEDNESDAY, JUNE 16:** The Colombo Municipality changed the hours of water cut to 5 am to 9 am: earlier it was announced the water cut would be from 7 am to 11 am. According to the National Water Supply and Drainage Board, water from the Kelani River which is now supplied to the suburbs south of Colombo through the reservoir at Ambatale cannot be supplied to the city till stage II of Ambatale is completed which could be finished only in the year 1978—CDN. Nearly 300 University students including Buddhist monks who stormed the Education Ministry were yesterday dispersed by Police: the students belonging to faculties Public Finance and Taxation, Estate Management and Development Studies stormed the Ministry Office demanding an assurance that they would be provided with jobs on the completion of their courses: Police used tear gas to disperse the students who marched in procession from the University Campus to the Education Ministry—CDM. The Ceylon Electricity Board announced that in view of the low level of water in the Castlereigh and Mousakelle reservoirs it will have to decide on a power-cut unless the situation improves: the Board advised the public to use minimum electricity—CDM. According to the Virakesari Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, had discussions with several of her senior Cabinet colleagues on the problems facing the Tamil speaking people of Sri Lanka: the paper further said the Premier was of the view that the problems of the Tamils should be solved without any delay: as a first step towards this the Government of Mrs. Bandaranaike will create a situation in the country within the next two months to make the Sinhala people realise that the problems of the Tamils is not one of political but of national interest: meanwhile a mass

meeting will be held on the 26th of this month at the New Town Hall to seek support from the Tamil speaking people for the 20-point programs submitted to the Government by forty prominent Tamil citizens regarding the problems of the Tamil speaking people—VK. The Government has empowered all Government Agents to cancel the licences of traders who flout the Price Control Regulations and confiscate the goods without an order of a Court of law: the regulation was gazetted yesterday—DM. Four Police officers including an Inspector of Police was remanded by the Avissawella Magistrate in connexion with the death of a person taken into custody by the Police—DM. A Police Constable of the Narahenpita Police has been interdicted for alleged assaults on a mother and a daughter—LD. The Aththa editorially asked the Government as to what happened to the "crash program" it announced sometime ago: the editorial further said that even if it is not for the purpose of fighting an election it will be of immense good to the country and will gather the progressive forces of the country. The Janadina in an editorial comment said that at a time when the Communist Party wanted all banks nationalised the Minister of Finance was actively engaged to establish a branch of a leading American bank in Sri Lanka: the paper said the progressive forces in the country are eagerly waiting for the reaction of the Communist Party (Moscow wing) to the attempts by the Finance Minister to establish a branch of an American Bank.

**THURSDAY, JUNE 17:** Mr. Nihal Jayawickrema, Secretary to the Ministry of Justice, told the Daily News that draft laws are now under preparation empowering High Courts to try a citizen of the country if he has committed an offence against the laws of the country in a foreign land: Mr. Jayawickrema said that the normal process of the law would be made applicable to the alleged offender in efforts to hand the 'wanted man' extradited to Sri Lanka. The Ministry of Irrigation, Power and Highways, appealed to the public to conserve electricity in view of the poor levels of water in the Mousakelle and Castlereigh reservoirs: in a communique issued the Ministry said public co-operation will avoid power cuts—CDN. Mr. T. B. Ilangaratne, Minister of Trade, Home Affairs and Public Administration, said all religious organisations have pledged their support to make the forthcoming Non-aligned Summit Conference a complete success—CDN. Students of the Colombo Campus of the University went on

strike from yesterday in support of a demand by students following certain courses that should be assured of employment on the completion of their studies: Peradeniya, Katubedde, Vidyalankara and Vidyodaya Campus students too will stage a one-day token strike today in support of the students of the Colombo Campus—CDM. The Department of National Housing has been instructed to take steps to auction houses built on loans from the Department and owners of which have defaulted over Rs. 10,000 by way of loan arrears—CDM. According to the *Virakesari* only five recognised political parties will be allowed as observers at the forthcoming Non-aligned Summit Conference to be held in Colombo in August: the parties are SLFP, UNP, LSSP, CP (Moscow wing) and the Federal Party. Dr. S. R. Nithyanandan, a former lecturer of the University of Sri Lanka, was sentenced to four years rigorous imprisonment and fined Rs. 500,000 by the CJC (Exchange Frauds) for his involvements in illegal foreign exchange transactions: Dr. Nithyanandan is presently in UK—VK. Another incident of alleged Police assault is reported from Kosgama on certain employees of the State Timber Corporation: five employees are injured and two are warded in the hospital—ATH. The Press Council ordered the Editor of the Sinhala weekly paper *Adha* to publish an apology in the front page for misreporting a certain news item involving the Director of Education, Bandarawela—ATH. The People's Bank has drawn up a plan to assist the fisherman of the southern coast of Sri Lanka: under the proposed scheme a sum of Rs. 10 million will be given as loans to fishermen and manufacturers of fishing vessels—DM. 212 positive cases of cholera have been reported from various parts of the island within the last six months—DM. There is a danger of the spread of more infectious diseases in Colombo and its suburbs owing to the present 20-hour water cut—ATH. The *Janadina* editorially requested the Government to take urgent steps to solve the water crisis.

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## INTERNATIONAL DIARY

### June 17 – June 18

**THURSDAY, JUNE 17:** At a meeting in Brussels NATO defence Ministers called on the Atlantic powers to improve its nuclear forces in the face of the growing military might of the Soviet Union and its Warsaw Pact allies. China welcomed the improvement in Pakistan-Afghanistan relations. The Trade Union Congress of Britain voted overwhelmingly in favour of restricting all wage rises in the forthcoming 12 months to a limit of four and a half percent: the voting took place at a special conference where nine million voted for and about a half a million voted against. On arrival in Dacca Yugoslavian Deputy Foreign Minister, Lazar Moisev, said that his country wanted closer economic and political ties with Bangladesh. US Congressman Allan Howe, the third American politician to be caught up in a sex scandal in a few weeks, was charged for soliciting a policewoman disguised as a prostitute: Mr. Howe would enter a plea in the courts

on next Monday. Newly appointed American Ambassador to Lebanon, Mr. Francis E. Meloy, disappeared yesterday on his way to an appointment with President elect Elias Sakris: an Embassy spokesman said he was unable to say to which side of the Moslem-Christian demarcation line the US envoy disappeared. Beirut Radio quoted Lebanese Premier as saying that a decision had been taken on the withdrawal of Syrian forces from Lebanon. Italy's Communist Party Chief, Enrico Berlinguer, in an election speech said that he could not be deposed by the Soviet Union as Alexander Dubcek of Czechoslovakia had been: he also said that he defended Italy's inclusion in the NATO mainly because he felt it safer to be in the NATO.

**FRIDAY, JUNE 18:** Kidnapped American Ambassador in Lebanon, Francis Meloy, was found killed in a sea front area two miles from the place of incident: his economic councillor, Robert Warning and his driver too were killed: President Ford and Secretary of State, Dr. Henry Kissinger condemned the killings as senseless and cowardly act: the Palestinian Leftist Alliance in Beirut announced yesterday the killers of the Ambassador have been arrested and they are being interrogated; identity of the killers were not given: Iraq said there is a risk of foreign intervention if the Arab Peace Force is not sent to Lebanon soon. In a letter to the *London Times* former British Prime Minister, Sir Harold Wilson, said the racial tension in Britain would be increased by insensitive administration or by unthinking press and radio comments. Kuwait urged for an increase in the price of oil but wanted this decided unanimously by the OPEC. Twentysix people died and over 200 people were injured in racial violence in South Africa. Indian Government amended the emergency detention laws empowering the government to detain a person up to a period of two years without bringing him to trial. Australian Prime Minister, Mr. Malcom Fraser, currently on a six-day tour in Japan, told his Japanese counterpart that he will not meet China's leader Mao Tse-tung when he makes a visit to Peking next week. Pakistan's Council of Newspaper Editors has demanded that the government should refrain from using emergency powers against the press the council further said the government should apply the normal laws of the country when dealing with new papers and editors. According to US Defence Department, nine US Sixth Fleet vessels, including one helicopter carrier and an aircraft carrier have been sent to standby off the coast of Lebanon during the past few days.

## TRIBUNE

In this issue many of our regular features on local matters have been held over. And this is likely to happen for a few more weeks. More space has been, and will be, devoted to articles about the Non-aligned Movement. Many interesting articles on the forthcoming Summit, specially prepared by correspondents from the **Tribune** panel of free-lance writers, employed in specialised organisations and agencies, will appear in our pages in the coming weeks.

TOWARDS THE COLOMBO  
SUMMIT

## Lima Declaration—3

— Continued —

This is the third instalment of the Declaration at the Ministerial Meeting of the Foreign Ministers of Non-Aligned Countries at Lima in Peru, August 25-30, 1975.

98. Considering that since the Algiers Summit, the Non-aligned Countries have been implementing a series of positive political and economic actions and that the Bureau in Havana recommended that it was imperative urgently to oppose the new imperialist strategy with a coherent strategy to be adopted by the Non-Aligned Countries, in the political and economic fields, the Foreign Ministers agree on the following Strategy to strengthen International Peace and Security and Solidarity and Mutual Assistance among Non-Aligned Countries.

### OBJECTIVES

99. The Ministers for Foreign Affairs considered that, to be coherent and lasting, this Strategy should, *inter alia*, pursue the following basic objectives:

(a) To strengthen the coordination and joint actions of the Non-Aligned Countries in order to ensure international peace and security, to eliminate causes of international tension, to dismantle military bases, to create peace zones, to encourage general and complete disarmament and to strengthen the United Nations;

(b) Coordination and collective action to oppose threats of use of force, intervention, aggression, foreign occupation, and measures of political and economic coercion which attempt to violate the sovereignty, territorial integrity, independence, and security of the Non-Aligned Countries;

c. Intensive development of close economic, financial, scientific, technological and cultural co-operation among the Non-Aligned and developing Countries themselves, through specific mechanisms designed to establish true horizontal co-operation among them, in particular with

regard to raw materials, the attitude to be taken with regard to transnational corporations, and common treatment of transnational enterprises and of foreign capital, thus generating an increased collective power of negotiations to achieve a more democratic international order.

With this in mind, they agree on the following measures of joint policy:

### MEASURES OF JOINT POLICY

100. The Foreign Ministers undertake to strengthen coordination among the Group of Non-Aligned Countries on a systematic and continuing basis in order to ensure the elimination of hotbeds of tension, the dissolution of military alliances, the end of cold war, and the dismantling and liquidation of military bases so that international security may embrace all the areas of the world and all peoples and countries and that the detente initiated by the great powers may extend throughout the world.

101. To this effect, they agree to coordinate a joint concrete and continuing action leading to the participation of Non-Aligned Countries in the elimination of causes of world tension, for instance in Southern Africa, in the Middle East and in Cyprus. Likewise, they shall extend this co-ordination and joint action to promote and achieve the dismantling of foreign military bases implanted in the territories of the Non-Aligned Countries by virtue of unequal treaties.

102. The creation of *ad-hoc* working groups, when appropriate, to examine solutions for the elimination of hotbeds and the practice of consultation on the subject among the Non-Aligned and other countries, through the effective co-ordination of the Bureau, should be the framework of this concrete co-operation.

103. The Ministers for Foreign Affairs, furthermore, undertake to make their co-operation and joint action closer so that seas and oceans do not become objects of rivalry and competition among the great powers and to prevent these areas from being considered strategic zones of power policy.

104. They agree to sustain a joint action against any policy of the great powers which may en-

danger the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of the Non-Aligned Countries in the aforesaid maritime areas and, pursuant to the provisions adopted by the IV Summit Conference in Algiers shall maintain a close watch and co-operation in order to create zones of peace and co-operation in the different regions of the world, and to secure respect for these so as to diminish tensions, to eliminate foreign military presence and to promote peaceful co-operation among States.

105. They noted with deep concern that the Declaration designating the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace, approved by the General Assembly of the United Nations, has not been respected by the great powers. For example, the Diego Garcia naval airbase is being maintained and the air, naval and military presence of the great powers is being strengthened, which thus creates rivalries and tensions which endanger the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of the States in that area.

106. In this respect, they consider it important to condemn especially the installation of the Diego Garcia base and invite littoral and hinterland States to refuse to grant facilities to warships and military planes of the great powers used in the context of their rivalry and for any other purpose that may be detrimental to the sovereignty, territorial integrity, and security of countries in the region.

107. To that effect, they undertake to initiate close co-operation and action so that a conference of countries of this region be held in order to secure the implementation of the Declaration on the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace, as approved by the General Assembly of the United Nations.

108. In accordance with the Political Declaration of the Summit Conference of Algiers on the establishment of Peace and Co-operation Areas, the Non-Aligned recommend the creation in the South Pacific Ocean of a Peaceful Co-operation and Peace Zone so that the ocean areas be free from the use of force by the States. For this purpose they deem it advisable that the necessary consultations among the countries of this area be carried out so that the said

## Foreign Ministers At Lima

proposal, which has been endorsed by the Conference, may be adopted since it constitutes an actual contribution to the strengthening of the international peace and security.

109. The Ministers for Foreign Affairs undertake to coordinate a concerted action within the Third Conference of the United Nations on the Law of the Sea, pursuant to Resolution No. 13 adopted during the Fourth Summit Conference of Algiers.

110. The Non-Aligned Countries undertake, likewise, to carry out a joint action so that, in conformity with Resolution 2574 D of the General Assembly, the moratorium be complied with and that States, natural or legal persons abstain from activities which exploit seabed resources outside the limits of their national jurisdiction until appropriate international legislation and international authorities are established along the lines of the proposal of the 77 Group during the Third Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea.

111. The Ministers for Foreign Affairs grant their full support to the principles and objectives of the 1975 Mexico Declaration, regarding women's equality with men and their contribution to development and peace, adopted by the World Conference of the International Women's Year; reaffirm their commitment to establish national strategies based on the above Declaration and the World Action Plan of said Conference and on the Resolutions approved in the said Conference. They reiterate their conviction that the full and complete development of the developing nations requires the maximum participation of women and men in the spheres of their national activity, the establishment of the necessary conditions in order that women in their countries may attain equal rights as men and exercise the same, as well as equal opportunities and responsibilities. They reaffirm likewise, that women, due to the unequal treatment they have always endured, are natural allies in the struggle against all forms of oppression and international exploitation such as colonialism, neo-colonialism, zionism, racial discrimination and *apartheid*, in which the Non-Aligned Countries are engaged,

and represent a vast revolutionary potential for economic and social transformations. They agree to recommend to the Coordination Bureau that it maintain permanent interest in the problems of women's integration so that this subject may be brought up regularly in the United Nations and in other international forums.

112. The Conference notes with great concern that the arms race, especially of nuclear weapons, is being accelerated and intensified, thus threatening peace and security, particularly of the Non-Aligned and other developing countries. Although initial results have been achieved in the field of control of strategic nuclear armaments and bacteriological weapons, steps toward genuine cessation of the arms race and initiation of the disarmament process are still lacking.

113. The Ministers for Foreign Affairs agree to coordinate the action of Non-Aligned Countries within the framework of the United Nations, in order to promote the holding of a World Conference on Disarmament, with as little delay as possible, with the participation of all States on an equal basis and during which universal disarmament guidelines, in particular with respect to nuclear disarmament, would be approved together with the utilization of resources thus freed for international co-operation.

114. If it becomes evident that it will not be possible to convene a World Disarmament Conference, the Foreign Ministers consider that a special session of the General Assembly of the United Nations devoted to disarmament issues should be convened as proposed in the Declaration of the First Summit Conference of Non-Aligned Countries.

115. Likewise, they agree to pursue the action of the Non-Aligned within the frame of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament in order to expedite the work of that body and to achieve agreement's on prohibition of chemical armaments, cessation of all nuclear weapons tests and, above all, progress in disarmament.

116. The Conference considers that the solidarity of the Non-Aligned Countries with progressive and peace-loving nations has

resulted in a progressive and positive change in the ratio of forces within the United Nations Organization. In this respect, the Non-Aligned Countries agree to preserve and extend that solidarity and to dedicate all their efforts to the strengthening and adaptation of the structures of the United Nations and to raising their international prestige through actions inspired by the purpose and principles and spirit of its Charter. They have decided, in the same manner, that with respect to the Ad-hoc Committee established for the review of the Charter of the United Nations through Resolution 3349 (XXIX), to coordinate their positions and to submit relevant suggestions. The participants also resolved to increase and strengthen the representation of the Non-Aligned Countries in international organizations and, in particular, in the principal Organs of the United Nations, taking into account the principle of equitable geographical representation and having regard to the need for rotation among them.

117. The Foreign Ministers undertake to safeguard and strengthen the present historical trend for the national political, as well as the economic liberation of countries in Asia, Africa, Latin America and other regions against the growing threats of aggressions and use of force in interventions to prevent self-determination, recuperation of natural resources, racial equality, social and economic structural reforms and attempts against the independence, national sovereignty and security of the Non-Aligned Countries.

118. The Foreign Ministers reiterate that any interference or aggression against a Non-Aligned Country constitutes a threat to the principles of active and peaceful coexistence within the policy of the Non-Aligned Countries.

119. The Conference agrees that, in the event of Non-Aligned Country being subjected to threats of the use of force or of aggression, or subject to measures applied under pressure destined to prevent the full, free and effective exercise of its sovereign rights, such measures should be considered as being directed against the Non-Aligned Countries as a whole which, at the request of the country concerned, would pro-

vide it with assistance in conformity with Resolution No. 3 of the Economic Declaration of Algiers.

120. Recalling the mandate of the Bureau, the Ministers for Foreign Affairs undertake to strengthen coordination between Non-Aligned Countries by means of periodical meetings, with a view to assess and recommend the implementation of political and economic undertakings as well as the strategy agreed upon by Non-Aligned Countries.

121. To this effect, they undertake to encourage these meetings for the purpose of allowing the Bureau to maintain a permanent dynamism within the *Ad-hoc* working groups that the Non-Aligned may create in order to face crisis in the areas of the world where tensions exist, as well as working groups of an economic nature already in existence amongst the Non-Aligned Countries, such as the Inter-Governmental Group for Raw Materials, the Inter-Governmental Group for the creation of a Financing Fund for Buffer Stocks, the Group for the creation of a Council of Associations among Raw Material Producing and Exporting Countries, the Committee of Experts on Foreign Private Investments, the Committee of Coordinators for Economic Co-operation among Non-Aligned Countries and other groups which are being created when specific fields of co-operation are identified in the field of economic relations.

122. The Conference emphasizes that the further promotion and coordination of joint actions of the Non-Aligned Countries is of paramount importance for the realization of their effective role in international relations. Noting that significant results have been achieved in this area, substantive contribution to which has been made through the activities of the Coordinating Bureau and the Group of Non-Aligned Countries in the United Nations, the Conference holds the view that it is necessary to intensify efforts in this direction and to further develop various forms of co-operation of Non-Aligned Countries in joint activities, including prior consultations on the modalities for the implementation of the decisions of non-aligned conference in international organizations.

123. The Conference entrusts the Coordinating Bureau with the

task to pay due regard to the improvement of the mechanisms of coordination and mutual co-operation and, in co-operation with other Non-Aligned Countries, to prepare appropriate proposals and recommendations for submission to the Fifth Summit Conference.

124. The Ministers for Foreign Affairs, in conformity with the objectives of this strategy and in accordance with the programmes of co-operation of Georgetown and of Algiers, undertake to make co-operation among Non-Aligned and developing Countries in matters of economic interest more dynamic, concrete and intensive. In this connection, the Foreign Ministers expressed their conviction that Malta's admission to the Group of 77 would strengthen the unity of purpose of the Non-Aligned Movement, and requested the Non-Aligned members of the Group of 77 to support the inclusion of Malta in all the discussions, on matters of common interest, which Non-Aligned Countries habitually conduct within the framework of the Group of 77. Co-operation among the Non-Aligned and developing Countries could be centered, among other fields, on the associations of raw materials producers, making this co-operation a closer link among themselves and bringing assistance to the Non-Aligned Countries in their struggle for the recuperation of natural resources, including nationalisation; by co-operating to establish common basic standards for the treatment of transnational enterprises, and of foreign capital and by co-operating closely at the same time in the scientific, technological and cultural fields so that this joint economic co-operation may foster a situation where the Non-Aligned Countries may avail themselves of their own internal resources and forces, increasing in this manner their interdependence and establishing a new international economic order. For this purpose, the following policy measures for an economic strategy are being agreed upon.

**ELEMENTS OF A STRATEGY TO STRENGTHEN THE UNITY AND SOLIDARITY OF THE NON-ALIGNED COUNTRIES, AND TO ESTABLISH THE NEW INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC ORDER**

**I. WORLD ECONOMIC SITUATION**

125. The Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Non-Aligned Countries assessed the international economic situation, as well as its evolution since the IV Conference of Heads of State and Government of the Non-Aligned Countries and have noted that its assessments and action oriented decisions proved to be correct and that they have been widely accepted as a basis for negotiations and expanded activities, within the United Nations in particular, with a view to establishing The New International Economic Order. This has been clearly demonstrated at the Sixth Special Session of the General Assembly, its regular sessions, meetings of other important organs of the UN, as well as by world conferences on food, raw materials, industrial development, the law of the sea, population, the International Women's Year Conference, as well as the OPEC Summit Conference held in Algiers.

126. The Ministers for Foreign Affairs noted with satisfaction the progress made with respect to the recognition of the sovereign right of States to choose freely their political, economic and social systems, to the application of the principle of permanent sovereignty over natural resources and other economic activities, including nationalization and re-adjustment of prices to obtain an equitable and remunerative price level for exports of raw materials and other basic commodities and the acceptance by the international community of the need to evolve and implement The New International Economic Order which ensures mutual and equitable benefits for all States.

127. The Ministers for Foreign Affairs observed, however, that progress towards economic liberation and the affirmation of sovereignty by Non-Aligned Countries and other developing countries, although it has contributed to a great extent to the questioning of the present structure of international, financial and economic relations, has been systematically opposed by imperialist countries determined to perpetuate their privileged economic situation through economic exploitation of developing countries by means of unequal terms of trade and the appropriation of surpluses through

repatriation of profits, interests, royalties and over-invoicing by transnational corporations. And furthermore, parts of the developing world are still subjected to foreign aggression and occupation, apartheid and colonial domination, this being one of the greatest obstacles to the economic emancipation and development of the developing world as a whole as well as the greatest threat to peace and security in the whole world.

128. Moreover, it is the persistence of this structure of imperialist domination that has transferred the impact of the economic crisis from capitalist countries to developing countries where poverty and social problems have become more acute.

129. For this reason, the Ministers for Foreign Affairs refused with firmness accusations according to which the origin of the economic crisis was to be found in the developing countries which started to recuperate their natural resources and to improve the prices of their raw materials, whereas in fact the responsibility lies with opulent societies characterised by monopoly concentration and irrational use of technology and natural resources.

130. The Ministers for Foreign Affairs noted with dismay the plight of the developing countries which have been most seriously affected by the economic crisis (as defined by General Assembly Resolutions 3201 (S-VI) and 3202 (S-VI) created by, among other things, a conjunction of monetary instability, drought, recession, a sharp rise in the price of their imports and the meagre response of the developed countries to the need to improve their condition. These countries face severe balance of payment problems which are threatening the very foundations of their economies.

131. The Ministers for Foreign Affairs recognized that the reform of the international monetary system has so far made little progress due to the intransigence of certain developed countries which dominate the International Monetary Fund and noted that the development of developing countries is seriously affected by the continuance of monetary disorder which creates uncertainties for their trade and for a smooth flow of resources to them and often re-

sults in inflation of their import costs. The Ministers, therefore, stress the need to accelerate the process of monetary reform, with a view to finalizing it by the end of next year including an adequate increase in the voice of developing countries in the decision-making authority in the International Monetary Fund, by making it possible for as large a number of developing countries as possible to join, consistent with the need to establish a stable and flexible monetary system and promote international trade and economic development.

132. The Ministers for Foreign Affairs noted with concern that some developed countries continued raising barriers to trade and spent enormous sums to subsidize inefficient production of food and agricultural products placing them on the international market under conditions which are causing grave damage to the developing producer countries. The Conference also noted with concern that the trade of the developing countries in manufacturers still faces serious tariff and non-tariff barriers. The import regimes of developed countries tend to be more rigid as the degree of processing of raw materials increases. There is little evidence as yet of any conscious effort on the part of the developed countries to vacate areas in which the comparative advantage lies or has shifted in favour of the developing countries or areas relative to manufacturers and semi-manufacturers involving the use of local factor endowments. While schemes of the Generalised System of preferences have been introduced by most developed countries, there has been very little progress in the Multilateral Trade Negotiations, even two years after the Tokyo Declarations.

133. With regard to international financing for development, the Ministers for Foreign Affairs observed that, quantitatively and qualitatively, the transfer of financial resources from the developed countries has deteriorated as these resources have become costlier in payment terms, interest and ties, precisely at a time when the access of developing countries to financial markets has become more precarious because of the international economic situation. This has placed a greater burden on

the external debt servicing of developing countries, and so far no effective measures for financial relief have been implemented, particularly for the developing countries most seriously affected by the crisis, as defined by General Assembly Resolution 3201 (S-VI) and 3202 (S-VI).

134. Likewise, the Ministers for Foreign Affairs observed that the international financial institutions have initiated steps to adapt themselves to the growing and urgent needs of developing countries, but should exert greater effort to meet such needs adequately and to play a role in fostering the process of development of the developing countries. In particular, this evolution is hindered by the existing distribution of decision-making authority in these institutions which conditions the access to and application of resources to certain standards of political and economic behaviour, and which obstruct the free and independent development of the developing countries.

135. The Ministers for Foreign Affairs took note of the modifications in the ratio of forces within the international economic struggle which permitted and was in turn reinforced by the historical measures adopted by OPEC, recognizing that this is the first time that developing countries, by means of a fair readjustment of the prices of their raw materials, have succeeded in changing the direction of the financial resources generated by an unequitable trade relation.

136. The Conference supports the measures undertaken in that direction by the oil-exporting developing countries. It notes with satisfaction the policies adopted by these countries in directing their net liquid assets to the development of their peoples and in channelling an increasing part of these assets towards the development of other developing countries. The Ministers are convinced that this trend should be reinforced in the future so that maximum benefit accrue to developing countries.

137. The Conference exhorts the developing countries producing other raw materials to organise themselves on a product-by-product basis as a means of facing the problem posed by imported inflation, the ever-increasing pri-

ces of their imports, the expensive obligations that high external debts entail and the increasingly serious difficulties of access to the commercial and capital markets of developed countries. The transfer of real resources to developing countries has not compensated for the resources outflow of these countries due to their unfavourable terms of trade and to the repatriation of resources, income and capital remittances by transnational corporations and invisible operations. All this makes it more imperative to enhance the potential for cooperation among developing countries.

(To be Continued)



## TOWARDS THE COLOMBO SUMMIT

### Non-aligned News Agencies' Pool

— first year of operations —

On the eve of New Delhi July Conference on the co-operation among the non-aligned countries in the field of information, where the functioning of the pool of the National Agencies of the Non-aligned countries will be the main topic, *Tribune* finds it of a special interest to publish the First Annual Report about the activities of the Pool.

The Pool itself has increased by the addition of a few new members. It has also perfected its communications, among others, establishing the direct radio-link with Colombo. Finally, during recent Coordination Bureau of the Non-aligned countries meeting in Algiers, the participating Ministers extended their full support to the POOL, expressing the hope that the Delhi July Pool-conference will consolidate a further advance in the mutual co-operation of organs of mass-information of the Non-aligned countries. The Conference on the Non-aligned News Agencies Pool is scheduled to open in New Delhi on July 8.

Belgrade, January 1976 (Tanjug)—

The Non-aligned News Agencies Pool, as a concrete form of co-operation among the non-aligned countries in the field of public information, entered its second year of operations as of January 20th. On that date in 1975 the Yugoslav news agency Tanjug, by agreement with 11 other news agencies of non-aligned countries, inaugurated free flow of news reports and information between national news agencies of the non-aligned countries. The Pool operations began, and at present are maintained, in three languages of exchange among the participating news agencies: English, French and Spanish. The fourth Pool language is Serbo-Croatian, the language in which Tanjug distributes the news reports of participating news agencies to the Yugoslav press, radio and television.

As the Pool enters its second year, it may be stated with professional and political objectivity that a phenomenon, a concrete practice, new in the history of news agency co-operation has emerged in the world of information. At present, close to 30 news agencies of the non-aligned countries are participating or intend to participate in the Pool. Some of these news agencies, in fact, have been formed during the first year of the Pool's operations. The participating news agencies are from the following countries:

Algeria/APS/, Argentina/TELAM/, Bangladesh/BSS/, Republic of Cambodia/AKI/, Chad/ACHP/, Cuba/PRENSA LATINA/, Egypt/MENA/, Ghana/GNA/, India/PTI/, Iraq/INA/, the People's Democratic Republic of Korea/KCNA/, Libya/ARNA/, Malaysia/BERNAMA/, Mali/ANIM/, Morocco/TAP/, Mexico/NOTIMEX/, Palestine/WAFA/, Panama/PANA-PRESS/, Peru/ANDINA/, Senegal/ASP/, Somalia/SONA/, Sri Lanka SLBC—the national foreign-broadcasting radio station/, Sudan/SUNA/, Tunisia/TAP/, Republic of South Vietnam/GPA/, Yugoslavia/TANJUG/, and Zambia/ZANA/.

The news agencies of Cameroun and Ethiopia have expressed their intention of participating in the Pool, as has Kuwait where a news agency is in the process of being formed. Tanjug periodically also receives and distributes news carried by the newly-formed news agency of the People's Republic

of Angola/ANGOLA-PRESS/. The Office of Public Information of the United Nations/OPI-UN/co-operates with the Pool and its news reports are carried by the Pool. UNESCO has also expressed its readiness to co-operate with the Pool.

On the eve of the Fourth Non-aligned Summit, held in Algiers in September 1973, the idea of co-operation among the non-aligned news agencies was taken up in somewhat more concrete form than hitherto. Although time did not permit a meeting of representatives of news agencies of the non-aligned countries to be held just prior to the Algiers Summit, the Fourth Summit nevertheless included under item 14 of its Programme for Action the recommendation that the non-aligned countries begin working on a project for co-operation in the exchange among themselves of information and in informing the world about themselves through co-operation among their news agencies as well as among other public information media and through cultural exchange.

On the basis of this recommendation, Tanjug exchanged views with a number of other news agencies on possible concrete forms of information exchange between the news agencies of the non-aligned countries. In these bilateral contacts with news agencies of the Arab countries, Africa, Asia and Latin America it was agreed that organizing a Pool would be a form suitable to attaining this joint aim. Tanjug, on the basis of this, sent a letter on December 3, 1974 to all the news agencies of the non-aligned countries. In this letter it informed the news agencies of its decision to undertake this project within its own organization and inviting them to participate. For this first stage of the Pool's operations, Tanjug assumed the role of collector and distributor of Pool newscasts. However, it was explicitly noted even then that the Pool's development would be possible only on the basis of reaching a joint agreement and the engagement of all news agencies participating in the Pool. The Pool's start was marked by statements contributed especially for the occasion by the heads of state or government of the following non-aligned countries: Sri Lanka, Yugoslavia, India,



Republic of South Vietnam, Afghanistan, Malaysia, Iraq, Tunisia, Ghana, Mali, Egypt, Palestine, Mexico, Senegal, Dahomey, Tanzania, Bangladesh.

This form of exchange among the news agencies of non-aligned countries was undertaken with the aim of alleviating a certain one-sidedness, often felt earlier, in reporting on the actual situation and development of the non-aligned and other developing countries. This one-sidedness was the result of the criteria of and selection of topical information by the major, international and traditional news agency networks. Hence, from its very inception the non-aligned News Agencies' Pool was referred to and called an effort to "decolonize the news", that is, as a step further along the way towards general decolonization, emancipation and the attainment of full independence. This is without doubt why the Pool has attracted attention in the political circles and press not only of the non-aligned countries but in those of "third parties", too.

During the first 12 months of the Pool's operations, Tanjug received and retransmitted approximately 3,500 news reports and other items of information originating in the news agencies participating in the Pool. These were redistributed to the Yugoslav press, radio and television and abroad, through its foreign broadcast services in English, French and Spanish. Approximately one thousand Tanjug news reports and other information must be added to the total quoted for news reports and information distributed abroad by the Pool. These originated in Yugoslavia or were received from Tanjug's foreign correspondents and were selected by Tanjug for inclusion in the Pool newscasts. The record kept of placement of the news reports from the Pool-participating news agencies in Yugoslavia's 12 daily papers shows that an average of 350 Pool texts appear monthly in these papers. This average does not include, of course, the regular news reports and despatches filed by Tanjug's foreign correspondents and published by these papers.

**HOW THE POOL OPERATES.** In keeping with the agreements reached by Tanjug in bilateral contacts, each Pool-participating news

agency may at its own expense and via the communication facilities at its disposal, send two to three news reports or other information items to Tanjug daily. This amounts to a total of up to two pages of material daily. Tanjug picks up this material, which arrives in English, French or Spanish, and redistributes it, first, in Serbo-Croatia, through its domestic services to the Yugoslav press, radio and television, and, second, in the three languages of the other Pool participating news agencies, otherwise world languages. Tanjug handles the translation of each item received into the other two languages in the event the news agency of origin has not done so itself.

This has, of course, put a greater load on Tanjug's facilities. An up-to-date "battery" of new, 30-kW transmitters was set in operation to coincide with the inauguration of Pool activities and this had made it possible for the Pool newscasts to reach all news agencies equipped with radioprinter-receiver equipment. Tanjug transmits the news reports of these news agencies to its own subscribers and to other news agencies in their original form or authentic translation. For news agencies in areas of the same language as that in which an item is received, the item is retransmitted as it was received. An exception is in the case of the news services of news agencies which have their own developed foreign broadcast services and which do not themselves indicate the items they want included in the Pool but have left this selection, so far, up to Tanjug's Pool editorial staff. Tanjug has a team of four specialized journalist-editors and associates working for the Pool as well as the entire staff of journalists and translators of its department of foreign language news services which otherwise regularly prepares the other Tanjug newscasts and reports for distribution abroad. (In five languages).

Tanjug includes in the Pool its own daily news reports and information from Yugoslavia and abroad, especially from the non-aligned countries or on international events of particular interests to the non-aligned countries. Together with Tanjug's foreign correspondents, totalling 39 at present, the Pool-participating news

agencies of the non-aligned countries represent the largest group as a news source for Tanjug's General Service for the Yugoslav press, radio and television and also for its foreign newscasts. (Note: Tanjug makes available also, to its subscribers in Yugoslavia a daily selection of news reports and information carried by the major world commercial news agencies as well as a number of national news agencies which do not participate in the Pool. Pool news and information is carried in full in the daily news bulletins published by Tanjug in three languages—English, French and Spanish—for distribution to foreign diplomats and foreign journalists residents in Belgrade.

**POOL "CREDENTIALS".** The Pool of news reports and information of news agencies of non-aligned countries, launched in January of last year on the basis of bilateral agreements, received its first wider international support at the First Conference of News Agencies of Arab and African Countries, held in late February and early March in Tunis. This Conference provided two important affirmations: first, it adopted the principle of a "Pool-system" as a form of co-operation between news agencies of both parts of the African continent and the Middle East and, second, it formulated explicit support to the Non-aligned News Agencies' Pool which operates through the Yugoslav news agency Tanjug. Item 14 of the Final Act of the Afro-Arab News Agencies Conference attended also by government representatives of several of the countries of these regions, recommended that the participating countries /a total of close to 50 countries attended the Conference in Tunis/as well as non-aligned countries study the possibilities offered to them by the Non-aligned News Agencies' Pool and that they establish contact with it, in the interest of keeping the people of their own countries better informed.

The Coordinating Bureau of the Non-aligned Countries, at a Ministerial Meeting in Havana from March 17th to 19th makes note under item 28 of the Meeting's Final Act, of the newly operating Non-aligned News Agencies' Pool. The Coordinating Bureau recommends that this and other forms of co-operation among the non-aligned in the

field of information be continued. This document also sets down the need to appoint an official Coordinator for the non-aligned in the field of information. This need had still earlier been signalled out, at the meeting of the group of coordinator countries held in the fall of 1974 in Belgrade.

The Foreign Ministers Conference of the Non-Aligned, held in August 1975 in Lima, decided to separate the question of co-operation in the field of information from co-operation in its Action Programme in the economic field and to adopt a special political resolution on this subject. This was Resolution no. 6. Article one of this Resolution reads as follows: "The Conference with satisfaction makes note of the results of efforts made in co-operation among the non-aligned countries in the field of public information, and, especially, in regard to the establishment of the Non-aligned News Agencies' Pool which began operating in January 1975. A meeting of government representatives and news agencies of the non-aligned countries ~~will~~ be held in order to draw up a draft Statute for the Non-aligned News Agencies' Pool which would cover various questions such as, for instance, the question of organizational structure, manner of operation and financial participation, with the aim of submitting this draft for consideration and final approval to the summit Conference in Colombo. The participants accepted with pleasure the offer of the Indian government to be host to this meeting in New Delhi, sometime during 1976.

Article 2 of Resolution no. 6 of the Lima Ministerial Conference also sets down the decision appointing Tunisia the Coordinator-country for co-operation among the non-aligned in the field of public information. Tanjug distributed a report on the first seven months of Pool operations at the Ministerial Conference in Lima. This report was distributed to all the delegations of the countries participating in the Conference. Tanjug meanwhile received the working paper pertaining to the Pool and its further development distributed by the Indian delegation at the Ministerial Conference in Lima.

Tanjug sent its report on the first seven months of Pool opera-

tions to all the Pool-participating news agencies accompanied with a cover letter dated October 20, 1975 as well as the above-quoted Article one from Resolution no. 6 of the Lima Conference. In this report, Tanjug cited results achieved as well as the situation at that time in terms of the number of participating news agencies.

**RESULTS AND FUTURE PROSPECTS.** The results achieved to date lead to the conclusion that the Pool is not a short-term project but rather a long-term undertaking, just as is, otherwise, the policy of non-alignment. This conclusion requires that the results of the first year of operations be assessed above all from the standpoint of the success of this new form of multilateral co-operation in actually achieving an exchange of information and the scope of acceptance of the idea and support of the Pool as well as the constant increase in the number of participants in this undertaking.

The results achieved in terms of news-report placement are doubtless modest but show a constant upward trend. What is lacking, however, is a full appreciation of how the Pool-participating news agencies themselves distribute the material of this service to their own subscribers. Also lacking is a measure of the extent to which the daily papers in the respective countries pick up and publish the news reports and information provided by the Pool. The impression is that in a certain number of countries whose news agencies are Pool participants, the information services of the traditional, major and commercial news agencies, and some others, still dominate in daily press, radio and television reporting on other non-aligned countries. The limited information available, however, indicates that the Pool material of its participating news agencies has found a sizeable response in the press of many of the non-aligned countries—India, Tunisia, Iraq, Ethiopia, Mexico, Peru, Argentina, Panama, Morocco, Algeria, Sudan, Ghana, Libya, etc.

But, at the very least, the first year of Pool operations has brought inestimable knowledge, experience and lessons for the future. The reference here is to strictly professional questions as well as

to problems of mutual assistance to aid in the technical capacitation and the formation of trained journalists. There can be no doubt that each of the Pool-participating news agencies has already acquired a certain experience and that at a joint gathering each will be able to put forth valuable suggestions for the further development on a multilateral basis of this co-operation.

A changeover of the current Non-aligned News Agencies' Pool to a multilateral basis would mean, most probably, expanding the Pool network, with the engagement of the national news agencies which dispose of the necessary facilities. It is felt that such news agencies should act as collectors and distributors of other news agencies participating in the non-aligned Pool. In this, future phase of co-operation perhaps it would be advisable to move towards a regional selectivity of topical news and information by these news agencies.

As already noted, another question outstanding is that of the degree of institutionalization for this form of co-operation in the circulation of news and information among the news agencies of the non-aligned countries. The appointment of an official Coordinator for Information as well as the forthcoming meeting New Delhi of representatives of the governments and news agencies of the non-aligned countries certainly represent important steps in consolidating and further developing the Non-aligned News Agencies' Pool.

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#### LETTERS

The Tribune welcomes letters from readers. Short letters have a better chance of being published. All letters are subject to condensation for space reasons. Anonymous letters will not be considered for publication. Writers may request that their letters be signed only with initials or a pseudonym but preference will be given to those fully signed and bearing the writer's complete address.

## News About Samachar

—a critical analysis—

Under Government pressure the different News Agencies in India were combined into one Organisation—*Samachar*. Governmental propaganda from New Delhi has stressed the need for a unified national news agency. We publish a criticism of *Samachar* which appeared in the organ of the Communist Party of India which supports the Indira Gandhi Government.

New Delhi.

**SAMACHAR**—The sole wire service News Agency in the country—has come in for a sharp criticism, both in Parliament and outside. *Samachar* which means "news" has been attacked for not living up to its name and the purpose it is supposed to subserve. Often, non-news becomes news for *Samachar* while news as such is killed by its silence, mostly by design and sometimes by the self-censor of correspondents, themselves, who feel, perhaps, the news may not be the liking of those in or around the seats of power. In the two months of its existence, the *Samachar* has not been able to show what good it can do but amply demonstrated what bad it can bring about.

No wonder; the general service of the *Samachar* (and that is what bulk of the newspapers subscribe to) is around 25,000 words per day, much less than what formerly the PTI or the UNI used to transmit over their wires. The PTI or UNI wordage averaged 35-40 thousand a day. And these 25,000 words are mostly culled from official handouts or pronouncements, both official and of lesser fry who are presumed to carry weight. On top of it there is a sort of remote control operation where a telephone call decides the fate of an item, a story or a report.

he failure of the *Samachar* is not accidental. Its genesis as it were foreshadowed the shape of

things to come. One may recall that there was that question of delinking and diffusion of the press. After the midterm poll to Parliament, the government had indeed prepared a bill for the purpose. But it was overnight withdrawn for reasons still unknown. The process now seems to be going in a reverse direction. Monopoly groupings are getting integrated. A case in point is K. K. Birla becoming the chairman of the Indian Express also, the largest newspaper chain in the country.

Now there is another diversion as well—a proposal to delink the editorial portfolio from the proprietors. The proposal for delinking and diffusion was given a go-by. Instead, it was emphasised that the merger of the four national news agencies—two in English, PTI and UNI, and two in Hindi, *Samachar Bharati* and *Hindustan Samachar*—would bring about the formation of a single national news agency to serve the common good. This was to be the so-called first step in ending the monopoly control over the news media. It was said that a single news agency would have a bold new perspective, ensure greater coverage, concentrate on developmental news, inculcate rural bias (for India lives in its villages), avoid duplication and thus save money, time and effort—in short be a representative news gatherer and disseminator.

The journalists, especially the federations of unions of both the PTI and UNI, stressed that there must be discussions to plan such a news agency and that the employees must have a say in the management. But it was easier said than done. The employees were not consulted. The All-India Radio suddenly proposed to discontinue its subscription to the PTI. The hint was unmistakable. Though the boards of directors of the PTI and UNI (mostly representatives of big papers) were practically the same there was resistance to the merger. This resistance had to be overcome. The other two news agencies hardly mattered.

The boards of directors of PTI and UNI finally saw the "good sense" in the merger and decided to join up. One fine morning the agreement was indicated and the "good news" was spread out. A

*Samachar* committee was appointed and April 1, 1976 was announced as the D Day. But someone somewhere had a prejudice about the April Fools Day and the informal merger took place on April 2.

The *Samachar* is a society registered under the Societies Registration Act is yet to buy up or take over the shares of the UNI, PTI etc. Recently its news service charges have been raised by about 10 per cent. Though the staff members have been combined, their salaries are still paid by the respective organisations to which they belonged earlier. The *Samachar* committee since, slightly enlarged with some co-opted members, consists of *Hindu* editor G. Kasturi (chairman), P. C. Gupta of *Jagrani* (former PTI chairman who was arrested during the emergency and then released), Dr. Tarneja (former UNI chairman), *Malayala Manorama* managing editor K. M. Mathew general manager of *Birla's Hindustan Times* Santosh Nath who also did a stint in the *Statesman* (former UNI director), *National Herald* news bureau chief B. K. Joshi, *Bhopal Hitavada* editor N. Rajan, *National Herald* managing director Mohammed Yunus, director general of All India Radio P. C. Chatterjee, (ex-officio members), *Matrubhumi* managing editor V. M. Nair, *Lok Udyog* editor Raj K. Nigam, and *Times of India* film critic Shameem. One lady member is to be co-opted but no name has yet been finalised.

This committee excluded some of the former top management personnel of the PTI and UNI. It appointed former special correspondent of PTI Wilfred Lazarus as acting general manager of *Samachar*, former chief news editor of PTI, Kasbekar as editor of English service and former special correspondent of PTI K. P. Siriawastava as editor of Hindi service. Former deputy general manager UNI V. P. Ramachandran has been shunted out to Ranchi as industrial correspondent. Former editor of PTI C. Raghavan has been made social and economic affairs correspondent of *Samachar* at Bhubaneswar, though at one stage he was tipped for correspondent in Brussels.

There are now reportedly three committees formed in the *Samachar*. One is the integration committee, another is the structure committee while the third is the

objectives committee. These committees are supposed to finalise plans on respective fields within two months. The integration committee is chaired by R. P. Billimoria, formerly of Tata house and currently a director of SAIL. Other members include LIC northern zonal manager S. G. Subramaniam, J. C. Mathur of Indian Institute of Public Administration, retired deputy general manager of PTI Fernandes, Delhi manager of PTI P. R. Chandran, former UNI administration officer S. K. Duggal who is also assistant editor of Samachar English service. The structure committee is headed by Dr. Tarneja and includes Santosh Nath as member among others. The objectives committee is the most elusive committee and no one exactly knows, at least publicly, who its exalted personalities are.

Moreover, none of these appointments were openly announced. The employees do not know anything about these committees, not to talk of their being included in it. It appears that only the unions have been told, informally, that some of them may be taken as "assessors" to these committees, not as members. No appointment has been announced on the notice board. It is quite obvious that the front men in the Samachar do not know what they are supposed to do. There is no accepted blueprint for it. It is also asserted that it is not a government news agency but a private society.

The lack of clarity and the frankly negative attitude of the committee to associate Samachar employees with the management and reorganisation functions are leading to an utterly deplorable state of affairs in the Samachar. Journalists in the Samachar often complain that they have no journalistic initiative left, for they are not sure of their position. So why risk it? To be on the safe side, it is better to do what is expressly wanted, most of them feel!

The rural bias in reporting has not materialised at all in the Samachar and there is no in-depth news gathering. Since its inception, the Samachar has put out only one "investigative" report—the Turkman Gate events in Delhi—which had a sort of Goebbelsian touch! It, however, seems that the Samachar had an idea of telling

the country about the implementation of the 20-point programme whose first anniversary of proclamation is very near. It asked its state correspondents to send detailed reports on the subject and some did respond. But the Samachar bossed sided on the advice of someone that the information would not suit the purpose since it showed up many instances of non-implementation. By going through the Samachar news items, one would not get an idea of what is really happening in the country, among the masses in particular. There is a planned non-reporting of press conferences or statements of progressive forces. Even congressmen ate not spared this guillotin.

This sort of practice is highly objectionable since it shuts out the channel of information between the people and the government. Certainly, in a democracy, government has to know what the people are complaining about or what they are asking for. The coverage of Parliament and state assemblies also reflects this approach. Hardly any speech other than official speeches is reported properly and even if it is partially reported, all genuine and just criticism of the bureaucracy or non-implementation of the announced programme of the government are carefully left out in order to present a distorted picture before the country. Whose policy is it? And, of course, the padayatra campaign of the CPI which has covered in one month tens of thousands of villagers contacting several million villagers and educating them about the 20-point programme was no news for the Samachar!

Or take the demolition of the coffee house at Connaught Place in New Delhi. This was a public interest story. One need not write if anyone had opposed its demolition but the fact that this centre no longer existed could certainly be reported, for it had symbolised a sort of consumer resistance against profiteering and had a history of its own. But no, such news could not be creeded, someone ordained by a telephone call. What is further shocking about the Samachar decision-making process is that an IPS officer, formerly of the Intelligence Bureau, often tells the Samachar bosses

what is in the interest of the nation and what is not, and in that light news is put out or killed.

Interestingly, news of rightist conclave or their policy projections are circulated by the Samachar. Should not the news of the rightist, communal or divisive forces whose activities are definitely against the interest of the country be ignored? No wonder in such a situation, hangers-on and careerists thrive and try a quick climb-up in the Samachar. There is the notorious case of a crime beat reporter suddenly riding high and doing PR jobs including fixing up appointments with ministers for fat considerations.

In the Samachar office, he used to strut about as the most important executive and a potential general manager, and the youngest to boot! He was first appointed as a roving correspondent and later as the chief roving correspondent. One fine morning, he was, however, brought down from that high horse. It is said that he was caught in shady deals. But shady deals are natural in such abnormal set ups. These instances only show that the "Make it" or "break it" phenomenon in the Samachar depends on how close you are to the men at the helm of affairs, and not on your merit, capacity or devotion to duty.

—New Age, June 6, 1976



SRI LANKA TODAY—2

## An Analysis Of Independence

By Prof. A. D. P. Jayatilaka

This is the concluding part of a most thought-provoking article by Prof. Jayatilaka of the Sri Lanka University at Peradeniya. The first part had appeared in our issue last week.

**The Government of Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike was responsible for implementing many progressive measures like the Nationalisation of oil companies, insurance, take over of state aided private schools,**

curtailing of private practice by Government doctors to one of channelled practice etc. The reactionary group of the privileged plotted a coup against the Government of Mrs. Bandaranaike. Even some prominent members of the U.N.P. were aware of the coup and gave support to it in a very silent manner. The plot failed, the plotters were found guilty in the Supreme Court of Sri Lanka but when the U.N.P. came back into power in 1965, the plotters were allowed to appeal to the Privy Council. The Privy Council acquitted those guilty on a point of law and it is indeed very interesting to note that some of those involved in the coup were given public sector jobs during the U.N.P. government from 1965 to 1970.

During Mrs. Bandaranaike's regime, by clever manipulation, the income from our primary products kept falling whilst at the same time there was no check in the increase of the birth rate. The government was forced to place a ban on all luxury items. The fall in foreign exchange earnings led to more borrowing from other countries and agencies. The Government also encouraged industry but unfortunately it was the luxury items that people sought permission from the Government to start industries.

*In fact most of them enjoyed income tax holidays and were allowed to market their goods at any price. The public was held to ransom by the new industrialists. This was the great mistake of the Sirima Bandaranaike government. The Government should have approved industries of essential items and also those industries which made use of local raw material.*

In 1964, however, three members of the L.S.S.P. were given portfolios by Mrs. Bandaranaike and thus was formed the first coalition Government. In December 1964, Mr. C. P. de Silva, who had been a long standing member of the S.L.F.P. and also the President after the death of Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike, crossed over to the Opposition and helped to defeat the Government of Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike by one vote. This was because the Government was trying to broaden the ownership of the National newspapers.

In March 1965, Mr. Dudley Senanayake was able to form a Government with the support of the Federal Party, Sri Lanka Freedom Socialist Party, Tamil Congress, M.E.P., Jatika Vimukthi Peramuna and the L.P.P. In order to curry favour with the Buddhists Mr. Dudley Senanayake, in 1966, declared the poya and pre-poya days as the regular week ends. This caused commercial chaos in the country. In July of the same year several Buddhist Army personnel and a well known Buddhist monk were arrested as being involved in an alleged coup against the government. All the accused were acquitted in the Law Courts of this country.

Mr. Senanayake encouraged agriculture and irrigation and gave large tracts of land, on lease, to wealthy capitalists and capitalist organisations for agricultural purposes. The Government also allowed the import of vehicles for agricultural purposes but unfortunately these vehicles were used in Colombo to transport children to school. The cost of living climbed gradually and the people bore it patiently.

*The masses were in the same plight as before. Mr. Dudley Senanayake was a good man but the bureaucrats around him fed with information and statistics which he believed without question. Towards the end of his stewardship as Prime Minister there were many problems which he had to face.*

1. A large number of students from the rural areas were entering the Universities but they had no meaningful employment after graduation.
2. Even though large sums of money had been spent on agriculture, the country was still importing large quantities of food.
3. With dwindling foreign exchange, he helped his supporters by giving them Open General Licences to import anything they wanted. As a result the country was flooded with unnecessary goods.
4. Corruption at top level could not be prevented. Using his name, many people including his relations made large sums of money.
5. Gave one measure of rice free instead of two measures at 50 cts.

6. The entire University academic staff of all the Universities were antagonized by the formation of the National Council of Higher Education and the utterances of the Honourable Minister of Education.

Yet, Mr. Senanayake was hopeful that he would be returned to power in the General Election held in May 1970. The result was a landslide victory for Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike and the United (Left) Front. Mrs. Bandaranaike and the other leaders of the United Front promised the moon to the masses before the elections and the victory itself was a bloodless revolution. The United Front promised to wipe out the colonial regulations and introduce a Constitution to suit the genius of the people. Unfortunately, the landslide victory with its massive majority in Parliament was indeed a tragedy for this country.

The newly formed Government was intent on reform. Many people with expertise were put into positions formerly occupied by professional bureaucrats and the people expected great things. The new 'Sahibs' were no better. Although the Government had good intentions and passed several progressive measures in Parliament, the implementation of these plans and decisions were left to the former professional bureaucrats who were allergic to the new reforms. The Government was blocked in the Senate and although the Senate was finally abolished there was no great change. From the Prime Minister downwards there was a fear to radically alter the conditions existing in society. They themselves feared that their own position in society would be questioned and challenged.

The overwhelming majority in Parliament made the Ministers and the Members of Parliament a little insensitive to public criticism. All fear and shame had disappeared and these people were doing things which the U.N.P. had never even thought of. Corruption and nepotism slowly crept in. Trips abroad were frequent by Ministers, Deputy Ministers and M.P.s. There was an instance when the Deputy Minister of a Ministry and the Secretary to the same Ministry were fighting over as to who should

attend a meeting scheduled to be held in New York.

In the meantime the youth of the country that ushered in the new Government were restless and disillusioned. The promised changes in society did not seem to even on the cards, the jobs still went to the privileged groups and as a result insurgent activities were plotted and planned with a view to overthrowing the Government. In April 1971, the insurgency broke loose when the Government least expected it and it was a miracle that the Government survived. There were many casualties amongst the 'rebels' and members of the armed forces. The queer thing is that the youths were resorting to revolutionary methods but the Lanka Sama Samaja Party and the Communist Party which had all along advocated revolutionary tactics to capture power condemned the insurgents as being stooges of right wing capitalism and the C.I.A.

The insurgency brought some sense into the heads of the leaders of the United Front Government. The Government quickly introduced measures like Land Reform, Ceiling on Houses, State Trading Corporation, prohibited the import of all goodstuffs except rice, flour and sugar, commenced the Mahaweli Diversion Scheme, reforms of the Judicial system, ceiling on income and compulsory savings. It also adopted a new Constitution in May 1972.

Yet, the Government took no meaningful steps to stop corruption, indiscipline and nepotism amongst its own party members and the elected representatives of the people. The new Constitution vested greater power with the Ministers and created Political Authorities where members of the National State Assembly superseded the powers of the local Government Agents in matters concerning day to day matters. Disbursement of funds were left to the Political Authorities and it is alleged that there are some Political Authorities who have misused funds and their powers. They probably do not want to contest a seat at the polls again. Jobs are given only to those who could produce a letter from the Member of the National State Assembly and specially recommended by him. This has led to

much abuse and degenerate corruption. Today the country faces four major problems. There are:—

1. Spiralling cost of living,
2. Inability to get a job of work done without political patronage,
3. Indiscipline, indecency and corruption of the politician,
4. Indiscipline, indecency and corruption of the Public Sector Employees from the Higher Echelons to the meanest peon.

Feudal systems are apparent again. Consideration is given to members of a particular family irrespective of their party affiliations. Kandyan Sinhalese are given preference to the low country Sinhalese thereby creating division amongst the Sinhalese. On the other hand in fields like Education the Muslims have benefitted tremendously. The Tamils claim that they are discriminated against in the field of education especially after the creation of a single University of Sri Lanka where entry is determined by standardisation of marks media-wise.

**There is no grouse and valid arguments against standardization. In a paper submitted by Professor Valentine Basnayake, Professor of Physiology of the Peradeniya Campus and myself to the Secretary, Sectoral Committee of Social Overheads, Housing, Mass Media and Transport this is what we had to say regarding standardization and the district quota system.**

*"We wish to support the principle of standardisation and of district quotas in the admission of students to the University.*

*Standardization of marks in each subject from year to year makes allowance for variability of standards of the examination papers in the subject from year to year. The raw marks are converted to a given pre-determined average and scatter (eg. an average of 50% and a standard deviation of plus or minus 15%).*

*Standardization of marks in each subject between language media is a desirable safeguard in situations where allegations can be made about partiality towards Sinhala students by Sinhala examiners and towards Tamil students by Tamil examiners. (The same sort of principle is adopted in the final examination of the faculties of*

*Medicine in Colombo and Peradeniya, the marks in each subject are standardized for Colombo and Peradeniya separately. This is done to equal the allegation that Colombo examiners may overmark Colombo candidates and that Peradeniya examiners may overmark Peradeniya candidates in the race for jobs as doctors).*

*District quotas are desirable in order to improve the chances of children who may be handicapped by lack of opportunities in the districts away from Colombo, Jaffna, Galle and Kandy and other big cities and towns. The quota system would also break the tendency of children to migrate from peripheral districts to the big schools in Colombo, Jaffna, Galle and Kandy, and it may lead to the improvement of schools in the peripheral areas."*

In spite of similar recommendations from the academic staff of the University of Sri Lanka, the Government went back on its earlier decision of district quotas and started a scheme whereby 70% of entry was by merit and 30% by the district quota system. Once again the privileged classes were able to change the decisions of the Government.

Indiscipline is rampant throughout the country and is reflected in the Universities primarily. The bureaucrat obstructs the good work done by some voluntarily organisations by offering vague excuses and whispering that these organisations are acting the best interests of the Government.

Mr. J. R. Jayewardene is clamouring for early elections and so is Dr. N. M. Perera. Mrs. Bandaranaike is determined to carry on until May 1977 so that she would be the focus of world attention during the non-aligned summit scheduled to be held in August 1976.

What are the options for the people in the election of 1977?

The people could revote Mrs. Bandaranaike into power and have the same inept, inefficient and indiscipline system riddled with corruption. On the other hand the people could give power over to Mr. J. R. Jayewardene. He has pledged that the new U.N.P. is a democratic socialist party and will wipe out the rich Mudalalis. Considering his past and present activities one may presume he

may lead the country into an iron dictatorship with the loss of basic freedoms except to those who are in his favour. Hitler once brought discipline and efficiency into a degenerate Germany. Could the same thing happen in Sri Lanka? What about the L.S.S.P.? Their leadership is a spent force and they could never form a Government in this country for another twenty five years at least.

What then is the option for the people of this country who have toiled and worked so hard to find that with each successive Government only a few enjoy the benefits of their efforts? The people are looking for an honest leadership but they find the same old faces that have dominated the politics of this country for the last twenty five years.

I sincerely believe that the option is a third force or shall I say a new force, either with or without the present politicians. A leadership drawn from the people, an honest leadership devoid of family name and feudal traditions. Every member in this third force must have an unblemished record in the past.

The leadership must ensure every citizen whether he be Sinhala (Kandyan or Low country), Tamil, Moor, Malay, Burgher or any other racial minority and who are citizens, the right to be free from hunger, a right to be clothed and housed in decent dwellings and a right to have medical treatment, if ill. There must be a leadership that will ensure every citizen a meaningful occupation and give dignity to whatever job a man does. We need a leadership that lives simple lives in public as well as in private. We should not tolerate a leadership that speaks of socialism by day and sips whisky by night.

We need a leadership that has loving kindness and that which does not take revenge. We need a leadership that has compassion, altruistic joy and equanimity. We need a leadership that will not discriminate against helpless people. We need a leadership that will be prepared to share—not only their wealth, property, knowledge but also the fruits of poli-

tical power. We need a leadership that will indulge in pleasant speech and for that the leadership must be sober at all times. We need a leadership that will take constructive action and not action for the promotion of their own ego.

Above all we need a leadership that will respect the law which they themselves create and see to the implementation of the law equally to all its citizens. We need a leadership that will ensure the correct man for the appropriate job with no interference of any kind. We need a leadership that will be an example to their followers regarding both their moral and legal honesty. We need a leadership that will not discriminate against a minority nor tolerate the intolerance of a minority against the majority.

Unless we find this leadership soon, this blessed country of ours where the Dhamma of the Buddha, the teachings of Christ, the moral influence of the Hindu religion, and the admonitions of the Prophet intermingled harmoniously will be drawn downwards both politically and economically until a blood bath will drown us all.

\* \* \*

#### BUILDING A VILLAGE HOUSE—83

## The Sound. And The (Impotent) Fury

By Herbert Keuneman

**THE SOUND.** Why, in God's name, is nobody in a CBC (SLBC) Sinhala play ever happy?

For want of an English programme to which I can successfully tune in—brrrrr! wheeee! peepy-peep-peep-peep! crrack! and even snap and popple or, in the alternative no sound whatever—I still continue to listen under protest to what must be the world's most uncouth programmes, taken all in all. (And don't let anybody tell me that I must be overcritical and possibly pedantic, because no one ever writes and complains. No one complains because amongst the dumb suffering masses against whom these rural insults are aimed they know better than to waste

time complaining, once. The Authorities seem to have decided that a given course is right. Or Left, as the case may be. None of them 'writes and complains' about lots of other things: the shocking dilatoriness of the post and telegraph, the unpunctuality of the CTB and the ever open question of whether a given bus will run at all, the sink of corruption that is the rural co-operative system...but it would be inconceivably starry-eyed for even a Government propagandist to claim there was nothing wrong with these.)

But to come back to what I began to say. One would think, to hear the way the characters in a Sinhala radio play carry on, that either the people of Sri Lanka—especially the women—are the most afflicted, weebegone, and lachrymose on earth (false) or the one dramatic emotion the country's radio actors, actresses and playwrights have enough mastery of their craft to exploit is the so cheaply evocable facilely communicable catchpenny one of sentimental or exaggerated grief (probably true!) This is not perhaps typically the case with the men—tears in them are comic relief, so that dolour amongst them must be expressed by a hysterical rise in the voice or a panting aphasia; and the conventional deep male emotions are blustering wrath or ingratiating ruttishness—but listen to a female character for ten consecutive minutes and within that period she will certainly contrive to fetch a sigh with a 'whumph' like the first power stroke of an ancient crude-oil engine on half-compression or a sob that must come all the way from the sole of her feet. After that, she snivels.

As for Ceylon Theatre (as the radio presents it to those who want to listen) apart from a few feeble adaptations, and—worse—plain cribs of theme from more creative civilizations, everything is nicely calculated to suggest that the Country's *ne plus ultra* is the soap opera. There are no less than four of them currently going: all bumbling along on the same hackneyed theses of the conceit and venality (invariably compensated for, under the goodness of Providence, by stupidity and crassness of a most egregious order) of *koralas* and *arachchis*—Grama Sevakayas, strangely enough, must lack these vices since they do not appear—

and of the indefeasible high-mindedness and fortitude of the simple peasant; and of the lispng charm and patient virtue of every village woman save the dangerously over-educated virago that becomes so unwomanly emancipated as to demand actually some personal freedom! and of the peasant's apparently unrelieved long-suffering and helplessness if he will not help himself. .et sic omnes: all the trite shibboleths of schoolboy debates on Country vs. Town.

Yet, of all the overmany *natya* marred by dishonest derivation, self-conscious stylization, cheap slice-of-lifism, ineffable clumsiness of technique—in a duologue the other day of three or four half-lines per character there occurred at least three minutes of aside addressed to the listener—and often thoroughly incompetent casting and delivery, in all this ruck I say of far-below-mediocrity, the one *natya* that stands out is a soap-opera, the hoary *Nava Muvanpelessa*. It is true the soap-opera form demands of its creator little beyond familiarity, with its *mise-en-scene*, for it need never rise to any great height of dramatic climax, and the device of dramatic irony fights a good part of his battle—and still the worst writers descend to the aside—and he can always pull his chestnuts out of the fire in Next Week's Pedestrian Instalment, and nothing draws a return audience willy-nilly (whether the drama is really approved or not) as the compulsion to discover out of sheer curiosity what the hell happens to the silly girl anyway. No, the soap-opera is God's gift to the uninspired but assiduous.

Nevertheless, within these limits or despite them *Nava Muvanpelessa* is a meticulous piece of work; and the actors, if they have no need to act but only speak, yet do so in utterly authentic dialect and with impeccable 'Kandyan' intonation. So excellent are they and so typical their goings on that they completely establish themselves as characters and their village as a place on a map.

All very well. But when three imitators start up, convinced that 'Now the "formula" has been found!' and go on as we Ceylonese do, once one bold innovator has done the pioneering, to follow the formula slavishly, merely setting the action and dialogue in a new

quarter of the Island—the deep Southern Province, the Kelani Valley or what have you—cribbing characters and changing merely names and situations and descending so low as even, if I mistake not, to crimp actual speakers of parts: then it becomes really too much of a hitherto tolerable thing!

Be that as it may. Can we not learn, shall we not learn for the sake of our national image, to present the people of Sri Lanka as capable of any other real emotion than degrees of hysteria? It used to be said that Veddas did not smile. Is it now to be said that the rest of the nation can do nothing but sigh and cry?

In the field of music (at any rate, of a certain kind) we seem to go to the opposite extreme: that of excruciating frivolity. In these articles I have earlier written—more than once, I think—about our so-called National Songs. I call them that; but I believe there is a specific Sinhalese name for them; anyway, the young folk here call them, without irony, *desabimana gi*: Songs of Pride in Our Land.

Now, what is more than casually noteworthy about these deplorable lyrics—and I say 'deplorable' purely from a musical and poetic standpoint—is that almost without exception, and I myself can think of no exception at all, is that (1) they seem to have sprung full-armed with ready-made emotion since 1970 (this in itself, however, could well signify that not until then had the masses anything to pride themselves upon) but also (2) the emotion is all too often so patently spurious that not seldom author and composer alike are reduced to repeating a single undistinguished phrase up to 16 times! and (3) the music to them is grotesquely—un-national. I am not writing here about something I have complained of before: the inelegant reduction of the Sinhala scale to the cramped dimensions of Equal Temperament. There is a much more disconcerting repudiation of genuine national tradition. The *rhythm* of an extraordinary proportion of these outpourings of Sinhala feeling belong to *Kaffirinha!* To second-class citizens and ex-(but long ex-) slaves! That piddling trumpery that announces the News is as good an example as any:

hip-py hip-py hippety-hoppety,  
hip-py hip-py hippety-hop;  
hip-py hip-py hippety-hoppety,  
hip-py hip-py hippety-hoppety  
hip-py hippety slippety slopety  
hip-py-hop! you puppets, be hep  
and get uppity!

Ho—(don't stop, just hop!)—Pi!

I cannot, honestly, envisage the March of Time taking place to a dotted rhythm. And I try—but, also, I cannot—picture the most authentic and dignified of our national leaders, the Prime Minister, Mr. Kobbekaduwa, Mr. Dias Bandaranaike *et al* advancing (skippety-skip) toward the Distant Dawn, to the *baila* beat!

And as merely a matter of unhappily comic curiosity; one of the new songs that does escape the *baila* snare ends with a syllable—oh! I know it is a perfectly correct Sinhala grammatical inflection, and I have no business ascribing it western connotations; but it is an ugly end-sound by any standard—'wow'

**THE FURY.** I state without much fear of contradiction (save possibly by interested propagandists) that ever since the traditional celebrations came back into usage with the earliest stirrings of national consciousness this has been the most dejected New Year's Festival in living memory.

And amongst single agencies for the fiasco the Co-operatives must bear a great deal of the blame.

If you live in a town, maybe you will not have found the difference from other years so marked. But here in the village, to see a time of genuinely high spirits beaten into an apathetic submission to uncontrollable circumstance is real tragedy. No one should make the mistake of dismissing as childish or frivolous the simple *jollification* that marked the day: there was nothing real else to mark it. It has no religious significance. Yet, to all but the unnaturally high-minded it was the happiest day of the year. The harvest (provided you'd had one) was safely in. The family—for the only unailing time in the twelvemonth was home. There was leisure. There was (even if it had had to be carefully hoarded for some time previously) for at least once an abundance, not a mere sufficiency, of food and drink: enough abundance to allow some of it to be devoted to consump-



tion for sheer pleasure. Everyone was well fed, fresh clothed; rehabilitated. *This year not.*

It would be unfair to blame the Co-operatives for some of the season's disappointments; it would be unfair to blame them in the ultimate issue for the shortage of food and raiment, which probably do more for morale than even family reunion (for a reunion without these visible warranties of however temporary prosperity is inhibited). But one can, and must blame them—and I should like to know of one rural one which was not blameworthy—for failure to distribute equitably whatever provisions and textiles in fact became available, and the village can blame them, and does. It's an old and long-banked smouldering of fury, and it has not gone out of control—indeed, I am not sure that many villagers are aware that their fury exists as a potential outbreak—but heaven forbid the guilty men (and women) when it does break out.

The trouble is that every village co-operative store is in effect a pool for private speculation. And the way they are organized and from time to time re-organized does nothing to rectify this basic immorality. I am aware that the Co-operatives have been only very recently the subject attempts at reform. But the reforms are apparently in the realm of bureaucracy, not in the field of human relations.

To begin with, the bureaucracy evidently suffers from the strange delusion that stocks must be guarded primarily from the purchaser! He is looked upon as a potential shop-lifter and is shackled by a complicated system of queues and double checks and is not allowed so much as to handle a piece of prospective goods, which the staff selects for him! But every villager knows who the real thieves are. Does the bureaucracy not know? or does it just not care? Is the co-operative system a benefit system for the public? or for the co-operative employee? This year the Ehetuwewa Co-operative Cared not welsh on the double week's rice and sugar issues, because anybody could check on them. (In any case, they did nothing for the festivity; for they were only an advance, not a bonus, and if you turned them into New Year kavum then you just went short

later.) But no dry-fish. No Maldive Fish. No curry-stuffs, even, save coriander. And what about the butter-nylon saris? and the 'synthetic' trouser lengths? If they reached Ehetuwewa at all I have seen nobody wearing them. If they did, they were doubtless hidden under the counter to be sold to a favoured few for friendship or favour or a better cashwise reason. To the rest: 'Sold out!'

Pinhamy and a few of the more thinking elders of this village whom I ran into on the tank bund a week or two ago had a suggestion that—to some extent—may help: that notice of every issue of an important commodity be written up on a board outside the shop, giving details of the quantity received and announcing a date, after a minimum interval it would be put on sale. Would this be beyond the bureaucratic reformers?

It is probably wishful thinking to hope that reforms could go so far as to be more careful about the appointment of personnel. A boy who once worked for me (a niceish boy, but hardly one troubled by a weight of responsibility towards others than himself; and ex-insurgent jailed for having a considerable stock of handbombs concealed in his room and whose only summation of the business after he was released was to complain to me: 'And after all that, the Government won't even give me a hand-tractor') has recently been appointed manager of village co-operative store! A little reckless? Or is it something more sinister? A girl who some years ago was politically appointed to be a co-op. assistant and was shortly after sacked for dishonesty was recently politically appointed to a precisely similar co-operative post; with a precisely similar result! Of course, that she should have been sacked a second time is a hopeful sign. But are our MPs, who have a large hand in this sort of thing, a little too concerned with those they contract to employ and not quite concerned enough with the good of us common citizens who, after all employ the MPs?

To clean out the co-op's—even just at village level—will be a pretty task! But, for that reason, shall it never begin? Could there not be found a handful—one handful—of honest men in all 'Sri' Lanka who could constitute a dependable Flying

Squad to maintain such a reform? They would, of course, probably require a bodyguard if they so much as began to take themselves seriously. But trained bodyguards no longer specifically employed should be available, too, after the Colombo Summit?

Meanwhile the villager suppresses his fury, believes it impotent, and grimly seeks the more practicable alternative: since you can't buck the Co-operatives, buy one of your own relatives into one of them!

PS. This article was written very long nearly two months, ago. It is thus with considerable pleasure that I remind readers that 'Pinhamy's, suggestion about announcing beforehand the sale of recent accessions to Co-op stocks is precisely what the Department announced a few weeks past as part of its new (customer-orientated?) policy: a matter for great satisfaction, apart from the public benefit that we are sure will ensue if the regulation is enforced, for it suggests that the criticisms people make are not always the 'destructive criticisms' as which most politicians characterize any criticism at all. More strength to the Minister's elbow!

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# Confidentially

## \* GOSSIP

IS IT ANY SURPRISE that a joint study by two governmental agencies regarding various aspects of the "communication flow" in the villages of Sri Lanka should have discovered that "gossip" plays a key role in transmitting information to villagers? That the *Daily News* had a small front page item recently under the heading VILLAGE GOSSIP OUTRANKS NEWSPAPER, RADIO MEDIA? That this study on the "communication flow" had been jointly undertaken by the Agrarian Research and Training Institute of the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, and the Communications Strategy Project of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting? That it would seem from the report published in the *Daily News* that findings of the study have been published "jointly"? That we have still not been able to lay our hands on a copy of this report but we hope to do so in the near future? That in the meantime we will go on the excerpts and the condensed summary in the *Daily News*? That this is what it said: "Gossip plays a key role in transmitting information to villagers: newspapers and radio rank second and third in importance after gossip in conveying information to them: a majority of radio listeners listen in for purpose of entertainment rather than to increase their knowledge: that 80 percent of the people interviewed cited gossip as the most important channel through which they receive information..." That this finding seems to have surprised the researchers? That it was not necessary for them to indulge in this kind of researching to know that the Radio (SLBC) and the Newspapers (Sri Lanka's big dailies) have created such a credibility gap between themselves and the vast majority in the towns and the villages that people tend to believe the opposite of the slanted propaganda put out as "news" by the SLBC or the so-called "national dailies" (all now under the control of the Government)? That the choice of the term "gossip"

is an indication that the researchers were not anxious to find out how news (fact and comment) really go round our villages? That the term "gossip" has an *ab initio* derogatory connotation? That anyone who knows Ceylon (and Sri Lanka) for the last forty or fifty years are aware that word-of-mouth talk has always played a more important role than the newspapers and the radio? That at all times the Radio and the big newspapers have slanted and managed news in favour of the ruling Establishment and he powers-that-be—from colonial days, right through UNP and SLFP governments and right up to the current euphoric heyday of the UF—and it is no surprise that people have no faith either in the Radio or the Big Newspapers? That the researchers have not troubled to find out just how the "gossip" in the villages originate? That an objective study will show that such "gossip" is very often generated by comment and news items in the smaller papers, weeklies and periodicals—many of them party journals or aligned newsheets? That experience over the years has demonstrated to the villagers that the news emanating from these small papers (and retailed to all by village mouth-to-mouth talkers) have been nearer reality than the pompous profundities of the Radio and the big newspaper media? That elections from 1947 to 1970 were determined more by such talk rather than the Radio and the big Newspapers? That a great deal of the so-called "gossip" also originates from what had been said at public meetings big, and small?

That researchers of the Agrarian Research and Training Institutes and the Communication Strategy Project do not seem to have realised what the true meaning of the term "gossip" they so carelessly use? That according to the *Daily News* report the researchers had gone on the assumption that "messages through the gossip media tend to be cumulatively exaggerated as they circulate among people in the form of rumours—an end product of gossip"? That this verbosity makes a pretence at discounting "gossip" forgetting that the villager (as well as the urban dweller) are sick and tired of the exaggerations, half-truths, pseudo-falsehoods, slanted news,

managed news and biased comment which have become the stock-in-trade of the SLBC and the pro-governmental daily newspapers (and they are the only big ones still surviving)? That it is because of the acts of commission and omission of the Radio and the Newspapers that Gossip (really mouth-to-mouth communication) has assumed such importance? That these governmental researchers seemed to have hit upon the bright idea that the (gossip) "channel can be used to pass down information of a positive type" (pro-government propaganda seems to be the only thing "positive" to these researchers)? That "certain individuals in village society who habitually place messages passing through them in their correct perspective could be enlisted to counteract distortions of positive messages as they flow down the gossip path"? (That the moment such persons are enlisted for what will be recognised as government propaganda they will be outcasts in their villages—their standing is assured only as long as they free of any taint of being with the ruling Establishment of the day)? That the researchers then go on (most optimistically) to work out the mechanics of how Gossip can be "managed" and controlled to subserve the "positive" propaganda of the Government? They say that "the village tea kiosk is one of the principal locations where active discourse occur among the male population; other subsidiary places of activity are the co-operative store, the sub-post office and the barber's shop: an occasion for social discourse with free flow of gossip among males and females is the thovil ceremony"? That the *Daily News* report also has a few paragraphs about the new "individualism" in our villages? That from the *Daily News* extract on this "individualism" does not give any clue what the researchers were after? That when the full report of the researchers becomes available to us we can probe the matter further? That in the meantime, we can expect the Communication and Media experts of the Government to attempt to get into the Gossip Media in the villages? Will they go as disguised "Goviyas" or "Goviya Mathmayas"? Will the villagers have any difficulty in spotting them?



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We have a wide range of antiques for sale, including ancient stone carvings, metalwork, furniture, and jewelry. Each item is carefully selected and presented in a way that highlights its unique beauty and craftsmanship.

Our museum and trade centre is open to the public, and we welcome all visitors. Whether you are a collector or simply someone who appreciates the beauty of antique art, we have something for you. Visit us today and see for yourself the incredible beauty and craftsmanship of our antiques.

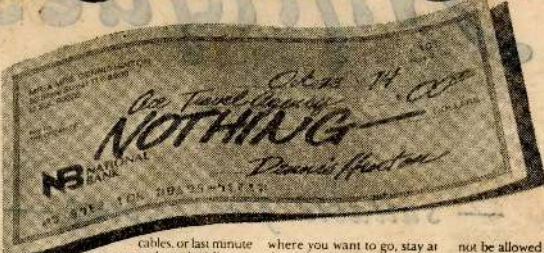
# THE TREASURE PALACE

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# The price you have to pay for a good travel agent.



Nobody gives you something for nothing, Right?

Wrong. The travel agent does. If you've never heard of a travel agent before, have never used one, or ever plan to do any traveling—business or pleasure—then this ad is meant for you.

Just three minutes of reading now could save you a lot of time and money later. And we're all interested in money, aren't we?

#### What you get for nothing.

The travel agent is a central source for all travel information and reservations. Really a one-stop travel center and guidance counselor.

He can make reservations with airlines, cruise ship lines, bus lines, most hotels, car rentals and even sightseeing trips.

He can arrange visas, insurance, travelers checks, and tickets to the Plaza Del Toros, The Met, The Mets, Nets or Jets. He can arrange group tours for archeologists, chemists and architects, independent tours for those who like to go it alone, foreign and domestic excursions and straight business trips.

He can also tell you what to wear, what to see, what and what not to eat—and whether you should drink the water.

Say you're flying to New York. You could get a ticket and recommendations on all of the above for the same price you pay for the ticket alone. That's the difference a travel agent can make.

All for nothing? All for nothing.

**What you get for something.** You may have to pay for exceptions like an unusual itinerary, extended or independent arrangements, late

cables, or last minute changes such as deciding to go to Paris instead of Pocatello.

But there are no hidden charges. You'll know about any charges before you're charged. If you are ever charged.

#### Who pays?

Travel agents are paid a commission by the air, land or sea carriers they book you with, by most hotels, car rental companies and sightseeing tour operators.

**Why? Economics.** Convenience. There are more than 9,000 travel agencies in the U.S. Most airlines, for example, couldn't afford to have 9,000 convenient offices around the country. This way, the airlines pay the travel agent when he delivers passengers, and don't pay him when he doesn't. Fair enough.

So it naturally figures that the travel agent is going to try to sell you the most expensive travel package he can, right?

Wrong. The travel agent is out to make you happy, not the airline or cruise ship.

Because he wants you back. So be honest with your travel agent. He can't arrange a champagne vacation on a beer budget. But he can get you a lot more for your buck than you yourself can arrange. Because that's his business.

And the travel agent is not a mind reader. If you say you want a secluded two weeks away from it all in Tahiti, and you're bored after a day and would rather have the two weeks in Vegas, don't blame him.

**Who should use a travel agent?** Business travelers. Vacation travelers. Kids being sent to grandmothers. Grandmothers. Anyone who travels.

A travel agent is the simplest, most efficient way to get

where you want to go, stay at the right places, pay the right prices and get the most for your money. And not be furious with the relative who gave you a bum steer.

#### Why it's better to plan with a travel agent than your Uncle Harold.

Unless your Uncle Harold is a travel agent.

Chances are, your travel agent has been where you want to go. Maybe your uncle has too.

But the travel agent has the latest facts. He can tell you that the new Paris Plaza is now under new management and is nothing like the Paris Plaza Uncle Harold stayed in a month ago. Because it's his business to know.

If he doesn't know from firsthand experience, he knows the right people to ask. So he's been around.

And how do Uncle Harold's qualifications stack up?

Before a travel agency manager can hang his shingle on a door, or write tickets, he must have received an appointment from the Air Traffic Conference (ATC) or International Air Transport Association (IATA), the International Passenger Ship Association, and others. This appointment requires at least two years of full-time experience in creating, generating and promoting passenger transportation sales and services and at least one year's experience in airline ticketing and reservations.

About financial responsibility? Glad you asked. A travel agent is bonded for at least \$10,000. That's a lot of travel insurance. He must pay his bill to the airline in full every ten days or his appointment may be cancelled by the ATC or IATA. That means he would

not be allowed to issue tickets on any airline. That's not a threat. That's a promise.

In addition, travel agents take many of those glamorous familiarization trips every year. The difference between your glamorous trip and his is that on his trip, he may check out five or six hotels in one day. He looks at singles, doubles, twins, suites, restaurants, bars, convention facilities, kitchens, chefs, management—all in a single day in a single city. That may not be fun for him, but that's not the purpose. It's to make a better trip for you. Would your Uncle Harold do that for you?

One more thing. If you do have a problem on your trip, you also have a built-in problem solver. Because, believe us, we listen to travel agents. When they have a problem, we have a problem and those problems get solved. In a hurry.

#### How do you choose a travel agent?

You would ask that question. Choosing the right travel agent is like choosing the right doctor, lawyer, architect or CPA—except your travel agent doesn't cost you anything.

Your best bet is to shop around. Ask friends. Look in the Yellow Pages. Look for agents who specialize in the destinations you choose. There are mom and pop agents. Giant corporation agents. Specialists in business and particular countries. Package tour specialists.

Choose one that you're comfortable with. But whichever you choose, you'll be further ahead if you do go with a travel agent.

And what have you got to lose? Nothing.

One of a series of free travel classes sponsored by Alaska Airlines.



**Ceylon Express — WORLD TRAVEL**  
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