

TRIBUNE

CEYLON NEWS REVIEW

50 Cts.

Vol. 18 No. 4

May 19, 1973



WATERGATE,
PRESS COUNCIL
AND FREEDOM

MAY DAY

WEATHER
REPORT

THE DETENTE &
SRI LANKA

TAMASHAS,
ECONOMIC
DIFFICULTIES,
CHOU, TENG
AND CHINA

VIETNAM

TIMES
IMBROGLIO

Tribunania

Watergate, Press Council and Freedom

WATERGATE is a meaningful word. It means so many things at one and the same time. It means so many things to so many people. In the words of Senator Charles Percy, Republican candidate for 1976, "Watergate is far worse than Teapot Dome, the worst is yet to come." The Teapot Dome scandal, during the administration of President Harding, in the twenties, involved bribery and leasing of federal oil fields. Though Watergate is of such momentous import in the USA, it has not caused even a slight tremor in Sri Lanka. Most people here do not seem to care whether President Nixon comes out of it all unscathed, whether is impeached or not, or whether the sacrifice offering he will make of a dozen or so of his top aides and colleagues will assuage public opinion in the USA. It seems somehow distant and far away.

But to vast numbers of discerning people in Sri Lanka, especially in the context of the Press Council Law and the Regulations which have now been tabled, Watergate is symbolic of the part played by the American press in bringing the disgraceful scandal on the very periphery of the Presidency into

self into the open and before an indignant public.

President Nixon and his aides have been critical of the US press especially after the Pentagon Papers took the lid off the Vietnam war. It was only recently that Nixon had described the American Press as the "shoddiest living Press", but today after Watergate the White House has been compelled to state that it was a "vigorous, free press". The White House Press Secretary Ziegler publicly apologised to the *Washington Post* for calling the paper names for probing into the Watergate affair.

Watergate has many lessons for Sri Lanka. A free, vigorous and even a "cantankerous" press is essential for a free democratic society to exist. There is no guarantee that a controlled and regulated society, even based on an acceptable ideology, would by itself prevent corruption, nepotism and an arrogant abuse of power. The lesson of Watergate is that only a free and cantankerous press can bring to public attention unpleasant facts about the high and mighty in the land. In the USA, the role played by a free press, since the Pentagon Papers sensation has reached such high proportions that "the American Society of Newspaper Editors, while believing it represents the freest press in the world, is nevertheless pondering whether it should ask Congress to enact a 'shield' law to protect reporters from having to surrender confidentially obtained data to

Courts and District Attorneys."

THIS, THEN, is the power of the press. Without its powerful capacity to probe and its right to publish what it thinks can stand up to the law of libel, bribery, corruption and breaches of law, even by those whose business is to enforce them, will go unchecked. The wrongdoings of VIPs, VVIPs and VVVIPs, in the category of the high and mighty, will go undetected, unprobed and unpunished if the press is fettered and restricted. Now the American editors want a shield for the probing re-

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

SUBSCRIPTION Rs. 25 per year, for 52 issues.

For air mail and sea mail rates abroad, please write to the Circulation Manager, mentioning the country of destination.

TRIBUNE makes no attempt to exact complete conformity from its contributors, but rather welcomes a variety of opinions consistent with general policies.

MANUSCRIPTS. **TRIBUNE** cannot assume responsibility for unsolicited articles and letters. None will be returned unless so requested and is accompanied by a stamped self-addressed envelope.

porters, but there is not the slightest doubt that the Sri Lanka Press Council Law "unshields" the journalist who wants to investigate evil in high places and places major restraints on every newspaper to publish what is fit to print.

In the Pentagon Press case, Judge Gurfein declared: "...a cantankerous press, an obstinate press, an ubiquitous press must be suffered by those in authority in order to preserve the ever greater values of freedom of expression and the right of the people to know." Even in the "socialist era" of the United Front in Sri Lanka it is essential for the people to know the truth—without the Government determining through the Press Council what is true and what is not, what is fit to print and what is not.

The fact that we find ourselves in the ridiculous position imaginable under the new dispensation is amply demonstrated by the Regulations governing the Press Council Law which was tabled in the NSA on May 2. The Regulations came up for discussion on May 4, the Regulations came up for discussions in the NSA, and one Member in particular, Mr. Prins Gunasekera pointed out very clearly that the Government has "put the cart before the horse" by introducing the Regulations under the Press Council Law. "Here is a set of regulations", he said, "concerning punishments and the offences on the contravention on the code of ethics without actually anyone knowing what

that code is..." It was like introducing a criminal procedure code without a penal code."

Mr. Gunasekera also referred to Regulation 11, in which there was provision for the Council to settle a complaint without summoning or even hearing the defendant. Such a provision he said was a travesty of justice and was not prevalent in any court in this country. It made the Council a special court. Arguing against the Regulations, he said that they had been designed to make the Press of Sri Lanka spineless. When the Regulations came into operation, it would be possible for anyone near to the seats of power to penalise a poor journalist. And it would be impossible for any journalist to write anything against the government for fear of reprisals. Already newspapermen had become apprehensive of their jobs. With the passing of these regulations, the fate of the journalist would be sealed for ever, Mr Gunasekera warned.

He went on to say that there was a vast difference between mud-slinging and criticism. He had been a newspaperman and had often castigated the United National Party. Had the Minister been on the opposition side at that time, he would have been overjoyed.

Mr. Gunasekera said that certain provisions in the discarded first Press Bill were being brought into the regulations. By this, the right of a newsman to hold his source as a secret was being taken away.

The freedom not to disclose news sources was a traditional right of a journalist. The newspaperman enjoyed it even during the era of the reactionaries. But not it appears, under the era of Socialists, he said.

AFTER READING the Regulations now tabled in the NSA, and which will be discussed again on May 18, it is clear that as long as the Press Council Law and the Regulations thereof remain on the Statute Book, the freedom of the press in Sri Lanka will be a mockery. The Government and what is worse the Establishment, through the relevant Minister, who will control the Council, can hold any newspaperman or newspaper to ransom. Once a complaint is lodged, everything will move swiftly if the complainant is of the Establishment. The investigations will be



Founded 1954

A Journal of Ceylon and
World Affairs

MAY 19, 1973

Vol. 18. No. 4

43, Dawson Street,
COLOMBO 2.

Telephone: 33172

TRIBUNE, May 19, 1973

superficial, the procedure summary and the punishment will be swift—according to the whims and fancies of the Council. The rights of a defendant are not adequately recognised, and there seems to be a presumption that a newspaperman is inherently and intrinsically prone to vilify and scandalise persons in authority and denigrate a government in power.

The intentions and scope of the Press Council Law become clear only when read in conjunction with the Regulations, and there is no doubt that until these laws remain unrepealed it will be a kind of silence of the graveyard which will prevail all over Sri Lanka. Blue-eyed trade unionists belonging to the Establishment will be allowed to shout "...we don't want free rice...we don't want sugar in our tea...we don't want chillies in our curries..." without let or hindrance, but if anyone outside the charmed circle raised similar slogans (or even identical slogans), they will fall foul of the administration which will order the law-enforcing agencies to take action against such slogan-shouters as subversives.

It is with a kind of hushed fear that newspapermen await the era of the Press Council of the United Front. "Watergate will not be possible" in Sri Lanka. No paper will dare to publish anything akin to the Penatgon Papers. We will sink into a kind of Dark Age of uniform conformity. IN THIS ISSUE, we have a special article on *The System and the Watergate Affair* showing how a watchful press which was free to print

everything fit to print had brought the Watergate scandal to the forefront of national politics. In *Sri Lanka Today* will be a new feature in *Tribune* and it will appear as frequently as possible. This week, MAY DAY 1973 is highlighted and the details revealed make interesting reading. *Canax* deals with the weather in this week's piece and though he sees everything as "mainly fair"—the stock phrase of our Department of Meteorology—the realities of Sri Lanka seem to be far from "mainly fair". One can either laugh one's way with *Canax* or one can cry. The old feature *Chronicle* will be re-started next week and we hope to maintain this column with some regularity. The Editor in his *Rambling Notes* flits from subject to subject, from the IMF to Chou En-lai, from UF's ad hoc socialism in Sri Lanka to the Maoist version of communism in China.

It is yet too early to review the progress of *Tribune* after it has become a weekly again. But our printing-schedules have run into difficulties with the Wesak holidays right in the middle of the second week, and the Republic Day celebrations early in the third week. With the Sri Lankian malady of extending one's holidays—either on medical certificates or just *nikkan*—work gets interrupted. Most people will knock off probably on the 18th, 19th and 21st and have a long stretch

right from the 16th to the 22nd. All this makes scheduling the Saturday *Tribune* a great problem, and we have no alternative but to get everything ready well ahead of time. Although this issue will be datelined May 19 we cannot have any coverage for the opening of the Bandaranaike Hall on May 17. It is only in our issue of May 26 in which we can deal with the opening of the Bandaranaike Hall, and Republic Day will slip back to our issue of June 2nd. *Tribune* is not a magazine for spot news, and hence these anomalies do not matter. We are a newspaper of comment, and that is what our readers look forward to. *Sherlock Holmes* asks a number of questions about the Times Imbroglia.

OUR COVER last week was a jumble of shots of Wesak sights in past years. Pandals and decorations will be few this year—as they have been after Austerity was proclaimed as a way of life by the United Front. More and more austerity is not a matter of choice in Sri Lanka today, but a matter of compulsion—there is nothing else we can do. The cover this week is symbolic of the mess Nixon has fallen into owing to the Watergate affair. It is a scissor and paste job based on cartoons and caricatures from American newspapers. What will VVVVIPs in Sri Lanka say, after the Press Council gets going with its Regulations, should any local car-

(Continued on page 9)

MAY DAY '73'

MAY DAY this year assumed a special significance due to a variety of reasons.

In the first place, this was the first May Day to be celebrated in the usually grand manner since the SLFP-LSSP-CP United Front Government was elected to power in 1970. This election took place soon after May Day 1970. The workers' festival could not be celebrated at all the following year because of the armed insurrection which took place in April 1971. The celebrations last year were on a subdued scale due to the conditions still prevailing at that time and were confined to indoor meetings.

Secondly, this was the first May Day since the birth of the Republic of Sri Lanka in May 1972. The proclamation of the Republic substantially completed the Island's political independence, and as many speakers at the United Front May Day rally at Galle Face commented, for the first time workers were celebrating their international day of solidarity after the country had severed the last link with Britain which could be interpreted as derogating from our political sovereignty.

Thirdly, the sudden and unexpected death of former Prime Minister Dudley Senanayake also invested May Day this year with a special significance. The UNP, naturally, interpreted the vast crowds that thronged to pay their last respects to their late leader as a measure of

the support they still count among the masses and a vote of no-confidence against the UF Government.

THE GOVERNMENT in turn, was keen to dispel any such notion. Hence their all-out bid to make their May Day celebrations this year the biggest ever.

Opinions will vary on whether they succeeded in this aim. There can be no doubt that the May Day procession organised by the United Front parties was the biggest ever. Even on the most modest estimates, the procession took over four hours to pass a given point. The biggest processions previously organised never exceeded this time. Former processions took at most three hours to pass a point.

But opinions differ as to the size of the rally at Galle Face green. While there can be no dispute that it was one of the biggest ever, some opine that the meeting at the same venue on May Day 1963 when the three Left parties—the LSSP, MEP and CP—were in the process of forming their short-lived United Left Front was bigger.

Whatever it be, there can be no doubt that the Galle Face meeting this year was a massive one, justifying the Prime Minister's comment that the masses were still with the United Front. Even the Aththa which has been bitterly critical of the Government in recent times was forced to concede this fact.

IT WAS not so much the speeches made by the United Front leaders from their platform on Galle Face that captured the attention of the public. Rather, it was some of the slogans shouted by the processionists that surprised the by-standers and have since been the subject of comment in the press, both by supporters and opponents of the U.F.

"We do not want free rice"—one of the commonest slogans shouted by those who took part in the May Day procession—was probably a reaction to the capital that the UNP made, during the recent funeral obsequies, of the free measure of rice that had been Mr. Dudley Senanayake's gift to the people since 1966. But how many of them will actually forego the free measure of rice that they decried still remains to be seen.

"We will drink tea without sugar" and "We will eat curries without chillies" were two other common slogans. Here again, whether those who shouted these slogans in their lustiest tones actually mean to carry out what they said is a matter of some doubt. Anyway, the very fact that they shouted these slogans should be a source of encouragement to the UF Government.

It must also be remembered that in some cases the above slogans were accompanied by certain provisos. "We will forego this or that... if the Government..." "In most cases what the slogan-shouters wanted was for the Government to march boldly towards socialism, not

being content with mere half way measures as now.

Nepotism, corruption and other ills that plague the land under U.F. rule also got more than their share of the processionist's tongue-lashing.

IN SOME CASES, particularly by the Aththa group, the slogan-shouting was confined to pinpoint the drawbacks and shortcomings of the Government without alluding at all to the credit side of the Government's record or suggesting a constructive way out of the crisis.

The announcement of steps to take-over the *Lake House* press (nicely timed for May Day) also came in for favourable comment, although in some cases this was accompanied by the demand for the take-over of the *Times* and *Dawasa* groups also.

All in all, the variety of the slogans and the respective amplitudes of the voices which shouted them gave observers a fine glimpse into the workings of the minds of those who support the U.F. Government. *The Government too could derive much profit pondering over the significance of the slogans shouted and planning future action accordingly.*

IT IS A PITY that some slogans were in extremely bad taste. Without confining themselves to shouting political slogans only—like the ones referred to above—some descended to the level of abusing the dead UNP leader. Their effect could only have been the opposite of what their promoters intended. Far from winning

sympathy to their cause, they would have alienated even decent-minded neutrals further away from the United Front.

These foul slogans also provide the UNP now with an excuse to justify the attacks at a number of places on buses carrying U.F. supporters and sympathisers to Colombo and at the processionists themselves leading to one dead and a large number wounded.

There can be no doubt that these attacks bear all the hall-marks of organised thuggery. The new weekly *Janavegaya* (whose contingent in the May Day procession was one of the brightest and the best) has even hinted at the name of the UNP leaders responsible for this May Day mayhem. Judgment must be reserved on the matter till the probe which the Government has initiated is completed.

Finally, a word about the respective contingents of the two junior partners in the U.F.—the LSSP and the CP—in the May Day procession.

The LSSP banners seemed never-ending. Party branches, trade unions, youth leagues, student's organisations etc. etc. were never before seen in such profusion as during this year's May Day. It proves that the LSSP has made clever use of their position in the Government to increase their strength in the country. Whether this is due to political jobbery or straightforward, clean politics, we do not know. But of their increased strength in the country, there can be no doubt.

In pitiable contrast was the CP contingent—or rather two CP contingents visibly marching separately for all the world to see. Not so long ago the CP section in every May Day procession took one's breath away, as even the hostile *Daily News* was once forced to concede. This year, in tattered ranks, both CP groups together did not take more than a few minutes to pass a given point.

This is the sorry state to which that party has fallen as a result of their internal squabbles. Time was when though a small party, it was judged by friend and foe alike as a well-knit, disciplined force to be reckoned with.

The post-Eighth Congress crisis has reduced it to a mere shadow of its former self—at least for the foreseeable future.

To Ensure
You Receive
Every Issue of

TRIBUNE
CEYLON NEWS REVIEW

Become a
Subscriber

WEATHER REPORT

"Mainly Fair" – Yes, But By Whom?

BY CANAX

I may be too late to be of any help, judging from the dateline on the news report, which is February 19, 1973. But if I'm not, Dr. S. Gnanalingam of the CISIR has only my Co-operative Store to thank for the assistance he is about to receive from me unasked. My measly ration of maldivé fish came wrapped in a piece of old newspaper, and as Dr. Gnanalingam's luck would have it, the little piece told all. Seems he had just been appointed by the Minister of Industries and Scientific Affairs to probe the working of the Department of Meteorology.

The news report amounted to a bad-weather warning from the Department's Union of Technical and Scientific Officers. But mindful of past performance, and even so long after, I'm still undecided whether to take the forecast seriously or not. Looking back, however, it does seem pretty serious that there should have been a storm brewing in our Met. Department itself when the rest of the country was, at the time, in the grip of its worst drought in goodness knows how long.

If Dr. Gnanalingam can make anything of that, he's welcome to it—with or without acknowledgement, as they say in some press handouts.

He may also be able to make something—well, some sense, at least—of all the

data I happen to have gathered in my own off-the-record (and off-the-ration) probe. Being pushed for time, I first did a quick survey of school-children using my revolutionary system of CUT (Count Upto Ten) which is as simple, really, as it sounds involved. Taking my place or vantage point near a school I start counting slowly, deliberately—and audibly—like a rundown metronome on its last couple of ticks. And, of course, tocks. (Another system of mine, also patented, and used exclusively by me, is totally different from CUT since its' actually CUT in reverse, so that it becomes a Countdown, starting with ten and working down to zero. This, by the way, remains my humble and largely unknown contribution to modern space exploration)

Now back to where we were, which was in the midst of CUT in operation. On the stroke of ten, as it were, I accost the school-going kid nearest me and launch my opinion poll-cum-probe on the weather and what the child feels about the way its been managed by the bureaucrats so far.

My first sampling was of an eight-year-old boy, and he was quite disgusted. "It's not fair," he cried, "It rains only during holidays!" I knew just what the little fellow meant—there's a time

to sun, and a time to rain, and to hell with the Seasons.

One little girl wasn't even aware we had a full-fledged Government Department to handle the elements. I had to tell her the truth and I did, even if it meant shocking her right down to her cute donkey fringe. Not merely a whole Department, I said, there even was a Director for the purpose.

She didn't believe me, of course. But to get down to her views. Put in a nutshell, though I've no idea why, she wasn't expecting it to pour every day of term, just two days a week—possibly three at most—so she would not have to be daily dragged out of her bed even before, as she put it, the sun had been pulled out of his. I refrained from suggesting the obvious—that the sun possibly had a more understanding mother, for one thing, and, better still, had no Minister of Education to contend with up there—the first, because I believe every child gets the mother it deserves and, the second, because we already have more young insurgents than we know what to do with.

Another little lady wasn't asking much either and that, too, not often. She could recall only one instance for the whole of this year, which happened to also coincide with the end-of-term test, when she felt a little assistance by way of a bit of stormy weather might have helped prevent her from displaying her unfamiliarity with subjects she didn't care much about, anyway. She too was equally ignorant of the very

existence of a Director of Meteorology right here in Colombo.

"So that's why it hasn't worked," she sighed, her voice a pathetic mixture of disappointment and vague awareness. "I've been praying to the wrong person, then," she added. "No body told me."

A youngster passing by at the time chose to volunteer his opinion though he wasn't being actually polled. "That fellow doesn't have our interest at heart," he said, sounding terribly bitter, "and he's obviously content to drift along on the path of no work and least initiative".

I would have ignored the boy's remark had it not suddenly rung a bell. And sure enough, on checking back, I discovered that that was precisely the accusation levelled at the Director by the Union's Secretary too. If I may, once again, try interpreting what I don't understand, could it mean that the Director has been sort of cruising, willy-nilly, with his head in a cloud? That's not an altogether inappropriate way for a weathercock-in-chief to travel, provided he chooses the right cloud, which is a Nimbus, I guess. Just any old cloud won't do.

And so it went. Every kid polled, after my mandatory count of ten, seemed to feel the weather hadn't been managed fairly, and to his or her advantage or satisfaction.

Having finished the day's probe I turned homeward since that's the only place in town one—at least I—can

be reasonably sure of board and lodging any time of day or night, and at very reasonable rates too. Like my take-home pay every month. The facilities available at home also include, with luck, a little peace and quiet.

Well, it wasn't my lucky day, for she (you know who, don't you?) spotted the copious notes I had made during my one-man probe. So it was goodbye peace, goodbye quiet, though not necessarily in that order.

"Why don't you poll my views too?" she demanded, stirring my tea so aggressively it had all my sympathy.

"I can't," I protested. "What would Dr. Gnanalingam think?"

"Wives could also have views, you know," she said sarcastically.

That was what I was afraid of, but I didn't tell her so. Instead I said, "Yes, but they won't fit in....."

"What do you mean, won't fit in?"

"This project is not in Todd-AO, CinemaScope or VistaVision."

She obviously appreciated the joke, for she came back with an equally funny line, and a scowl to match. "Well, do you, or don't you, want to hear me?"

Any man knows when he's beaten, and I'm no exception. "Are you for or against?" I asked. My pencil poised for her answer.

"You'll find out soon enough," she said coolly. "To begin with, I think he's a woman-hater."

I had found out sooner than I imagined possible.

"It happens all the time," she cried with vehemence. "I spend hours washing clothes, and you know what happens?"

"Don't tell me—I know. It rains."

"Rains!" she exclaimed. "It rains cats and dogs!"

I didn't take her seriously, of course, for she tends to exaggerate like that when excited. But I looked her in the eye and said "So?"

"So what's this great Director of Meteorology doing about it? What's he directing, anyway?" she cried, and added darkly, "He's a saboteur, if you ask me."

Only then did it dawn on me. And again my mind went back to what the Union Secretary had said—about making the Department function "with a view to align it to the National needs of the day." Was it possible, I asked myself with an involuntary shudder, and was too scared to even dwell on the topic for long.

And here we were naively thinking that the Five-Year Plan got ploughed under by the April '71 caper, and that Production Year was—ah, well, forget it.

I already have.

THE UNITED STATES

The "System" and the Watergate Affair

BY MARY SHERWOOD

Washington,

President Nixon declared in his April 30 report to the nation that Watergate represented a series of illegal acts and bad judgments by a number of individuals. Then he added: "It was the system that has brought the facts to light and that will bring those guilty to justice. "A system that in this case has included a determined grand jury, honest prosecutors, a courageous judge—John Sirica—and a vigorous free press".

THE SYSTEM, that combination of governmental and non-governmental factors, works slowly sometimes, spasmodically at others. But it works. It began to work in the Watergate case when five men were arrested at the headquarters of the Democratic National Committee in the Watergate apartment-office complex in Washington.

A Grand Jury, routinely determining whether cases assigned to it should be prosecuted, was assigned the case of the Watergate burglary. This Grand Jury returned indictments against the five and two other men, all of whom were later tried and convicted. The Grand Jury, which sits for 18 months is still in session, and investigating other possibly illegal acts related to the original burglary, and further indictments are likely.

Additional facts began coming out in the prosecution

of the seven men, spurred by the questioning of the presiding judge, John Sirica, who was not satisfied by the responses. All were found guilty and heavy sentences imposed. At this point, one of the convicted men, James McCord, offered more information.

McCord and five of the others were granted immunity from further prosecution, and they testified at length before the Grand Jury.

AT THE SAME TIME, another part of the "system," the Congress, was boring in on the Watergate and into the financial practices of the committee to re-elect the President. The General Accounting Office, which is responsible to Congress, reported "apparent violations" of the Federal Election Campaign Act by the re-election committee. This led to indictment of the re-election finance committee, which was fined 8,000 dollars for spending violations after pleading "no contest."

In February the Senate voted to set up a select committee, headed by its leading constitutional expert, Senator Sam Ervin, Jr., to investigate Presidential campaign activities (by either party) in the 1972 election. Its staff members are preparing now for open hearings, which will begin a little more than two weeks from now.

President Nixon singled out "a vigorous free press"

for its part in bringing the Watergate matters out in the open, although the vigorous reporting in both newspaper and broadcast media has been a source of much embarrassment to the administration over the last few months.

SOME OF THE REPORTS of illegal activities emerged first in the press; many of them have not been substantiated, at least not yet, but the developments in general have indicated the power of the media's probing. At one point, just before the trial of the seven Watergate defendants began, Judge Sirica enjoined all parties concerned with the bugging from making public statements about it. He quickly revised his order with the explanation, "it is not the intention of this court to affect Congressional activity, political debate or news media reporting."

Following his television report Monday night, President Nixon walked into the White House Press Room and told reporters: "Ladies and Gentlemen of the press, we have had our differences in the past, and I hope you give me hell everytime you think I'm wrong. I hope I'm worthy of your trust."

There is bound to be friction between any administration and the press. President Nixon's statement, however, shows that his basic philosophy would be in line with the comment of Federal Judge Murray Gurfein in the 1971 ruling in which he denied restraint of the *New York Times* from publishing the so-called Pentagon papers. Judge Gurfein wrote: "A cantankerous press, an obs-

Watergate Affair

tinative press, a ubiquitous press must be suffered by those in authority in order to preserve the even greater values of freedom of expression and the right of the people to know."

The cantankerous free press is a part of the American system, and the system, however imperfect, is still working.

Continued from page 3

Tribunania.....

toonist seek to lampoon one of them. The Council, *mere mctu*, without even a complaint from the VVVVIP, or a five-star VVVVIP, haul the cartoonist for such indiscretion over the coals and make him wear sack clothes and ashes in repentance.

With all the shortcomings of the capitalist system in the USA, as depicted by the doctrinaire pundits of the United Front, a great deal must be said for the freedom enjoyed by the press in that country. It is customary to say that this freedom operates within the capitalist system, as between two capitalist parties—though we must not forget that even the Left press is more free in the USA than it will be in Sri Lanka after the Press Council. It is only when the socialist system feels strong enough to permit the kind of freedom (even that of the wild ass) which prevails in the USA that one can say that the socialist system has attained that kind of maturity symbolic of the strength of a system which has come to stay.

RAMBLING NOTES

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

On Tamashas, Economic Difficulties, On Chou, Teng and China

THE MONTH of May began with a bang with the stirring May Day Rally of the United Front Government. Buses, lorries, trucks and other state-owned vehicles were made available to all and sundry to reach Colombo with only the minimum charge for fuel being got from those who travelled in them or from the organisations which utilised these vehicles. All roads led to Colombo. Ministering angels had provided lunch and dinner packets and some organisations had even provided a little pocket money to their supporters who had made the May Day pilgrimage to Colombo to greet the leaders of the UF and give them a morale booster.

Then the Government tried to settle down to some serious work to get Production Year going, but Wesak and the one and only Bandaranaike Hall opening were beckoning everyone to another round of galas and tamashas—and this would be followed up with the Republic Day celebrations. May is a pleasant month with the flamboyant trees in bloom, with colourful cassias and keenas to add colour—and the weather cooling down with pre-monsoonal showers. The great US experiment of

Skylab went up on May 14 whilst President Nixon was struggling with the problems left in the wake of Watergate—which by itself was bad enough but its backwash has continued to cause upsets that have played with Nixon's Cabinet and his Establishment.

In Sri Lanka, people's spirits are being kept up with the tamashas—May Day, Wesak, Bandaranaike Hall, Republic Day and the like—but matters continue to be dismal on the economic front. For the first time, the IMF does not seem (as yet) to have made available the customary standby credit, and though the amount involved is only the miserable pittance of 25 millions, Sri Lanka is today like the beggar who has little or no choice. But we have to put up a brave front and pretend that we can do without the IMF. Minister Colvin R. de Silva has thought it appropriate at this stage to lash out at the IMF World Bank and other institutions. Sri Lanka had made strenuous efforts to get IMF and World Bank support, but it had failed to get the credits asked for.

Grapes often sour, and in this case too cynics may be tempted to say that the IMF grapes had become sour to

Sri Lanka, but UF cheer leaders assure us that Sri Lanka does not need to rely on the IMF in any case. If anything could be got from these capitalist outfits, well and good, we'll get them, but we can do without them: with self-reliance and all that. We can go back to the wooden plough and the buffalo instead of depending on new-fangled equipment like tractors etc. Such is the new philosophy which seems to be pervading influential sections of the UF. :

AN EXAMINATION and analysis of this new trend must be done in a more leisurely and careful fashion, but in the meantime we must take note of the fact that the Government is confronted with serious problems of cash, finance, production and the like. The people, whose spirits are being buoyed up with tamashas galore do not seem to realise the depth and seriousness of the situation.

Occasionally a whisper gets into the daily papers; the *Sun* on May 10 had a front-page story with the heading **ECONOMIC CRISIS: DRASTIC MEASURES MAY BE NECESSARY.** The report read as follows: "With the prices of major imports rising sharply in the World Market the Planning Committee headed by the Prime Minister Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike has had a series of discussions on what measures should be adopted to meet the mounting economic and financial crisis at home. The Planning Committee is the top policy planning body on economic questions. Its members include

several key Ministers including the Minister of Finance, Dr. N. M. Perera.

"The *Sun* reliably understands that the discussions of this committee have taken a new and urgent note in view of the deepening foreign exchange crisis caused by falling export earnings, a rising import bill and the burden of servicing a large Foreign debt.

"Official sources believe drastic measures may be necessary to rescue the country from this situation."

"It is also understood that the Planning Committee discussions have centred on certain recommendations made by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank as well as Government's own economic experts.

"In this respect most observers are of the view that government action, if it is finally deemed that urgent action is necessary, would come in the form of new measures to restrain consumption expenditure—reduce the food subsidies, particularly the rice subsidy—and step up the pace of the import substitution programme in view of the savings involved in terms of foreign exchange.

"This could result in the rationing scheme being overhauled leading to the inclusion of more items under the ration, it is believed."

Even this newspaper report does not reveal the full extent of our economic and financial plight. Ministers and UF apologists continue to find excuses for the mess we are in. They have now come to realise that it is futile to talk about UNP

subversion or the violent insurrection of youthful insurgents. They row heap all the blame on international factors—and ignore the many acts of commission and omission of the UF which have caused and aggravated the present situation. Minister Ilangaratne, who has now come forward as the chief apologist for the Government, seeks to justify everything done, not done and undone on "pragmatic" grounds. He does not, like some of his colleagues, pretend to rely on rigid ideological doctrines to justify UF policies. Ilangaratne likes to claim he is a pragmatist. He says he wants to make use of every sector, private, public and co-operative, to promote the national well-being. In a speech at a Chamber of Commerce, on 26/4/73 he had endeavoured to place all the blame on international factors. He had said: "Ours is still essentially an export-import economy, depending to a large extent on the vagaries of the trade and monetary winds blowing in from other parts of the world. The devaluation or revaluation of international currencies and the shortfall in supplies from our traditional sources of essential commodities like rice and flour, have a disproportionate effect on the economy".

Such factors, it must be remembered affect all countries. How was it then that developing countries like Ceylon have succeeded to show remarkable progress in this period. Hongkong, Singapore, Malaysia, Brazil and even Indonesia have done wonders in economic reconstruction. Even smaller

countries which have not done as well, have certainly done better than Sri Lanka. At least they are on the road to a massive breakthrough on the economic front. These countries have not proclaimed high falutin' doctrines of great ideological purity, as we have done, but they have succeeded where we have failed.

WE HAVE even failed to make a success of our public sector undertakings. The CTB continues to lose millions every year although the fares have been increased. We merged a number of state financial institutions into the National Savings Bank and in the first year of operation we have to shell out Rs. 26 million from the Treasury to keep the new Bank solvent (the excuse that the state grant of Rs. 26 million is only an exercise in book-keeping will not convince anyone.) It is clear that the State has to subsidise the Bank in order to "voluntarily" attract savings deposits from the public.

The Sun in an editorial on May 4 commenting on Minister Illangaratne's speech to the Chamber had concluded: "The Trade Minister in his address to the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce on April 26 also said, inter alia: We want all sectors—private, public or people's—to serve the consumer and the nation". In so many words, the Minister indicated that the United Front Government had no desire to liquidate or take over any sector of the economy on the basis of preconceived notions.

"If this opinion is equally shared by the rest of his

Government, without leaving us only our tooth brushes, perhaps we might have taken him on his word. Unfortunately, what the Minister said is not representative of the true state of affairs. If it were, then there would be no problems at least, not so many.

"Two factors have put Sri Lanka on the hop. We have tried to chew more than we may digest. That is number one. Number two: our invoices are loaded with politics and we are still fiddling with politics while the country burns."

ABOUT A YEAR AGO, when Prime Minister Sirimavo Bandaranaike went to China, it was reported that Premier Chou-En-lai was said to have told her that free rice, free education and free medicine did not constitute socialism. The basic premise of a socialist society was that every person had to work adequately in order to get his food, his clothing, his medicine and the like. Nothing was given away free. A man had to work hard enough not only to earn his keep but also to create reserves for the nation. To the credit of the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka, it must be said, that she had endeavoured to put Chou's advice into practice at least in a small measure in the last Budget—reducing some of the subsidies and free handouts, but the backbenchers had threatened revolt and pressurised the PM and the Cabinet to reverse decisions and permit the subsidies to go on.

It is therefore unfortunate that Prime Minister Chou was not able to come here

for the opening of the Bandaranaike Hall on May 17. He could have repeated his advice to many others in Ceylon. There had also been hopes right up to the end that he would be able to come. It was only when the final announcement was made that another high dignitary with a 20 member delegation would come that the final speculations about Chou ended. The Sun report stated that "Premier Chou is understood to have said he is unable to do so (come to Ceylon) in view of his presence being necessary in Peking."

There is no doubt that a great many changes are taking place daily in China. There is a continuing process of changes in the higher echelons of power in Peking and the topmost hierarchy of the Establishment. There are also other changes of tremendous significance, and there is little doubt that Chou cannot leave China at this moment.

Derek Davies writing in the *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 16/4/73, stated: "China today appears to the visitor to be engaged in a national exercise in ideological sophistry. Bluntly, it is in the process of jettisoning the harsh idealistic principles which established the supremacy of the state's interest and the subordination of the individuals' which were so painfully established during the Cultural Revolution. It is reinstating a system of material incentives to encourage production both in the factories and on the farms, while hoping that the ideological

hand proves quicker than the eyes of the workers and peasants, who could hardly be blamed for concluding that the once-denounced policies of Liu Shao-chi had been reinstated, despite their begetter's political demise.

"The Party is negotiating a series of pragmatic stepping stones across a turbulent stream of embarrassing ideological implications. On the opposite of the bank lies the prospect of the type of economic growth which China enjoyed after its recovery from the Great Leap Forward in the early 1960s. It is a crossing forced upon it by the third successive year of poor climatic conditions which have tragically undermined the foundation of Chinese economy agriculture and indirectly affected its leading factor, industry. The Party's ideologues are camouflaging the stepping stones, hoping that the masses will not recognise them as being those which carried them out of the bitter years which followed the failure of the Great Leap....."

THE ARTICLE then went to set out in detail the changes which have been effected which many could interpret as a going back to Liu Shao-chi. One of the most important signs that a great change is taking place is the return of Teng Hsiao-ping, former secretary of the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee, former Finance Minister, former deputy Prime Minister, former acting Prime Minister. He fell from favour, together with Head of State, Liu Shao-chi, when the Red Guards unleashed their fury against Mao's opponents in

1966. The Peoples Daily, Peking, on April 23, 1968 had summed up Teng's crimes as "dreaming of engineering a counter-revolutionary coup... a vain attempt to restore capitalism... defiantly applied the logic of a scab and renegade to resist Chairman Mao's instructions." The paper's verdict on Teng was: "How utterly reactionary and vicious he was...."

"Now," reported the Far Eastern Economic Review, 23/4/73, "without a fuss or explanation, Teng popped up at a formal occasion in the capital, with no official rank ascribed to him but accorded the status of a deputy premier. By all the laws of Stalinism, the man should not have lived long enough to be rehabilitated." Various reasons are attributed for his resurrection. The FEER concluded its report thus: China needs to keep consumption under control. The ground is being prepared politically for resistance to pressures for higher incomes and for emphasis on pushing up savings to finance modernisation of the entire economy."

There are various speculations as to why Teng has been brought back. One trend of opinion seems to indicate that Mao, in his game of balancing groups, has now tilted a little in favour of what is known as the "Shanghai group" led by Chang Chun Chi in order, it is said, to place curbs on the increasing influence of Premier Chou. Mao it is believed has maintained his supremacy by ensuring that no one group ever secured such a dominant position as to threaten Mao's supremacy itself.

Together with Teng's rehabilitation, other old guard leaders who had been "purged" during the cultural revolution have come back into favour: Lo Jui-chin, the former Minister of Public Security, Po Po, an expert in planned economy and chief of the Propaganda department Tao Chu.

There is even greater speculation that all these changes, especially the rehabilitation of Teng would bring major changes in policy: it is thought that there would be decisive changes in the attitude to the USA, that the cold war against the Soviet Union would be sharpened but the greatest changes are expected on the domestic front. The News Week 30/4/73, summed up its report on Teng under the title *A Star Is Reborn*, thus: "If Teng's return does signal a complete victory for the pragmatists, it will go a long way towards reassuring the world that China's recent diplomatic reasonableness will survive even after Mao and Chou have died. Significantly, many of Teng's old army comrades, who were also purged during the cultural revolution, are now back in power. And Teng himself, cabled Sydney Liu, 'has all the qualities desperately needed in China today. He has the ability to succeed Chou En-lai—and he is quite capable one day of taking on the task of running China'....."

With such momentous changes taking place in China there was not the slightest doubt that Premier Chou could leave his country at this time.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

BY ARIEL

THE DETENTE AND
SRI LANKA

MANY CIRCUMSTANCES have compelled thinking people in Sri Lanka to wonder whether the detente which has become a reality among the big powers brings any benefit to this country at all. Whilst the detente has been established in many areas of international relations, irritating little wars and terrible acts of organised violence continue to erupt in the difficult areas of tension.

Not everybody is yet as enthusiastic about the detente as others who see in it the way out for most of the inter-state conflicts and tensions plaguing mankind today. In Britain, opinion is sharply divided. It must be remembered that Britain has not yet reconciled itself to being demoted from number one power in the world to something much lower (it is hoping to regain some of its glory through the European Common Market and its concomitant Political Union). In the meantime, there is a great deal of cynical scepticism about the virtues of the detente. The London *Economist*, 14/4/73, in a leading article entitled IT'S MOSTLY BUBBLES stated: "we have hardly set foot on the road, and already it turns out to be a slippery slope. There is an astonishing con-

trast between the observable facts of the present relationship between the Soviet Union and the west and the rhetoric that is being talked about it. The rhetoric suggests that great changes have already taken place. The observable facts are that so far there has been relatively little change in things that can be counted and measured and that most of such changes as are in prospect look like being to the disadvantage of the west....."

By the West, the *Economist* is primarily concerned about British interests and the interests of the other members of ECC. It went on to say that "the Russians will claim that these events in themselves constitute a real change in the situation: in the fashionable phrases, the cold war is over, tensions have been relaxed, the era of detente has opened. On recent evidence, those phrases will be uncritically repeated in many newspapers and on many television sets in the western world.."and the paper finally went on to warn that "...the west had better learn not to be taken in by the proposition that to talk is to succeed. It has got to ask the hard questions. What do we want? How do we get it? How do we measure

the degree of our success? The rest is the bubbles in the champagne glasses of the diplomatic round."

THOUGH the British would like to look at the matter in this way, people in Sri Lanka will naturally view the matter in a different way. To them the policy of detente, mainly centred around the normalisation of relations between the USA and the Soviet Union (which is what really bothers the *Economist*), does not conflict in any way with the national interests of developing countries like Sri Lanka. There does not seem to be the slightest doubt that any improvement in US-Soviet relations and the resulting agreements would contribute to the rapid development of the third world countries and help to ensure the sovereignty and freedom of these countries. The Soviet Union, in particular, has been at pains to stress that it seeks to maintain relations with countries like Sri Lanka on the basis of equality and mutual interests and that it was always willing to help the developing countries to achieve progress in the economic and political fields. It would certainly add to Sri Lanka's international prestige if it was able to maintain really close relations with the Soviet Union—as it already has with the USA and China.

Political observers all over the world, and papers like the *Economist*, in particular, have pointed out that the detente sprang from the unceasing efforts that had been made by the Russians over the years towards a detente.

The bedrock of Soviet foreign policy has been to end the cold war and establish a world of peaceful co-existence. After World War II this was the constant policy of the USSR, and it had won much support for the Soviet Union among a large number of countries which were interested in peace, and also among third world countries which were seeking to end oppression and exploitation.

There is also not the slightest doubt that the name of Brezhnev has become closely linked with Russia's "peace offensive" against international tension and the hangover of the "cold war", with the efforts for settling disputes through negotiations and with the improvement of mutual understanding between the east and the west. The signing of the treaties between Russia and West Germany, the four-parties agreement on West Berlin, a visible progress in convening the all-European conference on security and cooperation have all helped to relieve tension in Europe and have had a beneficial impact on the rest of the world. From a Europe which was buried deep in conflicting confrontation between NATO and WARSAW, it is today slowly evolving into a continent of peace and cooperation. It is admitted that this situation has been possible because of Brezhnev whose influence on the European detente cannot be underestimated just as much as the positive role he played in bringing to an end the

hostilities in Vietnam and Laos.

It is well to remember that the United States has been the centre of the detente—no doubt because the USA was the pivotal home of the cold war. The detente between American and China made possible by President Nixon's visit to Peking was only one limb of Washington's efforts to establish a worldwide detente. Nixon also went to Moscow in 1972, and both the visits have together been described as "a historic turning point". It is absolutely correct to characterise Nixon's efforts at detente and peace as that of an important architect of the international detente which has become a fact.

WHILST the United States has pursued this policy of detente in its own national interests and whilst it has sought to maintain a single-minded oneness in its approach towards Russia as well as China, commentators have observed differences in the way Russia and China have approached the matter. Russia seems to have striven for a fundamental improvement in the relations between the USA and the USSR to secure a general detente on the avowed basis of implementing the Charter of the United Nations. Moscow seems to have entered the negotiations for a detente as part of its long proclaimed foreign policy to end the cold war and establish a world of peace and cooperation.

CHINA, however, seems to have narrower objectives in that such a detente with the USA, it felt would strengthen its hands against the Russians on the one hand and the Indians on the other. China has not for a long time spoken about international peaceful coexistence, and this has led many to think that China was still in that stage where it felt that continuing tensions would help it to establish its position as a major power. China continues to nurse her border disputes with the USSR and India and does not seem to be able to enter into fruitful negotiations to end these disputes. In an era of detente, purposeful negotiations must mark any endeavour to end tensions and conflicts whether over boundaries or any other matter.

The USA seems to be genuinely interested in achieving a peaceful solution to nearly all matters of international significance just as much as Russia has also won a reputation as an advocate of peace opposed to colonialism. Many complex and difficult questions have solved: the prohibition of nuclear weapon tests in three spheres, prohibition of bacteriological weapons, the prohibition for the use of military purposes the sea bed, etc. etc. In many of these, it is a matter of record that it was Russia which had taken the initiative.

For a small country like Sri Lanka, it is important that a tension-free world of peace should flourish for any economic development.

A POINT OF VIEW

THE VIETNAM WAR

Sir,
THE recent signing of the peace agreements relating to Vietnam has been welcomed by all peace-loving people of the world. It has also been rightly hailed as a great victory for the Vietnamese people who for over 12 years defied the terror and fury of the biggest imperialist power with all its immense military and economic might.

The US Senate's Democratic Leader, Mike Mansfield has calculated that from 1961 till 1973, the Vietnam war had cost the US about 400,000 million dollars, seven times more than all the money now in circulation in the USA.

From 1965, when the US escalated the dirty war to include murderous air-raids over the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, the US dropped about 5,000 tons of bombs on Vietnam every day. This means that the equivalent of one "Hiroshima" bomb was dropped on Vietnam every five days. In all, the US Air Force rained on hapless Indochina approximately 7.5 million tons of bombs—more than 3 times the amount of bombs dropped during World War II. Yet nothing could crush the fighting spirit and determination of the brave Vietnamese people. They held out and compelled the aggressors to retreat.

After the end of the Korean war, the now-defunct *Life* magazine reported that this was the first war that the

US fought and failed to win. It is already a matter of history that the Vietnam war is the first that the US fought and lost.

What has the US to show for all the death and desolation that it brought to this unhappy land in the course of 12 long years? Only hundreds of thousands of Americans killed and wounded. Even according to official Washington figures, the Vietnam war, reckoned according to the number of casualties is the third biggest in US history.

THE INDOMITABLE Vietnamese people not only successfully defended their motherland from the foreign interventionists. They were able to deal devastating counter-blows against the aggressors. Thus, they brought down 4,200 US planes over the territory of the DRV. Last December alone, when the USA resorted to massive raids on the densely-populated areas of Hanoi and Haiphong, the DRV armed forces shot down over 80 enemy planes, including 34 B-52 strategic bombers. All this was made possible thanks to the assistance rendered to the DRV by the socialist countries and in the first place by the Soviet Union.

Ninety per cent of the arms used by the DRV and the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam against the Americans and their South Vietnamese puppets came from the Soviet Union. These arms included sophisticated air defence equipment including MIG fighters

Ilyushin light bomber and surface-to-air rocket missiles. In fact, according to US sources, it was the Soviet Union that was sustaining the DRV's war economy and practically underwriting almost all its defence requirements against the USA's armed might in South Vietnam.

AS SOON as the US aggressors started their bombing raids over the DRV, the Soviet Union took all the necessary steps to give all possible material assistance to their Vietnamese brothers. Thus, negotiations conducted in 1965 by Soviet and DRV Government delegations culminated in the conclusion of an agreement on Soviet assistance in developing the economy and strengthening the defence capacity of the DRV. In conditions of continuing US aggression, similar agreements were signed in later years too right up till 1970. Agreements on additional Soviet economic and military assistance to the DRV were signed in Moscow in June 1970. Speaking at the 24th Congress of the CPSU, in 1971, First Secretary of the Vietnam Worker's Party, Le Duan, expressed "profound gratitude for the valuable support and assistance which, in the spirit of proletarian internationalism, the CPSU and the Soviet people are granting us."

The other socialist countries too stood shoulder to shoulder with heroic Vietnam in helping her to defend socialism in the North and repel imperialist aggression in the South. They regarded aid to embattled Vietnam as their own cause. The world saw this socialist internationalism in practice as a mighty force

ensuring the victory of a people fighting and defeating imperialism.

It is saddening to think that the tragedies of the Vietnamese people could have been made much less and their victory over the US imperialists achieved much earlier if the leaders of the Peoples Republic of China too had pulled their weight along with the other socialist countries and come to a common front with them in support of Vietnam, leaving aside other differences. In fact, this was precisely what was proposed by the Soviet leaders when the US began escalating the Vietnam war in 1965. Unfortunately, the Chinese leaders rejected this offer out of hand.

THANKS to the publication of the secret Pentagon papers, we now know that this attitude of the Chinese leaders was known to the US militarists before they decided to launch large-scale air raids over the territory of the DRV. The attitudes and activities of the Maoists and their attacks on the Soviet Union and other socialist countries were described in secret American documents as "strategic advantages for the United States."

The line pursued by the Chinese leaders at that time was to preach to the Vietnamese people "self-reliance" as practised by the Chinese people during the course of their own civil wars. Preaching self-reliance to the Vietnamese people, the material assistance that China exten-

ded to the people of a small Asian country bravely battling the imperialists was very limited indeed. UPI correspondent Henry Keys has published some figures prepared by US intelligence sources. According to them, while the total military aid given to Vietnam by the Soviet Union during the years 1965-71 amounted to 1655 million US dollars, that given by China came to only 665 million. Whereas the Soviet Union rendered economic assistance to Vietnam during these years to the tune of 1585 million US dollars and the other socialist countries contributed as much as 800 million dollars, China gave only 555 million.

In fact, Peking's policy vis-a-vis Vietnam has been described as one of "indirect conflict and minimum risk." The essence of this policy was refusal to render Vietnam active support in order to avoid the risk of inviting direct US reprisals against China.

They cynically characterised every escalation of the war against Vietnam as the "death convulsions" of US imperialism. This convenient "theory" provided the excuse for the Peking leaders to stand idly by without doing anything active to bring about the defeat of US imperialism. In fact, Mao Tse-tung assured his American friend Edgar Snow as far back as 1965 that China would become involved in the Vietnam war only if the US attacked China.

Colombo.
14-5-73.

—Spartacus

Where Are The Beatles?

NOWADAYS the Western press, radio and television show far less interest than formerly in the four Liverpool lads who became famous the world over as the Beatles. There are several reasons for this. The group has broken up. Here is how Ringo Starr, one of the quartet, explained it: "There came a time when each one of us began to think more of his own interests. We no longer had any common aim. All that remained was personal ambition... And so each went his way.

Ringo himself lives with his family in Hampstead, London, and sometimes sings with other bands. George Harrison is still in London. Paul McCartney and his family live in virtual seclusion on their farm in Scotland. And John Lennon has moved to Los Angeles. Nevertheless, the Beatles still have much in common. They continue to live for and by music, composing songs and recording them. Their Apple recording company is still in operation. They also regularly appear in films. Lennon and McCartney are well known for their staunch support of the Northern Ireland patriots. Lennon's songs have a strongly political flavour. Will the Beatles get together again? Of late they have stopped denying rumours to that effect. The future will show whether the different roads they have taken will lead them to the same goal.

—New Times

ANOTHER POINT OF VIEW

U. S. A. AND VIETNAM

BY BARRY BROWN

Washington,

"THE DAY we have all worked and prayed for has finally come", President Nixon told the American people in a television address after the last US fighting force had left Vietnam. It is indeed an historic occasion, and one calling for an effort to understand something of what it has all meant.

Part of the story is told in the official statistics that have been compiled since the first ones were issued 12 years ago: US combat dead, 45,943; US dead from non-combat causes, 10,298; US wounded, 303,616; US missing, 1,344. In every category, the cost in human life to the Vietnamese, both South and North, was surely much higher. The money cost of the war to the United States is generally although unofficially and by non-American sources estimated at something over 100,000 million dollars, and the economic loss to the Vietnamese was undoubtedly again even greater proportionately.

As to whether all this vast sacrifice was worthwhile, perhaps no one will ever be able to say with certainty, simply because it can never be known what would have happened if the effort had not been made. At the end, President Nixon expressed the conviction that "we have prevented the imposition of a communist govern-

ment by force on South Vietnam.. we have achieved our goal of..peace with honor." In the larger context of international politics, he also asserted that "we have ended the longest and most difficult war in our history in a way that maintains the trust of our allies and the respect of our adversaries."

SURELY these are important accomplishments. Yet in his first nation-wide address on Vietnam after he entered the White House, even President Nixon set aside the question of whether the United States ever should have entered the war, and said instead "the urgent question is what to do now that we are there". Endless controversies are involved in this approach, over how the war was fought and how the peace negotiations were pursued—not only by President Nixon but by his predecessors. But the fundamental question of whether the United States should have intervened, at the cost in blood and treasure and social turmoil that was ultimately paid, will evidently have to be left to whatever imperfect answer history may offer.

In the more immediate sense, the first question raised by the ending of the American military presence in Vietnam is what will happen in Indo-China. It is characteristic of this struggle that

it is impossible to say with precision, even now, simply that the war is over. Those few words cannot convey the full truth about the conclusion of a conflict so compounded of tragedy and turmoil, of high purpose and political complexity.

CERTAINLY the people of Vietnam are not convinced that peace has come to them. The fighting since the signing of the Cease-fire Agreement of January 27 is evidence enough of the continuing danger of military action by both sides, if the provisions of the settlement that are intended to transfer the struggle to the political arena are not carried out. The difficulties being encountered by the international machinery designed to supervise the peace are an ominous sign.

Even in its international aspect, it cannot be said with complete assurance that the war is "over," despite the success of the United States and North Vietnam in meeting their commitments to troop withdrawal and prisoner release within the 60 days stipulated by the Paris Agreement. The continuation of American bombing in Cambodia, where there is not a cease-fire, makes this point. Moreover, in his speech hailing the final departure of the US military forces, President Nixon found it necessary to warn that some provisions of the Paris Agreement "have not been complied with"

One of these is that "prohibiting infiltration from North Vietnam into South Vietnam," over which President Nixon

(Continued on page 19)

Capitalist Economic Crisis: Shifting The Burden to Developing Countries

Peking,

THE *People's Daily* on March 28, carried a signed article under the title *The imperialists shift their economic crisis onto the developing countries.* Following are excerpts from the article.

IN RECENT YEARS, the crisis of over-production often broke out along with the monetary crisis in the imperialist countries. In order to extricate themselves from this plight, the imperialists have been trying every means to shift their crisis onto the people of the Asian, African and Latin American countries, thus bringing serious difficulties and great losses to the economy of many countries. This practice of making gains at the expense of the Third World peoples has aroused strong opposition among the latter.

Dumping "surplus" commodities is the customary tactics of the imperialists in shifting their crisis onto others. The total volume of US exports to the Asian, African and Latin American countries in 1970 was 12,990 million dollars, or four times the 1950 figure. "Surplus" industrial products occupied a big part in its export trade. According to UN statistics, the value of machines and transportation means exported by the "developed" capitalist countries to the developing countries formed 41 per cent of their total export value to these countries, while other manufactured

goods formed only 28 per cent. What is more, the big inflow of "surplus" agricultural products into many Asian, African and Latin American countries has ruined their rural areas, made the farm land waste and forced large numbers of peasants to desert their homes.

In order to control and plunder the developing countries and shift onto them the crisis of over-production, the imperialists have all along tried to make the national economy of the Asian, African and Latin American countries rely mainly on producing and exporting only one or two items of raw materials or agricultural products.

Since 63 per cent of her cultivated land goes to rubber, Malaysia cannot but receive "surplus" food grains from imperialist powers. Since 90 per cent of Venezuela's foreign exchange comes from petroleum she cannot but import "surplus" mining and other industrial equipment from imperialist powers. Similar cases may be found in Ghana, where cocoa takes up 70 per cent of the exports; Colombia, where coffee takes up 68 per cent of the exports; Egypt, where cotton takes up 53 per cent of the export; the Dominican Republic, where sugar takes up 58 per cent of the exports; and Sri Lanka, where tea takes up 66 per cent of the exports. These circumstances make these countries liable to the eco-

nomical attack of the imperialist countries that want to unburden their crisis.

TO KEEP down the prices of mineral ores and products is one of the customary means the imperialists use to shift their crisis. For instance, when an economic crisis gripped the US in August, 1969, industrial production was slackened where rubber was the raw material. To lower the rubber price, the monopolists dumped their inventory and inflicted heavy losses on the developing countries which produced natural rubber. Taking 1963 as 100, the index of export price of Malaysian rubber fell to 54 in April, 1972. Compared with 1969, the total export of Malaysian rubber increased by 14 per cent in 1970, but the actual income from the rubber export fell by 14 per cent.

Besides, the imperialists shift the crisis onto the developing countries through increased export of capital and commodities. Capital export mainly takes two forms: direct investment which aims at robbing the countries of their mineral resources and agricultural products and seizing markets abroad; and bilateral or multilateral "aid" to state monopoly capital which is aimed at military and political infiltration and dumping of "surplus" commodities by imperialism under the pretext of "aid". In the past few years, US monopoly capital has increased its direct foreign investment by over 10 per cent annually, reaching 86,000 million dollars by the end of 1971, or

more than twice of that of 1960, of which 27 per cent was invested in the developing countries.

Rounded by successive monetary and financial crises, imperialism is trying hard to shift its losses caused by the crises onto the third world. Most obviously, the Asian, African and Latin American countries have suffered losses in foreign exchange reserves because of the monetary and financial crises in the capitalist world.

Total gold and foreign exchange reserves of the capitalist world amounted to 129,800 million dollars at the end of 1971, with those of the Asian, African and Latin American countries accounting only for 22,780 million dollars. 75.9 per cent of these was foreign exchange reserves, mainly in US Dollar. The Asian, African and Latin American countries suffered a loss of 1,200 million dollars in foreign exchange reserves as a result of the US dollar devaluation in December, 1971.

MORE SEVERE losses in foreign exchange reserves were inflicted on many Asian, African and Latin American countries by the monetary and financial crises of the capitalist world centring around the US dollar since the beginning of this year.

The financial crises of the capitalist world also brought heavy losses in foreign trade to the developing countries. The exports of the developing countries to the United States amounted to about 15,000 million dollars in 1971, and the dollar devaluation

caused the Asian, African and Latin American countries a loss of 1,200 million dollars in their exports to the United States.

The "new economic policy" carried out by the US government in August, 1971 is a typical example of shifting the monetary crisis onto others. As a result, the developing countries suffered a loss of about 2,500 million dollars according to the estimate by the third session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.

The policy of plunder, expansion and profiting at the expense of others pursued by the imperialist countries has aroused strong dissatisfaction and opposition among many developing countries and people. The call for unity to safeguard the national interests of the third world echoed at many international conferences. Those countries mainly relying on the export of primary products have also united in various ways to oppose imperialist economic plunder. The struggles of the developing countries against the shifting of economic crises by

the imperialists onto other countries are converging into a strong force, enhancing and deepening the inherent contradictions of the imperialists.

—Hsinhua

USA and Vietnam

Continued from page 17

has previously expressed concern. In his war-end address, he again said: "we shall insist that North Vietnam comply with the Agreement, and the leaders of North Vietnam should have no doubt as to the consequences if they fail to comply.."

For this and other reasons, it seems likely that the aftermath of the American undertaking in Indo-China will still pose problems and dangers for a long time to come. Nevertheless, one lesson of the Vietnam War has obviously been well learned, for it is already embodied in the Nixon doctrine. The President has said that the United States will maintain its strength and abide by its treaty commitments, but that it will henceforth look to others seeking its help to take primary responsibility for their own defense—and especially for the provision of their own manpower for defense.

Perhaps that understanding of the limitations of American power needed to be learned in Vietnam. Perhaps a new understanding of how to employ American power more modestly and constructively, in the evolving configuration of international power, will play a vital role in the building of a structure of peace.

For News Behind
the News

Read

TRIBUNE

Regularly.

AFRICA

Drought Threatens Famine in Wide Areas

SEVERE DROUGHT has hit large portions of west, central and southern Africa devastating crops and herds and raising the specter of famine this winter in some of the world's poorest countries.

The nations most severely affected, according to State Department officials, are Mauritania, Mali, Chad and Upper Volta, all located in the so-called savannah belt which stretches across Africa just south of the Sahara Desert.

These and several other countries have issued an appeal to the international community to help feed their people. The United States has just launched an emergency relief program in conjunction with Canada, European Common Market countries, and the United Nations.

A NUMBER of other countries in Africa are also reporting severe drought conditions.

In South Africa, the shortage of rain is said to be the worst in 50 years and is estimated to have cost farmers \$320 million so far.

In Rhodesia, the farmers' union is calling the situation a "national tragedy," with crops cut by more than half and the loss estimated at \$54 million.

The drought poses particularly serious problems for the breakaway, white-minority ruled Rhodesian government, because agricultural

products are one of the country's most important earners of foreign exchange. The country's reserves are now lower than at any time since it broke away from Britain in 1965 and the United Nations imposed economic sanctions.

OTHER COUNTRIES and areas in Africa suffering from an acute rain shortage include Zambia, Botswana and Swaziland in southern Africa, the Central African Republic and Senegal and the northern regions of Dahomey, Cameroon and Nigeria in West Africa.

In Senegal, where peanuts provide 80 per cent of the country's total export earnings, the crop this year is expected to drop to 350,000 tons, less than half of last year's production.

But the hardest hit African country appears to be Mauritania, where cattle-raising nomads make up a large portion of the 1.2 million population. State Department officials agree that the situation there is extremely serious.

ESTIMATES of the drought's toll on cattle herds range as high as 80 per cent, and grain production is said to have fallen to about one-fifth of the normal 100,000 ton level.

So far, there are no confirmed reports of human deaths due solely to food shortages. But some offi-

cialists speak of "pockets of starvation" throughout the savannah belt due to a combination of hunger and normal diseases, particularly among babies and children.

Most of the countries in this belt are regularly short in grain production and forced to import sorghum and millet, the chief staples, to feed their people. They have few or no natural resources and are locked in a struggle with the Sahara Desert which is edging southward at a rate of about 3,000 feet a year.

DROUGHT is now affecting many portions of the southern hemisphere, including the Indian Subcontinent, Australia and Indonesia. Some Middle East countries, notably Lebanon, Syria and Israel, were also suffering from an acute rain shortage until recently.

Weather experts at the US Department of Agriculture say that despite appearances there is no worldwide drought and that some areas in the southern hemisphere had heavy rains last year.

They noted that the drought has come immediately after record crops and rainfall were reported in 1971 throughout the world.

In the relief program now being launched to aid drought stricken West and Central African nations, the US Agency for International Development is providing 67,000 tons of sorghum and millet out of a total of about 190,000 tons coming from a variety of countries and UN and

(Continued on page 22)

INTUITION OR REVELATION?

How 'visions' helped world's great achievers

BY WEBB GARRISON

DON'T downgrade your intuition. It can pay off. Name any field of achievement: Science, mathematics, art, music, poetry, and a survey of great names will reveal that many were guided, or enlightened or even given dictation in visionary states.

Take the wholly unexplainable case of Rene Descartes. Already famous as a scientist and philosopher, the French scholar was deeply interested in mathematics.

During one night—November 10, 1619—Descartes experienced vivid dreams three. Taken by itself, no dream "made sense". But when he pondered all three together, he was suddenly filled with enthusiasm.

Descartes cautiously confided to friends that the dreams had revealed to him "the magic key which would unlock the treasure house of nature." That magic key was analytic geometry—a revolutionary new tool for the study of space, time, matter, and energy.

NEARLY 50 years later, in 1666, a 23-year old amateur scientist saw an apple fall from a tree. He fell into a reverie. Not consciously in control of his mind, he glanced at a pale halfmoon that was clearly visible in daytime. "The apple and the moon are doing the same

thing", a mysterious voice told him. "Both of them are falling."

Isaac Newton felt his idea was so preposterous that he didn't publish it until 21 years later. By then, development of calculus as a mathematical tool had given him a way to prove the truth of his vision. Often regarded as the most important single discovery in the history of science, Newton's law of gravitation paved the way for today's moon-shots.

ANOTHER "vision" went like this: Tie off pancreatic ducts of dogs. Wait six or eight weeks. Remove and extract. That terse memo sounds as though it might have been written by some ancient witch preoccupied with study of internal organs of animals.

Actually, it was jotted down on the night of October 30, 1920. Its author was an obscure lecturer in the medical school of the University of Western Toronto. Frederick G. Banting never wavered in his testimony that the three sentences he wrote down that night were "given to him."

Colleagues treated his vision casually at first. A few even snickered. Today, however, every diabetic alive is perpetually indebted to Banting and his vision. For the cryptic note gave the world

insulin. Artists, composers and poets seem to have little in common with biologists, mathematicians and physicists.

BUT AN incredibly large number of notables in the field of the fine arts have testified that they too, have had help. Many refer in their diaries to visions and moments of illumination. A few go so far as to insist that they have sometimes served only as stenographers, taking down words or melodies that are dictated to them.

William Blake said of his poem on "Milton and Jerusalem" that he wrote it from immediate dictation, without premeditation, and even against his will.

Essayist and poet Ralph Waldo Emerson declined to take credit for his greatest works. He simply put himself in a receptive mood, he said. Having trained himself to enter that mood he found that once he was in it "from some alien energy the visions come."

Charlotte Bronte refused to make more than minor alterations in her novels, no matter what critics said.

Her characters simply did what was inevitable, she insisted. Her role was that of a medium reporting their doings. So any changes would represent personal meddling with detailed reports "given" to her.

William Thackeray said of his novels: "The characters once created lead me, and I follow where they direct. I have never seen the persons I describe, nor heard the conversations I put down. "I am often astonished my

self to read it after I have got it on paper."

Earlier John Milton had expressed about the same idea in different words. Sometimes the blind poet experienced long "dry spells", during which nothing came to him.

Frequently the creative drought ended in the middle of the night. Waking with his mind buzzing, Milton would call for his daughter to come to his bed and seize a pen to take down the verses that were descending in unexpected floods.

Johann von Goethe, author of "Faust", devoted considerable attention to the role of visions. "All productivity of the highest kind, every important idea, every great thought which is followed by fruit and has consequences, is in no man's control, and is elevated above all earthly power," he insisted. "Such things men receive as unexpected gifts from above."

SINCE ANCIENT times persons on the receiving end of creative visions have pondered the riddle of who-or-what is responsible for them.

Socrates attributed many of his ideas to "a friendly demon". Raphael believed that at his most creative moments his brush was guided by mystic forces.

Robert Louis Stevenson credited his finest stories to "the brownies," and said he was not responsible for what they produced through him. Pablo Picasso said that, "At the beginning of each picture there is someone who works with me.."

James Watt conceived the steam engine in a single flash of insight. He denied having produced the invention, insisted that it was given to him.

Nikola Tesla, an Austrian emigrant who came to this country in 1884 and soon began working for Thomas Edison, developed dozens of important inventions. Many of them came to him in visions.

In a flash, he would receive not only the design but also the precise measurements of components needed to produce an electrical device radically different from anything in use.

Tesla's visual images were often accompanied by bursts of light. He refused to analyze his own mental processes, regarding ideas as having burst into his mind through processes beyond his control.

EVEN Carl Jung, a great psychiatrist, studied many writers and concluded that words sometimes "positively impose themselves upon the author...his pen writes things that his eyes perceive with amazement.

How the creative visions get into a person's head is at least as mysterious as where they come from. Many make their appearance during states of semi-consciousness, others even force an entrance during sleep.

Giuseppe Tartini, inventor of the modern violin bow, dreamed that he heard Satan play "a sonata of such exquisite beauty as surpassed the boldest flights of my imagination."

When he woke up, he hastily transcribed the notes

that form his famous "Devil's Sonata."

Who knows? If you stay open-minded to whispers from "the brownies", may be you will one day be on the receiving end of a creative vision!

Africa — Drought

Continued from page 20

Common Market agencies. The value of the grains plus transportation costs brings the US contribution to about \$9 million.

The United States is concentrating its bilateral aid in four countries—Mali, Upper Volta, Niger and Senegal—where it has ongoing programs to increase grain production.

These four countries, where the total estimated shortfall in grains is 250,000 tons will get at least 44,000 tons directly from the United States in the next few weeks. Another 23,000 tons in US commodities is going through the UN Food and Agricultural Organization to Chad, Mauritania and Senegal.

AID and State Department officials say that a major obstacle to heading off widespread starvation among the 24 million people in these West and Central African countries is the logistics involved in distributing the food.

Because much of the population in this area is nomadic and road-and-rail systems limited, it is extremely difficult to get the food to those who need it. In many cases, nomadic tribes have driven their depleted herds southward deeper into Africa in search of water and grazing lands.

TRIBUNE, May 19, 1973

IS IT TRUE?

Sherlock Holmes

* The Times Imbrolio

IS IT NOT TRUE that it was a powerful combine headed by N. S. O. Mendis which had pushed out in 1948 the earlier management which had run the *Times of Ceylon* after the paper had gone "Ceylonese" in 1945/46? The bulk of the money for the change over had been put up by Sangarapillai—a man who had made his money on hospital food contracts? That Sangarapillai had also made money on other contracts too? That in this era of contractors' raj it was only befitting that the bastion of British imperialism should pass into the hands of a contractor? That since he did not have all the money to pay the old shareholders fully, the Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation had obliged him with a bigish loan—and the Bank had a representative on the Board?

That Sangarapillai had thereafter entrusted the running of the company to a few of his friends who had secured the services of Frank Moraes as Editor? That the paper rose to great heights in the two years Moraes was with the paper? That it was during this period that a Rotary machine was bought to replace the old Crabtree flatbed? That it was also in

this period that the *Lankadipa* was started with Julius Lanerolle and D. B. Dhanapala at its helm? That whilst this was going on, Sangarapillai, the contractor, had secretly changed his loyalties and his friends? That one fine day there was a palace coup and a new management was in power? That Moraes immediately resigned and went back to India?

That almost 25 years after the 1948 coup, another coup has put the powerful N. S. O. Mendis combine on the defensive and out of the *Times* premises? That NSO who had ruled the *Times*, directly as well as indirectly, for the last twenty years through partners and nominees has at last lost possession of the place? That Directors Ranaweera (formerly a ward, then a partner of NSO) and Ediriweera, with the support of Director Amarasuriya, have with the assistance of the workers and the union staged a veritable coup d'etat against NSO? That the attempt by the two remaining NSO loyalists, Viswanathan and Weerasooriya, to appoint three more Directors (even with Amarasuriya protesting) have run into an Injunction which will come up for further hearing on May 18?

That history has a way of repeating itself? That NSO who now has a mortgage on the Sangarapillai Trust (with Mackwoods Fund) has been caught napping? That it will be interesting to see how the tussel develops? That half the battle in these matters is possession and that is what NSO has lost? That Ranaweera and Ediriweera (and Amarasuriya) backed by the Unions have possession of the buildings and the printery and the papers? That there are enough skeletons in the cupboards of the old Management to keep them or the hop?

That there are also whispers that a merger between the Ranaweera—Ediriweera *Times* and the Gunasenadas *Dawasa* could be a possibility under certain circumstances? That this is a development which cannot be ruled out? That one essential must for any fruitful development of the *Times* is a new Rotary? That this means foreign exchange? That the first major casualty in this sordid story of intrigue, coups and counter-coups is unfortunately R. L. Michael, a vigorous, go-getting journalist with a flair smooth journalese, pungent idiom and thought-provoking comparisons? That many people now genuinely miss the *Opinion* column in the *Daily Mirror*? That the stand-in who wrote the same kind of stuff whenever Michael was out of town is also likely to be a casualty? That even if NSO stages a successful counter-coup, it will be difficult for Michael to ride the crest again?