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Letter From The Editor

THE LATE MR. S. W. R. D. BANDARANAIKE, in a memorable retort to carping dilettantes who were cynical about his "politics in an age of transition," had stated "that rivers do not flow backwards." Though this dictum may sound trite, commonplace and cliché-ish, it conveyed a truth that could not have been more forcefully or explicitly conveyed. Throughout the march of recorded history, rivers may have run dry, (temporarily or permanently), but they have never turned backwards. This has also been true about the course of human history. Man's destiny, like a river, has moved forward, even if sometimes it gets bogged down in swamps and marshes or spreads fanwise in deltas. On the cover, this week, we have a picture of a mountain stream in the high plateau of the Adam's Peak—Horton Plains region of Sri Lanka from which rise all the big rivers of the island. Though very close to the source and still well within the basic watershed, the picture depicts the erosion and denudation in the high montane area about which ecologists and the *Tribune* have been lamenting for a long time. But neither erosion nor denudation can turn a river backwards. And so it is in the affairs of man also. One striking example that is topically relevant at the moment is the Nonaligned Movement whose Fifth Summit conference concluded its deliberations in Colombo last week. It is still a young stream of human endeavour. It had surfaced only in 1955 in Bandung. It had acquired a status as a new stream in human history in Belgrade in 1961. In Cairo, in 1964, it had begun to attract attention as a significant movement that could not be ignored. Lusaka in 1970 had shown its immense potentialities as a movement of the have-nots in all the continents. Many new tributaries had begun to flow into it, and in Algiers, in 1973, the nonaligned movement acquired the breadth and scope of a powerful instrument of man's desire to build a world of justice where exploitation of man by man, of nation by nation, would be reduced to a minimum. It was in Algiers also that the supreme importance of establishing a new international economic order was forcefully mooted and the Lima Conference of the Foreign Ministers of nonaligned countries in August 1975 set down the streamlined blueprints for such an attempt to transform the world—in Declarations and Resolutions of great significance. In the meantime, with the formation of OPEC, and the oil crisis following the Arab-Israeli war of October 1973, a new group of haves had emerged in the third world of the nonaligned. UNCTAD III and IV, the Group of 77, the Dakar Conference on Raw Materials, and the Special Sessions of the UN on raw materials, prices and a new economic order have infused new life and meaning into the nonaligned movement. Whilst the seeds of a new determination to end the exploitation of the many by a few was germinating at a rapid rate, there was even greater transformation on the political plane. In Asia, the war in Indochina went against the greatest and mightiest power the world has known, and by April 1975, the United States had been compelled to withdraw lock, stock and barrel from Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos. In Africa, Portugal, the oldest colonial European power, after 15 years of bitter wars of national liberation in all her vast territories, surrendered in the wake of a revolution in the home country of the empire. Britain and France have over these years turned many somersaults in vain attempts to hand over political power in their colonies to chosen elite in the hope of maintaining the economic domination which will bring them cash profits. France, it is claimed, has done better than Britain, but it is only a matter of time before the pro-European elite are pushed into the dustbin of history (as it has already happened in many places): and permanent economic crisis and recession have overtaken the old colonial powers owing to the loss of the visible and invisible profits of ruling and running an empire. Although the oldtime colonies of the European powers have all but disappeared, the so-called "settler-colonies" of white minority rule in Rhodesia and South Africa (clinging painfully to Namibia) still remain as last vestiges of colonialism in the continent which had enabled several European countries and the United States to lay the foundations of economic power and wealth on the toil, sweat and blood of millions of slaves. Similar exploitation of not merely manpower but also the natural resources of Asia and Latin America have awoken millions throughout the world to a new consciousness of the realities of power. European and American publicists seek to argue and explain that this consciousness was due to the evil machinations of marxian communism, the anti-christ of european christian humanism, but such self-delusory logic is of little avail against the tide of human destiny relentlessly pushing forward to usher in a new age to mark the end of white-skinned supremacy based on gunpowder and arms. It was in this setting that the Fifth Summit of the Nonaligned Countries met in Colombo.

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CONTENTS

EDITOR'S NOTE BOOK

—The Summit p. 2

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

—Libya & North Korea P. 6

SRI LANKA CHRONICLE

—August 5—12 p. 8

INTERNATIONAL DIARY

—August 5—14 p. 11

MARGINALIA

—By Bryan de Kretser P. 14

VILLAGE HOUSE—89

—Our Baby p. 15

FORTY YEARS AGO—6

On A Tea Estate p. 17

HERE AND THERE

—Peoples Cannot Be Fooled p. 20

US FOREIGN POLICY

—By Joseph C. Harsh p. 22

LETTERS

—SWRD, Portugal p. 23

CONFIDENTIALLY

—Press Centre—I p. 24

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

The Summit

EXCEPT FOR A FEW SHORT-COMINGS, inevitable in such a major undertaking, all the arrangements for the Nonaligned Conference began and ended without a hitch. Sri Lanka has good reason to be proud that she was able to host one of the biggest gatherings of important political personalities in the world of today in a manner that won praise and admiration from all concerned. The stature of the Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike, has grown immeasurably not only in the eyes of the people of this island but also in the third world of developing countries, because she was able to make the necessary arrangements for the Conference of this magnitude and at the same time to carry it through to a successful conclusion.

Even the LSSP's journal *Socialist Nation*, of Friday August 20, 1976, admitted that **NON-ALIGNED ARRANGEMENTS (WERE) WELL PLANNED** and commented that "the ceremonial inauguration of the meeting of the Heads of States and Governments of the Non-aligned Countries worked to plan and reflected the great attention to detail that the Government had paid throughout several months of virtually obsessive pre-occupation with this international occasion. There were minor breakdowns of arrangements here and there and the security precautions were so greatly exaggerated that they became a nuisance even to the delegates attending the conference, let alone to those outside, like the press and political observers, who were interested in the conference and its outcome. These, however, cannot be considered an unforgivable offence and were to be expected in a country that was going through the experience of hosting a major world conference for the first time."

The *Socialist Nation* was, however, perturbed that excessive attention had been paid to the pomp and the pageantry and that the political aspects and implications of the Conference had been sadly neglected. After mentioning that poor countries in the Third

World could not afford costly "pomp and pageantry", the LSSP paper complained that the "real substance" of a Conference of this kind had been overlooked. It said that "pomp and pageantry are the governing styles of feudal-minded ruling classes or those authoritarian bureaucracies that contrive survival by stupefying the masses with chauvinism and circuses....."

But a survey of opinion, both local and abroad, indicates that there is general agreement that a great deal was achieved in both the political as well as the economic fronts so far as the forward thrust of the nonaligned movement was concerned. Though the glamorous rhetoric of aggressive radicalism was absent throughout the conference (even admittedly radical countries like Cuba, Angola, Mozambique and Vietnam displayed a realistic moderation of a new kind), the declarations and the resolutions demonstrated that a new maturity had begun to characterise the deliberations and conclusions of the nonaligned movement. Prime Minister Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike, the President of the Conference and its leader for the next three years, summed up the position admirably in her concluding address:

As we conclude this Fifth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned nations, we greet the end of Conference and the beginning of a new advance. Between Bandung and Belgrade, we prepared for a long journey towards a New Horizon for the world's peoples. Belgrade defined our goal and the path to it. Cairo, Lusaka, Algiers and now Colombo have been pauses on the way, not for rest, but for reflection, review and re-dedication. Our goal is total freedom, economic emancipation and the dignity of all peoples. It implies a world at peace with itself, in which a new civilization based on mutual respect and co-operation trust and understanding, can flower.

Under the imaginative and dynamic Chairmanship of His Excellency President Boumediene of Algeria, our progress between Algiers and Colombo has been deeply rewarding and eventful.

At Colombo, we have looked back on our gains and examined the climate in which we must plan

our future. The two Declarations, the Resolutions and the Programme of Action which we have adopted at this Conference are both the blueprint and the structural framework for the World which we have set out to build.

In fifteen short years, we have swept away many of the injustices which were entrenched over centuries. We have extended the meaning of democracy from the confines of a mere political ideology towards a new frontier of true equality of men, races, nations.

The tasks that lie ahead are immense in their dimensions and in their implications for the future of humanity. To face them, we must depend, more than ever before, on the same weapons with which we wrested our past victories. These weapons are our unity and our steadfast adherence to the essential principles of Non-Alignment. We must not allow anything to undermine our unity or deflect us from the path of true Non-Alignment. If we lose our way, humanity would have lost its future.

We are indeed engaged in the shaping of history as it unfolds itself. In such close contact with history in the making, we are bound to be sometimes its masters and sometimes its victims. It is only natural that those among us who have been its victims should feel rancour and resentment; but we are not merely the objects of history chained to a law of challenge and response. To be masters of history, we should seize its constructive opportunity.

Reconciliation is more constructive than recrimination; partnership, more productive than partisanship; concord a better alternative to discord. And the Non-Aligned are strong enough today to offer these creative alternatives to the legacy of the past. The world cannot mistake wisdom for weakness, true statesmanship for opportunism, friendship for fear.....

This speech reflected in no uncertain manner the predominant sentiments of an overwhelming majority of those who participated in the Conference.

There are still countries in the nonaligned movement which believe that it was necessary to take an abrasive and aggressive attitude

The Summit

towards imperialist and colonialist countries just as there are countries which think that the best way of coexistence is colusive collaboration with the rich countries of the West.

To the credit of the Nonaligned Movement it must be said that the Colombo Conference has steered clear of both extremes and has adopted a middle-of-the-road path which has neither pleased the West nor satisfied the East. The West, however, has been sharp in its criticism that the "communist lobby" has had its way in securing the adoption of resolutions which were directed solely at the USA and European countries ignoring some dangerous aberrations in the socialist camp. The BBC, in a commentary on the day after the Conference, had declared that an active communist lobby had manipulated the Conference into adopting postures, attitudes and resolutions which savoured of communist propaganda.

The Soviet press, on the other hand, was disappointed that the Conference did not totally reject the suggestions that the USA and the USSR should be equated in regard to big power rivalries and naval show of strength in the Indian Ocean. Apart from this, Soviet comment was that the Movement continued to sustain and nurture its anti-colonialist and anti-imperialist character. Peking, however, seems to derive a great deal of comfort that though there were no direct condemnation of Soviet "hegemonism," there was critical references to superpower rivalries and bigpower manipulations in the speeches of certain delegations and took the opportunity to preach limitless sermons on the evils of soviet revisionism apart from an occasional bash at US imperialism. To China, the Fifth Nonaligned Conference had struck a big blow at the "two superpowers"—the USA and the Soviet Union—with the proviso that Soviet Union was "more rapacious than the United States in plundering and exploiting the poor countries."

All these reactions to the Fifth Nonaligned Conference betray an over-simplified approach based on preconceived notions about what was good for the Third World and what the poor countries should

do to better themselves. A more realistic approach, based on interpretative analysis-in-depth, from the point of view of the nonaligned countries themselves will get us nearer the truth than seemingly weighty pronouncements from any of the mighty centres of contemporary power.

To understand the mood and tempo of the nonaligned world one must read and re-read the careful formulations in the speeches of Mrs. Bandaranaike of Sri Lanka, Mrs. Indira Gandhi of India, Marshal Tito of Yugoslavia, Mr. Kenenth Kaunda of Zambia, Sir Ramgoolan of Mauritius, Mr. Forbes Burnham of Guyana, Mr. Boumedienne of Algeria and a number of others (Ghana, Burma, etc. etc.) who believed that the nonaligned world should have a distinctive and independent identity which should not be associated even with its allies in the socialist camp; that it should have an identity which should enable it to carry on a dialogue as well as business with the rich countries of the western world in spite of doing their utmost to save the Racists in South Africa and Rhodesia, the Zionists in Israel and the multinational corporations. It is significant that even countries like Cuba and Angola which openly proclaimed their friendship and admiration for the Soviet Union and other socialist countries were far more restrained than what many had expected them to be. But the *par excellence* of balanced moderation and pragmatic realism was contained in the speech of Prime Minister of the unified Socialist Republic of Vietnam. He made every point he wanted to make, consistent with the marxist policies of his country, but there was none of the tub-thumping associated with infantile leftwing agitation of an earlier period. And this attitude was maintained by the two other Indo-China states, Laos and Kampuchea. In the non-aligned movement today, many of the contemporary marxist movements seemed to have developed a new and welcome maturity and demonstrated that hard words and a flamboyant vocabulary were no longer necessary to proclaim or implement a policy.

Whilst it can be said that, amongst others, countries like Cuba, Angola, Mozambique, Vietnam and even Iraq were part of what the

West regarded as the pro-communist lobby, Singapore, Zaire, Senegal, Saudi Arabia, Bangladesh, Kuwait and a few others carried on an unrelenting battle in the Committee and even in the open sessions in a way which made many middle-roads refer to them as the "pro-western" lobby. The West, it seemed to many, was determined to undermine and denigrate the movement in order to blunt its thrust against imperialism and the rich nations of the West. No country, however, seems to have taken upon itself to propound Peking's logic. And, no country thought it necessary or even argue against it.

The pro-communist group in the nonaligned movement, no doubt, endeavoured to give an increasingly radical content to the declarations and resolutions, but they took care not to push matters to a point where a break or a split would have become inevitable. They took particular care not to antagonise the middle-roads.

The pro-west lobby, knowing their weakness in numbers, adopted dilatory tactics, filibustered on inconsequential procedural matters, raised red herrings to sidetrack the deliberations into blind alleys, all, no doubt, to prevent any finality in the proceedings or the resolutions or the declarations. The discussions on criteria, on admissions of new members and the expanded bureau had dragged on to the point where everybody had begun to despair and had thought that the Conference would be compelled to adjourn without any conclusions. Furthermore, the bitter polemical feuding in the Political and Economic Committees made many believe that the Fifth Nonaligned Conference would be left high and dry to be adjourned *sine die* without any Declarations, or Resolutions or an Action Programme.

But, the desire for unified finality, even without any lengthy discussions, was so great that the Summit was concluded on schedule with everything that was on the agenda properly finalised. At the very end, everything was adopted by acclamation, and those who had battled to prevent the radical thrust in some of resolutions and declarations were swept along with the tide.

TRIBUNE, August 28, 1976

A study of the documents of the Conference—this can be done only in the course of several articles in the coming weeks and that by different Tribune contributors specialising in nonaligned matters—indicates that there was a great desire on the part of an overwhelming majority of the participants in the Fifth Nonaligned Conference to exercise unremitting vigilance to preserve the essential character of the movement and maintain unswerving fidelity to its principles. In view of the threat to the integrity and solidarity of the movement, it was universally agreed that there should be full respect for the decisions of the movement as the best safeguard against any danger. This sentiment runs through the Political Declaration. It reaffirms the crucial role played by non-alignment in preserving world peace and security among nations. Non-alignment symbolises mankind's determination to establish a new and equitable international economic, social and political order and has been a vital force in the struggle against imperialism and all forms of foreign domination.

Non-alignment upholds the right of all peoples to freedom and self-determination and of all nations to pursue their own independent strategy for development and for participation in the resolution of international problems. It enables resistance to the politics of pressure and domination.

The non-aligned, the Declaration says, have rejected the notions of inevitable world conflict. They refuse to accept the view that newly-independent countries do not have an important role to play in easing tensions for safeguarding international peace. They have also rejected the view that international peace can only be based on a balance of power or that security can be ensured by countries joining power blocs and military alliances of great powers.

The Declaration says the non-aligned have consistently upheld the principle of international co-operation as the basis for a secure world order. They have also opposed the notion that confrontations can be the only course for the comity of nations. Asserting that the principles of non-alignment have begun to command increasing respect from the rest of the world, the Declaration emphasises that

the unity of the non-aligned and their growing co-operation constitute an essential contribution to the evolution of a new international order founded on national independence and international co-operation based on equality, mutual trust and justice. The participation of non-aligned countries has become an almost indispensable element in the solution of international problems. It also warns the non-aligned about the problem of unequal relations between States, often amounting to domination. This is a grave problem, which even threatens to negate the hard-won freedom of some States. In the post-colonial era, one of the principal tasks of the non-aligned would be to continue to combat unequal relations and domination arising from neo-colonialism.

The Declaration expresses grave concern over the serious danger to the non-aligned posed by interference in the internal affairs of these States. Although the process of decolonisation has made significant headway the true independence of States has not been safeguarded. Politics of pressure and domination are continuing to erode this independence. Measures calculated to cause disruption and destabilisation are threatening law and order, creating political confusion and economic chaos. It warns non-aligned countries to act more resolutely against threats of foreign pressure and domination, subversion or interference in their internal affairs. Resistance to pressures and infiltration is indispensable for the preservation of the non-aligned countries.

The Declaration says the non-aligned countries resolutely reject any attempt to justify foreign interference under any pretext whatsoever, whether it be on the basis of ideology, balance of power, spheres of influence or national interest. It warns that interference can assume multifarious forms—political, economic and military—as well as through the information media, and emphasises that it is especially important for the nonaligned to be unremittingly vigilant against any and all forms of interference.

In this context, the Declaration notes that several non-aligned countries have been subjected to various forms of pressure and have

been exposed to threats or acts of aggression. The non-aligned as a whole have been the target of organised campaigns of vilification and intimidation designed to deter them from pursuing a united and independent role in international relations.

The Declaration stresses that more than ever before, there is a vital need for the non-aligned to maintain the closest unity among themselves as well as with all peace and progress-loving forces in the world if they are to strengthen their capacity to combat imperialism's desperate efforts to recover the ground it has lost in recent years.

The Declaration has welcomed the progress so far achieved in the relaxation of tensions between the great powers which has reduced the danger of nuclear confrontation. But it points out that detente is still limited in scope and geographical extent. Tensions and conflicts exist in other areas. Aggression, foreign occupation, intervention and interference, racial discrimination and apartheid, as well as economic exploitation, continue unabated in various parts of the developing world.

The Declaration emphasises that detente cannot be secured through the policy of balance of power, spheres of influence, rivalry between power blocs, military alliances and arms race. These concepts sustain the present unequal relationship between the powerful and the weak and can defeat the very not merely pre-suppose but help purpose of detente. It expresses the determination of the non-aligned to play a more direct and effective part in the relaxation of international tensions and in the search for just and equitable solutions to outstanding world problems. It particularly expresses concern over the danger to peace and security in the Mediterranean region. It points out that the security of Europe, the Mediterranean, and the Middle East is indivisible. The draft calls on the non-aligned countries of the Mediterranean to act in accordance with the principles of non-alignment to convert the Mediterranean into a zone of peace and co-operation.

The Declaration hails the victory of the struggle against imperialism waged by Vietnam,

Kampuchea (Cambodia) and Laos. It also greets the attainment of independence of Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Angola, Cape Verde Islands, Sao Tome and Principe, Comoros and Seychelles. It notes that the process of decolonisation, which began after World War II, is nearing completion. It reminds the non-aligned of the problems of Israel. South Africa, Namibia and Rhodesia. The link between colonialism and racism aims at the domination of Africa and the Arab world, it says.

The Declaration concludes by asserting that the non-aligned will identify themselves with all national liberation movements, all attempts to destroy unequal relations and domination of any sort, and will pursue action towards these ends through every means.

At the time of writing, the final version of the Political Declaration has not been released. The "i's" are being dotted, the "t's" being crossed and the grammar is being brushed up in the different languages—but with no changes in the content.

ONE SIGNIFICANT DEPARTURE in the language of the Political Declaration is that the word *detente* has been dropped in favour of the term *relaxation of tensions*. It is known that Iraq and Syria had wanted the change and other countries had agreed to it. It had been argued that the word *detente* had come to be associated with the "two superpowers" and as the nonalignment movement did not accept the thesis of the two superpower world, it was best that the word "detente" should be replaced by the phraseology "relaxation of tensions." It will be recalled that President Ford had also taken the word "detente" out of his vocabulary because many Americans had associated the word with Kissingerian surrender to the Soviet Union on many international questions. But the word *detente* is now universal in the USA; and, practically every speaker at the nonaligned summit expressed the hope that *detente* would be extended to all parts of the world and every field of human activity.

It will be interesting to examine, in another article, the differences which manifested themselves during the Conferences and how they were smoothed over by the com-

elling pressure for unity. Even Bangladesh, which had adopted the role of a Don Quixote tilting at windmills (receiving support from some of the rich oil sheikdoms on the Islamic basis), could not go beyond getting a half-term on the Bureau as against another Muslim country, Afghanistan. And, in spite of the very large number of Muslim countries, Saudi Arabia's many attempts to bring Pakistan as a Member, or as an Observer or even as a Guest did not receive any kind of support—not even from other champions of the Muslim Brotherhood. Even Gaddafi of Libya did not support the cause of Pakistan at the Conference, but he seems to have salved his Islamic conscience by dropping in at Islamabad to tell Prime Minister Bhutto that Libya would back Pakistan's call for a Third World Summit—the Third World cannot be defined in the manner the non-aligned can be.

Libya had drawn a great deal of attention at the Conference just as it has in international arena in recent times. The name of Gaddafi has been tied up with the increase in the international aircraft hijacking business apart from accusations by countries like Egypt and Sudan that he has been seeking to overthrow the governments in these countries. His role in the Middle East has been unpredictable but his opposition to the old order of Muslim kings and sheikhs has been unwavering. He seems to take delight in spending his oil millions lavishly on causes he fancies.

In Colombo, Libya made a splash which took everybody's breath away. Pages after pages of newspaper space was bought at high prices in order to publicise Gaddafi's views on every imaginable topic. The story of Libya was after the September 1 revolution by Gaddafi was told and retold many times over. Expensively printed books with wonderful coloured illustrations were distributed far and wide. And, full size colour photographs of Gaddafi were distributed to queues of people. To cap everything, in the manner of potentates of Arabian Nights fantasy, bundles of notes were thrown into the air for the multitude to grab.

Apart from this, Libya was one of the two countries which caused

a little stir in the protocol arrangements. A Libyan airliner with a full load of "security men" had arrived in Colombo without travel documents for a large number of them. The plane had to be sent back with these people and Mr. Felix R. Dias Bandaranaike had to issue a public statement to clarify the position because the wildest rumour had begun to circulate about the incident. There is reason to believe that this incident had delayed Gaddafi's arrival for the Summit meeting, but he did come with the same men with proper documents. However, he showed his pique by refusing to walk on the red carpet or be received by the guard of honour.

Libya's maverick exhibitionism was only matched by North Korea. For some months, Pyongyang had been making efforts to re-establish its embassy in Colombo, but after the incidents of 1971 and the exchange control case connected therewith (without North Korea being brought into it directly), Colombo had been unwilling to sanction the re-opening of the Embassy immediately. The Koreans had wanted an Embassy before the Nonaligned Summit—they had hinted that Kim Ill Sung would come only if the embassy was reopened. In the absence of an embassy, the North Koreans brought a ship with a delegation of 120 people. The ship was berthed in Colombo harbour and the North Koreans seemed to have thought that the ship was "extra-territorial territory." But they soon found out that this was not so when the transmitters they tried to operate were "sealed". The ship was placed out of bounds for local people.

North Korea bought newspaper space for Kim Ill Sung who did not attend the summit. There was nothing noteworthy in the North Korean delegate's speech, but their obstinate insistence in wanting a seat in the Bureau as against Vietnam deprived them of sympathy and support of nearly all non-aligned delegates. The North Koreans wanted a new subregion—Northeast Asia—to be recognised for purposes of the expanded Bureau, and their "struggle" to have their way had caused the biggest "headache" to the Summit (and which had enabled quixotic Bangladesh also to persist in a long

drawn struggle to obtain a place in the Bureau).

The North Koreans also acquired notoriety on account of an incident at the Press Centre. A group of journalists from North Korea had surrounded a South Korean "journalist" and had wanted to stage a "battle"—but others had stopped the fight. On the next day, the South Korean had also come ready for a "struggle", but the North Koreans had evidently thought better of their aggressive attitudes.

With this background, it is not surprising that opinion in Colombo has not been very sympathetic to the North Koreans in the incident which had occurred on August 17/18 in the demilitarised zone between North and South Korea. The fact that North Korea had expressed regret for the killing of two American soldiers is clear indication that North Korea was guilty of staging an incident which they probably hoped would give a propaganda handle at the Colombo summit. But the Nonaligned Summit refused to react to the North Korean episode. Though the general sentiment at the Conference was anti-American, the overwhelming majority of the participants refused to be drawn into the matter on the side of North Korea.

Finally, it is necessary to mention that the Fifth Nonaligned Conference received worldwide media coverage. Its documents have been published in newspapers all over the world. But the interpretative analysis of the conference and its decisions from different capitals showed how the world has reacted to the new developments in the non-aligned movement. All such comments and analysis have not yet become available in Sri Lanka and when they are received it will be interesting to examine them in the light of the prevailing sentiments and views of Sri Lanka and other nonaligned countries.

NEXT WEEK

HOW THE PRESIDENT IS CHOSEN IN THE U. S. A.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

BY KAUTILIYA

* Libya * North Korea

FOR SOME WEEKS, the continued fighting in Lebanon, in spite of the many attempts to secure a ceasefire between the contending parties, and the eruption of violence in South Africa, has held the attention of the world. The increased guerilla activities in Rhodesia and the raids by Ian Smith's forces into Mozambique have also indicated that Southern Africa was rushing headlong into a new phase of violent upheavals.

But last week two new trouble spots have begun to emerge: one in the Middle East between Egypt and Libya and the other in the Far East between North Korea and the USA in the demilitarised zone. It is not likely that the trouble in North Korea will go much beyond verbal pyrotechnics and high falutin' threats of dire consequences. But the trouble between Egypt and Libya seems to portend much greater difficulties.

Political observers have been increasingly suggesting that war between Egypt and Libya was now a possibility. During the last fortnight, the Egyptians have stepped up their deployment of tank forces along their Libyan frontier after the bombing of train in Alexandria which was attributed to a Libyan terror squad. The Egyptians say that this was staged by Gaddafi's underground network and that it was directed against President Sadat. The train which was blown up was one on which the Egyptian President was scheduled to travel. Sadat, at the time the incident occurred, was on a brief vacation at his summer residence in Alexandria before his departure for the nonaligned conference in Colombo.

Shortly after Sadat returned to Cairo after the Conference and within hours of Gaddafi's return to Libya, an Egyptian airliner on a routine domestic flight from Cairo to Luxor and Aswan was hijacked by a group said to consist of Palestinians, Egyptians and Libyans who had wanted the plane taken to Benghazi or Tripoli in Libya. The fact that the plane was landed at

Luxor to be rescued by Egyptian commandos, whose operations were directed by the Egyptian Prime Minister himself, has raised doubts as to whether this hijacking was staged by the Egyptians in order to involve Libya into just one more incident to justify a war to overthrow Gaddafi. Furthermore, the hijackers are reported to have confessed that they had been hired by Libya to take this plane to Libya and that fee promised was £ 100,000 sterling. All this savours of fabricated frameup because there is no explanation so far as to why the hijackers allowed the plane to land on Egyptian soil at Luxor instead of forcing the plane to land on Libyan territory which was not very far away.

There is no doubt that Gaddafi has been nettling Sadat and the Egyptians on the ground that they had sold out to the Americans over the question of Israel and the territories captured by the Israelis in 1967. And Sadat, backed by Saudi Arabia which has pushed Egypt to get closer to the US, seems to have come to the end of his patience so far as Libyan taunts and accusations are concerned. And there are indications that Gaddafi has supported movements to overthrow Sadat just as is alleged to have supported attempts to overthrow Nemeiry in Sudan. Gaddafi also has no use for the kings and sheiks of many oil-rich Arab States.

In the circumstances, Egypt seems to have been prodded by a number of kings and sheiks to bring Gaddafi to heel. With this object in view Egypt has for sometime now been building up a military show of strength in the Western desert. The Egyptians are reported to have brought in tanks, anti-aircraft missile batteries and the bulk of their commando forces to the Libyan border. It is admitted that the border region is a sensitive and tricky one: the local Bedouins and the Libyans just across the border are more than a handful for the Egyptian paratroopers. Moreover, the Bedouin tribes inside the Egyptian border have never been enamoured of the government in Cairo and there is no doubt has recruited that Gaddafi's agents have recruited saboteurs and supporters.

It is also reported that Egypt has increased its strength on their

North Korea

eastern flank with Israel in the demilitarised zone in Sinai desert—with three infantry brigades exceeding the levels laid down in the 1975 interim agreement. It is believed that Washington has been soothing the Israelis with the story that Sadat felt obliged to make these troop movements on his eastern flank in order to blunt Arab charges that he was prepared to take military action only against fellow Moslems. There is no doubt some truth in this, although Israelis will naturally develop many apprehensions by such troop movements.

So far, the Egyptians have not gone beyond propaganda and troop deployments against Libya, but there are indications that the Israelis have been examining the possibilities of commando raids against Libya. There have been suggestions that Libya was involved in the attack on the passengers of an El Al plane at Istanbul recently, and there have been speculative discussions in Tel Aviv pointing out that whilst the distance between Israel and Entebbe was 3,840 kilometres the most vulnerable military targets in Libya were only half as far away.

American pressure has probably restrained Israel from taking action against Libya for its support to international terrorism. It must be remembered that Americans still have oil interests in Libya. But in view of worldwide accusations that Libya was behind some of the international terrorist acts (Gaddafi's government is believed to have spent no less than \$ 30 million in the last one year to finance such terrorism).

Libyan counter propaganda has alleged that there was a secret Egyptian-American-Israeli front in favour of military strike against Libya. But knowledgeable political observers think that there was no such alliance either in operation or in the offing: that each country was waiting for the other to do something. In the meantime, Gaddafi himself seems to have planned counter attacks in Egypt and in certain Arab countries in addition to similar actions in western Europe.

With this build up, it was significant that in the nonaligned summit the Arabs—including the Egyptians and the Libyans—were able to put up a united front not

to wash their dirty linen in the nonaligned forum. This is an indication that there was compelling pressure generated among the 86 nonaligned countries for a united front against imperialism.

In the meantime, the tension which was growing in North Korea with the US rushing naval task forces to Korean waters has been defused a great deal by the North Korea expression of regret for the killing of the two US soldiers. Though it was suggested in news paper headlines that the US had "rejected" the Korean expression of regret, the official communique from the USIS seems to indicate that the US was willing to start a dialogue to compel North Korea to desist from such actions in the future. This is what the communique stated:

"The State Department considers as a 'positive step' a North Korean statement regretting the incident in which two US Army officers were beaten to death, but it says the United States insists that North Korea give assurances for the future "safety of our personnel" in the Korean Demilitarized Zone (DMZ). The US position was spelled out August 23 by State Department spokesman Robert Funseth, who said Washington has asked for a meeting August 24 of the Military Armistice Commission at Panmunjom to gain such assurances from the North Koreans. At the State Department's regular daily press briefing, Mr. Funseth said he wanted to make three points about the August 18 murder of the two Americans and the August 21 message of regret from North Korean President Kim Il Sung. 1. "We recognize that the North Korean statement expresses regret over the incident, and we consider this is a positive step."; 2. "Nevertheless, this does not change the tragic fact that two American officers were brutally beaten to death without provocation."; 3. "Therefore, we are calling for a meeting of the Military Armistice Commission tomorrow to insist upon North Korean assurances respecting the safety of our personnel in the DMZ."

Several journalists observed to the spokesman that his current statement on the incident seemed to be a considerable toning down of remarks by the State Department that were issued August 22

in reaction to President Kim's message. At that time the State Department said that the Kim 'expression represented a back-handed acknowledgement that they are in the wrong. However, we do not find this message acceptable because there is no acknowledgement for the brutal, premeditated murder of two Americans.' Mr. Funseth replied that 'we did say yesterday the statement represented an indirect acknowledgement by the North Koreans that they were wrong in this brutal act, and I am today further characterizing it as a positive step as far as it went.'

"He told questioners that there has been no further communication from the North Korean and no additional secret meetings between the top American and North Korean representatives at Panmunjom since they met August 21. The North Koreans called for that meeting, and it was there that President Kim's message was read by General Han Kyu Jung, the North Korean representative to the Military Armistice Commission, to Rear Admiral Mark P. Frudden, Jr., the American representative. The Kim message stated, in part, that "it was a good thing that no big incident occurred at Panmunjom for any period. However, it is regretful that an incident occurred in the Joint Security Area, Panmunjom, at this time. An effort must be made so that such incidents may not recur in the future."

Mr. Funseth refused "to speculate" on what options were open to the United States if North Korea refuses to give assurances that no such further incidents will occur. When asked if Washington would consider the incident ended if it gets the North Korean assurances, Mr. Funseth would only say that "it certainly would improve the present climate." The spokesman said that US forces in South Korea remained on what is called Defense Condition III, an increase in force readiness above that required for normal readiness. However, he said that the State Department's task force that was formed the afternoon of August 18 to deal with the incident was disbanded at 1000 hours, GMT, August 22.

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SRI LANKA CHRONICLE

Aug. 5 — Aug. 12

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; TOCSI—Times of Ceylon Sunday Illustrated; DM—Dinamina; LD—Lankadipa; JD—Janadina; VK—Virakesari; ATH—Aththa; SM—Silumina; SLD—Sri Lankadipa; JS—Janasathiya.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 5: All foreigners whose visas had expired were warned by the government yesterday to leave the country immediately: Immigration authorities warned hotels not to entertain or allow foreigners whose visas have expired to stay and they were also warned if they failed to bring the stay of such foreigners to the notice of authorities they would be prosecuted: this warning came in keeping with a decision of the government not to allow foreigners to stay in the island in view of the forthcoming Non-aligned conference—CDN. Mr. C. Kumarasuriar, Minister of Posts and Telecommunications, yesterday, appealed to two unions of Post Masters and Telephonists to postpone their decision to strike from midnight of August 4 in view of the forthcoming Non-aligned Nations Conference—CDN. Archbishop Makarios of Cyprus informed the Government that he would be in Sri Lanka on August 12 in time for the Non-aligned conference: this was revealed by Mr. Lakshman Jayakody, Deputy Minister of Defence and External Affairs, at a press conference yesterday: Makarios will be the first head of state to arrive in Sri Lanka for the conference: Mr. Jayakody also said that so far 74 countries had accepted the invitation to attend the conference: there would be 17 Observer status and four Guest status attending the conference—CDM. Mr. C. Arulampalam, SLFP MP for Nallur and Political authority for Jaffna, was yesterday shot at the arm by unknown gunmen in his electorate: he is warded at the Jaffna Hospital and Police have commenced investigations into this shooting incident—LD. A water-cut starting from tomorrow has been planned for five towns South of Colombo in order to supply more water to the city of Colombo during the month of August—CDM. According to Virakesari which quoted Mr. Lakshman Jayakody, Deputy Minister of Defence and External Affairs, none of the Opposition members would be given a place in the Sri Lanka delegation for the Non-aligned conference. Station Masters who earlier decided to launch strike action from the 10th of this month to win their monetary and promotional demands now decided to postpone this action—VK. 110 owners of over 4000 acres of land affected by the take over under stage I of the Land Reform Act will receive compensation amounting to Rs. 3 million: this has been decided by the committee appointed to decide on the amount of compensation: applications of several hundreds of owners are still being processed—DM. Education centres will be established in all electorates in the island by the Ministry of Education to train peasants on development work: principals of schools will be appointed to be incharge of these centres—LD.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 6: Two trade unions of Postmasters and Telephonists began a strike at midnight on Wednesday (August 4) and the Ministry of Post and Telecommunications has started the strike has affected the postal services in the outstations only but in the post offices of the city the services were nearly normal—CDN. According to the Virakesari the strike by the postal unions paralysed the postal services all over the island and no mails were despatched from Colombo to outstations: trunk call telephone services too were badly affected and government deployed the services of postal trainee to keep the services somewhat functioning. Police recovered a car abandoned at a place called Nilawari which is said to be used in the shooting of Mr. C. Arulampalam, M.P. for Nallur and Political Authority for Jaffna: the driver of the car was found in an unconscious state in the boot of the car: the DIG Northern Range, Mr. Seneviratne, visited the scene of the shooting: meanwhile Mr. Arulampalam has been brought to a hospital in Colombo for treatment—VK. Mr. Kim Ill Sung, President of North Korea, is expected to attend the forthcoming Non-aligned Conference and he is expected to make the visit by ship—VK. Five Tamil youths in prison have started a fast unto death and Prisons authorities said they would take all possible steps to feed them: meanwhile the Tamil United Liberation Front has given 3 days time to the government to take appropriate action either to release the Tamil youths in prison or to bring them before a court of Law and arrangements are being made to start hunger campaigns in all Tamil speaking areas—VK. Mr. T. B. Illangaratne Minister of Public Administration, Trade and Home Affairs, ordered that all government communications to Tamils should be in Sinhala with a Tamil translation—CDM. Several major trade unions have pledged support to the Government to the successful conduct of the Nonaligned Conference—ATH. Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, Leader of the Opposition and President of the UNP, told a public meeting at Hanguranketha that the Opposition will not allow this government to cling on to power even for one day after May 22 next year: he further said that if the government continued even for a day more than the period stipulated in the Republican Constitution, the Opposition with the support of the public, government servants and the forces would topple this government—LD. Mr. S. D. Jayaratne has drawn up a plan to develop the eastern coast of Sri Lanka for fishing purposes with aid from the World Bank—DM. Three specially made water pumps arrived in Colombo yesterday from Britain to pump supplies from Ambatale to the city and with the installation of these pumps it is expected the shortages of water in Colombo will be ceased—CDN.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 7: The strike by Post Masters continued yesterday and a spokesman for the striking unions told the Virakesari that they would continue the strike until their demands are met by the Ministry of Post and Telecommunications: meanwhile the government in a broadcast yesterday said that all post masters on strike should handover the keys of post offices and cupboards in their offices to the nearest Government Agent or Divisional Superintendent of Post offices before midnight on August 8—VK. Government will take all necessary measures to keep the postal services functioning without any

inconvenience to the general public, according to a statement issued yesterday—CDN. Mr. Dhanapala Weerasekera, SLFP MP for Dehiowita, addressing a trade union meeting yesterday, posed the question whether a reactionary foreign agency is behind the current strike by Post Masters: he recalled how the postal employees failed to join the general strike of 1966 when the UNP was in power: he also said the present postal strike is not a struggle to win the reasonable demands of the workers but a naked attempt to sabotage and impede the Nonaligned Nations Summit—CDM. Indian Airlines made arrangements to assist the Nonaligned Summit by providing special flights for delegates arriving for the conference via Bombay—CDM. The Bandaranaike Centre for International Studies brought out a publication entitled "Non-aligned conferences: basic documents 1961-1975" on the eve of the Colombo Summit: in an introduction to this publication, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, Prime Minister, has stated the non-aligned movement started with 15 nations when its first conference was held in Belgrade in 1961 to the present 85 and every effort must be taken to deepen the unity of the non-aligned nations—CDN. In an order yesterday Government said that the national flag should be flown at full-mast at all government corporations and local government institutions from August 14 to August 20 on account of the Non-aligned Summit—CDN. The delegation from Vietnam for the summit will be led by the Prime Minister of that country, Mr. Pham Van Dong—CDN. The heads of states conferring for the conference will study the possibility of creating a co-ordinating instrument for the movement's growing activities—CDN. In a message to the Fifth Nonaligned Nations Conference Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, said steps should be taken at this 5th conference to be held in Colombo to find economic and political independence to peoples of two third of the world—VK. Three specially made high capacity water pumps were handed over to Mr. W. P. G. Ariyadasa, Minister of Local Government, by the British High Commissioner Mr. David Aires at the Katunayake airport yesterday: the pumps were gifted by Britain to the Government to augment the supplies of water to the city of Colombo—DM. 16th of August has been declared a public and Bank holiday on account of the Non-aligned Summit—LD. *Aththa* in an editorial referring to a speech by the leader of the Opposition in which he said that he would topple the government if it remained in power even one day after May 22, 1977, said this is a threat not directed to the government but to the masses of the country and the entire democratic system: the paper said Mr. Jayewardene has made this statement in spite of several pledges by the Prime Minister that she would dissolve the NSA after the term of the present government expired: the paper further said if Mr. Jayewardene attempts violence to overthrow the government the masses of this country too would be ready to face his forces.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 8: The 17-nation co-ordinating bureau of the Non-aligned nations will meet at 10.30 a.m. tomorrow at the BMICH to prepare the way for the Foreign Ministers meeting which will precede the biggest ever Non-aligned nations summit: the Bureau meeting starting tomorrow will continue for three days and will discuss the draft declaration, Action

Program and finalise details for the foreign ministers meeting starting on Wednesday and financial matters such as the common budget: when the Summit begins on the 16th Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, will address: the co-ordinating bureau consists of Algeria, Sri Lanka, Cuba, Guyana, Kuwait, Liberia, Malaysia, Nepal, Peru, Senegal, Somalia, India, Mali, Tanzania, Yugoslavia and Zaire—CO. On the recommendation of the Prime Minister the President has made order under section 5 of the Public Security Ordinance for the maintenance of services during the Non-aligned Summit Conference: these regulations will be in force till the end of August—CO. Delegations attending the Fifth Non-aligned Conference began arriving in the island around midnight on Friday and the entire operation-including security and protocol, began functioning from Friday night—CO. The Central Committee of the Communist Party (Moscow wing) in a statement issued yesterday said the Non-aligned summit is a tribute to the policy of the United Front Government—CO. Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, will hold discussions with representatives from the SLFP, CP and Tamil speaking people to solve the problems facing the Tamil community: among prominent Tamils invited for the discussions are Messrs G. Mahadeva, E. R. S. R. Coomaraswamy and V. Kanapathipillai: these talks will be held on Tuesday evening—TOCSI. Mr. Anura Bandaranaike, Chief Organiser of the SLFP Youth Leagues, returned to the island from a trip to Libya: at Libya Mr. Bandaranaike made a proposal to President Muammar Gaddafi that a permanent international bureau be set up to fight Zionism and racism: according to the *Sunday Times* this proposal was accepted by President Gaddafi. Following an announcement by the government Post Masters on strike decided to hand over the keys of Post offices to the Government Agents but decided to continue their strike until their demands are met—VK. Following a threat to fast unto death by Tamil youth in prisons Mr. S. J. V. Selvanayagam, leader of the TULF has complained to the Prime Minister that these youths are now being transferred to various prisons in the island from Colombo and requested her to inform him as to where they have been taken from Colombo: he also requested the Premier to make arrangements for relations and doctors to visit these prisoners—VK. More and more trade unions in the private and public sectors have informed the government of their support to make the Non-aligned conference a success—ATH. Mr. Lalith Athulathmudali, a well-known lawyer arrested by Police on suspicion in connexion with an acid throwing incident on a company executive, has been released by a Magistrate on Rs. 5,000 bail—ATH. The Randoli perahara of the annual Kandy Esala Perahara starts today—SLD.

MONDAY, AUGUST 9: According to the *Daily News* the two striking unions of Post Masters last night decided to suspend their strike and return to work: a spokesman for the unions told that they have instructed their membership to return to work by 11 a.m. tomorrow—CDN. The Bandaranaike International Airport, Katunayake, was a hive of activity yesterday and commercial aircrafts touched down every 15 minutes carrying delegates for the co-ordinating bureau meeting which starts today and the foreign Ministers meeting which starts on Wednesday: fiftysix delegations

have already arrived in the country to participate in the conference of Foreign Ministers of Non-aligned nations and among these delegates were 14 Foreign Ministers: several ministers and VIPs were present at the airport yesterday to receive the foreign ministers arriving in the country—CDN. A total of 700 delegates have already arrived in the country and another 700 are expected today—CDM. The Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike and the President, Mr. William Gopallawa, participated at the unveiling ceremony of the Avukana Buddha replica, a statue made by Mr. Henry Dharmasena, opposite the BMICH yesterday—CDM. Over 600 foreign journalists are also expected to be in Colombo during the Non-aligned Summit period—CDM. When the *Virakesari* asked the Deputy Minister of Defence and Foreign Affairs on the condition of Tamil youths in prisons who are fasting he said that these youths are consuming milk and glucose and are keeping fit: when the reporters further asked him as to when these youths would be charged in a court of law he said that he could not talk about the matter just now—VK. Colombo will get a 12 hour supply of water from today: the time of supply will be from 7 p.m. to 7 a.m.—LD. A team of newspaper and television representatives who arrived from Italy to the country were sent back by officials of the Bandaranaike International airport, Katunayake, yesterday as they did not have a valid visa to visit the country: the journalists produced accreditations from their respective newspapers which the authorities turned down: following this incidents stricter controls on visas will be enforced on all arrivals during the Summit conference—ATH.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 10: The Co-ordinating Committee of the Non-aligned countries which had its first meeting in Colombo yesterday decided to adopt the draft agenda prepared by Sri Lanka: this was stated in a press release issued by the Non-aligned Secretariat: during the main conference an effort will be made to activate a solidarity fund for the economic and social development: each member will be required to contribute at 500,000 special drawing rights to be paid in four annual instalments in freely convertible currency and already seventeen countries have agreed: but for the fund to get started at least 40 countries should consent and the Colombo Conference expects this to come right in view of the spirit of unity prevailed at the early stages of the conference—CDN. According to the *Daily News* Foreign Ministers of Arab States are due to meet informally in Colombo to discuss the Middle East situation especially the Lebanon situation. The observer delegation from Australia said the arrangements for the Colombo Summit is so far the best for any conference and great care had been taken to prepare everything for the needs of all participants—CDN. The Prime Ministers of Cape Verde and Sao Tome and Principe and six Foreign Ministers are some of the delegates due to arrive today at the Bandaranaike International Airport—CDN. A 120-member North Korean delegation arrived by ship at the Colombo Harbour yesterday and President, Kim Il Sung, is expected to arrive by plane on the eve of the Summit—CDM. At yesterday's Co-ordinating Bureau meeting of the Non-aligned nations, India protested against allowing Rumania to participate at Observer level and following this protest the matter was referred to the Foreign Ministers Conference for a decision—VK. Mr.

V. Dharmalingam, MP for Uduvil, yesterday sent an urgent telegram to Mr. Lakshman Jayakody, Deputy Minister of Defence and Foreign Affairs, to release information on the condition of Tamil youths in prisons who were fasting—VK. The *Aththa* in an editorial referred to attempts by the Prime Minister to hold talks with progressive leaders of the Tamil speaking community to solve the problems facing the Tamils and said that this is a very welcome move aimed to solving the problems of the Tamils to foster unity between the Sinhala and Tamil communities. A special delegation of the Indian Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, headed by Mr. Mohamed Yunus met Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, yesterday.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 11: The meeting of the Foreign Ministers of Non-aligned nations will begin at 4 p.m. today at the BMICH: so far sixty Foreign Ministers have arrived in the country: the 17-member Co-ordinating Committee meeting which began on Monday will end today: at the Co-ordinating Committee meeting a proposal by India to increase the number of Co-ordinating countries from the present 17 to 22 or 23 was accepted: according to the *Daily Mirror* the most controversial issue before the Foreign Ministers meeting which begins today will be whether to change the criteria of the Belgrade Summit which adopted that countries involved in military pacts should be barred from membership of the Non-aligned movement: this issue has arisen over the question of admitting Portugal, Philippines and Rumania as observers for the Summit—CDN, CDM & VK. Government yesterday sealed the Radio transmission room of the North Korean ship which arrived with delegates for the Non-aligned Summit: the ship is now berthed in the Colombo Harbour: the reason for this action follows complaints that the transmission from this ship interfered with local radio transmissions—VK. All Postmasters who were on strike returned to work yesterday and the services are now functioning smoothly—VK. Yesterday Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, held talks with representatives of Tamil speaking people over the problems facing the Tamil community: several Ministers and prominent Tamil citizens participated at the talks: the Premier is reported to have stressed the importance of solving the problems of the Tamils without delay—VK. Mr. L. B. de Silva, former Judge of the Supreme Court, died yesterday at the age of 73: Mr. de Silva was recently appointed as one man commissioner to probe the activities of the State Gem Corporation—DM. 15,000 were successful at the GCE Advanced Level examinations held in April this year the result of which were released by the Education Department yesterday: 60,000 candidates sat the examination—LD. *Aththa* in an editorial said extreme caution must be exercised in giving membership for certain countries who sought membership to the Non-aligned community: the editorial further said that membership to certain countries will make the entire non-aligned movement meaningless.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 12: Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike, Minister of Finance and Justice, was yesterday unanimously elected to chair the Non-aligned Nations Foreign Ministers conference: after the ceremonial opening, Mr. Bandaranaike, in his speech to Foreign Ministers, said that the Non-aligned movement must

carry forward the victories already won against colonialism and imperialism, and these victories should be consolidated through economic action—CDN. According to the *Daily Mirror* severe restrictions had been imposed on foreign journalists who want to visit their delegations now residing in hotels and the type of treatment meted out to them might not only impair the coverage of the Summit but also reflect badly on Sri Lanka in the countries of these journalists. Foreign Ministers of Arab nations met informally yesterday and decided to put a common front on issues facing them before the Foreign Ministers conference which continues today: the main issues discussed were Palestine and Lebanon—CDM. According to the *Virakesari*, Arab nations will discuss ways of providing economic aid to Non-aligned nations which are affected by oil price hike. According to a government communique issued on the discussions Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, had with prominent Tamil leaders on the question of solving problems facing the Tamil community, the Prime Minister hoped that some reasonable and workable solution could be arrived at over the 20-point program submitted by the Tamil leaders—CDN. According to the *Daily News*, Sri Lanka will initiate a move to the Non-aligned nations to call upon all states to restore to their rightful owners art treasures expropriated by the former colonial rulers. Marshal Tito who will be here for the Summit will entertain the Non-aligned nations leaders to a cocktail party on board his yacht in Colombo Port on August 18—CDM. Sri Lanka will propose to the Summit the adoption of a resolution calling the Third UN Conference on the Law of the Sea to establish a new regime of the oceans which will ensure the security of states and respect for their sovereignty and territorial integrity: under this proposal major powers and technologically advanced countries will be called upon by the Summit to restrict their movements in the sea—DM.



INTERNATIONAL DIARY

Aug. 5 — Aug. 14

THURSDAY, AUGUST 5: According to *Tanjug*, France is viewing the forthcoming Non-aligned conference to be held in Colombo as one of the most important international events this year. *Voice of Uganda*, the newspaper from Kampala, said the Non-aligned movement can attain its anti-imperialist aims only through consistent and all-round consolidation of unity and solidarity especially with the USSR and other socialist countries in the world. The Philippine Government has informed the United States that it wants to take over the command of three US bases still remaining in the Philippines: one of these is an airfield while the other two are naval bases. Yugoslav President Marshal Tito said practically all non-aligned countries are under great pressure pending the Colombo Conference and further said Yugoslav itself is under pressure: Marshal Tito said the pressure is not from the people but from certain quarters and as an illustration said about the conduct of the US Ambassador in his country: he accused him for giving

lessons on Yugoslavia's internal affairs to the US President. Jamaican Prime Minister, Mr. Michale Manley said the Non-aligned conference in Colombo must be clear and united about its aims about the new international economic order. Viking-1, the US spacecraft now in Mars will burn a sample of the soil taken from Mars and ground same for scientists on earth to know the chemical composition of the soil and gases in it: with this "cooking" American scientists are expected to solve the mystery of the Maritan soil.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 6: In keeping with their policy of supporting all initiatives and actions for the promotion of peace and international understanding Sweden and Finland, two neutral north European countries, have said that the forthcoming Colombo Non-aligned Summit is the most important world event this year. North Korea's President Kim Il Sung is expected to make on his rare overseas visits to attend the Colombo Conference. United Nations has shown a keen interest in the Colombo Conference. The grounds has started to stabilize after a series of earthquake that hit China last month: the biggest earthquake occurred on July 28. According to *Tanjug* outsiders are interested in prolonging the dispute between Uganda and Kenya and to see that the representatives of both countries visit the Colombo conference with ill-feeling towards each other. Viking-1, the US spacecraft now in Mars, faced several technical problems and scientists in California were engaged in taking measures to correct the faults. According to *Tass* the grave crisis which hit the US economy over the recent years has seriously told on the black citizens in that country: the report further said 24.5 per cent of the black people are unemployed. Sudan executed 81 men by firing squad for their involvement in last month's coup to overthrow the regime of President Jaffar Nimeiri. Hundreds lost their lives and several thousands were homeless in a flood that hit Denver, Colorado, suddenly. The Fifth Law of the Sea Conference that began at the UN started decisive and crucial negotiations on the preparation of a comprehensive convention on international relations and the rights and duties of judicial subjects in seas and oceans.

SATURDAY AUGUST 7: According to a *Reuter* report as a measure to help solve the debt problems of developing nations the Fifth Summit of the Non-aligned Nations to be held in Colombo will be asked to set up an institution to promote trade among developing countries. The delegation for the Non-aligned nations summit from Vietnam will be led by the country's Premier Mr. Pham Van Dong. The British Broadcasting Corporation announced that it closing its office in New Delhi because the office had been unable to contribute to programmes or assist in programme-making owing to press and broadcasting censorship imposed by the Indian government last year. The two Russian scientists aboard the *Salyut-5* now orbiting the earth ended their fourth week in this space laboratory. Following a new wave of violence in the township of Soweto the South African council of churches attacked the regime and described the government actions as "strong-arm-tactics" against the black population. Kenya and Uganda began their talks to normalise relations on Thursday and according to a Kenyan spokesman the talks have made "some progress." According to figures released by Chile's

military regime more than 800 thousand workers are jobless in Chile and this represents 22 per cent of the nation's labour force. New China News Agency reported that Peking's industries continued production in spite of the earthquake that devastated the city. The London House of Commons was reported that the public of Britain are angry over the recruitment of mercenaries fighting in London: the mercenaries are fighting for the right wing forces in Lebanon.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 8: Radio Hanoi reported yesterday that Vietnam and North Korea called on all countries attending the Non-aligned Summit to contribute for its success. There is no official confirmation about Cuban Premier Dr. Fidel Castro's visit to Colombo for the Summit. Northeast China which faced an enormous earthquake last month now was hit by torrential rains and faced a new threat from floods: millions of Chinese camping out in streets and open grounds for fear of another earthquake were affected by the downpour. Delegates from Kenya and Uganda who met in Nairobi agreed to resume normal relations between the two countries. Britain's former Government Minister, Mr. John Stonehouse, was convicted in London on 14 counts of fraud, theft and conspiracy: his secretary 29 year old Mrs. Buckley was also convicted of aiding Mr. Stonehouse. Japanese Prime Minister, Takeo Miki, addressing a memorial ceremony for thousands of people died when the world's first atom bomb was dropped on the city 31 years ago said that the only way to attain real peace is to abolish nuclear weapons and liberate mankind from the nuclear threat. The Shah of Iran speaking to the press after he had talks with the US Secretary of State said that he wanted to barter his diminishing oil supplies for American weapons: he further said that his country had a sovereign right of self defence which could not be challenged. Dr. Kissinger, the US State Secretary, arrived in Britain for talks with Prime Minister James Callaghan to begin talks on how majority black rule could be established in Rhodesia: officials accompanying the State Secretary said he would not hold a surprise meeting with South African Premier John Vorster: Dr. Kissinger began a eight-day visit to the Europe and the Middle East. Rioting in the black township of Soweto in South Africa worsened and Police was put on alert: black youths threw stones at buses and trains and burned several vehicles. In Paris, France signed a contract to build two nuclear power plants in South Africa.

MONDAY, AUGUST 9: Dr. Kurt Waldheim, Secretary General of the United Nations, will arrive in Colombo on Sunday to attend the Non-aligned Nations conference: he is expected to be in Sir Lanka for four days. Egypt's People Assembly (Parliament) decided to nominate President Anwar Sadat for another term of office: this was announced in the country's semi official newspaper Al-Ahram: President Sadat's first six year term expires in October this year. In a ceremony in Salisbury Rhodesia's first black Roman Catholic Archbishop, Patrick Chakaipa, was installed: Archbishop Chakaipa is a son of a tribesman. In an editorial in the news bulletin of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) Arab states have been told to bring back their monies in foreign banks to Arab banks and stockpile food supplies to meet any future threats or aggression against the

Arabs: the editorial quoted the threats by Jimmy Carter, US Democratic Party's Presidential nominee, who said that he would launch a food war or an economic war against Arab countries in the event of the latter raising the prices of oil. Yugoslavian Foreign Secretary, Milos Minjo, left Belgrade for Colombo for the Non-aligned Nations conference. Syria requested a postponement of a first meeting of a four-man committee being set up to help end the war in Lebanon: delay in forming the Syrian Cabinet and the inclusion of left-wing Lebanese in the committee is said to be the reason for the request by Syria. Uganda followed up its agreement with Kenya to normalise relations by releasing 75 Kenyans detained in a prison in Kampala. China remained in alert for the 10th day in case of new earthquakes while millions of Chinese camped out in open space in heavy rains.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 10: Peking felt slight tremors of earthquake and officials made no comment. John Roselli, an underworld figure who last year said he was hired by the American Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) to assassinate Cuba's Premier Dr. Fidel Castro, was found killed in Miami, Florida, yesterday. French President Valery Giscard d'Estaing who left Gabon for Zaire said that "Africa should be left to the Africans": the French leader called for majority black rule in Rhodesia. Fresh fighting was reported in Port Elizabeth, black township of Johannesburg and Police stood by for any renewed fighting in the township of Soweto. Australian Foreign Minister Andrew Peacock said in Canberra that the Australian Government plans to increase contact with China at all levels. President Makarios of Cyprus will leave for Colombo on Friday to participate at the Non-aligned Nations Conference. Morocco Foreign Minister, Ahmed Laraki, said in an interview published in Rabat that his country would block any attempts to discuss the Western Sahara at the Colombo Non-aligned Nations conference. US Secretary of State, Dr. Henry Kissinger, yesterday arrived in Pakistan from Iran: in discussions with Dr. Kissinger, Pakistani Premier Ali Bhutto said that Pakistan's security was indivisible with that of Iran: Mr. Bhutto told Dr. Kissinger that he wanted detente with India but the Kashmir dispute was a precondition: in reply Dr. Kissinger said that the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Pakistan was of great concern to the US. King Hassan of Morocco said that his country would spend half the funds of the State budget on arms to repulse any attacks launched by neighbouring Algeria. Israel announced that it is building two missile patrol boats for sale to South Africa.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 11: French government officials told that their country would sell nuclear reprocessing plants to Pakistan despite pressures by the United States to cancel nuclear deals: the officials commented on discussions Dr. Henry Kissinger had with Pakistan Prime Minister, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, where he dissuaded Pakistan from buying a French Plutonium plant which could prompt a cut-off America aid. The Non-aligned Summit conference in Colombo would condemn the recent sale of two french nuclear reactors to South Africa. Mr. Mohamed Yeganeh, Chairman of the Governors of the 800 million-dollar OPEC fund, told in Vienna that developing countries will be able to start borrowing money before the end

of this year from this fund. Mr. Sheik Yamani, Saudi Arabian Oil Minister, told in Geneva though there is a pressure by OPEC to increase the price of oil this will not be allowed this year but he expected a price hike next year; he said oil ministers will meet in Qatar in December this year to consider an increase for next year. *Tass* reported yesterday that the Soviet Union launched an automatic station Lunar-24 towards the moon. Palestinian and Lebanese rightwing military leaders met the Arab League Liaison Officer for talks on a new cease fire and possible total evacuation of Tel Al-Zaatar camp in Beirut. Mrs. Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister of India, told in New Delhi that the whole focus of the Non-aligned Summit meeting in Colombo next week would be on economic issues: she told Congress Parliamentarians that tremendous efforts are being made to belittle the Summit and term it a "jamboree" but Non-aligned movement is very necessary for the very existence of India. Indian Police detained ex Chief Minister of Gujarat State, Mr. Babubhal Patel, following information that he would lead a protest march against the state of emergency.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 12: In a confidential report sent to the European Economic Commission by a group of Europe's major mining companies it was stated that the control of their own mining resources by Third World countries could endanger Europe's future supplies of raw materials: this was stated in an article in the *Guardian*. Rhodesia's Prime Minister, Ian Smith, announced yesterday that his country's forces crossed into the Mozambique and killed more than 300 African nationalist guerillas at a base camp. South African Justice Minister announced that the government had decided to extend to all of South Africa its new powers to arrest without a charge: earlier the powers were operative only in the Johannesburg and its black township of Soweto: government also announced that its forces clashed with Zambia on the border. Soviet Ambassador to Australia, Mr. Alexander Basov, stressed the need for making Indian Ocean a peace zone but scoffed at the suggestion that Soviet naval presence in the Indian Ocean constituted a threat to Australia. A report by UN Secretary General, Kurt Waldheim, on the role of the United Nations on disarmament was published in New York: this report was prepared on a number of recommendations made by United Nations member countries. Following tension between Greek and Turkish governments on the situation in the Aegean the former called for a meeting of the UN Security Council. French government turned down a request by US State Secretary, Dr. Henry Kissinger that France, US and Pakistan should get together to settle a row over the French-Pakistan nuclear deal.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 13: Marshal Tito, President of Yugoslavia, is expected to be present in Colombo to attend the Non-aligned Nations conference which starts in this city on August 16. Soon after the Colombo conference endorses the move India will take follow-up action to establish the press agencies pool of the Non-aligned countries. Arab nations attending the Non-aligned Nations conference decided to initiate a resolution calling for the expulsion of Israel from the United Nations. Violent rioting between blacks and the Police started in the Cape Town 17 blacks died and over 50 were seriously injured: according to the *Reuter* this is said to be the worst riots South

Africa has seen since the Johannesburg riots two months ago. The United Nations Committee against Apartheid has recommended that the Security Council should impose mandatory sanctions against South Africa including embargoes on oil and military supplies and the rupture of all diplomatic, economic and other relations. Former Japanese Prime Minister, Tanaka, who is under arrest on charges of accepting bribes from the Lockheed Aircraft Corporation, is suspected of having had secret dealings with South Korea: an Opposition member in the Parliament charged Mr. Tanaka of having accepted a bribe of one million dollars from Seoul authorities to hush up an incident where a Seoul Opposition Member was abducted by the South Korean Central Intelligence Agency from a hotel room in Japan. Mr. Abdulla al Nowais, Under Secretary of the Ministry of Information and Culture of the United Arab Emirates, on the eve of his departure to the Colombo conference said that the UAE will continue to contribute 55 per cent of its income as aid to the Arab and the Third World countries.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 14: Dr. Henry Kissinger, US Secretary of State, returned to the US after eight day tour of European and Asian countries: Dr. Kissinger will brief President Ford on a dispute over a nuclear power sale that is affecting US relations with Iran, Pakistan, and France: Iran and Pakistan have earlier indicated to the State Secretary their desire to purchase equipment that would enable them to reprocess spent nuclear fuel rods into plutonium—the vital ingredient for an atomic weapon. Mr. Sanjay Gandhi, powerful youth leader of the Indian Congress Party, and son of the Indian Prime Minister said in an interview with the Editor of the *Illustrated Weekly of India* that the Indian Congress Party needed lot of revitalising: Mr Gandhi also said that the Presidential form of Government is more suitable for the country. A report from Washington said that China was willing to trade with Taiwan: Mr. Hugh Scott, US Senate Republican leader, told this in Washington after he returned from a visit to China. At a conference of eighty theologians held in Dar Es Salam it was concluded the principle cause for underdevelopment in the world was the exploitation by European nations aided by Christian churches: theologians from Asia, Africa and the Latin America participated at this conference. Influential Jakarta newspaper *Indonesia Times* in an editorial criticised the policy of the Australian conservative government for favouring further buildup of US military presence in the Indian Ocean contrary to the wishes of littoral developing states to make the area a zone of peace. A Pakistani doctor told in London that Asian immigrant doctors do not get a fair treatment in Britain and warned his country's doctors not to come to UK: there are 20,000 doctors in Britain who have emigrated from overseas and this make 35 per cent of the doctors manning state-run medical institutions.



MARGINALIA

Nonaligned Conference And All That

by Bryan de Kretser

I kept asking myself why I felt slightly uneasy at the rhetoric which accompanied most of the speeches especially at the opening ceremony. Everything they said was fine, all of us are against racism, imperialism, neo-colonialism and the like. Come to think of it, it really amounts to being against sin. And of course all decent folks are against sin. Indeed, God Himself is against sin and has been so for quite some time. Good to know of course that the non-aligned folks are also on the side of the angels. Troubles about the sin business is that usually we are all against the other chap's sin. The only sin about which we can do something is our own. But, of course, at august international gatherings one does not usually 'cry mea culpa, mea maxima culpa.' But going to the Latin makes me remember another Latin injunction *Nondum considerasti quantis ponderis peccatum*. Some of our leaders might well ponder these words which warn us to take sin seriously both when treating international problems and dealing with the sin problem nearer home.

THE ABSENCE OF THE CRITICAL NOTE. Our newspapers have gotten rather boring. They read more and more like Government hand-outs. They slavishly extol the achievements of our leaders. Rarely is there any note of criticism or evaluation. Our reporters act rather like blotting paper, just reporting what they are told. And as most of the Press is now Government controlled it means that they are becoming extremely dull. It ought to be of course that the newspaper folks help to keep the politicians on their toes.

PEOPLE. No one talks much about the emasculated manhood left in the wake of Colonialism. Yet this is the primary weakness in most of the non-aligned nations. Despite much talk to the contrary, much of our leadership is neo-colonial in character still, in that the elite group managing the nation is more at home in London

New York, Paris. Certainly they are far removed in thought and culture from the rural masses in their lands. Yet for economic recovery to take place these masses must be mobilised and transformed. And for this to take place, leaders must draw close to the rural folks, stay with them and work with them, to help restore their manhood. E. F. Schumacher writes "Every country no matter how devastated, which had a high level of education, organisation and discipline, produced an Economic miracle. Why care for people? Because people are the primary and ultimate source of any wealth whatsoever". Small is Beautiful p 168-169.

TRIAGE. Leaders of the Developing world would do well to ponder the meaning of this fateful word. They talk too easily of the world being one, and mutter ceaselessly that the poor threaten the peace of the entire world. A vast majority of the poor could starve to death and it would not disturb the sleep of the rich, it does not disturb our own rich folks when poor folks die, folks in their immediate neighbourhood. Point is that this kind of thinking only tempts us to run away from our problems, these will only be solved by our own efforts, or they won't be solved at all, and we shall die, and the rest of the folks will mutter pious platitudes "How sad".

THE ARAB GOLD. Many of the folks of the Developing World are hoping that the Arabs will solve our problems. They won't. What they appear to be doing, all unconsciously, is to come before us as a mirage does in the limitless sands of the Sahara, and all desert travellers know that to follow the mirage leads to death. As long as we play the First world game, talk and think in terms of an international currency which they dominate, we shall stay bound to a structure which tells against us. Dollars are not reality for us, the earth is, our hand is, a tree is, these we can control and these we must organise to resolve our problems.

THE TIRADE AGAINST THE FIRST WORLD. The strange part of all the cries against imperialism and the like is that a great majority of our leaders who talk thus, were trained in the first world, send

their own sons to study in First World universities, and intend for the most part to spend much time in the First World. What is the brain drain? Just that.

ONE HALF AGAINST THE OTHER. Our local political leaders urge on us the need to think and act on behalf of the whole nation. However they themselves do the most they can to keep the peoples divided. What is the M.P.'s letter? It is simply given to all who voted for the Party.

It is one of the most vicious ways of perpetuating divisions among our peoples. Our people should demand that the MP's letter be banned. Folks who produce such a letter would automatically be refused employment and the M.P. himself, after a first warning, ought to be sacked.

LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION. For sometime I have come to believe that one of the greatest threats to freedom in Sri Lanka is the practice of the M.P.'s letter of approval to enable a citizen to get a job. It is a vicious thing. Already the M.P., because of the MPCS, Land Reform and a whole series of Legislative enactments, has enormous regional powers. The need for the M.P.'s recommendation ensures that all citizens are reduced to serfs. Personally I am thinking of giving my vote to the Party which realises the danger to freedom in this practice and undertakes to ensure its disappearance if they are returned to power.

"It is dangerous to mix business and politics. Such a mixing usually produces inefficient business and corrupt politics." E. E. Schumacher in *Small is Beautiful*. In this one sentence we have the essential reason for the present situation in Sri Lanka. We have nationalised a number of social and economic ventures and in almost every case allowed politicians to control the business, especially by permitting them to interfere in the appointments. Recently some of our Ministers have asked, ordered, that every appointment be made subject to their approval. It is not surprising therefore that our politics are corrupt and the nationalised ventures in a mess.

REGIONALISM. This is one of the soundest policy platforms of the present Government. It should

mean that in each region, people take over development programmes, cultural revival, and responsibility for building community. Unfortunately because our leaders do not really trust the people, ordinary folks, they tend to keep the central bastions of decision to themselves and their relatives. Therefore the decentralisation idea is self-defeating. We are building a new feudal system in which the MP takes the place of the old Walauwa chappies. Initiatives are stultified. The M.P. resorts to development stunting, broader roads, vast playgrounds, impressive industrial complexes and these take the place of human renewal and slow but steady selfreliance and growth to human maturity.

BACK TO THE BIKE. Reports from the UK suggest that in that country there is a great increase in the number of folks using the bicycle. Those who prefer it to other means of transport, give as reasons: reduced cost of travel to and from work, improvement in health, reduction in pollution etc. In this country, however, instead of encouraging a similar development, getting hold of a motor car still remains the dominant status symbol. We are racing to the 7 Sri series. More oil imports, more waste of foreign exchange, more pollution. More hospital cases. More heart patients!

GRADUATES INSIST ON BEING GIVEN GOVERNMENT JOBS. There was a strike at University level recently when Graduates demanded Government employment and appeared to meet with official resistance. It is rather sad that all of our graduates should see Government employment as the Mecca. All apparently want to play it safe to ensure a pension at 55. Are there no spirits of adventure and daring, among our youth? Do all want to become simple pen-pushers, 'yes' men to the Government in power. Is security the main purpose of our mortal existence? When one thinks of the barrenness of our films, the short supply of good Sinhala literature, the need for new enterprises, it is rather discouraging to realise that the finest products of our vast and expensive educational system want to play it safe and enter a process of slow decay and death.

A SYSTEM TO PRESERVE THE FEW. It appears to be clear that the resources of our earth

must be used according to some rational plan. The growing strength of Communist Parties in Western Europe reflects the concern of sensitive peoples there to the need for men to plan and control the use of finite resources in the interests of all. A mad consumer-orientated society threatens to use up the limited resources fast. Controls will be necessary to ensure human survival. In countries like in Sri Lanka where there is only an 'echo' capitalistic society, and where sophisticated forms of economic enterprise are still in foetal form, there is no need whatsoever to push our society through all the laboured forms of struggle likely to take place in the West before these controls are effected. Apart from a very few so-called Capitalists, the vast majority of all our peoples are proletariat. Some rational form of control of the raw materials of our land can easily be brought into effect if we have the political will to do so. We do not have to call this Marxism. There is plenty of inspiration within the Buddhist and Asokan traditions which would support such a drive.

* * *

BUILDING A VILLAGE HOUSE—89

"Any Baby On Any Mother's Knee"

By Herbert Keuneman

Be forewarned, by my quoting Swinburne, that this is going to be a Sentimental Article. I make no apology for that; well, anyway not a long one. Sentimentality is a completely human indulgence, besides a free one, hence a wholly justifiable pleasure in these days when any other luxury costs money.

So, preoccupied though you may be with matters of moment or—depending upon how you look at it—of the moment? such as the 'Colombo Summit', I judge it not only time but timely to reintroduce to you our Baby, our Nilima, of whom I have neglectfully given you no account for a long while, nearly half a year.

I have called her 'our' baby, rather than 'Dinga & Banders' baby', partly because she seems

to me to be regarded by the greater part of Galkandawala, our village, as a sort of communal possession, like one of the village *devatavas*, and there exists throughout the day what gives the impression of being a constant file of villagers, particularly the younger among them, passing through her shrine (which during the daytime is this house) zealous to perform before her their eager namaskars: and chiefly because every baby is the epitome of the Type of an Ideal, of an yet untarnished vision of the unspoilt Nature and undisappointed Destiny of the Human Race:

*'The world has no such flowers
in any land,*

*And no such pearl in any gulf
the sea,*

As any babe on any mother's knee.'

The pleasure of Babies is like the Pleasure of Ruins; in fact it is the same pleasure, babies and ruins being each a symbol of the same paradigm. 'Where did you come from, baby dear?' (implying the transcendental answer) is the only logical attitude toward the beginning, as 'Alas! poor Yorick (for what was left of Yorick was no more than a ruin, within the meaning of the word) is toward the end, of the matter. Disillusioned regretful reverie is obviously enough no more 'realistic' a regard of humanity than credulous grateful wonder; yet, still less so (though far less objected to in our maudlin Today) is to ignore the cogitation of humanity's *substantia* because of a preoccupation with, so to speak, its *circumstantia*. Up with Sentimentality! it is at least a by-road to Truth.

I see that my 'short' apology has run away with me after all! Never mind. But let us turn now to little Nila, the cause of all this lubrication.

I just wish you could see our baby now, at age 7 months. Beautiful! And I mean she is: beautiful. Now, in that assessment I am not being sentimental; not even, I will insist, partial. See! I will admit her imperfections: her eyebrows are noticeably lighter than her lashes (but the lashes are lovely, long and opening outward like the stamens of *lunuwarana* blossom) and Somebody has obviously overhennaed her hair (but her hair curls like fleece and her tiny nose

is not all bone (but her mouth is Kama's bow; though perhaps—I am in two minds about this—her lips are a trifle bee-stung for me). Yet, what counts is the way the little angel is turning out. I was somewhat dismayed, at first, with her pale colour: what has a born Vanni girl to do with non-committal beiges and reticent creams? But this one's skin is at last turning the ideal gold, dusky gold ruddied with hues of copper; and Whoever designed her has with great daring set the ruddiness off by her eyes, black as eugenia berries when you look at them, but when you look into them shot through with paler lights in pale and dark ambers and the honey tint of good tortoise shell. Again, her limbs, once unsure like small new tendrils of their predetermined form, are beginning to achieve the most pleasing, and recognizably feminine, shapes and proportions.

Fascinating as it is to watch the blossoming of this delicious little body, it is even more so to observe our baby's own gradual awakening to her members and functions. To tell the truth, Anatomy has her for the moment somewhat beat! Not just her own anatomy either. It was charming to see her the other day most interestedly bemused, but finally thoroughly frustrated and vexed, by what must have seemed to her a deliberate deception on Nature's or Dinga's or somebody's, part. I have known few babies—but then: I have known few babies, full-stop—more sensuously highly developed, the sense of sight perhaps more than any other, with a terrific eye for pattern and colour, so that one thing, only, more entrances her (more than toys or rattles or sham things to suck) than a simple piece of bright fabric, a bandana handkerchief would be bliss: she enjoys, oh! she enjoys, with an almost gourmand 'gust', the anticipation, ingestion and assimilation of her feed. It happened on this occasion that she was lying in the middle of her mat, while Dinga lay beside her with her head on the pillow, so that about level with the baby's observant eye was Dinga's nicely rounded bent knee decently veiled in her cloth; and the contours of that knee were exactly such as to raise a thought in a small slightly-greedy rationality. It was the right size; and the right shape;

and almost the right feel; but was it—after she had thoroughly explored the knee with hands and lips—the Right Thing? There was but one way to tell: take the wrapping off it. But the cloth would not lift, as Dinga's jacket always easily did; and that was where the unpleasant spectre of doubt appeared and our ordinarily so good and patient Nila began to bawl!

It is her arms and legs, however, that normally bemuse Nila the most. She is obviously delighted to own as many of these extensions as she does—she would probably like more, for she works them constantly—but she has not yet learnt to differentiate between them and (being a fair-minded baby) plays no favourites but tries to employ them interchangeably. She has grown up with them and has come to accept that some are better at certain tasks than others, so she is not frustrated by them (only, sometimes a little impatient at a suddenly-discovered inability in them to understand each other completely) but wherever possible she makes the handiest limb do. It was so she came to improvise what I consider an adorably informal (therefore gratifyingly sincere) form of salutation offered first to me and later, when she realized as she certainly seemed to my plain delight in it, eventually reserved for me alone, until a few days ago; as I shall later relate. I had appeared at her levee one morning at a time when she had both hands occupied. I always salute her, for my part, with a special gesture which I hope will become a sort of masonic sign between us: a kind of circular hand-wave which my wife and I had loved and adopted from some long forgotten film; and this new love of my life was beginning to learn to wave back. Today, however, as I have said, her hands were full; so with charming gravity and an even more engaging logicity, yielding me a lazy sleepy contented half-smile of the utmost but unguishing friendliness, she waved me the nearest chubby leg instead. Still does.

Nilima's daily levee is a thing to witness. She holds it in this house, because the plague of flies that in this season of drought darkens the *gammandiya* houses is enough to make a Beelzebub of

any little god or goddess however urbanely disposed toward worshippers, and here she amiably grants *dakum* to the file of devotees that seem always queuing up to kiss, cuddle, coddle, dandle or otherwise pay her their devours. (It never ceases to amaze me that without—in this single context—the least tom-fool self-consciousness about appearing cissy there are, even in the adolescent age group as many boys as girls eager to buss and fondle her—any baby at all, to tell the truth—especially to carry her; but it is a typical village attitude.) Our Nila is never so impolite as to struggle and scream whoever, it seems, is bestowed with temporary charge of her; though it is quite clear she prefers some, such as her 10-year old Uncle ('father', by village kinship) Herat. Me, she submits to being carried by, yet is evidently pleased and relieved when I hand her over. (This has always been a thing between babies and me and is probably due to a mutual suspicion of each other dating back to the time when I had to carry babies professionally, baptizing them, upon which as often as not they baptized me back; so that my surpluses, launder them as I might, always diffused a faint ammoniacal smell.) But liking-to-be-carried-by is one thing; it is absolutely certain that in that same well-sorted Department of Affection of hers Nilima knows which of her folks she loves the very best, and they are, I think, her mother; and her Benderside grandmother; and me.

I make this preposterously proud claim with due humility; for Nila herself has provided the proof. More than once, Nila is one of those thrice blessed—and blessing—babies that never go into a tantrum and seldom-or-never cry: only in the active chill of a fever or the pain of a colic or the discomfort of a wet nappie or to give warning, 'I'm hungry; not just greedy-hungry, I'm real-hungry; do something about it'. But if she feels that one of us three has neglected her for any unconscionable time (and the allowable period differs appropriately for each of us in her grave, analytical little mind) she greets us on our eventual appearance not with the wide smile with which she forgives lesser defaulters but first with deep real tears of heartbroken reproach—*iki gagahaha andanava*,

as P.B. onomatopoeically describes them. I am fortunate that I have seldom had to merit this utterly crushing reprimand—if I look in on her from time to time and pass the time of day she is perfectly satisfied, for she is far from a demanding baby. But let us not seem to fail her. The other day, for instance, Dinga had to keep her in the *gammandiya* house, and it was not until evening that I walked across to see her. She had been quite cheerful up to then, I could hear her happy chuckles all the way to the garden stile. Yet on my appearance she became a very Niobe of a baby, holding out her arms to me and insisting that I—, the merely tolerated Nilima-carrier—hold and hush her. This has happened before. I suppose it will happen again. But it shall happen as seldom as humanly possible.

These unmistakable proofs of sensuousness, sensibility and emotionality in our Nilima, our little Lotus Blossom, increasingly fill me with delight and a lively, though gratuitous pride: she is so evidently a feeling personality. She is also a thinking one. As witness: she loves, and unmistakably loves consciously, young animals. She doted on Bussa (rodi-language for Dog) a minute white-and-patch-work puppy who, alas! suddenly up and died, and for many days would search with her eyes the corner he preferred to inhabit, cooing and crowing at the *revenant* her memory still conjured there. She squeals with glee at the sight of a hen and chickens. But above all, like any good Vanni girl, she betrays an affinity with baby calves that amounts almost to fellow-feeling! On the walls of the room here where she chiefly holds court are tacked a number of large photographs of wildlife which Nihal Fernando and Pat Decker, who took them, finding in them some infinitesimal flaws have parted with to her Uncle P.B. And whenever her human courtiers will let her, while sparing the flamingoes in flight and the elephants and the leopard maybe a passing glance, she asks to be held up to the picture of the herd of spotted deer, whom she plainly identifies as calves, and chortles and squeals with joy and love at the calf-shapes in the print.

I wish I could report as satisfactorily upon her physical well-

being. But what with the bitter drought and the calves all sick with a flux, and the flies, and the tainted cowmilk she used to be given to augment what Dinga could give her until I forced upon Dinga and her mother-in-law the 'extravagance' of an artificial substitute (Rs. 30-40 a month there, or 10% of Banders' income) the poor mite suffers patiently but frequently from a distressing and debilitating gastritis. So bad, in fact, had her poor tummy become that in addition to the 'doctor's medicine' upon which I insisted Dinga was reduced to making the temple vow upon which Banders' mother insisted; a vow of five-times-five: five lighted saucer-lamps, five bowls of rice boiled in coconut milk, five trays of betel leaves, five trays of five sorts of flowers, and five joss-sticks. Some days ago—though neither treatment has as yet completely cured the trouble—I went to the temple to watch the vow trustingly paid.

It was all most reverently though quite unfussily done, the old *upasakayo* who conducted the ceremony breaking off whenever he saw fit, to instruct or explain...or even himself to help amuse the baby. As for the latter, she was no way hazed by the solemnity of the occasion but entered wholeheartedly into the informal spirit in which it was celebrated. In a tender gesture of symbolic renunciation Dinga laid her precious baby on the cool tiled floor at the feet of the god Vishnu to whom the vow had been promised, and the great blue image looked benignly down from its giant height at the tiny human stretched below him and for the moment thoroughly engrossed in tearing to pieces a big pink lotus: her own name-flower, but this one given her by the old man from the god's own votive tray. Then, as though suddenly conscious of the tender regard, but still busy with her flower, Nilima looked up into the god's face, smiled as though between equals a complaisant but rather abstracted smile, and politely waved an egalitarian leg at him.

Whereupon some such communication as the following undoubtedly passed: 'Hi! Lord Vishnu, you doing OK? I'm OK; you OK too? Good, we're all OK.'

Indeed.

FORTY YEARS AGO

On A Tea Estate

...first quarrel...then a "dead" man.....

By Ina Trimmer

IT WAS NOT TILL EVENING that I brought up the subject of the smoke again. We were seated in the little verandah with the usual tea tray, talking over the events of the day.

"Wonderful flushing weather, rain at night, bright, cold mornings", said my husband sipping his tea. He always sipped it, as all connoisseurs would any drink.

Perhaps "tea makers" always quietly sip their "cuppa". It must be a habit due to "tasting" at the factory, because when some days later I accompanied my husband on one of his factory rounds I saw a shelf with several little white cups without handles.

"What's that for?" I asked him.

"For me to taste what the liquor is like", he answered.

"Do you taste your tea every day?"

"Every day", he said with emphasis. "I don't say that all tea planters do it or have to do so, but in my case it is necessary. When I took charge here the teas were appalling. There was neither flavour nor liquor, just straw-coloured water with the taste of dried leaves. I think I've pulled Brae out of the fire but I dare not slacken; not yet, any way. Brae tea was famous—I beg your pardon, notorious—in the U.K. At the auctions in Mincing Lane. It's a well-known story, vouched for by several that teas were known as High Grown, Medium, Low Grown and Brae. In a class by itself! Five pence below all other grades!

"But I have changed that. I've changed the name, too. I couldn't understand why my teas still continued to fetch the old price. I knew they were good, but buyers fought shy. They were suspicious of Brae tea. It was damned before ever they tasted it. So I had new labels printed, and new Managalla tea faces on the Market. Managalla is one of our divisions.

"Have you broken the old record then?" I asked.

"You bet. We're almost level with the High Gowns now. Wish I could shift the factory out of this hollow."

"Why? What's wrong with a hollow?"

"Everything, as far as a tea factory is concerned. It should be built on a height, somewhere where the air is free to move."

"O-o-h! what for?"

He looked at me over the cup he was about to raise to his lips. There was a steely glint in his blue eyes, but I was the fool who rushed into dangerous places unaware of the signal I should have heeded.

"A shed is so necessary here."

"O-o-h!"

"Well you see—ee they use wet firewood in the store and it smokes like a..a chimney. In fact I could hardly breath this morning for the clouds of turbid, mucky stuff that rolled out of the kitchen and filled the house."

"So you propose that a shed should be built even though you know we are here only temporarily?"

"Yes," I said airily, still unaware of danger. "It will be such an improvement to the house."

"I thought I told you that I am keeping a stern hand on all useless expenses. A shed will cost money you know." There were icicles in his voice, but I continued to press my point.

"Then a lean-to; that'll do."

"I repeat again, any useless expenditure must not be incurred."

I realised I was treading on quicksands.

"I..di..d..n't know", I faltered.

Then the tears sprang, brimmed over. I felt lost, was a stranger. I had no part here.

"E..e excuse me..e..e" I said rising.

My husband looked up and jumped to his feet.

"What! Crying!"

"No-o. I'm not crying.

"Oh Sunny! I never meant to hurt you. I had vowed that you would never cry again, and now I have gone and done it. It's all this damned estate."

I stood stock still, the tears flowing.

"You shall have your shed."

"I..don't want it. If you put it up I shall kick it down."

He puts his arm round me, "Cheer up Old Lady". Crying O'er a wretched shed."

"It's not the shed; it's you," I sobbed.

"Worse! much worse! Please forgive. The struggle for this place has got me down. I am unable to see things in the right perspective. It's accounts, accounts and money all the time. Please sunny, no more clouds. I shall have to call you my rain cloud if you don't dry those tears."

"You mean smoke clouds." I brought out, still blubbing.

I left him and went into the bedroom and came out with a book.

"Aren't you going to talk to me?" he asked.

"No! I retorted shortly as I sat down at the other end of the verandah by the Aladdin lamp and opened my book. "There's a book I want to finish."

He tried a few gambits which I ignored.

Dinner passed almost in silence. My husband made attempts at conversation but there was no change forthcoming from me.

My book engrossed me again after dinner, and when retiring time came we were both taciturn. By the round tea table were two chairs in which we usually sat and talked, often deep into the night. But one was now empty—mine.

I could see my husband was waiting for me, his tea forgotten but I passed by to my bed.

"Aren't you going to sit down? Won't you talk to me?"

"No! I am sleepy. I'm off to bed, Good Night."

"Sunny,"

"Yes! what d'you want?"

He rose, and a tentative arm stole round me; very gently as if he was afraid I would repulse him.

"You remember what we decided to do before we married?"

"No!"

"Can't you remember I told you one day we must never to sleep in anger?"

I was silent.

"Don't you remember my telling you that there must always be a large comfy chair in our room where we can both sit and make it up before we retire, whatever our quarrel? The chair isn't here; not yet anyway. But surely the spirit is, the spirit of forgiveness. Have you forgotten?"

I remembered it well but I stood relentlessly still. I was sulking and resentful.

"Is it so hard to say those two words, Sunny "I forgive"."

I looked at him. His eyes were pleading.

I said them.

ONE DAY the even tenor of our existence was unexpectedly disturbed. If Matara was quiet and peaceful, if the impact of Time hardly noticeable there, how much more so was estate life. Each day was almost the counterpart of the other. When my husband was out in the field or factory I potted about the house and garden. There was little to do in either because this was only a pied-à-terre while we were awaiting the completion of the Big Bungalow.

Our first quarrel which had begun about smoke ended in smoke. Neither of us referred to it again but the next morning there was great activity at the back of the house. I looked out of my bedroom window to see coolies coming and going carrying "keratees" (jungle sticks) and tagrams. By evening the firewood shed was up and already stocked with neatly cut logs of wood to suit the dover stove. There was no more smoke but at the end of the month I knew who paid for the luxury. My husband had charged himself with the full cost of the shed.

We had just finished lunch some days later and had moved on to the verandah to sit there awhile till my husband finished his after-meal "cuppa". Due to my weakness for coffee he too had changed from his eternal tea to a pot of coffee after lunch; not a cup mind you, but a pot for himself alone. I once told him:

"Teddie, what a blessing you never took to alcohol. You would have had real libations of it."

Indignantly he looked at me.

"And why, pray?"

"Don't get ruffled, old dear. It's only because you need such quantities of liquid."

As we sat over after-lunch coffee, my husband suddenly looked up.

"What's that row going on outside? he asked."

"Row? Coolies always make a row, don't they? I've never heard them talk in gentle tones. I think they must make love at the top of their voices. Sweet nothings must be sweeter yet to them when shouted to the fourwinds of heaven."

"No. No! said Teddie impatiently. "There's something up."

Even as he spoke we heard someone chasing up the steps.

The conductor appeared. "Sir, Sir," he said excitedly. "Come quickly, one man, one man."

"Well! what about him?"

"Our pluckers found him in the tea, top of Munian's field."

"Came to steel leaf I suppose", said my husband.

"What steel sir! He, one dead man."

"Dead! How did he get to the top of Munian's field, and why?"

"Crawling Sir, crawling! Our women saw him and screamed and ran. They thought one animal come from the jungle."

"But you say he's dead."

"Not quite dead but just now going to die."

If ever there was exasperation in the conductor's voice against his dora! it had certainly reached its limit.

"Excuse me Sunny," said my husband rising and hurriedly gulping down his coffee. "I had better go and see what all this is about—Samuels."

"Yes Sir."

"Is the man dead or is he not"

"Now dying."

"Have you given him anything And where is he?"

"In the factory Sir, What give He cannot swallow."

"Brandy" shouted my husband.

"Bring the bottle of brandy!"

It really was amazing the faith my husband had in alcohol. And a non-drinker at that! Now, if he had called for tea...

"I'm off Sunny. Tell Arumugam to chase down with the brandy."

He hurried away with the conductor and I overcome by curiosity, took up my umbrella and followed him. The factory was close by, in a hollow, beside the road. In the room where the women sat picking out the stalks from the piles of made tea, a man lay on a mat, emaciated to the bone. I thought he was dead but I heard my husband say, "Give him the brandy, a teaspoon at a time. Careful now—very slowly! Samuels, send for the dispenser. Tell him to come at once."

I joined my husband and looked on as the assistant tea-maker wet the unconscious man's lips with the brandy. Then, almost a drop at a time, he was made to swallow it, imperceptibly at first, then more strongly, till a wineglass full was consumed.

Suddenly the factory rang with a "hepatha". Everyone backed hurriedly, startled by the unexpected metamorphosis from lifelessness into exuberance.

"AANDAVANA" said one of the frightened women. "It is the devil in him that is crying out. He is possessed by an evil spirit."

"Out!" said my husband. "Chut woman! Is that the way to talk? Give him more brandy."

The more he drank, the more he shouted. There was no doubt

that my husband's faith in this unfailing remedy was fully justified.

"Ah! there you are, Julius", as the dispenser appeared in the doorway. Come on and take over. This poor devil was in the last stage of exhaustion so I gave him some brandy.

"My God, sir, he's dead drunk now!"

"Better than being dead anyway. Look here. Get him carried to the dispensary and put him into the little emergency room next door. Leave him there till he recovers completely Any expenses, charge them up to me. D'ye fellow?"

"Yes, Sir".

"Don't leave him alone. Not tonight anyway. Put him in the charge of your own attendant and see that he wants for nothing."

In a few minutes coolies strung him up on a pole in a queer little hammock made on the spot with one of their own cumbles. It is their way of carrying their sick even for several miles. I thought it was a most inhuman method when I saw him bundled up like a dead iguana, but my husband laughed at my horror. "That's how they do it, and you wan't change it for the next hundred years, if then."

Next morning Mr. Julius presented himself at the bungalow.

"Well, how's the patient?" asked my husband.

ALAS FOR THE TREES

The weather being what it has become, Trees are Very much in the news. The Prime Minister herself called upon the nation to protect trees and to plant trees. This pious exhortation received due publicity, and, as I see it, will end with exhortation. The trees will continue to be ruthlessly cut down, and conditions being what they are, no trees will be planted to take their place. The fact of the matter is that the entire structure of the nation's life as at this hour spells the doom for trees. Forget the national level where speeches are made or where legislation is enacted. Look at the regional level for a start. Most of our political big bosses have been given what amounts to a pre-election bonanza—vast acres of land acquired under Land Reform have been made virtually theirs, to give to whom they please. They would be less than human if they did not use these acres to purchase votes. The choice for them is a simple one, trees or votes—which do you think they will choose?

Once the land has been given to village folks, their choice is no less simple—trees or food obtained through the sale of trees for fuel. Does anyone suppose that these folks faced with the problem of food for the day will remember the Prime Minister's exhortation, and choose trees?

So, one way or another, the structures condemn us to a bleak and treeless future.

Bryan de Kretser

"Doing well Sir. Will you come and see him?"

My husband planked his old grey felt hat on his head and took up his stout cane without which he never went out anywhere on the estate.

"Come on Sunny, come with me and do the talking. He's Sinhalese and I cannot manage the Bhasa."

The man who was practically dead yesterday was seated up in bed.

"Kohameda?" I asked. (How are you)

"What's your name?" "Heen Banda."

"Nay varathak naha." (No nothing wrong).

"Can you tell me what happened?"

"Nonamahatmaya, I went to shooting monkeys ten days ago with my friend beneath Tunisgalla mountain."

"Ah, my Hump!

"What's he saying?" interjected my husband. I translated.

"The forest is heavy amongst those mountains and valleys and hardly anyone goes there. We lost our way. My friend therefore went in one direction and I in another to look for the path we had come by, but I don't know what has happened to him. We never saw each other again. The more I walked, the deeper I went into the jungle. There are wild animals there and the leeches! they will eat you alive. So I slept on trees."

"What's he saying? interrupted my husband impatiently.

Again I translated.

"But how did you exist?" I asked the man. "What did you eat for ten days?"

"That jungle is full of wild limes and oranges. The trees were loaded with fruit so I ate them. But nonamahatmaya, I had come to the end to the end of my strength. I thought I would lie down and die. Then I saw a hill. One more effort I said. I don't know how I climbed it. I think I dragged myself up on my stomach. I reached the top. I saw people. They screamed and ran."

"What's he saying?" my husband was the most impatient man when he was kept in the dark.

"Yes" said the dispenser. "Our women pluckers were on top

there. Munian's field sir, you know the place. They ran screaming that a wild animal had attacked them.

"After that Mahatmaya", turning to my husband, "I didn't know anything till I woke up in this bed."

"Now don't talk so much," said my husband. "Julius, see that he doesn't exert himself. D'ye fellow? Feed him up. Get a chicken from the lines."

A week later the man turned up at the bungalow dressed in a clean cloth and shirt my husband's gift.

"Kohameda?" My husband knew that one word having learnt it from me. Then back to English "Quite recovered now?"

I was translator again.

The man threw himself at my husband's feet, his hands upraised as if in prayer.

"Cha! cha! Cha! Don't do that. God only must be worshipped. Get up." My husband lifted him and set him on his feet. "Here's ten ruppees to see you home. Now don't go killing monkeys anymore. They are too much like us."

He came back a month later and told us that his friend had returned sooner than he did but had been in jail waiting to be tried for murder—his murder. The police did not believe the story that one of the two who had gone into the jungle had lost his way.

"Mahatmaya, you have therefore saved not one life but two."

Till the day we left Brae, several years later, he would suddenly appear, maybe once in six months or even a year, bringing a bag load of vegetables.

"Dorai, a small gift for you. I live today because of you. May the great deiyo protect you."

(To be Continued)

HERE AND THERE

BY DOPEY

The People Cannot Be Fooled

Other day we witnessed a most comic scene, almost Gilbertian in the Dramatis personae and the setting.

The setting was at the junction Badulla-Eandarawela and a road leading to a deep valley hamlet called Bindunuwewa. This road is motorable up to a distance of 3/4 mile from the junction mentioned above. From there onward, it is a sinuous foot path across the contours and in some places so steep that steps have been carved out from the hillside in the fashion of Sigiri, going down to the Hamlet in the Valley below.

At the junction there was a teapoy with a cloth cover, a small oil lamp, a bottle of Lanka Lime and a glass. Nearby there was a bevy of undernourished school girls squatted around a "rabana" playing the usual *Raban padday* it sounded like *Yaman Selo, yaman selo olu kaddane*. There was a C.T.B. bus commandeered from the nearby bus halt, decorated with blue or purple buntings and streamers. The bus had to get the passengers out of it and those who were there to take the bus were asked to wait till the ceremonies were over. The master of ceremonies, "authoritatively", had seen to it. He also stopped other vehicles moving till everything was over. Curiously nothing much was said, probably following the rule "silence was golden"; the lamp was lit, a Lanka lime bottle was opened and served to the person who lit the "ceremonial oil lamp", then the bus started to proceed along the branch road leading to the hamlet in the valley, followed by two jeeps into which the participants of the ceremonies scrambled in. As the party left the school girls changed their *padday* which sounded like "*Thana buckiyath ganiyekethe, vambthosath malualethe*" etc.

As the ceremonial cavalcade moved along, other vehicles were given the green light to move and the curtain descended on the scene, everything was normal thereafter, except the bus travellers, who were waiting for their bus. The ceremonial bus after covering the 3/4 mile returned to the bus halt in about fifteen minutes time, minus the buntings etc. picked up its passengers and proceeded to their destination. One thing must be said of the bus passengers, they performed the getting out and getting in all in good humour and not one word said or spoken by them. They

seemed to have reconciled to this kind of summary treatment, which, probably they experience whenever they go or whatever they have to do with officialdom in their own little world.

After about an hour's outing, we also came to the end of the road, and found that the speechifying was reserved for the end of the journey, and not at the beginning, probably for very good reasons: They could not delay the regular passengers whose bus was commandeered for the occasion.

There, we heard the loudspeakers blaring out at full blast, extolling the deeds of the **Political Authority**: what he has done and was doing for the people in the hamlet in the valley. How difficult today for a Government to feed the people, but in spite of these difficulties, the P.A. has inaugurated the bus service to cut short their four mile walk by 3/4 miles, and many more things are in store for them but to receive them all must practice the virtue of Patience and bla, bla...went on non stop till about 8 p.m., speeches intermingled with songs, *Virudu Kavi* etc. explaining the good work done by the V.I.P.P. present. It was a gala day.

Things were getting a little boring for us, for we had to spend that night in the vicinity, so we happened to encounter a resident of the hamlet in the village, returning home after purchase of his night meal—a loaf of bread, we will call him "Bandun". We asked him what was happening. He said, "the people say that the P.A. inaugurated a bus service from the junction to this spot so that the people need walk only 3 1/2 miles instead of 4 miles to the bus halt at the top of the road..It may be a god sent, because today we have not the life to walk the 3/4 mile; but to pay for the 3/4 mile bus ride we must have the money. And if we had the money we would rather walk the balance 3/4 mile and buy our food. I want two pounds of bread for the night but I had cash only for one loaf."

He was bitter about it. So to put him in good humour and to relate to him the christian Parable of feeding the multitude, we asked him what his religion was. His reply was "Sir, *agamakhel mul*, let me have the food then I will have the strength to think of a religion." we thought it discreet

to drop the topic. So we said the bus ceremony was in the morning but why are they speechifying so late into the night. "No, the real ceremony is at the *Samagam kaday*" and there may be a free issue of *Kassippu* today, and the shouting must be due to that", said he. We thought it prudent to cut short the conversation we took leave of him and promised to meet him if we came his way again. Poor Bandun.

So, we all think that the people of Sri Lanka can be hoodwinked by such Gilbertian episodes. Patentely our Politicians still think that the people can be led by their noses, and by such gimmicks can ask them to vote for them. Our voters are not such fools, they take note of all what is happening around them. As the study by the Radical Centre states, "that in a typical village and most people below 30 years of age can read and may have learnt elementary mathematics, geography, civics and hygiene". So they are educated enough to discern things for themselves. There cannot be a more typical village than the Hamlet in the Valley.

But our Politicians think otherwise; the audience is illiterate so that they can tell them how they were bound hand and foot to foreign imperialism and that they should grasp socialism—Moscow wing, Peking wing, Trotskyites idiom etc. Our voters understand all these, but their concern of the moment is food, clothing and shelter and be able to get them in quality and quantity within their earnings.

Every Political Party in Sri Lanka, there are dozens of them, they all promise the heaven. It may be U.N.P., M.E.P., S.L.F.P., L.S.S.P., all these parties make the same approach till they get the vote. Once they get the vote "it is my nest box first and not yours". In spite of this, every party has its adherents to their theories and their supporters. The former expects to get the plums and the latter hopes that they will also get something to satisfy their hunger. Hungrier one gets, lesser the reasoning becomes, so one cannot blame them.

Today our politics has such a stench, that one way of insulting an individual is to call him a

U.N.Per, S.L.F.Per, etc. We do not know why this stigma is attached to our Political Parties but there it is. We will be damned annoyed and insulted if we were to be labelled U.N.P., L.S.S.P. S.L.F.P. etc because we have a little more intelligence than necessary to be a politician or a political stooge. What we want our politicians to do is to strive to create a free society with freedom to work and serve and earn an honest living, and not treat us like fools as enacted on the 12th of April Bus Inauguration ceremony at Bindunuwewa. This bus never went that way after the Ceremonial Trip.

It would be stupid to expect a bus to be operated for the walking distance though the P.A. thought otherwise. This is why many ridicule Socialism a *La-Sri Lanka*.

Another episode to befuddle the people of Sri Lanka was, the other day, S.L.B.C. amidst magul bera etc., announced over the network that the first shipment of Janawasa Tea was loaded that day for the "London Auction". Another load was being sent to London. Listening to the S.L.B.C. we got the impression and believed that Janawasa was another Brand of Tea grown, processed and marketed by one of the many statutory bodies now handling the plantations. On our inquiries, it turned out to be nothing but Liptons, Brooke Bonds, Helbodda tea, as old as the tea industry in Ceylon, was being shipped as "Janawasa Tea" after nationalising the tea estates and Agency houses. There must be thousands of others like ourselves who were misled to believe that it was a new product of the Nationalised estates. How simple we were, so we cannot blame the simple folk of the Hamlet in the Valley who believed that the P.A. gave them a bus service. That is what the P.A. and in this case S.L.B.C. believe. The simple folk see through their chicanery.



AFTER PARTY CONVENTIONS

Why U. S. Foreign Policy Won't Swerve

By Joseph C. Harsh

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America's regularly scheduled, quadrennial, political crisis is substantially over without serious damage either to the American political system or to the domestic and foreign policies of the United States. Overseas America-watchers now can assume in their calculations that no important policy changes are to be expected in Washington or from Washington in the foreseeable future.

This conclusion flows from the deeds of both omission and commission of the two major American political parties during the Summer convention phase now completed of the long American presidential election year. The Denouement still lies 2½ months away. Much political rhetoric will ascend to the skies meanwhile. Uncertainties of relatively minor import still exist. But the major uncertainty has been dispelled.

The election campaign which lies ahead will be waged between two non-ideological political parties. The differences between them are in emphasis, not in substance or general direction. The two candidates are both generalists who differ with each other over such things as how much can be done to stimulate employment without risking more inflation.

But it can be taken for granted that the man who will take office as the next elected President of the United States next January, whether he be Democrat or Republican, will to the best of his ability try to keep the American economy in continued growth without releasing another round of dangerous inflation.

It can equally be taken for granted that the next American President will continue to practice detente with the Soviet Union, although shunning the word, and will probably try harder than has been done over recent years to refurbish the alliances with Western Europe and Japan.

Any doubt about substantial continuity of both domestic and foreign policy was largely removed shortly before the Republican Convention opened when Ronald Reagan,

who had been challenging President Ford for the Republican Presidential nomination, picked as his prospective running mate a pro-Labor Liberal from the Northeastern State of Pennsylvania, Richard Schweiker.

That drained the ideology out of the American political situation. Until that moment Mr. Reagan had appeared to be a Right-wing American Conservative with chauvinistic overtones whose political support came almost exclusively from the upper economic classes. At that moment he joined his Republican rival, President Ford, and Democratic nominee Jimmy Carter, in aiming his appeal at a broad American political spectrum.

There was still a detectable difference between the Reagan and Ford postures. But Mr. Reagan had ceased to be a reactionary trying to capture the Republican political machine for reactionary purposes. He had instead become another political pragmatist seeking to win first a nomination and then an election by pragmatic devices.

This does not say that a President Reagan would have behaved much the same as President Ford or a President Carter. In the

White House a President Reagan would undoubtedly have tried to practice some of the beliefs of his original Conservative constituency. But it did mean that his Conservative inclinations would probably have been as tempered by realism and expediency as the equally Conservative inclination of Gerald Ford has been tempered by the same considerations from the moment he left the corridors of Congress.

It also meant that the Republican Party which has long been languishing is to have at least an opportunity for revival. It can seek to revive itself as offering services to a broad spread of Americans instead of lapsing into being the champion exclusively of those with wealth whose prime political concern is the avoidance of taxes.

Another way of stating the above is that American politics have for long been tending in the ideological direction. The Democrats had slipped toward becoming the party of the left. The Republicans had been moving towards the posture of a party of the right.

The Carter candidacy checked the leftward drift among Democrats and pulled them back into the political center.

So, at this moment in the American political year, we do not know who will win the election and be the next President, although the polls favor Jimmy Carter and the Democrats. But we do know that whatever the outcome the United States is not going to lurch suddenly and significantly Right, or Left after that next election day.

* * *

LETTERS

* S. W. R. D.

Sir,

With reference to the article in the *Tribune* on the June 12, 1976, under the heading "Some Memories and Reflections" by Mr. James T. Rutnam, I wish to point out to your readers that the Maha Mudaliyar did not visit "the homes of the great unwashed" living in the Maradana area.

I remember quite vividly when one evening Sir Solomon Dias Bandaranaike's car drew up under

our porch at Bambalapitiya. As soon as I saw Sir Solomon I rushed up and opened the door for him—As a schoolboy I was a great admirer of this gentleman, the country squire and I was often taken to his Walawa by my grandfather whenever we went to Kandy—he stepped out of his car followed by his son, greeted me and went up to my grandfather the late Hon. W. M. Abdul Raheman who was seated on the verandah on his lounge chair as usual. Before my grandfather could even greet him, Sir Solomon burst out in Sinhalese—"Abdul, this Son of mine will not listen to what I have to say. He is determined to contest the Maradana seat, so I have come to you and am now handing him over to you. You will have to win this seat for him and I know that you can do it". That was about all that I overheard before I walked away.

Within the next few days the late Hon. Abdul Raheman sent for the prominent and influential Muslims living in the Maradana area. A large number arrived and after the usual refreshments had been served he casually informed them that he was interested in the Maradana seat. The gathering straight away thought that 'Honorable' as he was fondly called was going to put his son Razik to contest this seat. The next bomb shell was that his best and dear friend's son Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike was seeking election to this ward. There was dead silence for a minute or so and then someone asked him in Tamil "what could such a young fellow do against Gunasinghe?" The old gent promptly relled that being Sir Solomon's son was enough and that he would carry on the good work and name of the family. He instructed these gentlemen to go around the electorate and make it known to all the voters that "Honorable" was working for young Bandaranaike and that it was their duty to see that he won this seat. A week or so later I accompanied my grandfather who went around in his car stopping at certain houses and getting down. Crowds quickly gathered and he was welcomed and assured that his friend's son will win this seat. My grandfather was a popular figure in and out of the community and hardly anyone would say 'no' to a request made by him as he

never asked for favours. On election day I accompanied the old gent who went round the ward talking to people. After winning the seat the Maha Mudaliyar called with his Son to thank my grandfather. He just brushed it off saying that he hardly did anything but all the credit should go to the Muslim community living in the Maradana area—certainly these voters did not come under the category of "the great unwashed". As good Muslims most of these simple folk took ablution five times a day before saying their prayers.

Our late Prime Minister, Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike always gave credit to the late Hon. Abdul Raheman for starting him off on his political career.

The Maha Mudaliyar, as far as I can remember, never went around this electorate as he had entrusted his Son to his friend and colleague the late Hon. W. M. Abdul Raheman.

I trust you will be good enough to publish this correction in fairness to a man who never sort publicity and was always the friend of the poor.

Sharker Mohideen.

441 1/1, Galle Road,
Colombo 6.
19.6.76

* Portugal

Sir,

That Portugal sought and found admission to the deliberations of the Non-aligned Conference is "a source of great gratification to those acquisition with her history. It is also a very healthy sign that her people have an open mind. The Portuguese followed the Spaniards in the sixteenth century expansion of Catholicism. Her history can be read in the "Temporal and Spiritual Conquest of Ceylon" translated from the Portuguese into English by the late Fr. S. G. Pereira, a well-known historian of Ceylon. Though Portugal is accused of "imperialism" or "colonialism" in common with Holland and England, in being of time in the territories held by her, the

teaching which can express her in this regard is within the Catholic Church and is to be found in a Catholic doctrine which teaches that the Catholic Church is militant, that is, goes out to conquer in the power of the Lord and holds dominion over territories and when time is no longer of the Lord in the land the Catholic Church is proclaimed as triumphant in time. As a boy I remember to have studied this doctrine in the Catechism at school more than half a century ago and I believe that it is from ignorance of such a teaching that these lands are spoken of i.e. Portugal, Holland and England, in the contemptuous or vituperative designation of 'imperialism' or "Colonism".

It is the Pope of Rome, the head of the Catholic Church, who can speak with authority of being of these lands in time in the doctrine I have mentioned.

H. C. G. Van Dort.

29/1, Sumanarama Road,
Mount Lavinia.
19.8.1976

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• Press Centre—1

IS IT NOT A FACT that the *Daily Mirror* was the only English daily which spotlighted the mess that was the Press Centre? That whilst the fullest praise must be given for all the other arrangements made for the Conference—in the BMICH, in the Conference Secretariat, in regard to arrangements for accommodation, transport, traffic security, and a host of other interconnected matters—the disgraceful happenings in the Press Centre cannot be ignored or overlooked? That, as had been stressed in this paper and elsewhere, the highest praise must be given to all the postal, telephonic and telecommunication facilities at the Press Centre, yet it would be wrong, in the national interest, to gloss over (as some VIP circles are seeking to do) happenings in the Press Centre which had led to several threats by foreign pressmen to stage a walkout? That the *Daily Mirror*, on Monday August 23, following the stories it had published earlier, had a frontpage eye-opener under the heading THEFTS REPORTED AT PRESS CENTRE? That the report read: *“foreign pressmen working at the Press Centre have reported to the police the loss of various items which they had kept on tables: police sources said yesterday that the items reported lost were expensive fountain pens and ball points, cigarette lighters and other items which the visiting journalists used while reporting the Non-aligned Summit Conference from the Centre: a senior police officer said that they found more outsiders than journalists making use of the Press Centre and it was difficult to prevent further cases of theft unless a permanent force of policemen was placed on duty inside the Centre: it was originally agreed that no policeman was required as the Centre would be only for the use of Pressmen: ‘but contrary to these, plans’ he said, ‘the people who worked at the centre brought in wives, children and relations?’ That this is an understatement of the vast numbers who had overrun the Press Centre? That whilst tight security measures were enforced in regard to pressmen with photo-passes and*

what not, the so-called “staff” and “workers” at the Press Centre were issued printed slips of paper in which “names” were scrawled under a red legend STAFF or OFFICIAL? That whilst a handful could be identified as genuine staff and working officials, there was a vast horde (which increased day by day) without any such labels affixed to them? That in the first phase, many of the “staff” and “officials” went out and handed over their badges to friends and others to gain entry—and once their faces became familiar to the security guards checking the Pressmen, members of the public were allowed to float in and out of the place without let or hindrance? After a while (from the third day onwards) the multitude was inside the Press Centre? That Pressmen were not able either to record the speeches on tape-recorders or even taken down shorthand transcripts? That one closed room for journalists was free of outsiders a day but the multitude soon invaded this room also? But the number of seats in the room was insufficient for even a fraction of the pressmen? That all other viewers were taken over by the outsiders? That these outsiders even wandered into the “closed” room where the journalists were typing copy and where some of the telex machine were located? That these outsiders walked in and walked around this “typewriter pool” and gazed at the pressmen hammering away at the typewriters to beat the deadlines in different parts of the world in the same way that the public gaze at animals in a zoo? That the annoyance and indignation of pressmen was great but there was nothing they could do? That men and women, wearing “Official” and “Staff” badges brought groups of their friends, relations and others to show them how journalists worked, how the wire agencies (AFP, Samachar and Reuter) had space inside the big room) operated, how the telex messages were taken over and how the Nashua copies were obtained? That every group of the public were taken on conducted tours by such “officials” and “staff” to every part of the Press Centre where journalists were working? That journalists from different countries were pointed out to such groups in the way that one showed a new specimen in the zoo? That this went on

every day right to the very (bitter) end? That every time foreign pressmen had protested the centre was cleared of part of the outsiders for a few hours and then the same pandemonium was restored? The local pressmen were totally ignored (in fact humiliated) by the Press Centre dictators each time they had sought to point out such shortcomings? That local pressmen were aware that accreditation had been refused to the entire periodical press in the island on the ground that the press Centre would be short of space? That some local correspondents of reputed foreign papers (stringers) were also denied accreditation for no known reasons? That this column will take up the question of accreditation in a subsequent issue but in this piece the focus will be on the many consequences that stemmed from making the Press Centre a marketplace for the general public? That if the friends of those connected with the Press Centre were entitled to receive the benefit of a TV show, then the press centre dictators should have set up a few viewers at the Sugathadasa Stadium and other public parks? That in these circumstances it seems funny that some top VIPs should be heard saying that the Press Centre was a wonderful place with excellent arrangements for foreign journalists? That such arrangements had not been available at many international conferences? That it was true that on the first and second days, many foreign pressmen had said that the arrangements for working and the telecommunication facilities were excellent? That it was true that these, by themselves, continued to be excellent right up to the end? That the comments of foreign pressmen after the multitude had entered the place, were different? That one foreign pressman had cynically declared that it seemed to him that a kind of “cultural revolution” had overtaken Sri Lanka initiated by the dictators at the Press Centre? That those who invaded the Press Centre also helped themselves to the bulk of the documents and other material intended for pressmen—many of whom had to go without them or borrow them from journalists who had been able to obtain copies in the uncontrollable scramble that arose each time documents were distributed?



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