

TRIBUNE

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• BANDARANAIKE
FOOD
PRODUCTION

• ALGIERS
EGYPT
CHILE
CHINA

• INANIA

• INSIDE
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THE BANDARANAIKE MUSEUM

IT IS only fitting that this country should have a Bandaranaike Museum. There is no doubt that he, among all the political leaders who have played a prominent part in the post-second-world-war and post-independence period of Ceylon's (Sri Lanka's) history, is the only one who deserves a Museum. There were Ceylonese of consequence during the first quarter of this century who displayed true erudition statesmanship and scholarship and who have left enough material in the form of writings and speeches to merit enshrinement in a museum. But in the period after the second world war, this island has not thrown up many men of such statesmanship and calibre as to evoke the admiration of thinking people. Those who have played a prominent role in political affairs have been so engrossed in parochial party politics (mostly dirty) that they have not let their talents make an impact on the cultural and socio economic life of the country. The only exception was Bandaranaike. He was a scholar in his own right, and as a writer he had a masterly style and idiom. He had a manner which transcended the ordinary humdrum politics of the day. He was a parliamentary debater *par excellence*, but what made Bandaranaike stand out above the rest of his contemporaries was his capacity to view matters with the perspective of a scholar. He was a philosopher, from whatever angle is viewed, and even those who cannot agree with his philosophical speculations, cannot but admire the nimble wit and gracious turn of phrase. If he had not been drawn into party politics, he could easily have made his mark as a writer, or a silver-tongued orator or even a philosopher. But even in politics he has left a transcendent mark on the history of this country. He broke the Brown Sahib Establishment the British had set up in Ceylon to administer the Independence they had bestowed on this country through the leverage of electoral alliances and temporary coalitions of the most unlikely political bedfellows. He unleashed the forces of social upheaval which brought about a major social revolution. He died before his time through an assassin's bullet, and what has been done in his name after that may not be all S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike, but that is the price every leader who seeks to change the course of human affairs has to pay to posterity. Empires have been built through murder in the name of Christ, and intolerance and ruthless persecution practised in the name of the Buddha and genocidal wars carried on in the name of Allah and the Brotherhood of Islamic Love. Bandaranaike had his shortcomings—he would not be human if he did not have them. If any leader of this era deserves a Museum it is S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike. Any attempt to make it a political tamasha will only detract from his greatness.

Tribunania

* Bandaranaike

* Food Production in Alice in Wonderland

FOURTEEN YEARS AGO, September 26, Solomon West Ridgeway Dias Bandaranaike died having been shot by an assassin who had been ordained a Buddhist monk and who had worn the yellow robes of the Sangha at the time he fired the fatal shot. Much water has flowed under the bridges since that day. At that time when every major newspaper, in the country the big dailies and others, were against the social upheaval wrought by Bandaranaike, the weekly *Tribune* was the only newspaper which had sought to understand and support the late Prime Minister and the changes he had endeavoured to bring about in this country.

Tribune does not usually indulge in crowing about its past and what it had done (it is all a matter of history, because the printed word endures more than the spoken word), but it would not be out place to mention that *Tribune*, which had begun publication in 1954, was the only paper which persisted in predicting that Bandaranaike and his electoral alliance would sweep the polls in 1956. Right up to 1963-4,

when the leftist parties, the LSSP and the CP, began to change their critical stance against their electoral ally, the SLFP, and seek a new coalition with it, *Tribune* was the only paper which stood up against the weight of the big rightwing papers which were determined to undermine the Bandaranaike *millieu* and prevent it from taking deep root in the body politic of this country.

But when the LSSP and CP swung into a calculated coalition with the SLFP in 1964, after breaking the united left front which the three left parties had established in 1963, the Bandaranaike regime had a number of agitational and partyline papers to back it. Even the SLFP created its own press. It was after this that *Tribune* was able to regain the objective for which it had been founded—to be an independent and objective political journal.

In the period immediately after the assassination, it was *Tribune* which had analysed the forces which were behind the assassination, and for a number of years it was the

only paper which carried special supplements on the anniversary of the death of Bandaranaike. But, now such supplements have become the media for commercial exploitation of advertising revenue and today a Bandaranaike supplement is a votive offering to the Establishment. It is not an attempt to review history as it should be examined. It would, therefore, be inopportune, at this moment, for *Tribune* to say what it must say about the Bandaranaike "revolution" as it has now developed under the impact of the Old Left and the New Left. A little more time must elapse before one can sit back and draw the lessons of history about what has happened in the country after 1948, and more especially after 1956.

Bandaranaike had said that rivers do not flow backwards, and others have said that scrambled eggs cannot be unscrambled, but unless major changes are effected soon in Sri Lanka, history will record that rivers do run dry and that spoilt eggs, however well scrambled, will not make good eating.

FOURTEEN YEARS have gone by since S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike's assassination and those who knew him intimately will know that many things have been done in his name which he would never have done himself. Greater men than he have suffered in the same way. The inglorious deeds which have been done in the name of Christ, of Buddha, of


Mohamed and other leaders who preached love and compassion fill hundreds of books. But that is neither here nor there. Those who claim to act in the Bandaranaike tradition—and they are a multitude now—all insist that even the wrong things they have done was only to protect the gains of the Bandaranaike “revolution” from being corroded by “reactionary and anti-national elements”. It is a futile exercise to contemplate upon the matters that have taken place in the last 14 years which SWRD would have approved and which he would not have approved. In his own lifetime, some of his colleagues had done many things to which he was totally opposed. But there are certain fundamentals which he himself would never have transgressed.

If the Bandaranaike anniversary is to serve any purpose, it can only be a landmark for a stocktaking, to see whether this country is going along the right path to achieve the objective of a better life for the vast number of the people in this country. The policies which have been followed during the last fourteen years must be tested in the reality of actual achievements in terms of food, employment and a happier life. At the moment, there does not seem to be desire among those who have the destinies of the island in their hands to examine what they have done in the spirit of self-criticism. The tendency to succumb to an euphoria of supreme success on one's own creation is too predo-

minant at the moment for any purposeful self-examination. The euphoria, however, has begun to wear thin, and in another year or two, the time may be ripe to critically examine what has taken place since 1956 and more especially after 1970.

THE FOOD CRISIS is now the main topic of discussion among top government circles in the country. Every media, under government control, is now full of the food crisis. A forum discussion on the SLBC, in which three government officials of the VIP variety participated, set out the new Government thinking on the matter. For the first time, they spoke frankly about the realities of the situation. They set out the difficulties in other countries and stated that Sri Lanka had not received adequate rain in the last three years: that wheat flour was available at a price, but that rice could not be got even with gold. The line that was plugged was that we in Sri Lanka must either produce or perish, and that we must learn to make do with substitutes for rice and wheat flour. Right through this panel discussion, one official VIP kept repeating the number of acres that was planned with this, that and the other, and how much more the Ministry of Agriculture intended doing, but another official, harking on the fact that to judge by the amount of cultivable land which was idle, one could only conclude that there was inadequate awareness among the people about the food crisis.

This panel discussion was no doubt intended to rectify this absence of awareness of the depth of the food crisis. The officials went on to tread ground where even angels will fear to tread to wonder whether this lack of awareness was due to the fact that people felt that this question of producing food was a party matter and not a national matter and they hoped that their frank exposition of the reali-



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ties would help to stampede people into growing more food as a matter of national urgency.

A number of matters stand out clearly from this discussion and from the decision to broadcast it (the same forum has been repeated over half a dozen times over SLBC). First, it is now clear that the government has begun to recognise realities. During the 24 months, *Tribune* has drawn attention to the growing world food crisis and more especially to the total and partial failures of the monsoons—pointing out that immediate steps had to be taken to meet the crisis. But, *Tribune* was told, and told by important people that we were being "alarmist" and that we were focussing attention on these matters in order to justify our criticism of the United Front government.

FORCE OF HABIT

Neckermann, a West German firm operating in Senegal, recently opened a club on the country's sea coast. It was open to all but... One of the members of the Senegalese government thought of spending a few pleasant hours there, but was simply ejected by the doorman. Commenting on the incident *Le Soleil de Dakar* asked what the West Germans would say if a club "only for Senegalese" were opened in their country. The company was forced to apologize.

We were never, and we are still not, critical of the UF government per se, but we have always felt and still feel that many of its so-called radical measures were ill-conceived (even in the cause of promoting socialism) and they were self-defeating in the context of the Sri Lanka realities.

There is not the slightest doubt that the gravity of the food situation would not have been so severe if the Government had adopted more realistic and more pragmatic policies than what they pushed through in great haste through the National State Assembly with the steamroller majority the UF commands.

If the Government had read the writing on the wall about the growing food shortages throughout the world, the Government would not have insisted on ignoring the production aspect of food production and on concentrating on effecting changes of a socio-economic and political nature in the system of land tenure. Many bigwigs in the Government had mistakenly been under the belief (and they still seem to hold this belief) that radical changes to abolish big private landowners and private landlordism (and not company landlordism) will automatically and spontaneously induce greater production.

How mistaken this view is will be brought home to these doctrinaire pundits only a little later. What they have failed to realise is that in the modern con-

text what is important is not the ownership of land but the utilisation of land. The first priority of government should have been to ensure the maximum utilisation of land. More ownership means nothing.

Anti social landlords, the evils of landlordism, and the wasteful use of land could have been eliminated if attention had been paid, in the first instance, to ensuring the maximum utilisation of land. It would have been better to tackle the question of ownership after establishing new patterns in land utilisation. But this advice is today academic. The simple fact is that we have put horse before the cart and nobody (in the Government anyway) seems to know how this mistake can be rectified.

Secondly, the Government has ignored the warnings about the weather and the changing patterns of rainfall in Sri Lanka during the last five years. Officials on the forum panel ventured on the sunspot theory of rain and drought cycles. There are many other such theories for dilettante intellectual mental exercises, but it is a sheer waste of time to talk about them. We can remember how a big governmental VIP told *Tribune* that this paper had a "bee-in-its-bonnet" about the monsoons and the inadequate rainfall. We were told that officials of the department of agriculture had assured government that there was nothing to worry on this score and we were told that everything was okay.

Now officials have woken up, to the weather but not to the need we have been urging —of having a crash programme to tap ground water resources. Officials know that the only part of the country which can effectively respond to the Government's call to increase production is Jaffna where ground water resources have fully been harnessed. Officials and even parliamentarians were enamoured of mighty irrigation schemes (to revive the glories of the past), but they refused to pay attention to the humble suggestion we made that we must have more wells, more surface wells and more tubewells, and more water pumps. Even today, the terrific Rs. 200 million crash food programme for the last quarter of 1973 is mainly dependent on the inter-monsoonal rains in October to be followed by the north east monsoons thereafter. If the rains from October fail, or are partial, the Maha food programme will crash, except in Jaffna and a few other places where wells have been dug by enterprising farmers and cultivators. (If United Front fanatics have their say there will be a hue and cry to take over and nationalise these private wells so that the "exploiting classes" are liquidated).

It is not too late for the government to launch a crash programme to dig more wells and provide water pumps at cheap rates—and not at the fantastically high prices charged now. This was done in the Maharashtra in India where the rains had failed for seven years running (negating the

sunspot theory of five dry years followed by five wet years). Such crash programmes have been carried out in many other parts of India. In Tamilnadu, the government made its first priority to supply electricity to the farms and farmers because electric pump sets are cheap and economical and the so-called "dry" south India is today one of the agriculturally surplus areas in the sub-continent. In Ceylon, we are so anxious to provide electricity for ornamental, industrial and urban dwelling centres and have not realised how much electricity can help in agricultural production.

Thirdly, if anybody is to blame for the present lack of national interest in food cultivation it is the United Front government. It must be remembered that very nearly 50% of the voters at the last elections had cast their votes in favour of the UNP, and that the FP had also collected a very large percentage of the votes in the Tamil areas. In this situation, for the Government to laugh at and ridicule the grow - more - food campaign launched by Dudley Senanayake and the UNP and to castigate the Tamils for supporting the FP was only to perpetuate the parochial narrow sectarian party politics of this country.

When the UF was in the Opposition, it had carried on a vicious campaign of obstruction against the Dudley Senanayake campaign to grow more - food. UF stalwarts had taken to task the *Tribune* for supporting the grow-more-

food campaign of the UNP and had shouted from the rooftops that anybody supporting Dudley's grow-more-food campaign was a reactionary camp follower of the decadent UNP. When the UF came to power, it defused the UNP grow-more-food campaign.

The UF spoke glibly and blithely spoke about the wonders and miracles its radical and progressive policies would bring. Any setbacks and shortcomings in targets and production were attributed to UNP sabotage, the insurrection and the like. And now the UF has the convenient stalking horse about the world food crisis and the absence of rain. But this kind of bluff will not take the government very far. No government can hope to win popular confidence through scapegoats or smoke-screens.

The simple fact is that Sri Lanka is one of the countries which need not have had a food crisis if the grow-more-food campaign, initiated by Dudley Senanayake in 1967, had been continued after eliminating the mistakes which had hampered its full development. Instead of trying to improve on the grow-more-food campaign of Senanayake, the UF Government threw it into the dust bin. And now, the Government wants to resurrect it. It did not have the graciousness to admit its own mistake in discarding it. It had tried to make it out that it was starting something won.

derfully new by proclaiming a Production Year and a Grow - More-Trees Campaign. But, the humbug to sustain narrow party interests have vanished, and it is now a plain and simple grow - more - food campaign.

The UF Government also wants to start the gimmick of mobilising school children to do shramadana weeding—something which in opposition it had condemned most vehemently. The food production can do well enough without school children being brought into it for political tamasha, but that is another matter.

But what is significant is that the Government, whilst bemoaning the lack of interest on a national basis, has not taken the first step towards securing the support of all sections of the people. In a politicalised country like Sri Lanka it is not enough to shout "tiger! tiger!.." and to hope that political opponents would rush to the rescue of the Government in distress.

The Government must invite political opponents to participate in a national campaign for food production on the basis of an agreed political truce. This the UF government, with its overwhelming majority in the National State Assembly, and with three years more to go, is not likely to do—although its popular support among the common people has corroded beyond measure. If there cannot be any political truce with the UNP, on the one hand, and the FP, on the other, to maximise

food production on a national basis (on a war footing as some Ministers like to boast), the next best thing the Government can do is to offer inducements to cultivators and farmers. In this too the UF government acts in the most foolish and stupid manner.

After dispossessing over 5000 real producers of wealth and foodstuffs, simply because they did not have the political fore-knowledge to turn their land holdings into public companies, it would be futile to offer inducements to such people to produce more food on the land they only hold in trust for new owners who are yet to be selected by the Land Reform Commission. This apart, the inducements offered to cultivators and farmers who have not been affected by land ceilings, are niggardly, inadequate and too meagre to promote production. Furthermore, the inducements have always come too late and always been too little.

Increased GPS price levels have been announced, long after cost—of—production levels, on which the new prices were based, had become fictional. The new price of Rs. 18 per measure of paddy came one year or eighteen months after it ceased to be realistic. Now the cost of all the inputs have shot beyond all earlier levels and the latest increase in the prices of diesel and kerosene have gone beyond the point of no return. A GPS price of Rs. 28 to Rs. 36 a bushel of paddy would be realistic, on an average 40

bushels an acre production to offer a real inducement to the cultivators.

But our officials who advise our ministers are lost in a Alice-In-Wonderland fantasy of their own doctrinaire creation and they will fail to see this point and they will marshal a whole lot of stale and bogus statistics to support their contention.

Over a year ago, *Tribune* had pointed that mist of the statistics provided by the officials were bogus and could not be relied upon. *Tribune* has been proved correct—and the excuses the officials now have for making wrong estimates cannot be accepted. On plain commonsense logic, *Tribune* was able to assert that the figures, estimated and otherwise, were bogus, and what *Tribune* had stated have been proved correct. Even today, these officials are playing this game of hide-and-seek in a Sri Lankian-Alice-in-Wonderland and Ministers are swallowing this bluff most enthusiastically.

The future of this country is bleak until such times as our officials are brought down to earth and stop saying as in Alice-in-Wonderland "off with his head!.. off with his head!.." to stop doubting Thomas' who seeks to prick their, balloons of bluff, bluster and bravado.

CEYLON: MARGINAL NOTES

BY SERENDIB

✱ **World Bank** ✱ **Janavegaya**

✱ **Gunasenar**

THE WORLD BANK. At the time of writing these notes, it is not clear whether the Minister of Finance will attend the meeting of the World Bank and the IMF at Nairobi on September 24. By the time this issue appears in print, what he does will be known. But what even more important than his attending the meeting is the tussle that has surfaced in the political firmament of Sri Lanka as to whether this island should or should not break with the World Bank.

This conflict, primarily among the different trends of political thinking within the UF itself, had begun some-time ago, and *Tribune* had drawn attention to it especially when we examined the question of the suggestion that we must repudiate or re-schedule certain of our foreign debts. We had pointed out in later issues that there had been hints that we should break with the World Bank in order to tell certain of our shylock-like foreign creditors to "go to hell". The *Janavegaya*, the *Nation*, and the *Aththa* led the campaign to break with the world Bank. The *Lake House* tried very hard to sit tightly on the fence, but its

columns revealed conflicting trends kept down to conform to a seeming objectivity. The *Times* group (and more especially the *Daily Mirror*) was neither here nor there. These papers peddled its own financial panacea, to de-link the rupee, and use it for internal purposes, and then to use the floating currencies of the world as and when we get them to service our foreign transactions.

Although the *Times* did not put it straight, what it suggested about "de-linking the rupee" from the reserve currencies meant a break with the IBRD and the IMF. The *Times* group of papers also gave top billing to speeches of Ministers and MPs who wanted a tough line with the IMF. Only the *Sun-Dawasa* group fought hard against this ultra-radical trend and warned the country and the Government about the dangers of breaking with the World Bank at this juncture. The *Nation* of August 17, 1973 in a frontpage splash, under the heading REACTION AND THE WORLD BANK —IMF AND FOREIGN CAPITAL ARE THE LAST HOPE went "hell for leather" for the Gunasena group of news papers. This is what its

Political Correspondent stated: "Though Finance Minister Dr. N. M. Perera returned to the island early last week, no details of what transpired between him and the IMF have as yet been made public. This is not surprising, seeing that Prime Minister Sirimavo Bandaranaike has not yet come back from the Commonwealth Prime Minister's Conference in Canada. Whatever happened in Washington in the matter of the IMF's stand-by of 25 million dollars for Sri Lanka, the problem is not small or simple for the IMF's bosses or our own leaders. The latter, at least, are certain to approach it with a due sense of responsibility.

"If one is to be informed by Mudalali Gunasena's gutter press, the 'Dawasa' and 'Sun', a great deal of elation appears to have been caused in the ranks of Sri Lanka's reactionaries and racketeers by the Finance Minister's refusal to say anything about his talks with the IMF bosses. In the booze-bars and gambling joints and in the cocktail circuit, the feeling is like old times. Drooping spirits have begun to revive again, for the umpteenth time, just as they did on the eve of NM's Budgets, or during the April 71 Insurgency, or when the Speaker ruled on the issue of the Press Council Bill and the Constitutional Court. The reactionaries and racketeers no longer plan their lives over a long term. They live from day to day. They are content with small mercies. Any indication that the United Front Government is in a little difficulty and

full-throated 'hurrahs' go up from a tumult of besotted throats.

"What is most interesting is the new expectancy that the reactionaries and racketeers have developed in the matter of foreign political and economic assistance. It would appear that they have lost all confidence in their ability to help themselves. So a mighty cheer has gone up everywhere for the good old World Bank (they mean, of course, the IMF!) The 'World Bank' will teach this dirty Government a lesson! The 'World Bank' is the last hope of all decent people in Sri Lanka (with, of course, the Mudalalis foremost among them!) The 'World Bank' will save our country and our property and create the right climate for foreign capital to invade and occupy our land!

"Quickened to activity once more by this new sense of expectancy, the astrologers have worked up their voices to a new boom. We have not got the patience or tolerance to read astrological rubbish, so we do not know with what Mudalali Gunesena's poorly paid hacks fill the pages of "Iranama" or what the other purveyors of hocus pocus talk about the stars. It will be of great interest to know what "Subasetha", the astrological rag of Lake House under the Wijewardenes, now has to offer to the masses under Lake House's new management."

The *Nation* berated the Gunasena group for not waiting for an official pronouncement from the Prime Minister (then away in Canada) or from

the Finance Minister (away in Washington) on this question—but had, instead, published various items of news which had irritated the *Nation*. The Political Correspondent stated that the Gunasena combine should have waited. "until the arrival of the Prime Minister or the Finance Minister's statement on the IMF standby. On the contrary, Mudalali Gunasena's journalistic jackals have been rummaging among the rubbish-heaps for crumbs and bones of news. Some people in high and responsible positions, it would now seem, have been waiting by their own rubbish heaps for the arrival of these jackals. How else could the latter have picked up juicy morsels from the dirt piles in place of the bones that they expected? If we are correct, Mudalali Gunasena's news-rags may indulge in the most outspoken hostility or insidious intrigue against the Government; the UNP and J. R. Jayewardene may publicly adopt these news-rags as their faithful spokesmen; but this does not deter certain high-placed and influential people in the Government from making common cause with Mudalali Gunasena."

The *Nation* then cited reports from the *Sun* of August 8, August 11, August 14 and August 16—all of which have been referred to in the columns of the *Tribune* by various columnists.

THE JANAVEGAYA. Whilst the *Nation* was mounting this campaign against the Gunasena group, the *Janavegaya* suggested that Sri Lanka

would not lose anything if it broke away from the World Bank. Shortly after the Minister of Finance had returned from Washington in mid August the *Janavegaya* had editorially stated that the country was in the vortex of internal as well external economic crisis. The prices of essential imports, including food, had gone up. The interest on short term loans was going up day by day.

This was the external crisis. Internally, for various reasons, including the absence of adequate rain, the production of food had not reached the expected targets. The paper pointed out that the Minister of Finance had just returned from Washington after talks with the IMF and the World Bank. The results of the talks were not yet known. But reviewing our relationship with the World Bank, it was not a matter for surprise if the World Bank has persisted in its demand on us to devalue the rupee, and to impose cuts on welfare measures. The *Janavegaya* had stressed that this kind of gambling with the World Bank will not benefit this country, and went on to say that ever since this Government had come to power, the Finance Minister had gone abroad on several occasions; that he had held several talks with the bosses of the World Bank; that the President of World Bank, Mr. McNamara, had come to Sri Lanka and had talks with our leaders; that nevertheless our monetary situation had remained the same.

The *Janavegaya* then criticised certain local newspapers

(not by name), which had attacked the Minister of Finance for not taking a tough line with the World Bank. Said the *Janavegaya* that Dr. N. M. Perera had not gone to the World Bank on his own volition but because it was a Government decision. Leaving all this apart, the *Janavegaya* declared that what Sri Lanka wanted was an independent economic structure and that it was not necessary for us to go begging anywhere. The World Bank was an institution designed by the imperialists for exploitation. "Therefore, whatever be the talks of the Finance Minister had with that institution the important question was that any relations we had with the Bank must be determined by us on the conditions which are agreeable.

The *Janavegaya* then went on to state that the world market prices for our tea, rubber and coconut products were declining: that the income we made from our national produce were being utilised for the import of flour and rice and that it was not being used for national development: that to solve concomitant economic problems we were borrowing from capitalist countries at high rates of interest. That while, this was the situation, asked the *Janavegaya*, what was the fate of the masses who were looking forward to a socialist setup? Sri Lanka would qualify for IBRD loans only if we followed the advice tendered to us by IMF experts. This country could no longer swallow the advice of the World Bank. The masses want

national development, not for name's sake but in reality, and for this the masses were ready to sacrifice if the country can be developed without risking its freedom and sovereignty. It was time for the Government to place its confidence in masses and to sever all connections with the World Bank. The *Janavegaya* stressed that the Government must boldly take the decision to break with the World Bank and place all its trust in the strength of the people: all capitalist links should be severed and the country should not be pawned to the World Bank. This was the only way of strengthening socialism in Sri Lanka.

Early in September, the *Janavegaya* returned to the same topic and in yet another forceful editorial, it asserted that Sri Lanka will not send a representative to a World Bank meeting to be held in Nairobi, Kenya, on 24th of September. The Minister of Finance Dr. N. M. Perera and a team of officials will attend the Commonwealth Finance Minister's Conference to be held in Dar-es-Salam on the 17th of September. Meanwhile, it stated the following resolution would be passed at the 22nd anniversary of the SLFP at the Kolonnawa Town Hall. "...We praise and respect our Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike for taking a bold action to safeguard our respect and freedom by rejecting the conditions laid down by the World Bank in giving loans to Sri Lanka." In the forthcoming Algiers conference in which our Prime Minister was

participating discussions will take place about the countries which receive aid from the World Bank and the IMF.

Two opposite views are being expressed said the *Janavegaya*, about the conditions laid down by the World Bank on giving loans to Sri Lanka. The first, was to sever all connections with the World Bank and to build up an independent economy for our country. According to this view, failing to do this, will force us to dance to the tune of the World Bank and thereby we will be indebted to it for ever. Unless this was done immediately we will be slaves of the World Bank.

Concentration Gauge

American scientist Kreal Montor has invented a small apparatus, the size of a cigarette packet, capable of gauging man's level of concentration. For that purpose sensors with electrodes are attached to a person's head to register the electromagnetic waves emitted by the brain. If his thoughts stray, a bell rings. If this does not help, a more powerful signal is switched on to attract the attention of those controlling his work. Several midshipmen volunteered to have the apparatus tested on them. The experiment proved successful. The inventor thinks the apparatus should first be offered to lorry and bus drivers, flyers, and members of similar professions.

The second view was to come to a mutual agreement with the World Bank without any loss of face for either side. According to this view of opinion we must win the sympathy of the World Bank and get the benefits from it. This section is also of the view that if we listen to the WB and cut down welfare facilities, devalue the rupee, we can, not only come out of the economic difficulties that we are facing but also we will be in a position to get more and more aid from the WB. All these years, said the *Janavegaya*, what our Government has done was, whenever we had dealings with the WB, we argued the pros and cons of the conditions laid down by the WB and then came to a decision. And after such discussing we cut down the welfare measures one by one. We have tried to maintain equality between the conditions of the WB and our economic policies.

There are two paths open to us now, said *Janavegaya*. And we have to decide what path we should follow. And by following the correct path we will achieve the goal. When we sever our ties from the WB we may have to face many difficulties. A nation which always borrowed for everything has to face many difficulties when it stops borrowing. But at the end of these difficulties awaits a classless society. When foreign aids stop we will be compelled to exploit the avenues available locally. This will be a blessing in disguise. As long as we attach ourselves to the WB there won't be any freedom. The United Front

Government must broaden its foundation and gather all the progressive forces in this country to achieve this.

Such is the policy advocated by the Janavegaya and it is something worth watching.

GUNASENA GROUP. Whilst certain newspapers, like the *Daily Mirror* asserted on September 11 that the Minister of Finance will not go to the World Bank meeting at Nairobi on September 24, after attending the meeting of the Commonwealth Finance Ministers Conference at Dar-es-Salam on November 17, the *Sun* on the same day boldly asserted that the Minister of Finance would continue his negotiations with the WB for a IMF standby when he attends the IBRD, IMF meeting at Nairobi on September 24. A paragraph in the *Daily News* 13/9 indicated the kind of compromise typical of Sri Lanka. Dr. N. M. Perera, the Finance Minister, would go to Nairobi after Dar-es-Salam to "attend the meeting of the Group of Twenty but not the meeting of the IMF"—forgetting that the Group of Twenty was a creation of the IMF. It is interesting, however, to note what an inspired piece of writing in the *Nation* of August 24 by a writer, who called himself *Aquarius*, had to say about the Gunasenas. For the record, it is well worth quoting the article which had the heading **NOW ON TO DAWASA.** "One of the most important accomplishments of the United Front has been its successful reorganisation of the ownership of

the Associated Newspapers of Ceylon Limited. In a situation where there has been agitation for this move for over a decade, the Government's move at this crucial time to deal with *Lake House* displays a welcome sign of seriousness in their ranks. This move is invested with something bordering on historicity because now as never before we are confronted with an economic stalemate, the outcome of which will shape the future of this country, her people, and their civilization. At this juncture it would do well to pause awhile and review the whole concept of the broadbasing of the ownership of *Lake House*. Junius Richard Jayewardene has gone to great pains to prove that the reorganisation of *Lake House* is a move to "gag the press" and infringe on the newspaper group's freedom of expression and publication. Such an argument of course presumes that *Lake House* has been nationalised.

"It is important at this point to remember that the Government is armed with the Business Acquisition Act which permits outright nationalisation. It is well to remember also that this piece of legislation is not as rusty as some would have us believe. On the contrary, it has been used against the private graphite mines and the British Ceylon Corporation who have been oligopolies and monopolies in their respective fields of industry. Moreover the justification for the utilisation of the Acquisition Act was all the more pronounced in the case of *Lake House* because it has been effectively

demonstrated by the Justice T. S. Fernando Commission that the existing owners of *Lake House* were incorrigibly anti-social. Nevertheless the Acquisition Act was not used against *Lake House*. Instead, a Bill which completely diffused the ownership of *Lake House*, preventing an individual shareholder from owning more than 2% of the shares, was framed."

"Junius Richard Jayewardene is of course the last person who has the right to speak about 'freedom of expression'. His record in this sphere during the period 1965-70 when his party was in power provides one with a pretty good insight into the kind of freedom he has in mind. It included at times the total suppression of the Opposition press—*The Aththa*, *The Janadina*, *The Janasathiya* and *The Nation*. We cannot easily recall a parallel situation in any part of the world. Junius Richard Jayewardene's dictatorial suppression of the Opposition press is thus unique in the annals of contemporary history. And Junius Richard Jayewardene and his revered leader, Dudley Shelton Senanayake, will go down in history, if for nothing else, for their complete contempt for and, absolute abhorrence of the concept of the freedom of expression.

"It is most advisable in this situation for the United Front to boldly go ahead and register its *bona fides* in this field by promptly redistributing the large number of shares currently vested in the Public Trustee. Now let us ask ourselves the question, why was *Lake House* broadbasd.

If the purpose of Government was to stifle its critics, this could have been achieved by either nationalisation, the suppression of newsprint or, to take a leaf from Junius Richard Jayewardene's look, by sealing the presses. No. The purpose was to bring into the realm of journalism an entirely new concept, that of a truly democratic newspaper group. After all, in the future *Lake House* will be owned by a representative cross-section of the people, not the representative cross-section of Rukman Senanayake's brother in law's family!

"If we are serious about our political democracy and our economic democracy, that is Socialism, then we must be just as serious about our journalistic democracy. The experiment of *Lake House* must therefore be the beginning of a comprehensive endeavour to bring about democratic principles of ownership among the nation's newspapers. With *Lake House* as a brilliant and exemplary precedent, we must now get on to instituting a similar set of reforms at the other newspaper groups. In the case of the *Times of Ceylon*, this becomes a little difficult as they themselves are unsure as to who owns what. Moreover they will insist, like their compatriots in the UNP and the Church of Ceylon, on washing their dirty linen in public. Further, the *Times* is a relatively democratic group and there is not that degree of urgency required in one's dealings with them. The Independent Newspapers

Limited is, of course, a different breed of cat.

"The concentration of ownership at *Dawasa* and the domination of this group by one family, namely the Gunasenas far exceeds anything like the monopoly that was *Lake House*. Perhaps nowhere in the world is a principal newspaper group so effectively dominated by one family. What is more sobering is the fact that nowhere else in the world would such an insufferable monopoly be allowed to exist. Nowhere else in the world would such a situation be tolerated. A bill on the lines of Associated News papers of Ceylon Limited (Special Provision) Act of 1973, must

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be drawn up for the Independent Newspapers Limited. Such a move should not be mistaken for malice or intolerance. But rather as an effort after perfection because even in this world of imperfections, *Dawasa* is still an eyesore that stands out a mile.

The Gunasena, not to be caught on the wrong foot, on September 13, announced that the Independent Newspapers Limited would go "public": the present private Company would be converted into a public company and shares would be offered to the public to diffuse the ownership.

THE PROBLEM

The Frankfort real estate companies building posh apartments for the well-to-do are going through a crisis. Only one flat out of every four in the Living in the Sun apartment house is tenanted. At the same time 4,000 families, according to official statistics, have no home and 115,000 foreign workers and 10,000 students are looking for a place to live in. In an effort to find a way out, the landlords have asked the city council to move people needing homes into the vacant flats. There remains only a trifling problem to be settled—so far no one is willing to pay the difference between the sum people can afford and the high rent demanded.

INTERNATIONAL-AFFAIRS

BY ARIEL

* Algiers

* Egypt

* Chile

* China

ALGIERS SUMMIT. The Sri Lanka papers were full of the Algiers Summit, for a few days but the main attention was focussed on the role played by Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike at the summit. From all accounts she had covered herself with glory. Apart from this, very little real background information has yet become available. News agencies had spotlighted some of the highlights, particularly the slanging match between Gaddafi and Castro, and the spectacular "making up" of these two volatile leaders hugging each other in public. The full text of the communique the interpretative news analyses from several quarters and the inside stories behind the news, should become available soon and it would only then be possible to find out just what has really happened. There is however, no doubt that the Summit itself was a great achievement—to get so many countries from all the continents together.

From a cursory examination it would appear that the Arab nations in conjunction with many African states have

again as at Georgetown, sought to make their predetermined views adopted by the Summit under the guise of consensus. One important decision however which seems to have been taken unanimously is that the venue of the next Summit will be in Sri Lanka in 1976 and that the one after that will be in the Argentina in South America in 1979. At least, in this one matter the Arab-African states seem to have realised that it would be self-defeating to want to hold these summits always on the African continent.

EGYPT. President Anwar Sadat has at last been compelled by the impetuous Gaddafi to agree to a kind of merger between Libya and Egypt. Although Sadat leans very heavily on the rightwing Islamic Brotherhood forces inside Egypt, he was not willing to be swamped by the completely obscurantist ideology which Gaddafi preaches and practices in Libya. Sadat has discarded and destroyed the Left inside Egypt. Mildly liberal elements, like Sabri, are all in prison. The rightwing forces inside Egypt want the merger with Gaddafi's Libya in order to oust what remains of the liberal-left inside Egypt and also break with the Soviet Union and the socialist bloc whilst pushing Egypt to the pro-imperialist and pro-American Arab states like Saudi Arabia.

President Sadat himself seems to think that if he tilted towards Saudi Arabia even more than he had done before, the chances of the USA pressurising Israel to

come to terms with the Arab states after disgorging the territory it had captured in the 1967 war, were greater. Saudi Arabia is now seeking to claim ascendancy in Arab matters by threatening to freeze its oil supplies to the USA at a time when the USA is threatened with a fuel shortage. This has made Nixon reprimand Israel over the manner in which it has sought to take the law into its own hands by hijacking Arab airliners looking for Palestinian commando leaders. But this reprimand will not bring back the territory Egypt lost in 1967, nor restore to Syria and Jordan what they lost at the same time.

After the recent Algiers summit, Sadat has sought to restore friendly relations with Jordan—relations which had been broken nearly two years ago. Syria was also brought into the picture. All three states have held discussions in Cairo about plans to recover lost Arab territory from Israel. Whilst the pro-west politics of King Hussein of Jordan and the slightly pro-east attitudes of Syria are known, President Anwar Sadat's politics are most enigmatic and uncertain.

Recently when the juvenile Col. Gaddafi was on his doorstep wanting at least a symbolic merger, Sadat had dashed off on a secret mission to Saudi Arab, Qatar and Syria. Not much is known about these visits, but whilst Sadat is chasing the chimera of Arab unity with divergent Arab states like Saudi Arabia, he enters into a merger agreement with Libya

which, though proclaiming Arab unity from the rooftops, is on bad terms with practically all its Arab neighbours.

Where President Sadat will take Egypt is not clear, but unless he decides who his friends are and used them to seek a political settlement in the Middle East he is likely to get into further difficulties—without solving any of the urgent economic problems within the country. Libya's oil may ease some of Egypt's problems temporarily, but to agree to this merger Sadat seems to have obtained the secret consent of King Feisal of Saudi Arabia, the Sultanate of Qatar and even the government of Syria. Saudi Arabia is one of the oil-rich countries which pays the subsidy to Egypt, Syria and Jordan for keeping the Suez Canal closed and is certainly in a position to call the tune. Libya is in the bad books of Saudi Arabia and other Arab states, but Sadat thinks that he could keep everybody satisfied by continuous round of palavering.

In the meantime, Sadat has hinted that with certain other European forces presumably in Western Europe another canal was ready for the building. Arab oil money and West European technology are to be brought together to build another Suez on Egyptian soil.

While President Anwar Sadat continues his flirting with the idea of a new Suez with oil-rich Arab and imperialist West European financiers, he has put the purse-

proud Gaddafi in his place before he agreed to initial the agreement to pave the way for an eventual merger without fixing any dates or datelines. Egypt was greatly dependent on Libyan subsidies to meet its budgetary deficits which are alleged to have been caused by the losses stemming from the closure of the Suez Canal. It was this hold which Libya had on Egypt which Gaddafi was using to pressurise Sadat.

But Sadat has now outmanoeuvred Gaddafi. Whilst the latter mounted a major campaign to intimidate and black mail Egypt to agree to an immediate merger, Sadat went off on a secret mission to King Feisal of Saudi Arabia and the sultanates of the Gulf States and succeeded in persuading them to grant him a subsidy to counterbalance the Libyan subsidy—Gaddafi had already withheld it for a month or two. Sadat has also now come to terms on a political basis with Syria and Jordan—two countries Gaddafi had ostracised.

Gaddafi is up against a blank wall when it comes to Saudi Arabia. King Feisal may be a "pro-imperialist reactionary," but he is also the guardian of Islamic values and the Holy Places—and no resurgence of an Islamic cultural revolution, such as Gaddafi wants can take place without his co-operation.

CHILE. When President Salvador Allende failed to attend the Algiers Summit this month, it was obvious

that he was in trouble at home. But no one suspected how deep the trouble was. But on September 11/12 he was ousted by a military junta with a strong rightwing flavour. The tragedy of Allende was that he had tried to go too far too soon without the consensus of his people. Most people will remember that Allende was chosen President on a 36% popular vote and right through the three years he has been in power, both houses of legislature were opposed to the ultra-left radical measures he insisted on adopting to make Chile a socialist country in double-quick time. When he found that he could not carry through his measures in the normal constitutional manner, he encouraged leftwing forces to bring about the changes by extra-parliamentary activities and through obsolete legal provisions. It was said that he had sought to observe the letter of the Constitution in most matters but he ignored its spirit.

The armed forces of Chile had been co-operative and responsive to him during the first 18 months of his rule especially when he had a senior armed forces commander as his Minister of Interior. But with Allende rushing headlong into premature measures to convert Chile into a socialist state "through democratic means", he asked for trouble. His methods disrupted the economy and there was a great pauperisation of the economy. This led to strikes—and naturally rightwing forces encouraged and supported the

strikes. Chile has been on the brink of a civil war during the last one year whilst Allende was hoping that the world of socialism and the world non-alignment would help him to pull the country out of the economic morass into which it had fallen. But before that help could come—if it ever could have come—he has been ousted. And he is dead, and it is not yet clear whether he committed suicide or whether he was killed when the Presidential palace had come under seige.

Armed worker's detachments are said to be fighting the units of the armed forces, and at the time of writing it is not clear whether the coup will be a signal for a nationwide civil war. In the rural areas, where the land had been forcibly taken from the landowners by landless peasants and the descendants of the ancient Indians, a guerilla movement seems inevitable—because the military junta will want to restore the land to the old landlords. But whether the workers and other leftwing forces will be able to offer much resistance is yet to be seen.

CHINA. News continues to filter through about developments in China about the Tenth Congress of the Communist Party and also about what is going on in China itself at the present juncture. One thing is very clear is that the world knows very little about political life in China—it seems to be like a submerged submarine where the crew live their own, almost utterly unknown life.

After the Cultural Revolution was completed in 1969, life in China seemed to have become relatively easy and quiet, but once again there is a new upsurge of turbulence with a major campaign to exorcise the ghost of Lin Piao.

The Tenth Congress has laid the stamp of approval to fight this Lin Piaoism by stepping up the "criticism of revisionism and correction of style" which is primarily aimed at rendering harmless the late Marshal Lin Piao's followers. If one is to judge by the measures announced to fight this revisionism one can only conclude that the supporters of Lin Piao are still very numerous. Reports indicate that the entire administrative and party machinery had been mobilised long before the Tenth Congress to purge the country of Lin Piao "swindlers".

This drive against Lin Piaoism must have been necessitated because of growing dissatisfaction inside China. It is not clear what this dissatisfaction really amounts to but when the Government was seeking to induce greater production through offering greater material inducements (the crime for which Lin Shao-chi was liquidated) many observers foretold that another cultural revolution was inevitable. And if the policies of the discarded Lin-Shao chi were adopted in economic affairs it would be serious blow to the prestige of Chairman Mao. Towards the end of 1972, the French magazine *Enterprise* had noted:

"Mao Tse-tung is not the absolute ruler of China anymore. Nowadays the 'Great Helmsman has vanished, only his name and the legend are left.'" This French estimate may be wrong or far-fetched but a growing sense of uncertainty seems to have triggered the desire for a new Cultural Revolution.

The *Newsweek*, 3/9/73, commenting on the situation in China, unaware that the Tenth Congress had been held in secret the week before (there is a time lag in *Newsweek* commentaries), had raised the question whether a new Cultural Revolution had begun under the heading *Is Chou En-lai in Trouble?*

"...The present great cultural revolution is only the first', Chairman Mao Tse-tung proclaimed in 1967. 'Inevitably, there will be more in the future'. In the heat of the West's recent infatuation with Peking, that particular thought of the Chairman's has largely been ignored. But history in the People's Republic of China has a curious way of repeating itself. And last week, nervous Western Sinologists thought they had begun to detect a few ominous signs that China's extreme leftists were mounting a full scale attack on Premier Chou En-lai and the moderate foreign and domestic policies he represents..."

It is well to remember that Mao Tsetung has always emphasised that the revolutions struggle was a permanent feature of life and that there would be always conflict between contradictory forces.

Observers were of the view that for some time now Mao Tse-tung was ready to begin a new stage of the Cultural Revolution. The posthumous denouncement of Lin Piao is, no doubt, the beginning of this new Cultural Revolution. People are now being asked to "study" the sins and mistakes of Lin Piao. The term "the main and accessory trends" which was in popular use in the 1966-69 period has once again come into vogue. The former Red Guards, now adults, were frustrated that in spite of what they had done, they did not as yet have a voice in government or in top "decision making". This has now been corrected by the elevation of Wang Hung-wen.

The "first whiff of the radicals' new offensive" had come early in August when Peking's official press enthusiastically devoted columns and columns to the seventh anniversary of the Red Guard movement — a sure indication that the disgraced Red Guards were once again in official favour. Next, the *Red Flag*: "...In an article flaying the moderates around Chou, Chiang Ching deplored recent educational reforms that place more stress on academic competence than on political enthusiasm. And last week came the strongest attack yet on Chou's policies—a denunciation of the use of material incentives to revive China's industry and agriculture after the debacle of the cultural revolution 'If we do not defeat the bourgeois attempts to turn back the wheel of his-

tory', the *Red Flag* thundered, 'we will diminish, undermine and even lose the victories already won'..."

It is well known that the *Red Flag* is largely controlled by Mao's wife, Chiang Ching, who is associated with the extremist groups which had first launched the first Cultural Revolution. There does not seem to be any doubt that this First Lady is laying the foundation for a bid for supreme power. The *Newsweek* noted that Chou En-lai was compelled to meet this challenge and stated that this tussle "will form the centerpieces of the upcoming Tenth Congress of the Chinese Communist Party", and went on to state: "So serious, in fact, is this danger that most analysts agree that Chou's sudden trip to Manchuria earlier this month represented a bid for the support of Gen. Chen Hsilien, the powerful commander of China's crack troops along the Soviet border. The meaning of all this manoeuvring is not lost

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on western diplomats—least of all U.S. Secretary of State-designate Henry Kissinger. 'When major domestic policies are under fire,' says one American official, 'we cannot be certain that foreign policies will not also be affected'. Clearly any abrupt setback for Chou En-lai, the architect of China's rapprochement with Washington, would send shock waves reverberating around the globe. In fact, Peking has already given diplomats the jitters—and reinforced the belief that major internal changes are currently in the works—by quietly ordering that no new tourist visas are to be issued during the next two months.

"Perhaps even more ominously, there are increasing reports of social turmoil and outright disruptions in the provinces that are reminiscent of the early days of the cultural revolution itself. Radio Moscow claimed last week that Szechuan youths in Chengtu and Chungking has clashed with local authorities after refusing to be sent down to the countryside. In Canton, an unofficial curfew has been imposed, and the Government has sentenced 'saboteurs' to death. And late last month, rumours of growing unrest were fed by the 24-hour grounding of all aircraft within China; the last time such a measure was taken was during the Lin Piao crisis two years ago.

"Nonetheless, on the surface, Mao's China is still more relaxed than ever before. Before the ban on tourism, Western visitors reported that the new era of detente

had finally sparked a new curiosity among young Chinese about the outside world. Many Chinese youngsters are now enthusiastically studying English; visiting Western symphony orchestras are playing to packed houses, and some young girls are boldly replacing their drab revolutionary uniforms with brightly coloured blouses. But it is just this easing of revolutionary fervor that has prompted the more militant party members to launch what may or may not prove to be a new cultural revolution but which clearly is a drive to rid Chinese society of its new 'revisionist' influences..."

The *Time* magazine, also of 3.9.73, after mentioning that a mysterious meeting had taken place in Peking stated that "to China watchers the carefully maintained silence was frustrating proof once again China's ability to hold its secrets..." The magazine after venturing a guess as to what the meeting was (it was indeed the Tenth Congress), it went on to say "...China was in the midst of an ideological and political struggle over key domestic problems, involving the state structure, the setting of domestic priorities and the succession to Mao Tse-tung, 80. The controversy flared up first in the Manchurian province of Liaoning, ostensibly inspired by a farm worker-student's complaint that he was not allowed sufficient time to prepare for a collegiate entrance examination. An article backing the student appeared in the *Liaoning Daily*, followed quickly

by a long piece in the leading party monthly *Red Flag*. On the surface the controversy involved a long-simmering dispute over the quality of higher education, which since the Cultural Revolution had suffered severely under a policy that stresses political 'correctness' rather than academic ability for aspiring college students. Now requirements are being tightened, annoying ideological purists."

The controversy was a simple one but fundamental. Is China to be ruled by "intellectuals" who believe in academic education, or by "worker-peasants" who are trained in political education without being bothered by academic distinctions. The *Time* described the attack on the intellectuals thus: "In reality, the quarrel reflected the continuing struggle for power between radicals, who reverse ideology above all, and pragmatists like Premier Chou En-lai, who place considerably more weight on industrial and agricultural progress. The depth of the dispute was underscored by a broad side in the authoritative *People's Daily*, which attacked—of all people—Confucius (551-479 B.C.) In the typically veiled fashion in which the Chinese Communists carry on their internal disputes, the sage was assailed for allegedly defending the slave-owning classes against reformers seeking to change the system. Confucius, the article noted, was the descendent of slave-owning aristocrats; his patron was the famed Duke of Chou. The description of confucian

BEING DEAF TO A HOOT

By Canax

When, sometime ago, Mr. Premadasa got back into the UNP fold he promptly marked the event with a broadside which still sticks in my mind. Democracy cannot operate, he said at the time, if the Government is deaf and the people dumb. I can't get over his failure to mention, even in passing, that democracy actually operates best when the two afflictions are switched the other way round; if the people are deaf, it hardly matters whether the Government is dumb or not, for the people wouldn't notice, anyway.

I did recall the point he made, though, when nomination papers were handed in the other day for the Colombo North Parliamentary election, and wondered if Mr. Premadasa still stood by what he said.

The point has been weighing so heavily on my mind I feel I have been pondering the matter even in my sleep. Where else could I have discussed the matter with Mr. P in such detail when I've never had the pleasure of meeting him in person?

policies chimed unmistakably with the postcultural Revolution policies of the Chinese leadership specifically those of highborn Chou En-lai. These pointed references convinced many China watchers that Chou, 75, was on shaky footing. Others, however, were convinced that it was too early to decipher just what was happening. Few denied that perplexing difficulties were in the making for Chou's again leadership.

This power struggle in China is of considerable interest to the rest of the

If memory serves, the discussion was kicked off by my asking, "Is it true the UNP not merely believed in but also followed the principle that the People should speak and the Government listen?"

"Of course," he replied, "We encouraged *all* the people to speak when we were the Government."

"The 1970 Election result was the obvious reward for it?"

"It could have happened to anybody," he protested.

world, especially the western powers which have recently opened diplomatic relations with China. They realise that Chairman Mao cannot live for ever, and that it was important to know who would succeed him. A new grouping of forces inside China which might seek to disturb the *detente*, which has now been established, will cause serious repercussions causing possible reorientation of foreign policy. There is restraint and caution on all sides while watching the struggle going on in China for political supremacy.

"What does that prove, anyway?"

"That you were deaf when you could least afford the luxury."

"No, no!" he cried. "That was because we *listened* only to some people and not all."

"Oh, you were selectively deaf?"

"It's just that we couldn't hear most of them," he insisted, "since we happened to be on a different wavelength."

"You mean you were listening on shortwave while most of the people were frantically trying to get across on medium?"

"That's one way of putting it," he said.

"What was your frequency like?"

"Very high", he said, shuddering at the very thought. "Certainly about 36,000 per annum for reasonably good reception, but the higher the better."

"Even as high as Capital Gains?" I asked in disbelief.

"At that level," he assured me, "we heard loud and clear. The People may speak but it's only Money that talks—or so we believed."

"You don't anymore?"

HE SUDDENLY looked older and, well, wiser—or so it seemed to me. "We still believe money talks but we've found it talks not only to the UNP, and that's been quite a shock."

"Has the Party recovered?"

"Of course," he said. "The UNP will no longer project

the image of being a rich man's Party. Thanks to the opposition we have learnt our lesson. We too will start at the bottom, championing the hoi polloi, and work our way up. Once in power it will be each man for himself, and the Party for all."

"You're not serious, are you?"

"Our Party believes in deeds and not just words," he said, "and we now have no less than 5000 of the poor, suffering masses in Colombo Central alone to prove it."

"What do you do—give them three free meals a day plus pocket money?"

"We've done better than that," he replied proudly. "We've made them members of the Party."

"Big deal," I said. "But why only 5000?"

"The rest couldn't spare a buck each."

"That seems a bit much these days," I remarked.

"At least you can't say we're not competitive," he pointed out. "You think you can get into the Capri for that price?"

"That's all very interesting. By the way, were those the 5,000 who spoke out on Nomination Day?"

"Not only them," he said. "It was the People who spoke and one could not help hearing them even if one tried."

"Being audible is one thing" I pointed out, "but did they make themselves clear?"

"I have do doubt they did."

"They used the official language, I suppose?"

"The People took no chances and resorted to an international lingo," he said.

"You mean English?"

"Not really," he explained. "A hoot is a hoot in any language and transcends all national barriers."

"Would you say the People spoke fairly and without discrimination?"

"We intended to be fair, but when we found some people practising austerity we too decided to follow the good example and withheld our hoot at times."

"What do you mean, we?" I asked. "I'm talking of the People out there."

HE LOOKED more pained than surprised. "Don't you know there are two kinds of People?"

"Yes, rich and poor."

"Try again," he suggested.

"Good and bad?"

"You're getting warm," he said encouragingly.

"I know," I cried as it dawned on me. "Theirs and Yours?"

"You live and learn," he said simply.

SOVIET "MONSOON" PROGRAM

Research vessels "Okean" and "Priliv" of the Far Eastern Hydrometeorological Institute have returned to Vladivostok after a three-month voyage in the Indian ocean. These are two of the four Soviet weather ships that were used in implementing the "Monsoon" program jointly with Indian scientists. The researchers studied the dynamics of the monsoon of the Indian ocean, a powerful stream of air that moves in summer from beyond the equator in the South easterly direction. Due to the latest equipment and instruments and quick processing of data on board the vessels, the scientists could glean many complex interactions of the atmosphere and the ocean and obtain valuable information on the emergence and development of monsoon. This is of great importance since the giant streams of air often cause heavy rains to fall on the Indian shores and cause floods. The results of the expeditions on board the "Okean," "Shokalski" "Voeikov and Priliv" vessels will help predict destructive air streams.

Indian specialists worked jointly with Soviet scientists on board the Soviet vessels during the research in the Arabian sea. The preliminary results of the "Monsoon" program were discussed at a joint Soviet-Indian scientific conference in Cochin. The Indian specialists expressed great satisfaction with the research and highly assessed the efforts of Soviet scientists who participated in the experiment.

—APN

"Tell me more," I begged eagerly.

"Now our people are the poor suffering masses, okay? Their people—well, the less said about them the better, except that they and the Government are one. So when our people speak, they expect to be heard!"

"I get you now," I said at last. "Your grouse is not that the Government didn't give a hoot, but that it did?"

"Precisely. When the toiling masses give a hoot they don't expect to get a hoot in return. The People have an inalienable right to hoot the Government if they so wish, but no Government has the constitutional right to hoot back, certainly not in a republican socialist democracy."

"Are you saying the Government was deaf to your hoots?"

"Yes, that's what I'm saying."

"If the Government was deaf, how come it summoned all those riot squads on the double?" I asked.

"A reflex action, no more," he said. "Fear makes the Government do the darndest things, and rushing in riot squads was the most illogical of them all."

"What would you have considered the proper response by Government to the people's hoot?"

"Why, that's obvious," he said. "It should have honourably resigned from office."

Inania Of This, That and The Other

"That's My Cup of Tea," Said He

By INNA

IT WAS the down-train to Colombo Fort from the hilly hill country, and the day was a sweltering day in August. To add to its heat, two men, one of whom was an obvious planter, were discussing the merits and demerits of keeping Sri Lanka's Tea going. It was a wonder. The planter had had enough. He was proving to the hilt that it was impoverishing Sri Lanka, and the other man was for holding on a little longer.

What silenced the barrage of Mr. Opponent was the Planter's producing this paragraph with a flourish:

"And as Rene Dumont, the French agronomist of the Sorbonne, (in connection with Ceylon from as early as 1932) says: 'If I suggest an increase of one-half of one centime per cup of tea paid by English housewives for a year, Ceylon would be out of her economic impasse, but Brookebond and Liptons and other oligopolies would smile...'"

Mr. Opponent re-inserted it into his pocket and I sank back into a meditative reverie. Thereafter it was snatches of talk that I heard: "They buy our tea at 2 Rupees and make 58 to 60 Rupees on a single pound, and I am in this structure whereby I exploit my country and ruin my people."

WHAT could I do with all my eagerness to Open To the Left. Edged up to him and chummed up to find that he was a christian. I never realised that there could be so many christians (I've met scores of them in recent times in this type of sincere battle) doing what the communists do and are supposed to be doing—fighting, working for the truth. Sri Lanka's church is getting vigorous and is risking it, hats off to the patient, plodding apparently-slow leaders. They do not know how much their quiet efforts are worth, as they slowly allow patterns of truth to emerge.

I went back to my friend and he produced another scrappy piece of paper full of grime and dust, and it read thus:

"The sinhala capitalists have followed the example of their English masters and have either bought or created plantations. The Rupee companies possess as many estates as the Sterling Companies. One must see how the Sinhala superintendent lives 'in the English manner', often even with an English wife. His bungalow situated on a wind-swept promontory, dominating a magnificent panorama, surrounded by superb gardens and herba-ceous borders, tended by nume-

rous gardeners—which does not mean necessarily, at great expense! This is not the picture of a 'democratic' society but a capitalist society with certain feudal practices" (Dumont, *Peasantry at Bay, Paysanneries aux Abois*, 1972, page 34-35)

THAT WAS enough.

Why charge this good gentleman with untruths? Perhaps he must have seen for himself at least one person acting like this, although it is unsafe to generalise. His tirade against the 'pukka sahibs' may have been too loud, but was worth the pyrotechnics he displayed. He

is shortly to leave the 'profession' he said, because he had "learnt that there is a lot of discrimination and you cannot live the Gospel in such situations. I am getting out of it, I am". I was only recalling what a christian (catholic) priest had given me a week earlier, from Paul the Pope:

"The most revolutionary ideologies end only in a change of masters; installed in power themselves, the new masters surround themselves with privileges, limit the liberty of others and allow other forms of injustice to rear themselves (Cardinal Roy's Letter by the Pope, 45)

INDIAN OCEAN

(Continued from last week)

US Seventh Fleet's new role. At the height of 1971 Indo-Pakistan war, the US on 10 December 1971 announced the despatch of a nuclear powered red carrier led task force of the Seventh Fleet to the Bay of Bengal. The Task Force 74 comprised the nuclear powered aircraft carrier *Enterprise* (89,600 tons), an amphibious assault ship *Tripoli* with a battalion of 800 marines, seven destroyers and frigates and an oiler. The total force consisted of 6,000 men—sailors, airmen and marines. The Task D Force entered the Bay of Bengal on 15 December 1971. It was seen sailing back in the Malacca Straits on 10 January 1972.

Earlier a US squadron of six warships — 4 destroyers and a submarine led by the aircraft carrier *Ticonderoga*,

carried out training and anti-submarine exercise from 18 to 23 April 1971 in the Wharton Basin, South-west of Java and north-west of Australia. USS *Enterprise* accompanied by the guided missile frigate USS *Bainbridge* conducted four-day exercises in the eastern region of the Indian Ocean in the fourth week of September 1971.

With the reorganisation of its Commands on 8 July 1971, the US Navy decided to step up its activities in the Indian Ocean. Under this arrangement, the Commander-in-Chief Pacific was given the control of US military operations in the entire Indian Ocean from 1 January 1972. Admiral John S. McCain, Commander-in-Chief Pacific said in Honolulu on

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16 December 1972 that the US Seventh Fleet might play a larger role in the Indian Ocean as the Vietnam War winds down. Commander of the Seventh Fleet, Vice-Admiral William P. Mach, said in Hong Kong on 11 January 1972 that the Fleet's fighting capacity will be increased. The Indian Ocean is to be more closely shadowed in future, he asserted.

The Seventh Fleet plans to send more patrols into the Indian Ocean. The US Defence Department spokesman said on 10 January 1972 that US naval ships would sail from time to time on no fixed schedule and at no fixed force level in the Indian Ocean.

—Foreign News & Features.

CHRONICLE

JULY 16-18

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

MONDAY, JULY 16: A Declaration of Assets Bill under which Ministers, MPs, Secretaries to Ministries and certain categories of officers of public service and Security forces will provide details of their wealth, is expected to be tabled in the National State Assembly shortly by the Leader of the House, Mr. Maithripala Senanayake. A spokesman for the Ceylon Estate Employees Federation has told the *Daily News*, that monthly wages for estate employees is impracticable. The Central Bank has changed the parity rates of the Ceylon rupee in relation to the currencies of many other countries: according to the new rates the US dollar is now worth Rs. 6.04 and the UK pound at Rs. 15.60 remain unaltered. Under the Anti-Explosives Law, using the emergency powers, the Government has widened the law to include in its area of authority the territorial waters of Sri Lanka. Nine Sectoral Committees, each chaired by a Minister, have been formed under the National Planning Council. According to the Sun, the Minister of Finance, Dr. N. M. Perera is expected to make a visit to Washington to negotiate for a standby loan of 25 million US dollars. The International Court of Justice has refused to grant Pakistan's request for an interim injunction against the transfer by India of the 195 POWs trial in Bangladesh. President Nixon, laid low with a bout of viral pneumonia, has shown slight improvement according to his physician.

TUESDAY, JULY 17: At a conference of all Government Agents held yesterday at the Central Bank auditorium, the Minister of Public Administration, Home Affairs and Local Government, Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike requested the GAs to help root out bribery: the press was allowed to be present at this Conference and even permitted to ask questions. The debate

on the Lake House Bill will begin in the National State Assembly, today. At the C.J.C. inquiring into the Exchange Control offences, Superintendent of Police, Tyrell Goonetilleke said that the Prime Minister herself ordered the arrest of two prominent persons. Several incidents of thugery were still being reported from Dedigama. Under a new joint shipping service agreement with China, the Chinese vessel "Chang Duy" was put into the harbour yesterday with a consignment of rice. UNICEF had approved 1 million dollars for Sri Lanka's services for children during the two year period 1973-74. According to a spokesman of the Milk Board, a big drop in sales is being experienced and as a result the Board is purchasing less milk from the collecting centres. The Ceylon Transport Board, which has been granted Rs. 20 million in foreign exchange, proposes to utilise the major part of this money to import spare parts. Father Adrian Hastings, in a letter to the *London Times* told more about the massacre of Africans by Portuguese troops in Mozambique.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 18: Speaking on the ANCL Bill, the Prime Minister has said that the Bill is not an act of political revenge nor a takeover but a step that followed public agitation against the monopoly of a family-dominated group of newspapers to broadbase ownership. At yesterday's meeting of Government Parliamentary Group, the Prime Minister referred to the Places of Worship Bill which was defeated in the House last week and cautioned the MPs to be more alert in the future. The Minister of Plantation Industries, Mr. Colvin R. de Silva, at a Press Conference held yesterday criticised the lopsided policies of the World Bank. Afghanistan's King Mohamed Zahir Sha was overthrown in a political coup led by the King's cousin, General Mohamed Daud: at the time of the coup, the 40-year ruler of Afghanistan was in Italy undergoing medical treatment. Following Vietnamese Peace Agreement signed in Paris last week, Britain announced diplomatic recognition of North Vietnam.

IN SRI LANKA TODAY

New Developments Inside United Front

by
Kubera

Political crises that have been maturing for some time, when they reach the point of culmination, assume startling forms before their final resolution. This is precisely what happened last week to the crisis created inside the SLFP-LSSP-CP United Front by the rift within the CP and its repercussions on the United Front as a whole.

The point of culmination of this long-standing political crisis was reached when Premier Mrs. Bandaranaike, as leader of the United Front, summoned Dr. S. A. Wickremasinghe and other leaders of the present CP Politbureau to a 'confrontation' meeting with representatives of the SLFP and the LSSP to discuss their relations *vis-a-vis* their U.F. partners.

Though the *Daily News* of the 12th September reported that dramatic moves were afoot within the CP to bring the two warring factions together to improve their bargaining strength with the SLFP and the LSSP leaders (mainly, it was said, due to the efforts of K.P. Silva who had just returned from Moscow which is known to be pressing hard for a compromise settlement between the two factions), this proved to a vain hope.

The very next day the same newspaper reported

that the CP had 'toughened their stance' on the eve of the confrontation meeting and that all moves towards compromise had been rejected. According to this report, the CP's Central Committee at a meeting held to consider the critical situation had authorised the CP delegation meeting their UF partners "to justify the attacks on the UF parties and their leadership irrespective of whether this leads to the CP's expulsion from the United Front or not."

At the confrontation meeting itself held on the 12th September, the CP delegation, it would appear, far from justifying their attacks on their UF partners, had taken up the position that these attacks were the work of 'irresponsible' and 'hot-headed' young elements in the CP who should not be taken too seriously.

The SLFP and LSSP leaders had given the CP delegates a patient hearing and Mrs. Bandaranaike had written a letter addressed to Dr. Wickremasinghe as the MP for Akuressa (but not in his capacity as present General Secretary of the CP) that "it is no longer possible to continue to regard you as members of the United Front."

It is not clear who the 'you' referred to by the Prime Minister refers to. Does it refer to the Communist Party as a whole? If that is so, why did not the Prime Minister say so clearly?

Or is it only to the 'hardliners' now in control of the party? Or, to put even a more limited construction that is possible though highly improbable, does 'you' refer only to the members of the CP delegation that met Mrs. Bandaranaike?

The 'hardliners' and 'softliners' have reacted differently to this new development within the United Front.

The former have issued a statement referring to "the exclusion of the Communist Party of Sri Lanka from the United Front" and promising, in spite of all, to support "the anti-imperialist and progressive measures of the SLFP-LSSP Government."

This statement has also gone on to say that the resulting danger to the progressive movement (from such exclusion) "cannot be retrieved by the substitution of a group of opportunists parading as honest Communists."

This last reference is to a phrase in Pieter Keuneman's letter sent to Dr. Wickremasinghe after the latter got his letter from Mrs. Bandaranaike.

Keuneman's letter makes it clear that he interprets the word 'you' in Mrs. Bandaranaike's letter as referring only to the hardliners' group. He points blankly in

forms Dr. Wickremasinghe that "I intend to take the necessary initiatives to rally all honest Communists to see that the Political Resolution unanimously adopted by the 8th Congress is honoured and that the CP of Sri Lanka fulfils the obligations it assumed when it signed the Common Programme and the Joint Election Manifesto of the United Front."

When asked what these initiatives were going to be, Mr. Keuneman has told the *Daily News*: "Wait and see." Since then he has held a meeting of his supporters in Colombo at the Moors' Islamic Cultural Home in the Fort on Sunday (16th September) and briefed them about the line he is going to take.

It is understood that he told his supporters that the position taken up by the present leadership of the CP does not at all reflect the decisions taken by the 8th Congress last year, that their exclusion from the UF have rendered them incapable of implementing the policies adopted by that Congress, that the primary loyalties of CP members should be to the political decisions adopted by that Congress and not to leaders who violate those decisions, that abnormal situations inside the party as exists at present (where one political line is adopted and those holding a diametrically opposite one elected to implement it) require abnormal remedies, that they (the 'soft-liners') were not splitting the party or forming a new one, but merely advancing along the correct

lines from the positions adopted by the 8th Congress in a way to implement the Congress decisions and to save the CP and the U.F.

It is learnt that a full-scale conference of Keuneman's supporters on an all-island scale will be held next Saturday (22nd September) where final decisions will be reached about the organisational restructuring necessary to give effect to these changes.

At the time of writing, it is not known how the 'hardliners' will react to Keuneman's move. Will they expel him from the CP as they have already expelled M. G. Mendis and a number of other leading 'softliners?' In any case, it is obvious that Keuneman is determined to go his own way. A final parting of the ways between the two warring CP factions appears imminent.

Keuneman will doubtless have the blessings of his United Front partners in the course he is about to pursue. There have been speculations in the *Daily News* (15th September) that "startling" developments in the shape of some leading hardliners joining Keuneman is not ruled out, though present indications in this direction seem to be most unlikely.

What is certain is that new disputes and disagreements are bound to arise between the United Front as a whole and the 'irresponsible' and 'hotheaded' elements in the present CP leadership who might even opt for withdrawal of the qualified support they have pledged the "SLFP-LSSP Government" and go

all out to oppose it tooth and nail.

Questioned about this possibility, a leading LSSP'er told the writer of this article "If they do, let's hope that at the end of it they will still have some teeth left!"

A very difficult situation will also be created for the CPSU and other foreign CP's by the latest developments inside the UF resulting from the split in the local CP. Will Moscow and other socialist capitals switch their support over from one group to the other? Or will they continue to support both all the while pressuring them to come together again?

The CPSU and other foreign CP's will, no doubt, be hard put to it to support only the group excluded from the UF by Mrs. Bandaranaike with whose government they maintain the best relations and whose policies both in the international and local fields they generally approve.

That is why some political observers opine that, whatever the apparent 'final' rifts at the moment, Moscow will pressurise even harder than before for some sort of compromise settlement between the two CP factions. But what success they will achieve in this, only time will tell.

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IS IT TRUE?

Sherlock Holmes

PETROL SHORTAGE MONSOON FAILURE

IS IT NOT TRUE that the mighty United States was hit by a petrol (yankee—gasoline) shortage this year? That in June 1972, US stocks of gasoline were enough to last 31 days? That motorists were using 6.8 million barrels daily? That refineries had begun to run near capacity? That shortages were barely averted in the summer of 1972? That stocks in June 1973 were only sufficient for 28 days? That motorists were using 7.2 million barrels a day? That because of this and the increases demanded by the oil producers, (mainly Arab and Persian Gulf countries), the US was short of gasoline for the first time ever since gasoline was used as a source for fuel? That this summer supplies were voluntarily rationed? That gas stations had put up huge billboards which read: "8-gallon limit please, to serve all our customers we must limit individual gasoline purchases your cooperation is appreciated? That even with this President Nixon had warned on June 29: "...or daily supply of gasoline this summer could fall short of demand by 1 or 2 percent and possibly as much as 5 percent.."? That the USA had gone through the

last summer, without a major shut down, by the thin end of a razor's edge? That over 54 percent of the country's service stations had limited their sales or operating hours? That this figure was furnished by the American Automobile Association? That the Cost of Living Council, in its first major operation under the new price freeze programme, had ordered rollbacks for 1106 service stations found to be overcharging an average of 2 cents a gallon for gasoline? That the Council had found that 741 independent and 365 company-owned stations had charged above freeze-price levels? That in this capitalist country the price control levels were enforced? That the US Government has now launched a drive to encourage a 5 per cent cut in the anticipated private use of energy in the next 12 months —with the Federal Government ordered to reduce consumption by 7 percent to lead the way? That it would be good thing, in Sri Lanka too, if the Government enforced a cut on all kinds of consumption by government bodies and corporations? That one of the biggest consumers of petrol in Ceylon is the enormous public sector?

IS IT NOT A FACT that inspite of rain falling unseasonally at times, this year, Sri Lanka has not got its share of the southwest monsoon? That one indication of this, is the fact that the two reservoirs serving Colombo have run dry and that a water cut had become inevitable in the city? That this failure of the southwest comes after a bad northeast in 1972-73? That the southwest in 1972 had also been partial whilst the northeast of 1971-72 was poor? That since 1970 the rain gods have not given Sri Lanka her adequate share of rain? That Sherlock Holmes does not state this with a view to denigrating the United Front government which had come to power in 1970? That this fact is mentioned as one additional difficulty faced by the United Front—the absence of rain? That for a long time the Government did not recognise that the country was slowly slipping into the grip of drought? That today the Government is shouting its head off about the drought? That if the realities of the continuing drought were realised the Government would have started a crash programme for tapping ground water a long time ago? That even today the plans for the "stupendous" Maha cultivation is based on the rains? That if the rains failed or are only partial, Government's hopes for bumper harvests will vanish? That it is not too late to launch a crash programme to tap ground water sources as it was done in many parts of India affected by drought conditions for several years running?