

# TRIBUNE

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## DUDLEY SENANAYAKE

WHATEVER be the explanations for the vast multitudes which had paid homage to Dudley Senanayake in his death, there is not the slightest doubt that there was universal respect and admiration for the man who played such an important and decisive role in the affairs of this country during the last forty years. It was in the mid-thirties that Dudley Senanayake entered the political arena, and the crowds which queued up this week to file past his coffin is ample testimony to the impact Dudley Senanayake had made on the people of this country. Although he was fundamentally a conservative traditionalist, he was far more liberal, rational and human in the truest sense of the word than many who now parade as progressive radicals.

THE DEATH of Dudley Senanayake marks the end of an era in Sri Lanka, an era where the values of liberal humanitarianism verging on dangerous welfarism was interwoven into the fabric of adult-franchise parliamentary politics. Dudley Senanayake has died at a time when no politician or political party can for long afford to give free rice, free medicine and free education to the voters in Sri Lanka. The Achilles heel of Dudley Senanayake's politics was the fatal belief that subsidies culminating in free rice was essential for uplifting the masses. The verdict of history will not be kind to the economics Dudley practised, which has sapped the moral fibre of the nation, but as a human who loved his fellow beings and sought to lighten their burdens, he will be remembered long in this country. *Tribune* has disagreed with many of the political and economic actions of Dudley Senanayake, but we have unhesitatingly extended support to him in all his actions which we felt was in the national interest. Dudley Senanayake was a reader of *Tribune* ever since its inception in 1954, and to many associated with *Tribune* he was more than a mere friend. With him it was possible to maintain friendship and mutual respect even in total disagreement—and this cannot be said of many other leading personalities in Sri Lanka today. Dudley Senanayake died comparatively young, but as this country is passing into an era when free rice will soon become a suicidal mirage, it can be said that the world of Dudley Senanayake is no more.

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# Tribune

## ABOUT OURSELVES AND SRI LANKA

WITH THIS NUMBER we begin Volume Eighteen (18) of *Tribune*. In normal circumstances, each volume has covered a space of one year or 52 issues—the paper was always a weekly except in the period after June 1971 when we had re-started the paper after a period of suspension. From June 30, 1971 we had published the paper three times a month, and we had announced that the volume would consist of 60 numbers covering a period of about 20 months.

We have now completed this volume. It was a difficult period where we had many technical difficulties of production apart from other setbacks. But, nevertheless we have registered a significant growth in our readership in this period—a readership which is now demanding that we appear every week, every Saturday as before. We hope that we will be able to do this in the near future.

THE FIRST NUMBER of *Tribune* was published on May 1, 1954. As we have mentioned *Tribune* has been in continuous publication from 1954 to this day, except for two short periods of suspension: first during the Emergency immediately after the communal riots in 1958, from May to December, and then again from November 1970 to June 1971. The second suspension marked a new

phase in the developmental history of *Tribune*. Earlier, the paper had often been tempted or inclined to adopt partisan attitudes on certain questions and also in regard to political parties and groups. This kind of partisanship was at its height in the early sixties when certain political parties had no newspapers of their own and *Tribune* had often stood single-handed on their side against the thunder and power of the daily papers.

But with the beginning of the seventies, the situation had changed. In fact, the situation had begun to change in the second half of the sixties. Every political party had developed a press of its own and the big daily papers which had earlier monolithically stood for one party began to switch their loyalties from time to time between the different political parties. *Tribune* was slow to react to this new situation but slowly but surely the paper went back to the original objective of being a non-partisan journal dedicated to objective impartiality and a sturdy independence while providing an open forum for a varied range of opinions.

WE BEGIN volume eighteen in critical times, not only in Sri Lanka but also in the world at large. The pages of *Tribune* in the coming months will reflect the his-

tory, as it unfolds itself, in the island, as in the rest of the world. There is not the slightest doubt that the Government will face serious and difficult problems in this country, in the coming months. Apart from everything else, the simple question of cash liquidity, both internal and external, will tax the "golden brains" of this Government to the fullest. The IMF is likely to permit the customary stand-by credit of 25 million dollars for the coming year too, but probably with some stiff conditions that the Government must reduce budgetary deficits and also cut down subsidies still further in order

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TRIBUNE, April 20, 1973



to have cash for development work. The Aid Consortium has granted 65 million dollars of commodity aid, mainly in flour and fertilisers.

The Prime Minister and other Ministers have begun a campaign to grow more food. They now use unashamedly this slogan which they had shunned earlier because it had been one of the main planks of Dudley Senanayake and the UNP. The PM had instead used the term Production Year to avoid using the slogan grow more food, when she launched her grow more trees programme on January 1, but with the passage of time everybody has now slipped into the familiar slogan of grow-more-food.

AGRICULTURE in Sri Lanka is still moving at a snail's pace in spite of the Land Reform Act and the Agricultural Productivity Act. We have even receded from the bullock-cart age because we have no draught bulls to do any work. We are now crawling along like snails. Though the tractor is with us, most of us are dragged only by snails. The *Shamba* series in this paper reflects the stage of agricultural development in which the vast bulk of the rural population are buried in. Anatory Bukoba who writes this series is making a heroic effort to develop one-acre of land on means and the capital a little greater than what a normal peasant or middle class youth (who wants to be a self-employed farmer) can muster. The articles show the kind of progress which is possible. Even a snail will move faster at times. But such is the

reality of agriculture in Sri Lanka.

Daily we have an overdose of statistics of the wonders being performed in the rural sector and about gallant achievements in production being notched by the Five Year Plan. There is not the slightest doubt that many of our politicians have the supreme capacity to delude themselves and there are bureaucrats to furnish them with statistics to bolster their hallucinations. Statistics torn of out context and often based on half truths cannot make fiction into fact even though the SLBC repeats each item of such tendentious news three to five times. Ever since the SLBC started repeating each news item with propaganda value at least three times, the number of people who switch off the radio, whenever the mournful dirge which heralds the news broadcasts comes on the air, has increased. If our readers want to know how agricultural work is going on in our rural areas, they should read and re-read every instalment in our *Shamba* series with care.

What is going on in the agricultural sector today is a far cry from the crash programme needed to induce genuine productive activity among our farmers.

IN SRI LANKA we had a long stretch of holidays this month. From April 11/12 to April 18 was one spell of continuous shut down, and then after two working days Easter will cover the 20th to the 22nd. Though the second stretch will not be total holidays like the

first, many if not most people will take official as well as unofficial (and French) leave on the 18th and 19th and return to work only on the 23rd. Thus for over ten days from the 12th to the 22nd, the nation will be on holiday, production will lag, governmental activity will be at a standstill and nothing can or will be done. This is symptomatic of the Sri Lanka of today. The Government is more anxious to demonstrate its advanced labour legislation about paid holidays and the like than get down to a job of work in actual production. With this unbelievably long stretch of holidays, *Tribune's* schedules will be upset, but there is nothing we can do about it. Sri Lanka has more paid holidays for its workers than any other country in Asia including China, and it can be said that these holidays are more than even in many advanced industrialised countries.

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It is therefore useful, from time to time at least, to see ourselves as others see us. In *This Issue*, we have reproduced an article from the *Hindustan Times* entitled **WELFARE MINUS GROWTH IN SRI LANKA** by B. G. Verghese. It is a sober and most evaluation of the situation and those who still seem to be lost in the euphoria of United Front slogans will do well to read this article with care. The Editor in his *Rambling Notes* has some acidic observations about the kind of socialism which the United Front has sought to establish. He terms it *ad-hoc* socialism, meaning uncertain measures on a piecemeal basis. It is becoming increasingly clear that we cannot have the best of two worlds: either we have to go completely socialist on a fully regimented and controlled basis in all aspects of life and living or we should stick to capitalism with its many shortcomings—a mixed economy, such as the one the United Front wants to create can only land us into the kind of economic muddle we are in now. What we want immediately is increased economic production and basic economic development which would take us to a breakthrough into affluence. If we cannot achieve this through the UF mixed economy (and socialism through democratic means), we must stick to capitalism until we are able to make a real go for socialism. The current *ad-hoc*ism will take us down and down the path of economic stagnation.

## RAMBLING NOTES FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

### Ad-hocism will not bring Socialism:

#### Free Rice and now Free Wages make matters worse

OVER THE RADIO and through the press, Ministers and other government spokesmen are daily exhorting people to switch to foodstuffs which can be grown here, and they are, at the same time appealing to all and sundry to grow more food. This is a far cry from the kind of speeches made when the United Front came to power in 1970. The UNP grow-more food was derided and everything which the last Government had done, however constructive, useful and correct, was rejected. People were told that once the reactionaries were curbed and the UF programme was implemented, an era of plenty would be ushered in.

Economists, including experts from the IMF and the World Bank, had stated very clearly in 1969 and in 1970

that Sri Lanka had to adopt some very positively austere measures not only to rectify the mistakes made by the UNP but also meet the critical times ahead owing to the international trade and monetary crisis which was looming large on the horizon (the danger signals had come to a head in 1969), but the UF government in its cocksure complacency did not pay any heed to these warnings. It was certain that its policy of introducing socialism through "democratic means" and through a transition *via media* of a "mixed economy" would bring about a miraculous transformation within a short time. The advice of economists was rejected as bourgeois subversion.

Three years have gone by and this country is in a worse muddle than ever before. People refuse to believe that the past transgressions of the UNP alone is responsible for all this, nor do they accept the insurgency of 1971 had subverted all governmental efforts at economic reconstruction. Now the latest excuse is that world economic trends had taken everything beyond the control of the government. People will be inclined to accept this on its face value if there had been no warnings as early as 1970 that a world economic crisis was round the corner.

THREE YEARS AGO, Minister Illangaratne made exuberant speeches about the glorious future before Sri Lanka—once his policy of nationalisation and take-over of trade was implemented. People were led to believe

In The Next  
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MORE ABOUT

**DUDLEY  
SENANAYAKE**



that the policy of the United Front would bring under control not only the internal flow of trade in a way that would eliminate the evils of capitalism but also circumvent the fluctuations of the external world of trade with all its turbulence. Socialism was a magic that would do wonders and with the socialist bloc of countries to render assistance, Sri Lanka would mount the heights of supreme economic achievement.

Only very recently Minister Illangarante issued the following statement:

"People are having to queue up for bread although the quantity of flour that is being distributed each week is nearly the same as the weekly issues last year. This is due to the fact that during the last two or three weeks there has been a marked increase in the consumption of flour in the island. This increase in consumption of flour has been caused by Government having to take certain drastic measures such as the banning of the sale and transport of rice and restricting the free market in rice. This is one of the causes for the increased demand for flour; but this was necessary to maximise the purchase of locally produced paddy by the Paddy Marketing Board, reduce our imports of rice as far as possible and ensure an equitable distribution of available rice under the rationing scheme.

"As it is well known now, there is a world shortage of flour and rice. Flour which was available at £40 per ton last year costs £75 per ton

this year and rice which was available in the world market at about £35 per ton, now costs £75 per ton.

"Sri Lanka's foreign exchange earnings, which have not shown any appreciable increase, have now to be apportioned between foodstuffs costing twice as much as before and other essential goods. In view of the 100 per cent increase in the price of flour and rice, the most that can be done in the circumstances is to see that flour supplies are maintained at the same levels as last year.

"The world shortage in rice and flour as well as that in Sri Lanka are due to natural causes beyond human control. In the circumstances we have to be prepared to do with less of foodstuffs such as rice and flour which we are accustomed to and to make do as far as possible with subsidiary foodstuffs such as local grains, millet, sweet potatoes and manioc.

"I would also appeal to bakeries to use their quota of flour more for bread making than for confectioneries."

This statement speaks for itself.

Other Ministers now make similarly pitiful appeals though some of them chose to clothe their appeals in boastful statements of the great successes already scored. Nobody believes these statements about successes. People stand in queues for some essentials. Other essentials are not available. Food prices have soared upwards. They are angry but there is nothing they can do about

it. The UNP has offered no near alternative. Dudley Senanayake is still boasting about the free rice he gave the people. The Left Parties have lost their identity and they are merged in the Establishment. The JVP lost its appeal in premature anarchism and nihilistic terrorism.

*And the Government therefore has a continued lease of life.*

*Will they go on blundering as they have done so far?*

The Five Year Plan was launched over a year ago, but everybody knows that it has not got started. There is money to implement the Five Year Plan. Production Year was launched on January 1 this year. What has anybody to show for it? A few chilli plants and a few patches of manioc will not bring about an economic transformation.

IT IS TIME that our pundits in the UF climbed down from the high pedestal of complacent cock-sureness about the miraculous efficacy of the UF programme and sat down to examine self-critically why everything has gone awry.

One fact stands out. The *via media* of a mixed economy has proved to be flop. Socialism cannot be introduced by *ad hoc* measures to tinker with the economy. The Land Reform Act, the Agricultural Productivity Act, the Control of Housing and Incomes, Compulsory Savings and a whole host of other measures adopted by this Government are no more than *ad hoc* measures to knock



dents into the economy or flatten bulges in the economic structure.

Partial nationalisation and random take-overs will not bring socialism. They are no more than additional *ad hoc* measures to satisfy the ego of new elite bureaucracy thirsting to show their smart *alec* cleverness in transforming the economy from capitalism to socialism through "democratic" bureaucratism. When a stupid bureaucrat sold 25,000 tons of coconut oil forward and sold nearly 20,000 tons of poonac it was claimed that they were steps which would bring in socialism.

In whichever direction we turn, the United Front government has been satisfied with *ad hoc* measures to meet immediate problems on a short-sighted basis. In agriculture, production has dropped whatever be the claims of the bureaucrats of the Ministry of Agriculture. The farmer is not in a mood to co-operate with the Government in a crash programme of production. Legislation has been sectarian, and party enthusiasts have induced the Government into further *ad hoc* measures to rob Peter to pay Paul and *vice versa*. Grudges and election scores have been paid off under grandiose political formulations with a osuedo Marxism flavour.

*One thing is clear that all hoc measures of the Government have not taken the country one step nearer socialism.*

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE Dr. N. M. Perera, before he left for Washington last

month to attend urgent monetary conferences held a press conference. The report which appeared in the *Daily News* is reproduced below. Like Mr. Illangaratne's statement, the views expressed by Dr. N. M. Perera speak for themselves. No comment is called for except to say the *ad-hocism* of the Government, especially in financial matters, has led to the present sorry state of our economy.

At least for the record, it is worthwhile reproducing the press interview of the Minister of Finance. Future generations can see for themselves how *ad hocism* in financial policies, with little or no appreciation of the implications of the intricate currency and trade system of the modern world, have reduced Sri Lanka to a miserable position.

"Sri Lanka has to find an additional 400 million rupees in foreign exchange because of inflationary conditions in the outside world since November last year when the third budget of the United Front Government was introduced. Disclosing this at a press conference yesterday, Finance Minister Dr. N. M. Perera, said it was a staggering blow to a country already facing a severe exchange shortage. Dr. Perera was speaking a few hours before his departure for Washington to attend a meeting of the Group of 24 and the Group of 20 regarding monetary reform proposals.

"Referring to the acute foreign exchange crisis foisted on Sri Lanka—and over this the government had

absolutely no control—the Minister of Finance said it was regrettable that many politicians did not seem to appreciate this situation and were ignoring the crisis for their own political benefit. This crisis was not created by us. It has been imposed on us by virtue of our smallness and dependence on imports for our existence and since we are mainly an exporter of primary commodities, Dr. Perera said.

"When the dollar was first devalued Sri Lanka decided to tie the rupee to the dollar but quickly restored the sterling-rupee link because it was found that since the dollar was weak and sterling was stronger at that time, Sri Lanka was being exploited. For example, it benefitted big firms to invoice for tea in sterling rather than dollars owing to the fluctuations in the dollar-rupee relationship. They were only exploiting a situation by speculating. It was estimated that Sri Lanka would have lost about £ 100,000 sterling by this speculation owing to the rupee-dollar link.

"This shows how careful we have to be. We are now with the sterling which is floating but we cannot say with certainty what the future is going to be, Dr. Perera said. Sterling once considered a strong currency, was now floating and many other countries had decided to float their currencies—e.g. Canada, Italy, Japan, and Switzerland amongst developed countries.

"The Group of 24 and the Group of 20 were concer-



ned with monetary reform which "is now in the melting pot". Dr. Perera emphasised: "I do not think we have ever been faced with a situation like this in the world. In a sense there is no currency that is really stable. The United States dollar has been twice devalued and even sterling, a stable currency, is now afloat."

"What can we do?" asked the Minister of Finance. "We are strongly advocating and urging the developed countries to give heed to the liquidity requirements of the poorer countries. We are asking for a more equitable allocation of Special Drawing Rights (commonly known as Paper Gold).

"The Finance Minister explained that the S.D.Rs given to Sri Lanka two years ago (Sri Lanka received 13 million dollars in 1970 and 11 million dollars in 1972) were hardly enough to match our developing needs. The existing allocation of SDRs benefitted only the developed countries he said, because it was based on the quotas held with the IMF. Those who had bigger quotas naturally got more SDRs. Dr. Perera said that Sri Lanka was one of the developing countries that was propagating the idea of a "link" between development finance and SDRs as a way of meeting the liquidity problems of the developing countries. The idea had encountered opposition from the rich countries, especially from those who had the biggest gold reserves.

"Dr. Perera said that such a link, which has been under discussion for the past few

years, could do a lot to meet the liquidity problems of countries like Sri Lanka. For example, Sri Lanka needed about 100 million dollars a year for the next five years to meet the needs of her development plan. How could they muster the resources?

"The present SDR allocation was barely adequate for this purpose. At the last aid meeting nearly 65 million dollars had been pledged for Sri Lanka, he said but this aid would not be coming in till after June because a number of procedural matters had to be fulfilled.

"Dr. Perera said that this type of aid that came from the Consortium was "tied" aid. Sri Lanka had to buy her requirements from the country that was giving aid. There was no other alternative even though goods would be cheaper elsewhere. He said that in Sri Lanka's present crisis they welcomed aid that was offered under PL 480 because the re-payment term was spread over a very long period.

"Before going to Washington, Dr. Perera will be in London for discussions with the Commonwealth Relations Office on certain aspects of the aid the United Kingdom is giving Sri Lanka."

The United Front in 1970 had laughed at the World Bank, the IMF and its SDRs as instruments of bourgeois monopoly capital. Today, the UF Government sings a different tune.

THE LATEST ANNUAL report of the Central Bank of the "socialist" United Front Government makes it clear

that the Government is heading for disaster unless some drastic remedies are taken almost immediately. It will be some time before some of *Tribune* analysts study the report in full, but in the meantime excerpts from the Report which have appeared in the daily press make revealing reading demonstrate the futility of *ad-hocism*.

The *Daily Mirror* highlighted the following:—

"The food subsidy bill has risen rapidly in the last few years. Although successful and determined efforts have been made to mobilise additional domestic resources, the absence of a more positive approach towards curtailing current expenditure, particularly transfer expenditure, resulted in revenue gains being merely frittered away on non-development expenditure

"This is highlighted in the Annual Report for 1972 of the Central Bank of Ceylon issued yesterday.

"The report points out that as long as transfer payments make a heavy claim on available resources, the realisation of development aims will be thwarted by having less money to finance the development efforts. As long as the scale of such outlays on transfers are not kept within limits, aims of development will be frustrated," it adds

"Here are some other highlights of the report:—

"The gross national product at constant prices increased by 2.5 per cent compared to a rate of growth of 0.9 per cent in 1971.



When allowance is made for the population increase of 2.1 per cent in 1972, the increase in real product per person was only 0.4 per cent.

"The increase in money supply was wholly confined to the last quarter of the year. This was entirely due to "fortuitous circumstances arising from the bank strike. As a result of this strike the Government was compelled to raise Rs. 300m by way of Treasury Bills.

"The balance of payments on current account continued to remain adverse and became more unfavourable than in the previous year. Despite stringent controls, import surplus was larger than in 1971, and was mainly caused by the higher prices of imports.

"Currency alignments also caused prices to move up whilst at the same time pushing up the country's debt servicing burden.

"Government revenue increased by 17 per cent while its expenditure rose by 12 per cent over the previous year.

"The anticipated revenue from the approved Estimates for the 1971-72 Budget was Rs 3,945 million. Provisional data revealed that the actual performance had in fact been higher; the total revenue collections amounted to Rs. 4,192 million.

"The average Colombo Consumer's Price Index went up by 6.3 per cent in 1972, compared to a modest increase of 2.7 per cent in 1971. There was a steady increase of prices throughout the year. Shortage of imported goods and of domestically produced

items and several other factors exerted an upward pressure on prices. Increase in the Business Turnover Tax and the FEECs rate influenced the increase in prices in the last quarter."

The *Daily News* focussed attention on these and other matters:—

"In 1972 Sri Lanka's economic growth as measured by the Gross National Product increased by 2.5 per cent compared to a rate of growth of 0.9 per cent in 1971 according to the report of the Central Bank for 1971. The report prepared under the authority of the Monetary Board comprising Mr. H. E. Tennekoon, Governor, Mr. C. A. Coorey, Secretary to the Treasury and Mr. M. Rajendra, Appointed Member was handed over to the acting Minister of Finance, Mr. Bernard Soysa yesterday.

"The report states, that when allowance is made for the increase in population in 1972 of 2.1 per cent the increase in real product per person was only 0.4 per cent. The increase in total real product was largely due to an expansion in output of goods for domestic use specially livestock products fish, subsidiary food crops and coconut.

"This increase offset the fall in output of tea, paddy and rubber. In money terms GNP rose to Rs. 12,662 million from its value in 1971 of Rs. 11,828 an increase of 7.1 per cent. With an estimated population of 13 million real product per capita increased by only 0.4 per cent from Rs. 764 to Rs. 769.

"The overall growth rate in 1972 of 2.5 per cent was far below the target growth rate in the Government's Five Year Plan of 6.1 per cent according to the report. This indicates clearly that in the next four years the average growth rate has to be stepped up to 7.0 per cent to keep to the required target.

"The report adds that in the very first year of the plan a number of internal and external factors had affected its implementation. These factors had multiplied the problems the planners have to face since the plan itself was drawn up.

"In this connection the Bank report says there are serious deficiencies in the quantity quality and timeliness of data that are basic to the reviewing of economic progress. It mentions that detailed statistics on Sri Lanka's export and import trade are not available from 1970.

"The report says that in several sectors of the economy the performance rate was far below the target in rate in the Plan. Other salient facts in the report:—

"*Food Subsidy:* There is an absence of a more positive approach to curtailing expenditure and as a result revenue gains are merely frittered away.

"*Exports:* Investments in tea, rubber and coconut is falling and fertiliser applications on these properties has declined. It is of national importance that an indiffe-



rent production effort should not lead to a fall in export earnings.

**"Foreign Aid:** Foreign aid has to be treated as a kind of first aid required to resuscitate the economy and provide a healthy balance of payments and economic expansion without reducing or minimising efforts required to mobilise Sri Lanka's own resources.

**"Imports:** A critical look has to be taken at the items of mass consumption—rice, flour and sugar with a view to effecting notable economies. Total imports in 1972 were Rs. 2,687 million compared to Rs. 2,586 million in 1971.

**Earnings:** Tourist earnings reached Rs. 32 million in 1972 compared to Rs. 20 million in 1971. Gem exports amounted to Rs. 12.3 million compared to Rs. 3.4 million in 1971. Total exports in 1972 were Rs. 2,336 million compared to Rs. 2,265 million in 1971."

IN THE MEANTIME lay-offs and retrenchment have become the order of the day in the industrial and agricultural undertakings. Furthermore, owing to lack of working capital and other liquidity problems, many estates are unable to pay the wages of workers. Advance payments of taxes and other non-productive expenditure, compelled by the government, have made it impossible for many undertakings to carry on.

**But the Minister of Labour and the Government are compelling employers in the private sector to dip into reserves (if any) or incur debts to pay workers even if they are not doing any work (for lack of raw materials and other causes).**

This is a terrible state of affairs. Money is being expended as wages though no productive work is done. This amounts to expenditure for consumption. All economists, bourgeois, marxist and mixed economy fanatics, have stressed that it would be suicidal for Sri Lanka to expend money on consumption. That every little bit of capital must be channelled into productive uses. That payment of wages for doing no work is the height of consumption expenditure.

*We have free rice, and now we have free wages—all without doing any work to earn it.*

*Ad hoc* welfarism, like free rice and free wages, will not bring socialism. Nor is it socialism. We have the high authority of Prime Minister Chou En-lai that free rice, free medicine and other free benefits did not mean socialism. We can now add free wages to this list of Sri Lanka's welfare bounties.

We are already on the brink.

Many think it is already too late, but we believe in the old adage that is never too late.

We must either go in for full-blooded socialism—takeover and nationalise everything with one stroke of the pen, establish a dictatorship of the workers and peasants under one party, regiment the economy and all life, restrict civil liberties and slave-drive the working people into full production, and thereby bring in socialism.

Or, we must take two steps back, and rely on capitalism with all its shortcomings, inequalities and disabilities, and induce production through the incentive of profit, individual as well as corporate. We have to induce profitable and purposeful economic activity—or perish.

One thing is clear: that illusions and delusions that mixed economy will bring socialism in its wake, that hallucinations about the efficacy of *ad hoc* measures, must go.

The options are clear.

What next?

For News Behind  
the News

Read

TRIBUNE

Regularly.



SHAMBA

## ON DIGGING IN

MARCH 1 — 12

By ANATORY BUKOBA

March 1: I was up, early this morning and no nonsense about it. All the water had to be hauled up from the river. It was carried in an *attili* up a slope full of roots, rocks and slippery looking earth. There was the jak tree, now just a tiny sapling, to be watered and the *lawulu* tree, now just a little bigger than the jak. There were also the four plantain shoots. Each one of these required a separate journey to the river and a full *attili* of water. *Kekiri* and *pani kumbutu* plants they are really creepers—had to be planted before the sun got up, and these required water both to make the holes for them, and also after they were planted. The four *murunga* trees had to go in; water was needed for them in the same way as for the creepers.

We kept our four papaw plants and the mango sapling until this evening. Water was needed to soften the earth to dig holes for them, as with the *murunga*.

Some of what we have cleared looks a bit planted up now. I put some flower plants in this evening—do not know what they are, but I had found them growing locally, and they seem to flower all throughout the year.

All we have planted, except the *murunga* and the plantains, have to be protec-

ted from the sun during the day, by covering the soil around them with dried grass.

There are only two of us, but as the area around here is well-habited, and as it is also neither an old colony nor an old village, we cannot leave our house unprotected for fear of thieves. We have only a *cadjan* house and no doors. Anybody could walk in and away with anything if we were not here. This sort of life does not give us much freedom.

There has been the problem of food. Bread and plantains, the latter sold at an exorbitant rate, has been our diet for a week, but today we made *rotis* with some wheat flour a family had received on their ration books. Rice is almost unprocurable if you have no ration books, and we have not seen any yet. The coconut which we bought to make the *roti* cost forty cents, a fortune, I should think, for any coconut planter, if he received that price for his nuts.

March 2: The *kekiri* and the *pani kumbutu* plants look quite dead, but I am still watering them in the hope that their appearances is deceptive and that they may survive. I do not think I gave them enough water yesterday morning when I had to plant them as they

were delivered here at dusk the night before. and I felt it wise not to keep them unplanted till the evening. The day is appallingly hot, and I should think enough to kill anything.

Not all the papaw looks good, too. Some of their leaves are wilting as well as they might in this sun. The mango looks well, though. Not much can go wrong with the *murunga*. We have planted them in a long line below our boundary with the road and the public footpath that leads to the river.

The monkeys were on both sides of us today, but none intruded on the land. We have made our first *messa*, and for the first time since we moved in nine days ago, we shall be sleeping off the floor. It is a great relief not to be on the ground any longer, and the point was brought home to us when we killed two *mapilas* under a pile of *cadjans* just outside our *pol-athu* house this evening. I had moved the pile of *cadjans* only to have to move them again when a *mapila* under the last *cadjan* escaped and went back again into the new pile. With the aid of a friend, I moved them again only to find two *mapilas* this time. My friend made short work of them, but only just in time to prevent one of them again escaping once more into the yet newly laid pile. We burnt them on top of a pile of rubbish. With the time spent making the *messa* we barely had time to do any watering, and the plantains and the mango had to go without it.



Someone gave us a present of some *parripu* or dhal today and we got our first measure of rice. It cost us Rs. 1/60.

March 3: It looks as if we are in our first land dispute since we came here. There is man with buffaloes who has become used to taking them down to the river across this land. With the way we have planted our young trees, his buffaloes, which like all buffaloes hardly know what a path is for cannot but damage them if they continue to cross the land on the way to the river. Now one of his family is trying to claim a right of way.

There is a short cut to the river which by long usage may well be a public way and if he opts for this, we shall still have to put up a fence to make sure they do not stray and get among the young *murunga* cuttings. I am hoping to persuade him not to come this way at all but, that will not be easy, because this is his easiest way. There is no other route so clearly defined in all its stages. I can console myself that these difficulties do not arise without some reason.

We cooked our first rice and curry. The curry tasted good, although it had none of the usual trappings of curry powder, chilli and kaha. Some years ago, I was made to understand that no curry could be made without these. With the curry we had wild *karapincha*, a coconut and a lime instead and, I had almost forgot to say, a piece of cinnamon. We had some

*pappadung*, too. A few seconds on the fire in hot coconut oil was all they needed, and what a job it was to clean up the *attili* they were cooked in, when it came to "washing up."

March 4: We repeated the curry the next day, and we put in more lime, and it tasted much better. Plantains are a terrible price, such small ones, too, but I hear that the man who grows them gets four cents for an *ambul* and eight cents for a *koli kuttu*. The cultivator sells them when they are too green to eat, and he sells them a bunch at a time and not in half dozens. There are several combs on a bunch.

Ordinary coir rope can be quite a price. It is usually sold by the *kerrali* and not by weight in these out-of-the-way places. It seems to me that the actual length of a *kerrali* can vary quite a lot.

The sun is appallingly hot. Someone was trying to tell me this evening that it is better not to water in the evenings because the ground is too hot and watering tends to bake the plants. Others say that unless you put in enough water, it is better not to water at all, because a little water has this same baking effect. My own feeling is that there can be no hard rule about it.

March 8: Tonight there was no bread at the place I usually get it. One person said the price of flour is going up tomorrow, and that bread will cost sixty cents a loaf, and stocks are being

hoarded to await the event. As time will have elapsed before this gets into print, there can be no harm in repeating that rumour here. Another said, more simply, just that there is no flour. So we ate our supper and we hope to find something for breakfast tomorrow when tomorrow comes; only we shall have to go out to fetch it first.

This evening I did some tidying up, and also cut up some more sticks for my *massa* tables. The small jak plant is definitely all right. It is the eighteen-month variety, which means it will give us fruit in exactly eighteen months. That is something. I tidied up all my seeds and put them in a cellophane bag, so that they will not get lost. I ate my last remaining *lawulu* and kept that seed too. It is a big seed, as they all are.

My feet are in a bad way, several very painful places, some slightly septic. A good penicillin injection should cure that, but the nearest hospital is miles away. I hope they right themselves. The trouble is that a wound invariably acts as a magnet for another thorn prick. Very dangerous can be what are known as "mulla", which strictly means root, but is also used for the short stump that sticks up above the root when the brier or whatever it is, has been cut and not dug out. Some of them can cut like knives as I was reminded today. Although I did not feel it much, my sandal was covered with blood as I saw, when I looked down to see what dirt I



had put my foot in, it was not dirt that made the sandal foot wet, but blood. My companion, who had many thorns in his feet was more lucky than I, with all his thorns, not one developed into a sore.

*March 9:* The point about any place is that it must be a life, and not merely provide one. The old Ceylon villages are this. When ever I am reminded, by force of circumstances, which bring the fact home to me that progress here is slow, I tell myself that this is a life, that I have enough to eat although it is plain fare and monotonous but palatable and, apparently sustaining. I tell myself that it is fun being here, inspite of the heat, and it is fun because it is a life.

There are some young teak plants to sustain, and I have got to be here to see to that. Then there are lots of little improvements I make, for instance today, when someone else was doing the watering for me, I realised that he was having trouble with tiny thorns, hard to see and I decided a path must be made along the *murunga* trees.

This was done before night-fall. It amounts to another little path in the small area cleared and to the constant passers-by it must seem that the jungle has reached a little further, that this is another little refinement, an impression that a merely cleared area, cleared by burning, never really gives. I also started to clear the foot path beyond the house, the footpath that runs beside it and which is right outside

the "front door", by making it wider and more defined. This is an aid against snakes, if you go out in the dark without a torch.

*March 10:* The grass no longer looks like grass but like stubble. A blazing red sun-set proclaims another rainless day tomorrow. I borrowed a book today, the *Phenomenon of Man*, here of all places and I got as far as the end of the first chapter. It is by Teilhard de Chardian who calls down the wrath of some people on his head. I have no opinion about him there seem to be good people or both sides. What he says he proposes to write about seems to have some relevance to what I am trying to do here. I shall be interested to see how the book develops. While I was reading, a number of people dropped in. They were of a young generation, and they stayed for a chat.

My feet are still bad; a friend brought his big *kallagedi* along and did the watering in no time. The jak plant has lost its head, I do not know how it happened; it was there this morning. Monkeys invaded the place today, but it was long after the plant lost its top.

What was threatening has happened at last. There was no bread delivered anywhere either last evening or this morning. I do not know what the position is this evening as I have not been able to get out. A neighbour sent some cooked manioc and sambol along and that will last me tonight.

My *massa* bed was made at a ridiculous height from

the floor. I took it all down, lopped a foot off each upright-leg and put it up again. A big bon-fire I made threatened to envelope the forest, and I learned that it is possible to put a fire, that is spreading, out with a newly cut branch. A stick will not do it, and I had previously used the flat side of a *katha* which I did not have with me this time.

*March 11:* Everything looks quite dead. It is only the papaw which shows real signs of life. These looked all but dead at one time. Their leaves had died but they were watered twice a day without fail, and now they have put new green leaves, but the plants are still small. The *murunga* shows no signs of life yet but they nearly all stand firmly in the soil, as if they have put out roots. The plantains show no particular sign of life, but they are probably all right. None of the seeds I have sown seem to have germinated yet; I am going to give them more time before I look at the seed to see what has happened.

This afternoon I stopped a man who was going to cycle right down the middle of the property. He was a man strange to me, and he was investigating this route down to the river for his twenty buffaloes, he said. I told him that if he brought his twenty buffaloes through the land, I might as well give up. He said he could see that and departed.

*March 12:* Today I was back at clearing, and I must say it has both a quieting  
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# DEATH OF TWO EX-SENATORS

By **BASIL PERERA**

Two former members of the defunct Senate, the Upper House under the Soulbury constitution, died within a week of each other, just two weeks ago.

One was Justin Kotelawela, a brother of a former Prime Minister of Sri Lanka, Sir John Kotelawela. The other was D. G. William, a humble worker who rose to be the General Secretary of the LSSP-led Ceylon Federation of Labour, a post which he no doubt valued more than his membership of the Senate to which he was elected just before it was abolished.

Mr. Justin Kotelawela was one of the most successful business magnates in the Island. The only "business" Comrade William did was tidying up the rooms at the Galle Face Hotel where he started life as a room-boy.

Mr. Kotelawela received his education at the Royal College, then the local equivalent of Eton or Harrow. Later he entered the University of Cambridge where he graduated. Comrade William attended only the village school which he had to leave early to earn his living. The only university from which he graduated was the University of a Worker's Life.

Soon after the UNP was elected to power in the first elections held under the Soulbury constitution, one of

the first things that the new Government, formed under the late Mr. D. S. Senanayake, had to do was to elect and also appoint members to the Senate. They filled the Senate with their wealthy business friends—the Abraham Gardiners and Cyril de Zoysas, R. F. S. de Mels and Sarath Wijesinghes. It was then that the UNP came to be known, as the "Uncle Nephew Party". It is no cause for surprise, therefore, that Mr. Justin Kotelawela, as the brother of a powerful Minister in the D. S. Senanayake Cabinet and his propaganda chief found a place among the galaxy of business men who were given priority in filling the seats in the first Senate of Sri Lanka.

This was just four months after Comrade D. G. William had been dismissed from the Galle Face Hotel for leading his fellow-workers to take part in the famous General Strike of May-June 1947, a strike which was smashed by the British imperialists then ruling roost here but which nevertheless played a big part in hastening their doom showing as it did the impossibility of continuing to rule Lanka using the old methods. The 1947 General Strike in which worker-leaders like Comrade William played a signal role made the British rulers pass from direct to indirect forms of rule through their trusted agents. Hence the

abandonment of the Soulbury "freedom" granted in 1947 to the formal independence granted a year later—in 1948.

*De mortuis nihil nisi bonum*, it has been said—None but good about the dead. We trust that we will not be accused of violating this salutary rule in giving a political appraisal of the late Mr. Kotelawela in the course of this article.

One of the first motions that Mr. Kotelawela had to deal with in the Senate was one introduced by one of Comrade William's party colleagues. This motion simply said that the Senate must be abolished at once. Mr. Kotelawela's colleagues ridiculed the very idea of that motion and Mr. Kotelawela in common with them voted it down. The Senate as a museum of political antiquities continued for another 25 years.

Mr. Kotelawela was a frequent speaker in Senate debates. He was not distinguished for anything particularly conducive to the country's good that he did through his membership of that august body. But one theme ran like a golden thread through all his speeches. It was that the Communists and Samasamajists were not worth the powder and shot which they deserved.

An accusation often made by Mr. Kotelawela was that the Samasamajists and Communists were in reality secret agents in the service of foreign powers. This accusation was repeated so often that the well-known lawyer S. Nadesan, then elected as a



Senator by the LSSP group in the House of Representatives, was forced to move a motion calling for the appointment of a Commission to inquire into allegations of foreign agents and foreign interference in the country's affairs.

In the course of his speech introducing this motion, Mr. Nadesan said sarcastically: "I know very well that persons in certain responsible quarters who are interested in insurance have very often made allegations that the Leftists are in the pay of foreign agencies. My hon. Friend (Senator Kotelawela) has often said so. Perhaps he is in possession of a good deal of material on which he bases these allegations. It is not proper that he should keep those facts to himself and merely come out with certain particulars in this chamber where he enjoys absolute privilege...."

"Therefore, let a commission be appointed so that the public may know who are the people in the pay of foreign agencies. Then my hon. Friend (Senator Kotelawela) and very many others like him will all rush before the Commission with the evidence they possess."

Needless to say, far from rushing to the Commission, Mr. Kotelawela together with his UNP colleagues in the Senate voted down Mr. Nadesan's motion. But that did not prevent Mr. Kotelawela and others from continuing with their baseless allegations against the Leftists.

But all this failed to save the UNP from their inevita-

ble doom. In 1956 they were hounded out of power by the mass popular upsurge that swept the country. Soon afterwards Mr. Kotelawela lost his seat in the Senate. His brother who as Prime Minister had sworn to hunt down the Communists and Samasamajists in Sri Lanka had to leave the country and be content with hunting foxes in England!

What of Comrade William? After his dismissal from the Galle Face Hotel, he had become a fulltime trade unionist and started organising first the hotel workers, then the workers in the transport and other trades till he had become the General Secretary of five big unions and crowned his trade union career by becoming the General Secretary of the powerful Ceylon Federation of Labour. He was also elected to the prestigious Politbureau of the LSSP.

The working class and progressive movement with which he had been associated had by the 1960's succeeded in securing the nationalisation of the insurance business which Mr. Kotelawela had come to dominate.

Later Comrade William, always a fighter for progressive and trade union unity, had played his part in welding the often warring trade union centres into one single fighting front known as the Joint Committee of Trade Union Organisations of which he became a Joint Secretary. Mr. Kotelawela, proceeding in the footsteps of his Prime Ministerial brother had been forced to emigrate abroad

and spend his last days away from his homeland in foreign climes.

After the accession to power of the SLFP-LSSP-CP United Front Government, Comrade William had been appointed as a Director of the Hotels Corporation and also to the Senate in which Mr. Kotelawela once served. Now when a motion was brought there again to abolish the Upper House, Comrade William had voted for it and helped to get it passed. Thus ended a chapter in the Island's history.

When shortly afterwards a new constitution was brought into existence, framed for the first time by the people's elected representatives themselves, Comrade William as a leading trade unionist, has been one of the distinguished invitees present to witness the birth of a new era for Sri Lanka.

When Mr. Kotelawela died abroad recently and his mortal remains brought back to his motherland, there were, of course, his brother, relatives and a few friends and former employees to pay him their last respects. We mean no disrespect, but he died almost "unwept, unhonoured and unsung."

Comrade William died in harness in the land of his birth. Kanatte was one sea of heads as thousands upon thousands of the common people gathered in strength to take their leave of a fellow fighter who had been with them through thick and thin.

If these two men, coming from two different classes leading two different kinds

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PROPAGANDA OR ?

# Plan Is The Name Of The Game

By CANAX

FUN takes many forms, and a friend of mine happens to be one of them. He's fun because he knocks just about everything he can lay his eyes on, plus at his own door which he says he can lay his hands on as well. There was the time he knocked at it in a somewhat inebriated condition and demanded of his wife who opened the door. "Do you realise it's one in the morning?" On being curtly assured that she did, he came back with, "What's the matter, then—can't you fall asleep?" His wife, he confesses, was not amused, but he is very understanding about it. She is one of those people whose sense of humour deserts her when the sun goes down and doesn't return until the sun comes up. It could be worse, he says philosophically. "Imagine if the sun's movements were not so dependable."

Of course there are some things he doesn't knock, but only because he thinks one can do better with them than that. "Sacred cows are meant to be milked, not just knocked," he says, and he has a point there.

He's been stumped for sometime now deciding whether the Five-Year Plan is a sacred cow or not. "I've looked and looked," he says with despair, "and all I can see is a lot of bull, so I tell

myself it can't be all that sacred, after all."

HIS DISAPPOINTMENT with the Five-Year Plan was all too obvious after he saw what the Government Film Unit did with it. A criminal waste of first-rate material, he cried, after suffering through the short unimaginative GFU effort. Handled properly it could have been the biggest box-office draw this country has seen in decades, he said, and could have successfully rivalled all the Carry On series put together for laughs.

"Why pay valuable foreign exchange when you can produce all the laughs you want locally?" he asks, and I for one can't answer him. If the objective is self-sufficiency we might as well go the whole way. It stands to reason, I guess, even if my friend invariably doesn't.

But that's only one aspect of the matter. My friend says he can think of many others—and of that I have no doubt—but the one he cared to mention was equally in need of serious thought. "It's depressing to see what the GFU did with the Plan," he went on, looking anything but depressed, "and my sympathies go out to the author. I'm convinced he'll never again try his hand at being humorous, and that's a terrible loss for the country."

My friend feels the whole approach was wrong from the start. The Plan should obviously have been treated as a film spectacular, on the lines of *The Robe* or *The Ten Commandments*, but should have been played for laughs as the author obviously intended. That way, the film wouldn't have needed a De Mille to direct it, he says, since we have a Dahanayake right in our midst. "True, he may not have much cinematic experience, but he certainly makes up for that with the right approach and the light touch. After all, he's played Parliament for laughs all his life, hasn't he?"

IN ANY CASE, my friend says there's no shortage of talent in this country should the Government decide on a re-make of the Plan. If Dahanayake declines, he says it's not the end of the world. The UNP could—and, he feels, certainly would—do a great job putting the Plan onto the silver screen. They might even be generous enough to offer to bankroll the whole project if given a free hand. "People would simply die laughing," says my friend enthusiastically, "and even the Family Planning Association couldn't object to that. Every little bit helps, huh?"

The only minor hitch my friend foresees if the UNP takes on the job is the likelihood of constant friction between the two factions in the Party—the old and the not-too-old. The confrontation would be most direct when it came to giving the film its title. That would be the acid test since both groups



were clearly funny beyond words and would be at a distinct disadvantage when it came to choosing the right ones.

While one group might choose something hilarious like 'According To Plan?', the other might come up with a real killer such as 'Whose Future?—or Ask Not What Can You Do For the Plan, But What The Plan Can Do For You'.

If the Party finally picks the latter (presumably at a special meeting of the Working Committee that is not considered *ultra vires* the Party constitution) my friend says the film's box-office success is a foregone conclusion. "It's not just that people will die laughing," he observes. "You can start counting the bodies even before the title fades out."

MY FRIEND says he owes it all to his wife, for it is she who inspires him by asking the right questions, meaning the funny ones. Like when she asked, "What is the Five-Year Plan?"

"Fancy you asking that!" retorted my friend. "I thought you were already implementing it at home."

"I don't know what you're talking about," she cried.

"The Five-Year Plan expects every woman to do her duty and have a baby only once every five years—that's what I'm talking about."

"And what's she supposed to do in between?"

"Look after the baby, what else?"

"That's not what I meant!"

"Oh, that," said my friend, "Well, she can pray hard, or one thing, and...and..."

"And what?"

"...and sleep in the hall, for another."

"And what's he supposed to do in between?"

"That's none of your business. Even the Plan prefers to leave him to his own devices, so I guess he'll think up something to amuse himself."

"You bet he will!" she cried bitterly.

"Can't blame him, can you, when women insist on having the babies every time?"

My friend says the joke's on him now. Sleeping in the hall isn't all that bad, he says ruefully, except that he feels lonely at times.

### The New Farm

*Continued from page 11*

and a strengthening effect on the mind. This property, which is an old *hena* has a tangle of bushes and it requires some reflection or even ingenuity to know which way to cut through it. There is an easy way and a hard way, and it depends on the lie of the bushes, especially when it is so thick, that it is impenetrable even to the eye. Then, if you are not bent on slaughtering all the vegetation that you come to, but you want to keep what you think is worth saving, there is an added delectation, but also a problem, especially if you do not really know what is worth preserving. You are the final judge, because you know what it is you want to save from destruction, but it requires a man with real knowledge of trees and shrubs to tell you what it is you want to save. If you are not able to distinguish the various bushes and

trees, you are like a man who is blind and groping in the dark.

Well, I am off the floor in nearly all respects now, my patient cutting of suitable sticks after buying that knife a few days back, has been rewarded. I had everything necessary to put up a "massa" table in a few minutes. I lacked an "allawangu," but that did not deter me. The sight of the white ants, which had attacked the bottom of my little card-board medicine box, was enough to spur me and I think my chance companion, very knowledgeable on these matters learnt a little about the deft use of rope from me; I even surprised myself, which goes to show that you can do it when you have to, as I have always said.

### Death of two Ex-Senators

*Continued from page 13*

of lives, had died when they started their political careers 25 years ago, their positions in death would surely have been reversed. Mr. Kotelawela would have received all the publicity in the local press. Comrade William's widow would have been hard put to it to scrape the few rupees needed to insert his obituary notice.

As it was, all the newspapers, including those capitalist groups which had slandered and abused the worker's movement of which Comrade William was so distinguished a leader, now came out with paeans of praise for his honesty and integrity, dedication to his cause and devotion to his class.



## AUSTRALIA

## Whitlam Govt's Problem with its Super-Security Unit

We publish below a report from the Australian weekly *Tribune* about the recent *furor* in that country about its super-security organisation known by the abbreviation ASIO. Australia has a large number of Yugoslav emigres and they had many organisations under a generic name UTASHA and some of these were alleged to be terrorist. The Whitlam Government, which alerted about the safety of the Yugoslav Prime Minister who was visiting the country, called upon the ASIO to furnish the relevant files and information. ASIO thought it was sufficient to say that there were no terrorist gangs under the UTASHA and took up the position that its files were sacrosanct. This has touched off a first class "conflict" which will have significance not only in Australia but also throughout the Indo-Pacific region.

Melbourne,

THE BOLD initiative of the Commonwealth Attorney-General, Senator L. K. Murphy, in throwing down the gauntlet to the Australian Security Intelligence Organi-

sation, is being welcomed widely in the working class, labour and democratic movements of this country.

Provided that the Labour Government carries the confrontation to its logical conclusion, Senator Murphy's peremptory visits to ASIO offices in Canberra and Melbourne last week to demand and obtain access to their secret filing systems could spell the end of Australia's 23 years' experience of this privileged secret police state power.

But there is much more to the government's problem with ASIO than the fact—scandalous as it is—that ASIO chiefs refused to cooperate when the Attorney General called for full information on Ustasha terrorist groups. This demand had been precipitated by the Government's obligation to guarantee the safety of Yugoslav Prime Minister Bijedic during his visit to Canberra this week.

ASIO chiefs not only did not produce the information, but re-asserted their spurious claim—the claim of the former Liberal-Country Party Government—that no such organised terrorism existed in Australia. For the past 10 years and more *Tribune* has published many thoroughly documented proofs concerning the activities, organisation and fascist-type ideas

and aims of the Ustasha-based groups. It is now apparent that exposure of these matters is to be made shortly in Federal Parliament by Senator Murphy on behalf of the Government.

ASIO was, it is true, set up by the Chifley Labour Government in 1949 as a small-scale intelligence agency under a judge, probably at the insistence of British and US intelligence. But under Liberal Prime Minister Menzies, ASIO mushroomed and was rapidly transformed into an Australia-wide network of political espionage and intimidation, serving the most reactionary political and big business forces of Australian capitalism. Its activities were directed invariably against the Left, the democratic forces, the trade union and labour movement as a whole.

OVER THE YEARS its operatives were discovered to have been tape-recording trade union meetings and strike meetings; tapping telephones and planting listening devices; unlocking offices and office safes; interviewing, bribing and intimidating people associated with anti-war and other mass movements. They have been supplying defamatory "information" about individuals to extreme rightwing papers; advising employers to get rid of listed "politically unreliable" workers; and secretly organising the victimisation, demotion and even dismissal of public servants unfavorably mentioned in ASIO dossiers—the number of which reportedly runs into millions.

Not only the Left, but at times the entire leadership



and active body of the Labor Party became its target, as it conspired to maintain the most conservative forces in government office—for example, by means of the Petrov incident in 1954.

All this was built up through a corps of ASIO personnel, handpicked for their servility to the capitalist establishment and the rightwing government.

ASIO, its undisclosed annual budget now believed to be running at \$5 million, was re-authorised in a new Menzies Act in 1956. It was now a special super-bureaucracy—a watchdog above all other parts of the bureaucracy—whose director-general was not obliged to report to Parliament or to any Minister, but merely to advise in matters of security when he believes it is "necessary or desirable to do so."

THIS SACROSANCT role created for ASIO is now being explained away by certain conservative press interests and politicians as "freedom from political control" that is necessary to preserve the confidence of US, British, Japanese and Indonesian intelligence organisations in supplying information to Australia.

This is so much mumbo-jumbo. What the past week's events have revealed is that ASIO is part of the essential agencies of *Dictatorship* by the dominant class forces in the capitalist system, hidden deeply behind the partially democratic structures of general government administration.

NEXT WEEK'S Government report cannot do other than reveal, as *Tribune* stated more than once last year, that the McMohan Government and

its predecessors not only allowed and protected but encouraged in Australia for national political purposes the criminal operations of those fascist hangovers from Hitler's wartime axis partnership — the Ustasha.

The handful of war criminals and other hardcore leaders of Ustasha terrorism—brought into Australia as a conscious product of the former Government's pro-rightist political screening of immigrants—should be charged and tried, for their criminal acts and expelled from this country to their point of former departure.

The fate of ASIO, however, is a more complex question, the most serious yet faced by the Labor Government. It will not be enough to sack the ASIO Director-General Barbour, whose entire staff of political spies has been cast in the same far-right mould as himself. It will not be enough to rewrite the Act to subordinate their activities to an elected Minister.

As demanded over many years by the Communist Party; as demanded in a resolution on which the 1971 ALP Federal Conference became deadlocked—ASIO must be abolished, disbanded, destroyed root and branch.

Otherwise, as an arm of the hidden dictatorship of monopoly capitalism, it will reassert itself in one form or another. That is a fact that must be brought home to a Labor Government already pledged to radical democratic reform of Australian society.

—*Tribune*

## SOVIET SCIENTISTS ON WEATHER AND CLIMATE OF THE FUTURE

BY the year 2000 the climate of Northern Europe, Asia and America is to get markedly warmer, Soviet meteorologists maintain. They connect it with recession of the polar ice. It is possible to predict in advance and rather accurately, redistribution of temperatures and precipitation, which will affect vast territories at the turn of the century.

At a scientific conference in Leningrad on the problems of climatology recently, Professor Oleg Drozdov, Soviet meteorologist, produced preliminary estimates of expected fluctuations of weather. The conference, called into session by the Geographical Society of the USSR was attended by representatives of many research centres of the Soviet Union. Meteorological rockets, artificial satellites of the earth, quick-acting computers all contribute to tracing interconnections in nature and to establishing basic regulations in the evolution of the climate, Oleg Drozdov maintains. Among major discoveries in this field the scientists singled out new data about solar-terrestrial connections, the mechanism of the heat exchange between the ocean and the atmosphere, estimate of man's influence on the earth's power balance. —*Tass*



## Welfare Minus Growth in Sri Lanka

• By B. G. VERGHESE

SRI LANKA is in trouble. Having lived on its wealth for many years it has discovered that a nation cannot promote welfare without growth and that redistributive social justice must rest on increased production and employment.

In her Foreword to the Five-Year Plan, 1972-76, Prime Minister Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike wrote: "We cannot have a good life without plentiful production. We cannot continue merely to alleviate poverty without taking steps to attack its causes. We cannot concentrate on welfare measures while neglecting economic development." That was in November 1971.

Since then the situation has if anything worsened, with 1971 lost to the insurgency, while economic pressures, notably unemployment, have mounted.

Sri Lanka closely resembles Kerala in many respects and has roughly half the population of that Indian State (just under 13 million) in little more than its land area (25,000 square miles). Its predominantly plantation-economy (tea, rubber, coconut) enjoyed a tremendous post-Korean war boom through the early 1950's on which it built an enviable edifice of welfare that puts the Island way ahead of most of Asia.

EDUCATION is free from the primary to the university

level (though enrolment to higher education is limited by competition). Medicare is free (though a token dispensing fee of 25 cents—equivalent to 25 paise—was introduced last year). Every citizen gets a free measure of rice (roughly two lbs) per week and a second measure at a subsidised price of Rs. 1 per measure. Since Sri Lanka is deficit in paddy, the free ration has been sustained through imports.

Last December the Government withdrew the free measure of rice from income-tax payers and their dependents (to save Rs. 2.5 crores per annum) and in February this year it decided to raise the price of the second subsidised measure from Re. 1 to Rs. 1.60. Official spokesmen say this was to prevent a "run" on the second measure (normally only taken by 15 per cent of the population) in the context of drought and delays in food shipments resulting in a tendency to hoard.

THESE WELFARE MEASURES have undoubtedly been a boon to the people. Sri Lanka has none of the destitution to be seen on the sub-continent. Rural urban migration has been checked. The death rate has fallen to 8 per 1,000 (or European levels) and literacy is extremely high with 94 per cent of the 5-14 age group in school. There is greater egalitarianism though

this masks what is in some ways a continuingly feudal society dominated by the planters who constitute a landed aristocracy. The Indian stateless estate workers, descendants of a cheap indentured labour force, enjoy little economic mobility on account of political factors, and have provided the plantations with something of a captive labour market.

However, the welfare package has had a price tag and costs have risen with the natural increase in population. The cost of free education and health services and the rice subsidy is estimated at about 26 per cent of the combined revenue and capital budget which has shown a large and persistent deficit. The Government also has a public assistance scheme for destitutes covering 150,000 persons. When the guaranteed price of paddy was raised from Rs. 14 to Rs. 15 per bushel last year, the Government announced that the increase would be used exclusively for a superannuation scheme for farmers. This apart, nearly 45 per cent of the revenue budget is consumed by the salary bill!

These welfare costs have distorted economic priorities and the pattern of investment. Food subsidies alone have exceeded government expenditure on economic services during the past decade.

At the same time, the terms of trade have moved steadily against Sri Lanka, from an annual average of



142 in 1952-56 to 88 in 1968-70. The international prices of tea, rubber and copra have fallen while those of rice and the Island's consumer capital goods, and raw material imports have hardened. This has resulted in an acute foreign exchange crisis with a crippling burden of foreign debt. The operation of a Foreign Exchange Entitlement Certificate (or export bonus) scheme with a 65 per cent premium has involved partial disguised devaluation and pushed up certain domestic costs.

AGRICULTURE has been neglected with falling productivity in tea, rubber and coconut while the subsidised distribution of imported rice has depressed paddy prices and robbed the farmer of the incentive that would have induced him to grow more food. A ban on potato imports some years ago forced up domestic prices and immediately stimulated production of the crop. The Government has now banned the import of onions and chillies and plans to end all rice imports (other than the 200,000 tonnes contracted under the rice-rubber barter deal with China) by next year. This might well give the paddy grower the necessary stimulus to increase production.

If agriculture has not been buoyant, nor has industry. Wrong industrial-investment choices based on imported rather than domestic raw materials, mounting foreign exchange and, latterly, even rupee constraints, nationalisation of industry and trade, the promulgation of a some-

what sweeping Business Acquisition Act (by fiat and without assigning any reason), and land reforms which place a ceiling of 50 acres on plantation have together created a climate in which capital is understandably shy. The fear of a sudden takeover, and the releasing back to the original owners of lands in excess of the ceilings pending their ultimate disposal has reduced management to routine care and maintenance.

In the event, plantations and industry are merely ticking over, not growing. The Government has re-iterated its faith in a mixed economy and has selectively welcomed foreign investment. The one sector where this has produced visible results is in the development of the tourist infrastructure and the growth of tourism from which Sri Lanka can expect considerable earnings.

MORE THAN anything else, however, what must cause the the deepest concern is the complete divorce between free education and economic opportunity, resulting in a current figure of something of the order of 700,000 unemployed which works out to as much as 14 per cent of the labour force. Over 140,000 persons enter the labour force each year and of those currently unemployed only 10 per cent are illiterate while as many as 45 per cent have passed the eighth grade and 25 per cent are matriculates. Sixty-seven per cent of the unemployed are in the 16-24 age group—representing an explosive mass of frustrated and alienated

youth. No wonder the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna insurgency of young revolutionaries led by Rohana Wijeweera.

Political leaders, both Government and Opposition, are apt to attribute political rather than economic causes for the insurgency. The Leftists say this was in essence a Rightists plot to thwart the march towards socialism—land reform, the ceiling on housing property (to curb landlordism and rack renting-), demonetisation, the expenditure ceiling (by compulsory savings above an expenditure limit of Rs. 2,000 per month-, the socialising trade and industry—though some of these measures came after the uprising. But this would be straining credulity. The economic basis of the continuing political crisis is clear and threatening.

THE GOVERNMENT is aware of the crisis. Consumption must be curbed and savings and investment increased. The first steps have been taken to limit the food subsidy but the IMF is reported to have advised its complete abolition. There are pressures within the LSSP (Trotskyites- and Communist Party to part company with Mrs. Bandaranaike's SLFP and quit the coalition now before the growing crisis or the harsh social and economic discipline that must be applied to remedy the situation causes a backlash. Having ridden to office of the back of the SLFP, which has an almost two-thirds majority in the National Assembly on its own, these parties might feel



that they have something to gain and possibly much to lose by remaining in the coalition during what could be an uncomfortable and unpopular pitch if the Government really means to be effective. The LSSP's almost studied attempt to embrace Mrs. Bandaranaike last month on the Speaker's ruling seeking a reference of the Press Council Bill to a second constitutional court would tend to substantiate this thesis. The Communist Party has also further splintered on the very issue.

All this might appear to be a dismal prospect. But if the situation is difficult, it is not desperate. If nothing else, Sri Lanka is such a rich island that its inherent buoyancy will help it survive. There are, however, positive elements at work as well, most especially the Prime Minister's pragmatism and the Government's realisation that it must rethink its priorities and implement them. The first steps have been taken towards diagnosing the problem: switching emphasis from consumption to investment, creating agricultural incentives (the procurement price of paddy has just been raised from Rs. 14 per bushel to Rs. 18 per bushel), resuscitating the plantations, reclaiming some of the three million acres of cultivable land available on the east coast, the diversification of the agricultural economy (including deep sea fishing), import substitution, the development of resource-based and mass consumption industry, the creation of an export oriented industrial zone around Trincomalee, employ-

ment generation through a public works programme and a national youth service scheme, and tourist development. All this makes sense. It will require political will and organisation to carry it forward.

SRI LANKA'S new constitution vests the Government with all the powers it might need to overhaul the economy: legislative supremacy, in rejection of the theory of separation of powers and the abolition of the public service commission. These attributes of centralised government could be employed to advance the pace of progress if wisely used. Divisional development councils and district development councils have been set up and, if vested with real authority and not treated as symbols, could provide a decentralised structure for development, decision-making and community participation. How this might work—if at all—will depend on Mrs. Bandaranaike.

Regional economic co-operation could play a role. Sri Lanka like all its neighbours needs peace and stability to develop. India is its nearest neighbour. But it is such an enormous neighbour and culturally and ethnically so akin to it that Sri Lanka understandably fears India's shadow and would naturally wish to insure itself by seeking a balance in its external relations. Pakistan offers a ready counterweight and Bangladesh would probably have been recognised sooner but for Sri Lanka's dependence on Pakistan and Chinese rice and goodwill.

A RESOLUTION of the "Indian question" through the smooth implementation of the Sirimavo Shastri Agreement and an act of Indian generosity in absorbing the residual stateless—would be a great balm. It would also be in India's interest to assist Sri Lanka tide over its current economic crisis by entering into mutually beneficial trading and collaborative arrangements that would help promote trade diversification and industrial growth in the island. India could give Sri Lanka certain preferences (to the extent permissible under GATT) and offer it a guaranteed market for its new manufactures. India could for instance import tyres from Sri Lanka. The two countries are co-operating in tea marketing and in the Asian Coconut Community. The list could be greatly expanded.

Sri Lanka's willingness to enter into what might otherwise appear to be an unequal partnership would be enhanced were such co-operation to be set in a wider regional frame of South Asian co-operation in which Bangladesh, Burma, Nepal, Afghanistan and, hopefully, Pakistan would be partners. The smaller nations would find security in numbers and in an aggregation of economic strength that would enable them to look India a little more confidently in the eye. This for India is obviously not merely a trading problem but a challenge to state-manship.

—Courtesy: *Hindustan Times*.



PAKISTAN

## THE EXPLODING CRISIS

From A Special Correspondent

*It is evident, even from reports which are available about Pakistan, that things are not what they seem in Pakistan. We publish a report written at the beginning of March about the developing situation in Pakistan, and though some events seemed to be moving very fast this article provides great deal of inside background information. The situation has become more complicated with serious defections within the ruling Party led by President Bhutto.*

PAKISTAN has been brought to the precipice of a civil war with the replacement of Governors in Baluchistan and NWFP, and the dismissal of the Baluchistan Government headed by the NAP.

This brings to a head the confrontation between the PPP and its opponents, and while ending any chance of a consensus being arrived at on the Constitution, brings nearer the prospect of the Tikka Khan-Qayyum Khan clique ousting the Bhutto wing in the establishment.

The way the Pakistani propaganda media played up the alleged capture of arms in the Iraqi Embassy indicated the growing nervousness of the Bhutto regime in the face of the Baluchistan developments.

From all indications it is clear that the new power axis comprising of Army chief Gen. Tikka Kahn and Khan Abdul Qayyum Khan, the Interior Minister, has been quietly strengthening itself. Gen. Tikka Khan has become bold enough to join issue directly with opposition politicians like Baluchistan Governor Ghaus Baksh Bizenjo and NAP leader Wali Khan.

IT IS KNOWN that Gen. Tikka Khan himself had taken the initiative in despatching troops to Las Bela, and the troops have been trying to eliminate pro-NAP elements there under the garb of suppressing the revolt. Mr. Qayyum Khan had earlier done his best to blow up the Las Bela revolt beyond proportion, and had been spreading all kinds of stories regarding so-called arms smuggling into Pakistan.

As has been pointed out by Khan Abdul Wali Khan, it is amazing that the revolt in Baluchistan which was supposedly aimed at the overthrow of the provincial Government, should have evoked greater concern in Islamabad than in Quetta. This provides substance to the charge made by the Baluchistan provincial leaders that the so-called revolt was a stage-managed show by Qayyum Khan to provide the Centre an opportunity for direct intervention in the provincial affairs.

It is not clear how events will take shape in Pakistan from now on. But it is obvious that the confrontation engineered by Qayyum Khan between Baluchistan and the NWFP leadership and the Central Government, has entered an acute phase.

Gen. Tikka Khan's direct involvement in it means much more than his hatred for the Baluchis. (He was known as the "Butcher of Baluchistan" before he engineered the genocide in Bangladesh).

Pakistani newspapers have been suggesting for some days that the Baluchistan Government will be ousted and the National Awami Party banned in that province.

THERE ARE reasons to believe that President Bhutto himself is not very happy over the situation. He knows it fully well that any confrontation between him and the NAP would provide scope for the army to play a wider role in national politics. And that could create a situation similar to the one which Mr. Ayub Khan used to come into power. Ayub Khan, who is now Tikka Khan's mentor, had also made his mark as "a good administrator" and a proper "bando bast" man. What happened later is a well known story.

President Bhutto is perhaps aware of the fact that intensification of the trouble and real internationalisation of the issue could embroil the country in a massive



civil conflict. Baluchistan and NWFP together constitute over 50 per cent of the entire area of Pakistan. While Baluchistan commands the longest coastline of Pakistan, the NWFP occupies the country's strategic border.

For his own survival, it would be prudent for Mr. Bhutto to avoid a confrontation. Yet at the present moment, he appears to be too weak to stop the turn of events which are being engineered by the Qayyum-Tikka forces.

WHILE the situation is getting out of hand in Baluchistan and NWFP, a new challenge has emerged to Mr. Bhutto's political authority in his home state of Sind. The resignation of Mr. Rasool Bakish Thalpur has a much wider significance than as a protest against some allegations made by two Ministers of the Sind Government about the alleged gun-running by his brother.

The Talpurs and the Bhuttos represent two important landlord families of Sind and a fight between them could create a situation in which the power base the President has been trying to preserve will get weakened. Mr. Talpur enjoys the reputation of an honest politician. He has also a close personal equation with men like G. M. Syed, the "Jai Sind" leader, Mr. Mehmood Ali Kasuri, the PPP rebel leader and Mr. Mairaj Mohammed Khan, a former Minister of State for Political Affairs who commands

a tremendous following among the Urdu-speaking people of Karachi.

The possibility of a broad united front emerging, comprising of all these elements, is being hotly discussed in the Pakistan press. There have already been parleys between the National Awami Party leadership and PPP dissidents. The situation can become volcanic soon.

THE EFFECT of the deepening crisis has been reflected in the total stalemate in the National Assembly over the process of Constitution-making. The debate has been stalled although the boycott by the Opposition has been ended.

It is known that Sardar Shaukat Hayat Khan had persuaded Khan Abdul Wali Khan and others to resume their seats in the National Assembly on the plea that it would be far better to put forward their point of view in the National Assembly and get wide coverage for their opinions, than to continue the boycott. The strategy has been paying some dividends to the opposition in terms of political gains.

Only a miracle can give Pakistan a Constitution on 23 March, 1973, as promised by President Bhutto. And by then, a new dictatorship may be taking shape.

It is not merely coincidental that following the trouble in Baluchistan and the challenge from various quarters

at home, an intense vilification campaign has been launched by the Pakistani propaganda media not only against India, but also against the Soviet Union, Iraq and Afghanistan. Pakistan Radio has started telling its listeners that "an international conspiracy has been at work to undo Pakistan on the lines of notorious London plan."

ALLEGATIONS about a plot with regard to Bangladesh are being repeatedly made to bring home the point that "some neighbouring and big powers are determined to see the disintegration of Pakistan." While no sane individual finds it worthwhile to repudiate such wild charges made largely by Khan Abdul Qayyum Khan and his friends, the fact that they are made is an indication of the extreme despair with which Islamabad is acting to resolve the inherent contradictions in the country's present political structure.

## IN THE NEXT ISSUE

PABLO PICASSO

By Basil Perera

SHAMBA—Birth Pangs  
of a New Farm

By Anatory Bukoh

INTUITION OR  
REVELATION

Visions Helped Achievers

MORE ABOUT THE  
COCONUT INDUSTRY



# IS IT TRUE?

## Sherlock Holmes

### Janawegaya SLBC and Lake House

### Theft of State Property

IS IT NOT A FACT that the article in a recent issue of *Janawegaya*, the new Sinhala weekly with a special appeal to the youth, blasting the Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation, has evoked widespread comment? That most people fully endorse every word uttered by the *Janawegaya* article? That the interlude in Parliament, when an MP wanted to know the significance of the *Janawegaya* barrage on the SLBC, drew nationwide attention to the exposure of the SLBC? That everything seems to be wrong with the SLBC? That it is now long past being an Augean Stables which can be cleaned out? That mere superficial blood-letting will not help? That it would be interesting to see what the Government will do next?

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IS IT ALSO NOT TRUE that the same issue of *Janawegaya* had a brilliant piece of Sinhala writing exposing the foibles and vacillations of Lake House? That Lake House was compared to a lady of easy virtue with a supreme capa-

city to be all things to all men? That it was a neat summary of the history of Lake House and its present attempts to satisfy a new master? That for the sake of profit there was nothing it would not do? That some discerning readers of the *Janawegaya* thought that the article killed two birds with one stone? That a high personage (who dabbled in politics from the side-lines) was also coverly flayed in the same article? That in knowledgeable political circles there are whispers and speculations as to what all this portends?

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IS IT NOT TRUE that there is talk in knowledgeable political circles that a conspiracy of silence has descended on the police swoop on a printery where property belonging to a Government institution was found? That there is talk going the rounds that in the operation whitewash matters would be by-passed by making a scapegoat of a minor functionary in the organisation? That by this

means the big fish could go scot free? That all this talk might be just idle gossip? That the police would one of these days present a fool-proof charge sheet indicating the men who are really guilty of misappropriating state property? That in many socialist countries, even today, the penalty for robbing state property was death? That even those who pinched bulbs from a railway compartment merited the death penalty in these countries? That in Ceylon we have a more lax attitude to violations of the law of property. That under socialism a more sacrosanct attitude to property owned by the state and people is an absolute necessity if the socialist economy is to tick over?

\* \* \* \*

IS IT NOT SIGNIFICANT that many newspapers, including those in the *Times* group, have been focussing attention on police reports that thefts and corruption were increasing by leaps and bounds in all government institutions and corporations? That there were complaints almost every day about losses, thefts and other violations of the property law in practically all government undertakings especially those with commercial objectives? That it is hightime that these daily newspapers published a special list of such complaints and thefts so that the public could be made aware of the grave threat to the safety of public property?