

# TRIBUNE

CEYLON NEWS REVIEW

50 Cts.

Vol. 18 No. 3

May 12, 1973

• WIJEWARDENAS,  
SENANAYAKES  
AND THE UF

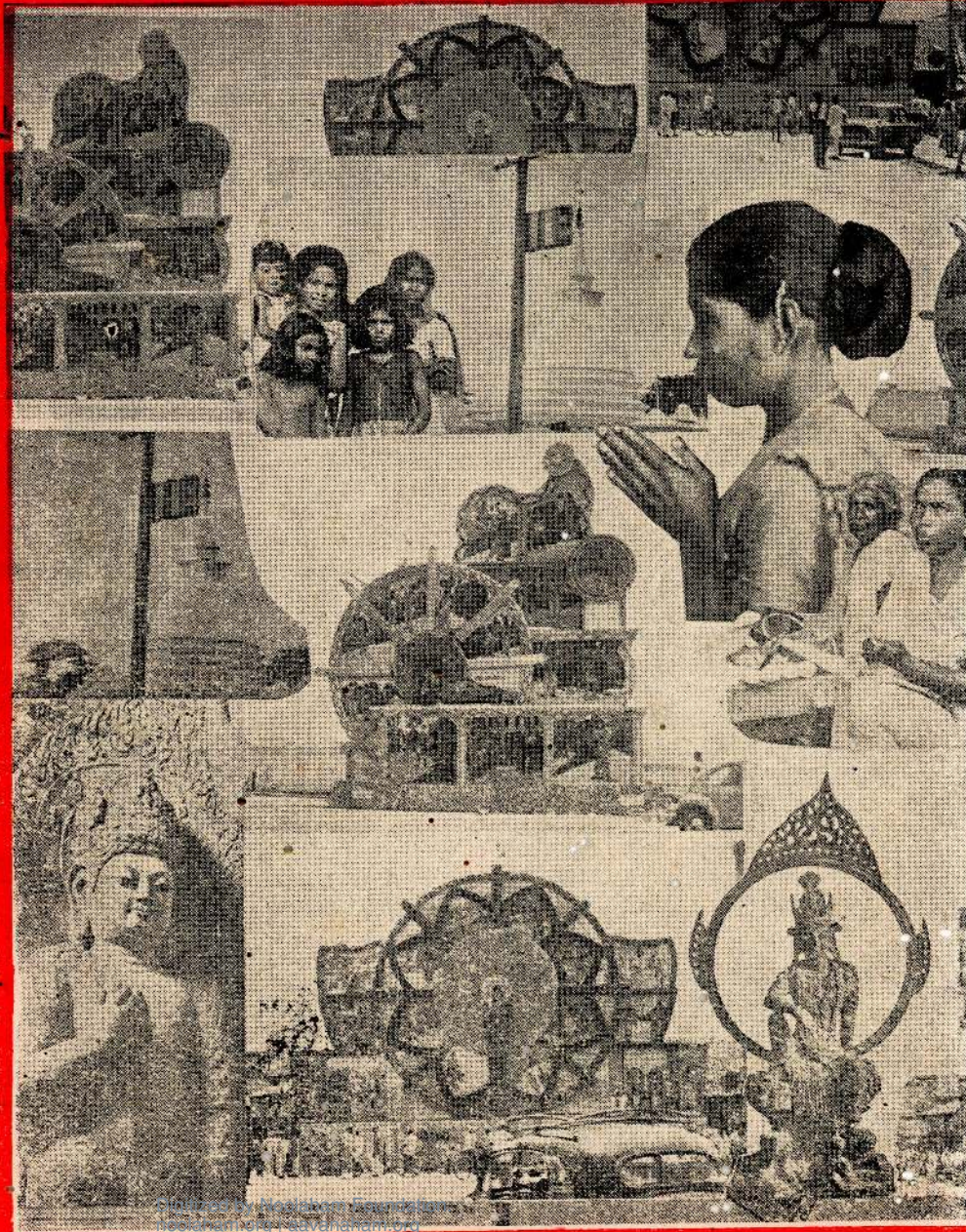
• MAKING  
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CAMBODIA &  
ISRAEL





# Tribunania

\* Tribune, Weekly Again

\* Lake House, Wijewardenas,

## Senanayakes and the United Front

WITH THIS ISSUE, *Tribune* will appear once a week, on Saturdays. It will be a slender publication of 20 pages with a cover of 4 pages, and until we secure commercial advertisements we will publish reading matter on three of the cover pages. But within this modest compass we hope to pack as much punch as we can, providing our readers with lively and interesting articles on domestic and international problems. Readers must also be reminded that our comments will be circumscribed by the frontiers laid down by the Press Council Law which now prevails in the island. The Regulations giving flesh and blood to the Law has been tabled in the Parliament and have been gazetted. At the time of writing the names of the Chairman and members of the Press Council have not been announced, but it is expected that the names will be public before this issue reaches the readers.

What the limits of press freedom will be like under the aegis of the Press Council in the era of the United Front, is difficult to envisage, but the capacity to sur-

vive with self-respect and integrity intact under these circumstances, is a difficult test for any newspaper. One day before the Regulations under the Press Council Law was gazetted, the law to broadbase the ownership of Lake House and place its management under public control was also gazetted. It will not be long before this bill to "takeover" Lake House becomes law. Seventy five percent of the shares, now held by one family, will be transferred to the Public Trustee, presently Mr. B. S. C. Ratwatte, and the shares will be sold to members of the public and public organisations like trade unions and cooperative societies on the direction and discretion of the Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike. No single person or organisation will be entitled to hold more than 2% of the total, and even the 25% left with the family must be dispersed in this way. The Public Trustee, on the appointed date, will nominate a Board of Management to run Lake House, until the new shareholders elect a board of management sometime early next year.

Thus will end the Wijewardena family's sole ownership and management of *Lake House* which had been built into the strongest monopoly newspaper and publishing house in Ceylon. The Wijewardena newspaper venture had begun rather shakily in the midst of the first world war, but in the twenties it gathered momentum. Wijewardena was a veritable dynamo as a newspaper entrepreneur and soon Lake House outstripped its rivals and swallowed up most of them, leaving only the *Times* group which was able to withstand Wijewardena pressure because it was the voice and organ of British vested interests

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TRIBUNE, May 12, 1973



in the island. The Wijewardenas represented the up and coming compradore bourgeoisie of the low country Sinhalese inter-married with a section of Kandyan feudal aristocracy—and their compradore capital being mainly derived, at that time, from coconuts and plumbago.

IT IS A FACT of recorded history that the collaboration and political cooperation between newspaper owner D. R. Wijewardena and politician D. S. Senanayake, the guiding genius of upsurging Sinhala Buddhist revivalist nationalism, bore fruitful results. Wijewardena built a profitable newspaper empire, and D. S. Senanayake a political dynasty which had dominated the political scene unchallenged from the twenties to the fifties of this century whilst from the mid-fifties to the early seventies the Bandaranaike (and Ratwattes) shared power alternately with the Senanayakes. Power was derived from the ballot, and mechanism to secure power was charged by promises of state-subsidised utopias for the masses coupled with emotional slogans (and actions) about religion, language and even race.

One phase of this dynastic struggle has ended with the liquidation of Lake House as a single family unit. As long as founder Wijewardena was alive, he had guided his newspaper venture in a way that seemingly made the papers he published neutral "national", but his successors especially his sons-in-law dragged Lake House into partisan politics of a petty nature with the result that new left-inspired forces in


coalition with the Bandaranaiques and the SLFP demanded that Lake House should be "taken over" in the public interest. In 1963-64, the demand for such a takeover was strong, but all efforts of the then SLFP-LSSP coalition failed to achieve this objective because the Lake House had helped the UNP to undermine the parliamentary majority of the Government.

The Government fell in December 1964 and in the general elections of March 1965 the UNP led by Dudley Senanayake had come to power, and the Lake House had a supremely powerful and profitable lease of life for a full stretch of 5 years. But from the time the UNP fell in May 1970, Lake House has been under a cloud with a permanent threat of a takeover, and in spite of the fact that sections of the Wijewardena family had made peace with the Bandaranaiques and the Ratwattes, the pressure from within the UF for a takeover was great. The Report of the Commission which investigated the exchange control malpractices of certain directors of Lake House constituted another major setback to the fortunes of the Wijewardenas.

AND NOW the end of one phase of contemporary political history has come. Lake House will be no longer a Wijewardena monopoly. What D. R. set up has now been lost. It is significant that the takeover of Lake House was proclaimed a short while after the death of Dudley Senanayake. The funeral had evoked such a

massive mass response that many had developed secret hopes that Lake House would once again be able to come into a new era of prosperity and power with the ghost of Dudley Senanayake presiding over the fortunes of the UNP and Lake House. But the UF was evidently not willing to take chances. The bill to take over Lake House was tabled.

It is also significant that for the first time since elected assemblies had begun to function in Ceylon, there is no member of the Senanayake clan in the NSA. But there is no doubt that the Senanayakes will make a bid for the continuance of their dynasty in Ceylon's politics with the by-election at Dedigama. A nephew of Dudley and a son of Robert Senanayake will, it is said, contest the Dedigama seat, and even if the



**Founded 1954**

**A Journal of Ceylon and  
World Affairs**

MAY 12, 1973

**Vol. 18. No. 3**

43, Dawson Street,  
**COLOMBO 2.**

Telephone: 33172



young man does not win this time, he is believed to have more than a touch of his uncle's and his grandfather's charisma to make a major mark on the politics of this land. The Senanayake dynasty may soon arise once again phoenix-like from the ashes of Dudley Senanayake to play a dominant role in the politics of Sri Lanka for a further period, but it is doubtful if the Wijewardenas will be able to regain their newspaper empire. With adult franchise, and with the prevailing upsurge of buddhist and sinhala national sentiments, Senanayake charisma can project itself into our politics, but with the Press Council Law, the income ceilings law, the new tax laws coupled with enforced compulsory savings to siphon excess incomes into state coffers, the Wijewardenas cannot hope to regain or even rebuild in the foreseeable future a newspaper empire such as the one which is now passing out of their hands.

*Such are the vagaries of human fortunes. Just five years ago, the Wijewardenas and Lake House were at the zenith of supreme power, but today they stand humbled, and though they have not been pauperised by expropriation they are poorer than they were. But they have been emasculated of political power. All this should provide a salutary lesson for many who now stand in the pinnacle of power in various fields. Power more than corrupting those who wield it blinds them to realities especially the realities immediately around them.*

**THE UNITED FRONT** government is now on the war path. The massive demonstration for Dudley Senanayake in death seems to have jolted them into new activity. The Lake House takeover bill and the Regulations of the Press Council Law were tabled immediately after a mighty demonstration was organised for May Day. The Government used all the power and prestige it could command and utilising the machinery of government and structure of the public corporations, brought into the city of Colombo on May 1 the biggest May Day demonstration ever in the history of the island. The numbers so mobilised has been variously estimated: ranging from 2 lakhs to 3 lakhs.

Numerically the number is only a fraction of the crowds which had flocked to Dudley's funeral, but the impact of the May Day demonstration was mainly on the leaders and loyalists of the United Front. It has given them a new fillip of encouragement a time when the frustrations stemming from shortages and austerities had brought a downward swing in UF morale. Some of the slogans at the May Day were intriguing: "we dont want free rice..we will have tea without sugar." Is this to anticipate what is in store?

It was also significant that many of the slogans were of a personal nature centering around personalities in partisan party politics. It was also noted that the certain slogans also reflected the infighting within the United Front. The Wickremasinghe

group had their darts into the Keuneman group, whilst the LSSP stalwarts had their arrows directed at the Moscow Revisionists whilst the Moscowites did not forget their old feuds with the Trotskyites. The SLFP too had an occasional swipe at some of their partners. But, all in all, the May Day demonstration was a powerful demonstration that the UF Government still had lot of punch. Some of the floats which took part in the motorcade were undoubtedly of international standard, i.e. Petroleum Corporation's, the Cement Corporation, etc., but several others did not come up to expectations.

**The Government is today moving aggressively forward. With the takeover of Lake House, the Government will soon be in a position to control the mass media of the country in a significant way. UNP governments in the forties and the fifties had also controlled the mass media through political collaboration, but that did not ensure its political supremacy for all time. The UF government has established control of the mass media through legislative fiat, but whether even this by itself will ensure political supremacy for any foreseeable period is problematic.**

WHILST Lake House will undergo major transformation as a result of governmental action, the Times seems to be undergoing internal upheavals of a major character. On May 1, it was announced that Mr. P. A. Ediriweera,



chief of the prestigious Ceylon Tours Ltd., had become the Deputy Chairman of the *Times* group (presumably Mr Donald Ranaweera continues to be Chairman), but the tone and manner of the announcement made it clear (for those who could read between the lines and who know something of the internal goings-on in the *Times*) that Ediriweera was taking over. On the very next day, it was clear that he had indeed "taken over."

On May 3, on the front page was a double column box in large type under the heading SORRY, NO 'OPINION' and stated that "The *Opinion* will not appear in this column till arrangements are made for its reappearance in keeping with national aspirations and the highest standards of journalism. Till such time we shall publish views of our readers titled *What Our Readers Think*".

Now the *Opinion* was the hard-hitting front page editorial column of the *Daily Mirror*. It was aggressively hard-hitting and incisive and it appealed to the frustrated and the angry in a big way. The circulation of the *Mirror* was largely based on the *Opinion*. Many people bought the paper only to read the *Opinion*. These pieces were not classics either in the art of writing or editorials which posterity will treasure but they appealed to the man in the street. As examples of contemporary journalism in the style and manner of sensational journalese which titillates the palate not only of suburbia but also disgruntled intellectuals, editorials in

the *Opinion* column were "superb."

This box in the *Mirror* of May 3 is an indication that Mr. Reggie Michael has suffered a temporary eclipse, and this was confirmed by what the *Aththa* had to say on its front page on May 4. There is not the slightest doubt that *Mirror* was built up by Reggie Michael on the journalistic reverberations of the *Opinion* column, and if the new dispensation in the *Times* is seeking to sustain the *Mirror* circulation without it, they are in for a big disappointment.

IN THIS ISSUE, we continue the *Shamba* series by Anatory Bukoba. In this connection *Tribune* received a letter dated May 3 from Mr. H. A. I. Goonetilleke, the Librarian of the University of Ceylon, Peradeniya Campus, to say: "I am following with vicarious fascination and absorbed interest the progress of Anatory Bukoba on his one acre by the banks of the Kala Oya. I do wish it will be possible for you to publish the series in book form when it is complete. I have not read anything in English so well and intelligently written about the hard facts of rural agriculture in Ceylon. My congratulations on securing it for your paper." As we have pointed out often, the *Shamba* series reflects the kind of agriculture which the vast multitude of peasants in this country are able to indulge in. In the piece this week he details the heart-rending efforts he makes to make plants grow.

*Canax* in his *Easy Chair* makes a whimsical probe into the talk the reputed N. U. Jayawardena gave to the Rotarians about the nature of the economic crisis in Ceylon.

## DROUGHT IN AFRICA

A vast area of Africa south of the Sahara taking in Mauritania, Senegal, Mali, Upper Volta, Niger, Chad and Northern Nigeria has suffered from severe drought for the past three years. According to official releases. Associated Press reports, about 80 per cent of the cattle population and 60 per cent of the sheep and goats have died in Mauritania since 1969 because of lack of water and feed. Experts predict a disastrous peanut crop this year in Senegal which threatens seriously to affect the country's entire economy. In Western Chad the harvest is expected to be 40-60 per cent less than usual.

The United Nations and the governments of the countries concerned are organizing relief for the population. In Senegal, for instance, all wage earners are required to donate a day's wages to augment the \$ 8,200,000 assigned for the purpose by the government. The Nigerian government has allocated \$ 15 million for relief operations in four northern states.



# RAMBLING NOTES

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

- \* April—Holidays and Deaths
- \* Indira—Remarkable Diplomacy
- \* Journalism—Times & Lake House

MANY EVENTS of significance took place in Sri Lanka in the month of April. For one thing it was a month of holidays. From April 12 to 17 it was one continuous stretch of public holidays, starting with the New Year and ending up on Prophet Mohamed's birthday and the Maha Poya. Then came the Easter weekend from the 20th to 22nd and the one working day in between, viz, the 21st, was declared a public holiday for Dudley Senanayake's funeral. Then work resumed on the 23rd, but on the 28th everybody knocked off early taking leave on Monday April 30 in order to prepare for the stupendous May Day Rally on May 1.

It took working people two days to shake off the *ennui* after the May Day, tamashas, and work of some kind began on May 4, but everybody is looking forward to next round of holidays with Vesak holidays on May 16 and 17. For four days from May 17, Sri Lanka will celebrate the opening of the Bandaranaike Memorial Conference Hall, and this will merge into the Republic Day celebrations on May 22. It is a safe bet that there will be a holiday shut down, or a substantial slowing down,

from May 15/16 to 23/24. With all these holidays, and with public servants and others squeezing in their scheduled leave into working days in between two stretches of public holidays, this country loses many working days. With this kind of generous holidays and leave facilities afforded by the government of Sri Lanka, it is not surprising that Production Year 1973 has not yet really got going.

In April many leading personalities were removed by the hand of death. Two ex-Senators, trade unionist D. G. William of the LSSP and finance tycoon Justin Kotelawela of the UNP, started the ball rolling. Then came the death of Dudley Senanayake followed by that of Dr. Gunapala Malalasekera. A large number of lesser lights also passed away from the scene in April, but in the hysteric euphoria of Dudley's funeral the claims of others to greatness were forgotten.

The long stretch of public holidays and the untimely death of leading personalities covered a major portion of Sri Lanka's April score card on the negative side. On the positive side, the most significant was the visit of Indira Gandhi, the Indian

Prime Minister, from April 27 to 29. Though she was in Ceylon for only about 48 hours, and though she had only one long official discussion on pending issues, governmental circles are satisfied that they had got out of India what they had failed to get for a long time.

BI-LATERAL issues came first. At the officials' talks held last February, the Indian Foreign Secretary Kewal Singh had only grudgingly agreed that India would take back an increased 10% for one year as an experiment. He had refused to commit India for a longer period. Nor had he been willing to consider Ceylon's request that the 10% should be in a kind of geometric progression: 10% of the stipulated 35,000, i.e. 3,500, for the first year making the total 38,500; 10% of 38,500 for the second year, making a total of 41,000 odd; and for the third year 10% of 41,000 odd, and so on.

Ceylon had wanted this increase in order to catch up with lost time—because the UNP government from 1965-70 had slept over implementing the Agreement. The Indian official team had flatly refused to consider the Ceylon suggestion of a 10% increase on the cumulative totals every year. Indira Gandhi not only conceded the 10% demand but has also left vague in the communique as to whether the increase would be the static 3,500 or the 10% of the cumulative number for each year. On the wording, both interpretations are possible, and as the Indian Prime Minister has agreed that India would like to take back the agreed



figure of 525,000 as quickly as possible, it is likely that Ceylon's interpretation would prevail—if Sri Lanka continues to act with the normal friendliness and goodwill towards its neighbour.

*This is a big advance from Sri Lanka's point of view and governmental circles view this as a major concession wrung from India*

THE SECOND matter or which official circles in Sri Lanka seem to be happy about is that India has now agreed to pull out of cold storage the question of the 150,000 stateless. When the Shastri-Srimavo Pact was concluded, there was an estimated 150,000 stateless (the number must have increased now) not covered by the Agreement. Sri Lanka had in recent years wanted this question also resolved, but India had taken up the position that this problem could well be discussed when the matters stipulated in the Agreement had neared final implementation.

Indira Gandhi agreed to pull this problem out of the deep-freeze in which her officials had placed it and agreed to have the matter discussed once again at the officials' level in order to find a solution. Sri Lanka's fear was that India would deny liability or obligation in respect of these stateless and that this number would become a "burden" on Ceylon. Indian officialdom whilst not denying responsibility had refused to take up the matter for discussion until the Agreement was more or less fully implemented—by which time the number would not

be merely 150,000 but several times more owing to the process of natural growth.

*The re-activating of this question for mutual discussions between the two countries is regarded by Sri Lanka as another major concession won by her.*

Even on the question of re-opening the registers for Indian citizenship, Indira Gandhi had taken a more flexible stand than had the officials who had attended the last talks. Ceylon's case was that only 400,000 had so far applied for Indian citizenship though India was committed to take back 525,000, and that nearly 600,000 had applied for Ceylon citizenship whereas Sri Lanka had undertaken to accord citizenship to 300,000. To re-adjust this anomaly, Ceylon had wanted the registers for Indian citizenship re-opened, but India's officials had been adamant that the question of the re-opening of the registers could not be taken up until the pending applications had been processed.

Mrs. Gandhi took up a realistic position that this matter could be discussed as soon as Sri Lanka showed the "mechanics" of how the re-adjustment could be done by opening the registers. The ball is now in Sri Lanka's court and as soon as this country has concrete proposals as to how this could be achieved, the matter would be taken up for discussion.

**These three matters were the vital questions "in dispute" regarding the Shastri-Sirimavo Agreement, and on the three, Sri Lanka feels that she**

**has made a major advance since the deadlocked officials' talk last February.**

ANOTHER MATTER on which there is great deal of satisfaction in political circles in Colombo is that the Indian Prime Minister took pains to assure Sri Lanka that the Government of Tamil Nadu had stated that it will not interfere in the internal affairs of Sri Lanka. She went on record to state that it was wrong for the DMK in Tamil Nadu to have ties with political organisations in Ceylon and vice-versa. (The Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu also supported her position when he stated that the DMK in South India did not have cells in Ceylon).

This categorical assurance by the Prime Minister of India that the DMK will not be an instrument for subverting the sovereignty of Sri Lanka has helped to minimise many of the fears and apprehensions that had been entertained in this country. That such an assurance was forthcoming from the Prime Minister of India (without any *quid pro quo* assurances from Sri Lanka about the growing influence of the China-Pakistan axis directed at India) has helped to create new climate of cordiality towards India among influential political groups here. *This is also regarded a major advance on the studied silence which had previously been maintained on this subject.*

Finally, VIP circles in Sri Lanka's ruling hierarchy are quite happy that the Indian Prime Minister was also will-



ing to bring out of cold storage the question of Kachativu. So far, all attempts by Ceylon to discuss the question was negated by India's officialdom (no doubt on directives from political quarters) on the specious plea that it was not a matter for immediate discussion. Indira Gandhi has now agreed that the question of Kachativu will be discussed by officials, and in the first instance the documents of both parties would be exchanged. At the press conference she went on record to say that "Kachativu was only a rock not an island and that it was of no strategic value to India..". This was more or less conceding Sri Lanka's claim that India had no objections to this bit of rock being regarded as part of Sri Lanka—but before this admission was made officially (*de jure*), India wanted the median line between India and Ceylon in the Palk straits to be drawn on the basis of the existing foreshore boundaries.

With the Palk Straits being so narrow India could not afford to permit Sri Lanka to measure her 12-mile limit of territorial waters from the shores of Kachativu. That is why India would want the median line drawn first and after that she could concede that Kachativu was a piece of Ceylon rock.

The Indian Prime Minister's remarks about Kachativu being a bit of rock of no strategic value seems to have caused the ripples in Tamil Nadu and the Chief Minister Karunanithi seems to have lodged a protest in New Delhi that handing over

Kachativu to Sri Lanka would cause emotional upheavals in South India. The question of Kachativu is not a matter for a regional state government as it is one of the subjects on which only the Centre can decide. *Karunanithi's protest is only a reminder to Sri Lanka that she must have the goodwill of both New Delhi and Madras to resolve the question of Kachativu.*

ON ALL questions of international or regional significance, there was complete and unanimous agreement: between both countries about the Indian Ocean, about non-alignment, about the non-aligned summit, about Vietnam, etc. etc.

India has also agreed to reduce the trade gap between the two countries and at the same time extend economic assistance and co-operation in a big way to help Sri Lanka to effect a breakthrough in the economic field. India is now in a position to assist Sri Lanka in many ways, and a high-powered team has arrived in the island on May 8 to draw up concrete proposals to improve trade between the two countries and also prepare reports for possible fields of economic co-operation.

THUS, Indira Gandhi's visit to Sri Lanka has created a new atmosphere of cordiality and friendship between the two countries. Mrs. Gandhi has been making a round of visits to all her immediate neighbours, Nepal, Bhutan, Sikkim and now Ceylon. By her diplomatic skill she has succeeded in generating more friendly responses from these countries than had existed

for a long time. She has also established the closest ties of friendship with the new state of Bangladesh which she had helped to bring into existence. Normalcy has to be established only with Pakistan.

She has now offered a "package deal" to President Bhutto offering to release the prisoners-of-war if Pakistan would exchange the Bengalis in Pakistan for the non-Bengalis and Biharis in Bangladesh. The earlier precondition of the recognition of Bangladesh has been dropped, but Dacca had insisted that it will stage a war crimes trial involving about 195 pows now held in India. Any adjustment on this had to be settled by direct talks between Islamabad and Dacca, and Shiekh Mujibur Rahman has made it clear that he would not begin any dialogue with Bhutto unless his country was duly recognised. Bhutto is now caught in a cleft stick of his own making: the new Constitution of Pakistan regards Bangladesh as part of Pakistan and Bhutto cannot well afford to violate the Constitution he framed—within a few weeks of its coming into being. Bhutto cannot also afford to reject summarily the package deal because he has to bring back the 90,000 odd pows back as quickly as possible—because Punjab will be in revolt if he does not bring them back soon. That is why he has sent a long reply to New Delhi wanting the pows question to be dealt with separately, as a special and urgent issue.



Indira Gandhi has now flung the ball into Bhutto's court on the paws issue, and has shown that she has developed far greater tactical skill and diplomatic finesse in dealing with India's neighbours than shown by her father at the height and glory of his power,

THIS IS A PERIOD, especially in the years after 1962/63, when empires and crowned heads are tumbling down like the proverbial ninepins. Kings and empires in the classic sense do not exist anymore, but destiny is toppling men in power and in charge of financial empires with unfailing regularity. Before they are toppled, their positions are undermined, their reputations denigrated and their integrity thrown onto the dustheap. This rule of historical change, which is being enforced upon a reluctant world, does not seem to spare anyone, or anything, big and small: all those who exercise authority and power (and in this era such persons seem to develop limitless arrogance which led them to misuse power and abuse authority) seem to fall under the guillotine in the most unexpected manner.

Take the newspaper world in Sri Lanka, for instance. Of the three mighty giants, two have already fallen by the wayside. The reputations of those who guided the destinies of *Lake House* went with the discovery of exchange control malpractices, and now the Government has decided to "broadbase" the ownership and hand over control to a new management. And now, the same

fate seems to have overtaken the *Times* group, but this time the toppling over has come from within and not by governmental action. For a long time, knowledgeable people were aware that the *Times* group was the "sick man" of the fourth estate in Sri Lanka. After the last disastrous strike by the CMU, when the management scored a public victory, it was known that over Rs. 2 million of the employees provident fund money had been used by the management to run the business—violating the rules governing the Provident Fund.

There were regular whippers and bazaar gossip about goings-on inside the *Times* group, but its newspapers sought to maintain a patronising aloofness whilst being involved in petty partisan inner-party political intrigues. The *Mirror* so far as the UNP was concerned, was constantly rooting for J. R. and was viciously anti-Dudley: in the SLFP, it had a soft corner for Maithripala Senanayake. The *Lankadipa* was always strongly pro-SLFP, but it was evident that in recent times there were several curbs on its pro-SLFP leanings. Whilst frustrated Bambalawatte and the indignant sections of the middle classes bought or borrowed the *Mirror* to read the rhetorical outbursts in the *Opinion* column, the circulation of the *Lankadipa* kept slipping down. The evening *Times* really had no circulation to boast about. When Dudley died, the *Opinion* column in the *Mirror*, which had been calling him names not so

long ago, did a double somersault and praised him to the heavens (still insisting that it did not retract from one word it had stated earlier.)

THEN CAME the debacle. On May 1, it was announced that P. A. Ediriweera had been made Deputy Chairman of the Group. On May 3, it was announced that the *Opinion* column was being suspended until arrangements could be made to have it written in a manner which was consistent with the highest standards of journalism. Then on the next day, May 4, it was announced that Ediriweera had assumed duties as the Managing Editor of all newspapers of the *Times* group. This was a post held by R. L. Michael. And finally on May 6, (when this column is being written) the *Times Weekend* had a frontpage splash in red banner headlines IT'S TIME TO RESCUE THE 'TIMES'—STARTLING REVELATIONS BY SRI LANKA JOURNALISTS' UNION..SHARE MACHINATIONS BY POWER BLOC: The story began with an apology. "Normally a national newspaper does not air its dirty linen in public. But a newspaper group like the *Times* Group is a national institution which owes a duty—a sacred duty—to its readers, the nation and its own conscience to come clean.."

Then a letter by Union to the new Deputy Chairman Ediriweera was published. It is an interesting document and much of it can be lilel



against three Directors named in person, N. S. O. Merdis, P. Navaratnarajah and S. Viswanathan. R. L. Michael is also named as one of the persons in the intrigue. Deputy Chairman Ediriweera, obviously with the support of Chairman Donald Ranaweera and another Director H. W. Amarasuriya, has taken more than a calculated risk in publishing the "facts" in the union's letter which may have to be substantiated in a court of law.

Reading between the lines, it is clear that the N. S. O. Mendis group have the controlling majority in the share-capital, but Ediriweera and his group have sought to take over the *Times* through a *palace coup* and have mobilised the support of one union to help them out, viz, The Sri Lanka Journalists' Union. Earlier the CMU was the most powerful union in the *Times* setup, but after the last strike, the CMU was pushed into the background with as many as 200 of its members not being taken back after the strike.

The Sri Lanka Journalists Union and the Ediriweera group seem to favour the "progressive and socialistic measures" of the Government (Ediriweera's own business in the travel and tourist line is one of the spheres reserved for the private sector with the guarantee that it will not be touched for a long time to come.)

How this battle royal will be resolved is hard to say, but Mendis and Navaratnarajah are old campaigners who know the art of getting out of difficult situations. Ediriweera is new to this field and seems to think that if he dons the shining armour of a knight gallant fighting for "conscience" and "for the nation" he would be invincible. To the observer on the by-lines, the squabble in the *Times* is a sordid affair which has been a long time coming.

WHILST THE mongoose-and-the-cobra tussle goes on in the *Times*, the deathrattle of the *Lake House-that-was* is now heard far and wide. There is really nothing to read in the *Daily News* these days. Many buy the paper only to check the obituary columns—because it still seems part of Sri Lankan status symbol to have a notice in the *Daily News* before one is buried or cremated. Whilst most people now only read the obituary columns and the classified advertisement columns in the *Daily News*, the Editor-in-Chief seems to think that he has the license to unleash personal invective and uncalled-for abuse against those who cross his path journalistically speaking. Smug in the feeling that he has taken out insurance with the bigwigs in the SLFP and the LSSP, in the likely event of a takeover, the Editor is dealing blows all round.

The *Daily News* of May 5 had a particularly nasty piece violating all the ethics of journalism about a foreign correspondent stationed in Colombo. The attack was launched in the Scribe column and it would appear that the foreign correspondent, in question the PTI man in Colombo, had written a piece that the *Daily News* had played down the Indira Gandhi visit and had refused to have a supplement which all other dailies had on the occasion of the Indian PM's visit. Apart from playing down the visit, it is a fact that the *Daily News* reports were also petty and facetious.

Journalistic circles know the anti-Indian predilections of the Editor, but the manner in which he pounced on the PTI man for making what was obviously a factual survey of the local press during the Indian PM's visit showed he was so charged with that personal venom that he forgot the basic ethics of journalism and decency. What the high and mighty editor seemed to have forgotten was the people in glass houses should not throw stones—especially when such an attack was uncalled for and was unworthy of one occupying such an important post as the chief editor of the *Daily News*.

It is still not certain whether the present editor of the *Daily News* will survive the takeover at the fabulous salary he is paid, but if ethical journalism is one of the qualifications for the post he seems intent on counting himself out.



SHAMBA

## DIFFICULTIES OF MAKING PLANTS GROW

By ANATORY BUKOBA

MARCH 25 - 30

March 25, Sunday is a fine day for a farmer; he can rest without hurting his conscience. The usual watering done, the lettuce, tomato and carrot, the three vines, bought at Rs. 2/50 each, the jak, and mango and the coconut shells and broken attilis in, which are planted jak, *pani kumbutu* and olive seeds, and, finally, the pepper plant. None of these got much water but they all got some.

The smallest papaw plant that, I now recollect, was about as big as when I first got it, I tried with my hand to see how firm it was in the soil. Although its leaves were green, I found that its stalk was not firm in the ground. It had no roots. However, did it stay green all this while? Was its stalk lapping moisture up, although because it had lost its roots, it could not grow? It remains a mystery to me. As I have saved the seed of every papaw I have eaten since I came here, I shall be able to replace it. All five plantains appear to be alright, three with a new rolled up leaf still enclosed by the old one. This is why, as I learnt today, the new plantain leaf, when it first appears, looks as if it had grown several feet all in one night. In reality it grows to that length inside the old leaf in one night.

SOMEBODY gave me five vine cuttings to plant. I said I would put them in the evenings. "Oh no", I was told, "put them in this morning; roots must be planted in the evening, fruits in the morning," and I repeat it for what it is worth; as the grape counts as a fruit the vines duly went in this morning. I planted them in a row beyond the manioc patch, and I put a row of stones around them too. I leaned *cadjans* together over them, as the heat of the day was still to come. This evening, they all were watered again, all, that is, except the murunga plantains, papaw and manioc and I could not give them as much as I would have liked.

If it had not been for a chance visitor, a new one who brought me a gift of papaws to eat, they would not have been watered at all. He did duty for me by the house, while I drew the water from the river, and replenished the drinking water in one of my *kala geddies*. Earlier in the evening I set fire to one of the heaps of cleared vegetation, one to which the vegetables were drawing rather near. The heat was so intense that I felt it near the house, and I feared for the manioc and the five newly planted vines. Thank hea-

vens that the heap is out of the way now.

March 26. A day of crowded impressions this was. The thirty manioc cuttings got some watering at least their first since the rains. All else got some watering in the morning, too, except the murunga and plantains, but they got it in the evening. The two *alu kehel* and the two *ambul* all show signs of growth by their new leaf, but it is the *koli-kuttu* I am not sure of yet. The murunga are doing well; you can almost see the leaves grow, they come in such profusion, once they get started.

I started putting down a fence or a hedge today, above the murunga, at the top of the bank, and nearly at a level with the road, and I used a plant that grows in this place. It is easily uprooted, at least now after the rains and everybody says it is really a fencing plant. I put down five quite close together, the five which in their original place, would have got scorched this evening when I set fire to another heap of dried vegetation. SINCE I moved on to the land I have saved every seed of any fruit I have eaten, and I have a fine collection of papaw seeds. Twelve of these went into the ground today, in a square of four in three places, the spots that used to be occupied by the *kekiri* the *panni-kumbutu* (I have been told I have been pronouncing the name wrong, and I shall write the correct pronunciation here when I am sure of it), and the discarded papaw plant the *Panni*.



kumbutu in the *attili* are too small yet to be transplanted, I have been told. The pepper plant is quite dead, as I found out this evening. It had no root anyway, when I put it in but I had been told that could not matter.

On the other hand, a flowering plant which I was quite sure was dead but had been reluctant to pull out and had watered whenever I washed my hands before starting a meal, has now put out tiny leaves, a reward for my perseverance. So it will be, I hope, with the mango plant, but I think the *laulu* has had it, as they say. The five new vines looked all but dead when I put them in, but I was assured they would be alright. Two of the vines I paid for look that way, but the third has kept its leaves and looks well. I put more ashes round these three today, and round the jak, mango and *laulu* I think.

Now that I have really got started planting things, albeit, I am still on my own and lucky to be able to do any watering at all, a recitation of what I do may seem dull to the reader. So I shall philosophize a little now, at the risk of seeming long winded. My problem here has been essentially a human problem, a problem about human beings, so I think I am in a position to speak my thoughts. When I look around me and see the causes of my own predicament, I cannot but come to the conclusion that those very causes are a healthy condition.

IN SHORT, everyone seems very busy, and there is not

much wrong with Ceylon. I see no reason why we could not be prosperous over-night. The malaise, obviously, is at the centre and I do not want to be rude when I say too much of the London School of Economics, and also, perhaps, of Oxford. I listened to a debate some years ago, and the two leading lights said really nothing to disagree about except the form foreign aid should take.

Now, I cannot possibly put things right, just writing in this journal, so I shall drop the subject now, even if I leave the reader mystified. I shall say this what we want is not really scientific techniques but more of the simple things. Our heads are so full of tripe that we cannot descend to the commonplace, even when it is just a question of food.

Of this I can give one example. People look for the big occasion, when this goes down, and that. Meanwhile the minutes slip by. So they eat their curry and rice and do without the pudding or the dessert, or more simply the fruit. They could not be bothered to grow it. It was too small a thing. Unfortunately, Governments think so, too, and that is why we have five-year plans. I hope the current one never gets going. There is no need for it.

March 27. The bit of hedge I planted yesterday looks no worse from the removal of its plants from one place to another. The *murunga* is really showing the benefits of the water I gave it when there was no rain, and I have been lucky enough to water

the trees several times since the last of the rain. One of the *alu-kehel* has a fine, large, broad new leaf, fully opened out. That makes this, in a way, a red-letter day, one when the farm began to show results in a large way. The *koli kuttu* is showing no life yet in spite of what a friend thought, and duly reported as an observation a few days back. The *pannikumbutu*, sown from seeds in the *attili* is coming out fast, and should soon be ready for transplanting. Only one of the eight vines has any leaves. I am watering them all hopefully. I put ashes round the new five vines today, and I also gave the *koli-kuttu* an *attili* of ash, but I was told this was the wrong thing to do. The ash does not seem to have harmed the flourishing vine. Ash, I was told, "boils" the plant too much, and I know it does feel hot under the sun. One of the two jak seeds I planted in a coconut shell a long while back is at last showing signs of life. I had long given them up, although I still watered them daily. One of the manioc has at last put out leaves; it did not take long, too. I must say I have been very lucky about watering and watered everything there was to water both this morning and this evening. The plants must have had a real shock to find themselves so well attended to. I broke the spell of new planting I have been doing the last few days by doing none today.

March 28. There has been rain, and it came on very quietly; first a short light shower which left things



hotter than ever, and then, after a while, it began to rain, and it did so for two hours. It is dark now and the rain has only just stopped.

The wanduroo monkey has been but a few yards from some of the cultivated part. They were sitting in trees and looking at me, and I could only drive them away by taking up a slasher and setting myself to clear the thickly wooded part which is above the river. The noise of the *kaththa* slashing at the vegetation was too much for them, but they came back again later, and I had to repeat the performance. I dared not persevere with the work too long, because from where I was I could not see the front of the house at all, its only entrance, and the new buffalo track from the road, which gave direct access to it was out of my view, too. I planted three laulu seeds in one of the *attilis*.

March 29. The *panni-kumbutu* in the other *attili* are coming out very nicely and today I transplanted four of them out of the *attili* into positions which lie between the papaw trees and the papaw beds, so that the papaw is, as it were interlaced with *panni-kumbutu*, which is, by the way, what I should have been writing all this while for the word I used before.

It nearly rained after the usual hot day. The clouds were very lowering. There was a slight drizzle, but that was all there was to it, inspite of the rumbles caused by thunder. I planted nine manioc cuttings, these at

greater length than the ones I planted before. Six of the earlier ones are showing leaves now. No signs yet of any lettuce, tomato or carrot in the beds where I planted them.

It has been a day of hunger. No bread has been sold locally for some days now; no flour is the excuse. It is available much further afield. Plantains are going up in price. That may be because of the coming Sinhalese New Year.

The youth of this country are very clever making up ways of speaking Sinhalese. The particular one I heard sounds like Chinese; and I have seen for myself that this form of exercise can also be done with English.

March 30. Seven more manioc have put out leaves, making thirteen. Of the *panni-kumbutu*, transplanted yesterday, one looks quite all right, the other not so well, inspite of the protection they had from the sun. No signs of life from the vegetable beds but I weeded the lettuce bed of grass. Someone performed an operation on the *koli-kuttu* tree by removing the bulk of it leaving just a short stump with a green core to prove at least that the tree is not dead. There was a slight drizzle and it is drizzling again, but I refrained from doing any transplanting. Instead of this I did some clearing and spared some small *siyambala* trees. *Siyambala* is used in cooking, and the tree, fully grown, is quite a big one. The *murunga* look a fine sight with their leaves but the trees are still

small, and, except for the leaves, I cannot say they have grown.

Today I was lucky to be able to buy some lemons—in Sinhalese they are known as limes, which I find irritating, not just to eat or drink only, but to get at their seeds. I have a small collection of lime seeds now, a few orange and quite a collection of papaw seeds. I tried to save every seed of all I eat or drink; as I have said before, *Panni-kumbutu* is water melon. A very fine vegetable is sweet potato, and I must try and plant some.

Torch batteries are to country people in Ceylon what cattle are to Masai in Africa—anybody's game. To the Masai, acquiring other people's cattle by pinching them is not stealing, as a Masai once told me, nor do swapping old batteries for People's brand new ones, when they are not looking, as it seems in Ceylon. It is an expensive game for the one who is made a sucker and it has happened to me several times, and it can also be alarming, when you really need your new batteries, as I do here.

For News Behind  
the News

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N.U.J. & ROTARIANS

## The Four-Way Test For a Three-In-One Crisis

By CANAX

IT IS unlikely that Mr. N. U. Jayawardena, a former Governor of the Central Bank and one of our leading economists and businessmen, has anything against Rotary or Rotarians, but what he told them at one of their luncheon meetings the other day could, if nothing else, put those otherwise hardy gentlemen listeners of his off their fodder. Not a bad thing, that, if the food crisis is all we are concerned about. But we are not, of course.

Anyone in his right mind knows that Rotary, and its continued existence, should be as much our concern as any piddling food crisis. The way to put it in perspective is to remember that we can live with a food crisis, or any number of crises, but is life really worthwhile without Rotary?

You go saying things that put Rotarians off their grub, and the inevitable question you find yourself asking next, like Shaw did, is 'Whither Rotary?', and sure enough you won't be able to answer it the way he did, which was 'To Lunch'.

Nobody seems to have told Mr. J. that luncheon speeches for Rotarians are expressly meant to promote the digestive process and induce in the select group of listeners a keen sense of well-being. All that is expect-

ted of a speaker is that he mouth some inanity for no other reason than to make the gathering laugh, for laughter, if indulged in at the right times (lunch, for example) and in the right quantities (0.2 seconds at a time, every two hours) is considered the safest and surest way to Health and Happiness. (Hence the formula, H2—Oh! though it doesn't hold water). And if Rotarians are healthy and happy, it follows as a natural consequence that the country too will be likewise.

What Mr. J said at the luncheon, far from producing laughter would have served only to scare the day-lights out of his audience. It is extremely doubtful, in the circumstances, if any listener left that luncheon feeling he had done his bit for the country, and at peace with the world.

TO BEGIN with, he referred to "an economic crisis inside a social crisis wrapped up in a balance-of-payments crisis". Such food for thought must surely tax even elderly Rotarian minds to the very limits of endurance, to say nothing of taxing severely Rotarian tummies understandably beyond their prime. This is somewhat different to telling children ghost-stories at bedtime. (If you haven't tried it, let me tell

you what happens: it puts the kids to sleep, all right, but keeps the parents wide awake, and also scared like hell.)

If memory serves, there was a time way back in the mid '50s when it was fashionable to grapple with 'problems within problems.' But then that was just what the Doctor ordered for the political ills that ailed the country at the time. To be fair by him, NM now appears to have dispensed the same prescription for himself, proving beyond doubt that he is a Doctor and a Gentleman who won't create for others problems (within problems) he won't create for himself.

Having said that the causes of the present crisis were deep-seated, Mr. Jayawardena wasn't satisfied to leave well alone and actually proceeded to subject these causes to a depth of analysis only he is capable of. Yes, he actually analysed, and in detail, the causes of our three-in-one crisis. (Contrary to popular belief, this is vastly different in chemical composition to similar-sounding, all-purpose oil readily available in the market—once upon a time, as they say in fairy stories, though this isn't one.) In Mr. J's reckoning, our three-in-one crisis had, believe it or not, four main causes, thus casting doubts on the long-held suspicion, also called a Theory, of Cause & Effect. But where Mr Jayawardena truly pushed back the frontiers of knowledge was in showing that four Causes could produce, not just four Effects, but a Three-in-one Crisis, a discovery



which makes him worthy of an Honorary Doctorate from our University.

TO GET down to the Four Causes (which, incidentally, are not related to the Three Stooges, except in a round-about way, because of the difficulties of a Uniflow system governing all genetic traffic). The First, in chronological order, came the granting of universal franchise in 1931. This is one Cause that also doubled up as a Curse a quarter century later—in 1956, to be precise—although Mr. J wasn't being as explicit as all that. The way I see it, which is the way I suspect Mr. J also sees it, it was inevitable that the—ugh!—Common Man should eventually stomp in as though he owned this blessed country when the people who owned it in 1931 were foolish enough to hand out the Vote to all and sundry. It had to happen sometime, and what surprises me, even if it doesn't Mr. J, is that it took 25 long years to happen. You plant a seed, as the saying goes, and it can't help but grow. (Unless it's sold and guaranteed by the Agricultural Department.) So Mr. Jayawardena is right; that was the first mistake, only he calls it a cause.

What we have to do now is to try and get back to the stage we were in 1931. That may be a lot easier to achieve, with Rotarian assistance, than to sort out a many-layered economic crisis. After all our people, more than most others, are forever living in the past anyway, like buffaloes wallowing in the mud. To solve the problem we have only to strip the hoi polloi of the

Vote, and if that calls for a little bit of totalitarianism, well, you can hardly make an omelette without breaking the egg, can you?

Actually, Mr. J treated the First and Fourth Causes together, the Fourth being the gaining of Independence, in 1948, without a national struggle, as he put it. Now he's really confusing me on that point, for we gained Independence without a national struggle in 1948, then we gained it, again without a struggle, in 1956, and we gained it once more, also sans struggle, in 1970, although I can't remember losing it so many times. It doesn't make sense, but I guess it's not meant to.

The Second Cause, says Mr. Jayawardena, was the formation of the Lanka Sama Samaja Party in 1935. Seems the LSSP started a campaign of agitation designed to call for more welfare measures and not geared to increasing productivity. I haven't checked this out with NM yet, but I feel sure he'll be proud to own up to everything. Mr. J, says.

The Third Cause, chronologically speaking, was the anti-malaria campaign of 1945 which, he says, reduced the mortality rate considerably and was eventually instrumental in increasing the country's population. Looking back, one realises how foolishly short-sighted we were in allowing the WHO to do such a thorough job of its anti-malaria campaign. If only Mr. Jayawardena had spoken up in 1945, we would have recognised malaria for the blessing it really is. We would then have told the WHO to lay off and let malaria go about its business,

which happens to be killing people, thus keeping our mortality rate way up and our population level way down. What's done is done, I suppose, though in my view it's not too late to salvage the situation.

THIS MIGHT call for a lot of planning, and I have no idea if the WHO is geared for an operation of this nature or magnitude, but the only thing to do now is to ask the Organisation to stop eradicating malaria and start eradicating the Lanka Sama Samaja Party. This is where Rotary International could help—by supplying information, via up-to-the-minute aerial sightings if necessary, of any stray pockets of the Fourth International, so we can rid not merely Sri Lanka but the world as well, of a troublesome and dangerous pest. The first step will be to check if the LSSP, too, has developed an immunity to DDT.

Needless to say, all data supplied by Rotary International will first be put to the Four-way Test to ensure whatever the Test is meant to ensure. (Acidity, possibly, though I won't swear to that). It's a form of quality-control, anyway.

So, all things considered, what Mr. Jayawardena said at the luncheon, disconcerting though it was, was nothing compared to what he left unsaid, and yet implied (how could I have figured it out if he didn't?). It's the stuff that violence is made of, and was certainly enough to transform any self-respecting Rotarian overnight into a self-made Barbarian.



## TOPICAL

## AFTER DUDLEY - WHAT?

by "Spartacus"

Following the untimely death of Mr. Dudley Senanayake, his friend and second-in-command, Mr. J. R. Jayewardene has been unanimously elected President of the United National Party. This was expected. What the future holds for the UNP, the Opposition in the National State Assembly and the country generally under the new UNP leader remains to be seen.

UNP. Whatever may be said to the credit of the late Mr. Dudley Senanayake, it cannot be denied that it was under his leadership that the UNP saw its worst defeats. Barring the electoral rout of the UNP in 1956 under the leadership of Sir John Kotelawela, every election struggle since then has been an unmitigated defeat for the UNP, even though it may even have formed a minority government (as in March 1960) or a so-called National Government in 1965 with the assistance of the Federal Party and other minor parties.

This may seem strange, for Mr. Senanayake started his Prime Ministerial career in 1952 with the biggest electoral triumph that the UNP ever scored, not barring the 1947 election when the UNP was led by his illustrious father, the redoubtable Mr. D. S. Senanayake.

Mr. Dudley Senanayake's first spell as Prime Minister was followed by his temporary retirement from politics and the rout of the UNP under Sir John, which we have

referred to above. The responsibility for this rout, too, lies as much as with Mr. Senanayake as with Sir John, for it was the former's temporary political retirement as well as his tacit disapproval of the Kotelawela Government that contributed in no small measure to that ignominious defeat.

MR. Senanayake's come-back to politics in 1957 was followed by the resurgence of the UNP under his leadership. But this period can be described as the most opportunist in the UNP's history for the unprincipled way in which it attacked the policies followed by the then Government.

To give but one example, the UNP under Dudley Senanayake found fault with Mr. Bandaranaike for putting Sinhala Only on the statute book on the ground that it divided the nation. But when Mr. Bandaranaike sought to accommodate the minorities with his "reasonable use of Tamil" Bill, it was the UNP which led the opposition to it, organising protest marches to Kandy and openly declaring that the time had come to fight "without giving any quarter."

THE OPEN EXHORTATIONS of the *Siyarata* to "kill, kill and kill" the Tamils will not be easily erased from minds of the minorities for many, many years to come. Mr. Bandaranaike himself described the UNP at that stage as "despicable in defeat

as it was arrogant while in the seats of power."

All this goes to show that the UNP, when in the Opposition under Dudley's leadership, never learnt to build itself up as the alternative government to the party in power by advocating policies it would really follow if returned to power and winning the support of the masses, all it did was to rely on stunts and make pie-crust promises it knew it would never implement, even if returned to power. The pledge to the Catholic Church to return the schools taken over by Mrs. Bandaranaike's Government is a fine example of the latter.

The defeat of the UNP in 1970 was followed by the worst period for the UNP when Mr. Senanayake had to face open criticism and opposition from his own lieutenants, in particular Mr. Jayewardene and Mr. Premadasa. Even the Press that was always favourable to him began to publish long articles that the UNP would never become a party close to the masses as long as it was led by people like Mr. Senanayake.

Now under Mr. Jayewardene, what does the future hold for the UNP? Will the Senanayake family bandyism give way to Jayewardene authoritarianism? Or will the UNP learn from its past mistakes, really learn to tune their minds not to the rhythm of the universe but to the heart-throbs of the poverty stricken masses of this land and fashion its policies and programmes to



give these masses a new hope for a better future? Only time can tell.

OPPOSITION. A more important question that arises with Mr. Jayewardene becoming leader of the UNP is the one of the role of the Opposition vis-a-vis the Government in the National State Assembly and the country at large.

Readers will remember that it was not so long ago that Mr. Jayewardene was advocating support for the Government in the national interest in all matters in which it could be supported without putting party before nation or trying to score debating points against the Government on every trivial matter.

It will be remembered that Mr. Jayewardene openly threatened to get the UNP to agree to join hands with the Government, or failing that even join the Government ranks with those in the UNP who supported his point of view.

Now that Mr. Jayewardene is head of his party, what will his attitude be to the Government? Will he get the UNP to agree to his resuscitating the old strategy of "Trojan horse" tactics of entering the Government, thereby creating rifts and divisions inside Government ranks, strengthening the Rightist forces inside it and even his dearest dream of all, driving away the LSSP and CP from it?

Or will he, now that he is the UNP leader, go the way of all old UNP leaders, and

take up every stick available to beat and belabour the Government and try every ruse to climb back to the seats of power? Again, only time will tell.

COUNTRY. On the strategy and tactics that Mr. J. R. Jayewardene follows as leader of the UNP and the Opposition depends not only the future of the UNP but of the whole nation as well.

Whatever the demerits of Mr. Senanayake as leader of the UNP and whatever may have been his shortcomings as a democrat, it cannot be said that democracy at any stage in Sri Lanka was in danger from any ambitions or policies from his part. On the contrary, he himself warned against those within his own ranks who sought to overthrow democracy altogether and usher in naked dictatorial rule.

Now that Mr. Jayewardene is in the UNP saddle, will he abide by the same democratic canons that Mr. Senanayake always pursued? Or, will he, despairing of any hope of a democratic comeback to power, resort to extra-democratic measures to topple the Government? Or, still another possibility will he resort to democratic methods only while the UNP is still in the Opposition and resort to a naked dictatorship if and when the UNP comes back to power under his leadership?

Neither of the last two alternatives bode any good for the good of the nation. It is to be sincerely hoped that Mr. Jayewardene will always follow the democratic path by which he has always sworn and keep alive the torch of democracy which he has always said has been the light of Sri Lanka while its flames have flickered and faded out in one country after another in the developing countries of the Third World.

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## INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

BY ARIEL

## \* WATERGATE

## \* CAMBODIA

## \* ISRAEL

IN THE MIDST of the *detente*, so laboriously devised by President Nixon with the assistance of Kissinger, aggressive fighting seems to be breaking out at every turn. The US President with great diplomatic finesse had substituted the cold war of which he had been one of main architects with a new policy of *detente* with China on the one hand and the Soviet Union on the other. With this triangular *detente*, Nixon had evidently hoped that he would be able to sustain US initiative in world affairs and establish a new kind of *pax americana* to keep the stars and stripes flying high in all the seven oceans and in all the continents. The American people had endorsed this policy of *detente* and Nixon had won a landslide victory in the Presidential election last November.

With this triangular *detente*, Nixon had also hoped to end the war in Vietnam with the Paris Peace Agreement of January 27, 1973, and had also hoped that an end would be found to the Arab-Israeli conflict in West Asia. Cambodia has proved to be the Achilles heel of the Vietnam Peace Agreement, and the US seems to be well on the way into being sucked into deep involvement in a new war in the Indochina peninsula. In West

Asia, Israel has become a law unto itself and every time the Black Commandos strike Israel seems to think that it has the right to strike back ten times harder violating the frontiers of countries with which it is at peace.

But more than Cambodia or Israel, what has plagued the Nixon Administration and the Presidency itself is what has become known as the Watergate Mess. Millions of words have already been written about this and much more will undoubtedly be written immediately and also in the future. For a long time, the Watergate affair was simmering under the surface, but in the words of the *Time* magazine, 30/4, Watergate has now broken wide open.

UNDER the heading RIPPING OPEN! AN INCREDIBLE SCANDAL, *Time* began its report thus: "The denials, the evasions, the secretiveness and, yes, the lies—all has failed. The Watergate case was opening wide open. A ten-month campaign by some of the highest past and present officials of the Nixon Administration to cover up their involvement was crumbling. Stripped of its protective shrouds, the scandal was rapidly emerging as probably the most pervasive instance

of top-level misconduct in the nation's history.

"Incredibly, a former Attorney General was cited repeatedly by White House and Justice Department sources as almost certain to be indicted by a federal grand jury. So, too, was Nixon's chief legal counsel, as well as the second-ranking official in his successful re-election campaign and several former White House aides. A second former Cabinet Minister and campaign fund raiser seemed only a shade less likely to be indicted. There was very real possibility that some of these and other officials might be convicted of crimes and sent to jail. For several, at least, the charges may well include conspiracy to wiretap, perjury, obstructing justice and financial misconduct.

"The nation's capital was thrown into an apprehensive mood of intrigue and suspense. The suspect officials hired attorneys to defend them, held furtive conferences with federal prosecutors and shuttled in and out of a Washington grand jury room, dodging newsmen. In the White House, handsome young Presidential aides, selected for their team loyalty and their vaunted proficiency in public relations, turned bitterly on each other, contacting newsmen in order to leak their suspicions about their colleagues. No one was certain that his office neighbour might not be in the headlines next morning.

"At the epicenter stood a somber and shaken Richard Nixon, facing one of his



gravest crises. Forced by events to concede that his earlier blanket denials of White House involvement had been wrong, he finally dropped the pretense of being untouched by it all. Either he had been inexcusably remiss in not pressing an earlier, deeper investigation of the matter, or he had been amazingly naive in trusting his aides' protestations of innocence—despite repeated evidence in news reports to the contrary—or he had been a willing party to their deception. Either way, he could not escape heavy responsibility. The spreading scandal created for the nation a crisis of confidence in its Government. An overwhelming majority of Americans had re-elected Nixon in large part because he spoke so often of the need to regain respect for law, sternly administered and applied with equal severity to all..... The overall pattern of collusion and cover-up is ugly. The burglary and the wire-tapping of the Democratic National Committee Headquarters in Washington's Watergate complex last June was a serious crime in itself. But now it has been revealed as clearly part of a far broader campaign of political espionage designed to give Nixon an unfair, illegal—and unnecessary—advantage in his reelection drive. It was financed with secret campaign funds contributed in cash by anonymous donors and never fully accounted for, in violation of the law.."

The *Time* then went on to set out in detail the latest development in the scandal, and it must be remembered

that two of *Time's* journalists had uncovered some of the most secretive goings-on in the Watergate affair in the course of their journalistic probing.

THE *Newsweek*, 30/4, reported the Watergate affair in its own inimitable style. "It was the most damaging scandal to befall the Presidency since Teapot Dome—and when it cracked open last week, the tremors shook the Government to its foundations. Ten months to the day after it broke, Richard Nixon finally faced up to the Watergate mess. In the process, he cast aside nearly a year of official denials that anyone important had been involved in burglarising and bugging Democratic National Headquarters last year. He conceded the possibility of indictments at the very top level of his Administration. And he paved the way for a bloodletting virtually without precedent in US history—a purge likely to generate criminal charges against at least ten Nixon men, forcing several more into shotgun resignations and claim former Attorney General John Mitchell and White House topsiders H. R. Haldemann and John Ehrlichmann among its casualties.

"The resulting spectacle was a shattering one for the President and the Presidency, and Mr. Nixon assented to it only when events left him no other choice. His move to save himself reduced his government to an anarchy of finger pointing among his top aides, with thinly veiled threats to spread the blame as far as possible. The morality

of men running America had become a major issue, political calculations for 1974 and 1976 seemed suddenly obsolete, and that nation itself was damaged as the President's own credibility was called seriously to question. His Gallup rating plummeted 14 points in eleven weeks, with Watergate finally beginning to hurt.....Mr. Nixon had hoped all along to contain the scandal, what finally forced his hand was a confidential report that his deputy campaign director, Jeb Stuart Magruder, 38, had broken and begun naming names...The man most sorely hurt of all may yet be the President himself. His gamble was that he could recover the moral high ground portraying himself as a man who had been betrayed by his subordinates and had acted as soon as he found out about it. But the very act of discovery displayed the reach of what one gloomy Republican called a 'scandal of historic proportions', and the President may have moved too late to retrieve it. The damage would be graver still should Mr. Nixon be implicated—if, for example, he should be shown to have known about the bugging or to have sought consciously to cover it up after the fact. There was a quality of thinking-the-unthinkable about that question, an uneasy sense that to accuse the President was to assault the Presidency, and even the most partisan Democrats were hesitant to carry the attack that far.

THOUGH President Nixon's authority has been undermined by the Watergate affair,



Mr. Kissinger in an important foreign policy address to American newspaper publishers in New York recently had pleaded that they should not let a passing domestic crisis get in the way of foreign policy: put the durable before the ephemeral, he had said in effect. The Vietnam Peace Agreement too has run into major difficulties with alleged violations all round, but the bombing policy in Cambodia would probably run into a roadblock with Congress if the bombing went on long enough, and there is no doubt that the Watergate affair would put Nixon at a disadvantage in a major struggle with Congress.

The US efforts to create a strong and efficient government under Lon Nol have not met with any success. Communist and Sihanouk troops now hold most of the country and guerilla units have virtually surrounded the capital Phnom Penh. To meet the threat of guerilla attack on the capital, US B-52's have resorted to indiscriminate bombing. News reports also indicate that the South Vietnamese troops have crossed the Cambodian border in strength with armoured cars. This incursion by South Vietnamese troops is a direct violation of the Vietnam ceasefire agreement. The excuse indirectly trotted out by Saigon is that North Vietnamese troops were also in Cambodia, but Sihanouk claims that all troops fighting Lon Nol are Cambodians and Khmer guerillas.

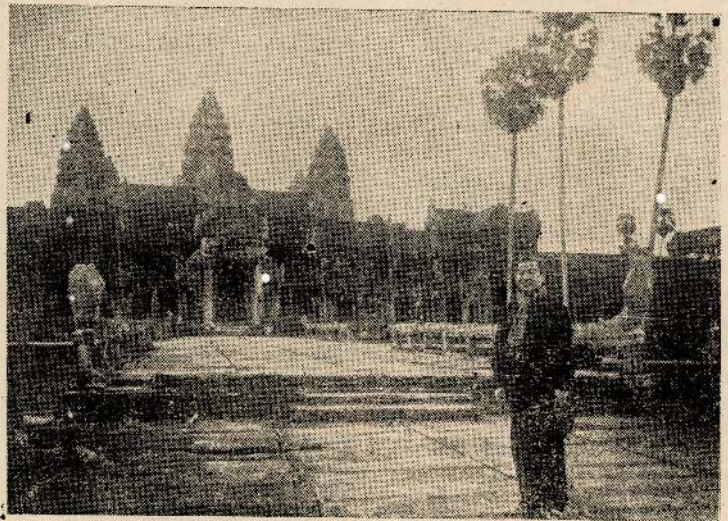
It will be recalled that the Paris Agreement stipulated

that all the problems of Cambodia should be settled by the Cambodians themselves. Troops from Saigon and US B-52 bombers have no right to be in Cambodia. It is reported that the International Control Commission too had noted several violations of the agreement by South Vietnam on the Cambodian border. Special US Presidential envoy General Haig visited the Indo-china region and even after that US bombers have pounded targets in Cambodia and troops from South Vietnam have crossed over. Does this mean that the US is reversing its Indochina policy of withdrawal?

THERE IS much speculation as to whether US bombing and military pressure in Cambodia will compel Hanoi to take a more flexible attitude in

regard to the questions of ceasefire negotiations. Will China permit the US to bomb Cambodia indefinitely without doing something about it especially because it is directed at forces which seemed to have rallied round Sihanouk who lives in Peking? Or does Peking think that this bombing would curb the North Vietnamese to some extent and make them more amendable to negotiations?

In the meantime, Prince Sihanouk spent a considerable amount of time recently inside Cambodia. The *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 30/4, commented on this editorially: "Prince Sihanouk has brought off a very considerable political coup as a result of his recent 1,000 kilometre tour through the communist-controlled regions in Cam-



PRINCE SIHANOUK, during his recent visit to the liberated areas of Cambodia.



bodia—Itself both a symbolic pilgrimage by a 'god-king' and a significant propaganda victory. He has proved that his almost religious charisma is not limited to exerting a spell over mass meetings, but that his charm can be brought to bear in difficult private negotiations. After uncomfortable years of exile in Peking during which he has maintained his own political potential and his value to his hosts, he has returned to his own country and persuaded all the guerilla factions fighting the Lon Nol government to accept him as their Head of State. And the frontline troops which he has made his own are hammering at the Phnom Penh...."

The *Far Eastern Economic Review* concluded this piece thus "...So, riding in Russian jeeps, escorted by Hanoi troops and accompanied by Monique and a French chief, Sihanouk has returned to Cambodia to stake his claim to come back one day as Head of State. What his fate will be after he has achieved reinstatement is anybody's guess. Will he, like Lee Kuan Yew, outmanoeuvre the leftwingers on whose backs he rode to power? Or will his own sad forebodings about his own fate and that of his country in a communist Indochina come true? The B-52s are merely postponing the answer."

A GREAT MANY acts of violence have recently occurred in many places owing to the continuing Arab-Israeli conflict. The Palestinian commandos and the Black Sep-

tember movement have staged spectacular attacks on Israelis at different points in the world, and Israel has chosen to counter-attack in Syria and Lebanon on the ground that the bases and the headquarters of the commandos had to be destroyed to secure itself from such attacks at the most unexpected places.

Early in April immediately after a Black September attempt to attack an Israeli airliner in Nicosia, Israel raided commando headquarters in Beirut. This was the second operation against guerilla organisations in Lebanon in two months. The Israeli claim that if the attack against guerilla camps in Lebanon on February 20 had taken place earlier the men who committed the Khartoum murders in which three diplomats were killed, might have been captured before they left Lebanon. The Israelis also claim that they had anticipated the Arab attacks on the Israeli Ambassadors flat and the El Al plane in Nicosia. Israeli military chiefs have stated that it was not possible to defeat terrorism by defensive measures alone and that is why Premier Golda Meir described the Beirut raid as "marvellous."

In the Beirut raid the Israelis killed three of the most important Fatah and Commando leaders and this constitutes a major blow to the operational command of Fatah. About the raid itself the *London Economist* 14/4 concluded its report thus: "Monday's raid on Beirut was carried out by a small

elite force including paratroopers and naval commandos. An advance party entered Lebanon on false foreign passports several days in advance disguised as hippies and some of the raiders wore Palestinian guerilla clothing and Lebanese police uniforms. The main targets dispersed throughout the capital, were attacked simultaneously to preserve the element of surprise. Several landings were made from the sea and helicopters were used to evacuate casualties. Two Israelis died and two were injured. Allegations by Palestinians that Americans were involved are being treated by the Israelis as just one more example of the Arabs' refusal to acknowledge Israel's military capability. It is now widely believed in Jerusalem that Israeli forces are capable of operating with the same effectiveness anywhere in the Middle East..... THIS is how the *Economist* summed up the situation, but Arab papers are indignant about the manner in which the raid was carried out. Israel, it is said, had not long ago been indignant that Palestinian commandos were using forged passports of other countries and had wanted severe punishment meted out to them. Now, the Israelis themselves were guilty of the same offence, they said, as the Beirut raiders had arrived with forged passports of the UK, Belgium and West Germany.

The Arabs also allege that the US Embassy in Beirut had helped these raiders and that the Embassy had given

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## LATIN AMERICA

## A Tidal Wave of Births

By Marquis Childs

BENEATH the solid economic progress the neighbour to the south of the United States has made in recent decades is a time bomb ticking inexorably on. The net population increase of 3.3 per cent, one of the highest in the world, means a doubling every 20 years, with a projected total of 130,000,000 by the end of the century. The present population is about 54,000,000.

Evidence of the threat of this explosion was a recent statement signed by 80 Roman Catholic bishops which, in effect, supported the government program of birth control. That program is an emergency drive to try to get the rate of increase down as rapidly as possible.

BEGINNING with the first of the year, the government opened 18 family planning clinics, 10 in Mexico City. Personnel to staff them have been training for many months. International planned parenthood has 52 clinics in operation.

A program much wider in scope is being initiated by the Mexican Social Security Agency. Hospitals all over the country are introducing family planning and providing varied means of birth control free of charge. The hope is that a nationwide system will quickly take hold.

THE STATEMENT by the Catholic bishops was cauti-

ously phrased to avoid any seeming conflict with Pope Paul's encyclical of 1968, *Humanae vitae* (of human life) reiterating the church's opposition to any form of artificial contraception. The bishops called their message a "new pastoral orientation" to *Humanae Vitae*.

While repeating the church's position that only the rhythm method of birth control is sanctioned, they expressed their support for "the role of authorities.. to invite responsibility, information and facilitate access to medical services" for family planning. *Humanae vitae* has been one of the most controversial of the many encyclicals promulgated by the the present pope. Strong opposition has come from liberal hierarchies in the Netherlands and elsewhere. The Mexican bishops noted that many families have children without being able to provide them with food, housing, clothing, health, love, understanding or education.

THE PRESENT POLICY of the Mexican government on family planning is a radical departure. As recently as last March the official position was that Mexico needed all the increase to carry out the goals of social and economic revolution. Then abruptly President Luis Echeverria Alvarez said this has been a mistake and it was essential to try to stop the flood of new births by direct government intervention.

One reason was the concern of the labour unions over the rapid rise in unemployment. With surplus labour flooding into the mar-

ket, much of it unskilled and with little education, the wage level is increasingly depressed except for the small, highly skilled trades in their own tightly held unions.

The people explosion in Mexico is universal throughout Latin America. A tidal wave of births is raising social and economic progress in virtually every country. The over-all rate of increase for Central America is 3.2 per cent, higher than in most Asian nations. The rate is 3.4 per cent a year for the Dominican Republic, Colombia, Ecuador, Venezuela and Paraguay.

ADDING TO the problem is the appalling incidence of illegal abortion. One estimate by demographers is that in all of Latin America there are 11,000,000 illegal abortions annually. With the complications that follow from crude and unsterile procedures, the drain on remedial drugs and blood plasma takes a heavy toll on supplies scarce to begin with. Hospital beds are also in short supply as one consequence of the illegal abortion mills. In Uruguay 80 per cent of all pregnancies end in abortion.

The danger signal has been flashing with increasing intensity as it is realized that the people explosion can mean a breakdown of the social structure, if not revolution. The goal of planned parenthood is a net reproduction rate of one. But even after that is achieved it takes about 60 years before the population actually ceases to grow.

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## International Affairs

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a hiding place to the raiders whilst they waited for boats to evacuate them. Arab sources further allege that all US missions were alerted in March to help the Israelis to put down Arab terrorism: that the Americans were intent on helping the Israelis as a reprisal for the killing of US diplomats in Khartoum.

Arab opinion is also critical of the activities of the Lebanon army, which they say, in avoiding clashes with the Israeli army units, only jeopardise the local and Palestinian population. Fervent appeals are now being made to Arab nations to recognise the growing danger of Zionism and imperialism and mobilise all their resources to fight for liberation.

Whilst many throughout the world abhor the activities of the Palestinian terrorists, they feel at the same time that Israel was taking things too far in the manner of its reprisals—because such acts will only generate more and more hate which could not be contained by diplomatic or political negotiations. Peace would be not possible in the Middle East if Israel persisted in greater terrorism of its own to defeat the lesser terrorism of the Palestinian commandos.

(Latin America.....)

This means a country's total population could add 50 to 80 per cent during the 60-year period. For Mexico it means 100,000,000 people by the year 2000 under any circumstance. And if the flood is not quickly checked the projections are so staggering as hardly to bear thinking about.

## A SOVIET VIEW

# UGANDA'S DECISIONS

BY B. ASOYAN

WINSTON CHURCHILL, who visited Africa at the dawn of his political career, found that Uganda was one of the best territories on the continent. He described it as the "pearl of Africa" and advised his government to fix it more firmly in the British crown. "Nowhere else in Africa will a little money go so far" the future Premier enthused.

It must be said, however, that Britain's treatment of the protectorate was less protective than plunderous: dozens of British companies which thrived on generous Ugandan soil for sixty years sapped its natural wealth, robbing Africans of the fruits of their labour and giving them practically nothing in return. To "go far with a little money" to paraphrase Churchill's remark became a veritable motto for the colonialists in Uganda.

In 1962, British rule was abolished and Uganda became independent. Needless to say, the winning of political independence could not automatically change Uganda's economic structure and the tenor of life of her ten million people. Her economy remained in the hands of her former masters—the British monopolists. The Ugandan people who had achieved freedom after a long and stubborn struggle were unable to enjoy its fruits and continued to lead a life of misery and privation.

THE MILITARY COUP of January 1971 brought to power

a new government led by General Idi Amin, which proclaimed its determination to put an end to the continued exploitation of Ugandans by foreign monopolies and lead the country along the road of independent economic and political development. In pursuance of this goal and in the interests of the Ugandan people, several branches of the economy including trade, are being nationalized.

The Amin government's recent decision to take under its control over 500 foreign, mostly British, companies operating in Uganda was a new important step in this direction. "African leaders must see that the economies of their countries are controlled by their own people and not by foreigners," General Idi Amin said. "Every key position must be held by Africans so that imperialists and Zionists find it difficult to commit sabotage", he added.

**The Amin government is waging a resolute fight against Uganda's enemies.** It expelled from the country Israel "specialists" and "advisers" who engaged in subversive activities. What is more, Uganda broke off diplomatic relations with Israel. The Government warned British representatives that resolute action would be taken if Britain continued its intrigues against the republic.

TRIBUNE, May 12, 1973



# IS IT TRUE? Sherlock Holmes

## \* VVIP's New House \* Saturn and the Solar Eclipse \* Savings Bank

IS IT NOT TRUE that a very important VVIP has bought himself an additional house in one of the shadier parts of Colombo 8 in the first week of April? That this personage has been preaching austerity to one and all? That he already owned a good enough house for his living? That the new place he has bought is a little up-to-date modern luxury palace? That the bazaar gossip is that part of the purchase price was paid under the counter? That if this were true, many people have much to grouse about? That when lesser folk handle blackmarket money it is a serious crime against the state? That when VVIPs do it nobody wants to talk about it? That if one were patriotic the money expended on the unnecessary house could have been invested in National Savings or Government securities.

\* \* \* \*

IS IT NOT A FACT that soothsayers and astrologers are predicting great events around the end of June this year? That the malefic planet Saturn is said to be transitting from the zodiacal sign of Aries into the sign of Gemini

on June 26? That this transit they say will bring great changes in the governments of many countries throughout the world? That in addition there was a solar eclipse on June 30 which these astrologers say will play "havoc" with the lives and fortunes of important men and governments? That those in authority and power will have to keep their fingers crossed that nothing untoward happens? That this is the Aquarian age when the world was being turned upside down so that a new and a better world would emerge thereafter?

\* \* \* \*

IS IT NOT A STRANGE KIND OF ECONOMICS that the Government has to grant Rs. 26 million to the National Savings Bank in order to recover Rs. 12 million loss incurred in 1972? That the *Weekend*, 8/5, drew attention to this peculiar kind of accounting, but it did not make as much of the story as it could have done? That the state was paying Rs. 26 million to the National Savings Bank to enable it to recover

a loss of about 12 million and also pay back to the State a profit of Rs. 14 million? That all this looks so mixed up that it makes one feel dizzy?

That a supplementary estimate was pushed through the NSA in order to set the affairs of the Bank on a good wicket? That it will be remembered that the National Savings Bank was a creation of this Government replacing the Post Office Savings Bank, the Ceylon Savings Bank and the National Savings Movement? That the new National Savings Bank took over the assets and liabilities of all three institutions and agreed to pay an interest of 7.2% on all deposits (over Rs. 915 millions) including those placed with its predecessors? That the Acting Minister of Finance, Bernard Soysa, in getting through the supplementary estimate had explained that the National Savings Bank was statutorily required to hold a substantial portion of its deposits in Government Securities and that most of them earned low interests averaging 4.5%.

That the difference in interest paid and received by the National Savings Bank, and its operational losses, had put the Bank in the red? That the operational losses of the Bank in 1972 was around Rs. 12 million? That if the Bank's investments had earned interest at the rate of about 9% (which is now paid by the State on certain domestic loans it has raised), this Bank would have recorded a profit of about Rs. 14 million?