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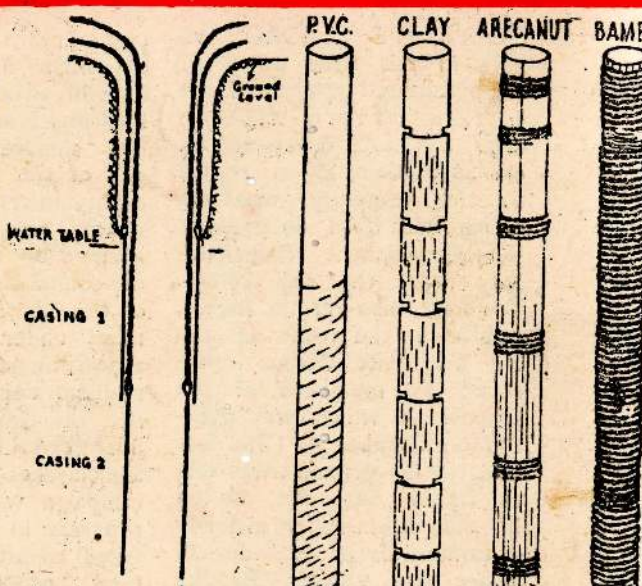
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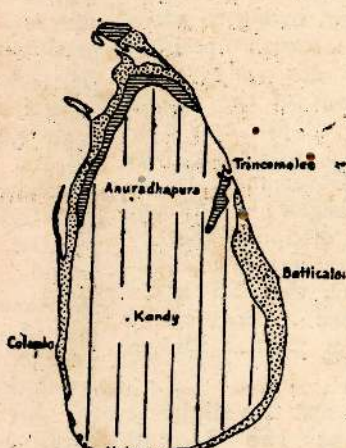
SRI LANKA'S

LOW COST

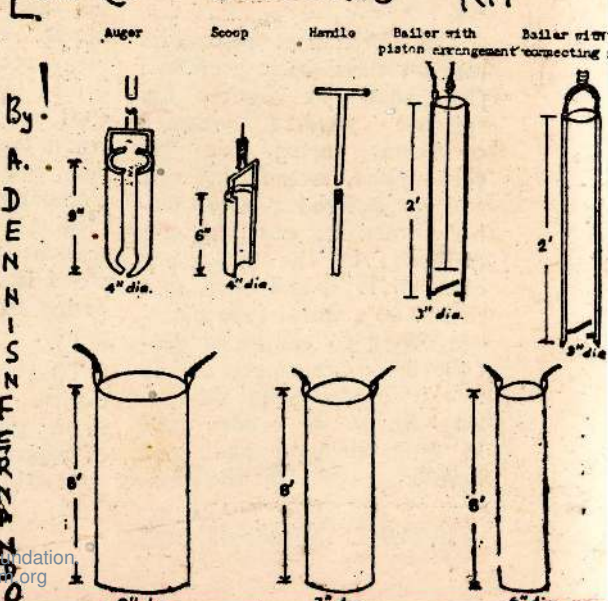
TUBE WELLS



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AREA 1- SUITABLE FOR BAMBOO, ARECANUT AND CLAY TUBE WELLS.

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In other parts of Sri Lanka where it is possible to use these tube wells when we encounter soft rock material.

By! A. DENNIS PERERA

- CLASS WAR & AGRICULTURE LOW COST TUBE WELLS
- PADDY PRICE TAMIL QUESTION
- BROADCAST TO THE NATION
- NO CONFIDENCE
- WAR ABROAD & AT HOME
- LAKE HOUSE

Tribunania

* Class War and Agriculture

* Low Cost Tube Wells

FOR THE RECORD, we have in this issue published the broadcast speech made by the Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike, on September 29 in regard to the austerity measures which had been detailed to the Government Parliamentary Party the day before. We have, also *For the Record*, published the text of the *No Confidence Motion* sponsored by members of the Opposition which was debated on October 4. The fact that the Government was able to throw out the motion by the steam-roller majority it commands is no index of either the validity of the Government's case or the popularity it now enjoys in the country.

The Government rested its case on three basic premises: first, that this country has suffered adverse weather conditions during the last three years, second, that this country suffered a major setback when its economy was disrupted by the insurgency of April 1971, and third, that there was a world food shortage owing to continued drought in several parts of the world coupled with devastating floods in others (and in some drought and flood have alternated in the same

region more than once.) The Opposition had argued that even if all the three factors mentioned above were taken into consideration, the severity of the present food and economic crisis had been engendered, perpetuated and accentuated by the several acts of commission and omission of the United Front Government under the impulse of anachronistic slogans and unrealistic doctrinaire theories: that the Government had deliberately killed the Dudley Senanayake grow more food campaign which had been in progress in 1969-70 and had failed to start an alternative food production campaign consistent with its socialist policies: that, owing to partisan and sectarian political imperatives not only were many sections of the people driven into despair and frustration, but other sections whom the Government favoured had begun to disrupt elementary discipline thereby making a mockery of administration; and, that Sri Lanka stood isolated internationally owing to its partisan foreign policy.

There is not the slightest doubt that the United Front government is guilty of apathy and insensitivity to realities. As early as

1970 it was known that this country was heading for an economic and food crisis and the Government had done nothing more than take stern austere measures to liquidate the political and economic power of the classes, communities and groups which had opposed the United Front coalition in the 1970 elections—without paying adequate attention to the economic and food problem either from a socialist as even a capitalistic angle.

Instead, legislation was enacted to bring about a social revolution through an egalitarian distribution of existing wealth and property—through land reforms, stiff personal taxation, ceilings on income and the like. Until the beginning of 1973, no thought was given to production—there was only lip-service and sloganising. *Tribune* has always been at pains to point out the futility of the social upheaval, which the United Front was inducing, without providing for an alternative structure for production. Optimists now claim that the four pieces of legislation about land—the Land Reform Law, the Agricultural Productivity Law, the Agricultural Land Law and the Sale of State Lands (Special Provisions) Law—would automatically and spontaneously usher in a new era of increased agricultural productivity, in fact, a green revolution overnight: and all of this under the doubtful patronage of stick-in-the-mud bureaucrats and drunk-with-power parliamentarians all enmeshed in a corruption

such as this country has never known before.

Much has to be undone in regard to the damage caused to the productive machine and even more done to induce cultivators to enter enthusiastically into production—before this country can hope to see a Green Revolution. IN THE MEANTIME, the Government continues to wage its class war on the international front, on the most partisan and sectarian lines, and also pursue the class war on the domestic front totally unmindful of the realities confronting this small country in regard to food and monetary resources.

INTERNATIONALLY we have turned up our noses at the World Bank and the IMF because these admittedly capitalist organisations had given Sri Lanka advice based on capitalist ideology, no doubt to promote capitalist economic development in Ceylon. If the United Front was opposed to everything capitalist as something which would infringe on the sovereignty and independence of this country—then, the least it could have done was to walk out of IMF and the IBRD no sooner the United Front government was formed in May 1970.

In our wisdom, we have carried on a class war against the IMF — IBRD in the belief that we could convert these two imperialist organisations to accept the socialism propounded by the SLFP—LSSP—CP coalition in Sri Lanka. It was obvious to all, but the

pachydermous VIPs of the UF administration and establishment, that Sri Lanka would come a-cropper in the class war it had declared against the IMF—IBRD. We have now reached the point of no return and the less said about it the better.

The United Front had also declared a class war against all imperialist countries and more especially against world Jewry. Part of the strategy was to weaken and ultimately defeat imperialism, and this was by extracting from them as much money in the form of aid and loans. We have preached to the Aid Consortium countries why it was in their interests to extend credit and aid generously to the UF government in Sri Lanka. For its own reasons, the Aid Consortium has given small crumbs to this island, but it is not likely that any more will be forthcoming for sometime to come. And UF apologists have therefore begun to crow that imperialist grapes were sour.

But the class war we have carried on, with single-minded dedication, against the imperialist countries—in favour of the oil-rich Arab countries, the Vietnamese, and other countries fighting for “liberation”—has estranged the United Front government of this country from most of the big countries in the capitalist world. In reality, we cannot afford to break with these imperialist countries in the contemporary world of interdependence but this Government behaves as if it is a mighty

power and preaches sermons to these imperialists to change their (leopard) spots before it was too late. The big and small powers of the imperialist and capitalist camp, however, continue to maintain allegedly friendly relations with Sri Lanka's United Front government because it is part of their capitalist strategy to play a cat-and-mouse game with little errant countries until the people get



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fed up with the futile and fruitless policies pursued by the utopian idealists of united front coalitions who delude themselves into thinking that through the smokescreen of a mixed economy socialism could be achieved through parliamentary legislation.

Whilst Sri Lanka has thus carried an open and defiant class war against all imperialist countries, we have also waged a subtle and subterranean class war against revisionists and other "rengades" in the socialist world—with the result that there are many countries in the socialist camp which look askance at the socialist protestations of Sri Lanka's United Front.

We are not so clever as the Vietnamese who are able to keep on cordially friendly terms with the revisionists as well as the others. In Sri Lanka we breed only purists who wage a class war on the international plane on the most classical lines. Even in regard to third world

Thinking Daisies

Soviet biologists conclude that plants have a sophisticated and perfect "nervous system". They respond sensitively to the least changes in the environment, and send relevant reports to a nerve centre which, like a human or animal brain, controls their functioning. Furthermore, it has been found that plants have memory and a language of their own.

non-aligned countries, we wage an indirect class war against the reactionary government of India (partly because she is aligned to the revisionist bloc) whilst we tilt towards a military dictatorship in Pakistan—it would violate the principles of the class war if we admitted that we favoured Pakistan for geopolitical reasons. So, we take cover under a transparent plea of neutralism and non-alignment which nobody but ourselves takes seriously.

THE CLASS WAR we have carried on the international front has left the United Front without any friends (bar one), but this does not seem to worry the pundits of the United Front who refuse to admit that international class war we have carried on since 1970 has been understandably coloured and impregnated with geopolitical considerations. We refuse to admit such realities and proclaim that we will wage our class war until capitalism, revisionism and all other imperialisms are wiped out from the face of the earth.

We have been, further, so immersed in this international class war that we ignored many global realities on the economic and food front. But now these realities have caught up with us and the fact that we have carried on a selfless class war on behalf of the Arabs, the Vietnamese and others does not seem to be of much help. The Arabs have jacked up the prices of crude oil

and petroleum products and they have not thought it necessary to grant us any concessions. At Georgetown, the Arabs ganged up against us in spite of the fact we broke with world Jewry on their behalf much to our detriment. But we are happy that at Algiers the Arabs did not oppose Colombo being the venue of the 1976 non-aligned summit. Meanwhile, with the oil squeeze and military action against Israel, the Arabs hope to come to a new detente with imperialism, and when this happens countries like Sri Lanka will be left carrying the baby of the international class war against imperialism. This is a hard world of realities and we cannot continue to live in an Alice-In-Wonderland dream world of our making either on the international level or on the domestic level. Internationally, we do not have any friends (bar one). We stand estranged from the real world centres of power and influence, and there is very little which those whom we have befriended can do for us.

ON THE DOMESTIC level too, the United Front government has carried on an unceasing class war according to its lights and the ideological predilections of some partners of the UF. We have pursued a ruthless war against UNP reactionaries, UNP capitalists, UNP landlords, Indian-origin Registered Citizens, Ceylon Tamils (because they prefer separatist-inclined Federalists to UF toadies), Indian Tamils (because they favour Thonda-

man's trade union to pro-UF ones), and finally but not least JVP che guevarist left revolutionaries and ultras. In this process, the UF in spite of its continuing parliamentary majority has estranged itself from all, bar the trade unions, in Colombo and other urban centres and also small pockets of intellectuals and white collar workers satelliting around the three constituent partners of the UF. On a popularity poll, the United Front will today rate very low.

There cannot be the slightest doubt that the Government must re-orientate its class war policies, internationally as well nationally. The Leader of the Opposition has pointed out, very correctly, that Sri Lanka today has no friend to loan her even 200,000 tons of wheat or rice, and it is known that countries like the USA, USSR, and Canada are in a position to give such loans although they are not inclined to sell food crops either for cash or credit except to approved customers. Unfortunately Sri Lanka is not in a position to approach any of these countries for such trade or assistance (because Sri Lanka has viciously fought the "imperialism" of the USA, the "revisionism" of the USSR, and the "neo-colonialism" of Canada which had undertaken to profitably exploit the resources of Sinharajah forest).

China may yet come to our rescue, but there is no reason why we should have cut ourselves from countries like the US and the USSR.

ON THE DOMESTIC LEVEL the class war carried on against "reactionaries" has isolated the government from most sections of the community. The trade unions, which have been pampered and spoilt from 1970, are still dragging their feet heavily behind the UF, but it is not clear how long this dwindling honeymoon will continue. In the meantime, the class war the UF has carried on has brought about a significant drop in agricultural production (not taking into consideration plantation crops), and not all the threats made by the Government has induced greater production. From class war threats, the Government is now slowly moving to offering monetary and other inducements to cultivators (too little and too late), but there seems to be stiff resistance to this in many quarters because such material inducements are said to be the stock-in-trade of capitalist renegades like Liu Shao-chi. Ceylon, however, cannot afford the luxury of a cultural revolution to exercise embryonic Liu Shao-chism—and it is also well to remember that that there is much to be said for the material incentives Liu Shao-chi wanted to offer farmers and other producers of wealth.

All said and done, the UF Government's current grow-more-food campaign will flop disastrously unless the UF hierarchy are willing to call off the class war on the international as well as the domestic front. This will naturally entail taking many steps back, but without such a strategic

retreat, the country, can only look forward to a dismal and terrible future.

The next elections are due only in 1976 (there are wild rumours that the present establishment will extend the life of the National State Assembly and the ruling elite for a further period), and the people cannot hope to change the government until then. 1976 is yet a long way off and unless this Government changes its policies immediately under pressure of public opinion and declares a truce on the class war front, a tragedy of the worst magnitude will soon envelop this country.

On the international front, there are yet no signs of weakening in regard to our class war postures, but on home front there seems to be a desire to drop the class war against some sections of the people, particularly the Ceylon Tamils. There are reports that secret negotiations are being conducted by the UF Establishment with nominees of the TUF—with the CINTA acting as the honest brokers. The Prime Minister has also decided to pay a visit to Jaffna later this month. These are only straws in the wind, but they are healthy and welcome signs.

ON THE COVER, in this issue, we have drawn attention to a very important development which has taken place in this country in regard to tapping the ground water resources of the island. *Tribune* has been insisting for a

long time that there was no possibility of even a minor green revolution unless agriculture was based on controlled irrigation. Tank irrigation was limited and it could not be extended beyond a point. Furthermore, tank irrigation was expensive compared to groundwater irrigation. And the possibilities of groundwater irrigation is limitless for a long time to come. Jaffna is the only place in Sri Lanka where groundwater is used today extensively for agriculture, but there is no reason why the same techniques cannot be developed all over the island, even in areas where the rainfall is heavier than in the North. And unless this

is done, agriculture can never be done under controlled conditions or in a scientific manner.

Tribune has been consistently publishing, over the years, articles on the need to develop our groundwater resources, but since 1972 we urged this with a sense of urgency. Among the articles we published was one in our issue of June 30, 1972, about the low cost bamboo tubewell that had been developed in certain parts of India where the soil was suitable for such tubewells.

A very high official in the Agricultural Establishment had then told the Tribune that this was not a practicable or feasible proposition either in India and more especially in Ceylon. He pooch-pooched the whole thing as a gimmick. He was so cocksure about the virtues of what the Ministry and the Department were doing and declared that the corner had been turned in agriculture and that the Kobbekaduwan Green Revolution was already upon us. He must be now a sadder but wiser man.

Then, in our issue of August 4, 1973, we had a front cover illustration about the Indian bamboo tubewell and we published a story of how the low cost tubewell had become a major success in India. On this occasion, we had some positively welcome reactions.

THE DOUBTING Thomases' of the Ministry and Department of Agriculture held their tongue and maintained a cynical silence, but many readers of *Tribune* wanted more

information about these low cost tube wells. At about this time, we received a small booklet entitled THE GROUNDWATER RESOURCES OF SRI LANKA by an official who is employed in the Planning Division of the Ministry of Irrigation, Power and Highways, A. Dennis N. Fernando. We had referred the booklet to a *Tribune* researcher on ground water problems and even before we received a review of this booklet, we received a "press release" from an organisation called the National Rural Conference, announcing the details of low cost tube wells, practicable in Sri Lanka, and also about a demonstration of one such tubewell in a farm at Daluwakotuwa, close to Negombo.

In this issue we have published the press release as well as an article by A. Dennis N. Fernando, the President of the National Rural Conference, about these tubewells.

We have devoted much space to this matter because we realise the importance of groundwater in any scheme of agricultural development in the island. Mr. Dennis Fernando is well qualified to write on this subject. Apart from his professional qualifications, he had in the January of this year visited India where he was the guest of the National Science Academy. He had been to the Central Ground Water Board and the Minor Irrigation Division of the Ministry of Agriculture in New Delhi and also the Directorates of the Central Ground Water Board at Rajasthan and Hyderabad.

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In the preface to his booklet he writes: "I saw for myself how ground water development has made its impact not only in the soft rock areas but in the hard rock areas as well. I therefore set about the task of computing the available ground water resources in our country based on the Indian experience because I considered it my duty to place the ground water resources before the government for consideration, since this is bound to have a great impact in the future development of our country."

To Mr. Fernando's credit it must be said that he has not been merely satisfied making reports, but he has done a great deal of homework and he is today in a position to demonstrate that lowcost tubewells are a practical proposition in the soft rock areas in Ceylon. These tubewells could be sunk with low cost drilling equipment.

For hard rock areas, more sophisticated equipment is essential and this is where an alert government must step in. But, the Government must rid itself of its allergies to Israelis, Indians and other "reactionaries and imperialists" if it wants to develop ground water resources locally because we need not only sophisticated know-how but also advanced equipment which cannot be produced in the island for a long time, or never at all.

CEYLON: MARGINAL NOTES

BY SERENDIB

✳ Paddy Price

✳ The Tamil Question

TOO LATE AND TOO LITTLE. Much is being made of the increase of the GPS (or PMB) price for paddy. It has been proclaimed that Rs. 25 a bushel would drive the cultivators of paddy into ecstasies of joy and make them cultivate all available land where paddy can be grown and has been grown in the past. *Tribune* had repeatedly pointed out that over 40,000 acres of paddy land in the northern areas were not cultivated during the last Maha, not because of the drought but because the then prevailing GPS price of Rs. 14 was uneconomic—unless one produced over 100 bushels per acre.

Then, too late for the last Maha, the price was increased too little to Rs. 18 per bushel. If this announcement had been made earlier, much more of the lands left idle would have been cultivated. Since the middle of this year the cost of paddy cultivation has jumped skyhigh—Diesel costs more, fertilisers cost more, agro-chemicals cost more, barbed wire costs more, hurricane and petromax lamps cost a fortune if they are available and mammoets and other implements are scarce and rare commodities at fantas-

tically high prices. At the Rs. 18 price level, it was not likely that more land would have been cultivated.

After much reluctance and jaw-jaw, the GPS price has been re-fixed at Rs. 25. *Again it is too late and too little.* If the paddy lands which can produce only 40 to 50 bushels are to be cultivated, the price of GPS paddy should be at least Rs. 40 a bushel. Otherwise the cultivator will suffer a loss. Only the lands which can produce between 100 to 120 bushels per acre will find the Rs. 25 a bushel an incentive.

The nett result is that even if the marginal paddy lands of the 30/40 bushels-an-acre level are cultivated under the imperatives of the current food shortages, the cultivators will not sell the produce to the PMB at Rs. 25 a bushel, but he will sell the paddy on the quiet to the private trade at an economic price around Rs. 40 a bushel or more. There is no way the Government can prevent this—and if the Government insists on draconian measures against cultivators who sell at the market price, cultivators will stop cultivating thereafter.

If the Government wants to buy the overwhelming portion of the paddy produced, the least it can do is to fix a price at which those who cultivate on a marginal basis will be willing to cultivate and sell. Bureaucrats tend to fix their yardstick on what can be grown under optimum conditions and the highest yields—with the result that the Government is saddled with an uneconomic and unattractive purchasing price.

It is futile and foolish to speak about compelling all owners to cultivate their lands and produce paddy at less than uneconomic prices. The threat of land being taken over and being given to others anxious to cultivate is an empty threat. There are no such people who want to cultivate the so-called idle land. If the present owners do not want to do it, very few others will want to burn their fingers. Instead of uttering threats of take-over and summary alienation, the Government should sack the officials who have blundered for the last three years on every aspect of agriculture and obtain the services of others who will give correct and realistic advice. Party loyalists, living in a dream world of wish-fulfilment, are the last people to give sound advice.

THE TAMIL QUESTION.

For some weeks now, even as the TUF was preparing for its satyagraha campaign scheduled for October 2, and even after the FP had dropped its federalism and adopted the more explosive demand for a separate state, press reports indicated that

there were hush-hush talks between the SLFP hierarchy and leaders of the TUF. The parties, it would appear, had been brought together by the CINTA, the Ceylonese Institute for National and Tamil Affairs, an organisation which has ex-Supreme Court judge Manickavasagar as one of its active livewires.

There is no doubt that the food situation in the country has compelled even rabidly Sinhala chauvinist elements to have second thoughts about casting the Ceylon Tamils and the Indian Tamils (stateless and otherwise) into the outer wilderness because they have refused to accept a constitution which has not provided legitimate constitutional guarantees (written into the Constitution) about minority rights. A slow realisation seems to have come over certain elements, who had so far believed that the Tamils of Ceylon could be slowly transformed into Sinhala Buddhists through a new Republican Constitution with the aid of Kumarasuriens and Thuraiappahs, that the Tamil community in the island cannot be culturally, linguistically and otherwise assimilated into making a homogenous Sinhala Buddhist nation. Even if they entertain such ideas, they seem to sense that this project has to be postponed *sine die* and that it was time to call a truce in order to ensure at least minimum food production by getting the co-operation of the Tamils. The Kumarasuriens and the Thuraiappahs have failed to deliver the goods. Both are discredited men among the Tamils—even among Tamils who are

genuinely “progressive” and socialist. And among the “reactionary” Tamils, the names of these SLFP Tamil “leaders” stink.

In this situation, the Government cannot be better than to find a *modus vivendi* with the Tamils. The CINTA are better brokers than either the Left Parties or the SLFP Tamils. But, at some stage, direct negotiations must be started. There is nothing which cannot be achieved by negotiations. Mao Tse-tung came to terms with Richard Nixon, and there can't be any difficulty for Mrs. Bandaranaike and Chelvanayakam to come to terms.

The *Sun*, which is today the only daily newspaper which reports political developments with a sense of objectivity and without suppressing facts or slanting the news, had an interesting report on October 5 on its front page under the heading CONCESSIONS FOR TAMILS—SECRET TALKS GOING ON. The report read: “Top SLFP negotiators who have been making behind-the-scenes moves to work out a ‘modus vivendi’ with the Federal Party have offered several new concessions to the Tamils on the language question. The *Sun* reliably understands that the negotiators in fact spelled out the concessions which the Government would be prepared to concede and that the two sides reached broad agreement on these at the last meeting held a few days ago.

“The concessions, it is understood, centred on:

(i) Language rights of Tamils should be respected: (ii) Certain categories of Tamil public servants to be exempted from the requirement that they should learn the official language; (iii) Language of administration in the North and Eastern Provinces.

"A reliable Federal Party source yesterday declined to be specific about the concessions offered in regard to the language question. He would only say that SLFP negotiators were willing to go a little beyond the Tamil Language Special Provisions Act. This would at least help root out a great injustice done to the Tamil community, language-wise he added.

"However, these 'unofficial soundings' have not progressed beyond the language question as both sides are showing a great deal of reluctance to shift their positions in regard to two other equally controversial questions. According to political sources, these questions relate to colonisation and regional administration. Federal Party negotiators have insisted that there should be regional autonomy in the Northern and Eastern Provinces.

"As regards colonisation, the Federal negotiators have stressed the policy should be re-oriented in such a way as to ensure that people of the area are given preference in setting up colonisation schemes in the North and East. It is understood that SLFP negotiators told the Federalists that they could not agree to these two matters."

ARE HARDLINERS SOFTENING? In regard to the Tamil question, the *Sun-Dawasa* group has from its very inception taken the most hardline Sinhala-Buddhist line. Articles over the years were written that the Tamils in the island, whether in the North, East, Up-country, or anywhere else for that, were interlopers and that the best they could hope was to persuade themselves to be assimilated into the strident Sinhala Buddhist nation. The *Sun-Dawasa*, consistent with this line, attacked the federalists as traitorous elements acting as a fifth column for the DMK in Tamil Nadu. On this, the group built up its circulation and influence among the Sinhalese population and by its hardline stances gave the United Front, which it supported most vigorously in the May 1970 elections, the requisite jingo flavour to sweep the polls in the Sinhala areas.

The *Sun-Dawasa* group represented the conservative "rightwing" elements in the SLFP and had for a long time had sought to bring about a marriage between right inclined SLFPers and centre-left UNPers. Now the *Sun-Dawasa* group is under attack from the radical left in the UF which has routed the SLFP right. In these circumstances, and no doubt under the impact of the war austerity conditions prevailing in the island, there have appeared chinks in the hardline stone-wall of the *Sun*. In an editorial on October 5, entitled *Hara-Kiri* it said: "Despite last minute hopes of accord, and Sinhala-Tamil unity talks be-

tween the leaders of the TUF and the Ceylonese Institute for National and Tamil Affairs (CINTA), the campaign has begun. Why it should have begun by violating Section III of the Postal Ordinance is not quite clear. But there appears to be a certain esoteric affinity between our Post and Telegraph and federal politics."

The *Sun* showed a realistic understanding that Kumarasurrier, the Minister of Posts, had failed to deliver the Tamil goods to the Sinhala hardliners and that Kumarasurrier's *bona fides* were suspects among the Tamils.

After this preliminary preamble, in which for the first time it was revealed in print that CINTA was acting as the honest broker between the TUF and the SLFP, the *Sun* went on to show that it still had a painful hangover from its hardline days. It reminded the Tamils that they were in for a tough time if they started a satyagraha campaign and recalled that the 1961 FP satyagraha campaign had been a dismal failure.

The *Sun*, no doubt, believed that it would frighten some Tamils at least by threatening them with "battered bones" and thus pressurise them into desisting from participating in any civil disobedience campaign. The *Sun* stressed in the editorial that 12 years ago the Federalists had courted imprisonment and rough treatment with no result, and that today it would be futile to make the same mistake all over again. This is how the *Sun* set out the

only part of the editorial which reminded discerning readers of the hardline politics of the *Sun*. "In the early sixties too it was by violating the Postal Ordinance and setting up an independent post office that the hartal marked its inauguration.

"Apart from politics amidst the food crisis, and riceless, flourless days, the yearning for board and lodging at State expense must hit a new high. We might even envy the federalist volunteers who propose to fill our jails. But the experience of 1961 should show that a civil disobedience campaign is not just a matter of non-violence. Echoes of the many battered bones of twelve years ago are still heard."

To drive home the point, the *Sun* slanted history to say that Gandhi's salt march was a futile exercise because it led to violence, and that even the best of non-violent campaigns usually ended up in violence and bloodshed. This was a grim warning to the Tamils that if they sought to question the right of the Sinhala Buddhists to be supreme overlords of the island with the divine sanction to

make the Tamils culturally, economically and linguistically subservient, they were likely to become victims of a bloodbath as in 1958 (this was stressed in a later part of the editorial).

This was how the *Sun* rewrote the history of the salt satyagraha launched by Mahatma Gandhi in a way to support its arguments—about the dangers of any Satyagraha movement for the Tamils themselves.

"In 1936 when Mahatma Gandhi launched the famous Durgri Salt March, the plan of the satyagraha was to keep clear of violence completely. But at the end of the day there was so much baton-charging and hurt that a special hospital had to be set up to tend to the injured. Some estimate that, despite all the good intentions of Mahatma Gandhi, when the lid blew off Durgri, the incidence of violence was not unequal to a small time Hindu-Muslim riot in India."

But, having given this hard-line advice to the Tamils, the *Sun* donned a kid-glove to soften its blows and it ended up with a fervent appeal for a settlement of the Tamil question through negotiation. One does not have to read much between the lines in the passage below to realise that the *Sun* has begun to realise that the Tamils have certain fundamental rights in regard to language and that these rights should be conceded to them. Not very long ago, the *Sun-Dawasa* group had hinted that it was high treason to question the supreme validity of the Sin-

hala language and that the Tamil language was only a temporary phenomenon in the island—until such times as the Tamils were assimilated.

Today, the *Sun* has begun to sing its old themes on a new note—and this shift has been pronounced. This is how the editorial signalled the change: "We know that the TUF campaign has begun, but we still do not know where it will end. We might keep our fingers crossed, that even now CINTA goodwill will prevail and the problems between the Sinhala and the Tamil people will end in an amicable settlement. Against the background of the economic crisis, and the United Front Government's increasing loss of popularity, any means, other than friendly, spells hara-kiri. According to the former Supreme Court Judge Mr. V. Manickavasagar, who is the CINTA President, what the Tamil community most desires is to be able to transact business with the administration in the Tamil language, and clarification on the question of education of Tamil children."

The *Sun* went further and conceded that the guarantees about the Tamil language should be written into the Constitution (if the *Sun* and other Sinhala hardliners had taken this attitude at the time the Constitution was drawn the history of this country might have taken a different turn in 1972—a turn for the better). The *Sun* is now willing to concede this because CINTA leader Manickavasagar had stated

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Regularly

that eighty percent of the Tamils would be satisfied if the language question were satisfactorily settled.

With this, the *Sun* thinks the FP and the TUF could be by-passed and the Tamils won over. But even on the other two questions, that of regional autonomy and colonisation, the *Sun* was willing to negotiate on the basis of a detente.

"If the language issue is then solved and even written into the Constitution without prejudice to the Sinhala Only Act, 80 per cent of the Tamil people would be satisfied. Other problems could then be settled by negotiations and discussion.

"With Emergency '58 in mind, the UF Government's approach now should be thorough statesmanship. If such statesmanship is shown, it will defeat the ulterior motives behind Federal Party and TUF politics, and bring into harmony the common aspirations of both Sinhala and Tamil people in a resurgent Sri Lanka."

The concluding part of this editorial is a far cry from the editorial the *Sun* had written on the same subject some time ago. But this new orientation in policy is a welcome and happy departure from jingo hardlining, and, it can be truly said that even papers like the *Sun* have begun to be influenced by the Kissingerian machiavellianism of establishing a detente as a preliminary to negotiations.

A VERY OPEN LETTER

Having A Word With Paul

by Canax

Dear Mr. Zills,

What you have done you have no doubt done thoughtlessly, but I think you got off pretty lightly all the same. For if being complimented by our Ministers isn't getting off lightly, I don't know what is. Believe me, it could have been worse. Like being made Director of the Government Film Unit, no less.

Your 'Time and Nation', made in collaboration with the GFU, does take the concept of realism in cinema to its logical limit. Some may consider it a bold venture; others, like myself, think it also a rash one. Your boldness, I would say, was born of innocence for you have picked a subject our own producers have always chosen to pretend, and for good reason, didn't exist. As you probably don't know, even Manik Sandrasagara could only pluck up enough courage to get as near realism as 'The God King' would take him. He has a long way to go, you'll say, but there it is. Just think about it.

You may not have heard of my wife, but don't worry, because I have. And she, I am happy to say, has heard of you. This is a most unusual way of introducing ourselves, but one has to start somewhere, somehow. To be honest, I myself heard of you only through her, and a most unusual way that was.

She was talking, as I recall it. Since it also happened to be in the dead of night, my recollection is that she was doing so in her sleep. What did register quite clearly, however, was a name she mumbled a couple of times. To say that this disturbed my sleep is only half the story; it also disturbed my peace, as it would any man's in a similar predicament. I didn't know Paul was your first name at the time, but I certainly knew even then it wasn't mine, first or last. In the circumstances, I'm sure you'll agree with me that any husband who can sleep undisturbed is unquestionably deaf in more senses than one.

THE AIR was cleared the very next morning, of course. We behaved like two adults should and, being both blessed with a high sense of responsibility, sorted the problem out in a perfectly civilised manner. To start off, I merely accused her with commendable bluntness of two-timing on me. For her part, she was no less than dignity personified as she coaxed out old memories (willingly, it seemed to me) of some girl whose name I forget now and who is happily married, anyway. To someone else, I'm afraid.

When I mentioned Paul she feigned total ignorance at first, which I thought a little suspicious. But before a

little could become a lot, she had second thoughts and managed to give the name an identity—yours. Seems she had in fact been thinking about your film shortly before she fell asleep, which made it all so plausible. We kissed and made up at once, as always.

In case you're wondering why I'm telling you all this, I'm also wondering myself, so we won't let that worry us too much; it can't be by way of an introduction, for it is far too long for one. Maybe I put you in the picture so you could use it as the basis for your next film. If you do, there's none better than myself to play the part of me. It all depends on how far you're willing to go in pursuit of realism. As I said earlier, just think about it.

What my wife was thinking about your film can be put in a nutshell. All her thoughts, in fact, can be thus conveniently stored away, which is a big help these days. She feels that in concentrating on Government offices alone in your search for time-wasting and lethargy you've been wasting too much of your precious time. What she means is that you probably don't have as much time to waste as we have and, believe you me, we have plenty to spare. Or rather, waste.

SHE SAYS if only she'd known in time of your presence and the nature of your mission out here, she would have invited you over to our place and saved you a lot of time, to say nothing

of the trouble. I gather from her conversation she had me in mind to play the lead role in the event, though play is not quite the right word for it in her view. It might sound too much like hard work to me, she says.

To hear her say it, I'm a born actor to whom realism is second nature, the first being better left unsaid. I consider such testimony too fulsome, but only modesty prevents me from protesting out loud. If I had starred in your film, she says, all I'd have had to do to steal the show was to be natural, and be myself. She may be my wife, but she'll sure convince you that if time-wasting and lethargy were what you were looking for, you'd have found both virtues amply enshrined in me. I have made a fine art of it, she once told me, but since she refuses to elaborate you'll just have to take her word for it.

At the risk of sounding familiar I know you're German, Paul, and you Germans have a thing about work. As a race you have a tradition of working yourself to death. Our own unique view on the subject is that whether you work or not you die, so why work and die? We long ago figured out that the one is inescapable while the other is not. If you have any difficulty sorting that out, give me a tinkle and I'll tell you which is which.

But tell me, Paul, is it really true that laziness and lethargy are so scarce back home that whole generations of young Germans have

grown up not knowing the meaning of the words, or what they look like in real life? If that is so, I'm truly happy for you that your voyage of discovery proved successful.

SRI LANKA has over the ages proved to be all things to all men, at least all things to the few men who happened to drop by, but none of them seemed to have discovered what you have. Or, maybe, none of them looked the way you are doing now, for the camera hadn't even been invented then. There can be no question, however, that we've had laziness and lethargy all along; so long, in fact, we never realised anyone could or would get excited enough to even go make a film about it.

Once you made your discovery I guess it was only natural that you would want to share it with your fellow men. I would have had no cause for quarrel had you intended sharing your good fortune with your countrymen. But from what I hear I do have cause for quarrel, since 'Time and Nation' is to be screened exclusively in our nation, not yours.

Now, being in the business yourself, I don't have to tell you that the cinema's mass appeal is largely because there's an actor imprisoned inside each one of us. We are all, let's face it, frustrated to a greater or lesser degree by the lack of opportunity to let the actor in us get out and into the public gaze. And you come along and give a chosen few the very opportunity all of us

have been eagerly hoping for all our lives.

Given at any other time, yes, but not now, Paul. At this very moment, what our country needs is not to make actors of us all. We have enough people doing the acting, only we call them politicians, but what's in a name, after all? What we need urgently is enough people able and willing to do the spade work, and we're trying pretty hard to convince ourselves there is as much fulfilment in that as there is in our traditional pastimes, which is time-wasting and lethargy. Just when we are trying to kick the habit, even if strictly on a short-term basis, you come and glamourise it.

Many hearts will also be bitter over what you've done, and there'll be countless women who, having recognised an acquaintance of theirs hogging the spotlight in your film, will go back home and give their hubbies hell for their lack of enterprise in not being lazy enough to catch your camera eye. Working wives not seen in your production are in for it, too, from their better halves.

Oh, Paul, do you realise what this will lead to? I'm trying to perish the thought, but the thought seems determined to perish me. I see before me the spectre of my countrymen suddenly giving up tradition and stop being lazy for its own sake and start being lazy for where it will get them, which is as far as the silver screen. You may or may not agree, but it is my firm belief that

Inania *Of This, That and The Other*

LIBERATION

by INNA

WE TOLD you the last time about the nuisance-value, the tragedy and the inhumanity of the senseless rich who line their pockets with gold, through the multi-national corporations. May be, a goodly number of these 1000 men, are christians in name, sign themselves and stab their fellowmen, or as in the ditty, 'praise the Lord and pass the ammunition'.

At OSPAAL (Solidarity Organization of the Peoples of Africa, Asia and Latin America) 1966, a Resolution condemned the greatest cancer of modern society with the words: "Colonialism and neo-colonialism are the greatest cancer of contemporary mankind. It is the duty of every country and people to eliminate them from the globe".

One is reminded of the plaintive, truthful repetition of Martin Luther King's "I have a dream", when one reads the OSPAAL resolution:

—*“only the national liberation struggles can put an end to this state of cultural stagnation, of general alienation, and restore to our cultures in Africa, Asia and Latin America, their rightful place in history..*

—*“only the national liberation struggles can restore our sense of adequacy..*

—*“the national liberation struggle, not only sets culture free, but gives it new fields of expression..*

laziness as a means to an end is no laziness at all. Ditto with lethargy.

What's done is done, Paul. You are surely about to destroy a beautiful thing, and I can only hope history will forgive you, even if right now a lot of us won't.

Yours lazily

— Canax

—*“the liberation struggle, which is at the present the highest form of awareness, unifies these factors which define a nation..”*

(OSPAAL, 1966, pp. 137-8 (Fanon). Jenkins in *Explication*, p. 200.)

FOR YEARS the pass-word was "Development" and "Progress." While go-getters cashed in and went ahead with reforms, renewal and development of their own countries, the rich became richer and the poor got poorer. The rape of the colonies went on, and a good many of those so-called benevolent countries sitting astride the globe today rode to wealth on the backs of the poor.

The British economist, Jenkins, signals that one form of economic organisation unites a super-power and several poor nations. Examples are

the British Commonwealth, the French Communauté, American Alliance for Progress and USSR's COMECON (Council for Mutual Economic Assistance). In every case, he asserts, the arrangement works for the benefit of the rich nation..they do not change the structure of the world; on the contrary, they stabilize the present division into rich and poor (185).

Liberation is "Vimukti" that should end in Moksha (total salvation). The Buddhism of Sri Lanka has this as its basic urge, as the *Dhammapada* would show in its bid for liberation of man from the shackles of greed, domination, lust, thirst for power.

Saivite Hinduism is one big urge to liberation of man, as it takes its trend from the Bhagavata purana, the *Bhagavad Gita* and the Upanishads: "Lead me from darkness to light, from the unreal to the real, from death to immortality."

Isn't the *Qur'an*, in its setting of liberation from the desert sands to the Gardens beneath which streams flow, from Allah the Liberator who through the Meccan surahs commended even the liberation of widow and orphan from oppression, a key document for freeing people?

The Exodus was a liberation from the bondage of low wages, oppression, decimation by killing to the Promised Land; the christian religion also purports to be through Christ, its founder, a total liberation.

Why then is there a certain set of theologians in a certain

FOR THE RECORD

Prime Minister's Broadcast to the Nation

On September 29, 1973, the Prime Minister, Mrs. Srimavo Bandaranaike, addressed the nation over the radio in regard to the austerity measures announced the previous day to a meeting of the Government Parliamentary Party. We publish the full text of broadcast message.

My fellow-countrymen, today I address you on a matter of vital importance. You would have perhaps been aware, from newspaper reports, as well as various programmes over the radio, that the Government was, contemplating certain serious economic measures. You would, perhaps have also read or heard over the radio my recent address to the nation calling upon the people to engage in a food production war.

You would also recall that I, personally, on every one of my public appearances during the last few months have highlighted the serious food shortage which practically the whole world is experiencing today. On these occasions I clearly told the country that very important and serious steps will have to be taken domestically in order to prevent the spectre of starvation from haunting this country.

IN ADDITION, you would recall that I, as well as numerous members of my Cabinet, have made detailed statements from time to time about the paramount necessity for not only stepping up production of rice, but also the necessity to engage in a crash programme for the cultivation of subsidiary foodcrops such as yams and tubers.

I am not going to dwell at great length on the world food

foreign country, backed by heavy resources (monetary too) hellbent on eradicating every idea of Liberation theology. Is this how they are true to the truth and to the Gospel. Are monied-men behind the scheme? Have they lost what they call 'Faith'?

situation, because I have noticed that both the press as well as the radio have explained the causes and the reasons for this shortage.

However, if I may reiterate the basic facts very briefly, it could be said that severe and repeated drought conditions in several wheat and rice-producing countries as well as severe flooding in certain other countries, have been the major causes of our present predicament.

You would perhaps have, by now, read about the large quantities of cereals, amounting to many millions of tons, which have been bought up by various countries, such as the USSR, India, Argentina etc. who were either net ex-

porters of cereals or largely self-sufficient.

You would have also perhaps read about the desperate conditions in West Africa where people of six nations are starving due to prolonged droughts, that have affected their countries.

You would also have read about the recent disastrous floods in Pakistan and India as well as both droughts and floods which had affected countries such as the Philippines and Indonesia.

Due to factors such as these, for the first time since 1945, conditions have arisen in the world where the supplies of cereals available have just not been enough to meet the demand, even if countries had the money to purchase them.

IN THE CASE of our country the implications of this have been that the normal suppliers of cereals have found it difficult and, in some cases, impossible, to supply us with our requirements.

You will also remember that we ourselves have experienced droughts of varying intensity from 1971 onwards, which in turn, have led to a lower production of rice as well as other foodstuffs.

There is a third factor which is responsible for our present food crisis. That is, the lure of cheap food hitherto available at all times in the world market lulled Governments into a false sense of security which led to a neglect of domestic food production.

This security is no longer there, and perhaps with it has come opportunity. On many occasions, history has revealed that adversity has acted as a great spur to national reconstruction and development and it is my belief that that moment of history has dawned for us.

Out of these adverse conditions we shall rise up once again, as a nation which has severed its dependence on others for our basic needs.

I would like now to talk specially about our immediate food situation. I shall talk about our three basic food commodities which are rice flour, and sugar.

Take rice first: the position is this. We can no longer depend on imported rice for our consumption.

As I have mentioned earlier, rice is just not available for export from the normal rice exporting countries. Whatever small stocks of rice which are available with speculative dealers in the world market are sold at such fantastic levels that it would be beyond the reach of even much richer countries than Sri Lanka.

To put this in perspective, I would like to give you some figures. In 1965 it was 48 cents a measure.

In 1967 it was 58 cents a measure. In 1973 however, the price shot up to over Rs. 2/08 per measure, and that also only if available. In this situation, it is clearly not possible to guarantee the same ration that is presently distributed and it would be

futile to attempt the impossible.

According to the stock position of rice with the Government taking also into account projected arrivals of shipments from China, if the present one measure of rice is given per person per week, then our stocks will run out by December this year.

Our Maha crop is not due to come in till early April, 1974. Therefore, the situation would be that there would be no rice to give on the ration from January, 1974, to April, 1974, if we continue with the present ration.

THE GOVERNMENT which has considered the situation very carefully and in all its aspects, has therefore determined that it would be best to ensure some minimum ration rather than run the risk of having nothing to give on the ration at all.

In order to ensure an equitable distribution, therefore the Government has decided to give half measure of rice per person per week free of charge to all non-income Tax payers.

As for Income Tax payers, Government is making suitable arrangements for them to purchase half measure of rice per ration book per week at Rs. 1/-, if they so desire.

I repeatedly mentioned that we have to grow our own essential foodstuffs to reach self-sufficiency as soon as possible. To attain complete self-sufficiency in our main staple food rice, the Government has decided, with effect from the 1st of October 1973 to raise the

guaranteed price paid for a bushel of paddy from the present Rs. 18/- to Rs. 25/-. All monies realised by the farmers in supplying paddy to the Paddy Marketing Board at Rs. 25/- a bushel will be free from income tax. The Government has also decided to make arrangements for the farmers to obtain easy credit and easy repayment.

The Government has further decided to freeze the interest due to the overdue loans given to farmers. Those who have not been able to repay loans will be able to draw fertilizers and agro-chemicals on credit and will be given an extension of time to repay their loans.

Government will also grant loans to deserving cultivators on the basis of Rs. 100/- up to 3 acres at the discretion of the Government Agent concerned for the purpose of paddy production in the 1973/74 Maha season.

I NOW come to the question of **wheat flour**. Here, too, the situation is similar to that of rice. Flour which we imported at 24 cents a pound in 1956, 27 cents a pound in 1970, is today about 84 cents a pound. At this price it is no longer possible to import the same quantities which we imported earlier. Even at this high price flour is not available in the world market.

Government has therefore decided to *ration flour* with effect from the 1st of October, 1973. Every consumer would be given on his ration book one pound of flour per

person per week, at a price of 70 cents per pound.

After the Government has ensured a basic ration of flour to every individual in this country, every week, it is not possible according to the present stocks of flour available, to allow the bakeries to bake anything other than bread, buns and rusks. The selling price of a loaf of bread will be 76 cents. I appeal to the people to use the weekly ration of flour judiciously supplemented, if necessary, by yams and other foodstuffs.

The situation with regard to the price and supply of **sugar** is the same as rice and flour. The Government has, therefore, decided to issue three-quarter pound of sugar per month per individual at 54 cents on the ration. However the price of off-ration brown sugar will be increased to Rs. 2/- per pound and the price of off-ration white sugar to Rs. 2/10 per pound.

The Government has naturally been very concerned with the impact of these measures, particularly on the economically weaker sections of the community. We have considered it essential therefore that they should have adequate support.

The Government had decided therefore that a **special allowance** over and above the Rs. 7/50 per month already granted, will be given to all wage-earners who presently earn below Rs. 400/- a month. In the public sector this would include all employees of Government De-

partments the Armed and Police Forces, State Corporations, Statutory Boards, including the University and the Nationalised Banks, as well as those in the service of local bodies. This allowance will be calculated so that those in the lower salary brackets will receive approximately a 10 per cent increase; the percentage tapering off as the salary level reaches Rs. 400/- per month. Besides the Rs. 7.50 per month paid at present, the increase in the allowance will be contained within a limit of Rs. 20/- per month. Marginal relief will be given to those in receipt of remuneration between Rs. 400/- and Rs. 420/-.

DAILY-PAID EMPLOYEES would be given increases, approximating to 10 per cent of their present wages. Pensioners and those in receipt of Widows' and Orphans pensions not exceeding Rs. 400/- will be given increases of 10 per cent subject to a maximum of Rs. 20/-. For those receiving public assistance steps are being worked out to benefit them, approximately on the same basis. The special allowance amounting to 10 per cent of the Consolidated Wage as at October, 1973, would also be paid to all employees in the co-operative sector in receipt of Rs. 400/- or less per month subject to a maximum of Rs. 20/- per month.

As regards the private sector, including the plantation sector, Emergency Regulations will come into effect from the 1st of October to ensure that these sectors pay

their employees a special allowance amounting to 10 per cent of the consolidated wage as at October, 1973 up to a maximum of Rs. 20/- per month to all employees in receipt of Rs. 400/- per month or less and whose terms and conditions of service are determined by Wages Boards or Remuneration Tribunals. Those employees coming under the ambit of Collective Agreements, will also be brought under this scheme.

I would like to refer to one other important matter before I conclude. I have already spoken of the paramount need to step up agricultural production in this country and I have outlined the measures that the Government will introduce from 1st October, 1973 in order to aid and assist the farmer in this country. We have however not stopped at that. **Agriculture has from now on been placed on a war footing.**

Special offices will be opened in the 22 districts; each office under the direction and control of a political head, such as a Minister, Deputy Minister or a Member of Parliament.

This office will be the focal point of agricultural development in the district.

The Government Agent and all subordinate Government officials will work in close co-ordination with this office. Part of the Budget will be decentralised with effect from 1974 and approximately Rs. 200 million will be diverted to assist this local effort. Pending such decentralisation, Rs. 25 million have been released for work this year.

This programme will also benefit a section of people which will not get relief from an increased G. P. S. price or from increased wages. A special agricultural works programme which I inaugurated a week ago can go a long way to solve the problem of that sector and especially of the unemployed youth who will find productive employment offered to them in this programme.

Special powers will be given to the District Committees to begin the cultivation of uncultivated land. I have set up a separate unit under my own office with radio links to all the districts and I shall personally be in complete and continuous touch with this whole programme.

Progress will be continuously monitored and staff in the districts not engaged on essential work will be diverted for this purpose as a matter of high priority.

I call upon all sections of the community irrespective of whatever differences that prevail to sink them and join in this national effort.

I do not wish to say very much more, but in conclusion I wish to state one thing.

In this country where we have such a proud record of people rallying round every national cause we can turn the tide of present temporary difficulties.

What is necessary is a concerted effort, by all patriotic persons to meet the challenge without depending on foreign nations and international lending institutions.

In fact we have been depending on other nations and these lending institutions for far too long a time.

Let us not mortgage our children any more. Let us be self reliant, courageous and determined. I have no doubt whatsoever that with the steps we have taken and with the co-operation we will receive from the people of this country in this great task of national reconstruction and economic independence, we shall win.

Bread and buns only

The Ministry of Foreign and Internal Trade has told the Master Bakers Association to use all the flour issued to them to bake bread and unsweetened buns only.

As an incentive they have fixed the price of bread leaving a higher margin of profit, official sources said.

The price of a pound of bread in Colombo has been fixed at 76 cents. There has been an increase of 30 cents of the prevailing price throughout the island.

Depending on the areas, the price could be a few cents more than 76 cents, this is because of transport costs.

The Master Bakers Association has told the Ministry that they will inform all their members to abide by the ruling and not to make any sweetmeats, official sources said.

ALSO FOR THE RECORD

The No-Confidence Motion

The No Confidence Motion debated on October 4, 1973 was sponsored by the following members of Parliament:— Mr. J. R. Jayawardene; Dr. W. Dahanayake; Mr. Prins Gunasekera; Mr. X. Sellathambu; Mr. R. Premadasa; Mr. S. Thambirajah; Mr. Falil Abdul Kaffoor; M.B.E. Mr. N. Wimalasena; Mr. M. H. M. Naina Marikar; Mr. G. J. Paris Perera; Mr. M. Mustapha; Mr. K. W. Devanayagam; Mr. Dharmasena Attygalle; Mr. Rukman Senanayake.

Whereas the Government— having promised to provide two measures of rice has reduced even the free measure to half a measure;

whilst stating that "we shall make life less expensive for the ordinary citizen" and having pledged to supply at low prices and adequately the essential food stuffs such as Masoor Dhall, Dry-fish, Coriander, Cummin seed, Chillies and Infant Milk Food as well as Textiles and Drugs, has caused a scarcity in all these items and increased their prices;

having promised to solve all problems including the problem of unemployment among the youth has massacred or detained them in their thousands;

has made the cultivators helpless with promises of providing them with agricultural implements and other requirements readily and at cheaper prices;

having pledged that the democratic rights of the people will be more effectively safeguarded and the "freedom of speech, organisation, assembly and public procession will be guaranteed in law and in practice" and that the "freedom of the press will be ensured" has broken all those promises and has controlled even the fundamental right to distribute a legitimate pamphlet;

having got a mandate to rule for five years has without the mandate of the people arbitrarily extended its term of office to seven years;

by following foreign policies unfavourable to the country and by adopting oppressive economic policies and social policies that bring discord among the citizens, from the time it came to power, has brought the country into such a perilous situation that the people have to go through immense hardships, repression and sufferings not experienced in recent history and those faced with starvation may even be tempted to take their lives;

having promised at the General Elections of May, 1970 to establish a just administration, has from the time of coming to power taken revenge from the people on political and other grounds;

and since the United Front Government of the SIFP-LSSP-CP under the leadership

of the Prime Minister Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike has no political or moral right whatsoever to rule the country any further and as it has rejected the mandate given by the people and since the people have lost confidence in the Government this Assembly demands the Government to resign forthwith.

Colombo North By-Election Results

M. Vincent Perera (UNP)	26,956
Ananda Premasinghe (LSSP)	9,818
Amir A. Sheriff (Ind)	1,049
T. Julian Perera (Ind)	380
Upasena Akmeemana (Ind)	147

Majority	17,138
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Spoilt votes	203
Total Polled	38,553
Percentage Polled	80.7
Total Registered	47,781

Messrs Sheriff, Julian Perera and Akmeemana forfeited their deposits.

* * *

How they voted in 1970

V. A. Sugathadasa (UNP)	20,930
Harris Wickrematunga (Ind)	13,783
W. I. A. Crosby Fernando (Ind)	164
A. S. Jayamaha (Ind)	97

Majority	7,147
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Spoilt votes	97
Total Polled	35,071
Total Registered	44,511

FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

The National Rural Conference

pioneering efforts on low cost tube wells

On September 23, 1973, the National Rural Conference (No. 79/15 Alexandra Place, Colombo 7) held a demonstration at a farm at Daluwakotuwa to show that a low cost tube well was a practical possibility in this country. We publish the Press Release issued on that occasion by the President of NRC, A. Dennis N. Fernando, who is the local expert on ground water and its utilisation.

TODAY with the introduction of high yielding seed varieties, the use of fertilizer and multi-cropping patterns being developed for the production of more food, water is a key input and it has to be available to the farmers at the right time and required quantity. Even in the so called wet zone of Sri Lanka water is a scarce commodity. We cannot have it when we want it, unless we store it and draw from it when required. The drought has shown the need to search for a more reliable source of water.

Man has throughout the ages constructed tanks on the surface and the farmers use them when they want it. Though their control was fully efficient it was satisfactory till recent times with the introduction of high yielding varieties.

Today with the more individualistic water requirement of the farmer the surface water schemes are unable to fully cope up with the requirement of the individual farmer.

FORTUNATELY nature also stores its water under ground. We in Sri Lanka have about 5.8 million acre feet of water available under ground that could be tapped for use annually.

In Sri Lanka ground water exploitation has been in vogue widely in the Jaffna peninsula for agriculture and in other parts for domestic consumption using open wells.

Tube wells have been constructed by the Irrigation Department at Vanathavillu. They are however expensive to install and maintain and moreover have also problems

of controlling issues as different farmers require water at different times. Be that as it may.

The National Rural Conference has started a project to assist the small farmer who could have his water for cultivation at the time he so desires using low cost tube wells.

We have attempted in the first instance to restrict our project to those areas that have sandy soils and to the soft rock areas where manual boring of the ground is possible.

For our tube wells we have used clay pipes, bamboo, hollowed arecanut tree trunk and P.V.C. pipes.

THE PURPOSE of this demonstration to you at Daluwakotuwa is to show that by using our local raw material we could extract the ground water, instead of depending on foreign materials from abroad with our foreign exchange. The P. V. C. tube well was constructed to show that there is not much difference in performance of this and other tube wells in terms of output. One could certainly argue that one type of tube well lasts more than the other but the question must be put at what cost?

Our thesis has been that capital formation should be generated by the farmer himself as otherwise we find that when the farmer is dependent on a very high capital input he has to pay very high interest on the money loaned, only to fatten the money lender whether it be the local chettiyar or mudalali or the Credit House in Colombo.

BY THE simple procedure of first installing a temporary tube well, with bamboo or hollowed arecanut tree trunk, he could successfully cultivate for 3 or 4 seasons, then earn sufficient money and there after invest on a more permanent tube well, if he so desires. Moreover he is also in a position to choose the location of his permanent tube well, on a more rational and scientific basis at less expense after having seen for himself its performance. All

Tube Well

farmers as you are aware are conservative, they would like to see the results. By this cheap method we could easily initiate them to tube well irrigation.

You see today in this demonstration how water could be extracted from the ground using a tube well made of: (1) Bamboo; (2) Hollowed Arecanut trunk; (3) Clay pipes; (4) P. V. C. pipes.

The added advantage of making the farmer to pay for the water indirectly so, by paying for the lifting of the water, the farmer would unconsciously attempt to conserve the use of water, he would try to maximise the use of rain water and lift only such amount of water necessary to sustain his crop. This we feel is a positive method of controlling the waste of water in our irrigation schemes, where we see that water is used more than is necessary for the crop. Tube well irrigation has the added advantage that no land is inundated.

THE QUESTION may at this stage be asked that anyway we would have to import the pump and this would mean a draining of our foreign exchange and what happened by importing tractors instead of using the buffaloes may be repeated in this as well and that we would be totally dependent on foreign exchange for agriculture.

The first priority would no doubt be locally fabricated small pumps which individual farmers could operate. We say fabricated and not assembled with the minimum

of foreign exchange for the importation of only components like bearings and raw materials that cannot be turned out or are available locally.

There is a very strong need for our rural electrification programme to be geared to the needs of lift irrigation as has been done in India. If we do this we could further cut on the foreign exchange components and also have easier and more reliable electric pumps for these tube wells. The above two aspects would be persued by us in due course as a long term measure.

However an immediate effort on the food drive is to mobilise the use of ground water with the available resources within the country. To effect this we have developed the use of clay pipes, bamboo and hollowed arecanut tree trunks to function as tube wells for the lifting of water to assist in the food drive.

You have seen for yourselves the availability of water below the ground that could be tapped using simple devices. No doubt their availability would vary with the location and the formation.

The National Rural Conference would give voluntary advice to those who want such advice. We would promote the formation of tube well construction units all over the island for those who are prepared to perform this service at cost or a minimum profit.

An article entitled
Low Cost Tube Wells
by
A. Dennis N. Fernando

is being held over for lack of space and will appear in our next issue.

LOW COST DRILLING KIT FOR CONSTRUCTION OF TUBE WELLS

In order to popularise the use of low cost tube wells the National Rural Conference is desirous of assisting voluntary organisations or individuals in fabricating simple equipment for the boring of tube wells in soft rock formations. The total cost of investment on this equipment is about Rs.600/- per kit and could be made by the village smith.

The kit comprise of an Auger, a Scoop, one Bailer with a Piston and Valve arrangement, one bailer with valve arrangement that could be connected to rods, and three casings 8 ft. in length of different diameters.

RAMBLING NOTES

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

* War Abroad and War at Home

THIS COLUMN is being resumed when a hot and terrible war has broken out in West Asia between Egypt and Syria, on the one side, and Israel, on the other—with all the other Arab states, from the Persian Gulf (Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia) to the Atlantic (Morocco) having pledged full and unconditional support to Egypt and Syria. Though Jordan has placed its troops on the alert, it has so far kept out of the fighting although it had lost much territory in the 1967 war.

The Arabs have made it out that they are waging a *holy war* against Israeli aggressors who have stolen Arab lands. The Soviet Union has placed the blame squarely on the shoulders of the Israelis also calling them aggressors, Brezhnev has gone so far as to appeal to all Arab countries to join in the Arab war against Israeli aggression. India has also blamed Israel for the war. Sri Lanka has taken a similar stand. The United States has been silent on the question about the cause of the war and is now only seeking to induce the UN to secure a truce and a ceasefire without delay. China has also thrown its weight behind the Arabs, but has customarily blamed the

super-powers, the USA and the USSR, for the situation in the Middle East—China no doubt hopes to increase its own standing among the Arabs by criticising the policies so far pursued on by the United States and the Soviet Union. The United Kingdom has been cautious in its statements, but France seems to have tilted somewhat in favour of the Arabs.

The war had started on October 6 when Egyptian forces had crossed the Suez Canal and had attacked Israeli positions at the same time as the Syrian Army had attacked the Israelis on the Golan Heights front. Though, technically speaking, it was the Egyptian army which had struck the first blow this time, there is no doubt that the Arabs were entitled to make a pre-emptive strike (Israel did this in 1956 and 1967), in the unsettled conditions which continued to prevail in the area owing, on the one hand, to the political intransigence, of Israel in recent times, no doubt under the influence of *hawks* of the Moshe Dayan group, and on the other to the persistent Arab declarations that Israel should be wiped out as a state. Israeli doves, who had wanted a political sett-

lement in terms of the UN resolution, had been pushed aside by the *hawks* who overreacted to every minor act of terrorism committed by the Palestinian and other guerrilla and commando units.

There is not the slightest doubt that Arab countries, including Egypt and Syria, were willing to arrive at a political settlement with Israel during the last one year, it was the political intransigence of Israeli *hawks* which had prevented a settlement towards which both the USA and the USSR had made serious efforts. There were also Arab *ultras* who had wanted, and who still, want a *holy war*, to finish Israel once and for all. The Arabs, smarting under the defeats they had sustained in 1948, 1956 and 1967 are now anxious to show that the Arabs can fight and that Israeli military invincibility was only a myth.

At the time of writing, there does not seem to be any chance of an immediate truce or a ceasefire and the war is likely to continue until one side or the other is beaten. The Arabs have started with an initial advantage. They had struck on a national holiday in Israel and they had caught the Israelis napping. The Arabs also seemed to be in a resolute mood for the fighting. The last few Russian advisers, who were in Egypt, had withdrawn on October 4 and many observers now say that this had been a clear indication that the stage was being set for hostilities.

The new Arab-Israeli war will bring new qualitative changes into the geopolitics of the world. All the *detentes*, which had been worked out in 1971, 1972 and even in 1973, by the new Kissinger-Brandt-Brezhnev-Tanaka-Chou brand of *detente* politics, will be put under severe strain as the war continues. Even if a ceasefire is achieved within a reasonably short time, the strains on the uneasy co-existence, which many countries had achieved with other countries they had confronted earlier will be under great stress.

WHILE THE INTERNATIONAL FRONT has become hot, this column is resumed when the situation on the domestic front has also become red hot. There is a new war on the food production front, and preliminary surveys tend to show that the Government has a great many things weighted against it. Leaving aside the adverse weather conditions which continue to prevail in many parts of the country, the Government has decked the cards against itself and it will need something more than human effort to secure a break through on the food front.

Conditions of austerity have become intolerably difficult, and there is not the slightest doubt that nearly everybody (except those who still believe in the euphoria of United Front invincibility and infallibility—and this is a dwindling number as the days go by) believes that the difficulties which now beset the country would have been

less if the Government had followed correct policies.

The luxury cars of governmental VIPs and bureaucrats is a daily reminder that the Government had blundered all along the way. Corruption has multiplied and proliferated—in spite of the best efforts of the anti-Bribery Department. Nothing can be done in a government department by a non-vip without a quiet *santhosam* to the right people and only a minor fraction of the people are willing to go to the Bribery Commissioner: they want to get along doing their jobs without being side-tracked into investigations, court trials and the like. The civic sense of the ordinary people is no more or no less than Governmental VIPs who flaunt new and new expensive cars in the face of people who are starved of the basic necessities of life.

The results of the Colombo North by-election were a foregone conclusion. The UNP increased its majority by nearly 10,000 votes, not because the UNP has put forward new and dynamic policies, but simply because the voters are angry with the UF government and its Establishment. The UNP majority would have been greater if it had fielded a younger candidate of the Rukman Senanayake age group. People are getting tired of the *old guard*, in every party, but Vincent Perera got by this time because of the failure of the UF to deliver the goods.

The LSSP candidate was able to muster about 5000

votes because of the urban workers in the city organised in the trade unions which are still thankful to the UF government for the many concessions they have secured through the present Establishment. In the rural areas, the Government would have fared more worse. Whatever the earlier support the SLFP and the UF might have enjoyed in the rural areas has now dwindled far more than can be imagined by town folk who still constitute the intellectual elite of the United Front hierarchy.

The Government has only itself to blame for the swing of the tide against it. Ordinary people,

No rice meals

A directive has gone from the Food Commissioner to Government Agents to inform all eating houses in their districts not to serve any meals of rice, rice flour or wheat flour on Tuesdays and Fridays of any week.

"In the first instance it will be an appeal" said Food Commissioner, Mr.T. Pathmanathan. "If the response is poor we will have to consider passing a law prohibiting the serving of meals of rice, rice flour or wheat flour".

Most of the Asian countries are now going through riceless days. This is most strictly enforced in India now because of the acute shortage she is undergoing.

moreover, do not have confidence that the Government has sufficient kick left to be able to stage a successful grow more food campaign or effect a breakthrough into a Green Revolution. Even the threats of the Government seem to fall on deaf ears.

Government regulations are observed only in the breach—with the consensus of all concerned. There are stringent regulations, for instance, about non-governmental transport and the movement of paddy and rice, and check posts have been set up in various parts of the country. At the moment, the scheduled rate for one lorryload of paddy to be taken illegally through a post is around Rs. 500 (to be shared by all at the post), and the average number of check posts a lorry usually

has to pass is about four. There is also a schedule for mobile police patrols which move about along certain roads at generally specified times. The amounts so paid at the check posts are added to the cost of the off-ration rice now being sold in different parts of the country at prices ranging from Rs. 3.20 to Rs. 4.75 a measure.

In spite of the sole monopoly enjoyed by the Paddy Marketing Board and in spite of the loud protestations of Ministers about stern measures, there is big and growing private trade in rice; and in the sea of corruption which envelops the Administration there is little the Government can do about enforcing the stern regulations they promulgate.

More and more officials have begun to insulate top

governmental leaders from the realities which prevail in the country and it is this widening gap between the people and the Government which has brought this Government so much into disfavour. Even the SLBC and the state-controlled newspaper media cannot any longer hide the mounting anger of the people against corrupt and inefficient bureaucrats who seem to flourish under this Government. The more draconian the measures imposed by the Government the greater will be the corruption to bypass the measures—and unless Governmental leaders can quickly re-establish rapport with the people and diminish the existing credibility gap, the country has to go through a most dismal period in the immediate future

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IS IT TRUE?

Sherlock Holmes

* LAKE HOUSE

IS IT NOT TRUE that the *Aththa* on October 4th had an explosive front page story about the goings-on in Lake House after it was "diffused" and its management taken over by a Board nominated by the Government? That hair-raising salaries were now being paid out from what are virtually public funds? That *Aththa* hinted that salary and pay increases ranged from a Rs. 4000 level to the Rs. 500 minimum? That the number of private secretaries (female) to the new bigwigs has proliferated in the most astounding manner? That an unheard of post has been created—a commissar in charge of *Unsold Paper*? That the *Aththa* also named certain persons mentioning the salaries and increases they had received? That a former employee of Lake House, who was not there at the time of the take over, has been appointed to a managerial post with an increase of Rs. 450 over his earlier salary (a short while ago when he quit the sinking Wijewardena ship)? That a female private secretary who was recruited on Rs. 400 in August 1973 was now paid a monthly Rs. 515? That another such secretary also got Rs. 515 a month? That these were

raw hands who were learning their jobs only after their appointment? That one Jayakody drew Rs. 2000 a month with an allowance (entertainment maybe?) of Rs. 500? That a new accountant was paid Rs. 2000 a month with an allowance of Rs. 500 a month? That another Jayakody was paid a salary of Rs. 1650 a month with an allowance of Rs. 500? That there was a new Law Officer at Rs. 2000 a month? That another person appointed to the managerial section was paid Rs. 1100? That two security officers were paid Rs. 815 a month each? That a lesser Security officer drew the salary of Rs. 462/50 a month? (That PCs in our Police Force will envy these security officers who have such cushy wellpaid jobs)? That if all that the *Aththa* had stated were true, (and there is no reason why it should be untrue), then it is clear that the bug which makes people unbalanced (mad) before destruction has begun to spread its poison in Lake House?

That comments made in Parliament, during the recent no-confidence motion, about some strange goings on in Lake House also make it amply clear that the rot has

begun to set in so soon after take-over? That it was said that there was a virtual black-out about the activities and meetings of the Leader of the House, Minister Maithripala Senanayake? That blood pressures are said to have shot up when his pictures had appeared and there is now an unwritten taboo in Lake House on any publicity for the senior minister who acts as Deputy Prime Minister? That there are stories about attempted interpolations of speeches made by leaders of the Opposition which were opposed by the old hands at Lake House? That those who wanted such interpolations were VIPs of the new regime in Lake House? That stories are going all round town about a new Director who wants to throw his weight about and wants to edit, sub-edit, report and even print the different papers of the group? That if this goes on for many more months, Lake House will become a white elephant on the hands of the public sector? That unless the Prime Minister took the matter seriously and ensured that Lake House is run as a newspaper should be run, it will not be long before the word *finis* would shine like comet over Lake House? That before the end comes, new Lake House would have established a reputation for slanted news as well as managed news? That a recent piece on how the increased prices of agro-chemicals and fertilisers would not really adversely affect cultivators is a supremely clever attempt to combine slant with managed news?