

TRIBUNE

CEYLON NEWS REVIEW

50 Cts.

Vol. 18 No. 7

June 9, 1973

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BREZHNEV

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THE PRESS

R. S. P. &
QUESTIONS

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Tribunania

BREZHNEV

SOME of the articles we had anticipated would be published in last week's issue were held over for this issue. The Editor's *Rambling Notes* took more space than we had planned for and we had therefore to shut out many articles. *Shamba* and *Safari* were held over, so was the *Contemporary Notebook* by Agastya.

Brezhnev is on our cover this week. He went to West Germany last month and Basil Perera has written an article on the significance of the normalisation of the relations between the FRG and the USSR. This month, Brezhnev goes to the USA. The APN correspondent in the USA, G. Gerasimov, has written an enthusiastic piece about this forthcoming visit. He says that the visit has the approval of most Americans and that they regarded it as "an important landmark in the normalisation and the improvement of relations between the USA and the USSR." He went on to say:

"The papers report that the State Department is busy making reference and memorandum notes, in preparations for the summit meeting. It is also studying the possibilities of signing some more agreements, say, in the field of cooperation in agriculture, a comprehensive agreement on cultural

exchanges, or an agreement on civil air communications, etc.

"Among the first responses to the news of another Soviet-American meeting and the important "Nine days in June", I did not find a single one of a frankly negative nature. Apparently the opponents of the normalisation of Soviet-American relations prefer not to come out directly against the meeting and the talks. True, instead, they are trying to provide advice for the American side to be "firm", to "stick to the guns," and not to "make concessions." This tactic of surreptitious replacement of talks with confrontation are doomed to failure, inasmuch as the public and the administration do not support it.

"What will the June meeting bring? The overwhelming majority of Americans are expecting from it a good deal of benefit for the sake of peace and cooperation. In this respect I could make references to the opinions of many people, but I would like to quote a recent talk of mine which, as I see it, reflects the sentiments and the thoughts of those US quarters that consider that America's future is not in confrontation, but rather in cooperation with the USSR."

Gerasimov then sets out what Professor Shulman, Professor of Law at Columbia University had told him. The APN correspondent concluded the article with his own comment.

"M. Shulman Professor of State Law at the Columbia University, told me: I regard the forthcoming visit to our country of L.I. Brezhnev, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, as a positive step toward further detente in the relations between our two countries. I can see at least four spheres in which further progress is possible as a result of L. I. Brezhnev's visit, he went on. Firstly, there can be progress in arms cuts. Secondly, one can expect progress in trade and economic cooperation between our two countries. Many administrative problems can now be solved on

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the basis of the already acquired experience of the first steps in that sphere. From the viewpoint of a long-term improvement of Soviet-American relations, trade is the focal issue. Thirdly, the two sides can expand cooperation in other fields of which there are many. What comes first to my mind are the prospects of joint efforts in environmental protection. One can confidently predict that in the coming decades this problem will become ever more important, thereby creating an objective basis for cooperation in that sphere. Fourthly, one can mention the problem of containment in political contention within certain boundaries so as not to jeopardise world peace. For all these reasons, continued the professor, we in the USA welcome L. I. Brezhnev's visit to our country and hope that it will become a successful stage in the process of normalisation of relations between the USSR and the USA.

"Thus, the hopes which are being placed by the US public on L. I. Brezhnev's visit testify to substantial changes in the frame of mind of the Americans, when they come to think of their country's role in the world and of the irreversible processes connected with the policy of peaceful coexistence which is being persistently and energetically pursued by the Soviet Union."

The Newsweek and Time have been so busy with Watergate and the Brezhnev visit to Bonn that they do not refer in any detail to

the Brezhnev visit to the USA. But, the *Economist*, 26/5/73, devoted one of its main editorials to Brezhnev with the cover of that issue being a picture of Brezhnev and Brandt.

With its characteristic cynicism, the *Economist* wrote its editorial under the heading THE DOVE WITH A SHOPPING LIST with a second title in question form: *But Where Is the Evidence That Mr. Brezhnev Will Be Asked To Pay Any Real Price. In Terms Of Wider Human Freedom, For What He is Demanding?* The *Economist* stressed that Mr. Brezhnev wanted the detente with the West, primarily because he wanted a great deal from the advanced industrial nations like the USA, UK, West Germany, France and Japan. His "shopping list" according to the *Economist* was a big one with a fifty years span, and the British weekly insidiously raised the question whether this quest for technological assistance and credits should not be used by the West to open portholes into the Iron Curtain so that "dissenters" within the Soviet Union and other Eastern bloc countries could secure a little freedom to practise the kind of freedom which is permitted to intellectuals and unorthodox thinkers in the West. The Soviet Union and other socialist countries fear that such concessions to "capitalist concepts of freedom" would corrode the socialist state and open the way for capitalist intervention in and later capitalist invasion of socialist countries. For over

50 years a *cordon sanitaire*, visible and invisible, has been sustained by both sides to prevent ideas from penetrating from one side to the other. The wireless and the TV, with satellite communications, have made such barriers valueless.

Nevertheless the barriers exist. Whether the current detente will change this state of affairs is doubtful, but the *Economist* wishfully hopes that USSR's desire for better relations and trade with the West could be utilised to achieve something which the West had failed to do for over fifty years, first by actual military intervention and trade embargo, and later through the cold war and a selective trade embargo.

A few extracts from the *Economist* editorial make interesting reading: "There is



Founded 1954

A Journal of Ceylon and
World Affairs

JUNE 9, 1973

Vol. 18, No. 7

43, Dawson Street,
COLOMBO 2.

Telephone: 33172

nothing like knowing what you want to help you close your eyes to what you prefer not to see. Mr. Leonid Brezhnev, home from his visit to Germany, still has his sights firmly fixed on Washington. He must have a clear view of the Watergate action, but he seems determined to treat all that he sees with the kind of nonchalance that Nelson showed off Copenhagen.... While the Soviet leader was in Bonn, heavily guarded by a vast array of West German soldiers and police whose main anxiety, it appeared, was the possibility of some assault on him by local communists of the Maoist sort, two richly symbolic events occurred back in Moscow. Mr. David Rockefeller ceremoniously opened a new office for the Chase Manhattan Bank at No. 1 Karl Marx Avenue. And foreign journalists and diplomats applying for travel permits discovered that a complete ban had been newly placed on visits to an extensive region that apparently included the Baltic States, the Ukraine and southern Russia..Mr. Brezhnev has in fact accepted the reality of Russia's urgent need for western loans and development aid, and he is out to get all he can from the capitalist cornucopia. The agreements he has just signed in Bonn show that, in order to open the way for big deals with German big business, he is willing to listen to west Germany's argument that it is entitled to represent west Berlin in international negotiations, even though the form of

words he eventually signed is a long way from actually conceding it. No doubt he has it in mind to offer Mr. Nixon something in Washington, for similar purposes. But he does not feel any need to flesh out the bones of east-west detente in diplomacy and commerce with a corresponding amount of relaxation in either the military or the human sphere. Mr. Brezhnev's empire can absorb a lot of foreign capital, and even a number of closely watched foreign technicians and salesmen, without ceasing to be a hermit kingdom within whose walls a colossal military and policing apparatus imposes tight discipline and throttles the circulation of ideas and knowledge as well as of people.. Mr. Brezhnev's habitual cautiousness is one of the things that have helped him to make more headway in his dealings with the west than his predecessor, Nikita Khrushchev. Khrushchev took unusual risks both at home and abroad; neither his blustering at the west nor his attempts to woo it were particularly successful, and his moves in the direction of relaxation inside Russia alarmed the hard-faced men and precipitated his overthrow. Nevertheless, he gave his people some reason to hope that life inside the Soviet system was going to get freer. Mr. Brezhnev holds out no such hope. Yet he seems committed to a foreign policy line that is going to make it increasingly harder for him to justify keeping the screws tight at

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RAMBLING NOTES

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

* Milk Foods

* The Press

IT IS DIFFICULT to decide whether there is a revolt from within the Government against the Milk Board and the Minister of Agriculture, or whether it is only a strategic and tactical move to prevent the thunder being stolen by the daily papers and the UNP—when one reads the fulsome barrages fired by the *Janawegaya* and the *Nation* against the "government" over the milk foods' fiasco. These two weeklies reflect the views of the Establishment of the United Front, and it surprised many that both papers last week strongly condemned the bungling over the milk foods.

Dr. Sivali Ratwatte in a press statement on behalf of some organisation set the ball rolling by criticising the increase in the prices of the milk foods. The *Janawegaya* followed with a screaming headline and hard-hitting criticisms. But the line of radical left within the SLFP and the UF was admirably summed up by the *Nation* in its issue of June 1. Under the heading GOVT. SPILLS ITS MILK, a Special Correspondent stated:

"The Government put up a sorry show indeed over the question of prices of Milk Board products. Government

and United Front supporters could not believe their eyes reading the announcement in the newspapers that the price of Lakspray had been increased by almost 80 per cent in one fell sweep; the price of condensed milk by 80 per cent; and of pasteurised milk by 65 per cent.

"There was not a word of explanation or apology at first. It seemed that the Milk Board bureaucrats were telling the people they could take it or leave it! Only when public protests mounted and the enormity of the crime that had been committed against the people became obvious, did the bureaucrats hide their nakedness behind a Ministry of Agriculture communique shamefacedly lamenting that world market prices had gone up and that the Government had imposed FEECs on milk powder imports.

"Since then the Government has changed its mind and brought down the prices of Lakspray milk powder to 28 per cent above its former price, and of condensed milk to 40 per cent. But this does not obliterate the memory of what took place. Who can forget that a state institution, producing an essential and basic food like milk and milk products, dared to raise its prices overnight by 80 per cent without warning, apology or explanation?

"No such enormous price hike has been known to take place in day to day commerce in the twinkling of a moment. Only arrogant bureaucrats, ignorant of their

job, oblivious of popular needs and contemptuous of their obligations, could have committed a crime of this nature. If the Government endorsed the bureaucrats' decision, it is a grave condemnation of the Government itself. Isn't this what the people continually complain about: viz. that the Ministers themselves know little of what they are doing and permit themselves to be led by their noses by incompetent and unreliable bureaucrats?

"The Government has no right to talk of world price rises, increasing freight charges etc., so long as it is unable to ensure that the state corporations are run efficiently and the bureaucrats are held personally responsible for everything that happens in them. The Milk Board has been a public scandal, for several years. Its administration has been notorious for its corrupt, wasteful and inefficient ways for as many years. Under the last UNP Government, particularly the Milk Board has specialised in monuments to its own profligacy, e.g. in the Ambewela Farm. But what action has been taken to correct all this?

"Even now, in the face of all this criminal bungling of the Milk Board bureaucrats, the Government remains inert and paralysed. Why has the Chairman, at least, not been held responsible and his head made to roll? That is the least that could have happened."

The *Nation*, in its *Notes and Comments* column also

expounded its latest line on the milk Board. The piece is an essay why Ministers of the United Front go wrong. Three reasons are given as to why Ministers fail? The answer, according to the *Nation*, is —bureaucrats. And this admirable piece concluded with the following paragraph: "How long can such a state of affairs endure? Cannot the Ministers be the makers of policy, instead of leaving this to their bureaucrats? Cannot the bureaucrats be the implementers of policy who will be held responsible for success and failure alike? Cannot Government Corporations and Departments be regarded as 'key producers of wealth, rather than as providers of jobs for voters at future elections?'"

The *Nation* seems to be coming round to a view which the *Tribune* has held for a long time: that government departments, corporations, colonisation schemes and the like are run for political rather than economic reasons.

NOW THAT *Janawegaya* and the *Nation* have come out strongly against the Milk Board something is bound to happen. The Minister has appointed a high-powered Committee of persons not connected with his Ministry to probe the Milk Board. The Committee frankly does not inspire much confidence among knowledgeable people because there are officials on it who are the subject of talk —and even if they do not create a mini-Watergate immediately, they are bound to come up when the immuni-

ties which certain persons enjoy now disappear.

Governmental committees cannot replace a vigilant and investigative press. In this connection a passage from Dr. Johnson's *Observations on the Present State of Affairs*, written in the 1756, makes most pertinent reading. Though it was written over 200 years ago and in another country, it has not lost any of its force in this country in the year of the Lord 1973.

Here it is: "The time is now come in which every Englishman expects to be informed of the national affairs; and in which he has a right to have that expectation gratified. For, whatever may be urged by ministers, or those whom vanity or interest makes the followers of ministers, concerning the necessity of confidence in our governours, and the presumption of prying with profane eyes into the recesses of policy, it is evident that this reverence can be claimed only by counsels yet unexecuted, and projects suspended in deliberation. But when a design has ended in miscarriage or success, when every eye and every ear is witness to general discontent, or general satisfaction, it is then a proper time to disentangle confusion and illustrate obscurity; to shew by what causes every event was produced, and in what effects it is likely to terminate; to lay down with distinct particularity what rumour always huddles in general exclamation, or perplexes by indigested narratives; to shew whence happiness or clamamy is derived, and whence it

may be expected; and honestly to lay before the people what inquiry can gather of the past, and conjecture can estimate of the future."

While on the question of press freedom and the ethics of exposing scandal, we have to mention that the Editor of the *Daily News* has taken umbrage with us for some remarks we have made in this column regarding certain comments which had appeared in the *Miscellany* column by *Scribe* in the *Daily News* of May 5. We had said that the tenets of ethical journalism had been violated because of the unprovoked attack which had been launched on a foreign correspondent who was stationed in Colombo. We had said that the "attack was uncalled for" and we had used hard words to denounce the editor in question.

IT HAS been brought to our notice that the foreign correspondent had sent a despatch which was provocatively facetious, to say the least. This is what the relevant part of the despatch had stated: "...one of the leading Tamil dailies *Thinakaran* distributed impressive cabinet size photograph of Mrs. Gandhi along with today's issue stop Only its sister english morning *Daily News* was somewhat on modest key giving only a few paragraphs of airport reception stop The editor of this largest circulated english daily who is not known for his friendly feelings towards India had written yesterday very critical editorial to mark Mrs. Gandhi's arrival and had pro-

voked a wordy duel between the Moscow wing and Peking wing by publishing on 26/4 highly polemical article in central page by N. Shanmugadasan secretary of the Peking wing party attacking Indian expansionism and Soviet socialist imperialism stop.."

There is no doubt that it is not correct for an agency correspondent to stigmatise the political inhibitions of an editor in a spot news despatch. It is another matter if an analytical assessment is made and it must be admitted that the editor has a genuine grievance for being so characterised in a spot news despatch. In these circumstances, *Scribe* justly pointed out that while the PTI man was entitled to say that the editor of the CDN had no friendly feelings for India, it was not usual for agency men to express such opinions in their news despatches.

But this is not the issue. The PTI despatch refers to two matters to justify the comment: that the editor of the CDN "had provoked a wordy duel between the Moscow wing and Peking wing.." An examination of the relevant papers showed that:

(a) The CDN published an edited version of a letter by N. Shanmugadasan—as a letter to the editor on 26/4/73, the day before Mrs. Gandhi's arrival.

(b) On 27/4 the day of Mrs. Gandhi's arrival the, CDN on invitation published the main article on its leader page a contribution by Hector Abayawardhana.

(c) On the same day 27th, the CDN published on its front page a press statement by CP Moscow extending a warm welcome to Mrs. Gandhi—a press statement issued to all newspapers. Neither Mr. Abayawardhana nor the CP (M) statement made any reference to Shanmugasundaram's letter. There was no "wordy duel".

When one considers all these facts, there is no doubt that the editor of the CDN had every reason to be provoked, although we feel that he may have used more elegant terminology in chastising the PTI man. We can appreciate his indignation. We are sorry that we rushed in to charge the editor of the CDN of unethical journalism on this matter without examining all the relevant facts....

(Continued from page 3)

home on the ground that Russia is ringed by threatening foes."

Such is the British conservative view about Brezhnev's current policy of detente and co-operation with the capitalist west.

Soviet commentators and analysts in the camp of the socialist bloc view the detente from a totally different angle: for them it is capitalism which is cracking up and in this process of disintegration it was willing to meet the socialist bloc half way to live an uneasy truce of co-existence so that peaceful competition between the two systems would finally resolve the contradictions.

INTERNATIONAL-AFFAIRS BY ARIEL

INDIA, BRITAIN, UNITED STATES AND CHINA

INDIA seems to be having more than its fair share of troubles. Owing to one of the most devastating droughts in history, several states are in the grip of a famine which has no parallel in modern times. Natural disasters are hard to explain but human disasters baffle understanding. The third Indian Airlines plane crashed near Delhi killing 47 people including Cabinet Minister Mohan Kumaramangalam one of the inner council of the Indira Gandhi establishment. The controversy over the appointment of the new Chief Justice of India was disturbing enough but the strike on the Northern Railways compelled the Government to illegalise the strike and bring out the military. In the Dindugul by-election the DMK's official candidate suffered a major disaster when the dissident Anna DMK's candidate defeated him by over a lakh of votes—thus showing that the DMK euphoria in Tamil Nadu had ended.

In Britain, an official announcement from Buckingham Palace ended the rumours and gossip about Princess Anne: she was engaged to cavalry officer Mark Phillips—Anne's name had been romantically connected with him for some time now. Whilst the British monarchy was will-

ing to permit another com- moner into the closely-knit royal strata, the scandal about two members of the Heath government being involved with call girls has created a minor *furor* in conservative Britain. Unlike in the Profumo scandal, the two Ministers resigned at the first whiff of scandal—and thus saved the Heath government. Moreover the scandal was contained because it was stated that there had been no security risk. Of course a section of the British press went to town with screaming headlines, but on the whole this scandal did not rock the boat.

The *Economist*, 26/5/73, summed up the situation thus: "The British have had a lovely week indulging in one more of their periodic fits of morality and inverted snobbery. The two culprits who have been flushed out of a so-called vice ring by diligent policemen and a rather more prurient pressmen. They are both rich, aristocratic and middle-aged. There is no evidence, and none is likely to be forthcoming, that they corrupted anyone but themselves or threatened the interests of anyone, but their own families. Neither Lord Jellicoe nor Lord Lambton has committed any great crime..they are not

the first public men who had committed adultery or made use of prostitutes, and they certainly will not be the last..both men admitted their activities and left the government..Their families and friends are bracing themselves for the outbreak of pious national rectitude which invariably follows scandals of this kind. A lot of cant can be expected to flow from both the press and pulpit, and some of it will reflect the genuine revulsion of a section of the British public."

IN THE UNITED STATES, Watergate continues to hold the centre of the stage. Even President Nixon's summit with the French President Pompidou in Iceland does not seem to have detracted from the Watergate affair. Even the *Skylab* drama has not brought any relief to White House. The Select Committee hearings is a veritable court of public opinion. What was at stake was the charge that there was a conspiracy to hide "White House involvement in political espionage, burglaries, wire-tapping, campaign disruption and illegal use of donated funds that are all part of the Watergate squalor."

It has been pointed out that "neither the repeated denials of presidential involvement in the scandal nor Richard Nixon's all-too-general television address of April 30 had stilled the poundings of multiple congressional hearings, grand jury investigations and relentless press probings..."

Then, towards the end of last month, Nixon issued a

4000 word statement in his defense. *Time*, 4/6/73, characterised it as one of the "strangest presidential documents in US history..The document contained confessions that no other US President has had to make. In it, Nixon cloaked his conduct in the claim that he had consistently acted to protect national security."

Time, however, is sceptical whether this "mystique-enveloped term carries such a patriotic appeal" and would convince many people. Senate GOP leader Hugh Scott had commented: "I hope that the President will receive the same credence that is sometimes given to thieves who purloin documents." According to *Time*, Nixon with his tendency to overstate a case, carried the new theme to illogical lengths. The statement, prepared by a special strategy group of White House top aides —Haig, Ziegler, Leonard Garment, J. Fred Buzhardt, Frank Buchman and speech writer Raymond Price—clothed all denials in "national security" idiom. The statement had been prepared with care: the group had worked in marathon sessions through the weekend, often without any break for lunch or dinner: meals and snacks were brought in. The speech-writer made changes sentence by sentence, and they were taken to the President for approval.

Time magazine also scrutinised this presidential statement sentence by sentence. Commented *Time*: "Though Nixon had assured the nation as recently as April 30 that there had been no limita-

tions on the inquiry, he now conceded there had been a limitation—imposed by himself, but only for security reasons. If that had led to a Watergate cover-up, the President argued, it probably happened because subordinates misunderstood him or went beyond his instructions."

THE STATEMENT went on to argue that "cover-up steps were actually taken to prevent the exposure of unrelated secret activities carried out by the CIA, the FBI and other intelligence agencies and a small secret *Special Investigations Unit* Nixon set up in the White House. Most of those operations he claimed, were aimed at detecting just who in the Government was leaking official secrets to newsmen or at protecting the Government against anti-war demonstrators radical bomb throwers and black extremists..."

Nixon in his statement insisted that he had neither authorised nor known about offers of Executive clemency to persuade the Watergate burglars to plead guilty and remain silent. He also insisted that he had made no attempt to get the CIA to take the blame for the Watergate operation—and had authorised no one else to do so. He also denied authorising or encouraging 'subordinates to engage in illegal or improper campaign tactics.' But *Time* sarcastically commented that "he did not say whether he had been aware of such activities."

It has been pointed out that his defence consisted of

several damaging admissions. Said he: "It seems that, through whatever complex of individual motives and possible misunderstandings, there were apparently wide-ranging efforts to limit the investigations or to conceal the possible involvement of members of the Administration and the campaign committee." *Time* recalled that five days after the Watergate "burglars" had been caught on June 17, 1972 Nixon had declared: "The White House has had no involvement whatever in this particular incident."

The President also now concedes that in his re-election campaign "unethical as well as illegal activities took place." He also added: "None of these took place with my specific approval or knowledge. To the extent that I may in any way have contributed to the climate in which they took place, I did not intend to, to the extent that I failed to prevent them, I should have been more vigilant." *Time* commenting on this stated: "That is the closest Nixon has yet come to accepting personal blame for the Watergate crimes, and it is pretty close indeed. His careful use of the word 'specific' could imply that he might have approved of such activities in general."

Time had doubts about the political merits of this statement and summed it up as "alternatively candid and evasive, specific and vague, the extraordinary Nixon defense document merits an almost line-by-line examination." This the *Time* does in its issue of June 4 and concluded

the examination thus: "... the Nixon document did give his stoutest supporters a rallying point. But the statement also revealed that: (1) his own directives had caused the Watergate cover-up by his highest aides; (2) he had set up his own ominous band of White House investigators who were so loosely directed that, according to his statement, they used methods of which he did not approve; (3) in his earlier statements about Watergate, he had tried to hide and distort the facts. Except for the conveniently vague national security considerations, the statement leaves Nixon with an extremely shaky defense."

The President had also retreated on the question of permitting present and former White House aides from testifying before various investigating bodies. *Time* pointed out that Executive privilege did not extend to inquiries where crime was suspected. The *Economist* pointed out that President Nixon's answers only raised more questions, and that every statement he made was being "minutely scrutinised more by hostile eyes than by friendly ones, and more as a source of leads for future investigations than as an explanation of the facts."

WITH THE DETENTE in the East Asia region, more and more is being written about China by competent persons. One of the most illuminating series were recently published in the *Far Eastern Economic Review* published in Hongkong. The author was Derek Davies.

Other articles by men like Richard Hughes and Leo Goodstadt were equally revealing. They are men who know Chinese and have lived in Hongkong and East Asia for many years and who are seeking sympathetic understanding of the China of Mao Tse-tung in a critically objective manner.

One of the main questions which have come up for comment is that though Liu Shao Chi has been physically and politically liquidated from the Party's hierarchy, his "line" and his "teachings" seem to be now re-adopted under various guises. The *Newsweek* of May 14 devoured a whole article to the question of the continuing conflict between the two schools of thought, though an effort was being made to show that what was being adopted was not what a "renegade" like Liu had wanted.

Derek Davies in the *Far* of April 16 stated "... After a tour of South China, involving visits to factories and communes in and around Peking, Canton, Shanghai, Wusih, Soochow and Hangchow, the visitor is forced to conclude that, in varying degrees, the state has decided to reward individual effort and initiative. As one cadre explained, China has a long way to go before achieving communism ('to each according to his needs'), for the foreseeable future, it is building socialism ('from each according to his ability, to each according to his work'). Equal pay for equal work implies unequal pay for better or poorer work. But

at the same time, it is desperately trying to convince the people (and perhaps itself) that this system is different in kind than that sponsored by the 'swindlers' like Liu Shao-chi who attempted to restore capitalism by 'selling sugar-coated poison'... Liu advocated 'doing what the masses want', wrapping his capitalist 'black trash in an ultra-revolutionary coat', seeking to oppose the Party. Today, the Party argues, perhaps not totally convincing, that an enthusiasm for socialism exists objectively among the masses and that by fully trusting and relying on the masses today, it is placing no blind faith in spontaneity, nor is it indulging in the Liuist fallacy of doing what the masses want.

"A contradiction always exists, Peking officials argue, between the interests of the state and of the collective and between that of the collective and the individual. The individual must be subordinate to the collective and the collective to the state: Liu's crime was to turn upside down this order of priorities...."

Derek Davies went on to point out that the Liuist line in the factories was material incentives; for the farmer it meant more time and energy spent on spare-time and sideline activities both by the teams as production units and by individuals on their private plots. The present regime, according to Davies, was seeking to "dress up a system into which incentives and other awards for hard work and initiative are integrated so that it appears to be different in kind and

motivation and result from the Liuist model. The dressing is fairly simply done: the interests of the individuals are largely equated with that of the state...."

This new approach of individual incentives for work had become necessary because of falling production in factories and in the fields, but there are powerful factions in the Party and elsewhere in China today which feel that enthusiasm should be properly stimulated only by contributions to the State.

THIS KIND of contradiction so carefully outlined by Derek Davies and other writers has led to contradictions within the leadership in China from the highest to the lowest levels. The *Newsweek* article makes it clear that the West is probing into the "two schools of thought" inside China so that the West could adopt a truly realistic approach to present-day China. Peking is naturally trying hard to conceal this power struggle going for supremacy which is covered up by ideological arguments: but what it amounts to is this that there are opponents to the domestic and foreign policy courses of Mao Tse-tung. Although Mao has politically liquidated many old comrades who disagreed with him and has established his personal supremacy over the bureaucratic and military regime in the country, it is clear that he has failed to consolidate this position not only inside the Party but also the country as a whole. This is probably the reason why the 10th Congress of

the Party has been repeatedly postponed and also the regular sessions of the National People's Congress have not met. Foreign observers who have been to China recently have sensed this instability in China's leadership. It is significant that the official propaganda from Peking, through the radio and the press, is carrying on a new campaign calling upon the party and the people to strictly implement Mao Tse-tung's dictum to continue "the struggle between the two lines" in the Party and in the state and to display vigilance with regard to projects to re-establish capitalism in China by way of "peaceful evolution." The propaganda stresses that even inside the Communist Party there were potential "betrayers and traitors to the motherland", and that "swindlers of the Liu Shao-chi type" (i.e. Lin Piao's adherents) try to "blow up fortresses from the inside".

It has been noted by observers that the struggle between the "two lines" which is going on in China, as well as the movement "criticising revisionism and regulating the style", impinge upon the vital interests of China including the problem of her future relations with the West and the East. It has been reported that adherents and enemies of Maoist policy fight each other "tooth and claw", and it is said that the "left wing forces" seem to be gathering strength and this included Mao's wife Chiang Ching, his nephew Yao Wen-yuan and Chang Chun-chiao for the first time took part in Mao's conversation with

Vietnamese leaders Le Duc Tho (up till now it was special privilege and monopoly of Chou En-lai only). This has led to speculation that there might be changes in high ranking officials, and it was even suggested that Chou's protegee, Foreign Minister Chi Peng-fei might be shifted. There are also reports that some changes would be also be effected among high ranking officers of the Army.

In these circumstances, and in the belief that Mao cannot live for ever, Washington, Tokyo and other western capitals are doing what they could to find out what China would be without Mao because these countries are deeply concerned about their future relations with China. The West does not want to be committed to Maoist hegemony in China if there will be changes which will compel a complete re-orientation of policies.

In the meanwhile stories circulating in Hongkong indicate that a sizable section of the population inside China are unhappy and discontented about the intensive preparations of a military nature under the slogan of "preparation for probable war" and of the necessity "to dig trenches". The discontent seems to take many forms: evading the work of

constructing bomb shelters, delays in completing such works, and grumbling about the waste of money on such projects. Refugees from China, of whom there are plenty in Hongkong, have stated that in many large cities like Shanghai, Canton, Tientsin and others wall posters have begun to appear appealing to the authorities to give up the arms race and to spend the money now being used "to dig into the ground" to construct dwellings, schools, hospitals and irrigation works. Repression does not seem to have eradicated these posters which reflect the anti-Mao line of thinking in the current ideological conflict.

As there is hardly any news reporting of the kind we know, from China (remember how the Lin Piao affair was denied for a long time), newsmen and analysts cannot be blamed for relying on reports which filter out through various sources. Recent visitors to China say that early this year there was an enlarged session of the Central Committee of the Chinese CP and that one of the matters discussed was the need to be ready for a "probable war". It would appear that provincial leaders were not enthusiastic about any war and had stated that think-

ing sections of the population felt that in the current atmosphere of detente whether the Soviet Union would attack China. Military commanders, it was reported, were keen that the army should be modernised and that primitive installations like trenches and tunnels for bomb shelters were valueless. It is clear, say observers, that the "two lines of thought" also reflects itself in the sphere of military preparations—as in all other matters.

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COLD WAR TO CO-OPERATION

On Brezhnev's Visit To FRG

BY

BASIL PERERA

The *Daily Mail*, referring to Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev's recent visit to the FRG, commented that it signified that the Second World War, at last, is over.

This indeed is the true meaning of this epoch-making visit. It draws the line under the long, sad history of Europe since 1945, puts an end to the cold war that has bedevilled European and international relations and opens the road to detente, peace and security in the continent on which began two world wars in the first four decades of this century.

To realise the magnitude of this change and see what it portends for the future, we have only to cast a glance back on the recent history of relations between the Soviet Union and the FRG—the two main antagonists in the last war.

It was only two decades ago that the cold war, declared officially by Churchill and Truman at Fulton in 1946, got a new lease of life with the accession to power in the USA of Eisenhower and John Foster Dulles. The latter declared at once that the new US Administration had given up the 'immoral' policy of the 'containment of Communism' and boldly launched out on the new, aggressive policy of the 'liberation' of Eastern Europe.

Defining the new role he envisaged for West Germany, Dulles stated: "A revived Germany can also be a great asset to the West. By attracting East Germany into its orbit, the West can gain an advanced strategic position in Central Europe which will

undermine the Soviet Communist military and political positions in Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and other neighbouring countries."

His faithful disciple in the FRG, Konrad Adenauer, echoing the sentiments of his mentor, wrote: "What lies beyond the Elbe and the Werra are Germany's unliberated provinces. Thus, the task is not reunification but liberation.... The term 'reunification' should finally disappear. It has caused enough damage already. 'Liberation' should be the slogan."

THE POLICY of strength and brute force in dealings between nations could not have been more clearly put. And to match words with deeds, the Dulles-Adenauer combine rebuilt the old Nazi armies under Hitler's old generals and in the old Hitler spirit, incorporated West Germany in the aggressive NATO military bloc and began to dream day-dreams of revising the results of World War II.

In 1961, the West German War Minister Josef Strauss

visited the USA, brazenly declared that "the Second World War is not yet over" and outlined a plan to 'liberate' the 'captive states' for which the US ruling circles observed a 'day of mourning' every year. According to this plan, a 'popular uprising' would take place in the GDR giving the FRG a chance to solve the 'inner-German conflict' by annexing the GDR and parts of Poland and Czechoslovakia in one swift 'police action.'

On his return home, the alert was sounded for all NATO units in Europe. The armed forces of the Western powers began to rehearse their plan for war, the main content of which was a rapid breakthrough from West Germany to West Berlin. The US air force began big air-lift operations. The West German navy began manoeuvres with over 100 ships along the GDR's Baltic coast. Nazi General Hans Speidel, Commander of the NATO ground forces in Central Europe, went on a tour of inspection along the GDR state frontier, and on August 10, 1961 announced that NATO was fully prepared for its job in this part of the world.

It was when the spark was about to be kindled to set aflame a European and world conflagration that the Warsaw Powers acted. Determined to defend the frontiers of socialism from the rabid Western warmongers, on August 13th they built the Berlin wall, a masterpiece of strategic planning, a grand military plan for peace which took the hothe-

ads by surprise and rendered them impotent for any contemplated lunatic action.

The warmongers were halted in their tracks. Peace had won. From that day onwards, the future of Europe and the world was assured.

Adenauer himself resigned from office as chancellor of the FRG in 1963, and Ludwig Erhard who succeeded him proclaimed that "the post-war period is at an end." But a few more years were to elapse before the period referred to could really be brought to an end.

To cut a long story short, in 1969, the CDU-CSU alliance which had ruled the FRG for over two decades was forced to relinquish office and hand over power to a coalition of the Social Democratic and Free Democratic Parties. Then began a new chapter in the history of Soviet-FRG relations and of European relations as a whole.

A LANDMARK in this history is the treaty signed between the USSR and the FRG in August 1970. This acknowledged the inviolability of the post-war borders that had taken shape in Europe and accorded the recognition, valid by international law, of the territorial and socio-political changes that had taken place in Europe since the end of World War II. It paved the way for a similar treaty between Poland and the FRG and a whole series of agreements between the GDR and the FRG, based on the actualities existing in Europe, culminating in the Treaty on Basic Principles of Relations between the two German states.

It may be recalled that in 1961 too, at the height of the Berlin crisis, the GDR submitted to the FRG a Peace Plan—one of many made over the years—for normalising the relations between them on the basis of peaceful co-existence, renunciation of force and non-interference by one German state in the internal affairs of the other. But that was summarily rejected by the revanchists on the Rhine. However, it is precisely on such principles now, thanks to the changed balance of forces in the world and between the two German states, that the GDR-FRG treaty of 1972 has been reached. That the people of the FRG too are in favour of such detente was made clear by the re-election to power of the Brandt-Scheel Government at the elections in the FRG last year.

It goes without saying that the Soviet Union has always given high priority towards easing tensions in Europe as one of the keys towards world peace. To bring about a radical turn towards detente on this continent was one of the main points of the Soviet Peace Programme adopted by the 24th CPSU Congress in 1971.

The significance of Brezhnev's visit to the FRG is that it is the logical next step in the continuing process of detente opening up prospects for further salutary changes in Europe in the near future. Following the normalisation of relations by the FRG with the Soviet Union, the GDR and Poland, the road is now clear for the establishment of similar relations with

Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Bulgaria. Both German states will also take their equal place in the UNO and its specialised agencies.

Both the GDR and the FRG will, of course, take part in the forthcoming all-European conference and contribute their due to the establishment of peace, security and confidence in Europe. In this connection, it is worth noting that Brezhnev and Brandt, during their recent meeting, exchanged views on the very complex problem of the mutual reduction of armaments and armed forces in Central Europe.

The USSR and the FRG are such big industrial giants that growing co-operation between them cannot but exert a beneficial influence on the entire course of European and world development. The USSR-FRG agreements concluded during Brezhnev's visit on the development of economic, industrial and technical co-operation, on cultural co-operation and on air travel will considerably speed up this process.

UNDER THESE agreements, the two countries hope to reach a new stage in their mutual ties, going over from mere bilateral trade to active and extensive economic co-operation—the setting up of huge industrial complexes, mutual co-operation in the production of certain types of equipment and machines, exchange of patents, licences know-how and the development of new technology. The new protocol on air travel

will enable *Lufthansa* liners to fly to Japan via the Soviet Union. Its beneficiaries will be not only the two signatories to the protocol but also Japan and other countries in Europe, South and South East Asia and Australia.

The new agreement on cultural co-operation provides for the development of exchanges in the fields of culture, science and education, the promotion of co-operation between government organisations, academies, research institutes and establishments of higher education. It will give a fillip to ever-increasing reciprocal visits of artists and scientists, students and architects, writers and journalists. What a change from the days of Adenauer-Dulles reavanchism when the only exchange possible was that of gun-shots across the border!

The new relationship between the former foes of World War II was well put by Leonid Brezhnev in a speech he made in Bonn. Said He: "We are bending our efforts so that the achievements of human civilisation and scientific and technical progress are used, not for hostility and destruction, but for creation, for raising the well-being and the spiritual wealth of the peoples."

This is indeed the stage where wars end and peace begins to prevail between nations.

ON QUESTIONS

Calling R.S.P.—Are You Receiving Me?

By
CANAX

Disappointment comes easily to some, but requires a little more effort in others. Our Minister of Information and Broadcasting, Mr. R. S. Perera, appears to have made the necessary effort—and got rewarded for his trouble. He is reportedly a very disappointed man, and his effort consisted of putting up a Question Box in his Ministry, only to find the public not responding the way he thought it would. Not that he was expecting miracles overnight, either. He had the Box for as long as—and I quote—"many days", and still no dice.

IF HE was not particularly keen on disappointment, Mr. Perera should not have made a big thing about telling people their questions would be answered—if they were considered of public importance. That was an elementary mistake unworthy of even an amateur in the propaganda racket. Ever without consulting Mr. N. U. Jayawardena, I'd say it was clear proof of a sizable communication-gap inside a generation-gap wrapped up in a credibility-gap between Informed and Informed, very much like the three-in-one crisis Mr. J. spotted on the economic front not so long ago.

After all it is common knowledge that the public, by and large, is too intelligent to ask anything but damn fool questions designed primarily to raise a laugh, possibly because one can still laugh oneself silly without having NM slap a tax on it. (Informed circles feel that is because the Doctor has a sense of humour—yet. Hope it lasts somewhat longer than his foreign exchange does.)

To quote Mr. Perera again. "I have not been asked a single question," he wailed the other day to the "Week-end" and added with a laugh, or so we were told, "I cannot imagine people without questions."

Such little tidbits of information are quite revealing when looked at objectively, which is the only way to look at anything now, and so can you, provided you too are willing to stand on your head before you start looking. By a tedious process of trial-and-error I have come to the conclusion that objectivity is the only answer to this topsy-turvy world, for it stops you going into a crazy and uncontrollable spin of your own, like some spacecraft do once out of reach. It also helps keep your head, if not your feet, planted

firmly on the ground. There comes a time when one can't be too choosy about which end is down, or up, and that time is now.

If Mr. Perera cannot imagine people without questions, that's just too bad. For his imagination. Which means he cannot also imagine people without so many other things these days. So questions are only one more item they have to learn to do without. And, given time, they will, provided the Government doesn't make the mistake of molly-coddling them by importing any questions to meet the acute local shortage.

LET THEM feel the pinch for awhile, Mr. Perera, and I bet you they'll learn to produce their own questions. Or do without them.

But what surprises me is Mr. Perera's inability to learn from the past—and a not-too-distant past at that. If there is likely to be a shortage of anything, the first thing to do is not to prevent there being such a shortage but to stop the word from getting around. For that only helps anti-social elements also called blackmarketeers in informed circles, to capitalize on the situation. We've seen it happen so often these past three years, aided each time by other equally anti-social elements, also called the Press in literary circles, which is what forced the Government, much to its distaste, to set up the Press Council. It was meant to say goodbye to such abuses in a free (and easy) society like ours.

And yet Mr. Perera goes about using the very same Press to spread the word. True, he made a joke of it, but if anybody is going to have the last laugh it's not going to be Mr. Perera for sure. There's already one helluva blackmarket in questions, and it's bound to get even worse with time. As things, are not only questions considered to be of public importance but even damn fool questions which normally would not find a market anywhere at any price, are going at a premium—if you can get them. You'll know just how bad it is when I tell you what I overheard the other day. I was strolling along the pavement when I happened to observe a man bargaining with a shopkeeper, obviously trying to get more than his money's worth, and I distinctly heard the trader snap, "Don't ask questions—just take it or leave it."

Yeah, it's that bad already.

But Mr. Perera can depend on me to help him out of his predicament. In fact, I have come to his rescue where it matters most—in my home. Ever since he said it my wife has been snooping around the house looking for the odd question (or, may be, an even one) that might be lying around waiting for an answer. She got so keyed up she even invoked the marriage contract in a vague sort of way to try and squeeze some questions out of me.

"Give me a few questions, will you," she pleaded.

"Sorry, dear", I said. "I'm a specialist, like our Ministers. I only have all the

answers. Why don't you ask your mother?"

"I asked, but she says that's not her responsibility. Seems you have to see to all my needs now. She wants to know what you married me for."

"Keep the conversation clean," I advised. "But, honestly, can't you think of a single question?"

"I can, but it seems applicable to all the Ministers so I doubt if it's of public importance."

"Let's hear it," I coaxed.

"The question is this: 'You mean you have nothing better to do?'"

"Hmm...mmm...mmm..."

"Is that your considered opinion?"

"I'm still considering it. That was just an interim report," I said, playing for time.

"I also thought up some supplementary questions to that one. Want to hear them?"

"Do I have a choice?"

"After my first question, I want to add, 'If so, why? If not, why not?'"

"You're reading too many Parliamentary proceedings" I cried. "Who do you think you are, an Opposition MP? Have you any other damn fool questions?"

"As a matter of fact, I have!" she cried. "I'd like to ask Mr. Kumarasuriar 'Is it true the Telecom Dept. is, after modernisation, at last showing profits on its island-wide telephone network?'"

CONTEMPORARY NOTEBOOK

"Now, *that's* a good question," I said, warming to my wife.

"But I haven't finished yet", she cried. "The next point is, 'How much of the lot was netted by the modern technique of having each telephone register at least ten wrong numbers per day?' How's that?"

If I didn't say anything it was only because I didn't have anything to say.

"Or how's this?" she went on. "I'd like to ask whoever the Minister is in charge of the Milk Board, 'Precisely what local production do you hope to stimulate by black-marketing in your products—that of cow's milk, or mother's milk?'"

Well, that's how things were shaping up at home, and the prospects certainly looked grim for our Cabinet until, in desperation, I resorted to a little friendly persuasion. "Don't send in such idiotic questions," I said, "if you don't want to meet me next in the divorce court."

THAT WORKED, Mr. Perera, that really worked. I must say on my wife's behalf that she always listens to reason.

So now if Mr. Perera is inclined to listen to one who's rooting for him and his happy band of Ministers, I'd say don't panic—and don't lose your shirt, if you have one.

I'm not sure if the Government still has such a thing, but it used to have a unit called the Information Department. If it's still there, use it, Mr. Perera, only do it on the quiet. Get the boys there to provide you the

* Concorde and the Eclipse * Mental

BY AGASTYA

ASTROLOGICAL. There is one unfailling topic in high VIP circles in Colombo today: the astrological implications of the transit of Saturn on June 10 and the solar eclipse of the Sun on June 30 with near eclipses of the moon (on the penumbra) around June 15 and July 15. Saturn transits from one house in the Zodiac once every 2 1/2 years and this time it moves from Aries to Gemini, where it will be in long-time conjunction with Kethu. This transit will naturally indicate a change of fortunes for the better

questions at the rate of, say, eight questions per man per eight-hour day. It might help if Ministers provide them with their answers in advance, so they can formulate the questions to fit. That'll save time, too.

Believe me, Mr. Perera, I know what I'm talking about—some of the time, at least. It's been done before, I promise, and with great success.

I don't want Mr. Perera to think I'm only saying that to make him feel better. Now, why would I do a thing like that for? But if he insists, I'll tel! him who's done it before. Dr. Goebbels did wonders with propagandæ, and what he did went down very well—so well, in fact, it took the Third Reich with it.

Feeling better already, Mr. Perera? Good.

for many who had been at the receiving end of the stick for a long time, but astrologers say that this transit will adversely affect many who have had it all their own way during the last few years: that it will topple many in high places all over the world.

What makes this peculiarly dangerous is that there is also a solar eclipse on June 30 in the zodiacal sign of Gemini and that this will be bad for those whose horoscopes are such that an eclipse in Gemini will affect them adversely. The ominous signs of evil will gather as early as May 29/30 when there will be a conjunction of 5 planets in Aries on the eve of Saturn's transit to Gemini on June 10, and while most of them would have transited out of Gemini when the eclipse takes place on June 30, the conjunction at the end of May will be like an astrological nuclear lift-off which will demolish mighty empires. Watergate in Washington, the mini-Watergate in Thailand, the famines in India and all the other upheavals are only fore-runners of greater upheavals which are said to come after the eclipse. It is also significant that Jupiter will be in retrogression from June 1.

Whilst these are only astrological prognostications, ordinary mortals in the seats of power feel that the Gods are with them and do not

seem to be in the least worried about what the astrologers say. In the meantime, in the materialist west, the prototype of the Concorde, jetliner 001 at a height of 60,000 will chase the solar eclipse with a group of British and French scientists.

A British Information Service bulletin describes the great Concorde experiment.

"The chase will take place on 30 June and, because of the Concorde's speed, the scientists will be able to observe for a period 11 times as long as they could on the ground—and more than seven times as long as they could by eclipse-chasing in a subsonic aircraft. The Concorde flight is due to begin at Las Palmas, in the Canary Islands, at 1045 hours Greenwich Mean Time at Mauritania, in West Africa. For the next 1,900 miles the jetliner will be hurtling along well above the infra-red absorbing layers of the atmosphere so that the teams of scientists on board are able to make their measurements in the best conditions. The flight will end at 1212 hours GMT, when the aircraft will be north of Fort Lamy in Chad, Central Africa. Where it will land.

"The British experiments will be conducted by teams of scientists from Aberdeen University, Scotland, and Queen Mary College, London. Aberdeen's experiment is to make observations, through a side window, of near infra-radiation from the stratosphere and the mesosphere, a

layer above it, to find out more about the decay of a form of oxygen. An eclipse provides the best conditions for doing this. The second experiment is aimed at getting particular information about a layer of the sun's atmosphere called the chromosphere, a mixture of elements at a temperature of about 5,000° Centigrade. A special observation window is being constructed in the roof of the aircraft so that observations can be made of the successive covering of layers in the chromosphere as the moon passes the sun's disc.

"British experiments are also being launched into space at the time of the eclipse of a rocket flight organised by universities and authorities in the US, Canada, and Britain. An Aerobee rocket will be launched from a site in northern Mauritania on a trajectory designed to intersect the eclipse path at a height of 95 miles. The flight will take 10 minutes and the payload will be parachuted down into the desert 160 miles away from the launch site.

"The rocket experiments are to collect data on the structure and heating of the sun's atmosphere and on magnetic activity, as well as fundamental information on atomic structure. The bill for both sets of experiments will be about £40,000."

Whether heads will fall, or government's topple or empires crash all over the world after June 30 is yet to be seen. But it will be fun waiting for events to happen. And if they do

not happen will some one say that the Concorde had come between the eclipse and the affairs of the world?

WITH OUR COMMENT: The Daily News on May 14, under the heading *Many Escape from Mental Hospital* reported that:

"Many patients are escaping from the Mental Hospital at Angoda. According to the Police Gazettes issued since March this year, over 90 persons are reported to have escaped from the mental hospital. According to police reports most of the patients have left in hospital clothes. About 30 persons reported to have escaped from the hospital are under 16 years of age. The oldest man reported missing is 75 years old. A police constable who was an inmate of Angoda is also reported to have escaped."

There is no doubt that such "escapes" have been going on for years and that many of these escapees had become important people in the bureaucratic machine and even in the political firmament in the country.

For News Behind
the News

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CHRONICLE

May 14 – 20

A diary of Events in Sri Lanka and the world
Compiled from English-language dailies Published
in Colombo.

MONDAY, MAY 14: The *Daily News* reported that over 2200 students who qualified to enter the Arts Faculty of the University had still not been admitted because no final decision has been taken regarding the allocation of courses among the four campuses: these 2200 students should have begun their university courses in January this year—this four month's delay will upset the university Calendar, and in the meantime the rest of the students have threatened to go on strike. The *Sun* reported that the Food Department has "cracked the crust of another massive racket in rationed rice": that rice had been drawn on bogus ration books and that about 20 Food Department officials had been interdicted. Minister T. B. Illangaratne disclosed to the *Daily Mirror* that corruption was so rife in most sectors of government activity and had assumed such-frightening proportions that Government had been compelled to devote most of its time and effort in rooting out this canker. Arrests continued to be made in Pakistan with the reported discovery of the alleged plot to overthrow the Government by a group of air force and army officers. The charges against Ellsberg and another over the leakage of the Pentagon were dismissed on Saturday May 12 and the Los Angeles Judge ruled that they should not be brought to trial on these charges at any time in respect of this leakage. The editor of *Dawn*, the Karachi newspaper which had been taken over by Government, was charged for having "lived beyond his means" alleging that he had got the extra funds from illegal sources. The US *Skylab* was expected to blast off tonight.

TUESDAY, MAY 15: The *Daily News* reported that the fisheries talks between Sri Lanka and the Soviet Union had ended inconclusively and that the Russian delegation had left last Sunday: that the stumbling block was the cost of the project—Sri Lanka had insisted that FEECs should be added to the foreign exchange component in the agreement making the pricing too high. Premier Chou En lai

had sent a special message on the occasion of the opening of the Memorial Hall which was scheduled to take place on Thursday May 17 he had regretted his inability to attend the opening ceremony personally owing to his commitments in China itself. The *Sun* reported that Secretary to the Ministry of Planning and Employment, Dr. H. A. de S. Gunasekera, had stressed the urgent need to cultivate every inch of available land—in order to avert what he called "a serious food crisis that is threatening the country. The *Sun* also reported that detention orders are to be served under emergency regulations on several persons for alleged involvement in the May Day incidents. The *Times* reported that a children's disease—*kwashiorkor*—was rampant and a very large number of children were receiving treatment at Government hospitals throughout the island: the disease was caused by malnutrition owing to the lack of proper feeding soon after weaning. The *Times* also reported that the dhal ration was expected to be reduced from June 1 because of the high prices prevailing in the world market following a drop in the production: the price had shot up from about £ 50 a ton last year to £ 110 now. The *Skylab* was sent into orbit yesterday and the astronauts—the first group—were preparing to take off to work in the space station.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 16: Today was Wesak day and all the papers carried special supplements about Wesak—they had carried supplements about the BMICH yesterday because on the day of the opening, May 17, there will be no papers owing to the holidays. The Chinese delegation, with a special envoy to open the hall, was expected to arrive by a special plane around noon today and the delegation was expected to visit the hall in the evening at 6 p.m. Wesak messages from the President and other leaders were published in all the papers. There were only 9 big Wesak pandals in the city of Colombo and big crowds were not expected: unlike in other years the police did not have to declare any streets only for one-way traffic. Serious trouble was reported on the *Skylab*, now in orbit, and the launching of the space station crew was being postponed until further notice. Missing FBI summaries of wiretap, placed on news reporters and others had been traced to the safe of

former Presidential aide John Ehrlichman. Veteran US diplomat, David Bruce, special envoy posted to Peking, arrived in Peking last night.

THURSDAY, MAY 17: There were no morning papers today because it was a special holiday the day after Wesak. The Bandaranaike Memorial International Conference Hall was ceremoniously opened at the auspicious time of 3.55 p.m. today by the special envoy from China and the Prime Minister. The *Times of Ceylon* in a frontpage story claimed that the mystery man referred to in the *Weekender* story of May 13 was in deep trouble with the Government because he had, among other things, contributed largely to the loss of the Australian tea market for Sri Lanka. Syndicated American columnist Jack Anderson offered dramatic insights into the Watergate affair and stated: "there is no evidence implicating the President in the Watergate crimes."

FRIDAY, MAY 18: The *Daily News* reported that a complete revision of its price structure was being contemplated by the Milk Board which had been incurring severe losses in the past few years: the price revision will also seek to provide the dairy producer with an increase of 20 cents a pint. The *Daily papers* were full of the pictures of the opening of the BMICH and the speeches made at the opening. The Government had decided to admit the 2700 arts and commerce students who had qualified earlier. They will be admitted to the campuses in June. Soviet Party leader Brezhnev left Moscow for Bonn on a five-day state visit. TV screens in the USA discarded the usual shows for the Senate hearings on the Watergate affair. The Kissinger-Tho talks were in progress in Paris.

SATURDAY, MAY 19: The Associated Newspapers of Ceylon Ltd. (Special Provisions) Bill was tabled yesterday in the NSA. In the course of the unfinished debate on the Regulations to the Press Council Act, Minister of Information, R. S. Perera declared that no penalties would be imposed until a Code for Journalists was formulated. When the Select Committee of the US Congress began its investigations of the Watergate scandal, Chairman Sam Ervin pledged that he would "spare no one" in the quest for truth.

SUNDAY, MAY 20: The *Observer* reported that the Planning Ministry had virtually vetoed the purchase of the second DC-8 from the UTA by Air Ceylon. UNP leader J. R. Jayewardene's directive to electoral party leaders was published in all papers: he wanted UNPers no to be provoked into violence and also to be ready to boycott all Lake House Publications if the Government took over the publishing concern. The *Times Weekender* published the full statement of the TUF on the demand for a separate state. There was a shortage of arrack at the taverns because 4 million bottle stoppers had been held up at the harbour for weeks under bags of flour (or was it fertilisers?) President Nixon threatened North Vietnam that he would not allow Hanoi to break up the Paris Agreement.

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ON THE ONE-ACRE FARM

Livestock, Vegetables and Difficulties of
Daily Living

APRIL 10-20

By ANATORY BUKOBA

April 10,

At the *polla* or fair I saw some "day-old" chicks for sale. These were priced at Rs. 1/50 a pair. The man said there were males and females mixed in the lot, and that I would have to take my chance about my pair being a cock and a hen. It was a chance I was prepared to take, and you cannot distinguish their sexes any way at that age. If you buy these birds you have to be prepared to look after them, and I pondered on that before making my decision to buy. Eventually I hit on a wicker box, one made with *pang*, and a wicker to serve as a lid. Together they cost me Rs. 5/-, and I went on to buy my chicks. I took what I thought were the most lively pair, and carried them home.

At first I had not much time to give to them, and I inverted the box over them and a tiny bush and some grass, with a celluloid bowl of water inside. Later I added some food, the remains of my plantain and bread lunch, but I do not think they ate any of this. From time to time I let them out to frolic around, and they liked to hang about my feet instinctively that for all practical purposes I was their mother or hen. They

had a good feed later when I let them run on the vegetable plot that I was digging. It did not take them long to learn to run along the newest furrow that I had dug or was digging, and I am quite certain they found a considerable amount of food. In fact they were chasing each other for the food the other had grabbed first. Eventually I put them to bed in this box with the lid and on top of the paper I had put at the bottom, I crumpled up some more paper to help keep them warm. Finally I suspended it all from a rafter in the house, as there are mice running about, and so this *Shamba* or farm has its first livestock.

April 11,

There was rain quite late last night. It broke the two-day drought and had the soil quite moist in the morning. It made quite a transformation. I am afraid I sacrificed the few plants of carrot that had appeared. The reader may remember that I had three beds of vegetables. Well, now I have potatoes running down the middle of two of these beds. Then, on either side of these potatoes I put down four vegetable seeds quite thickly in a line, lettuce and carrot in one bed, and tomato and

tampala in the other, one kind of vegetable to each line. This time I made the line by pressing down a stick lengthways to make it, and I smoothed down the bed with the flat of the mamoty, in one bed before I made the lines, put down the seed and covered it up, and in the other case after, simply because I had forgotten to do so earlier, but the bed was fairly smooth anyway.

Then I made a single bed of where I had put two vines previously, but had now moved out, and I put down some of those large bitter gourd seeds, well spread out, but again in two lines. This bed was also carefully smoothed out.

Now I have missed out mentioning the third vegetable bed. This I planted with red onions, and sliced a little off the top of each onion before I planted it. The soil in all these beds is like hard clay. I fear for the potatoes which I had put down earlier. They have not sprouted yet.

Today I put down one coconut. It cost me forty cents, and it was my idea of the best shaped one I would find, nice and round. It had rained this afternoon, and there was water lying everywhere, so I could see where the puddles were. I put it near a puddle but where the earth, when I dug it, turned out to be firm and dry.

April 12,

This morning I did a bit of real gardening, cutting the

grass with a light V.C. *katha*, the one you hold in one hand and swing across your body, from side to side, while you lop off the tall grass. It was a real pleasure doing this, a job that no Ceylon farmer, unless he is brought up in the European tradition, ever does.

My smallest *Murunga* tree I found knocked down snapped off at the level of the ground. Where it was really too close to the public pathway that leads to the river, a temptation to anybody who wanted to do some damage; so I removed the tree to the other end of the line and planted it again, after pruning it a little.

One thing I did, I admit shamefacedly, was to cook my first meal. It was sago, which we used to have as a morning drink, under conditions in which I am rather similarly placed now, some years ago. I washed the sago, then cooked it in a little water. When it had boiled a little, I added salt. This salt gave the sago its punch. When it had cooked a little, I added brown sugar, and ate it rather like porridge, but with a teaspoon, which I had the presence of mind to buy at the last *polla* or fair. It was too thick to drink, and it tasted very good.

The two little chickens are doing fine. I continue digging the new vegetable plot for them during the day. They grub among the soil for things to eat, and they

find some very fine worms which I am quite unable to see until they have them in their mouths.

April 15,

Alas, my first attempt at keeping livestock has come to nothing. One of the chickens was off colour only the day after I last said it was well, and by mid-day it was dead. One of them had had a fall the previous day but I cannot say which one. It had fallen from a height from my hand seemed alright. Perhaps I had not had really enough time to see that it was having no after-effects from the fall. Anyhow the next morning one of the two chicks was obviously not well. It took no interest in finding its food when I cut sods for it as I did for the other one, and I would say it had something the matter with one of its legs, from the way it lay. It obviously had difficulty getting around, and so it would not even try. By mid-day it was in great distress, and I removed it from its basket and kept it in the palm of my hand. It made great efforts at movement a few times, and these gave me a suspicion that it was going to die. As I did not want it to be alone neglected, I carried it about, when I was attending to something else. When I looked at it next, it was already stiff and it had died with its eyes wide open.

The other chick was feeling very alone, but in the pink of health otherwise, when I left it a few hours later. I had to leave it in someone else's care, and when

I saw him the next night, he said he had found the chick dead in its basket in the morning. I could not help feeling sad because I felt this would not have happened if I had stayed. I would say the chick died of loneliness or a broken heart. It was very distressing for me to find I was suddenly without a chick, and the next time would have to be a fresh beginning.

The mango sapling that I had planted about a month or more ago and which had lost all its leaves, I found today was dry in its stalk and also in its roots. But the part where stalks and root which were joined together still seemed supple and after cutting off the dead wood both top and bottom, I reset it. The root, I found, had been very long, and I suspect that the water I had given it had been inadequate to reach the effective part of this root, and so the tree had slowly died. Either it should have had more water or a shorter root.

The jak in the coconut shell is quite tall and will have to be replanted soon. Remembering the number of water melon seeds that were put in the attili, I would say that about a third have germinated.

None of the papaw seeds have germinated yet, nor the olive nor lulu nor potatoes nor any of the vegetables which I did on the second occasion.

April 16,

Five holidays in a row, and it is also what is known as Holy Week. Plans are apt to go awry, and, so, too, any constructive work. Anyway it is raining after what seems like weeks but can only be a few days. The roof started leaking and that had to be put right, as I said before, you merely pull the cadjans up the *parala*, or beams, or sticks as the case is here, where the leak is. I was unable to have a bath and I am wondering if I can do so in the rain. There is plenty of lightning.

Since I started cooking my meals, I seem to be more hungry than ever. Bread and plantain seemed to satisfy me more, although I am sure it did not do me much good. East Africans, away on their *Shambas*, almost live on plantains and it seemed to be the staple diet in Stanleyville, too, but here I am using plantains only as a savoury to savour the bread, while over there other things are used to savour the plantain like fish or chicken. Plantains, I remember reading, are rich in proteins.

Work, as I said, has come almost to a stand still, even the watering; that was why I was glad of the rain. I continued using the V.C. *katha* to cut the grass short and keep down the weeds around the beds.

April 17

This morning I lost the top of my V.C. *katha*. This piece of iron which cuts the

grass went flying over the road into the thicket on the other side. Fortunately, I followed its flight and had a good idea where it landed. This thicket is on a very steep bank and is impenetrable. Anyway, I started laying about it with the *katha* shaft. Weeds and thorns gave way to my blows. I was making a path to the place where I thought the iron had landed. I had an idea that it had lodged in a tree, and sure enough it had. Then it slipped and I thought I distinctly heard it slither down the slope. I gained the other side by making a tunnel elsewhere but a close search on both sides revealed no *katha* blade. Then I saw it lodged in what must have been the same tree, but lower down.

The second jak seed which I had brought from Colombo and which had germinated in a coconut shell, I transplanted today, and also the last water melon plant. At the moment they look all right, but the cadjan has fallen on the jak plant and bent it, but I hope it will be all right.

April 18,

There is a limit to what a man can do when he feels he ought not to take a risk with thieves by leaving a house unguarded. It handicaps him considerably when all the normal facilities, such as bathroom, lavatory, water etc. are outside and out of sight. He dare not even work too hard when he knows he might not be able to have a bath, when

people are slow to "sit in or sit out, to let them do these things. Anyway someone joined me today, at least temporarily, and it will give me a chance to attend to some urgent business elsewhere, and also some much needed work here.

The recently transplanted jak plants seem to be thriving. I think I have situated them nicely. When they are big they will grace the path on either side, the path that leads down to the river at the other end of the property. Manioc has been planted near them, and on the outside of the manioc more or less in line with the jak, are some water melon and beans. Between one of the jaks and the path and beyond the bigger manioc bed, is a line of vine, two of which are definitely doing well. All this is beyond the house. There are some flowers in front of the house, but not at this time in flower. Not far from them and in a line are the original jak, *taulu* and mango plants, which I am afraid may well be dead, so long are they taking to show any improvement at all. They lost their leaves long ago and never replaced them. Between the smaller manioc plot and the flowers is what is to be the vegetable plot. It has been dug over once, and will have to be dug over again.

As for the vegetable beds on the near side of the house, a few spring or red onions seems to have germinated, and also some tampala, which I understand is a green. The water melon plants near

them are doing well. Close to them are the papaw, growing very slowly. I piled earth round them a few days ago. Then come the plantain, also making slow progress. Then comes the line of murunga trees, then the bank, and finally the hedge. This last is beginning to look nice in places, especially after the grass and weeds were cut on the slope of the bank, and on the grass verge between the hedge and the road.

April 19,

What a difference when there are two people! I was able to do some watering at last, and how it catches one urging a man to go on and on. It is as bad as making money or losing money at gambling! There is always that other bucket of water one wants to draw, and it requires an iron will to say STOP! I gave all that I thought needed a watering, and stopped before doing the three vegetable beds, but after doing the bitter-gourd. It looks as if at least two of the twelve papaw seeds have germinated. The tampala has appeared, and so have a few of the tomato plants. There is no sign yet of the carrot, which was the only vegetable to appear the first time I put down seeds and it looks as if the lettuce has germinated but been attacked by something, because most of the lettuce seeds, including the germinated ones have been unearthed. It is strange that it should have attacked the lettuce but left the tomato, carrot and tampa'a alone. The red onion bed

has been redone; that is the earth in it has been sifted by hand, and the red onion, including those germinated have been reset. It is impossible to do this with the other two beds just now because the germinated plants are too small, and other seeds have not germinated yet.

Out on a walk, I bought back the sapling of a very tall flowering tree, and I replanted it here in the evening, in the place where two months ago I had planted the sapling of a thorny tree. That died and, I hope I have better luck with this.

The V.C. *katha* head flew off again, and instead of cutting off anybody's head in its flight, it struck one of the murunga trees and actually cut off two branches, after trimming them, in a new line below the present ten, but in the gaps, as it were or in army parlance, in echelon, as good soldiers, would do moving into the attack across open country. I watered them well this evening, and also the three vegetable beds. When I wrote ten murungas a few lines back, I had forgotten the eleventh which has had a new life. I had moved it from one end of the *murunga* line to the other and replanted it there shorn of its leaves. This too received a fairly good watering.

The work of keeping the grass short went on apace, but there is still more to do. I think I mentioned before that the bitter gourd has germinated. I have been in the habit of watering the *atilis* and *pol kattus* with seeds, twice a day.

April 20,

For some reason the two *murunga* trees at the right of the line, where the public footpath goes down to the river, were loose in the ground. I learnt something was wrong when I saw that some of these leaves of one of them were rather of too pale a colour, and I next went on to find that I could swivel this plant round where it was as if its roots had no hold in the soil. When I pulled it up I could not quite decide how the damage had happened. Either it was done by somebody, or, by the look of it, it was eaten by something. The plant or tree at the far end of the line looked so forlorn, I got hold of it and found that it, too, was loose. So I promptly removed them from where they were and put them in the second line of *Murunga* that I started yesterday. I had never liked their position which I had thought was too near the public foot path and was just asking for trouble, especially when the vegetable appeared on the tree. But my first companion had been adamant about putting them there, and I had let him have his way.

IS IT TRUE?

Sherlock Holmes

* Business Czar and Banking

Commissars * Airlifting Cows

IS IT TRUE that a big business tycoon who increased his commercial empire in Sri Lanka in the era of the United Front very nearly succeeded in persuading a state-owned bank to purchase from him the buildings belonging to one of the companies in his empire? That these buildings or buildings are situated in the heart of Colombo and he had wanted an astronomical figure for them in the epoch of housing control, of frozen land values and the control of rents and incomes? That he had wanted over Rs. 6 million for them? That the Government bureaucrats who valued the land and buildings fixed a price well under Rs. 4 millions? That it is strange that these valuers were subsequently induced on a second valuation to increase their assessment to a little over Rs. 4 million? That after some top level negotiations the Bank had almost decided to buy the buildings at Rs. 4.5 millions? That this was something unheard of in government circles: that one of its institutions should ignore its own valuer's assessment and pay a higher price for buildings it did not really need? That when this squalid deal was about to be con-

cluded, an even higher authority than the one looking after the destinies of the bank was alerted—and the deal was called off? That the bank and the country was saved of another scandal in the nick of time? That it would be interesting to find out the connections between this business czar and the commissars in charge of banking and finance? That unless such scandals are aired in public, corruption in high places will go on increasing? That a "cantankerous press" which will fearlessly probe such matters is essential in any country which has pretensions even to a little democracy?

IS IT NOT FUNNY that the Government of Sri Lanka has been induced to airlift 450 milk cows from Denmark? That the cost of the airlift would be several times the cost of the animals? That the excuse for this airlift is the shortage of milk in this country? That it is even

funnier that local dairy owners have been hit in solar plexus by the sky-rocketing prices of our cattle foods? That it is known that poonac prices had jumped up because over 20,000 tons had been exported by some foolish bureaucrats who had wanted to earn foreign exchange from a non-traditional export? That whilst we have ruined our dairy industry by stupid exports of the ingredients of cattle food to earn a little foreign exchange we are happy to spend millions to airlift Danish cows? That it would be interesting to see what the "danish connection" has done for this country? That it would be also interesting to find out the VIPs (and others) from Sri Lanka who have been to Denmark lately? That the "porno" connection is not the only thing which takes VIPs from Sri Lanka to Denmark? That the Milk Board and the state Livestock set-up have been plagued in recent years by a "swiss connection" also? That continuing the "French connection" has not only landed us with a white elephant of a fisheries harbour but that, if we are not vigilant we will also be saddled with real Jumbo jets, not to speak of obsolete DC 8s? That if this mania for imports is not checked, officials in the Milk Board will want to airlift supplies of milk daily from Switzerland and Denmark?