

# TRIBUNE

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## ON HUNGER AND FASTINGS

THE GOVERNMENT must be commended for increasing the weekly ration of rice from half to one measure for the two weeks beginning October 29 and November 6.

This is especially so if there is to be a further temporary cut in the flour ration owing to the late arrival of shipments. Bread is still extremely difficult to obtain and grains like kurakkan and the like are available only in minimal quantities and that only in some villages. In these circumstances, hunger has begun to stalk the land. The Government has correctly realised that its political opponents are seeking to make capital out of the situation—and this was an understandable reaction on the part of the Opposition in the context of the political cold war the Government insists on carrying on, in the mistaken belief that the class struggle in the country was now between the United Front, on the one hand, and the Rest, on the other. *Tribune* however, believes, and has pointed this out before that the attempt to straight jacket the class forces in Sri Lanka today into the pattern and framework of existing political parties (judged by the political convictions, obsessions and predilections of respective leaders) can sooner or later bring about a sociological *cum* ideological *cum* political unbalance in the country which can give rise to an upheaval similar in intensity to the one in April 1971. The youth of today, more than anyone else, have no use for the existing political parties and all high powered attempts to win over the youth to particular parties will fail. The class forces and their developing alignments in Sri Lanka today cut across existing party lines and if the political leadership of the different parties do not make new analyses and new appraisals of the class forces, they will soon find that they are in the wilderness which must inevitably take them into political oblivion. Even a *UF Big Stick*, coupled with land reform and income ceilings, cannot qualitatively transform existing class alignment to make them fit into existing party divisions just as much as *UNP* political gimmicks, like the *Satyagraha* with fasting and meditation, cannot do the same trick. Unless the ideological pundits of the different parties begin to think, analyse and act immediately, all of them will soon have no slogan except to recommend *fasting* to attain a true *Nirvana* in some other world better than what was possible on the Earth.

NEW  
POLITICAL  
AUTHORITY

BY-ELECTION

WORLD  
CONGRESS OF  
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SEMINARY

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THAILAND

TOURISTS'  
FOOD



# Tribunania

## THE NEW POLITICAL AUTHORITY

THE PRIME MINISTER is making a determined and heroic attempt to make the Government's grow-more-food campaign, called in UF parlance a *production war*, a success. She has already visited a number of district centres including centres in the Tamil areas. She has been to Vavuniya, Trincomalee and Batticaloa, and she is soon scheduled to visit Mannar and Jaffna.

The Government's production war is being directed and organised from special offices in the 22 GA's divisions. Each special office will be under a *Political Authority* exclusively drawn from the ranks of Ministers and Government MPs. This means that a new super-political bureaucracy, consisting of Ministers and pro-government Parliamentarians, has been imposed on the existing bureaucratic set up in each district. This new office is expected to direct the food production war by co-ordinating the activities of government departments, semi-official committees and currently free-lancing officials engaged in, involved and connected with the food drive. This new super bureaucratic machine — it will be as much of a bureaucracy

as the existing shaky steel-frame of the CAS cum Technical Officer's setup — is presumably under the PM's new Ministry of Plan Implementation and is said to have the power to by-pass individual Ministries and Ministers by directly invoking the supreme *Political Authority* of the Prime Minister.

While there is no doubt that this new system of *Political Authority* (replacing the *Competent Authority* which was the superior bureaucratic task force from the days of the communal riots on 1958 to days of the insurgency of 1971 and even thereafter, and which survives even now like a forgotten hangover) has been created because of the complaints that the existing bureaucratic machine has so far failed to discharge its functions in the manner expected of it by the present Government. However, there is good cause to ask the question whether this now super-duper bureaucratic machine, revolving around a *Political Authority* whose already low popularity rating is fast dwindling, can deliver the goods.

Can a *Political Authority*, centred on the Prime Minister with 22 satelliteing *poli-*

*tical authorities*, successfully accomplish what the trained administrators, operating as officials or semi politicalised competent authorities, have failed to do so far. Can specially chosen Ministers and selected MPs revolutionise the executive functions of our existing bureaucratic machine in a way that Sri Lanka's United Front Administration and Establishment will be able to perform miracles in gearing the "labour power" of emancipated workers and peasants (liberated from the clutches of landlords and capitalists) to socialised production and egalitarian distribution and thus enable this Government to win the war on the food front?

*Tribune* has often referred to the Alice-In-Wonderland world of make believe and mirages which United Front theory and practice has spread in this country like some noxious miasma which depresses and nullifies production and productive effort. Can the new system of *Political Authority* reverse this trend and lift the country bodily out of the wonderlandish mad hatter's castle in which it is now confined?

*Tribune* does not propose to answer this question directly because it would be wrong to pre-judge an issue. We want to allow our readers to find the answer themselves and for this purpose we will draw attention to a number of factors relevant to the issue and also raise a number of thought-provoking queries

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which will throw light on the matter.

IN THIS ISSUE we will only make a few preliminary observations and raise only a few initial questions on the fundamental changes in administration and government which are implicit in the rule of the Prime Minister cum Political Authority which has been imposed from on top on the ground that the present food crisis has made it imperative that production should be placed on a war basis and that this could be only executed through a semi-dictatorial system which derived its power and sanctions from the results of the May '70 elections. *Tribune* has often pointed out that the country was moving away from the kachcheri system of administration, handed down by the British (and modified during 25 years of independence), to a system which can at best be described as "MPs Raj" where *de facto* each Government MP is invested with supreme executive power in respect of his own electorate (and in the case of opposition-held electorates the power is shared between the sitting MP and the defeated, or prospective, candidate of the ruling party).

The new system of 22 district Political Authorities is a further extension of this, where MPs Raj is narrowed down to an inner executive council of 22. Constitutional experts will describe this system as Prime Minister's rule where the Council of Ministers and individual Ministers and Ministries take a place of secondary importance in the

matter of food production which takes precedence over all normal activities of the Government. Constitution- alists will be tempted to compare the powers the Prime Minister has assumed, because of the food crisis, to the American presidential system where the President is the Chief Executive. In the American system, however, the separation of powers is fully observed and is jealously guarded by the Courts, but according to the new Republican Constitution of Sri Lanka, the doctrine of the separation of powers has been discarded in favour of the total supremacy of the National State Assembly over the Judiciary as well as the Executive.

The new Constitution envisages a parliamentary system in which every elected member of the Assembly has a very important role to play in operating a special kind of democracy. MPs' Raj exercised by 150-odd members of parliament is, no doubt, a unique kind of democratic exercise, but we have often pointed out that the subordination of the judiciary and more especially the administration to parliamentarians, who are susceptible to constant pressures from voters, election agents and corrupt contact men, would give rise to evils far worse than what was sought to be remedied.

It can be argued that the further refinement of the system of MPs Raj into the newly created Prime Ministerial Political Authority system is a step towards a

new kind of dictatorship and it is a debatable question whether the current food crisis can justify the creation and perpetuation of a dictatorship by a Political Authority invoked by a democratically elected Prime Minister who commands a majority in the National State Assembly, especially at a time when it is clear that the alignment of party forces in the NSA



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no longer reflects the state of public opinion in the country. One year ago, when four by-elections were held, there had already taken place a 4 to 5 percent shift of popular mass support away from the Government and the United Front. In the last by-election in Colombo North, the shift was over 15 percent. The refusal of the Government to hold the by-election in Kankasanturai only shows that United Front strategists fear that even the little support the UF parties had enjoyed among the Tamils in May 1970 has now whittled down to zero.

THE UNITED FRONT government has now moved away from accepted constitutional and democratic practice and has trotted out a messianic claim that it has a "duty" to protect the people from the machinations of opposition politicians and "reactionaries" who were seeking to exploit the current food crisis for narrow party advantage. The question of the constitutional propriety of creating a new system of dictatorial political authority, mainly under the Emergency Powers brought into being during the insurgency of 1971, must be carefully examined in the weeks ahead, but the problem now before us is whether this new system of semi-dictatorial Political Authority will help to effect a breakthrough in food production.

Perhaps, the main reason put forward by the UF for the creation of MPs Raj and now the system of Political Authority is that the bureau-

cratic administrative machine which the UF had inherited from the colonial past and the UNP was chock-a-block with reactionaries who were out to sabotage the progressive and radical policies of the United Front. There is a basic weakness in the argument. The administrative system inherited from the British and the UNP in 1956 by the SLFP was subjected to many changes during the nine years the SLFP was in power from 1956 to 1965. But more than that, when the SLFP-LSSP-CP coalition came to power in May 1970, there was a total purge of all who were regarded as "reactionaries" and UNP-ers and what was even more significant was that a new political elite, drawn exclusively from within the bosom of the UF itself, was appointed over all other officials and bureaucrats. Part of this new bureaucratic elite came from within the old bureaucracy, (many of them appointed during the 1956-65 period), and the other part were new recruits who were either card-holding party members of one of the three UF partners or who were fellow travellers who developed new enthusiasm for "socialism" after May 27/28, 1970.

The *Atntha* has coined an excellent term "Sri 28" to describe the creatures who became ardent United Fronters, SLFPers and CPers after the announcement of the results of the last General Elections was finally completed on May 28, 1970. Within a few months of the coming to power of the United

Front coalition a new bureaucratic elite, consisting mainly of SRI 28s, was imposed on the old bureaucratic and administrative machine which had already been purged of all persons who were, rightly or wrongly, (most often wrongly), suspected of being "unreliable" from the viewpoint of the United Front purists.

Furthermore, this UF witch hunt, which was carried out with ruthless ferocity, caused an unprecedented brain drain out of the ranks of the administrative and technical machine which had existed in May 1970. The UF Government could do nothing to prevent this stupendous brain drain and the only curb it adopted was to insist that all technically and professionally qualified persons who left the country for jobs abroad could get passports only on an annual basis of a 10% levy on their earnings — thereby compelling many Ceylonese to discard the country's citizenship at the first possible opportunity).

IT MUST BE REALISED that the bureaucratic and administrative machine United Frontiers and others complain against today is the castrated hotch-potch left over after the UF witch hunt and the subsequent (and continuing) brain drain, adled by political appointments thrust into the system through party favouritism and fellow-traveler nepotism. It has been argued that the purge, brain drain and the infusion of the SRI 28 political elite into the system would bring into being what could be termed



a progressive bureaucratic machine which would carry out the radical policies of the UF.

But the reality has been different from the expectations.

The purges, the brain drain and the super-imposition of SRI 28 bureaucrats have played havoc with the administrative machine, particularly because the appointment of SRI 28 elite has been on the basis of political nepotism without any consideration for qualifications, professional or technical competence, suitability or aptitude. Furthermore, there has been systematic over-employment in government and public sector undertakings to satisfy party pressures and this has made the administrative machine lopsided, expensive and inefficient.

In spite of all these sins of commission by the United Front, Ministers and VIPs and others of the UF, when confronted with the public outcry against the corruption and inefficiency of the present bureaucratic and administrative machine, never fail to say that the UF was saddled with the bureaucratic system left by the British colonialists and UNP reactionaries, and that for this reason the wonderful plans of the government had gone awry through sabotage. Little do they realise that discerning people in Sri Lanka have begun to see that the present bureaucratic machine which has begun to wobble, totally unable to carry our normal administrative functions, is the end product of 3½ years of United Front attempts to transform and re-shape the bureaucracy. What discern-

ing people see today all others will see within a short time. And when this does happen the credibility gap which already exists between the Government and the people will become still wider.

The outcry against the bureaucrats has been recently mounting month after month, as conditions within the country have progressively grown worse, and to meet this criticism the MPs were given pseudo super executive powers in respect of their own electorates. This system of MPs Raj began shortly after the insurgency and has continued up to this day, but even this endeavour to politicalise the administration on an electoral basis has failed to produce any magical change. And now, we have the supreme apex of 22 units of Political Authority, with the prime objective of food production to make this country self sufficient, placed on top of a disintegrating bureaucratic machine in which SRI 28 bureaucrats and other UF appointees have turned out to be the most corrupt, inefficient and most incompetent cadres of the new Administration and Establishment.

Can the new system of Political Authority bring about a transformation which will produce wonders? Will food production be a success?

That is not a question we propose to answer at this juncture. We are, however, certain that our readers will be able to answer it, if not now, but within a short time. The proof of any pudding is in the eating, and in this instance, it is the eating which will clinch the issue.

In the mean time dialecticians of every hue and persuasion will wonder whether the present attempt to politicalise the production effort through the new system of Political Authority was only a mechanical exercise, and that because of this, it may not be able to bring about the requisite qualitative changes which is what is being aimed at which can be effected only through a dynamically dialectical transformation.

Some theoretical pundits seemed to have developed an obsession that the current food crisis in Sri Lanka could be regarded as a "revolutionary situation" in which proper political leadership, geared to mobilise the "labour power" of masses (the UF believes it has emancipated from landlords and capitalists), will be able not only to make this country self-sufficient in food but also liquidate the leadership of rival political parties because their rank and file will desert them to join in the politicalised food production war. There is a world food crisis which has accentuated the food crisis in Ceylon, so the argument goes, and in this revolutionary situation when hunger confronts every individual in Sri Lanka, a revolutionary call to wage a politicalised class struggle through the production war to attain self-sufficiency in food would help the United Front government to have the unique distinction of establishing socialism in one country through parliamentary democracy.



# RAMBLING NOTES

## FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

### UNP Gimmickry Stalemate in the North

THE UNP SATYAGRAHA on October 19 was not the flop the Government had hoped it would be nor was it the success the UNP claimed it was. It was no doubt a political gimmick of the kind which political parties in Sri Lanka have resorted to in order to mobilise public support. After first permitting the satyagraha, the Government had second thoughts and had banned any gathering on the Galle Face Green. But wisely it had not banned gatherings in other parts of the city and three processions led by J. R. Jayewardene, R. Premadasa and Vincent Perera had marched up to the barricades blocking all entrances to Galle Face Green to perform the satyagraha of fasting, meditating and praying for rain, food and for "wisdom" for the Government leaders to make correct decisions.

The prayer of the satyagrahis for rain was undoubtedly granted because a little after 4pm there began one of the greatest downpours, a cloudburst people had not known for a long time. This rain dispersed the crowd and

everything had ended peacefully. The satyagrahis were happy that their prayers for rain had been answered and the Government was jubilant that the demonstration had been turned into a damp one. But in the cold war of party-politics, it was claimed by Government publicists that this rain was only a continuation of the rains which had come down in the NCP and EP after the Prime Minister had attended an all-night pirith for rain in Anuradhapura on October 11. Whatever may have been the cause, the island wide rain beginning from October 12 is a happy augury for the Maha season.

The fact that the UNP had to resort to a gimmick like the satyagraha was only an indication of political bankruptcy of the UNP leadership which has so far not offered any concrete alternative political or economic programme. The vague and evasive statements made by UNP leaders J. R. Jayewardene, from time to time, offers no policy for action either short term or long-

term. If the UNP hopes to stage a comeback in 1976-77 it must begin mobilising the people on the basis of a concrete political and economic programme. Mere criticism of the United Front government will not take the UNP very far. The protest vote of indignant people which is now gravitating to the UNP will either move back to the Government, if it provides more food and employment however minimal or shift to new political forces which may emerge in the next two or three years. The UNP cannot hope to stage a comeback on political gimmicks like satyagraha, particularly when the election is still about 3½ years removed.

THE FACT that the satyagraha was regarded as a gimmick by all except diehard UNPers was clear from the crowd which gathered on October 19. It was a committed pro-UNP crowd. The uncommitted and floating voters did not respond to the call of the UNP leaders on October 19. One indisputable fact was that the TUF and the CWC, who were willing to join in the protest meeting on October 11 at the Town Hall, were not willing to participate in the satyagraha. The TUF and the CWC were also willing to join the grow more food campaign of the Government if the latter extended the slightest encouragement directly to them, but UNP leaders have so far taken a negative attitude to the production war—the UNP leaders have so far only asked the people to grow just enough food to



feed themselves but said nothing about increased food production to make the country self sufficient.

If the UNP wants to make any major political impact as a national party it must set out a concrete political programme on all aspects of national importance. It must set out a concrete political programme in terms of the new Constitution. It must set out a new economic policy concretely related to the radical economic measures like Land Reform, Income Ceilings, Compulsory Savings etc., etc., which have been implemented by the UF Government. The UNP must say how it proposes to solve the Tamil minority problem and deal with the six points demand of the TUF. The political and economic programme of the UNP must attract the youth which is today infused, like youth throughout the world, with ideas and attitudes demonstrably anti Establishment, be it, of conservative vintage or of leftist flavouring.

The UF government's popularity rating is undoubtedly at a low ebb at the moment, but it can regain its popularity if it succeeds in providing the people with food, employment and a reasonable standard of living. This the UF can do if it rectifies its many mistakes of commission and omission even partially. The UNP cannot hope to climb back to power on political gimmickry.

The TUF has now begun to take a more realistic view

of the political imperatives which have emerged in the country after the UF victory of 1970. Though the FP has adopted a "self-rule" objective, the fact that it has discarded its federal cry, thus paving the way for a dialogue with the UF on the one hand and the UNP on the other. The TC has pointed out that the FP had finally come back to the correct position: that the TC had always stood for a reasonable settlement on a unitary basis and that if this was not possible the only alternative was separation on a self-rule or some other basis.

The FP has wisely not pressed its self-rule dogma at the moment but has only stressed the six point demand agreed upon by the FP, TC and CWC, and which has the support of many Tamils in other political parties as well. In pursuance of this objective, the TC leader, G. G. Ponnambalam, now in the island, has already met the Prime Minister. Whether this meeting will lead to a wider dialogue with the TUF is yet to be seen, but both the Government and the TUF have begun to realise that it was essential to produce more food if life in the island was to go on in a normal way, and that this could be best achieved if the TUF co-operated with the UF in the production war.

UNFORTUNATELY, the major political parties in the island, the United Front (SLFP, LSSP, CP) and the UNP (with no allies now firmly wedded to it) seem to believe

that it was possible to wean away the rank and file of the rival party either by the slogans of the production war or by gimmicks like satyagraha. Many leaders in the UF also seem to have the delusion that they can cut the ground from under the feet of the TUF leadership by appealing directly to the Tamil masses (with the help of a few Tamil SLFP and LSSP - CP loyalists) to become involved in the food production war.

This approach to the Tamil masses has already created difficulties for the Government. The Political Authority for the North is Mr. Arulampalam, a renegade TC Member of Parliament, and in the weeks preceding the visit of the PM to the North he has used public funds (and the time of officials) in a bid to organise a mighty political tamasha to prove to the PM that he and his fellow turncoat TC MPs could deliver the Tamil masses into the PM's lap. This attempt was resented even by Tamil SLFP stalwarts Duraipappah and his coterie of flag-wavers, who were extremely anxious to show that they could organise better gimmicks and tamashas than Arulampalam to impress the PM how powerful they were in the North. This in-fighting within the pro-Government ranks in the North had placed a great strain on the officials who were only keen about getting the food production going. And all this disgusted the TUF, which had been willing to extend conditional support to the PM when she visited



Jaffna and Mannar during this weekend or her food production campaign. But when the TUF found that the UF stalwarts, who were in the forefront of organising the official receptions to the PM, were only anxious to make a political tamasha of the visit, thereby making the food drive only a smokescreen, they withdraw their support and requested the PM not to make the trip to the North at this juncture. It is significant that this TUF statement was issued in Jaffna by the Action Committee of the TUF (with its TC representatives concurring) on the morning when Mr. G. G. Ponnambalam met the Prime Minister by appointment.

The cholera scare in Kayts has no doubt come as a god-sent excuse to postpone the PM's visit to the North, but before she ventures out again she should make sure that the Political Authority in the North, who certainly does not inspire confidence even among pro-UF Tamils, or the SLFP caucus led by Duraiappah, does not want to make a political gimmick out of the food production drive in a way that will drive the TUF into a "no action" stalemate so far as the food drive is concerned. The Government must realise that any success in the food drive will redound to its credit even if the UNP or the TUF lend a helping hand and it would be political wisdom of the highest magnitude to obtain such cooperation without being sidetracked by party cold war politics into frustration and inaction.

ALL PARTIES must realise that the fate of the next

General Elections cannot be decided just now. But, if the country is not made self-sufficient in food very soon, anarchy will become endemic in Sri Lanka and the question of the next elections will become a purely academic exercise in speculative thought.

The UNP, TUF and the CWC will do well to throw their weight into the food production drive and demonstrate that they can do a good job of work in practical implementation in a way that will inspire confidence among the voters that these parties can be trusted to take the country out of the economic rut into which it has slipped during 25 years of Independence. The UF has bungled in many matters—in administration and implementation—and a rival party like the UNP should grab this opportunity to show that it can really do a better job of work than the UF. It is futile harking back to the past. Mr. J. R. Jayewardene and other UNP leaders must realise that UNP's past is not something to crow about and the less the UNP speaks about it now the better it will be for its future.

As these notes are being written the news of the ceasefire in the Middle East has been announced, and as anticipated by the *Tribune* it was on a resolution jointly sponsored by the USA and the USSR. A new storm has precipitated a new political upheaval in the USA centred on a demand for the impeachment of the President, because he had sacked the

Watergate Special Prosecutor, after compelling the Attorney General and his assistant to resign. Mr. Nixon seems confident that he can ride out the storm, but the whole episode is just one more shock, in an era of shocks, to American citizenry.

In Sri Lanka, the Appropriations Bill has been tabled and the Budget will be presented on November 1. It is still not known whether the IMF and the World Bank will not have second thoughts about extending credit to Ceylon because this country has now done everything the World Bank had wanted—except direct devaluation of the currency after dismantling the two tier FEFCs system. The fact that the West German government has extended a Rs. 80 million (30m DM) loan to Sri Lanka is an indication that something may be afoot, and part of the West German loan was 'untied' without any strings attached (this was in pursuance of the decision of the ECM Council).

It is not possible to discuss this and other matters in this issue, of *Tribune* but in the coming weeks all these matters will be examined, together with the dynamics of the food production drive and also the efforts now being finalised to start the first oil drilling in the Mannar area. Incidentally, the Ceylon Petroleum Corporation will export high octane petrol from November to the Far East, and this petroleum export is a welcome addition to its products which bring in foreign exchange.



# The By-Election and After

BY LANKAPUTRA

IN AN ARTICLE published in the *Tribune* as soon as the Colombo North seat in the National State Assembly fell vacant, the present writer commented that the United Front faced an uphill task fighting the UNP in this constituency, both in view of the composition of the electorate and the grave economic hardships facing the people at the present moment.

The UNP victory in this by-election was a foregone conclusion. But probably even the most hopeful optimists in the UNP did not anticipate the massive majority that their candidate, the affable Mayor of Colombo, Mr. Vincent Perera, scored on October 9.

UNP statisticians have dug deep into the past and come out with the startling conclusion that the UNP majority at the Colombo North by-election was the biggest majority of all the 47 by-elections held in Sri Lanka since 1947. It need only be added that of all the hefty majorities scored by United Front candidates at the last General Elections in May 1970, only those of Mrs. Bandaranaike at Attanagalle and Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike at Dompe were greater than that of Mr. Vincent Perera at Colombo North.

In earlier analyses made on the results of previous by-elections — at Puttalam, Ratnapura, Kesbawa, and Dedigama — we made the point that these elections showed a 3-4 per cent shift away from the United Front towards the UNP. The Colombo North by-election marks a distinct

change from this pattern. It shows a shift of as much as 15 per cent from the United Front towards the UNP. But of course, whether this would be repeated at future by-elections or whether this is just a vagary of Colombo North or the immediate grave economic situation, it is difficult to say just now.

THE UNP has claimed that the Colombo North result was "a public protest by the people against the Government's mismanagement in the food crisis and in general administration." (*Times of Ceylon*, 10th October 1973)

A spokesman of the United Front has countered this with the argument that the by-election result was "a moral victory" for the United Front on the ground that the UNP had gained only the new votes registered since 1970.

More plausible is the comment of the defeated candi, date, Mr. Ananda Premasinghe who has told the *Observer* (10th October) that the result was mainly caused by the present economic difficulties, and added that this would be a mere incident when the country is rescued from these difficulties.

**The by-election result has, of course, considerably raised the spirits of the UNP and their hopes about future trends. These hopes have been given a further boost by the mammoth crowd that thronged their public meeting held two days after the by-election and which has been described by Mr. J. R. Jayewardene as the biggest crowd he has seen in his 30-years political career.**

THIS MEETING, which the UNP convened with other Opposition parties, had been held to register their protest against "the intolerable burdens and hardships" inflicted on the people by the present Government. In the keynote speech delivered at the meeting, Mr. Jayewardene has repeated the arguments made earlier during the debate on their non-confidence motion in the National State Assembly and asserted that there was no world-wide food crisis as such, that the present crisis was largely due to the fact that the United Front Government, soon after coming to power, had dismantled the food production drive initiated by the former UNP Government headed by the late Mr. Dudley Senanayake

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and that the UNP would be with the people in their protests against the harsh measures that the present Government has imposed on them.

Unfortunately, for Mr. Jayewardene, the *Daily Mirror* and the *Lankadipa* the very next day carried copious extracts from the Budget speech made by him last year. This was the time, it will be remembered, that Mr. Jayewardene was peddling the line for the formation of a National Government on the ground that all political parties were to blame for the crisis facing the country and that no party by itself is in a position to solve the country's problems singlehanded.

In that speech Mr. Jayewardene had wanted the present Government without being afraid of public opinion, to take bold steps to rescue the country from the millstone of subsidies which had a crippling effect on the country's economy. He had wanted the Government to ban the import of all things that could be produced locally and take a number of other far-reaching measures.

Mr. Jayewardene has, in the course, of that speech, said that no Government in the foreseeable future would get the massive majority in the country's supreme legislature that the present Government enjoys and called upon it to take a number of measures which are very similar to the ones which the Government has now adopted.

GOVERNMENT SPOKESMEN are bound to make much use of this speech of Mr. Jayewardene in countering the UNP campaign in the coming weeks and months.

Meanwhile, striking while the iron is still hot, the UNP has announced plans for further action—along peaceful and non-violent lines, it is emphatically asserted on October 19th.

In an appeal to the people, Mr. Jayewardene has said that the leaders of political parties and organisations taking part in this "day of mourning and fasting" will meditate and pray "for wisdom to prevail in the minds and compassion in the hearts of the leaders of this Government" so that they may be "induced to feel the suffering of the people and repeal the measures they have taken."

Mrs. Bandaranaike has, in the course of a speech at Anuradhapura made some uncomplimentary references to the UNP plans calling it an "asatyagraha" campaign. She has accused the Opposition of trying to mislead the people and, without proposing alternative solutions, trying to capitalise on the present situation with a view to topple the Government.

Mr. Jayewardene has, in reply to this statement, specially written to the Prime Minister stating that she had misunderstood the purpose of the UNP's campaign. "We bear no enmity or ill-will to you or members of your Government," he has said in this letter, and repeated the assertion that this was only

a peaceful and non-violent way of registering their protest against the recent measures of the Government.

The Joint Committee of Trade Union Organisations had earlier requested the Prime Minister to ban this satyagraha campaign organised by the UNP and other Opposition groups. The reason adduced was that this was a ruse to incite the people to acts of violence against the Government.

But the Prime Minister has not listened to the pleas of the trade union centre organising workers most favourably disposed towards the United Front and its Government. However, too, she has referred to the possibility of opponents of the Government trying to create incidents that day and asked the people to keep away from Colombo on October 19th.

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## World Congress of Peace Forces

By

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The historic session of the World Congress of Peace Forces to be held at Moscow from October 25-31 is a congress of national and international organisations and prominent personalities who have participated in international actions aimed at easing tensions in the world, at developing solidarity with the national liberation movement and with the forces which struggle against racism and other forms of humiliating human dignity.

This Congress is being jointly prepared by the widest possible peace forces. This will be the largest ever international gathering in the entire history of the world peace movement. Over 3000 delegates from all parts of the World are expected to participate at this Congress and from Sri Lanka a representative delegation of about 15 members, including several members of parliament, are expected to participate.

ALL PROBLEMS vitally connected with the struggle for peace and independence—the problem of hunger for many millions, the problem of development, disarmament of the environment, of co-operation in different fields, social problems, the question of human rights—all these problems would be dealt with at the World Congress.

The peace movement which started in a small way in the years immediately following the end of the Second World War, has grown up to be a mighty force and now participants at these international peace congresses include delegations from non governmental organisations such as the World Federation of Scientific Workers, the World Council of Churches and the World Federation of Trade Unions

and governmental organisations such as the League of Arab States, Organisation of African Unity and the United Nations Organisation.

The peace movement, this great movement of the masses of the people, this great movement of action by millions, began with a Congress of writers and artists, scientists and educationists, musicians, philosophers and journalists. This was the World Congress of Intellectuals in the Defence of Peace which was held in 1948 in the auditorium of the Technical University at Wroclaw, Poland. Some of the most eminent thinkers, scientists, artists and writers like Picasso, Joliot-Curie, Ehrenburg, Julian Huxley, Tikhonov and Bernal took an active part at this Congress. The intellectuals who founded our move-

ment in Wroclaw were men and women who sought to give of their knowledge, their culture, to present before the vast masses in all countries, the true facts regarding the dangers of the new weapons of mass destruction which threaten mankind.

THE WORLD CONGRESS OF INTELLECTUALS sent out an appeal to all those who desired to prevent the out-break of a third world war, to meet in the great World Congress of Partisans of Peace, in April 1949, in Paris and Prague. It was at this Congress that the World Peace Council was founded with Fredric Joliot-Curie, the discoverer of radium, as its Founder-President and with John Desmond Bernal as the Chairman of its Presidential Committee.

The World Peace Council stands for the: 1. prohibition of all weapons of mass destruction and ending of the arms drive; abolition of foreign military bases; general, simultaneous and controlled disarmament; 2. elimination of all forms of colonialism and racial discrimination; 3. peaceful co-existence between States with different social and political systems; and 4. replacement of the policy of force by that of negotiations for the settlement of differences between nations.

The Sri Lanka Peace Council, whose president is Mr. T. B. Illangaratne, Minister of Foreign & Internal Trade, has from the very first years of the Peace movement worked for these ideals and has been functioning in association with



the World Peace Council. A congress session of the World Peace Council was held in Sri Lanka in 1957 and the session was inaugurated by the then Prime Minister of Sri Lanka, Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike, and presided over by the then Minister of Justice, Mr. M. W. H. de Silva. Another session of the World Peace Council was organised to be held in Sri Lanka in April 1971, but due to the unsettled conditions then prevailing in Sri Lanka, these sessions were held in Budapest.

For a number of years after the foundation of the World Peace Council the Peace movement was, in the main, restricted to the activities of the World Peace Council and its national organisations. Gradually the peace movement developed very much beyond that and many organisations came into being which have the same goal and are fighting for peace. The World Peace Council now took the initiative to bring these organisations together and to unite their efforts for the common objectives.

**THE WORLD PEACE ASSEMBLY** held in Berlin in 1969 was the first major landmark in the process of building this co-operation between the World Peace Council and a large number of international non — governmental organisations. Over 30 international organisations joined hands to sponsor the Assembly. Among over 1,100 delegates who attended this Peace Assembly, there were representatives of 65 inter-

national organisations and over 300 national organisations representing more than a hundred countries of all the continents. From Sri Lanka a representative delegation consisting of Rev. Prof. Kotagama Vachissara, Rev. Lakshman Wickremasinghe, Mrs. Vivienne Goonewardene, Dr. P. Udagama, Messrs. T. B. Subasinghe, Nihal Jayawickrema and T. Duraisingam attended this Assembly.

But soon after the Berlin Assembly it became clear that the movement had grown far beyond the breadth of the participation at that historic Assembly. The Berlin Assembly itself gave the impetus for this process. The very development of the international situation brought new political mass forces into action for peace and independence in a manner in which they had never acted before.

At meetings of the World Peace Council held in subsequent years in Budapest and Helsinki, the idea that a great gathering of peace forces should be held at an early date was mooted and discussed. The Presidential Committee of the World Peace Council held its sessions in Santiago, Chile, in October 1972. Mr. L. Ariyawansa, Secretary of the Sri Lanka Peace Council, representing Mr. T. B. Subasinghe, Minister of Industries and Scientific Affairs, who is a member of the Presidential Committee of the World Peace Council, attended this session. The Presidential Committee issued an Appeal, seeking the co-operation of all

organisations and movements — international, regional, and national — in the preparation of a World Congress for Peace, Security and National Independence to be held in Moscow in Autumn 1973.

**THE RESPONSE** to this appeal was very good and an International Consultative Meeting was held in Moscow in March 1973 to make the necessary preparations for the World Congress. This Consultative Meeting was attended by representatives of 40 international and 81 national organisations from 60 countries. Chandra Gunesekera, M.P. attended this meeting as a delegate from the Sri Lanka Peace Council.

It was decided at this Consultative Meeting that in the preparations for the Moscow Congress, provision must be made for the mass participation of millions of people of all countries. Wherever possible sponsoring bodies were to be set up on the widest possible scale, including both representatives of the national peace organisations as well as representatives of purely national parties, trade unions and other movements and groups.

In pursuance of this decision, the Sri Lanka Peace Council organised in March 1973 a seminar on "Asian Peace and Security" at the Royal College Hall, Colombo. Here lively discussions followed the reading of papers on different aspects of the subject by Mr. L. Ariyawansa, Dr. S. A. Wickremasinghe, Mrs. Vivienne Goonewardene



AGRICULTURE

## Small Farms Should Be Fully Exploited: FAO

New Delhi, Sept. 23,

The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) wants that small farms should be fully exploited with the help of new technology in the Asian region. The FAO has made this suggestion to countries of Asia and the Far East and commended the experience of India, Japan and the Philippines.

and Mr. T. Duraisingam. In June a representative meeting of physicians, lawyers, architects, trade unionists, religious personalities and political leaders, was called by the Sri Lanka Peace Council and a National Preparatory Committee for the World Congress of Peace Forces was set up.

A second International Consultative Meeting was held in Moscow in July 1973 to finalise the joint preparations made for the World Congress. Mr. Ronnie de Mel, M.P. participated in this Consultative Meeting as a representative of the Sri Lanka National Preparatory Committee for the Congress.

The situation in the world today calls for the united action of all peace forces. It is the hope and expectation of all peace loving people that the forthcoming World Congress of Peace Forces would substantially assist in the easing of tension and in the maintenance of peace in the world.

A SMALL FARM in Asia has often been associated with the backwardness of traditional agriculture. Recent studies have revealed that the small farm is as well managed, within its resource limitations, as large farms.

Farm management in most countries of the region has almost consistently shown an inverse correlation between the size of farms and yields. This is repeatedly confirmed in studies made in India over a period of time.

The FAO says, in its report, on the state of food and agriculture this year: that given a larger holding and the lack of capital or improved technology to exploit its advantages, yields per hectare depend mainly on the intensity of labour input. The small farm's greater land productivity is also reflected in higher levels of cropping intensity as shown by multiple cropping indices in India, Japan and the Philippines.

THE SITUATION would change if new capital inputs are made available to the small farmer, or new technologies which are highly responsive to scale, become available.

The main shortcoming of the small farm stems from its inability to undertake the risks. This has caused a definite lag in the rate of adoption of the new varieties by small farms (compared with

large farms) except where other things, such as access to irrigation, credit, working capital and inputs, are equal. And these are not usually equal.

In this connection, the FAO blames poor availability of credit and its assurance as being responsible for the weakness of the small farmer. Another problem is that the technology available is often designed for the larger farms well endowed with capital.

The small farms cannot be wished away. Nor is it any longer socially or politically practicable (even if considered desirable economically) to bypass them through a growth strategy which favours large farms. Growth on a base of 70 per cent of the land presently in small holdings would provide a greater potential for expansion than a rate twice as high on a large farm base of only 30 per cent of the cultivable land.

Then there are the factors of labour pressure and income distribution. The implications of all these are clear. It might be necessary for many countries to increase the number of small farms as a means of intensifying production and absorbing labour.

Therefore, the relevant question is not one of size, but of mobilising the only abundant resource-labour in a situation of scarcity of other resources. In the context of private property and decision making and the prevailing technology, the small farm has been able to do this best, the FAO said.



BATTICOTTA SEMINARY-10

## A TURNING POINT

BY

JAMES T. RUTNAM

In 1848, shortly before Hoisington relinquished his duties as Principal, Emerson Tennent, the Colonial Secretary of the time and a learned scholar who had already written several books on Greece and who was to write, a few years later, the best work on Ceylon published in that century, visited the Seminary.

He has left a record of his high appreciation of the work done at the Seminary in one of his smaller books *Christianity in Ceylon*, in which he describes the scene that gratified him as follows:

This is the concluding part of the series on Batticotta Seminary which was established in Vaddukodai by American missionaries in 1823. This institution was the fore-runner of the present Jaffna College.

"The whole establishment is full of interest, and forms an impressive and a memorable scene—the familiar objects and arrangements of a college being combined with the remarkable appearance and unwonted costumes of the students; and the domestic buildings presenting all the peculiar characteristics of Oriental life and habits. The sleeping apartments, the dining hall, and the cooking room are in purely Indian taste, but all accurately clean; and stepping out of these the contrast was striking between them, and the accustomed features of the lecture room with its astronomical clock, its orrery,

and transit instrument, the laboratory with its chemical materials, retorts, and electro-magnetic apparatus and the Museum with its arranged collection of minerals and corallines to illustrate the geology of Ceylon. But the theatre was the centre of attraction, with its benches of white robed students, and lines of turbaned heads, with upturned eager countenances, 'God's image carved in ebony.' The examination which took place in our presence was on History, Natural Philosophy, Optics, Astronomy, and Algebra. The knowledge exhibited by the pupils was astonishing; and it is no exaggerated encomium to say that in the course of instructions, and in the success of the system for communicating it, the Collegiate Institution of Batticotta is entitled to rank with many an European University."

TENNENT was a knowledgeable person. He was a distinguished product of Trinity College, Dublin, of which he became a Fellow. He was also elected a Fellow of the Royal Society. His unsolicited testimonial was well merited. Tennent had other comments to make in the same book. These two are deserving of mention.

He says: "The number which the building can accommodate is limited for the present to one hundred, who reside within its walls, and take their food in one common hall, sitting to eat after the customs of the natives. For some years the students were boarded and clothed at the expense of the mission; but such is now the eagerness for instructions that there are a multitude of competitors for every casual vacancy and the cost of their maintenance for the whole period of pupilage is willingly paid in advance in order to secure the privilege of admission."

Tennent finally sums up describing the position at the time as follows: "Nearly six hundred students have been under instruction from time to time since the commencement of the American Seminary at Batticotta and of these upwards of four have completed the establishment course of education. More than one half have made an open profession of Christianity, and all have been familiarized with its doctrines and more or less imbibed with its spirit. The majority are



now filling situations of credit and responsibility throughout the various districts of Ceylon; numbers are employed under the missionaries themselves as teachers and catechists and as preachers and superintendents of schools, many have migrated in similar capacity to be attached to Christian Missions on the Continent of India; others have lent their assistance to the Missions of the Wesleyan and Church of England in Ceylon; and amongst them who have attached themselves to secular occupations, I can bear testimony to the abilities, qualifications and integrity of the many students of Jaffna who have accepted employment in various offices under the Government of the colony."

THE SEMINARY showed signs of decline, although it was not too noticeable, from about 1845. This was due partly to the poor health of Principal Hoisington. But the chief factor was the policy of retrenchment adopted by the Mission. At the time of Tennent's visit to the Seminary, it was to all purposes a flourishing and promising institution, but his reference to the numbers being one hundred reflected a numerical set-back, for the number in the past had consistently varied from one hundred and fifty to one hundred and sixty.

The American personnel in the staff was the first to suffer from the axe of retrenchment. But the Tamil assistants, most if not all of whom

were graduates of the Seminary, stepped readily into the breach. Funds, however, were slow in coming. The whole vote for education, from the Mission was reduced to £1,000/- in 1852, and in 1854 the recommendation was made that the number in the upper classes should be brought down. The following year, the fatal year when the Seminary was closed, the total number on the roll was only \*96.

Although it took some time for the changing attitude of the Board towards the Seminary to take effect, yet it was evident that there was a good deal of rethinking in America regarding the wisdom, value and need of continuing the policy hitherto followed in the Seminary.

The American Missionaries, it should be realised, came over to Jaffna when the latter's fortunes were at their lowest ebb. For over two hundred years preceding the arrival of these Missionaries the people of Jaffna had been under the heels of two foreign conquerors viz. the Portuguese (1591-1658) whose superior arms crushed them, although only after a sanguinary struggle perhaps unique in the annals of Ceylon history; and the Dutch (1658-1796) who took over this erstwhile proud and independent Kingdom of Jaffnapatam from the Portuguese as booty from the wars, with not even an apology of consent from its inhabitants.

One would concede that the colonial powers had their

own ideas of civilising "natives." Between them the colonialists had satisfied themselves that they had each in turn "made Christian" a good part of Jaffna, meaning thereby that a good part of the people of Jaffna had become Roman Catholic during the Portuguese era, and Reformed Church Protestants during the Dutch. The only disquieting element in these "conversions" was that the Catholic would have wished to burn the Protestant "heretic" alive, and the Reformed Churchman would rather have embraced, if he must, the Hindu infidel than the hated "papist". That was the rift-ridden Christianity that was preached. Despite these tragic contradictions some of the seeds that were sown had really germinated, for from these sprouts have sprung many, among whom there are several Roman Catholics, who are very zealous and steadfast in the faith even unto this day.

But the spirit of the Hindu of Jaffna was broken by the crushing blows of his colonial masters; his historic temples were desecrated and destroyed at the outset by the Portuguese; his books were burnt or stolen and if (to keep body and soul together) he was forced, as in some cases, to make a sign of the cross at his work-place in the morning, he took good care when he returned home in the evening to make his peace with his own Gods by rubbing "holy ash" on his forehead in the darkness of the night.



## INTERNATIONAL-AFFAIRS

BY ARIEL

# US-USSR Detente

## Arab-Israeli War

## Thailand

THE OVER-ALL PICTURE of the international situation at this period presents a confused and often contradictory pattern of conflicting trends. A significant development is that over large parts of the world the cold war confrontations of the post-second-world war period have eased and the new *detente*, bilateral, and often multilateral, has led to the improvement of relations between a number of countries. This was because many difficult east-west disputes in Europe had been solved. Some weight too must be attached to the growth of the, as yet unacknowledged, influence of the bloc of third world countries of the non-aligned group which have stood for the elimination of the hotbeds of tension through negotiation and also the liquidation of tension which stemmed from colonialism and racism.

Whilst the western bloc of colonialist and imperialist countries sniggered at and even opposed the attempts of the non-aligned countries to fight colonialism and racism, their attempts to stop the

arms race and outlaw weapons of mass destruction and compel the US to forthwith withdraw its troops from Vietnam, and also to achieve a peaceful settlement of the Middle East crisis on the basis of UN resolutions, the countries of Eastern Europe, on the other hand, have endeavoured to sponsor resolutions which would bring them closer to the non-aligned group—resolutions to eliminate trade discrimination, foster mutually beneficial ties in the fields of science and culture and the like. In many matters, the policies of the non-aligned group coincided with those of the socialist countries of eastern Europe, and vice-versa.

The non-aligned and the east european socialist bloc gave a powerful support to the liberation movements in Vietnam, Mozambique and Angola and this was perhaps another reason why the policy of dictating from "positions of strength" and "brinkmanship" was abandoned and there was almost universal acceptance of peaceful co-existence. It is significant that the

biggest change was effected through agonising re-appraisals by western countries which had for decades sought to destroy "communism" and communist countries by means of persistent cold war offensives based on a global network of military alliance.

All this has changed.

The hawks have been defeated in many countries. On the basis of their national interests, nearly all countries have now begun to feel their way about to establishing bilateral relations on a new basis. All this has, no doubt, contributed to a general improvement in the world situation. The United States and the Soviet Union are now on better terms and in the process have arrived at several agreements which are beneficial to them as well as to the rest of the world. Increased trade between them has helped to develop a new atmosphere.

West Germany had solved its disputes with the Soviet Union and the other countries of Eastern Europe and this led to recognition of the GDR. The last remnants of the unresolved problems after the second world war in Europe have now been solved and the FRG and GDR have now been admitted to the United Nations.

The United States has dropped its cold war postures against China with the Nixon-Mao detente and this no doubt went a long way towards the Peace Settlement in Vietnam. The spirit of detente had even spread to the Indian subcontinent where Pakistan,



Bangladesh and India were able to work out a workable compromise regarding the repatriation of POWs from India; Bengalis from Pakistan; and non-Bengalis from Bangladesh, to their respective homes.

While relaxed tensions and detente have begun to spread their soothing effect over many areas, the hawks in Israel and the ultras among the Arabs had refused to let tensions subside in the Middle East to make a negotiated settlement possible earlier. The Arab commandos and the Palestinian guerillas believed that terrorism would force the Israelis back to the 1967 boundaries (and even further back) and Israeli hawks over-reacted to every act of terrorism with reprisals which made counter-reprisals inevitable.

And on October 6 a hot war, the biggest in the Arab-Israeli wars, erupted in the Middle East. Hawks and war-mongers in every country were no doubt pleased: they believe that war is a natural state for man.

THE REACTIONS of these elements can be easily anticipated, but many have found the foreign policy postures of China somewhat puzzling and difficult to understand. From the days the People's Republic was established, China had proclaimed herself to be a friend of dependent and subjugated nations. Her strong denunciations of imperialism had won her much respect and admirers throughout the world. But, today it is difficult to understand why China thinks that east-west agreements in Europe were unde-

sirable—Peking has told every west European country that it was necessary to be on guard against such detente. China, moreover, has made clear that a military alliance like NATO was a necessary organisation in the European setup, although NATO continues to support and supply arms to Portugal to suppress Africans in her colonies. On many matters, her policy statements differ from the policies adopted by the non-aligned powers, even though China claims to support the Third World countries in the fight against "imperialism and hegemony."

On the current Middle East war too the position adopted by China has puzzled a great many friends of China. Understandably, she supports the anti-imperialist Arabs against the Israeli aggressors, but she condemns the two "super-powers" viz. the USA and the USSR, even more vehemently than she condemns Israel forgetting that the two "super powers" must necessarily play an important role in any Middle East peace settlement. Whilst even the USA has welcomed President Sadat's offer to stop the war and talk peace at the UN if Israel would agree to withdraw to the pre-June 1967 lines, China has not reacted to it—whilst her comments indicate that she believed that the Arabs should continue to fight until the Israelis were crushed completely together with the two "super-powers" who were allegedly colluding to stifle the Arab struggle against "imperialism and hegemony."

The outbreak of the war in the Middle East has given all who have no use for international detente a fresh opportunity to attempt to push the world back to a bi-polar world of cold war confrontations and thus curb the growing trend towards peaceful co-existence. These elements lose no opportunity to undermine the trend towards detente. Encouragement for instance is given to Israeli hawks and the blame is heaped on the Arabs (and the Soviet Union for helping them) for the war, without realising it was the failure of Israel to withdraw to the 1967 boundaries, as required by UN resolutions, which was the ultimate cause of the war.

There has been a great deal of criticism that the Soviet Union had airlifted arms to the Arabs immediately after the outbreak of hostilities and that this was a violation of the agreements signed in the Nixon-Brezhnev summits in Moscow and Washington. While there is no doubt that the US-USSR detente has been placed under great strain because of the Middle East war, there are no indications that the detente is under any immediate threat of a breakdown. Secretary Kissinger had in a cautious statement stressed the need for restraint.

The USSR as well as the USA have regarded the Middle East as a sensitive area in their geopolitical calculations; for the USA it was a source of oil, and for the USSR it was an area which was on one of its doosteps—in fact at



the entrances through the Black Sea and the Persian Gulf. There was not the slightest doubt that the two countries would support with fresh arms' supplies the respective countries they had backed for a long time now. An airlift of arms from both countries to their allies was inevitable, but what is important is that because of the detente and the two Nixon-Brezhnev summits, the two countries are still on talking terms (on the hot line and otherwise), and have taken steps to bring about ceasefire as a basis for a more permanent peace settlement without indulging in cold war propaganda and abuse as in 1956 and 1967.

IT WAS INDICATED in this column last week that the US and the USSR had already taken steps to bring about a peace settlement. After those notes were written the following events which are of significance took place which seem to be connected with the peace moves. Nixon and Brezhnev are said to have had discussions on the hot line while Kissinger had met the Soviet Ambassador Dobrynin in Washington. These talks and meetings had begun almost from the beginning of the war.

Then, as the Soviet started airlifting supplies to Iran and Syrian, Boumedienne of Algeria had gone to Moscow. It is known that Boumedienne was not extra friendly to the Soviet Union and had maintained an uneasy truce in his relations with Moscow. Boumedienne had at times even adopted the Peking line of the two super-powers in

analysing world events. While Gaddafi had voiced his anti-Marxist and anti-Soviet sentiments in ultra Islamic idiom, Boumedienne was a more astute politician who couched his dislike of the Soviet Union in clever diplomatic language. Boumedienne's visit to Moscow came as a matter of surprise to many observers of the international scene, but when Boumedienne went to the Kremlin, it was clear that something was afoot.

Then came President Sadat's speech, on the tenth day of the war, to the Egyptian State Assembly in which he offered to stop the war if Israel withdrew to the 1967 lines and that thereafter he would attend talks for a peace settlement at the UN. On the same day, a few hours later, Mrs. Golda Meir, spoke in the Israeli Knesset. She did not refer to the speech made by Sadat, but laid down that a ceasefire would be possible only on the basis of the lines as they were on October 6, 1973.

It was clear that Saadat had politically outmanoeuvred the Israelis. His peace offer was welcomed in all countries including the USA. Saadat had also made it clear that the Arabs were prepared to recognise Israel as a state but they did not want Israel to retain the lands it had conquered in the 1967 war. Apart from everything else, it was a question of prestige because most of the land space in question, like Sinai, was virtually useless desert land. Mrs. Golda Meir's hardline hawkish stand lost

the Israelis a great deal of sympathy among countries which had been neutral in the Arab-Israeli conflict so far, and thereafter a number of African countries which had maintained friendly relations with Israel broke off diplomatic ties with Tel Aviv.

THE ARABS are now able to talk from a position of strength in the battlefield. They had also taken the initiative for what appeared a reasonable political settlement. The pressure of world opinion which supported Sadat's peace offer compelled Golda Meir to cut back on her hardline hawkish line—this was also because the Israeli forces had not fared very well on the battlefield and their losses of airplanes (because of the sophisticated Soviet missiles) seemed to have been very great. If any credibility is to be attached to the boasts of Moshe Dayan, the Syrian Army had been smashed and destroyed several times—but each time the Syrians had come up with a fresh counter-offensive.

It was in this situation that the British Foreign Secretary had hinted that Premier Kosygin was in Cairo for peace talks. This fact was later admitted in Moscow, Cairo and Washington. It is believed that a peace plan supported by the US, USSR and some of the other major powers would soon come into the open... To have an immediate ceasefire, it was said that Kosygin was seeking to persuade Sadat to accept an Israeli declaration of intent to withdraw to the 1967 lines and agree to a cease-



fire—allowing the Israelis to withdraw from the conquered territories within a stipulated time. This suggestion is not likely to be opposed very much by Sadat and other Arab states, but the other Israeli pre-condition that the new line should not be the hard-and-fast pre-1967 line but a new one which took the security needs of Israel into consideration, may not be accepted by the Arabs whose sentiments demand a withdrawal on principle to the pre-1967 line (partly for face-saving), and that thereafter at the conference table the security needs of Israel could be considered. The Arab arguments that such modifications would not be necessary if there was an international guarantee about boundaries, but Israel, with some justification, does not place such supreme confidence in international guarantees for boundaries which cannot be militarily defended from points of natural vantage.

And finally, there is Jerusalem. King Hussein, who is most concerned in the matter, whilst saying that land taken away from Jordan after the 1967 war should be returned had pointedly said that he wanted Jordan's "rights" in Jerusalem safeguarded. Does this mean he would be satisfied with some kind of "internationalisation" of Jerusalem or parts of Jerusalem which is sacred to the Muslims as much as to the Jews.

BY THE TIME these notes appear in print and *Tribune* reaches its readers a great deal more must necessarily

have happened. Though the USA and the USSR are playing the usual game of big power shadow boxing of showing their flag and strength, this time in the eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East by parading their warships, there is no likelihood, judging by what has taken place so far, that the US-USSR detente would collapse. Each side stands to lose too much if they become involved in the war themselves. They need peace to keep their people reasonably happy. The two-way traffic in trade was also something both countries needed. The USSR will find US technology an advantage whilst US agricultural produce will be needed for sometime until the Soviet Union is able to catch up with its own food production. On the other hand, the USA is hit with an energy crisis and the natural gas she can get from Russia via Siberia would help to supplement her energy resources. Further trade with the USSR will help the USA to reduce her foreign trade deficits.

Taking all these factors into consideration it is not likely that the detente between the USA and the USSR is likely to break but the strain will be great as long as the middle East war lasts. In 1967, the US and Israel were on top with the USSR and the Arabs in the doghouse, but today the position is very different. Though both parties cannot fight a limitless war, it has been estimated that Israel cannot fight at the same pace as upto now for more than

another 3 to 4 weeks. But the Arabs can continue to fight for a longer time, but Egypt and Syria realise that the longer the war lasts it is their territory which will be devastated and that all the money grants from the oil-rich neighbours will not be able to restore the destruction for many years.

Owing to the hawkishness of ruling Israeli circles, Sadat has been able to wrest the political initiative into his hands and with his peace offer win universal sympathy. Militarily, the Arabs are in a position to talk from a position of strength, because time is on their side and Israel cannot afford to fight a long war—and a stalemate on the battlefield will also be advantageous only to the Arabs.

It is in this context that the ceasefire and the peace treaty must be viewed. The US itself is not as strong as it was a few years ago to insist on having its way. The economic crisis in the US which has reduced the power of the Dollar (its convertibility and value) is still continuing. The oil squeeze from the Arab states will hit the US very hard during the coming winter. Watergate, then *la affaire* Spiro Agnew, and now Nixon's quarrel with his own Justice department, has hit US prestige on the soft underbelly of the high moralistic postures it has always adopted. All these put together and more have reduced the bargaining position of the US vis a vis the Arabs and the USSR.



Additionally, the US will want to restore some of the ground she has lost in the Middle East among the Arabs. Before Kissinger had been able to work out any peace settlement for the Middle East, as he had intended to, the hawks in Israel had precipitated several crisis and, this suited Sadat and the Arabs who had wanted a fresh opportunity to show their mettle on the battlefield with the sophisticated missiles and tanks provided by the Russians. And Arab oil has its on explosive potentialities.

**WITH THE MIDDLE EAST WAR** so much in the forefront of the news, many other events had faded into the background. The major disgrace which has overtaken Agnew has failed to shock or even interest many people. The Sino-Soviet cold war has been almost forgotten. Chile is already past history. Even the cataclystic changes in Thailand have not been properly reported or analysed, and therefore understood.

The changes in Thailand were unexpected. Though it as known that things were not what they appeared on the surface and though it had been pointed out that there was deep discontent in the country against the way the Government was handling vital problems, not even competent observers were able to anticipate the sweep and ferocity of the student riots which has swept the strongman Kittikachorn and his handy men out of the country into the dustbins of history. (Even

if there is a comeback it can be only temporary). Thailand has no more place for the likes of Kittikachorn. He was reputed to be the most stable military dictator in Asia and he was toppled with the greatest of ease.

At the time of writing these notes, interpretative and analytical articles about Thailand have not yet become available in Ceylon. The reports furnished by the BBC World Service have been so far the most informative reports on the Thai developments. BBC observers detailed the economic unbalance within the country, the opposition which stemmed from the deprivation of democratic rule and civil rights by the Kittikachorn dictatorship, the impact of the partial withdrawal of the US airforce and troops, and the waging of the US war against Laos, Cambodia and North Vietnam from bases within Thailand, and stressed that these were among the factors which were said to be relevant to an understanding of the situation. One BBC observer had stated that the US had stayed too long in Thailand and had waged the war in Laos and Cambodia from Thai bases even after the Vietnam Peace Agreement.

Sentiment within Thailand among students, intellectuals and others has for some time now been for a rapprochement with China and this was especially so after the Nixon-Mao detente. But Kittikachorn had refused to

discard his old SEATO cold war postures and the only contact he had allowed with China was the sending of a ping-pong team to Peking.

The new Thai Government apart from restoring such democracy as is possible within the country, will no doubt want to re-align Thai foreign policies to new realities in Asia.

### Living Death

Under the Suppression of Communism Act, which South Africa's racist regime passed back in 1950, Pretoria has forbidden 200 citizens named in the official government bulletin to engage in any public activities.

For most of the 200 persons listed these sanctions will be in force for a term of five years. The 200 are forbidden to attend gatherings of more than two, they may not visit schools, colleges or industrial enterprises, and are liable to be placed under house arrest.

Also banned is anything they may have said or written at any time. To all intents and purposes, they have been outlawed, since they cannot appeal to the judiciary against these sanctions. The Johannesburg Sunday Times says that they are being harassed extra-judiciary by the Minister of Justice and have been condemned to what is termed a "living death."



## CHRONICLE

## JULY 29-31

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

**SUNDAY, JULY 29:** A six-member team led by the Prime Minister Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike left for Canada yesterday to attend the Commonwealth Prime Minister's Conference. At the Conference the Premier will press for the Indian Ocean peace zone. A press release from the Prime Minister's office referring to an article in the *Sun* of July 21, captioned "Jawaharlal Nehru the Journalist," states that the views of an outstanding world leader have been deliberately distorted and the reader consciously deceived in what was surely a shocking example of un-ethical journalism. Mr. Pieter Keuneman, Minister of Housing and Construction, in a broadcast talk yesterday condemned the UNP's action of boycott against the diffusion of ownership of the *Lake House*. Doctors from all parts of the Island attended yesterday's joint meeting of the GMOA and MSA to discuss the alleged police assault on Dr. Wickremasinghe, DMO, Udugama Hospital. Eleven Ugandan students who were "stranded" at the Bandaranaike International Airport since May 30, have now moved out from the public lounge of the airport to a youth hostel in a suburb of Colombo: they moved out on the orders of the airport commandant. The second round of Indo-Pakistani talks commencing today is expected to be the most crucial of the attempts to normalise relations between the two countries. The Israeli newspaper *Maariv* claimed that the woman named Leila Khaled is suspected to be the leader of the terrorist group which hijacked a Jumbo Jet belonging to the Japan Airlines.

**MONDAY, JULY 30:** A statement by the ICTUO condemned the boycott campaign of the UNP against the *Lake House* papers as a 'conspiratorial move'. The Prime Minister in the course of a radio interview warned ele-

ments in the UNP against indulging in anti-democratic actions under the guise of defending democracy. Contrary to the front-page lead of the *Daily News*, the *Daily Mirror* in its front page lead says that all Doctors of Government hospitals will stage a 24-hour token strike tomorrow commencing at 8.a.m. According to the *Daily News*, the proposed token strike of doctors over the DMO assault affair has been postponed on the assurance of the acting PM that a commission to probe this would be appointed: the evening *Observer* led with the proposed 24-hour token strike by 2,500 doctors tomorrow. A *Reuter* report quoting highly reliable resources said that the Indo-Pak talks have reached a very difficult stage and their outcome hangs in the balance. France's second nuclear blast was so puny that at best the observers could only detect a fluffy white powder puff fragmented within minutes by the wind; a New Zealand Press Association report to this effect is what is said about the nuclear test: the report also says that instruments failed to register any fallout.

**TUESDAY, JULY 31:** The *Daily News* led with the token strike of the Doctors which commenced this morning. The One-man Commission probing the ragging incidents of the Peradeniya University in March this year, referring to an earlier story in the *Silumina*, told the Editor of the paper that he need not reveal the source of information. Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan, UN High Commissioner for refugees will be in Sri Lanka today on an official visit. The chairman of the CJC (exchange frauds) said, the maintenance of more than one set of account books at Polgolla, proved the "mala fides of these transactions": the Chairman made these observations after examining the account books recovered by the CID from a Yugoslavian firm engaged in work at Polgolla. The evening papers had stories of patients being turned down at the OPDs of Government hospitals owing to the strike by Doctors. Senior members of the Senate Watergate Committee proposed they should privately be permitted to hear tape recordings of President Nixon's conversations with his staff about the bugging scandal.



ON THE HOME FRONT

## In Search of Ideas

BY  
CANAX

ONE of the occupational hazards of doing a weekly column like this one is that pretty soon nobody believes what I write. It gets so, I sometimes don't believe what I write myself, hence no hard feelings on that score. But some of the unbelievers prefer not to keep their opinions to themselves, which is a pity. Many are the times I've been asked if my wife actually says the things I say she says in my pieces. A silly question like that deserves a silly answer, but I can't think of one off-hand.

That aside, the truth is she does. You may think this funny-though not too funny for words—but I happen to be somewhat fond of my better half (only don't breathe a word to her or it will go to her head). No man gets fond of his wife without a reason, and I have one. Without her, I could never have made it every week in *Tribune*. There may be another reason, too, but it eludes my memory at the moment, so it can't be as important as the one I've mentioned.

I suspect the reason why people ask about my wife is because they feel I make her sound good and funny on paper. Truth is, she is not half as funny on paper as she is at home.

Another question I'm frequently asked by those who pretend to be most concerned about me and my welfare is, hasn't my wife divorced me yet?

The answer to that is, not yet, I'm afraid. But don't lose heart, for I keep trying all the time.

The frequency with which she figures in my pieces probably gives many people the impression that she has nothing better to do than sit there 'feeding' me with copy for my column. The impression is a totally unfounded one, of course, for her peculiar view on the matter is that if she has nothing better to do, she has nothing worse, either.

WHEN, of an evening, she finds me brooding, she seems to know instinctively what I'm brooding about; she decides to give me a helping hand and a helpful idea of her own. Since her ideas are invariably heavier than the ones I ever have a helping hand from her just then also helps more than I care to admit. I don't know about the Evolutionary process, but two hands are simply not enough at times and it is just my luck I have a wife to give me the extra hand, even if only to heave her own ideas?

I guess I should be thankful for small mercies, though, and am grateful she has hands to offer when I most need them. Come to think of it, I'm probably luckier than a lot of men who keep grumbling their wives are minus the essentials. The most oft-heard grumble is that wives don't have any brains. Having hands and no brains may prove a disadvantage in men, the theory goes, but it's a disaster in the rest.

I still don't know how they can tell. It's obvious, perhaps, in the case of hands. I remember a friend, in one of his rare references to his wife, saying she had no brains. I asked him how he made the discovery. "Why, you can see she has no brains!" he exclaimed. Maybe he could, but I couldn't so I didn't pursue the point further.

AS I was saying, I should be thankful for small mercies, even some big ones. For not only does my wife have hands to help me, I suspect she has brains, too. The only meagre proof of its existence comes from an inadvertent slip on her part. "You're always picking my brains, aren't you?" she asked once, when I pestered her for another of her ideas for this column. Not conclusive proof, I know, but that's good enough for me. If she doesn't know what she has, then who does?

"No ideas for next week?" she asks, seeing me brooding again. When I don't reply she knows I haven't the



foggiest idea—of what I'm going to write about.

"You like me to say something funny?" she prods.

I know a wrong approach when I hear one, and since I'm desperate for ideas I begin to plead with her not to louse things up. She normally doesn't.

"Please, dear," I beg "watch what you're saying."

"Why, don't you want me to be funny?"

"I do, I do," I cry with more feeling than I put into those two words when I uttered them, just once, up at the altar years before. "But don't try to be funny."

"You want me to be serious then?"

"That's my girl," I reply enthusiastically. "You just go ahead and be serious, and I'm sure it'll turn out funny."

She thinks a moment and says, "That sounds funny to me already."

"Now do you believe me?" I ask proudly.

"You don't want me to be even seriously funny?"

"No, no," I say quickly, "seriously serious will do."

"All right," she says. "I'll tell you what happened today...let's see, now, shall I tell you about my saree first or about your record?"

I can see funny potential in her saree, but am puzzled about the other one. "What about my record?"

"It makes a funny noise." Heck, I think to myself, I don't even know where my

oke is coming from. "You call Mozart a funny noise?"

"This one goes tock..tock tock..tock.."

"How many tocks in all?" "I didn't count," she says

defensively. "Is it tuneful?"

"No, just a plain loud tock."

"Very unlike Mozart," I tell her. "Somebody has added to his original score."

"Not me," she cries, laughing at her own joke.

"You didn't scratch it by any chance?"

"I have nothing against Mozart," she cries, laughing even louder. "All I did was drop it once, but I've done that to Beethoven and Bach as well."

I DECIDE to change the subject. "Now what was that about your saree?"

"That's really serious," she says, "so you'll find yourself in stitches." While I prepare myself for a good laugh she adds, "There was

this bring-and-buy auction sale in our parish club, and I gave them one of my sarees." "Your bridal?" I ask, already amused.

"I don't want another girl to be unlucky," she says. "I gave an old Singapore nylex, and you know what happened?" "There were no bids," I suggest, making a wild guess.

"Only at the start, but it finally went for Rs. 495?"

I laugh so loud my wife says, "The joke is yet to come, and sounds dead serious too."

"Who's the clot who had so much money to burn?"

"Well, there was that house keeping money you gave me...."

I nearly choke on my laugh. "You mean you bought it back?"

"I couldn't just stand there and watch my saree being humiliated," she huffs.

"Who did you bid against?" "Myself."

It was all so excruciatingly funny I actually found myself crying like a child.

### MODERN THOUGHT—BY CASSETTE

British-produced educational cassettes are providing senior school pupils, university students and laymen with an easy way of keeping up with modern thought in a wide variety of subjects. The cassettes, which cover such subjects as ecology, philosophy, psychology, and art, have been devised by former British Broadcasting Corporation specialists with wide experience of making cultural programmes for radio and television for Seminar Cassettes Ltd. The contributors are recognised experts in their own fields. Personalities in the current series of tapes include Nobel Prize-winner Professor Dennis Gabor, who discusses the promise and threat of technology, and Dr. Thor Heyerdhal on marine pollution. The "University Series" offers 17 tapes under four general headings, while "International Report" is a new series of monthly cassettes on current affairs. The producers aim to keep the library constantly up-to-date.



# IS IT TRUE?

## Sherlock Holmes

### \* TOURISTS' FOOD

### \* MIRAGE IN JAFFNA

IS IT TRUE that top class, including five-star, hotels in Colombo and elsewhere are facing a new problem which threatens to proliferate into a major *malaise*? That it was found that food sent from the kitchen (or pantry) of hotels were reduced in quantity by the time they reached the customers' tables? That this was first noticed in the plates of sandwiches which were taken to customers? That one or two pieces from each plate were found missing at destination? That it was later discovered that the waiters had slipped them into their pockets either to be eaten by themselves later or to be taken to other workers in the establishment who were also smitten with the pangs of hunger? That this very understandable stealing of food is only a natural by-product of the Government's decision to provide all the rice and bread required by foreign tourists—even on Fridays and Tuesdays? That now some five-star hotels send security officers trailing behind waiters carrying food from the kitchen to

the customers to see that this stealing of tourists' food is stopped? That there is very little the Hotels can do when the Security Officers start colluding with the waiters? That these low-paid security officers also feel the pangs of hunger? That whatever Sri Lanka's Tourism VIPs may say about a tourist drive today, it is just common sense that tourists would be uncomfortable in a country where people are short of food?

\* \* \*

IS IT TRUE that a top delegation of SLFP-UF Tamil VIPs in Colombo had rushed in a special Sri Lanka Air Force plane to Jaffna when it was reported that an SLFP organiser in the North called Murugiah had been shot at? That the Colombo Tamil VIPs had been informed on the telephone that this murder attempt was politically motivated by the TUF? That when the Colombo delegation reached Jaffna, the Police had already found out that the Murugiah episode was

an entirely private matter which had nothing to do with the TUF or Murugiah's politics? That the Police must be highly commended for the promptness with which they discovered the facts and scotched the bogus smokescreen which had been spread by certain interested parties that Murugiah was the victim of a political conspiracy? That the Police must also be congratulated for informing the appropriate authorities in Colombo about the true facts whilst the VIP delegation was still airborne? That on arrival in Jaffna the delegation had found that they had been taken for a ride? That the difficult problem today is to decide who is to foot the bill for this particular air ride? That the Air Force has standard rates charged, through its commercial section *Helitours*, for such private air trips? That in the view of many the Tamil delegation in question should foot the bill for this jaunt? That the fact that the delegation had ministerial blessing (and ministerial presence presumably) should not be an excuse or charging the cost of this return trip to the taxpayer? That this Murugiah episode will throw revealing light on how the SLFP-UF Tamil brigade in the North conduct themselves in their private dealings with private citizens? That many such UF stalwarts believe that they enjoy a special immunity by waving the correct flag? That it is a good thing that this kind of political racketeering did not succeed on this occasion?