

CS Silbanyala

TRIBUNE

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DEVELOPING
POLITICAL
TRENDS

SKYLAB, NIXON,
PACIFIC REGION

THREE YEARS
OF UF RULE

CHRONICLE

MORE DIRTY
LINEN

FORECASTING
DROUGHT

TIMES,
GEM WORLD



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ABOUT THE CONTENTS

THE HOLIDAYS, Wesak, Bandaranaike Hall and Republic Day, coming in the middle of the last two weeks disturbed our printing schedules. In fact, we could not carry comments on these events in the last two issues, and it is only in this issue that we are able to deal with two major matters which the Government can claim to be the most colourful and ceremonially significant events, apart from May Day 1973, since the UF came to power in May 1970. The opening of the Bandaranaike Memorial International Conference Hall (BMICH) marked the culmination of a building, the foundation stone of which had been laid in 1964, when Mrs. Bandaranaike was Prime Minister and which had laid dormant during the UNP regime between 1965-70.

It was hailed as the hallmark of the lasting friendship between Sri Lanka and China. The Hall itself is a magnificent showpiece set in 37 acres of ground and is said to be the largest and finest conference hall in South and Southeast Asia, and perhaps in the whole of Afroasia. It was conceived on a gigantic scale and executed in fabu-

lous style. It is said that it will cost the Government anything from two to three million rupees a year to maintain it, and it is doubtful if the earnings by hiring out the hall would bring that money. Until Sri Lanka is able to make more friends and influence more people on the international level, there is little likelihood that the Hall would become a profit earning complex.

The Republic Day celebrations were staged on the highest possible profile with an armed services parade which was obviously intended to impress the "hostile elements" in the country that the Government had the power to suppress and crush them. The PM has made it clear that the UF government will not brook any opposition to the "socialism and justice" envisaged by the United Front. Truth is many faceted, and so are terms like "socialism" and "justice", and the PM's sweeping declaration on this matter will more likely than not infuse controversy and conflict into an already tense atmosphere. Tribune columnists will ana-

lytically, constructively and critically examine the policy and other declarations made by the Prime Minister and other political leaders during the current period of UF jubilation from May Day to Republic Day—following, it must be remembered, on the massive emotional euphoria which had stemmed from the death of Dudley Senanayake.

IN THIS ISSUE, our columnist Canax, with his cynical humour and pungent

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acidity, deals with the continuing efforts of the *Times of Ceylon* to "air" its dirty linen (Canax makes a point of dirty linen being "aired" as proclaimed by the *Times* and the customary "washing" of dirty linen) In the era of Watergate in the USA (and mini-Watergate in Thailand), the little dirty linen which the *Times* is able to produce for public edification should not shock anybody's conscience.

In our previous week's issue, we had to give a miss to our *Shamba* diary. Many readers had promptly asked us why: and we have had to explain to them that it was because of the exigencies of space.

And for the same reason we are skipping *Shamba* and *Safari* this week too.

Agastya's Contemporary Notebook which is deeply concerned about the transit of Saturn in June and solar eclipse on June 30, will appear next week.

Sherlock Holmes makes a preliminary survey of the world of gems, *Ariel* in his *International Affairs* is (naturally) deeply concerned about the Watergate Explosion and he also touches on the continuing war and tension in Indochina. *The Chronicle*, which we resumed last week, takes the reader from May 8 to May 13. Though this is a little behind time, it is an invaluable record which our readers, out of Colombo and especially those who are out of Sri Lanka, greatly prize.

RAMBLING NOTES FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

DEVELOPING POLITICAL TRENDS


UNITED FRONT circles now believe that, after the unfortunate (in their view) miasma around Dudley Senanayake's death, they have wrested the political initiative by staging the super-duper May Day Rally followed up with tamasha centred on the opening of the BMICH and the stirring military parade and civilian procession (with school girl bands and attractive floats) on Republic Day.

There is no doubt that the Government and United Front have been riding on an officially-induced wave of jubilation and self glory. What the common man feels and thinks seems to be only of secondary importance. The unbiased working class (blue collar, white collar, red collar and otherwise) organised in approved trade unions are the elite who have got the best from this government. And the Government seems satisfied to rely heavily on the noisy support of this section.

The rationing and distributive system is geared to keep boisterous the "proletariat" in the public and private sectors (only partially productive through over-employment and mismanagement) happy: the less vooi-

ferous sections of the population in the rural and semi-urban areas continue to suffer at the wrong end of rationing and distributive system.

The ruling hierarchy and the Establishment seems to have successfully insulated themselves from the undercurrents of thinking and feeling among ordinary people not merely in our vast rural areas but also in the towns and cities. This self-delusion stems partly from a fanatical and fatalistic faith in the efficacy of the mechanically doctrinaire political imperfection known as the Common Programme of the United Front (which became the election manifesto) and partly from a suicidal arrogance that what others think and say was wrong—falling into the category of things "reactionary", "bourgeois", "imperialist" and the like.



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43, Dawson Street,
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We have adequately dealt with the May Day demonstration and Rally of the Government in earlier issues, but it is necessary to examine the speeches and statements made on May 17 (opening of the BMICH) and May 22 (Republic Day) to find out the trends of policy emanating from the Government and the Establishment.

THE OPENING of the Bandaranaike Memorial International Conference Hall was a prosaic affair with a great deal of glitter and glamour. The speeches were intended to show that the friendship between Sri Lanka and China was traditional, spread over two thousand years of recorded history, and that the renewed friendship in the contemporary era had culminated in the gift of the BMICH which according to the Chinese Premier Chou En-lai was the symbol of lasting friendship between the two countries.

The Prime Minister's speech at the opening of the BMICH stressed the gratitude which the people of Sri Lanka had for the Chinese people and its Government for the many gifts she had given and the bounteous assistance which had been extended to the little island by the big Asian power. The special envoy from China, Hsu Hsiang-chjen, said the things which are normally said on these occasions, but went out of his way to insist that such assistance was *mutual*, mentioning the fact that China was still a developing country (this is the new line now being assiduously pushed by China).

This part of the special envoy's speech is worth quoting:

".....In her speech, Prime Minister Sirimavo Bandaranaike has spoken in praise of China's assistance to Sri Lanka. The Chinese people following the teachings of their great leader, Chairman Mao Tse-tung have provided friendly Afro-Asian countries with some meagre assistance. However, China is still a developing country, and her assistance to friendly countries is limited. We have all along held that assistance is always mutual. Shortly after the founding of the People's Republic of China, Sri Lanka dared to defy imperialist obstruction and concluded the rice-rubber trade agreement with China, giving us valuable support. The Government of Sri Lanka consistently stood for the restoration to the People's Republic of China of her legitimate rights in the United Nations and made unremitting efforts to this end. I would like to take this opportunity once again to express our sincere gratitude to the Government and people of Sri Lanka....."

The statement that China was a developing country and that the assistance it could extend was limited is understandable. It is also a warning that China was not in a position to render as much assistance as countries like Ceylon would want. After the magnanimous \$ 25 million in hard currency in May 1971, only a small sum of \$ 2 million has been forthcoming in hard currency. All other aid has been tied project

aid, and not one of the projects envisaged have got going though it was nearly one year since the Ceylon PM paid her visit to China.

But to find comfort that Ceylon had fought the dragon of imperialism when it signed the Rice and Rubber Agreement is a feeble attempt to oversimplify history to suit marxist logic. Those of us who were close "watchers" of events in the period when the historic Rice and Rubber Agreement was signed were aware that the Agreement was a purely economic agreement, and that whereas Washington made efforts to prevent the agreement to sustain the trade and political boycott Dulles had declared against China, the other imperialist power, Great Britain, had secretly but effectively encouraged the Senanayake government to enter into the barter agreement with China. At that time, Ceylon was desperately in need of rice, after it had failed to obtain supplies from its traditional suppliers. China was in need of rubber. It was a strictly and purely economic agreement, and the political overtones only stemmed from the hullabaloo made by Macarthyian-Dulles circles in the USA.

THE UNP MINISTERS who entered into this Agreement were not anti-imperialists by any stretch of imagination. They were pro-west, pro-capitalist and anti-socialist and anti-communist. The one thought furthest from their minds was to fight imperialism. To keep themselves in power by winning mass support they needed rice and they did not mind getting it from com.

munist China which was prepared to pay a premium price for the rubber.

The Ceylon-China Rice and Rubber Agreement has survived all governments in Sri Lanka for the last 20 odd years simply because it was an economic agreement. The UNP which had fought the 1965 elections on an anti-China cry did not choose to end the Agreement. If the Agreement had been impregnated either originally or even later with political potentialities and implications, the first thing the Dudley Senanayake Government would have done was to have abrogated the Agreement when it came up for renewal in 1967.

To think that the Ceylon-China Rice and Rubber Agreement was the result of the anti-imperialist struggle waged by Ceylon is no different from saying that the Watergate Scandal was the creation of diehards and reactionaries in the USA who were anxious to denigrate Nixon for his pro-detente policies. Karl Marx himself never sought to straight-jacket historical events into oversimplified formulae. Those who have read his writings on the contemporary events of his times will know that he never made the mistake of oversimplifying history to suit his theories. One has only to read the 18th Brumaire and his other writings that he was a profound analyst-in-depth of the events which were shaking Europe at that time.

The Ceylon-China Rice and Rubber Agreement of 1952 was no doubt a by-product of imperialist contradictions

which stemmed from the economic crisis which had come upon the world after 1929—just as Nixon's desire for a detente with China and Russia in 1971-72 arose from the impact of a series of contradictions and historical factors in the current period which cannot be oversimplified in a single sentence.

For those who know, it is hard to think of R. G. Senanayake, Sir John Kotelawela, Dudley Senanayake, Sir Kanthiah Vaithianathan and other members of the then Government as anti-imperialist stalwarts who were anxious to help communist China to break a US-inspired trade boycott. The Agreement was also possible only because of the secret encouragement given to the Senanayake-Kotelawela group by Britain to enter into this Agreement.

IT IS INTERESTING to note that Prime Minister Srimavo Bandaranaike and other leaders of the United Front Government have proclaimed that Sri Lanka will not import any more rice after 1973: that even if a wee bit of rice was imported in 1974, not one ounce would be imported after 1974. This means that the Ceylon-China Rice and Rubber Agreement, as presently constituted, must end. If Ceylon does not import rice, the Agreement would have to be re-negotiated.

Already China has doubled its purchases of rubber from Malaysia. It is yet premature to speculate, on possible options but if Sri Lanka does become self-sufficient in rice, or does not have the money to import rice (and

cannot therefore afford to barter away its rubber) this twenty-year old barter agreement between China and Ceylon will end. Some other trade agreement may take its place, but it can never be the same thing. Some marxist-minded commentators may be tempted to say that reactionary forces in Sri Lanka had sought to abrogate the Ceylon-China Rice and Rubber Agreement by refusing to import rice.

So much for that.

REPUBLIC DAY was celebrated with great gusto on May 22. The military parade was a stern reminder to "hostile forces" that the Government had the necessary fire-power to crush all opposition to "socialism and justice". The schoolgirl bands, the floats and the processions were impressive but in the context of rising prices and chronic scarcities public enthusiasm was limited to the loyalist trade union-based "proletarian" cadres.

Three significant events constituted a grim backdrop to the first anniversary of the Republic. The Lake House "takeover" Bill was tabled on May 18 and the Minister of Information in urging the NSA to adopt the Regulations under the Press Council Law assured everybody that no penalties would be imposed until a code for journalists was drawn up. The second was a resolution adopted by the Tamil United Front on the need for the Tamils to fight for a separate state, and the third a statement by UNP's new leader, J. R. Jayewardene.

After being cold-stored for a long time, in spite of persistent LSSP demands to the contrary, the Prime Minister tabled the Lake House "takeover" Bill in the NSA on May 18. It had been gazetted on May Day. The mass upsurge which followed Dudley Senanayake's death was, it is suggested by political observers, one reason for inducing the PM to permit the Lake House Bill to be gazetted and later tabled. The bill is now *subjudice* with six applications pending before the Constitutional Court challenging its validity, and we must withhold comment until the Court disposes of the matter. In the meantime, the Bill has evoked comments in the capitalist democracies of the West and in many of the third world countries in Afroasia that it is an infringement of fundamental rights which would lead to a restriction of the freedom of the press. Adverse comment and criticism in foreign countries will have no effect on the United Front government which believes that it was showing the world the true path of socialism and justice through "parliamentary democracy."

THE TAMIL UNITED FRONT on Thursday, May 17, at a meeting of the Action Committee held in Jaffna decided to take preliminary steps to set up a separate state for the Tamils in Sri Lanka. The Committee also accepted a proposal submitted by ETOM leader Suntheralingam to draw up a new Constitution for the Tamils and to set up a Constituent Assembly for this purpose. These decisions, reached after a meeting last-

ing eight hours, will now be put to all the constituent partners of the TUF for their approval.

The following resolution was adopted by the meeting: "Whereas the Government has completely rejected and disregarded the six-point demand for the amendment of the Constitution so as to incorporate the minimum rights of the Tamil nation and thereby preserve the unity of this country presented by the TUF, which is the only organisation representing the preponderant majority of the Tamils in Sri Lanka, on June 25, 1972.

"And whereas the leader of the TUF, Mr. S. J. V. Chelvanayakam, resigned his membership of the National State Assembly on October 2, 1972, in order democratically to establish that the Tamil people have rejected the Constitution and also to give an opportunity to the Government to put to test their claim that a considerable section of the Tamil people have accepted their Constitution and whereas the Government, by not holding the by-election for a period of over seven months, is striking the death knell of parliamentary democracy in the country.

"And whereas further inroads have been made into the rights of the Tamil people during the last one year of operation of the Constitution by:

"(1) The unprecedented attack on their religious freedom by the teaching of Buddhism to Hindu and Christian children in certain State schools and the establishment of Buddhist temples with

Government assistance in places like Kankasanturai and the claim recently made by certain Buddhists to ancient and venerated Saiva shrines like Thirukonesvaram.

(2) The underlining of the inferior state of the Tamil language by allowing the position of Tamil in the administration and the courts in the Northern and Eastern Provinces to be dependent on the tender mercies of an individual Minister and the language rights of the Tamil people in the rest of the country being completely disregarded.

"(3) The right to work of the up-country Tamil workers rendered stateless by iniquitous citizenship laws, being jeopardised as a result of the discriminatory policy of acquisition pursued by the Government and the denial at the point of the gun of the rights of Tamil workers, deprived of their work in the estates to make a living by clearing and cultivating uncultivated lands in the traditional Tamil homeland of the North and East.

"(4) The denial of equal opportunities in higher education to Tamil students by the implementation of a scheme of standardisation on the basis of language media and thereby endangering the well-being of future generations of the Tamils.

"(5) The policy of changing the medium of instruction of Tamil children to Sinhala, thereby paving the way for the total destruction of the Tamil nation, as demonstrated by the Government's action in making Sinhala the

medium of instruction in Standard One in certain schools like the Puttur Panga-seela School.

“(6) The very existence and the future of the Tamil nation in this country being endangered by the discriminatory actions of the Government directed against the Tamil People and the Tamil territories in the spheres of education, employment and economic development.

“The action committee of the TUF is of the view that the only way to preserve the integrity and identity of the Tamil nation and to rescue it from the path of destruction and to build a future for the Tamil nation in this country is the establishment of self-rule of the Elam Tamil nation in their traditional homeland.

“Considering the very great importance and vital nature of this view the Action Committee resolves to submit it to consideration of the constituent parties of the TUF and further resolves to set up a highpowered committee of seven to take all further action in this connexion.

“The following were appointed to the committee: Mr. S. J. V. Chelvanayakam, Mr. C. Suntharalingam, Mr. M. Sivasithambaram, Mr. A. Amirthalingam, Mr. M. Manickam, Mr. M. S. Sellathamby and Mr. A. Thaagadurai MP.”

This is the first time that an organisation which represents all sections of Tamil opinion in this country has made a demand for a separate state. Earlier only Suntharalingam had made such a demand through his one-man ETOM. The Federal

Party which was wedded to its concept of a “federal state” decried Suntharalingam’s demand as a piece of mischief to denigrate the FP position. The Tamil Congress stood for a unitary state wanting to collaborate with “reasonable sections” of the Sinhalese. The LSSP which has always insisted on a unitary state with parity of status for the two languages where the workers and peasants were in power ridiculed the ETOM and the FP and also declared that the TC wanted unity only with the Sinhala capitalists. The CP, right from the time it was started, had advocated “regional autonomy” for the Tamils in “their traditional homelands in the North and the East”, with a slight priority for the Sinhalese language on a *primus inter pares* (first among equals) basis, but when it fell for the myopia of parliamentary power through coalition with the Sinhala Only SLFP it quietly forgot its policy on the “national question”, just as much as it forgot, like the LSSP, the policies both had proclaimed about the “agricultural proletariat” of Indian origin in the plantations.

When the UF came to power, it was thought that the LSSP and CP together with SLFP Tamils like Kumarasurrier would be able to win over the Tamil masses by passing the TC, FP, ETOM and the CWC (in the plantations). The Left in the UF failed to win over the Tamils in spite of the distribution of largesse to chosen elements whom they believed would be able to bring

the Tamils round. But what has really happened was the opposite. The FP, TC, ETOM and the CWC came together in the TUF. The breakaway TC MPs who joined the parliamentary group of the UF have now become flotsam and jetsam of Tamil politics, being no more than brokers between the Government and applicants in the North.

The UF, and especially its Left headed by the LSSP-CP, believed that their “radical and progressive policies” would make the TUF disappear like mist before the morning sun. But the TUF has failed to disappear and objective reports indicate that the TUF is daily getting more and more support of the Tamil masses. Abusing it as a reactionary communal organisation seeking subversive support from the DMK in India will neither kill the TUF nor solve outstanding problems of national unity. Repression will certainly inhibit the TUF for a time, but history has shown that repression in the long run only adds fuel to the fire. Legal pundits may say that the TUF has committed treason, but hard words cannot solve political problems.

The TUF is not in a position today to do anything about securing a separate state. The resolution is only a declaration of faith, but its significance cannot be underestimated. In the last five decades, such declarations have led to far-reaching results within a few years in different parts of the world—unless of course conciliatory measures were taken to re-

move the causes which have generated the demand for separation.

THE NEW LEADER of the UNP, J. R. Jayewardena, held discussions with 116 electoral leaders on Saturday May 19 and the following press release was issued from the party office.

"The purpose of our Party is outlined in our Party Constitution; to maintain in Parliament and the country a Party to implement the policies adopted from time to time by our Annual Sessions. We must seek to do so through the consent of the people: through the free exercise of their vote at elections.

"In the 1970 General Elections we were returned to Parliament as an Opposition Party. We have to wait patiently, whatever the harassments our supporters suffer, or the hardships the people undergo, until the next General Elections, to seek the people's sanction to form a Government.

"I am emphasizing this because there is an atmosphere of violence prevailing in the country today. This is inimical to the smooth working of democratic institutions. Even if provoked our members should not resort to any violence; electoral leaders should see to it that in their electorates peace prevails.

"We must not consider political opponents to be enemies of the nation. They have their views and we have ours. It is our task to persuade the majority of the people to accept our views.

Such persuasion must be by reason and argument and not by the use of violent methods of speech or action.

"We have to oppose in Parliament and in the country such actions of the Government or any other body, which we think to be wrong and explain our opposition to the people. As we have come in the past we will continue in the future to do so, in Parliamentary Debates, through mass rallies and publications.

"If we think that attempts are being made to do away with the liberties of the people it is our duty to alert them and with their help take steps to prevent these attempts from succeeding.

"For some time our Party has been concerned and so have many supporters of democratic freedoms, about attempts made to muzzle the press. We are opposed to some clauses in the Press Council Act. We also feel that the Bill which makes the control of Lake House publications a Government monopoly will violate a Fundamental Right that every citizen has under the Constitution, of Freedom of Publication. Any monopoly the Lake House owners now enjoy should have been eliminated by competition and by other publications, if necessary by the State or with State aid. This was one of the methods proposed in the United Front Manifesto of 1970.

"I feel that in the circumstances we should call upon all freedom-loving parties and people to show their disapproval of Government's action by

the refusal to read, purchase or sell these papers, or to advertise in them, when they become State-controlled publications.

"Our campaign will be non-violent and public. We will seek mass participation. I feel the masses, irrespective of political affiliations should be in the forefront of any movement to protect their freedoms. At every step we will keep the Government informed of such measures as we intend to take, and no secrecy will shroud any of our actions.

"A non-violent campaign is a public campaign and its leaders must be in the forefront of it. I therefore request the electoral leaders to take the lead in their electorates and follow the instructions that will be issued from time to time. There must be no violence in speech or action. Our endeavour should be to convince the people and ultimately the Government too, that the course they are following is inimical to the welfare of the people in a democratic country."

THE UNP, it will be seen, is adopting a cautious, careful, but determined position. There is not the slightest hint that the UNP, or even sections of it, will seek any alliance with rightwing sections of the SLFP. The statement emphasises that the UNP will wait patiently until the next General Elections and seek a mandate from the people to form a Government. This is to make clear that it has no plans to topple the government through extra-parliamentary methods

of a violent nature before the next General Elections. However, the statement warns its supporters that violence was in the air and that UNPers should not be provoked into violence by the actions of others.

Whilst waiting for the next general elections, the UNP will mobilise public support for its policies and oppose all actions of the Government calculated to undermine democracy in this country. This, it will do, by open campaigns of democratically conceived and legally-permissible civil disobedience. The first of such campaigns will be *vis a vis* the takeover of Lake House. The UNP will organise a boycott of all Lake House papers and publications should it become a government organisation. It will ask the public not to advertise in its pages.

IT WAS in this context that the curtain was raised for the Republic Day celebrations on May 22. On the eve of Republic Day, the PM issued a message to commemorate the first anniversary of the founding of the Republic. Here is the full text of the Prime Minister's message:

"Exactly one year ago today we threw the last vestiges of foreign domination and entered the road of progress. We were determined to usher in a new era of prosperity and happiness as befitting a free, independent and sovereign nation. We have laid down economic freedoms as our ultimate goal, for political freedom alone would be quite meaningless. The most relevant question that we should ask ourselves at this juncture

is whether we are satisfied with our achievements as a nation.

"Our most important achievement during the past one year has been the formulation of a Five Year Plan designed to step up our efforts towards the achievement of our economic objective. The Five Year Plan was designed to enlist the co-operation and united effort of all the people to give their motherland a happy and prosperous future. It points out in great detail that economic emancipation is within our grasp if we work hard and utilise our resources to the fullest. **It is my opinion that the only way in which we could reap the fullest benefits of this plan is by doing more work and talking less.**

"We have a glorious past about which any nation could be justifiably proud. But we cannot live for ever merely basking in the sunshine of our past glory. On the other hand, we should be stimulated and encouraged by our great past to build up a new nation whose greatness and prosperity would be worthy of our great ancestors. We have pledged ourselves to this noble task. Let us, therefore, make every effort and strain every nerve towards victory in the economic war which we are now engaged in.

"In this supreme effort, a major role and responsibility rests on our young people. It is no truism to state that a country's future hinges on its youth. It is impossible to win our economic struggle without their whole-hearted support and co-ope-

ration. In formulating the Five Year Plan we gave a special place to the role of our youth. We have taken steps towards directing youthful energy and enthusiasm for the benefit of the entire nation.

"The mainstay of our economic emancipation is agriculture. All our development plans depend in the last analysis on the success of our agricultural development programmes. Let me remind our farmers that on their patriotism, dedicated effort and hard work depends the progress of our motherland.

"Let us, therefore, on the occasion of the first anniversary of the inauguration of a Republic toil whole-heartedly and with dedication towards winning the economic war which alone would make our independence meaningful. Only then could we be proud of the free, independent and sovereign Republic that we have established."

The most significant part of this speech is the appeal to the "youth" to participate in the work of economic development. She has made this appeal before, but it gets a new urgency in this Republic Day message. It also has a new significance in the light of the *Janawegaya* line in regard to the youth, and there is not the slightest doubt that the weekly paper *Janawegaya* reflects the thinking in the highest echelons of the Establishment. The appeal to "farmers" seems almost incidental.

The youth of this country was "misled" in April 1971 and the political and tactical mis-

takes of the JVP had landed the youth in a *cul-de-sac*, a blind alley. The hardlining CP recently been at pains to offer leadership to this leaderless youth drifting aimlessly in the political firmament of the island, but tied to the UF this wing of the CP has not been able to meet the youth on home ground. Certain radical elements of the LSSP have also wanted to win this youth over, but with the pivotal position of the LSSP in the Government it has not been able to get very far in spite of the large number of youth who have been found sinecures in LSSP-run corporations and departments. The *Janawegaya* wants the SLFP to take the initiative to win over the youth and is willing to collaborate with UF partner LSSP to do this job. Many youths, wrongly suspected of involvement in insurgent activities, and detained for long periods, have now been rehabilitated with jobs in government institutions. But neither the SLFP nor the UF have made much headway in winning over this youth.

The UNP, however, has been able to talk to the youth as an Opposition Party and although the youth have built-in antipathies to the UNP on pseudo-ideological and emotional grounds, they are daily becoming less and less allergic to the UNP. The turnout of youth at the Dudley Senanayake's funeral was something about which serious note must be taken.

In this background, the PM's appeal to the youth to join the nation in work has special significance. In her message she has urged

people to talk less and work more and has stated that national unity was essential for expeditious economic development.

IN HER REPUBLIC DAY broadcast on May 22, the Prime Minister after detailing the historical background and the achievements of the Government since it came to power in May 1970, went on to say:

".....We bear no personal grudges against any individuals. Whatever measures we have so far implemented have not been taken with the intention of penalising anyone, but in order to achieve our objective of a State which is truly free, independent and sovereign.

"We have so far gone only part of the way. Slowly but surely we are marching forward in spite of great difficulties and obstacles that we have to contend with from time to time. *The effectiveness of our actions can be measured by the extent to which our enemies are reacting against us. The great importance and significance of our measures have been realised far more quickly by our enemies than by anyone else. If these hostile forces are planning to make things difficult for us, I wish to inform them that the Government and the people are prepared to deal with any situation that they may create.*

"Personally and as leader of the country. I want to express my deep appreciation and gratitude to those people who, by their readiness to face hardships courageously, have confirmed the

confidence they placed in me and my Government in 1970.

"At the end of the first year of our Republic, there is something important that I would like to say to the people of this country. That is, whatever the problems we have faced in the past three years, we have always emerged victorious. Even by small degrees, we are moving closer to our goal.

"I wish to emphasise the fact that the difficulties which our people are facing today are not those imposed by us willingly. As a responsible politician and as leader of this country I have no intention whatever of imposing any burdens on my people deliberately or wilfully. On the contrary whatever burdens have so far been placed on the people have been due to many unavoidable factors. These I have enumerated many times before, so that I do not intend to repeat myself on this occasion."

The Prime Minister then went on to explain how the task of changing the old system based on exploitation into a socialist democracy was difficult and that many shortcomings and problems were inevitable in the process. She answered the critics who, she said, had stated that the government's idea of socialism "was to lower the income levels of the richer classes thereby dragging them to the levels of poverty, whilst not doing anything to raise the living standards of the poor..." She said it was wrong to let the rich live off the fat of the land and stressed that "the correct course of action is through re-distribu-

tive and other means to bring the living standards of all people to a reasonable level from which it would rise gradually and systematically. A stable society can be maintained only through such action, and this is the course of action we are following.."

Then she went on to expound a political philosophy of change which is highly debatable and problematic, and she also took the opportunity to state: "our economic dependence will continue as long as we continue to need, expect and receive foreign aid.." With this last statement nobody will quarrel, and she concluded this part of her talk by re-iterating that "until economic independence is achieved, any political independence that we have gained will never really be felt by the masses.."

Then after assuring "the people" that in spite of all "difficulties we are facing today we are determined to justify the victory won for us by our people," she concluded: "At the sametime I must warn the people that they must be aware of the various hostile forces which are working against us. They must at all times act with caution to safeguard our program of work. It is the common practice of our enemies to spread false and vicious rumours about our government. Those who join in this kind of campaign must understand that they are wittingly or unwittingly joining hands with those who are working against socialism and social justice. Therefore let us not be deceived by these

forces. Let us, with firm conviction, resolve on this day to go forward together.

This was a threat and a warning, and if those who are threatened take up the challenge, the country will have no alternate but to go through a period of conflict and tension. Political observers say that the warning is to four groups: (a) the UNP which has ideas about "socialism and justice" different from that of the UF; (b) the TUF which thinks that UF socialism and justice does not include the Tamil-speaking minorities now reduced to second and third class civil status; (3) elements within the SLFP and the UF which do not agree with the course of action now being followed by the Government; and (4) the dissident youth who had been misled by the JVP in 1971 into an insurrection.

The dissident youth are not in a position to offer any challenge at the moment. Their leaders are under trial and there is great disillusionment among them whether the path of terrorism and insurrection they had adopted was the correct one. The groups within the UF and SLFP, which disagree with the present course of action followed by the Government, are inhibited by party rules and party loyalties, and if they show any opposition they might be dislodged from the positions of vantage they now occupy.

The challenge to the Government can come only from the UNP and the TUF. Both have different aims and objectives, but both have declared that they will not hesitate to

resort to legal, democratic, civil disobedience to achieve their goals.

It is obvious that the Prime Minister and the Government will not offer any quarter to the UNP or the TUF even on issues on which a conciliatory approach is possible. Many observers feel that economic development will be hampered unless some kind of consensus is established with the UNP and the TUF, but UF theoreticians intent on achieving a revolution through a class struggle cannot conceive of a conciliatory process to economic development.

THE PERSPECTIVES which therefore unfold themselves immediately after the first anniversary of the Republic are not conducive to achieve a stable and harmonious development of the economic resources of the country. The Government, unless other counsel prevail immediately will be challenged by the UNP and the TUF: the first in the Sirihala areas and the second in the Tamil North and East and the UP-Country Plantations. The dragon seeds sown today will bring a holocaust in a few years time.

Armed insurrection can easily be put down by fire-power and the might of the security services. But civil disobedience is something more difficult to contend with. And indiscriminate repression in such circumstances boomerangs.

And this is a time when the Government of Sri Lanka has been pushed to the defensive. Food is short and

Continued on page 17

CHRONICLE

May 8 - 13

TUESDAY, MAY 8: Members of the National State Assembly were paid an additional allowance from last month, making their total emoluments to Rs. 1000 a month: the additional allowance was being given to meet travelling and subsistence allowances, (the earlier Rs. 75 for travelling having been withdrawn and the subsidy to the MPs hostel Sravasti had also been withdrawn) The tea market registered a sharp drop at yesterday's auctions. Income tax payers within the category will receive Rs. 40 per ration book a year as a relief measure for the loss of free rice. The UNP was not able to elect a General Secretary at the meeting of the Working Committee yesterday. Owing to the scarcity of dried fish, it was likely to be made a co-op monopoly in order to bring it under the rationing scheme. The White House declined to comment officially on the accusation of Presidential complicity reported to have been made by former White House Counsel John Dean: in the meantime Nixon's crisis of confidence and credibility grew deeper. The Whitlam government in Australia has decided to abolish appeals to the Privy Council.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 9: The Ministry of Education has announced that there will be no transfer of teachers until January 1974 except on disciplinary grounds. The *Daily News* reported that the CWE had imported 1800 tons of good quality dried fish valued at Rs. 3.6 million from India, Pakistan, Singapore and the Middle East, and that this will be distributed through co-ops and that the average price would be around Rs. 2 a lb. The *Sun* reported that there was a sharp decline in the granting of cultivation loans after 1970. Two MPs, Habaraduwa's Prins Gunesekeera and Colombo Central's (First) Premadasa have declined to accept the extra Rs. 400 allowance granted to MPs and sent cheques back to the Speaker. A eight-member team from India arrived in Colombo today to have discussions about Indo-Sri Lanka trade and economic co-operation. The *Times of Ceylon* published a special edition in the evening reporting that its Board's Chairman Ranaweera and its Deputy Chairman Ediriweera had obtained an injunction against three new directors who had been

appointed by two other Directors of the Board, S. Viswanathan and N. E. Weerasooriya (with H. W. Amarasuriya protesting), on the ground that the meeting was held illegally without notice to the Chairman or the Deputy Chairman. The Lebanese army took over the international security throughout the country as Premier Hafez tendered his resignation. Israel staged a massive two-hour parade through the streets of Jerusalem on Monday (with 400 planes flying overhead) to mark the 25th anniversary of the country's independence. The White House flatly denied yesterday that President Nixon took any part in any cover up of the Watergate scandal or knew in advance of the bugging on the Democratic Party headquarters.

THURSDAY, MAY 10: According to the *Daily News*, workers in the public and private sectors will soon have an opportunity of following degree courses at the University if representations made by trade unions to the Ministry of Education and the Vice-Chancellor are accepted. A top ranking Chinese leader, Marshal Hsu Hsiang Chien, Vice Chairman of the State Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, was expected to come to Sri Lanka with a 21-member high level delegation to be present at the opening of the Bandaranaike Hall on May 17: the Chinese team was expected here on May 15. The Federal Party conference which was expected to be held at Kankasanturai this month has been postponed: no new date has yet been announced. The *Sun*, which had been insisting earlier that Premier Chou was coming for the opening of the Bandaranaike Hall, stated categorically that he was not coming, and that the Prime Minister had received a personal communication to that effect. The *Sun* also reported that the Government had temporarily shelved the proposal to open a mission in Bangladesh due to foreign exchange difficulties: for the same reason envoys had also not been sent to Malaysia, Indonesia, Iraq and certain other countries. The Palestinian commandos yesterday accused the Lebanese Army of violating the newly-agreed ceasefire. Egypt yesterday strongly supported the Palestinian commandos and warned of the serious consequences of action against the guerilla movement. There was a White House announcement that President will carry on for the full term regardless of Watergate.

FRIDAY, MAY 11: The *Daily News* reported that the Sinharajah Forest project may be abandoned or altered drastically, with the consent of the Canadian authorities, if the Government accepted a report of a high-powered committee headed by Mr. George Rajapakse, Minister of Fisheries. What has been achieved fell far short of the kind of economic co-operation that was feasible and desirable, Prof. H. A. de S. Gunasekera, Secretary to the Ministry of Planning and Employment, said at the opening of the plenary session on Indo-Sri Lanka economic co-operation yesterday. The *Daily News* reported that charges would soon be made against 36 persons taken into police custody in connection with subversive activities in the North. The *Daily Mirror* reported that there was an acute shortage of vital drugs in government hospitals and that patients had to buy them outside. The National Chamber of Industries stated that as a result of cuts in industrial allocations employers will soon be placed in a position where, due to no fault of their own, they could not continue employing their labour force. According to the *Sun*, fresh attempts were being made to persuade Mr. Pieter Keuneman to accept the Party's key post of General Secretary or become its President. The *Times of Ceylon* reported that the National State Assembly may be prorogued before its next meeting on May 28. President Nixon, in a speech yesterday, pledged to punish all found guilty in the Watergate affair; he had added: "I did not get where I am by ducking tough issues... the finest steel had to go through the hottest fire..." Mr. Elliot Richardson, Nixon's nominee as Attorney General, yesterday pledged to a State Committee that he would get to the bottom of the Watergate bugging scandal regardless of where it led. Mrs. Martha Mitchell, wife of the former US Attorney General, who was likely to be indicted, stated that "President Nixon should resign because of the Watergate bugging scandal to give credibility to the Republican Party and to the United States." She went on to say... "if my husband knew anything about the Watergate break-in, Mr. Nixon also knew about it." Carrying on a tradition going back nearly seven centuries, Pope Paul yesterday proclaimed 1975 a holy year for the world's 600 million Catholics—as they have been doing every quarter of a century since 1470. The Indian Government has released details

of a tripartite agreement signed in Sikkim providing for sweeping democratic reforms in the country that make the ruler of the tiny Himalayan kingdom a titular head of State.

SATURDAY, MAY 12: India was expected to increase its trade with Sri Lanka by about Rs. 30 million this year in a bid to reduce the trade gap between the two countries: this was one of the immediate steps that India hoped to take in order to improve economic ties between the two countries. The Working Committee of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party yesterday decided to ask the Government to take on lease uncultivated land throughout the island and distribute them through Divisional Revenue Officers to peasants who were prepared to cultivate such land. The names of the members of the State Distilleries Corporation Board was announced yesterday. The *Daily Mirror* reported that an application had been made by the three persons who claimed to have been appointed Directors of the *Times of Ceylon Ltd.* viz. V. L. Virasinghe, A. P. Vittachchi and N. Sivagnanasundaram, to dissolve the Interim Injunction which had been entered against them on the application of D. J. Ranaweera and P. A. Ediriweera, Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the *Times of Ceylon Ltd.* The *Daily Mirror* reported that there were only 9 Wesak pandals in the city of Colombo this year. Former US Attorney General John Mitchell and former Commerce Secretary Maurice Stans were indicted yesterday in connection with a secret 200,000 dollar contribution to President Nixon's re-election campaign fund: the Federal indictment charged that Mitchell and Stans accepted the secret contribution in exchange for efforts to influence an investigation of financier Robert Vesco by the Securities and Exchange Commission. President Nixon yesterday announced a major reshuffle of his political administration: many of the old aides were thrown out and new ones brought in. The US House of Representatives yesterday voted twice to halt the American bombing of Cambodia in its first-ever rejection of White House Indochina policies: this was a major policy defeat for the administration. NATO and Warsaw Pact countries broke 14 weeks of procedure deadlock yesterday and announced an agreement to start planning for a con-

ference on troop reductions in Central Europe. There was a general ceasefire throughout Lebanon as from yesterday. While on a visit to Tokyo, Singapore's Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew warned that the aggressive economic advance of Japanese companies into South-east Asia was making them unwelcomed.

SUNDAY, MAY 13: The *Observer* reported that there would be a further cut of 25% in newsprint from June 1st and that there would be no allocation for periodicals and magazines: that the Eastern Paper Mills Corporation through whom the newspapers make their purchases of newsprint had been instructed to allocate only 75% of the actual newsprint in reels used in 1972 for printing daily newspapers: no newsprint in reels could be allocated to newspaper groups in respect of magazines and periodicals published by them. The *Observer* reported that the stocks of dried fish available in Sri Lanka today were inadequate to maintain a satisfactory level of distribution. The *Observer* also reported that a massive fraud (where three hundredweights of sugar were smuggled out in each lorry) was detected at the Manning Market: this was done by manipulating the weighing machines: Minister Illangaratne himself had been present at one such detection. According to the *Times Weekender* the area of Indo-Ceylonese economic co-operation would be enlarged substantially in the next five years with accord being reached on several projects at the three-days talks between Indian and Ceylonese economic experts which ended yesterday. The *Times Weekender* also had a hair-raising sensational headline on the frontpage (in pink ink) about a coup which was being planned by certain businessmen in Colombo directed against the Government's Five Year Plan and its progressive socialist measures. According to the *Weekend*, Sri Lanka's fisheries pact with the Soviet Union "has gone on the rocks" because the prices demanded by the USSR were considered as too high: the four-member Soviet fisheries delegation which was in the island since April 20 had left last night with

no agreement because of a deadlock over the question of prices. According to the *Weekender* Trincomalee was to be out of bounds for all foreign warships. Some 40 army and air force officers and civilians have been arrested in Pakistan since March 30 for conspiring to seize power: the coup, it is alleged by the Defence Ministry, was scheduled for a date between April 11 and 21. President Nixon will hold a summit meeting with Soviet Party chief Leonid Brezhnev in Washington between June 18 and 26: many think that this would serve to distract attention from the Watergate affair. The charges against Daniel Ellsberg and another in respect of leaking the Pentagon papers were dismissed yesterday by Judge Byrne in Los Angeles on the ground that revelations of White House-ordered bugging and wire-tapping of the defendants made his action essential: during the course of the trial it was shown that Ellsberg himself was the target of a burglary ordered by White House to get evidence against him—another Watergate.

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INTERNATIONAL-AFFAIRS

BY ARIEL

* SKYLAB * NIXON * THE PACIFIC REGION

SKYLAB is in orbit, but things did not go according to plan. But with Yankee ingenuity a programme has been conceived to repair the damage to *Skylab* so that the original project can be carried out. And while these notes are being written a crew of three are on *Skylab* hoping to do the job which will make *Skylab* fully operative once again.

What is *Skylab*?

Skylab is America's first space station. It is a scientific research center in earth orbit, and represents man's most massive effort to date to exploit space for benefits on earth. As spacious as a small three-bedroom home, *Skylab* contains comfortable living and working quarters for a crew of three. Some observers have described *Skylab* as "a house in the sky."

Skylab is 82.2 feet long and 22 feet wide at its widest point. Its habitable interior space encompasses 11,500 cubic feet. *Skylab* weighs 196,000 pounds—nearly 100 tons. Two wing-like solar panels (which convert sunlight into electricity) measure 28 by 30 feet each on *Skylab*'s sides. Another set of four panels having the shape of a windmill extends from *Skylab*'s sun telescope 98 feet from tip to tip.

Fifty-eight research instruments aboard *Skylab* will be used for 270 separate scientific investigations. The data will be analyzed by 202 principal investigators and 424 coinvestigators from 21 nations. Of these experiments, 146 pertain to observations of earth resources from space, 44 experiments pertain to investigations of the sun, 24 to other astronomical objects, 26 experiments are medical or on other aspects of the life sciences, 17 deal with material processing and manufacturing in weightlessness, and nine involve evaluation and development of manned systems for space flight, and four are classified as "miscellaneous." SKYLAB was to orbit the earth at an altitude of 270 miles once about every 93 minutes—thus completing nearly 15 and one-half revolutions around the earth each day.

Skylab was to remain in operation in this nearly circular orbit for nearly eight months. During that time, three crews of three astronauts each will live and work in *Skylab*—the first crew for up to 28 days, the other crews for up to 56 days each. Between crew visits, a few of *Skylab*'s research instruments can be operated

by radio command from earth.

The planned schedule for *Skylab* was as follows:

Skylab was launched into orbit unoccupied at 1730 GMT, May 14, 1973, at Cape Kennedy, Florida. The first crew was to be launched at 1700 GMT, May 15 at Cape Kennedy, and is to catch up with *Skylab* that same day. The crew will return to earth on June 12, splashing down in the Pacific Ocean 500 to 700 miles southwest of San Diego, California, at 1745 GMT. The second crew was to be launched at 0700 GMT, August 8, and return to earth with a splashdown at 2030 GMT, October 3 in the same area as the first crew. The third crew will be launched at 1800 GMT, November 9, and splash down at 2400 GMT, January 4, 1974, in the Pacific Ocean near Hawaii.

UNFORTUNATELY, information automatically arriving from *Skylab* after it went into orbit indicated that its wing-like array of solar panels had not unfolded properly. These panels convert sunlight into electricity and the array is the major power supply for the space station and its complement of scientific research instruments.

Because of this, the space crew who should join the space station on May 15 postponed their departure while the Space Centre at Houston planned out the next step. The first crew, Conrad, Kerwin and Weitz was therefore sent into space on May 25 and their Apollo craft successfully docked into *Skylab*.

This crew are expected to fix a sunshade to the sunward side of the craft so as to keep its temperature within comfortable levels for habitation. The launching of the first crew was postponed twice to give the astronauts time to practice and train for their space walk during which they will install the sail-like sun protection. The extra time was also needed to allow engineers to assemble and adapt tools the astronauts will require for their unprecedented task.

Another set of solar panels designed to supply the craft's eight large telescopes with electricity had unfolded properly and some of this power could be diverted to the station's other needs. It is hoped that even the stubborn panels could be made to swing out.

At the time of writing, there is no news about what the crew had done to repair the damage. But it is known that no damage had occurred to the scientific instruments and supplies and equipment. No adverse effects are reported to *Skylab's* food stores which are sufficient for three men for at least the 140 days during which *Skylab* will be occupied. The heat problem had arisen shortly after *Skylab's* launch when a shield designed to protect the station from impacts on possible penetration by space debris failed to attach itself, probably because of damage from vibration during lift-off. The shield's reflective surface was expected to keep the living quarters of the station from being hit by direct sunlight.

According to competent observers, *Skylab*, similar to the Soviet *Salyut* was the major project of the US space programme for 1973 and will be the first large-scale attempt to determine systematically what uses man can and cannot make of space in the foreseeable future. In the words of Walter Froehlich who writes regularly about space projects; "It is history's first manned mission most entirely devoted to the extraction of knowledge from space that might open new approaches to solutions of mankind's most pressing problems. Orbiting the earth once every 93 minutes at an altitude of 270 miles, astronauts inside *Skylab* will look down to study the earth, look up to investigate the sun, look outward to examine the universe, and look inside their spacecraft to appraise their own physical condition while working over long periods in weightlessness. They will check their psychological fitness during their long stay in strange surroundings. They will test how well the special furnishings in *Skylab* meet their normal body needs and provide them with comforts and conveniences. They will mix and process metals and chemicals to discover whether it might be possible to produce new kinds of alloys and medicines in weightlessness." WHILE *Skylab* is amazing the world with the skill, versatility and flexibility of American space technology, in the United States itself President Richard Nixon was in trouble. The *Newsweek*, 14/5, had a scintillating cover story CAN HE STAY AFLOAT? In

its issue of 21/5, *Newsweek* headlined THE MESS GOES ON. The magazine *Time*, 14/5, devoted its cover story to the problem of HOW MUCH DID HE KNOW? and *Time* on 21/5 had excellent reportage under the heading THE INQUEST BEGINS. Nixon's troubles were many fold. Ellsberg and the Pentagon Paper's accused had been discharged and the charges against them irrevocably dismissed by a superior court of the US. They were acquitted mainly because the White House had resorted to illegal actions to find evidence to convict Ellsberg and his co-accused.

It will be a long time before the whole truth will be known, but the *Newsweek*, 14/5, had an excellent piece under the headline: HOW THE WORLD LOOKS AT WATERGATE. It reported: "It was a cloudy, complicated story, and if Americans had trouble understanding Watergate at first, the rest of the world hardly even tried. But with the orgy of lurid disclosures, the housecleaning at the White House and the prospect of even more bizarre twists to come, Washington's allies and adversaries suddenly awakened to the potential global implications of the scandal. Sensational headlines splashed across front pages of papers from Hongkong to Hamburg...

The reaction came in a Babel of discordant voices. But as might be expected, much of the speculation centered on the question of just how much Richard Nixon was personally involved in the Watergate affair

and its cover-up. In many cases the judgement was harsh. Other observers were more charitable. And for the record, most governments would say that as far as they were concerned, Watergate was an American domestic matter. A number of foreign observers thought the affair demonstrated the strength of American democracy. They applauded a system in which independent courts and press and legislature had the power to expose a scandal touching the highest office in the land. Oddly enough, the gentlest reaction came from capitals that would have had a propaganda field day with the scandal a short time ago. While playing up Communist Party chief Leonid Brezhnev's trip to Washington next month—and taking an extraordinarily friendly line towards America—the Soviet press all but ignored Watergate. Peking, too, found its options limited, and the Chinese were keeping a rigid news blackout on the scandal

PRESIDENT NIXON is also in trouble with the Congress with the continued bombing in Cambodia. Kissinger and Le Duc Tho have opened talks in Paris to salvage the ceasefire, but Kissinger's position has been weakened by the US Congress refusing to vote any funds for the bombing of Cambodia, and though White House has declared that it will use other contingency funds for the purpose, Congressional disapproval is ominous. There is however, a great deal of disappointment throughout the world that after the signing of the

Paris Peace Agreement on January 27, the fighting has not ended in Vietnam and in Cambodia. American troops have been withdrawn and though this created the perspectives for a real normalisation of the situation in the region where fighting continues. Hanoi and Saigon have not been able to come to terms and this has led to an intensification of the American bombing of Cambodia.

Hanoi alleges that Saigon obstructs the real implementation of the Agreement whilst Saigon claims that the real culprit was Hanoi. The current talks in Paris should help to untangle the mess. Hopes are also entertained in many quarters that the simultaneous establishment of "laison missions" in Peking and Washington, which is practically tantamount to the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and the USA would lead, sooner or later, to the elimination of the "Taiwan problem", but even sooner that it would contribute to peace in Vietnam and the normalisation of the situation in Asia.

But normalisation of the situation in Asia does not seem an immediate prospect. The difficult and peculiar triangular tie-up between Peking, Washington and Tokyo baffles many. The agreements concluded between the three countries lead to complex situation that an analysis-in-depth of their relationships reveal interesting potentialities and the most dangerous options, especially in the light of the US intention to withdraw from the whole of Asia. The Prime

Minister of Singapore, Lee Kuan Yew, expressed grave fears about Japan's intentions vis a vis Southeast Asia whilst on a visit to Tokyo, whilst other countries in East and Southeast Asia seem to live in trepidation of China.

And, as for China, the Vietnam Agreement frees her to some extent from the heavy burden of the vast and comprehensive aid she had given to the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and to the Republic of South Vietnam (viet Cong) This will now enable her to concentrate all efforts on accelerated building up of its own military-industrial complex including its nuclear missile potential which will offer an immediate threat, not only to China's proclaimed enemies like the USSR and India, but also to countries like Japan and the United States (remember the paper tiger of US imperialism.)

In this connection observers have pointed out that Mao Tse-tung had declared while addressing a Vietnamese delegation recently that once the Vietnam Agreement was signed their "brothers" in Vietnam would have to lean more on their "own forces" and demand that the USA gives them "adequate material support" as compensation for the damage caused to Vietnam by the aggression. Cynically, the observers pointed out that Mao Tse-Tung did not dwell upon the question on why China has now given up its demand for reparations from Japan for damage done to China when Japan had attacked and occupied China over 50 years,

IN THIS GAME of chess and power politics, it has been noted that the normalisation of relations between China and Japan would enable both countries to jointly oust the USA from Asia and carry into effect what Premier Chou told Tanaka, in words not very different from Chiang Kai-shek's, that *Asia should be for Asians*. Chou would have naturally taken into consideration the presently troubled relations between Japan and the USA. China's rapprochement with the USA will also enable Peking to negate Japan's ambitions in Asia.

But China, on the other hand, wants both Japan and the USA to help her acquire technological know-how in scientific, industrial and economic affairs. It is only with their help that China can hope to "leap forward" into becoming an advanced and powerful nuclear state within a short time. The US Joint Chief of Staff, Admiral Maurer, recently stated that by 1975-76, China will be able to produce long-range missiles which would be able to reach "practically all major targets" in the United States. This statement has caused apprehensions and fears in many Western countries, and it is with deep interest that students of politics are watching the events which are unfolding themselves in the Pacific region.

In Europe, Soviet boss Brezhnev has concluded his round of talks with Brandt

on his recent visit to West Germany. Before he went there he had visited the GDR and Poland. And before Brezhnev's visit to Bonn, the FRG had virtually recognised the GDR as a sovereign and independent state. The Brezhnev visit brings to an end the state of war which had existed between Germany and the Soviet Union ever since 1941. Brezhnev is due to visit the USA on June 18 and this will provide an opportunity to discuss and analyse in a subsequent article the mechanics of Soviet diplomacy in what may now be termed Brezhnevian era.

(Continued from page 10)

the prices are high. Milk foods have doubled in price. Textiles have become virtually unobtainable and even what can be got costs a lot of money.

It is certainly not the most propitious time for any Government to challenge anybody for a fight. It will be far better for a Government to win over one's enemies and opponents rather than invite them to fight—even if the Government has every hope of crushing them out of existence.

The lessons of history do not seem to have any meaning for many people. And there seem to be many such people in high places in the state of Sri Lanka.

OPEN-AIR MUSEUM OF INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

The largest environmental museum in Western Europe has just been opened in Britain. It is about 30 miles west of Birmingham, along a stretch of the river Severn known as the Ironbridge Gorge. Here are preserved, on their original sites, some of the machines which started Britain's Industrial Revolution. Visitors can see the first iron-smelting furnace in the world to be heated by coal, instead of charcoal—Abraham Darby built it at Coalbrookdale, on the Severn, in 1709. One of the Wonders of the World, it was called in its day. There are also memories of other British industrial "firsts" created near Ironbridge: the first iron rails; the first iron boat, launched on the Severn; the first railway locomotive, built by Trevithick at Coalbrookdale in 1802; and the first iron canal aqueduct by the famous canal-builder, Thomas Telford. The actual bridge still exists. The "Iron Bridge" gave the gorge its present name. Factories, furnaces, engines, machines, houses—these will all be their own monuments, in their original environments. There has been an appeal by the organisers for £1 million. More than half that sum has been raised already. Without it, these relics of Britain's pioneering industrial inventiveness would soon have been destroyed by modern development. The Ironbridge Museum, although not then officially opened, attracted 40,000 visitors last year. This year, the forecast is for 100,000.

Three Years of United Front Government: A Balance Sheet

May 31st 1973, marked the conclusion of three years of the present SLFP-LSSP-CP United Front Government following the landslide victory gained by the United Front at the elections held four days earlier.

Though nearly a full year of the Government's time and energies were wasted in defeating the armed insurrection of 1971 and thereafter overcoming the colossal damage to the economy resulting from that rebellion, it is a good time now to examine the credits and debits of the Government's record and see how its performance has matched the promises of 1970.

PERHAPS the Government's greatest performance was the enactment of the new constitution which, by doing away with the last ties that derogated from our sovereignty, substantially completed our political independence. It has successfully fulfilled its election promise to operate a new constitution which proclaims the new Republic of Sri Lanka pledged to realise the objective of a socialist democracy and secure the fundamental rights and freedoms of all citizens.

The Government has also fulfilled in full the promises relating to external affairs—extending diplomatic recognition to the GDR, DRV,

DPRK and the PRG of the RSV, severing diplomatic relations with Israel and winding up "all subversive imperialist agencies which operate in Ceylon."

One of the chief election promises of the United Front was to "restore the measure of rice that the UNP Government cut from the rice ration." This pledge too it has fulfilled. But the price of this restored measure has been hiked twice, and tax-payers have been deprived of free rice altogether.

The UF Government can also take credit for banning the import of certain subsidiary foodstuffs like chillies, thereby giving an impetus to local production.

FULFILLING more pledges in their election manifesto, the UF Government has extended trade union rights for workers, granted full political rights for public sector employees, given trade union officials the right to enter plantations for trade union activities, prevented owners of plantations from resorting to the criminal law to eject dismissed employees, and restored to their former jobs many thousands of workers who were dismissed for trade union or political activities.

The UF has fulfilled its pledge to set up a state trading corporation to handle all imports and inaugurated its

own shipping service to loosen the stranglehold over us by foreign shippers. It has also expanded the sphere of the public sector by the take-over of the business of bunkering, nationalising graphite mines and the B.C.C. which had a near-monopoly in the coconut oil industry, and taking over a few foreign estates to be run by the Plantations Corporation.

The promises relating to housing, pledging the "development of housing estates for middle and lower income groups", new laws regarding rent control, housing loans etc, may also be said to have been fairly fully fulfilled. The Government has even gone beyond the promises contained in the manifesto by placing a ceiling on house property. This will enable a large number of tenants to own the houses they live in.

THERE ARE also a number of other promises which the Government has redeemed by setting up certain institutions it promised. But it is very doubtful whether it has achieved the purpose for which they were established. Thus, the Government has set up Employees' Councils, Advisory Committees and Janata Committees as promised in the election manifesto—probably in the fond hope that "every cook must learn to run the state." But have these new institutions made "the administration more responsive to the needs of the country and the wishes of the people", do they "help to associate the people with the work of formulating and implementing national econo-

mic plans" or ended the old, bureaucratic kachcheri system.

Few will contend that the Government has succeeded in the latter aims. And to that extent, despite the fulfilment of a part of the promises relating to the administration, it would be clear that it has failed in the major aim of achieving the stated objective. Under this category of half-fulfilled promises also comes the promises to make the Public Services serve as real instruments of service to the people and, in particular, the pledge to reform the Police and the armed services.

SIMILARLY, though the Land Reform Act is now law (though such a radical change was not even promised in the election manifesto), the Government has yet to fulfil its pledges to make food production "a really gainful occupation for the peasant", "redeem rural indebtedness", "develop land holdings", "consolidate fragmented holdings", "relieve the acute landlessness", etc. etc.

So are the promises regarding fisheries (to develop it as a "major industry with a view to making Ceylon self-sufficient in fish"), industrialisation ("industrialisation of the country will be carried forward with the utmost vigour") and cooperatives (to make them "play a major role in the economy of the country especially in rural development").

Finally, there are many election pledges that the Government has not yet fulfilled even partially or even laid the base for a

take-off point towards their solution. These relate mainly to the development of the Island's economy, solution of the problem of unemployment and the perennial problem of the cost of living.

THE UNITED FRONT election manifesto promised: "We shall seek to develop all branches of the economy at a rapid rate and according to a National Plan in order to lay the foundation for a further advance towards a socialist society." But, far from developing all branches at a rapid rate, many branches are not developing at all, or developing in the wrong direction.

Effective measures to increase the rate of production, to raise productivity, the standards of managerial efficiency, and root out all forms of corruption and political favouritism still remain to be taken.

"We intend to implement a programme of short-term and long-term measures in order to see that the energies and talents of our young people, which are now wasted in unemployment, are used for the benefit of the country and themselves."

"We shall also undertake a programme of public works covering the repair and maintenance of village tanks and the building of houses and roads that will give the unemployed youth an opportunity to serve the country and better themselves."

These were two admirable election promises in the UF manifesto which made unemployed youth vote in their

thousands against the former UNP Government. But they still remain to be translated into meaningful action.

"We shall seek to make life less expensive for the ordinary citizen. Goods in everyday use will be made available at reasonable rates. We shall enlist the aid of the people and their organisations in the fight against profiteering and hoarding."

This promise remains wholly unfulfilled.

Life is certainly not less expensive today than three years ago. The prices of essential goods are far from reasonable today. And people are still the helpless victims of, not active fighters against, blackmarketeers and profiteers.

Unless at least a few, preliminary bold steps are taken towards fulfilling this point in the United Front's election manifesto, the cooks, far from running the state, will not be in a position to run even their kitchens. And, as Mr. Dudley Senanayake confessed in 1970, the fate of governments is often decided in the kitchens.

For News Behind
the News

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NIGHTMARES

Coming Home – To More Dirty Linen

BY CANAX

I'VE HAD this recurring nightmare ever since the *Times* decided to had a sacred and national duty to first expose its own dirty linen to the public and only then, space permitting, peddle yesterday's hot news in cold print today. Given the type of discerning public whose collective eye the *Times* reportedly catches, it should come as no surprise that the switch in emphasis was considered commendable. It has even been whispered that having such valuable dirty linen without recognising its value for so long doesn't speak too highly of a newspaper's news-sense.

If I may retail some dirty old guesses of my own, it is possible the *Times* got livid about the way Nixon was hogging the limelight both here and abroad with his schoolboyish Watergate prank and decided it was time to show the world it could hold its own as far as sordid scandals go, even if it had to kill itself in the process. Or, as another guess of mine has it, the *Times* decided to win over its vast reading public for all time (and then some?) by showing beyond a reasonable doubt, as my lawyer would put it, that it was not above practising what it editorially preached against, for the ever-present risk any national newspaper runs is of having its sermonizing taken seriously. (Other guesses will be retailed only on

written request, if accompanied by a stamped s.a.e.)

MY NIGHTMARE, as I was about to say way up and long ago, is that I'll wake up one of these mornings to discover my ghastly dream staring me in the face as a frightening reality. Family paper that it is, the *Times* may have, unwittingly—as, again, my legal eagle would phrase it with careful aforethought—started something that my family, always great followers of Fashion, may be sorely tempted to emulate. They call it the ODL vogue (for Own Dirty Linen, not to be confused with the OGL craze which also brought in its wake quite a bit of other people's DL, if you remember, and was much in evidence in another time if not another place.)

One of the things I keep sweating over in my dreams is a letter in my daughter's hand addressed to the Commissioner of Inland Revenue, which goes something like this:

Dear Sir,

I am given to understand that you encourage people to be patriotic and tip you off about others attempting to cheat the country out of the money that is its due. I happen to have some very good tips for you, all of them concerning my father and the way he's been diddling you out of your share. I would

not normally do this, but last week he announced a further—and drastic—cut in my weekly pocket money, from 50 cents to 25, on the grounds that he couldn't make ends meet. I can't imagine him attempting such an impossible task when even the Government has stopped trying. I don't think he is, really, and is only using that as an excuse to con me out of the pittance he gives.

From the little arithmetic I have so far mastered at school I figure that the 50 cents he gave me each week amounted to Rs. 2/- a month, and Rs. 24/- a year. I'm reliably informed, though, that he has been bold enough over the years to claim an annual tax relief, on my account, of something like Rs. 300/-, and which you have been indulgent enough to let him have! I promise you—cross my heart, so you can believe me—50 cents is all I ever got per week. If his claim were true, why I'd have got the princessly sum of Rs. 6.25 a week—a figure which by itself is staggering, and a complete fib. If you really want to know where all that money went, drop in home and count the emptions, both black and white.

I suggest you ask him direct just how much he's been giving me as my weekly allowance, indicating that you propose to cross-check his answer with me. That'll teach him to tell the truth.

An even more serious matter concerns my piggy-bank Provident Fund, set up by me with my own approval, to be managed by me for my

own benefit, and the money to be invested by me at my own discretion. I also hear there is a law compelling parents to make regular contributions to such a Fund, the minimums being stipulated. If that is so, then my father has really got himself in a spot for not only has he not given a cent, but in fact has swiped every last cent there was in it.

I discovered too late that he has been dipping his hand into my P.F. without my prior knowledge or approval mostly because, as he later explained, he had no change to get himself some cigarettes. Now, if allowed to use my own discretion, tobacco would never be my idea of a safe investment with a guaranteed return—not counting lung cancer, of course. Needless to say, my precious capital seems to have gone up in smoke, never to return.

I am told that by doing all this my father has fallen foul of the law on many counts. Apart from the obvious ones of deception and fraud, I gather that any moneys he has taken unto himself from my Fund would really constitute a Capital Gain, requiring full disclosure and carrying a heavy tax. Hence it would prove useful to have his tax return re-checked, for I'm quite certain he has kept you in the dark about this additional and, in my view, ill-gotten gains.

Having told you all this, I can only hope that, while getting for yourself the moneys that are rightly yours, you will ensure I get the moneys that are rightly mine. I refer, of course,

not only to the huge sum of Rs. 7.98 that should have been in my P.F. at last count, but also to the generous rewards I'm told you offer informants. More than money, what I'd really like is a gift voucher for one year's daily supply of popsicles. As you know, 25 cents a week won't take me very far.

Yours in Hope,
"Child Victim"

ALSO IN MY NIGHT-MARE is another letter, again from my daughter, to the Family Planning Association, with copy to the Ministry of Planning (Ad Hoc), which goes:

Dear Sir,

Normally a child is meant to be seen and not heard—a quaint notion if ever there was one and which, you will agree, has no place in modern Sri Lanka. So, child though I am, I believe it is both my duty and privilege to take you into my confidence and lay all the facts before you so that you can form your own judgement, as indeed you are entitled to do. (If, by chance, you are not, or are incapable of doing so, please pass this on to your child—for information and necessary action.)

We kids owe a lot to our parents, including I suppose our very existence, accidental though that often has been. Parents, however, owe a lot more to their country, having been chosen the sole trustees for its youth. I hope you will pardon me for saying that my parents have been acting lately like a pair of silly, irresponsible grown-ups. They are, in short, up

to no good, and I will tell you how in a moment.

I believe that children, and especially a group of innocents like us, must be managed as a trust for the nation. Sad to say, my parents are doing everything possible to betray that sacred trust. For one thing, they display a disgusting and dangerous colonial mentality in my very presence, oblivious of how impressionable I am at this stage of my life. They keep yearning for something they call the Good Old Days, and sound quite bitter at not being able to send me abroad for my education, not stopping for one moment to consider my own objective view on the matter—that I have no desire to become Prime Minister, ever, or even the wife of one.

What doubtless interests you, though, is not what my parents say, but what they do. It is with a heavy heart that I say my parents are, even as I write, indulging in a lot of anti-national activity under cover of darkness, right in our own home. (In the bedroom, really, in case you'd like to know the precise location for launching a surprise raid.)

What made me first suspect my parents of such traitorous intent was the cunning way they tried to make me also an accomplice in their dark and sinister plans with seemingly innocent questions like, "You like to have a little baby brother to play with no"? or my mater responding to that question from pater with, "no, no, she likes a little sister!" All this,

mind you, despite my continued and studied silence on the subject, prompted largely by the sobering knowledge that I already have two little brothers and one little sister, and all little pests regardless of gender. That my parents can so easily forget how many kids they have amply illustrates the extent of their irresponsibility.

If prompt action is not taken, I'm afraid I'm going to have a little brother or sister I don't want, and the country's going to have an extra mouth it can't feed.

I therefore earnestly and sincerely hope you will take immediate steps to put an end to such disruptive activity in thought, word and deed, as otherwise I fear my parents' manoeuvres will surely wreck our Five-Year Plan and in the process ruin my future — or what little is left of it.

Yours sincerely,
Angel with a Dirty Face.

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JOINT INDO—SOVIET EXPERIMENTS

Forecasting drought a season ahead

BY THE END of the decade meteorologists would be able to forecast droughts "a month or even a season ahead." Director General of Observatories Dr. P. Koteswaram stated in a press interview recently.

Forecasts up to five days were available at present but longterm forecasts would become possible after the completion of the "monsoon experiment" in 1973 and another international experiment in 1976, Dr. Koteswaram said. These experiments were designed to study the physical causes for the development of the "Asian summer monsoon" he told participants at the National Symposium on "agricultural development."

Dr. Koteswaram said a number of research ships and aircraft of India and the Soviet Union would take observations from 50 metres below the surface of Arabian Sea to 30 kilometres above every day during the 1973 monsoon. This would be followed by another experiment in 1976 to be sponsored jointly by the World Meteorological Organisation and the International Council of Scientific unions, he said.

A SOVIET SATELLITE to be launched over the Equator in 1975 would keep a continuous watch over the development of monsoons and depressions over Asia and the Indian Ocean and send frequent pictures of relevant observations to earth based stations, he added.

With the aid of this massive international effort, drought

forecasts could be made "a season ahead" Dr. Koteswaram said. A major breakthrough in providing drought relief to farmers could be achieved through artificial rain making, he claimed.

Dr Koteswaram said the Government had agreed to set up an autonomous organisation for weather modification in the country. It was also possible to suppress the menacing hail by firing into the cloud small rockets containing "seeding material", Dr Koteswaram observed.

Once the technology of weather modification is well developed it would become possible to protect the country from droughts like the one witnessed last year, Dr Koteswaram said.

According to Dr Koteswaram the 1972 monsoon was the worst since the turn of the century particularly for Maharashtra, "which never before suffered from a drought of this magnitude."

He said the monsoon rainfall over the Konkan area was in deficit by 32 per cent. The deficit was 44 per cent for central Maharashtra, 55 per cent for Marathwada and 37 per cent for Vidarbha.

The monsoon of 1972 was characterised by a delayed onset, a three-week long break from the middle of July to the first week of August and an unusually early withdrawal, he explained. "This led to the widespread drought conditions over the country." Dr Koteswaram, said.

brother of an official close to a VVIP also with the Corporation at that time? [X]

IS IT TRUE?

Sherlock Holmes

* TIMES * GEM WORLD

IS IT NOT TRUE that the Ranaweera-Ediriweera section of the *Times* management have won the first round in the legal tussle about its future? That the Court has rightly wanted the first application to be dealt with before attempts to by-pass the application are entertained? That one of the bigwig VIREs in the NSO Mendis setup has suddenly left for a holiday to Denmark? That the *Times* made a special point of announcing the departure of P. Navaratnarajah Q.C.? That although this may be a routine holiday planned a long time ago, idle tongues are busy spinning stories about what all this means? That in the meantime there are persons inside the *Times* who are getting "panicky" about the dirty linen being "aired" or "washed" in the columns of the *Times*? That any reference to such dirty linen was making them so jumpy that they think nothing of making nuisance telephone calls to intimidate some people into silence by

the use of filthy obscene language? That Watergating will not take anyone anywhere these days?

* * *

IS IT NOT TRUE that there is a great deal of speculation about some of the goings-on in the gem world? That the *Sun* has been going hammer and tongs about an attempt to hush up a scandal? That according to the *Sun*, 2/5/73, a fresh probe has been ordered into the gem smuggling which was uncovered when a State Gem Corporation official was found in a Colombo jewellery shop during a Customs raid not long ago? That the *Sun* reliably understands that the fresh probe has been ordered as it is believed that attempts had been made to hush up the episode and save some of the persons involved in the racket? That some very intriguing questions are being asked in this connection: was the Gem Corporation official who was in the jewellery shop at the time of the raid in the pay of some city jewellers? what was the Corporation official doing in the jewellery shop at the time of the Customs raid? was the

That this affair had been unearthed when a tour leader had been nabbed at Katunayake attempting to take away foreign currency and some gems? That though the amount involved did not reach a phenomenally high figure, the tour leader according to the *Sun* had admitted the bank drafts and currency had been given to him by the jewellery shop which was raided and where the Corporation official was found? That the *Sun* claims that during the raid the Customs had found that the Corporation official had a cheque for Rs. 25,000, another cheque for Rs. 8,500 and a Cat's Eye worth Rs. 15,000? That further, according to the *Sun*, the Corporation employee "has admitted that the cheque had been issued by the jeweller for gems he had sold: that he bought and sold gems on a commission basis and that he had been temporarily residing in the jewellery shop?"

That it is strange that when this matter is referred to in VVIP political circles there is a hushed silence? That nobody seems willing to talk lest they tread on the corns of some VVVVIPs? That after Watergate it would be foolish for VVIPs to think that they can have immunity? That when great citadels have fallen in Washington, the little castles in the air in Sri Lanka cannot withstand even a small pushover?