

TRIBUNE

CEYLON NEWS REVIEW

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A WELCOME STEP

One of the really concrete and constructive steps which the Government has taken to induce paddy cultivators to produce more paddy is the recent decision to extend agricultural credit even to loan defaulters. A press release from the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, on August 29, stated that "loan defaulters will be granted credit after extending the period of repayment of loans by three years and granting the option of recovering the amounts in three to six equal instalments; freezing the interest due on overdue loans from August 1973; and by issuing credit in kind for fertiliser and agro-chemicals within their already determined credit limits." According to the press release 201,000 loan defaulters will now be able to obtain agricultural credit for the coming Maha season, even though by the existing rules they had been precluded from obtaining any agricultural loans at all. Readers will recall that *Tribune*, during the last twelve months and more, had commented, on several occasions, on the anomalies of agricultural credit in Sri Lanka—anomalies which stemmed from the built-in complexes based on commercial banking attitudes inhibiting our bankers. *Tribune* had consistently urged that those who had defaulted on their agricultural loans, owing to natural disasters like drought, floods or pestilence, should not be treated like defaulters of purely commercial loans which are not subject to the vagaries of the weather, and that farmers should be enabled to repay their loans through further credits being given to them. We had pointed out in a very recent note that in India a cultivator was assisted through five seasons of crop failures. We now understand that a top policy decision was made last year in Sri Lanka that agriculturalists should be assisted through three seasons of crop failures, but this decision was not implemented. If this had been done, the last two paddy seasons would have produced much better results. The present moratorium extended to farmers for one crop failure, or the accumulated defaults as at present, is a very big first step forward. But it is only a first step. Sri Lanka will do well to study how agricultural credit is managed in other countries, especially in India. The commercially-minded bureaucrats in our banking system must change their ways of thinking if agricultural credit in this island is to be placed on a healthy and sound agricultural (not commercial) footing.

FRANCE
LIN PIAO
SRI LANKA

SLFP
MUDALALIS

BOYCOTT
CAMPAIGN

US-SOVIET
TRADE

INDIAN OCEAN

LAKE HOUSE
AIR CEYLON

Tribunania

- * FRANCE
- * LIN PIAO
- * SRI LANKA

IN LAST WEEK'S issue of the *Tribune*, attention was drawn to a report in the *Nation* of August 24, that it would be more advantageous for Sri Lanka to secure the sponsorship of France to get a foothold into the ECM for our tea than rely on Britain. There is a great deal to be said in favour of this suggestion. None of France's ex-colonies grow tea whereas many members of Britain's Commonwealth grow tea.

Even *Tribune* did not realise that France had a considerable presence in the Indian Ocean. Small though they may be, France has possessions and bases on the eastern coast of Africa, that is on the south and southwest region of the Indian Ocean. France has islands in the southern part of the Indian Ocean. But the biggest possession is the large island formerly known as Madagascar, now titled the Republic of Majagasy. The French had a number of small possessions which have now been handed over to India.

Readers will find the article in this issue in the Indian Ocean Series on FRENCH BASES interesting and informative. The French never dominated the Indian

Ocean as the British did, but there is even today a sizable segment of French influence in this region. That France should want to extend its influence is understandable, especially in an era where the advanced industrial countries want to carve out a new place under the sun for themselves — whatever the relationship between the developed and the developing countries be called, neo-colonialist, sub-imperialist, joint partnership, multinational enterprise and what not.

IN THIS ISSUE we have also published the first half of an article written by Wilfred Burchett on the LIN PIAO story. Like so many things from China, there was a mystery about the fate of the Lin Piao story after he had faded out from the front rank in 1971. Until that time Lin Piao was the duly chosen heir of Mao and his right to succession was enshrined in the Constitution. When it was first suggested that Lin Piao had fallen from grace, there were angry denials and it was made out that stories about his treachery were concoctions of western chivawatchers. Slowly it was revealed that he had died in an air crash in a plane which was headed for the Soviet Union. But, even then, there was no official news about the fate of Lin Piao. Finally the fact that he was dead and that he had turned a traitor to the Party and the country was revealed through a leak from the Chinese Embassy in Algiers.

And now Burchett, semi-officially, in a despatch from

Peking has set out "the full story". This is a story which could have been told no sooner Lin Piao disappeared. This air of mystery and secrecy makes it extremely difficult for students of political affairs and current events to know what is happening in China. At the moment there is great speculation whether the Tenth Congress of the Communist Party has got going. The *Far Eastern Economic Review* of August 27 commented: "The world is now waiting with considerable interest for official confirmation that China's Communist Party is holding its Tenth Congress...." Burchett's article, dated August 20, seems to indicate that the Congress has either begun or was about to begin. This air of mystery and secrecy lends itself to reports of varying kinds. People who have recently returned from China speak about a sense of uncertainty and instability, and that differences of opinion stemming from Lin Piaoism and even resurgent Liu-Shao-ism have created conflicts and contradictions in the thinking of officials in charge of industry, agriculture and even military production. After Lin Piao, nobody will believe that there are no differences in the hierarchy: that everything is now centred solely on Mao Thought. But even Mao Thoughts can be seen in a hundred different ways by a hundred different people.

It is said that differences also exist, naturally enough, about who should fill the vacancies which have existed for a long time in the Party

and the State apparatus. It is only now that what Mao thought of Lin Piao, even at the height of the latter's glory, has come to light. But in the current struggle, as to who should succeed Mao, it has been revealed that Mao considers Chou En lai to be "a good executive but with a revisionist savour" capable of undermining, all "revolutionary undertakings". Though Chou has a concentration of power in his hands at the moment, it is difficult to say what the future holds.

After Lin Piao was disgraced and his supporters removed from key posts it was clear that matters were far from satisfactory in the Army, but Mao and his loyalists have been able to bring the Army round. Leo Goodstadt in an article in the *Far Eastern Economic Review*, August 27, after discussing the problem of re-educating cadres, stated: "...The role of the army was settled by August 1 (Army Day)—on the surface, at any rate. Almost every district described the Chinese armed forces as personally created and led by Mao Tse-tung. Their loyalty has been expressed in unequivocal terms to both Mao and the Communist Party." However, attacks on Lin Piao's military programmes have not resolved, it is plain, from many official accounts of the activities of individual units, and how far the new emphasis on purely military training is to be taken. Military skills are now to be prized. Nevertheless these cannot be subordinate to political considerations in Mao's China...."

COMMENTS like this and other references in the Chinese press indicate that an all-out effort was being made to bring the Army under the control of the military committee of the Central Committee of the Party. It is even hinted that the Ministry of Defence, as organised by Lin Piao, should be abolished or downgraded.

From what is written in China itself, there seems to be ferment and dissatisfaction everywhere, as in every other country. The FEER article by Goodstadt states that in addition to the problem of personalities, there are major questions about cadres. According to Goodstadt, the *Red Flag Journal*, the CP official's journal, this month, outlined a basic theme of the Communist Party Congress. A long article had called for "revolution in the superstructure". Goodstadt went on to say that the feature explained that China's administrative system and legal apparatus required considerable reform to meet the needs of the developing economy. "Some unhealthy tendencies in the State organs and defects in some links of the state system stand in contradiction to the economic base of socialism," commented the *Red Flag Journal* which condemned officials who believed that because their "educational level is low", administrative reforms and implementation of sophisticated political policies "are the work of leading cadres alone."

Goodstadt stated: "The nature and speed of the re-

forms that Peking's leaders have in mind is a matter for debate. China is too vast a country for any simple blueprint to be universally acceptable without modification. Furthermore, administrative overhauls and calls for greater political awareness by all cadres, no matter how humble, inevitably create tensions and quarrels..." In this connection the *Red Flag* had observed: "...some of our comrades often fail to see

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or do not understand the hindering effect of bourgeois ideology, idealism and metaphysics on the socialist revolution and construction." On this statement, Goodstadt commented that in other words, a significant proportion at least of China's army of bureaucrats will be unable to make the grade even through the intensive study of Marxism which Red Flag (and other local publications) repeatedly urge. These officials 'feel that there are many difficulties and do not dare to advance boldly'. "Such defects and the need to purge the body politics of those afflicted by them explain the clear indications in recent months from national and provincial administrations that a weeding out of bureaucrats and a tightening of standards and discipline have been underway. These issues are the focus of brutal arguments for the Party Congress..."

SUCH WEEDING out of bureaucrats and officers in the army must cause heartburning and discontent. It is alleged that, under cover of tightening discipline, all Lin Piao's supporters were being weeded out. Many of those who are weeded out question the propriety of those who had been thrown out earlier and who were now being rehabilitated including top personalities like Teng Shiao-peng and Peng Chen. As in every country of the world, China has its quota of troubles. The harvests have failed in several districts and China has had to import grain from the USA, Australia, Canada and other countries.

Although the storms stirred by the Cultural Revolution

have died down, and China is seeking to make amends for some of the excesses, Mao himself has admitted that there was a permanent political struggle in China. Edgar Snow in one of his recent writings has quoted Mao as saying that it was inevitable that there should be a "permanent struggle" in China—"one red flag was always fighting some other red flag." And now in 1973, Mao and other leaders have urged the people "to wage a bitter struggle in order to eradicate the 'poison' left by the swindlers of the Liu Shao-chi type" and also the "ultra-rightwing-deviation" which had been propagated by Lin Piao. This permanent urge to fight deviations and revisionism must become boring at some stage, and one wonders whether this stage has not been reached in China.

In this issue, we have published an article by David Rockefeller, the American banker, who recently opened a branch of his Bank in Moscow. He writes about the OPPORTUNITIES AND RISKS IN US-SOVIET TRADE. Rockefeller had also tried to open a branch of his Bank in Peking, but he had got no further than being permitted to make the Bank of China a correspondent of his Bank. The United States is busy enlarging its trade with the USSR, but it has had to admit that Russia has caught up with the USA on the MIRVs which will make the forthcoming SALT negotiations more urgent and more complicated. American propaganda keeps prodding the USSR about the lack of liberalism and democratic largesse

in its system—in dealing with dissent within the country. The US press last week took the opportunity to remind the Soviet Union about the "invasion" of Czechoslovakia in August 1968—to defeat the Dubcek experiment to "liberalise" socialism. To the Soviet marxist, Dubcek represented bourgeois infiltration which could not be tolerated.

China and Russia have now launched a full scale propaganda war, not only on ideological grounds alone, but also on the validity of the retention of territory now held by the USSR and which the Chinese allege had been conquered by the Tsars from Mongol and Minchu dynasties which had once ruled some of these territories.

NEARER HOME, the government's propaganda machine is working overtime to convince the people that they must put up with all the

Apartheid

The South African government's permission for a British team to play soccer against an African XI caused quite a surprise in Johannesburg. It was to be the first match in the country's history between Black and White teams. The surprise was short-lived, however. The government stipulated two conditions: the match must be played in Soweto, a black suburb of Johannesburg, and the spectators must be "entirely non-Whites."

hardships, scarcities, shortages and high prices—because all over the world the situation was no different. The SLBC now specialises in retailing the difficulties which exist in other countries, the inflation which has hit countries like the USA and Japan, the famine conditions in West Africa, India and other countries.

The publications of *Lake House* echo the same line with commendable faithfulness to the cause. The *Times* goes one better. It says that this Government has done everything it could have done to make a success story—but a harsh nature and the deprivations of world trade has brought difficulties to the Government. The *Times* is also busy plugging the anti-IMF line of a section of the ruling dynasty of the UF—delink the rupee from the reserved currencies (dollar and the pound) and the rupee should be used specifically for internal purposes only; and that Sri Lanka should use the foreign currency of the countries with which trade

was conducted for such transactions.

Only the *Sun* strikes a discordant note, somewhat critical of the government, a little out of tune with its former enthusiasm for this Government which the group had helped to bring into existence. But this discordant note has helped to bring a boom to its circulation judging by the way the *Sun* and the *Dawasa* are snapped up at the newstands in Colombo and elsewhere.

The Government media thinks that it will convince the people that the propaganda it unloads on the country will make the common man see the true light of the United Front government. But people are not satisfied listening to the tales of difficulties in other countries: they want to know how and why so many things happen in Sri Lanka and how and why so many things have not happened.

People cannot be made to forget the acts of commission and omission of the

Government — despite the heavy smokescreen now being laid about inflation in Japan, soaring prices in France and famine in the normally rich agricultural countries. If our official media goes on in the way it does, it will soon put good old Goebbels to shame.

POSTSCRIPT

It was only after these notes were written—owing to difficulties in production these notes have to be written well ahead of deadlines—that the news was flashed that the Tenth Congress of the Communist Party of China had already taken place under the chairmanship of Mao Tse-tung. It had been held from August 24 to August 28. That a Congress of this magnitude, in the most populous country of the world, could have taken place without the news being reported is a stupendous achievement. The professional China-watchers in Hongkong could do no more than guess. The Congress has been called a Congress of Unity and Victory. Lin Piao has been posthumously sacked.

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CEYLON: MARGINAL NOTES

BY SERENDIB

❁ China, Sri Lanka & Russia

❁ S.L.F.P. Mudalalis

WHILST the Government media was silent, it was only the *Sun*, 28/8/73, which picked up the London *Observer's* Moscow correspondent's despatch about a report in a Soviet paper about Chinese "intrusion" into Ceylon. It was said to be a copyrighted story, but the story was no more than an extract from the Soviet weekly *Literaturnaya Gazetta*. Dev Muraka, a longstanding foreign correspondent in Moscow, in his despatch had stated that "Moscow last week made one of its rare attacks on China's role in Sri Lanka. Usually, the Russians take a cautious attitude to the close relationship between Peking and Colombo because of Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike's sensitiveness on the issue. But in a long article in the weekly *Literaturnaya Gazetta*, Mr. E. Astapenko not only attacks the Chinese but makes an implied criticism of the Sri Lanka Government's accommodating attitude to Peking. This is bound to cause some ill-feeling between Moscow and Colombo."

Moscow does not usually rush into comment of this kind. Its press is controlled, regulated and disciplined by the imperatives of Govern-

ment policy. For the record, it will be useful to publish the Murarka summary of the article, interspersed with his own interpretative comments.

"Astapenko comments on the recent inauguration of a conference hall (the BMICH) in Colombo, built by the Chinese as a gift to Sri Lanka. Hsu Hsiang-chien, Deputy Chairman of the Permanent Committee of the Chinese National People's Congress was there to take part in the ceremonies. With heavy irony, Astapenko points out that China has still to build a textile mill which it has been promising Colombo for 15 years. In the meantime, he says, East Germany has already built a factory 10 times the capacity of the projected Chinese mill.

"After quoting some Ceylonese sources, mostly pro-Soviet, in criticism of Chinese aid to Sri Lanka, Astapenko suggests that it is not lack of funds which is holding up the work on the Chinese factory. After all, Peking has found money to build the conference hall. But it is because Peking is not interested in

the industrialisation of Sri Lanka. He asserts that the bad economic conditions in Sri Lanka suit Peking because it allows China to make 'generous gestures' designed for propaganda effect, and sometimes to use these difficulties to its own advantage.

"Astapenko claims the Chinese dream 'is to turn Sri Lanka into China's bridgehead in the Indian ocean, to consolidate their influence in Asia, to strengthen their anti-Indian positions and to create an anti-Soviet atmosphere. Astapenko also openly accuses the Chinese of playing a double game in Colombo. While they maintain the friendliest of relations with the Government they also encourage and back rebel groups, he says. He sees the hand of Peking in the serious rebellion which broke out in Sri Lanka in April 1971, and claims that the facts about Maoist involvement in the rebellion are now coming to light.

"Astapenko is particularly disturbed by Chinese attempts to win over the intelligentsia of Sri Lanka, and accuses China of splitting the writers of the island by encouraging the formation of a new writers' union dominated by pro-Chinese elements. The clue to Moscow's resentment at the strong Chinese influence in Sri Lanka, however, is to be found in the reference to the Indian Ocean. Though the Russians continue to deny that they have asked Sri Lanka for naval base facilities, it is

obvious that they would not like the Chinese to get a foothold of this nature. The Russians are aware of the strategic importance of Sri Lanka in the Indian Ocean. A Chinese base facility there would put them at a considerable disadvantage.

"In the past, Moscow has refrained from expressing publicly its misgivings about Sri Lanka's pro-Chinese policies. That it has done so now seems to signify that it wants to warn Mrs. Bandaranaike's Government that its pro-China policy has gone too far."

To judge even from this brief summary of what has been called a lengthy article, there is not the slightest that the shadows of the Sino-Soviet cold war have begun to reach out in the open to Sri Lanka.

What will the Government do? Will it hit back at Moscow and tell the Kremlin to go to hell in the same way that powerful sections in the UF want to tell the IMF and the World Bank to go to hell?

What will Pieter Keuneman and the softlining communists, who insist that the UF should be supported, right or wrong, now do?

Many interesting developments will arise from Moscow's sudden decision to tell Sri Lanka that she must watch her steps so far as China was concerned.

THE MUDALALIS of the SLFP came in for a big blast of

criticism in the *Nation* of August 24. It is well to remember that it was the support of these mudalalis, financial and otherwise, which had helped to bring S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike to power in 1956. It was these mudalalis who had sustained the Party in its difficult days right up to 1970. The mudalalis had helped to win the elections, helped selected SLFPers and UF hangers-on to sustain themselves in difficult times and extended the kind of support to them which was essential to defeat the UNP at the mustings.

For such services, the mudalalis drew their dividends. They had contracts galore. They got licences. They got industries. Rich SLFP mudalalis became richer. They were a powerful group in the Palace and the Establishment during the earlier period the SLFP was in power. Even when this Government was formed, they were a big force. They were said to constitute the rightwing and it was whispered that the mudalalis favoured a tilting of the rightwing of the SLFP towards the centre-left of the UNP in order to push out the Left in the UF. There is no doubt that the mudalalis had tried hard to bring this about. All the three big groups publishing dailies had sought to help the mudalalis in this game.

Now, after 40 months of the United Front government, the SLFP mudalalis are in a bad way. They have been economically and politically crippled. The nationalisation programme of the Government has reduced the private sector to narrow

limits. The Business Acquisition Act was a sword of Damocles hung over their necks. The Land Reform Law with the land ceilings, the Ceiling on Incomes, and a whole lot of other measures no longer gives the mudalalis much room for manoeuvre. Politically, they have been isolated—the rightwing in the SLFP is for the moment a dead duck. They do not seem to count for much in the Palace or the Establishment.

But this is not to say that fortunes cannot change overnight. The mudalalis have enough resources and punch to stage a come-back, but to see that this does happen, there is a concerted move to finish them off. The *Nation* is in the forefront of this campaign. In a leading article on August 24, with the headline PRICE OF MUDALALI SUPPORT: HOW MUCH MUST GOVT. PAY? the Political Affairs Correspondent of the paper recounted the events which led to the "nationalisation" of the betel leave export trade and also referred to another scandal.

All non-traditional exports, it will be recalled, were left

The Housewife

Harvard University has compiled a list of the most boring jobs in life. It shows that the worst off is the worker on an assembly line. He is followed by the lift operator, bank guard and copy machine operator. Listed tenth as the most boring job is that of housewife.

In the hands of the private sector with generous rebates, tax concessions and FEECs premium. The betel leaves' exports to Pakistan was developed by the private sector, and a number of exporters had organised themselves into an organisation to prevent too much in-fighting. A few MPs had complained that these exporters were making too much money, and that the producers were not getting the benefit of the high prices prevailing in Pakistan. This led to the nationalisation.

The Nation took the opportunity to have a swipe at the mudalalis citing the betel leaf matter and another scandal (such scandals in the private as well as public sector now abound.)

"Two incidents in recent days have raised a basic issue relating to Government patronage of businessmen, especially those who number among political supporters

RECORD

The Italians say they are accustomed to the inefficiency of their post offices, which sometimes keep letters and parcels for weeks before delivering them. The record, however, belongs to Sardinia: it took a post card almost eleven years to cover a distance of ten kilometres. It was sent from Portoscuso Village on October 11, 1962, and reached the addressee, living in the neighbouring village of Cortoghiana only a couple of weeks ago.

and contributors to party funds. Are such people less grasping or criminal because they pretend to be aligned with one or other party of the United Front, when in fact the only alignment they know is that of the expanding waist-line? Are they to be permitted to expand their personal wealth by holding the Government and the people to ransom on the ground of what they regard as 'investments' in party coffers?

"In the first case, 47 mudalalis, Borahs and other Distinguished Citizens in the Pettah, combined in an 'association' to export betel leaf to Pakistan with the aim of establishing a monopoly of the lucrative betel leaf trade with that country. The *modus operandi* was to contract with Pakistan Airlines for exclusive freight rights, covered by full bookings of available freight space from Co.ombo to Karachi. With such control over the export outlet firmly established, prices could be dictated to producers who consist of a very large number of small cultivators.

"Among the 47 listed as members of this 'association' were such well-known tycoons as B. Jeevanjee, Hema Dabare, U. K. Edmund, J. P. I. Piyadasa, S. A. Somaratne, Lukmanji Alibhoy, S. A. Gulambussein, S. H. Mohammed, M. M. Shuhaib etc.

"It was certain that, if this ring of exploiters was permitted to consolidate its position, the producers would have been cruelly fleeced while the members of this ring would have continued to accumulate large foreign balances in the name of send-

ing out 'non-traditional exports.' Fortunately, their game was foiled by the swift action of the Minister of Foreign and Internal Trade, Mr. T. B. Illangaratne. The Minister lost no time in prohibiting the operation of private traders in the export of betel leaf and declared the trade reserved for the state organisation, Consolexpo, and the Cooperative Marketing Board.

"The second case involved the 'lease' of 40 perches of State land to a Hotel company for the purpose of putting up a 10-storey building in Mount Lavinia. The land concerned is part of what is known as the 'Mount' to the people of Mt. Lavinia and provides them with the only open space which they can use for evening promenades and general relaxation. It also serves as a playground for young people and for the students of a girls' school on one of its extremities. The 'Mount' had been given on lease by Government for 99 years to the Dehiwela-Mt. Lavinia Municipality. The latter has now decided to 'lease' 40 perches of the 'Mount' to a Hotel Company for 30 years so that the latter may erect a hotel with 100 rooms near the Mount Lavinia sea beach. The company belongs to J. P. I. Piyadasa and tour-promoter Chandra Senanayake among others.

"The M.P. for Dehiwela Mt. Lavinia, Mrs. Vivienne Goonewardene, has protested to the Minister of Shipping and Tourism, Mr. P. B. G. Kalugalle, against this appeasement of mudalali interests at

the expense of the amenities enjoyed by the people in her electorate. She has questioned the procedure adopted to transfer state property to the mudalalis. Not only was the convention violated of consulting the M.P. concerned before doing so, but a lease for 30 years to construct a 10 storey hotel building is an obvious *mala fide* act on the part of the authorities.

"At the end of 30 years will you pull down the hotel?" she has asked the Minister of Shipping and Tourism. Mrs. Goonewardene, has demanded immediate stoppage of work on the levelling of the site and cancellation of the lease to the company."

We live in the age of scandals. After Watergate in the United States, the little scandals in little Sri Lanka appear to be small beer. With the rapid expansion of the public sector, scandals in the public sector have proliferated, and today they can easily fill all the columns of our newspapers for days together.

What will the mudalalis in the SLFP do? Will they simply go under? Or will they put on sack clothes and ashes, become pukka socialists, crawl into the public sector, and make their profits in other ways? Or, will the mudalalis turn to the UNP?



UNP'S BOYCOTT CAMPAIGN ENTERS SECOND STAGE

by
Lankaputra

It is reported that the UNP's boycott campaign against the newspapers published by the Lake House group after it came under the new management will enter the second stage on the 1st of September. This stage is said to take the form of house-to-house visits by UNP leaders asking the people at the own doors not to buy, sell or advertise in the Lake House group of newspapers.

The first stage of the boycott campaign, which lasted from 1st to 3rd August, it will be remembered, took the form of UNP's picketing at bus-stands, railway stations and other public places with posters asking the general public to boycott those newspapers. As we reported in our issue of 18th August, that campaign did not have the impact that the UNP leaders hoped for. In fact, others described it as an unmitigated flop, a debacle and a damp squib that was rendered even damper by the shower of rain that came down on the 1st August morning.

SUCH being the case, why the UNP under its new leadership should go on to another second stage whose results might even be more disastrous to them is difficult to surmise.

Mr. J. R. Jayewardene has referred to the declining sales of the Lake House newspapers. Even if this is correct, it cannot be attributed to the UNP's public campaign. No doubt, the diehard UNP's followed the advise of their leaders and stopped buying Lake House newspapers. And as there are quite a number of such UNP followers, sales were bound to drop. But that, as we said, cannot in any way be connected with the UNP's so-called first stage of the boycott campaign.

It may be also that politically neutral readers ceased to buy Lake House

papers after the take-over by the new management and the new look adopted by the editors under the new owners. Here again, it is the latter that must take the blame. The UNP cannot take the credit.

That is why it is difficult to hazard a guess as to the UNP's decision to go ahead with another public boycott campaign.

Why did the first stage of their campaign prove to be such a colossal failure? To our minds, several reasons can be adduced for this.

In the first place, the UNP went to the public—for the first time after the United Front Government was elected to power—on an issue that did not concern the masses. An UNP MP himself

(Mr. A. C. S. Hameed) said in the course of the debate on the Associated Newspapers of Ceylon Ltd. (Special Provisions) Bill:

"Do you really think that the people of this country are interested in the restructuring of the shares of the Lake House? Today the people are more interested in Bake House than in Lake House. The people want food."

WHY, OH WHY, did the UNP then go to the people on an issue that did not concern them? Perhaps, it is the recognition on their part of this Achilles' heel in their campaign that has made Mr. Jayawardene to raise the issues of scarcities and high prices of food items also during their second stage. But in the absence of constructive suggestions towards their solution, this gimmick is not likely to take them anywhere.

In the second place, in coming out against the new Lake House set-up, the UNP appeared to the people in a familiar role—that of defender of vested interests and the status quo, a party defending the existence of the old order against the emergence of the new.

Thirdly, the UNP in their boycott campaign appeared to controve one of their own principles—the right for all parties to propagate their points of view. It appeared as a party that was prepared to defend Lake House only so long as it peddled their point of view.

But the most telling blow to the UNP's campaign was delivered by Government spokesmen

and newspapers who refreshed people's memories with the UNP's own record of defending the freedom of the press they so loudly prate about today. They reminded the readers how soon after the UNP was returned to power in 1965—with all three big newspapers groups supporting the UNP and the state radio too in their hands—they stopped so low as to seal the presses of the Aththa and Janadina newspapers, the only Opposition newspapers at that time with a limited circulation, for long periods on end and permanently ban their transport through CTB buses.

As the UNP enters the second stage of its boycott campaign, it is appropriate to remind the UNP leaders of a challenge hurled at them in the National State Assembly by Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike. "Why do you not have the courage even now to stand upon your hind legs—you have the chance to reply—and declare honestly that you will repeal this law and restore the shares of all the persons named in the Schedule?"

THIS CHALLENGE still remains unanswered—for obvious reasons. It opposes the present law, but cannot say it will repeal it for then they appear to be the defenders of a few private capitalists. Then why oppose the present set-up without making constructive alternative suggestions? This has always been the dilemma of the UNP.

In 1957, a year after the late Mr. Bandaranaike was elected to power, the UNP went to town and the late Mr. Dudley Senanayake staged his come-back to politics after a period of temporary retirement on the issue of the Bandaranaike-Chelvanayakam agreement. This agreement, it will be remembered, reduced to a certain extent the animosities that had been created between the two communities after the enactment of the Sinhala Only Act the year before.

But after the UNP came to power again, what happened? Mr. Dudley Senanayake came to an agreement with Mr. Chelvanayakam which both of them admitted were based on the same lines as the Bandaranaike - Chelvanayakam pact of 1957!

Again, soon after the Government of Mrs. Bandaranaike was formed in 1960, the UNP joined the clergy of the Roman Catholic Church

IT WORKS

The Ohio (U. S. A.) police authorities have thought up a novel way of encouraging policemen in combating car thefts. A policeman who recovers a stolen vehicle and arrests them gets a special badge. For five such badges he is given a new car. The number of cars recovered and returned to their owners has increased by 49 per cent since the introduction of this system of incentives.

THE PUBLIC SERVICE

GOING OFF THE RAILS

By CANAX

in opposing the take over of assisted schools, even staging the famous extra-parliamentary mass occupation of these schools and the UNP itself launching a campaign from Shrubbery Gardens to openly break the laws of the land.

They made the Catholics understand—especially on the eve of the Negombo and Nattandiya by-elections held after they came to power—that they would soon restore the *status quo* in the matter of these schools. It was when all hope of the UNP redeeming their promise was lost that Cardinal Cooray released the correspondence that had passed between them to the press, revealing to all the world the pie-crust nature of UNP promises.

It has been so with many other measures that the UNP has opposed during their stay in the Opposition. They were opposed to the Paddy Lands Act, the nationalisation of the bus services, the reduction of the voting age to 18, the take-over of the business of the import and distribution of petroleum from the foreign oil companies etc. etc. But in none of these cases was the UNP, after it came back to power, able to make any change back to the old order of things.

When Mr. Dudley Senanayake was once asked why this was so, he replied tersely: "Because you cannot unscramble scrambled eggs."

The UNP, now going on to the second stage of their boycott campaign against the Lake House newspapers, is only trying to make a second attempt to unscramble scrambled eggs.

I HAVE little patience with those who keep knocking the Public Service at every turn, possibly because they have nothing worse to do. My conclusion may seem shaky, but if the performance of its branch in the Railway is anything to go by, I'd say the Public Service is as good as ever. There was a time, of course, when I did have some doubts, and even feared the Service as a whole was fast losing its great traditions, but not anymore.

A Public Service acquaintance who heard me talking in this strain was beside himself with joy, and openly wished there were more people like me, though he may have said that only because he felt one good compliment deserved another.

"Of course we still go out of our way to be downright difficult, but then the public is never satisfied," he observed more in exasperation than in anger.

Maybe some public servants were not trying hard enough, I suggested, but he dismissed the idea as unworthy of serious consideration. No public servant got to call himself one until he had proved his mettle. The training was long and tough, but of course all that was reduced to nought if a recruit didn't have it in him to start with.

"Mark my words," he said, sounding prophetic.

"Public servants are not made, they're born, and a good public servant is not just born, he's reborn."

"Into the Service?" I asked.

"Where else?" he countered. "Another branch, perhaps, but certainly not outside the Service."

"Can't keep a good man down," I agreed, "much less a good public servant down."

HIS OWN explanation for occasional lapses on the part of public servants was that they too were human and did sometimes act that way for reasons beyond their control, or comprehension.

"We live in difficult times," he pleaded in mitigation, "so one must expect to find now and then a public servant who's so preoccupied with his personal problems that he will thoughtlessly go out of his way and actually help the public."

A comprehensive study of all such cases over a period of several years seemed to suggest that public servants tended to forget themselves and be helpful only when members of the public they happened to come up against also happened to be either their friends or their relatives.

"Successive Governments have been at a loss to know what to do," he admitted.

"There was talk at one time of introducing a rule that on becoming a public servant one's friends and relatives automatically ceased to exist, but I doubt if that will work."

I said I doubted it too. "One can't give up one's friends that easily," I said, "and one can't give up one's relatives at all."

By now he was keen to know precisely what it was about the Railway that made me feel the Public Service was still in fine form. So I told him, and I'll tell you too.

There was this member of the public who had the brass to make an advance booking at the Fort Railway Station for one adult and one child to travel somewhere by third-class 'sleeperette'. But cussed chap that he was, he decided, just one day before the proposed date of travel, to change his plans and have two adults go instead.

THE MAN was even bold enough to trek back to the booking counter and ask that the Railway accommodate his sudden whim. He was directed to the other end of the same counter, where another public servant sat issuing 'sleeperette' tickets. There was a queue already but the man, not one to be so easily put off, took his place and worked his way up, determined to have his ~~demnable~~ way.

At this stage it is alleged, as they say in Police reports, that the public servant who listened to the man was unbearably courteous to him, even going so far as to appear positively sympathetic, in the process wasting precious

public service time to explain that the 'excess ticket' the man required had to be obtained, not from him, but from Counter No. 4.

So off the man went in search of No. 4. He found it soon enough, but couldn't get to it at once. There was a fairly long queue standing between him and his destination. Another determined wait and then he got his chance—to see the Public Service in action.

The man again had the nerve to say what he wanted, but the matter was too simple for the public servant at No. 4 to fully understand, let alone appreciate, fully or otherwise. So he called for help from another colleague, who readily came to his rescue and asked to hear the story all over again. Thanks to the special effort he was making he too couldn't make head or tail of the commuter's unreasonably straightforward tale. So he in turn went off to consult a few more colleagues, and was back in five minutes. The dialogue that followed went like this:

"You have 1½ tickets, no? Now you want to make it 2 tickets?"

THE COMMUTER, prize idiot that he was, imagined he was at last getting somewhere. "Yes," he said eagerly, "I want to buy the extra half ticket so I'll have two full."

"But you can't."

"You mean, even if I buy the extra half I still won't have two tickets though I have paid for two?"

"That's right."

"Then what will I have?"

"You'll have one full and two halves."

"That's funny. I was taught two halves make one full."

"Where?"

"In school, I suppose."

"Doesn't matter, so long as you didn't pick that up from the Railway."

"May I speak to the Station Master?"

The Station Master happened to be busy at the time, so three other public servants present chose to take on the commuter instead and show him the error of his ways. The discussion, as it was retailed to me:

"Why did you buy 1½ tickets?" asks one.

"Because they were for one adult and one child."

"Ah ha!" chortles another, triumphantly preparing to deliver the coup de grace. "So now you are trying to take somebody else!" An appropriate gesture with his hand indicates that, in the Public Service view, the attempt to change plans is not altogether above board.

"Not trying to," cries the commuter defiantly, "but wanting to, and willing to pay for it as well."

"But you're not taking the child, no?" asks the first.

"Why else would I want to make a half ticket into a full?"

"You should have decided that at the start, instead of creating problems for us," snaps the second. "We did you a favour giving your ticket in advance."

"I'm sorry, I didn't know it was a crime to change my mind," the commuter whines, shaking with fright.

"Anyway, we can't do anything now," says the third with finality. "Come at five tomorrow morning and buy your excess ticket for the other half."

HAVING listened to the story, my Public Service acquaintance glowed with pride. "That's the right spirit," he beamed. But he was quite disappointed with the attitude of the public servant behind the 'sleeperette' counter, who he felt was too soft and probably too young to know better. "As I said, you get the odd ball once in a way."

Though the boys in the Railway hadn't resorted to it, he felt they could very well have fallen back on ARs and FRs if ever they felt unequal to the task of successfully frustrating the commuter. One had to read them to realise how useful they could be.

"I dare say it takes a lot of practice," he said, "but once you learn to look a simple problem in the eye and complicate it beyond recognition without losing your nerve or too much time, the rest is easy. After that, making a difficult problem impossible is child's play."

I could not but agree. "If there's a will there's a way to complicate anything, however simple it may appear to the untrained public eye," I murmured, reaching out for what little was left of my bottled sunshine.

LIN PIAO - I

The Story of A Struggle for Power

By

Wilfred Burchett

We publish in two instalments Wilfred Burchett's story of Lin Piao's attempt to oust Mao Tse-tung and capture supreme power. The concluding part will appear next week.

Peking,

A great deal of time at the forthcoming Congress of the Chinese Communist Party, preparatory meetings for which have already begun here, will be devoted to discussing the case of Lin Piao, former vice-President, minister of defence and officially designated successor to Mao Tse-tung. A massive dossier on Lin Piao's waverings, ambitions and feudal-type plotting has been under discussion all over China for several weeks. Some lurid details on the private life of Lin Piao, his wife Yeh Chun and son Lin Li-kuo—proclaimed a "genius" by his father—are included. But the essence of the charges against Lin Piao are similar to those against Liu Shao-chi—summed up in the stock phrases "political swindlers" and "capitalist roaders" with an occasional "having illicit relations with foreign powers" thrown in for good measure.

The report shatters the image of Lin Piao created by himself and his closest follo-

wers—chief among them his rather sinister looking wife, who, with her down slanting eyebrows, looked like a villain from Chinese classical opera: she appears in the report as a tireless intriguer catering to the overweening ambitions of her husband, but with ambitions of her own as well. The image of Lin as the "closest companion-in-arms" and the "unwavering supporter" of Mao is repudiated. One of Mao's most famous articles, *A Single Spark Can Start a Prairie Fire*, the report recalls, was in fact a letter of criticism addressed to Lin Piao in 1930 because of his vacillating and pessimistic attitude in moments of crisis. The image presented in the report is of someone continually wandering from the straight and narrow and being pulled back into line by Mao Tse-tung; a Lin Piao repeatedly promising to correct his errors but never really changing his basic ideas.

That Lin Piao had his merits as a field commander is not denied. Neither is the fact that "although he turned out to be a traitor, he also did many good things", as a high government official expressed it to me.

As examples of the lengths to which Lin's closest supporters went to fabricate

the "closest disciple," image, the report quotes two recent paintings as falsifications of history. One was of the famous episode of the meeting of the Red Army forces headed by Mao with those headed by Chu Teh in Kiangsi Province at the beginning of the Long March in 1935. In the painting it is Lin Piao who leads the second column. Chu Teh is nowhere to be seen. The report points out that Lin followed Chu Teh when he mistakenly decided to return to Hunan instead of joining Mao in the Long March. (Mao went after Chu Teh and persuaded him to join him in the Long March.)

The second painting shows Lin by Mao's side at the Tsunyi Conference at which Mao was elected, after a heated debate as Secretary General of the Communist Party's Central Committee. In fact the report notes that Lin was a back-bencher who never opened his mouth during the debate—and voted against Mao. It was judged necessary to expose such details as the falsifications because they help to explain the overweening personal ambitions that pushed Lin to the ultimate crime: the attempted assassination of Chairman Mao on the night of September 12, 1971, followed by Lin's fatal attempt to flee to the Soviet Union via Ulan Bator in the early hours of the following morning.

That Mao had been suspicious of Lin's machinations for a considerable time is clear from the remarkable letter he sent to his wife, Chiang Ching, on July 8, 1966; the version from which the

following extracts are taken was published in *Le Monde*, Paris, on December 2, 1972. Responsible officials in Peking admit that, apart from reservations on a few points of translation, the letter is authentic—a rare confirmation that a text originally diffused by Chiang Kai-Shek's intelligence services is correct.

"Evil geniuses surge forth spontaneously," Mao wrote. "Predetermined by their class origins, they cannot act other than they do. The Central Committee is in a hurry to distribute the text of a speech by our friends. I am prepared to agree to this. In this speech he particularly referred to the problem of a coup d'etat." (The speech in question was a report given by Lin Piao at an enlarged meeting of the Political Bureau on May 18, 1965, in which Lin Piao in the most vehement terms denounced Peng Chen (then in charge of the Peking Party Committee), Lo Jui-ching (then Chief of Staff of PLA but dropped later that year) and other top-ranking leaders, for involvement in a murderous coup attempt against Mao.) "Ever has such language been used", Mao continued, and it is clear that he had his doubts both as to the alleged plot and Lin Piao's motives. "Certain of his ideas greatly disturbed me. I could never have believed that my little books could have such magic power. Now that he has so praised them, the whole country will follow his example..It is the first time in my life that I am in agreement with the others on the essence of a problem against my will.."

Mao then quotes from a Chinese classic that "the world being in need of a hero, enabled a type like Liu Pang to make his name.." and later gives his wife a direct warning about her own association with Lin Piao, "You must pay great attention to his weak points, his defects and his mistakes. I do not know how often I have spoken about this. I spoke of it again in April in Shanghai. What I have said may seem treason. Don't anti-party elements talk just like this? But to look at it that way would be incorrect. The difference between what I say and what traitors say is that I am speaking of my own reactions, while the traitors aim at overthrowing our party and myself.." (Mao is clearly referring here to Liu Shao-Chi and his supporters the fight against whom was reaching its climax at this time.) He explains why—at a time when the Cultural Revolution was reaching its peak—it was difficult for him to speak out openly against Lin Piao. "At the present moment, all those on the left speak the same language. If what I write to you were divulged publicly, it would look as if I were pouring cold water on them and thus aiding the right.

Our task at present is to partially overthrow the right—not totally because that is impossible—inside and throughout the country. In seven or eight years, we will launch another movement to clean up the evil geniuses.." (By his ill-fated coup attempt in September 1971, Lin Piao haste-

ned this latter process by two or three years.)

The report makes it clear that Lin was a most enthusiastic supporter of the Cultural Revolution because it enabled him to eliminate a very serious rival for power—Liu Shao chi—and many others while reinforcing his public and party image as the closest and the most devoted alter ego of Chairman Mao. Similarly, when Liu and a number of other important "rightists" and "capitalist-roaders" were eliminated Lin used the so-called May 16 Movement in what at first seemed an "ultra leftist" movement to eliminate as many others as possible, starting with his most serious rival, Premier Chou En-lai. When the ultra-leftists stormed the foreign Ministry in mid 1971 and viciously denounced Foreign Minister Chen Yi, it was Chou who was the real target, Chen Yi fought back like a lion valiantly defended by Chou, but Chen Yi went down fighting and, for a while, was eclipsed. Then the ultra-leftists, directed from behind by Lin, turned their guns directly on Chou-En-lai—but behind Chou stood Mao Tsetung and this was too big a target to take on openly. Chou was very briefly eclipsed, but when his detractors demanded he appear before them, Mao said: "Agreed as long as I stand with him". (The role of Chen Po-ta—like Mao, Chou, Lin and Kang Sheng a member of the Permanent Secretariat of the Communist Party—in this ultra-leftist movement will also be discussed at the forthcoming Congress)

All the above is part of the essential background to understanding the dramatics of September 12-13, 1971. But there are two other essential links in the chain of events.

At the Ninth Party Congress in April 1969, Mao rejected out of hand and in toto the report that Lin Piao had prepared. Another report was drafted, this won Mao's approval, but, on the question of having Lin named his successor it was apparently the second time in his life that he was "in agreement with the others on the essence of a problem against my will". Doubtless he could not afford an open confrontation with Lin before the dust of the Cultural Revolution has settled, in view of the key role played by the army.

But at the second Central Committee Plenum of the Ninth Congress, the Mao-Lin confrontation broke into the open as far as party affairs were concerned. Lin Piao's supporters, with his wife Yeh Chun, the leading activist in pushing from behind, proposed that Lin be appointed president of the republic—a post left vacant after Liu Shao-chi's disgrace. Mao opposed this and he delivered himself of a very strong criticism of Lin for his ever-impatience in bidding for the leadership. Doubtless this will be a passionately interesting section of the report, if it is published verbatim.

Lin seems to have considered—probably correctly—that his hopes for supreme power were ended. So from the heir-apparent (or "socerer"

apprentice" as he appeared in photos and paintings with his perpetually wagging little red book) Lin turned into a classical, feudal type conspirator from that moment on. Some elements of the drama played out on September 12-13, 1971 have been revealed piecemeal, but the full, connected account goes as follows as confirmed by most authoritative sources in Peking.

(To be concluded)

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CHRONICLE

JULY 5-9

A Diary of Events in Sri Lanka and the World compiled from English-language dailies published in Colombo.

THURSDAY, JULY 5: The *Daily News* led with a front page story about the decision of the Communist Party's Central Committee: the story said that Messrs. M. G. Mendis, Arnolis Appuhamy and C. Kumaraswamy had been sacked from the Party for anti-party activities and for "aiding and abetting" the holding of a separate meeting at the New Town Hall to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Party. It is doubtful, according to the *Daily News*, whether Sri Lanka will be granted the \$25 million standby credit by the IMF: the high power delegation that left for Washington last week to negotiate the standby for Sri Lanka has not received a favourable response. According to the *Sun*, the Food Department authorities have nabbed fifty people possessing 50,000 rice ration books obtained by fraudulent means. Owing to the disinterest on the part of Sri Lanka, a tea market in Iran worth at least one million pounds sterling is at stake, according to the newly appointed Iranian Ambassador Mr. Manoutcher Zelli. At the C.J.C. inquiry trying the insurgents of April 1971, a SP said that there is a possibility a foreign source might have helped the insurrection. The 35-state European Security Conference got underway yesterday at Helsinki. The US State Department, making a comment on the forthcoming French Nuclear tests in the Pacific wanted all countries to adhere to the limited Test Ban Treaty of 1963: but when asked about last week's China's nuclear test, the spokesman Mr. Hare, refused to condemn the Chinese test. Famous actress Elizabeth Taylor announced yesterday a separation from her actor husband Richard Burton. Ex President of Pakistan, General Yahya Khan's detention without trial is being challenged in the Court of Lahore. India has agreed to a proposal by Pakistan to hold new talks in an attempt to resolve problems on the sub-continent.

FRIDAY, JULY 6: An important conference of all Government agents and Assistant Commissioners of Local Government will be held on July 16 to discuss about the decentralisation of the national budget and the administration. The Colombo Detective Bureau, has commenced a campaign to register all domestic male servants. Encroachers on state land in the Poonanai area in the Batticaloa District are reported to be vacating after the recent declaration of this area as "proclaimed". Three estates totalling over 1400 acres in the Kegalle district were taken over by the Government, yesterday: Mr. Hector Kobbe-kaduwa, Minister of Agriculture and Lands, presided over the taking over ceremony which was held in the Dedigama electorate. The IGP has called for a full report from the Batticaloa police in connection with the alleged assault by certain police personnel on members of the public at the bus stand. The Catholic Students Federation said yesterday that Cardinal Cooray had declared the "thirty year old Federation which was founded by late Father A. Peter Pillai dissolved": the President of the Association has received a letter to this effect from the Cardinal. The *Sun* led with a front page story that silver bars were smuggled from Sri Lanka to South India to pay for the 48,000 detonators which were seized by the Sri Lanka navy in the high seas recently: this is what the CID team sent to India to investigate this matter had discovered. The election of office bearers to the GCSU is scheduled to be held tomorrow. The *Times* reported that a cyclonic storm, which had hit Galgamuwa, had caused havoc over a wide area. US President had "toyed with the idea" of resigning last May 4 as a result of Watergate scandal, his daughter Julie has told newspapermen. At the European Security Conference now being held at the Helsinki, the Soviet Union has proposed a ten-point master plan for world peace. A Boeing 737 "Argentine Airlines" plane has been hijacked with 70 people aboard. US Secretary General, Kurt Waldheim, yesterday called for the creation of a system of "collective economic security" for all nations in the world.

SATURDAY, JULY 7: Structural changes to the University of Sri Lanka under the Education Ministry's scheme of University reorganisation begins next week: this redis-

tribution of various faculties and Departments should be on a trial basis for two years according to the Minister of Education. The two leaders of the UF and the UNP will wind up their election campaigns at Dedigama today: the polling for the by-election takes place on Monday. Another 600 to 700 persons now held in custody in connection with the April insurrection are due to be released shortly. A Superintendent of Police from a division north of Colombo was remanded pending investigations into an allegation of bribery. The North Korean Embassy in Sri Lanka issued a cheque for Rs. one lakh in April 1971 for the crediting of £ 5,000 to a foreign account, it was revealed at the CJC inquiry into foreign exchange frauds. Interpol has alerted the Sri Lanka police over the 18 valuable Italian paintings, which were stolen from a church in that country. Election of office bearers to the GCSU are to be held today. Sri Lanka's export to the Arab countries has almost doubled within the last three years, according to Sri Lanka's Ambassador in Cairo. The Government has introduced a clamp on public servants travelling abroad on pilgrimages. An Israeli-newspaper reported yesterday that foreign diplomats in Rome have been warned that a 21-man band, including two Japanese pilots were planning to hijack an airliner to carry out a suicide mission over an Israeli city. The United Nations is working out an emergency food plan with leading grain exporting countries in case of a world food shortage. Cows which took grass apparently contaminated by fall-out of the latest Chinese nuclear test, were found to contain iodine in their milk.

SUNDAY, JULY 8: In an attempt to increase the foreign exchange earnings, over 150 vintage cars belonging to the "X" series and those prior to it will be exported shortly by the Government. The Bribery Commissioner has asked over 400 men in the Police, Custom, Excise and the Paddy Marketing Board to bare their assets. TAFFI forces on anti-smuggling operations have been alerted about the possible diversions of foreign cargo vessels to points in the North for smuggling activities. All emigrants from Sri Lanka will, in future, be entitled to a sum of only £ 100 for an entire family: in case they are unable to arrange for pre-paid tickets, exchange for outward pass-

age will be granted: following this ruling the black market rates for foreign currencies have shot up. Corporation bosses are empowered to suspend any employee if he is suspected of having engaged in any activity prejudicial to the interests of the Government. The Observer magazine has published a front page story on corruption in the Railway: the paper reports that the General Manager has ordered an all-out war against bribery and corruption in his Department. In the election of office bearers to the GCSU, once again the pro-LSSP group retained control. 108 persons including 4 Buddhist monks were yesterday served with charge sheets in connection with the April 71 insurrection. Pakistan has proposed July 28 as the date for official talks with India to resolve humanitarian problems caused by the 1971 war. The Soviet Union, today, for the first time voiced direct criticism of the most recent nuclear tests by China.

MONDAY, JULY 9: Almost all the papers have led with front page stories about today's by-election at Dedigama. A section of the Tamil Congress is of the view, according to the Sun, that as soon as Mr. G. G. Ponnambalam returns to the island from Malaysia at the end of this month, the Congress should sever relations with the Tor. Mr. Nihal Jayawickrama, Secretary to the Ministry of Justice, has told the Sun that charge sheets will be served on about 3500 persons within the next two to three weeks, in connection with the April 71 insurrection. Mr. V. A. Sugathadasa, an ex Minister is critically ill and is warded in a private nursing home. 140 Government teachers have been reinterdicted in connection with the insurgent movement. According to police sources the smuggling of luxury items has recorded an all time high, during the last few months. The decision on the petitions against the Lake House Bill will be announced by the Speaker, Mr. Stanley Tillekaratne when the National State Assembly meets tomorrow. By July 1 this year 52 estates to the extent of 150,000 acres had been taken over by the Government. Seventyfive homes were destroyed by a cyclone which hit panna in the Katugampola area on Saturday morning. France has banned from next Wednesday all vessels within a 12 nautical mile radius of her nuclear test site at Mururoa in the South Pacific.

MULTI-MILLIONAIRE VIEWPOINT

Opportunities and Risks in US-Soviet Trade

By DAVID ROCKEFELLER

Chairman of the Board, Chase National Bank

The author has had continuing contacts with Soviet citizens over the past decade, and recently visited Moscow to open an office of his Bank there. He made this statement before the Joint Economic Committee of the U.S. Congress. His thesis is that the potential political and economic benefits in increasing trade between the Soviet Union and the United States make the risk involved a prudent one. Mr. Rockefeller is head of America's third largest Bank.

I BELIEVE that the changes we see taking place in the Soviet Union's relations with the West in general and with the United States in particular are genuine, fundamental and deeply-rooted in economic pragmatism.

The policy of economic isolationism that characterized the USSR for many decades is being seriously reassessed. It has not brought the hoped-for benefits and rate of economic growth has been sluggish, if not declining, since the mid-1960's. As workers are expecting material improvements, the Soviet leaders are responding by placing a high priority on raising living standards and improving the quality of the diet.

In terms of technology, Soviet industry is generally conceded to be lagging behind the West. Increase in labour and capital inputs no longer can be expected to provide strong stimulus to

growth as in the past. The need, as indicated in the latest Five Year Plan, is to raise output per unit of labour or capital input. This means higher productivity. Despite large capital outlays, productivity levels in the Soviet Union are still substantially behind those of the United States. A Report, issued last year by former Secretary of Commerce, Peter Peterson, showed that labour productivity in the USSR was 41 percent of that of the United States in industry and only 11 percent in Agriculture.

Their search for assistance extends to our country because the United States enjoys the world's technological superiority in precisely those economic sectors that the Soviet Union needs to develop—Agriculture, computers, Pipeline Transmission and Heavy Machinery for Natural Resource development. U.S. industry and our

Financial institutions also have the ability to handle very large projects.

In the past, when economic difficulties occurred, the Soviet policy makers exhorted workers to work harder and consumers to hold down consumption levels. Such belt-tightening programs now appear to be less acceptable. The preferred alternative is to turn westward in the expectation that improved economic ties with the United States and other western countries will strengthen the Soviet economy. At the same time, the improvement in the world political environment, especially the ending of U.S. direct military involvement in Vietnam, has—I believe made it more possible for the Soviets to seek more enduring economic ties with the United States.

THE DESIRE of the Soviets to use Western trade, credits and technology to bolster their own economy hopefully could be accompanied by their giving lower priority to military programs. The large amount of resources they now devote to such economically non-productive activities—it is reported to be substantially greater in relation to GNP than in the United States or any other major power—could better be utilized to strengthen their economic capabilities. I hope that this turns out to be so.

At the moment, however, I think it is premature to conclude that the military competition between the Soviet Union and the United States is at an end.

My own belief is that in the longer run we both stand to gain a great deal in terms of both long-run political and economic benefits from the expansion of U.S. — Soviet commercial relations.

Initially, however, opportunities for the political benefits appear to be the more significant, at least, from our point of view. If the currently improved atmosphere leads to a world of real peace, then the present efforts at *detente*—of which increased commercial relations form an important part—will prove to be highly beneficial to the United States as well as the rest of the world.

On purely the economic side, the Soviets do appear to gain an advantage—if only for the short run—in increased trade. Expanding their purchases from the United States through credit can increase the availability of goods in their domestic markets, thus offsetting the negative effects of shortages of key commodities or products.

The corresponding expansion of U.S. exports, while very desirable and by no means negligible, may be of less significance in relation to our economy than the imports are to theirs.

The major economic benefits to the United States will become more evident in the longer run, as commercial relations expand in scope and depth. In particular, the extensive natural resources that are to be found in the Soviet Union could help alleviate prospective U.S. shortages, especially of sources of energy.

There is admittedly a degree of risk involved, when we consider that political benefits are not yet assured, and that major economic benefits are still in the future. However, it is in the best American tradition to welcome prudent risks for the challenging opportunities they bring. The world of business and the world international affairs

have always involved risks. We have learned to deal effectively with these in the past, and I don't see why we should not be able to deal with them in the future—especially when the risks of failure to act could also be great and when the possible benefits for us all are enormous.

It is my own view that, despite understandable reservations, the United States should extend most favored treatment status to the USSR.

The question, as I see it, is how best to promote personal contacts and exchanges of ideas, which are essential to the breaking down of barriers between East and West. Increased commercial relations are one important way of getting each side to better know the other. If the MFN issue proves a stumbling block to a broader range of economic exchanges, we may lose a good opportunity to re-fashion the world along more rational and more cooperative lines.



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THE INDIAN OCEAN

French Bases and French Naval Presence

By J. P. Anand

Institute For Defense Studies & Analyses, New Delhi.

Not many people know that the French have a sizable naval presence in the Indian Ocean, including substantial base facilities. This article by J. P. Anand, of the Institute of Defence Studies and Analyses, New Delhi, provides information which will interest many in Sri Lanka.

France maintains continuous military presence in some of its former colonial territories and colonial dependencies which are located along the eastern coast of Africa and in the south and south-west region of the Indian Ocean.

The French territories along the eastern coast of Africa are—(i) French Somaliland, (ii) Comoros and (iii) Reunion Islands. The main islands and archipelagos in the south and south-western Indian Ocean region are—(i) Isle Amsterdam, (ii) Isle Saint Paul, (iii) Kerguelen Archipelago and (iv) Crozet Archipelago.

The main former colonial territory in which France maintains a military presence is the island Republic of Malagasy, formerly known as Madagascar, off the coast of south Africa, commanding the sea route around the Cape of Good Hope.

FRENCH BASES. The existing French bases and military facilities are mainly at Djibouti in French Somaliland and Diego Suarez naval base and Tananarive airbase in Malagasy. Besides, there are meteorological outposts at Amsterdam, Crozet and Kerguelen. Isle Amsterdam has a special strategic significance as it lies midway between South-West Australia and South Africa.

A site for potential staging or transit post, Amsterdam

lies due south of the island of Diego Garcia on the southern end of the Central Ridge of the Indian Ocean. The development of an airfield or staging facilities could provide a stop-over to aircraft between Perth (West Australia) and South African airports.

DJIBOUTI (FRENCH SOMALILAND.) French Somaliland—the land of Afars and Issas—is situated in northeast Africa at the head of the Gulf

of Aden, entrance to the Red Sea and opposite to the south-western tip of the Arabian peninsula, across the Bab el Mandeb Strait. The shipping traffic has fallen since the closing of the Suez Canal in June 1967. Djibouti is the capital with a good airport and a harbour as well as a radio station. It is linked by rail with Addis Ababa.

The total strength of the French garrison in mid-1972 was estimated at 2,400—1,600 in the Army, 300 in the Navy and 500 in the Air Force. The navy had two minesweepers and some landing craft. The Air Force had 12 combat aircraft, one transport squadron and some helicopters. The gendarmerie consists of 500 including 400 locally recruited auxiliaries. France is planning to reinforce its garrison in the territory.

Western powers feel that in the present circumstances especially after the British pull-out from the Aden base, the enclave of French Somaliland should continue to remain in French hands due to its immense strategic importance especially when the Suez Canal is re-opened. From here, it is easy to monitor the movement of ships between the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean.

MALAGASY REPUBLIC. Under the 1960 defence agreement, the French have the right to maintain their bases and other military facilities in Malagasy. The headquarters of C-in-C of the French armed forces in the South Indian Ocean are located at Tananarive, capital of the re-

public. Brig-General Marcel Bigeard was appointed head of the French forces in early June 1971 with responsibility over Malagasy, Reunion Island and the Comoros. Considered to be a top counter-insurgency expert, Brig-Gen. Bigeard was seconded in recent years to several African nations to help train national armies. There were 3,000 French troops including Foreign Legionaries under his command in mid-1972.

There is an agreement with France, under which Malagasy receives aid in training and equipment in exchange for the right to maintain bases and other facilities in the republic.

DIEGO SUAREZ AND TANANARIVE BASES. The French have a small naval force and a regiment of about 1,000 Foreign Legion infantrymen based mostly on Diego Suarez in the north. The French have moorings there for two coastguard vessels or sub-chasers and one ship of frigate size. The French Navy maintains a frigate, two minesweepers and a landing craft. France uses Diego Suarez for "tropics familiarisation" tours of its sailors. American, British and other warships occasionally call at the port.

The French Air Force has Nord Atlas and DC-3 paratroop carriers and some Skyraider ground aircraft—12 combat aircraft and 6 transports, freighters—at Tananarive, where a regiment of marine infantry parachutists is also stationed. In 1972, the total strength of the French forces in Malagasy

was placed at 2,000-1,250 in the Army, 450 in the Navy and 300 in the Air Force.

Malagasy and French forces carried out week-long manoeuvres in the Majunga district of north west Malagasy, opposite the Comoros Island and Mozambique, which concluded on 22 September 1971. About 600 French Army, Navy and Air Force

personnel took part in the joint manoeuvres along with 2,000 Malagasy personnel. The government is planning to develop a super tanker port at Narinda on the north-west coast of the republic. The Vice-President for Foreign Affairs, Jacques Rabemananjara has however denied that the port could become a naval base.

HORMONE MAY HELP AGRICULTURE IN DROUGHT-STRICKEN REGIONS

Crop scientists in Mexico and Malawi are testing a hormone which acts virtually as an anti-perspirant to conserve water evaporating from crops in drought or desert conditions. Laboratory tests on cereals in Britain have suggested that a single application of the hormone—abscisic acid—can reduce water consumption by about 50 per cent in nine days, without any obvious interference with growth. Dr. T. A. Mansfield, of the Department of Biological Sciences at the University of Lancaster, in north-west England, told a gathering of British scientists that there had been considerable research into the possibility of cutting the rate of evaporation from crops by inducing partial closure of the plant's stomatal pores. Chemicals had been found which would do this and save water, but they usually also reduced growth too much to be of practical value.

But, he told the annual meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, in Canterbury, south-east England, a new approach to the problem had been suggested by the discovery that abscisic acid—a hormone which occurs widely in plants—can induce closure of the stomata if a very dilute solution is applied to the leaves. Dr. Mansfield suggested that one of the major natural roles of abscisic acid may be to reduce water lost during drought, for it had been found in large quantities in plants under these conditions. "If we apply abscisic acid to a plant to reduce transpiration we are making use of a built-in mechanism; we are introducing nothing that is foreign to the metabolism", he said. Field tests at the international Maize and Wheat Improvement Centre in Mexico and the Tea Research Foundation in Malawi had yet to demonstrate that the hormone could be used successfully for controlling water loss from crops on a large scale. But laboratory work had been encouraging, and simple chemical derivatives from the hormone appeared to be even more effective than the parent compound.

In Malagasy, the new government headed by General Gabriel Ramantosa is seeking basic change in the republic's close relations with France. Foreign Minister Didier Ratsiraka told *Daily News* (26 August 1972) of Dar-es-Salaam that although foreign relations with France were good, pre-independence agreements signed with Paris must be changed. The economy must be taken out of the control of foreigners and placed in the hands of the Malagasy people.

The KIM (Committee of the Common Struggle)* in September 1972 called for the removal of French and other foreign bases in the republic. The French bases, they contend, constituted "a sword of Damocles". The new Power for the Little Peoples Party (MFM) on 17 January 1973 called for the removal of French military bases from Malagasy, slating them as "spy nests."

Foreign Minister Ratsiraka held talks in February-March 1973 in Paris on the revision of the cooperation agreement between France and Malagasy. A government magazine *Reflects* (21 February 1973) said that Malagasy did not have fully independent power of decision when it signed the defence agreement with France in 1960—which affected its sovereignty at both national and international levels. Malagasy is seeking evacuation of the bases or at least recognition of its sovereignty over the bases.

Sensing a radical trend in the republic France was reported to be building a naval base in the Comoros group of islands.

FRENCH NAVAL PRESENCE
The French helicopter carrier *Jeanne d'Arc* and an escort frigate *Victor Schoelcher* called at Surabaya (East Java), Singapore, Penang (Malaysia), Colombo, Cape Town and

other ports in the Indian Ocean in February and March 1972 in the course of a round-the-world cruise. Welcoming the visit, South Africa's Defence Minister, P. W. Botha on 20 April 1972 expressed his strong support and appreciation of the French Navy's presence in the 'strategic' Indian Ocean. French naval presence, he said, would help "to maintain proper balance of power in the area."

A French squadron—comprising three destroyers including *Le Bourdonnais*, a tanker and a repair ship with a compliment of 1,200 officers and men including marine commandos rounded the Cape of Good Hope and entered the Indian Ocean in early March 1972. They were to strengthen the French naval units based at Diego Suarez and carry out joint exercises with the French garrison stationed in Malagasy. The squadron, it was said, would form the nucleus of a stand-by naval strike force in an area where France has considerable interest and defence agreements with French speaking African countries. A *Reuter* report (datelined Paris 17 February 1972) said that a squadron of French warships "is steaming towards the Indian Ocean to bolster French presence there in the face of growing build-up there by the US, Soviet Union and even China."

Two French frigates including *Le Provençal* called at Cape Town in the first week of May 1972 and later headed towards Malagasy.

Until early 1972, France maintained a small naval force

INSIGHTS ON SKIN TROUBLE

A team of dermatologists from Scripps Clinic in La Jolla, Calif., report a cure for psoriasis—an anticancer agent called azaribine. Doctors still do not know the basic cause of the disease which produces dry, scaly skin. The drug has not yet being cleared for general use by the Food and Drug Administration. But in early tests on patients with long-standing psoriasis, it produced "excellent" results.

In another area of skin diseases, Army doctors have launched a big research effort aimed at checking "jungle rot". This is an itchy, often runny type of skin sore associated with athlete's foot. It was a major incapacitating ailment among U.S. troops in the South Pacific and later in Vietnam. So far, investigating scientists have found no permanent way of handling this series of aggravating ailments once they have taken hold. But they say there is real hope that an effective vaccine may be developed soon.

—U.S. News and World Report.

of three frigates and four minesweepers patrolling the East African coast from Diego Suarez (Malagasy) to Djibouti (Gulf of Aden). The French government now plans to maintain an operational naval force in the Indian Ocean far from its traditional bases. The South African daily- *Di Oosterlig* (6 May 1972) said that France was increasing its naval strength in the Indian Ocean. France had more ships in the area in the first half of 1972 than any other country including the Americans and the Russians. There were about 10 to 12 French warships sailing in the Indian Ocean in April and May 1972.

French Defence Minister Michel Debre, in the course of his visit to these territories, said at Saint Denis (Reunion Island) on 22 March 1972 that France was planning to boost its naval presence in the Indian Ocean. He told AFP that escort vessels would soon be permanently stationed at the French naval base at Diego Suarez. France would also reinforce its military presence in Djibouti at the request of that country. The strength of the French garrison there was two battalions in early 1972.

SUPPLY OF ARMS AND WEAPONS. France seems to be interested in supplying military hardware, aircraft and naval ships to countries on the Indian Ocean littoral on commercial basis. It has supplied Mirage aircraft to Australia and Israel and three Daphne class submarines and Puma troop-carrying helicopters to South Africa.

Pakistan received three Daphne class submarines in

1971 and two squadrons of Mirage V were scheduled to arrive in 1972-73 in addition to a squadron of Mirages supplied earlier. In early 1973, Pakistan was reported to have placed orders for three or four Daphne class submarines.

France had offered Mirage jet fighters to the Indonesian Air Force to replenish its obsolescent stocks of Soviet MiGs. French firm Dassault has offered to sell or manufacture Mirage V aircraft in India. French Alouette heli-

copters are also being assembled in India.

A French firm is to supply a squadron of fast patrol craft with missile armament to Malaysia. The Malaysian Navy is equipping its fast patrol boats with French made Exocet missiles.

Interestingly, the supply of arms to Africa by Britain had aroused protests from a number of countries on the Indian Ocean coast but no such protest has been made for the supply of such arms to South Africa by France.

—Foreign News & Features.

SEVEN DECADES OF INFLATION

Inflation, it's being said, may be a permanent fixture in the United States from now on. Actually, a look back over the years shows that steady inflation has been the dominant trend throughout the twentieth century—with depression years just after World War I and the 1930s the big exceptions.

As a result, it takes \$5 today to buy what \$1 purchased in 1900.

Living costs at the turn of the century began a gentle climb that speeded up sharply during World War I. Then began a downward trend. Deflation hit with a real vengeance in 1929. Prices collapsed in the next four years, and hit bottom in the depression year of 1933.

From then on, the trend has been up.

War and Peace. In the past, it was war that provided the most virulent thrust for the forces of inflation. Prices shot up fastest during the two World Wars, the Korean conflict and after the Vietnam-war build-up began in 1965.

In recent years, however, inflation has been surging even as the impact of the Vietnam war was diminishing. The mild recession of 1969-70 had little effect in reducing inflation. Controls that were introduced in 1971 slowed the advance—but relaxation of controls earlier this year was followed by the sharpest surge of inflation since the Korean War.

It's this latest behaviour of prices that now leads many economists to wonder: Can inflation really be brought under control in this country?

—U.S. and World Report.

IS IT TRUE?

Sherlock Holmes

❖ LAKE HOUSE

❖ AIR CEYLON

IS IT NOT TRUE that fraud and corruption has proliferated in the public sector undertakings in a big way in recent times? That scandals about the CWE are regularly publicised in the *Observer* even after ANCL Ltd became a government-sponsored organisation? That people are so tired reading about these scandals that no one pays much attention to them any longer? That these malpractices are now taken for granted? That many believe that these sensational scandals are handled almost exclusively by the *Observer* in an attempt to boost its sagging circulation? That the *Observer* has always been the "sick man" of the Lake House group? That the old owners had deliberately "maintained" this paper because its losses constituted a useful siphon for the income tax purposes of the whole group? That the new owners are not in need of any such devices to circumvent the tax laws? That is why there seems to be a ho-ha about the circulation of the *Observer*? That everything done to brighten the paper has not produced results? That if the

sensational stories about CWE corruption and other news gimmicks do not boost the circulation, nothing will?

IS IT NOT TRUE that ever since Editor-in-Chief of the Lake House group of news papers, and a Director of the new ANCL Ltd., Mervyn de Silva, went to Europe for some medical treatment (for him or his family), there has been a visible drop in the quality of writing in the *Daily News*? That for a week or ten days, after his departure, there was no drop which was noticeable? That, in fact, the sub-editing and the choice of articles showed a slight improvement? That whilst the improvement in the "sub-bing" part has been sustained, the quality of leader writing has shocked knowledgeable readers with the slightest sensibilities to style, idiom and content? That pedantic schoolmasterly sermons on the problems of the country do not make good editorials in a daily newspaper? That didactic outpourings, with noble thoughts and high ideals, do not make up for poor journalism? That this country has for

long been deluged with sermons and bana from religious as well as political platforms that it would be difficult to take a regular morning doze from the *Daily News* also? That some useful bits of advice were thrown into the editorials about agricultural production last week, but the way it was said was reminiscent of the model essays which were sold in the old days to enable students to pass examinations? That modern journalism is a more exacting exercise than what the new owners of Lake House seem to envisage? That it will not surprise anybody if the circulation of the *Daily News* also started dropping? That the UNP need not persist in its boycott campaign if the level of editorial competence, displayed in the columns of the *Daily News* showed the present decline?

IS IT REALLY TRUE that Air Ceylon passengers off-loaded in Colombo or unable to join in confirmed flights are at the wrong end of UTA computer in Paris? Or is it that the passengers who suffered in this fashion were holders of cut-rate tickets and that they had to give priority to non-cut-rate ticket holders? That apart from a class system (first and tourist), the UTA seems to have a caste system (cut-rate and non cut-rate) for its passengers? That it is time that Air Ceylon did something about this?