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BREZHNEV IN INDIA

New Delhi, Nov. 17,

The visit of the top leader of a super power to any country is bound to provoke speculations as to what is behind the move. The Soviet leader, Leonid Brezhnev's visit to India will naturally attract attention from many quarters. China has already taken note of the visit. China's hostility to the Soviet Union is so great that even those who are friendly towards the Soviet Union cannot escape its wrath. Chou En-lai's description of India as a "vassal" of the Soviet Union should open the eyes of many optimists in this country that China's attitude towards India has undergone a change ever since Chairman Mao smiled on an Indian diplomat in Peking. India's policy continues to be to restore friendly relations with China. But obviously India cannot change its policy towards a friendly country like the Soviet Union in order to please China or to establish that India's attitude towards all friendly countries is identical. While India is keen to establish friendly relations with all countries her friendship towards the Soviet Union would fall in a special category. Political support in the international sphere, economic support which reduced India's dependance on hard currency and hastened India's progress towards self-sufficiency and support in the defence field when it was denied by others, are factors which would not be easy for India to forget. India's approach towards the Soviet Union may be said to be a national one, transcending party politics even though there are critics who would caution against putting all the eggs in one basket. But the Government's approach is that it would not be prudent to give up a dependable basket until an equally reliable and trustworthy basket could be found. Although Brezhnev is the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party, he will be accorded a welcome befitting a head of state. Besides a guard of honour by the combined services, guns will boom the salute when he lands at Palam Airport on November 26.....

K. Rangasamy

Foreign News & Features

December 1, 1973

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* On Dryland Agriculture

THE NEW STATUS SYMBOL of the *elite* in Colombo and elsewhere is to brag about what they have done for the food production drive, and in this, the planting of manioc takes a top place. It is a good thing to plant anything. It is especially good if manioc is planted in plenty. But it is not merely enough to plant—and that, anyhow. Anything planted must be properly planted, in the right way and in the right time. Otherwise, the effort will be wasted. Apart from proper planting, what is planted must be looked after so that there will be something to harvest.

Much of what is being planted by amateurs—who have taken to growing manioc and the like to keep up with the Joneses and to tell the Prime Minister or their Political Authority or some other VIP that their mite has been well and truly contributed to the food production war—is plain waste of time and effort. Manioc cuttings are being stuck into the hard ground in the fond hope and belief that manioc yams will automatically multiply underground. There is no preparation of the soil, no tilling, no loosening of the earth, no draining and no plans for regular irrigation—and even top notch professional *elite* in Colombo argue that where manioc is

concerned nothing more than mere planting need be done.

Much of the planting now being done by the vociferous *elite* will vanish into nothing when it comes to harvesting. To the *elite*, all this is nothing more than a political gimmick. The drive-way to their luxurious houses are now adorned with newly-sprouting manioc cuttings instead of the traditional crotons or ornamental palms, but this will not add one ounce of extra food to the nation's larder.

While anyone who knows the first thing about real agriculture will be amused by this kind of status symbol planting by the privileged *elite*, the real farmers and agriculturists are getting frustrated with the red tape and the bureaucratic mumbo-jumbo in which our administrators are buried. The *status symbol karayas* seem to be getting all the kudos (and all the possible concessions and benefits), but the real farmers still keep getting all the kicks—that seems to be the grouse of the man who knows how to plant and what to plant, at the right time and in the right way.

This is one aspect of the food drive to which attention must be paid by those into whose hands destiny has placed the responsibility (however temporarily) of running the affairs of this country. But it is even more important that Government, the Establishment and everyone else interested in the future of Sri Lanka, should pay even greater attention to what in UN and FAO circles has

come to be known as DRY LAND FARMING, as opposed to privileged farming with plentiful supplies of irrigated water from tanks or rivers. It would be incorrect to call this WET FARMING, because even the so-called DRY FARMING requires wetness. It would be best to call it the former *Tank Irrigated Farming*.

If Sri Lanka is to become self-sufficient in food, it is dry farming which can provide the breakthrough. Dry farming has been carried on for centuries in areas which have received anything from 15 inches annual rain to 70/80 inches of rain. It is in this region too that some of the largest irrigation tanks have been built. We have reached the saturation point in the possible number of large and small tanks, and it has therefore become necessary to look to the highland areas which cannot be served by tanks but which receive little rain and also have a plentiful supply of groundwater.

Traditionally, a chena type of cultivation on a rain-fed basis has been carried on over the centuries, but this will not do any longer. When the population of Ceylon had been around one to three million such easy-going and primitive methods of cultivation were adequate. But with 13 million mouths to feed, with a 2.5 percent increase every year, old-world rain fed and chena cultivation on the bulk of the potentially cultivable land in this island will simply not do.

The Jaffna Peninsula is the only place where dry farming has been carried on over the centuries by utilising the ground water resources to the fullest. Originally, the water was drawn by well sweeps manually operated or by simple devices worked by bulls, but now by petrol, diesel and kerosene driven pumps. The peninsula gets an annual rainfall of 35 to 40 inches—or did until the patterns of rainfall had begun to change during the last decade. But, there are regions in the Wannai areas, where the rainfall is as high as 70/80 inches a year whilst in the drier parts it is around 15 to 20 inches.

Israel is a classic example of dry farming techniques, and the most favoured parts of the country get only 4 inches of rain annually. Nevertheless, ground water is tapped by deep wells which go down as much as 2000 ft or even more. It was at one time thought that dry farming needed heavy capital investments in infrastructure as in Israel, but new research has shown that such heavy investments are not necessary for successful dry farming in countries like India and also in Sri Lanka.

MANY EXPERTS throughout the world believe that the 1970s will turn out to be the decade of the DRY FARMER. Scientists have been devoting time and energy on the problems of dryland crops and they have made vast strides to make dry farming the backbone of agriculture in many countries.

In India, where conditions are not very different from those in Sri Lanka, these discoveries of the scientists have been applied with great success by several groups of farmers in various parts of the country in the last two years. After drought had played havoc for over three years, the new techniques of dry farming put into practice in places like Ibrahimpatnam near Hyderabad, Rajkot in Gujerat, in Hayatnagar in Andhra Pradesh, and bumper kharif season crops were harvested—castor, hybrid bajra, setaria, sunflower, etc., etc.

The experience of farmers in these areas are not an exception. Throughout India where the Government sought to fight the drought and the changing patterns of rainfall and weather by concentrating on dry farming with ground water combined with the rain that fell, dry farming has proved a tremendous success. Dry farmers have been encouraged to try out new techniques developed by the officially sponsored All India Coordinated Research Project for Dryland Agriculture.

In the experimental plots and farms managed by the Project's scientists over 300 percent increase in yields (over what was traditionally got) have been obtained. The Indian Council of Agricultural Research has also done a great deal of work on dryland farming with assistance from the Canadian Government. Recently, the World Bank, the UNDP and the FAO had decided to contribute funds to the newly established International Crop Research Institute for the

semi-arid tropics with headquarters near Hyderabad, and this will add new stimulus to the development of dryland farming.

THE REAL SECRET of success, as so far discovered by scientific research, can be reduced to five major essentials: (1) the use of short

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duration varieties; (2) very small doses of fertilisers; (3) precision sowing; (4) the rigorous elimination of weeds; and (5) a more flexible timetable.

Short duration varieties grow more quickly and require much less steady supplies of water. The correct use of small doses of fertilisers promotes a vigorous growth of roots, enabling fertilised plants to tap deeper layers of moisture that would be beyond the reach of the unfertilised crop; and the more flexible sowing dates permits the farmer to hold his own against that most dangerous of all enemies—the long dry spells that frequently occur between one shower and the next, or in other words, the 'irregular' periodicity of the monsoon.

In India dryland farmers, have been advised, that instead of sowing as soon as the monsoon breaks, it was best, under the new strategy, to wait till a certain minimum amount of rain has fallen, in order to build up that crucial subsoil level of moisture that can be tapped by the longer roots of the fertilised crop during the long spells. What this means is that a dry farmer has to follow new schedules that can be scientifically determined and will vary from crop to crop and each type of soil, in each region.

IN SPITE of the devastating brain drain which has denuded this country of scientists, there are yet enough trained personnel who can work out the new timetables, the new sche-

dules and the new strategy for dryland farming on the basis of research done in India and the rest of the world.

Those familiar with dry farming in Sri Lanka know that the under traditional methods of cultivation, a rainless period of 20 to 30 days during the monsoon period is often enough to spell disaster. But the All India Coordinated Research Project for Dryland Agriculture has developed new techniques by which a dry farmer can look forward to a reasonably good harvest even after an unusually long rainless break of 50 to 60 days.

This is the real significance of the breakthrough achieved in dry farming.

The new strategy and new techniques will not be accepted easily either by the pseudo-learned who pretend that everything that can be known about everything is embedded in the brain of every Sri Lankan (and that therefore it would be stupid to look across the Palk Straits or even across the Indian Ocean for any ideas), or the traditional dry farmer of the Wannai. Most of the farmers in our dry agriculture areas live from hand to mouth: they have no savings and are unable to show even the little initiative which farmers in irrigated areas often display when confronted with new ideas, new techniques and new strategy.

It is unfortunate, but it is a fact, that most dry farmers are incapable of replacing traditional practices with new ones on their own, even

when the additional cost is minimal.

DRYLAND AGRICULTURE, only utilising the irregular rain, when scientifically done, will produce sensational results. But if ground water is tapped and used, dryland farming will revolutionise agriculture in Sri Lanka.

Land Reform and Income Ceiling will not bring this breakthrough. The new Agricultural Lands Law and the much-publicised Agricultural Productivity Centres, by themselves, cannot effect this breakthrough. Levelling down and universal pauperisation cannot bring about a revolution in agriculture, without the proper inducements to work and produce.

The mere alienation of three or five acres of land, expropriated from the landowners of yesterday under the Land Reform Law, is no inducement to produce—and within a short time the great wizards of the United Front will learn this to their bitter cost. Land given free is no inducement to even the landless to produce more. Apart from the fact that anything got free or easily produces negative results, the inducements so far offered by the United Front to farmers are no inducements.

At the moment, the UF is trying shork tactics to make people produce food—"you will starve if you do not produce food." And "Even your under-the-ceiling lands will be taken away if you don't produce. Under the impact of this hysteria, a little more may be produced to

INTERNATIONAL-AFFAIRS

BY ARIEL

* U. S. A * MIDDLE EAST * CHINA

IN THE WEEKS that this column did not appear a great deal has taken place not only in the hotbeds of confrontation but also in practically all countries of the world. In the USA, the missing tapes brought a new crisis for Nixon with insistent demands for his resignation, failing that, impeachment. But Nixon, with Kissinger, has been scoring heavily in foreign affairs, and this has probably contributed greatly to a swing of opinion in the USA which indicates that the majority of the people do

keep body and soul together, but it will not bring about a breakthrough on the food production front—into plenty or the possible exportable surplus.

But even with all the dead-wood which the United Front has cast upon the productive potential of our farmers and agriculturists, improved methods of dryland agriculture will bring in higher yields. And even such small mercies will be welcome at a time like this when, after three successive years of monsoon failures and partial monsoons, the rain gods do not still seem to be in a mood to relent where Sri Lanka is concerned.

not want Nixon to go—even though his popularity rating is very low. Many Americans have serious doubts about Nixon's integrity.

The prestigious *Time* magazine, in an editorial in its issue of November 12—the first in its 50-year history—called upon the President to resign. "Richard Nixon", it said, "and the nation have passed a tragic point of no return. It now seems likely that the President will have to give up his office: he has irredeemably lost his moral authority, the confidence of most of the country, and therefore his ability to govern effectively. The most important decision of Richard Nixon's remarkable career is before him whether he will give up the presidency rather than do further damage to his country. If he decides to fight to the end, he faces impeachment by the House, for he has indeed failed his obligations under the Constitution to uphold the law. Whether two thirds of the Senate would vote to convict him cannot be certain. But even if he were to be acquitted, the process would leave him and the country devastated. Events have achieved an alarming momentum; additional facts that would be brought out under subpoena power at an impeachment trial could strike in many unforeseen and dangerous directions. Moreover, a trial would take at least several months, during which the country would be virtually leaderless. The White House would be paralyzed while the US and the world awaited the out-

come. The Republic would doubtless survive. But the wise and patriotic course is for Richard Nixon to resign, sparing the country and himself this agony...."

The *Time* stated that Republican Gerald Ford should succeed Nixon who had a "solid if unimaginative record in domestic policy" which stood "somewhere near the American center" and that Ford was "greatly liked and respected on Capitol Hill." In foreign affairs, Ford, *Time* felt, was "obviously inexperienced," but other Presidents had risen above such limitations, and "with Henry Kissinger's help, Ford should be able to carry on the basically sound Nixon policies.."

The *Time* editorial then went on to recall that "it was just one year ago this week that Richard Nixon was celebrating his fabulous electoral sweep and seemed to stand at the very summit of power and opportunity. Hard-core Nixon haters may gloat over his fall from those heights; for most Americans it is a matter of profound disappointment. The editors of *Time* Inc., speaking on the editorial page of *Time*'s sister publication *Life* have endorsed Nixon for President three times, in 1960, 1968 and 1972. We did so with acknowledgements that aspects of the Nixon record and temperament were troubling, but we believed that the strengths of intellect and experience and his instinct for political leadership equipped him well for the office. In endorsing Nixon in 1972, following on his first term achievements

in foreign policy, we expressed a hope that by the end of the second term we could 'salute him as a great President'. Thus we come with deep reluctance to our conclusion that he must leave office. We consider the situation so unprecedented, the issue so crucial to the country, that we publish this first editorial in *Time's* 50-year history...."

THE EDITORIAL briefly summed up the "full enormity of Watergate" thus: "Despite ample instances of past Government corruption, nothing can be found in U.S. history even remotely approaching the skein of events that the word Watergate no longer defines or contains. A Vice President, twice personally chosen by Nixon, forced to resign to escape jail. A former Attorney General and intimate adviser to Nixon under indictment. Another former Cabinet member under indictment. One of the two most powerful presidential aides under indictment. Six other White House aides or Administration officials indicted, convicted or having pleaded guilty, seven more fired or resigned. Most of them shown to have been either in charge of, or aware of, illegal operations. The whole White House pervaded by an atmosphere of aggressive amorality — amorality almost raised to a creed. A ruthless determination to hide as much of this as possible from the public and the investigators."

The *Time* then dealt with another aspect of the matter: "The question that once seem-

ed so important—Did the President know about the cover-up?—was always somewhat beside the point. Whatever he knew or did not know, he must be held accountable for the actions of his top aides and the standards he established. To the extent that the question had meaning, it was almost impossible from the start to answer it in the President's favor: the men involved were too close to him to make his ignorance plausible: after initial indignant denials, each of his later explanations gradually admitted more knowledge, thereby conceding each previous explanation to have been at least partly false. One cannot think of any organisation, public or private—including some dictatorships—where a Chief Executive could survive in office after such a performance.."

The *Time* went on to briefly detail some of the events which have made Watergate a new word in the vocabulary of every language in the world.

"The catalogue of the President's involvement in illegal or grossly improper acts has become all too familiar. He approved the so-called Huston plan, which permitted illegal means (including burglary) to combat radicals. He established the plumbers unit, ostensibly to plug leaks, and it used illegal methods (wire-taps, forgery) to embarrass or spy on political foes. He impeded an investigation of the plumbers on specious national - security grounds while his aides tried to use the CIA and FBI to help the cover - up. He had a job

offer (chief of the FBI) dangled before the judge presiding over the trial of Daniel Ellsberg. He withheld knowledge of the Ellsberg-psychiatrist burglary from the judge for at least a month. His aides offered Executive clemency to some of the Watergate defendants; others, including his personal lawyer, used campaign contributions for payments to Watergate defendants.

British Tyres for Russian Lada Cars

British-made Pirelli Cinturato radial tyres have been ordered for all Russian-built Lada cars sold throughout Scandinavia. And the company has won a contract to supply the British radials for Volvo saloons assembled in Australia. Pirelli's latest radial versus cross-ply figures show that by 1976, 75 per cent of all cars that come off assembly lines in the United States will be fitted with radials. The contract to supply radial ply tyres for the Lada saloons sold in Norway, England, and Sweden is the second awarded to Pirelli, which is now one of Britain's big four tyre manufacturers. The new order, placed by Konela Oy, the Russian car distribution organisation in Helsinki, boosts total sales of UK-made Cinturatos for the Lada so far this year to £ 85,000. This follows a long line of Pirelli business links with the USSR.

"President Nixon's most recent actions come as a staggering climax to all that went before. We devoutly hope that it is the climax. When he originally refused to hand over the White House tapes either to the Senate Watergate committee or to Special Prosecutor Archibald Cox, his argument for the confidentiality of the President's deliberations certainly deserved consideration. Then the court narrowed the issue in such a way that confidentiality could be largely safeguarded: only the judge was to hear the tapes, and only for the purpose of deciding whether any parts were potential evidence in the cases arising from Watergate. If the President had wanted to contest this ruling, he had a clear opportunity to have the matter settled in the Supreme Court, by whose decision he had earlier said that he would abide.

"Instead, the President and his lawyer worked out the 'compromise' under which summaries would be provided (they would not hold up as evidence in court), and Special Prosecutor Archibald Cox was to be forbidden any further recourse to the courts in seeking presidential papers. Cox sensibly refused, and was promptly fired in flagrant violation of the President's pledge to the Senate, through the Attorney General-designate Richardson, that Cox would be independent and could be dismissed only for gross improprieties. That brought on the resignation of Richardson and the dismissal of his principal assistant, honorable men who both re-

fused to carry out the President's order to fire Cox. After an outpouring of indignation from Congress and country, which saw Nixon as defying the courts and settling himself above the law, came the President's abrupt reversal and his decision to hand the tapes to the court after all. And only a few days ago, there was the sudden claim that two crucial tapes do not exist.

"Now the President has found a new Attorney General and a new special prosecutor, equipped with not quite convincing promises of independence. Both are reputable men, but it seems to us that these appointments, or even the possible appointment of a prosecutor by the court, can no longer clear away the hopeless miasma of deceit and suspicion."

THIS IS a most damning indictment, but whether this will be sufficient, in the complexities of American politics, to secure a successful impeachment still seems problematic. The editorial, thereafter, proceeded to contemplate on the impact of Watergate, impeachment and corruption on the course of American history.

"The right of free men to choose their leaders is precious and rare in a world mainly ruled by authoritarian governments. It is the genius of the American Constitution that it combines stability with liberty; it does so in part by fixing a term for the Chief Executive and largely protecting him from the caprices of parliamentary government. An American President must be given the widest

freedom of action, the utmost tolerance, the most generous benefit of every doubt. It is a system that has served us well.

"A President's Gallup rating can fluctuate as much as the Dow Jones. He may push unpopular programs or oppose popular ones. Being a political as well as a national leader, he may dissemble within more or less accepted political limits. His Administration may be touched by corruption, provided that he does not condone it. He may make mistakes, many of them. He may fight the other branches of Government, for this is sometimes necessary to get things done. None of these matters—especially since they are always subject to partisan interpretation—are sufficient in themselves to justify the removal of a President.

"Yet there is a limit beyond which even such 'permissible' offenses, even such instances of 'mere' misgovernment, become intolerable. And the situation changes fundamentally when the effect of the President's actions and the actions of his appointees is to subvert the constitutional system itself. He then betrays his formal oath of office and his informal compact with the people."

THE EDITORIAL, after that, went on to examine something which obviously troubled many Americans: whether impeachment would create a dangerous 'precedent'. "There are legitimate fears about the precedent that would be set by the

President's resignation or impeachment. In two centuries, no American President has been removed from office other than by death or the voters' will. Once the spell is broken, would it become too easy for political opponents of any future President to oust him? We think not. Watergate is unique. In fact, the really dangerous precedent would be the opposite: to allow a President with Nixon's record to continue in office. This would be a terrible circumstance to lodge in our history, a terrible thing to explain to our children and their children.

"In recent decades, the American presidency has assumed an almost sacrosanct aura. It is time to remember that quite literally, and not as a flourish of speech, the sovereign in America is not the President but the people. It is true that the people elect him, which gives him his unique mandate, but to conclude from this that a President must be preserved in all circumstances, at any cost, is the first unwitting step toward dictatorship.

"As Watergate and related events emerged in congressional hearings and in the press, many patriotic Americans were nagged by a sense of disproportion. Crookedness and corner cutting? Yes. Crimes? No doubt—but after all, as the phrase went, 'No one was killed'. How could these acts, however shady or offensive, be weighed against the life-and-death responsibilities of the President? This rationalization will not stand; a President's 'big decisions' cannot be put into a compart-

ment separate from his other actions, his total behaviour. His integrity and trustworthiness are perhaps the most important facts about him to his country and to the world. And these Nixon has destroyed."

The editorial finally concluded emphasising that the removal of Nixon from the White House, either by resignation or impeachment, would be an indication of the strength of American democracy. "The nightmare of uncertainty must be ended. A fresh start must be made. Some at home and abroad might see in the President's resignation a sign of American weakness and failure. It would be a sign of the very opposite. It would show strength and health. It would show the ability of a badly infected political system to cleanse itself. It would show the true power of popular government under law in America."

The *Time* editorial has been quoted more or less in full because it not only sets out recent American history very succinctly but also reveals the important role played by the press in a democratic system.

The *Time*, in its issue of November 19, the week after its historic editorial, published the results of a Poll it had caused to be carried out. "Last August, most Americans (60%) wanted President Nixon to stay in office; now, just fewer than half (49%) do. At the same time, the number who want Nixon to resign has increased from 20% to 29%, but those who

want him impeached have held steady at 10%, chiefly because three out of five Americans fear that impeachment would tear the country apart. Nonetheless, close to 43% would favor holding a special presidential election in 1974, if that were possible."

THE POLL RESULTS projected to total population also revealed that; 68% believed that the President knew about or participated in the Watergate cover-up, that 18% thought he didn't know whilst 14% were not sure; in regard to the missing tapes 25% thought he was telling the truth, 55% that he was trying to cover up and 20% were not sure; and, only 3% thought that things were going "very well" in the country, to 24% it was "fairly well", to 43% it was "pretty badly", to 29% it was "very badly" and 1% had no answer

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The USA was like every other country in the world, in the throes of an oil crisis apart from also having to contend with the further serious dissensions in the already shaky Atlantic Alliance. The *Time*, 12/11/73, had a lengthy piece about the diplomatic cataclysm which had caused a "Rift Among Friends, Reflection About Foes" and had led to a "Dogfight In the Atlantic Alliance". The *Time* preamble to an incisive analysis about the international political and diplomatic aftermath of the Mideast war, read: "Like an earthquake, the fighting in the Middle East has sent tremors round the world and caused diplomatic seismographs to quiver in Washington and Moscow—and most of the capitals in between. Old alliances have been shaken, and new accommodations have proved less than they were advertised to be."

In the Atlantic Alliance, the USA found itself, during the Arab-Israeli war, holding the Israeli baby alone, whilst all West European countries were doing their best to show how 'neutral' they were in the hope that the Arabs would not turn the oil screw against them. The West European attempt to be neutral did not save them from the oil squeeze but it has generated major diplomatic reverberations on both sides of the Atlantic. Whilst some attention has been paid in the local press to the impact Mideast War, in regard to the US-USSR detente, and the Atlantic Alliance, not much has appeared in the local press or in magazines widely

read in Sri Lanka about China and the Mideast War.

But the *Far Eastern Economic Review* (FEER) 12/11/73, had a penetrating and informative analysis by the knowledgeable China commentator, Leo Goodstadt, entitled *The Middle East Backlash*. "The casualties of the Arab-Israeli conflict," he said, "include the politicians who promised their people magnificent victories. By a strange misfortune, among the victims of the Middle East crisis are the masterminds of Chinese diplomacy and in the front rank, Prime Minister Chou En-lai."

Goodstadt pointed out that Premier Chou had set out in his Report to the Tenth Congress that: "...the awakening and growth of the Third World is a major event in contemporary international relations. The Third World has strengthened its unity in the struggle against hegemonism and power politics of the super-powers and is displaying an ever more significant role in international affairs."

THE CHINESE VIEW of the war, according to Goodstadt, was simple. "The Israeli aggressors were openly aided by American imperialism and secretly abetted by Soviet social imperialism. Despite Soviet conspiracies to emasculate the Arab armed forces, Egypt and Syria would emerge in triumph; Israel's defeat would result in the utter disgrace of Russian and American imperialist ambitions. The Chinese committed to resisting the million-strong Russian garrisons on

the Sino-Soviet border by diplomatic counter-pressures around the world, pledged their total support to the Arabs' cause and prophesied their complete triumph."

Goodstadt then pointed out, that "the war demonstrated a very different reality from that depicted by Peking. It was left to Israel to justify the Maoist dictum 'a small nation can defeat a larger one'. Despite the quarrel which had resulted in the expulsion of Russians from bases from Egypt, Cairo was totally dependent on massive injections of Soviet arms and equipment to check Israeli thrusts into Sinai. Arab dependence on Kremlin for the sinews of war was admitted unashamedly. For all their valour, Arab soldiers could only match their Israeli foes when equipped with the most modern weaponry Moscow could provide. The Arabs were equally dependent on the White House to curtail Israel's desire for revenge. Without the intervention of the Soviets and Americans, Israeli garrisons would be relaxing today in Cairo and Damascus (no matter how brave and determined was Arab resistance). The Arabs not only tolerated the 'power politics of the super-powers'; they welcomed their interference. Chou En-lai's August observations on international affairs now make sorry reading.."

But, what was even worse, according to Goodstadt, was that China had to beat a retreat in the UN. "China's Kuan-hua was forced to confess that China's views had been rebuffed by the Arab

nations. He denounced the secret US-Soviet negotiations on resolutions for a ceasefire to be presented to the Security Council. Despite Chiao's violent opposition to using 'the United Nations as their hired tool to rubber stamp the deal,' he admitted, 'that

China Buys BBC English Courses

China has just bought 14 courses in the English language from the BBC, including records and textbooks produced by the Corporation's External Services. This follows a visit to Peking by Mr. Hugh Howse until recently head of the BBC Far Eastern Service. From this month he is in charge of the English by Radio and Television Service. Mr. Howse, who speaks several languages including standard Chinese and Cantonese, made the trip to the Chinese capital with British Council and Foreign and Commonwealth Office representatives and was impressed by the keen interest displayed there in the language. The courses just delivered to China include English for special purposes—the "Language of Aviation and Science" for example, as well as elementary to intermediate English. From this month the BBC is increasing its "English by Radio" broadcasts to China. Mr. Howse found that the broadcast lessons were being used by important educational institutions in China.

after taking into consideration the desire of certain countries concerned...the Chinese delegation...did not participate in the voting...If the countries concerned want such a thing...we have no alternative...Chiao tried to recover lost ground with the claim: 'Fundamentally speaking, the days are gone when the two super powers could manipulate and dominate the world'. Unhappily for Chiao, Washington and Moscow sorted out the Middle East crisis between them, and the Security Council displayed as much interest in China's opinions as they did in British offers to assist in finding a settlement."

Goodstadt drew pointed attention to the fact that Chou's influence and standing inside China had grown undoubtedly since 1969 due to the diplomatic finesse he had shown in drawing a whole procession of world dignitaries to Peking to impress on the Chinese people and the rest of the world that China was now an important force in world affairs. "But when impoverished small Third World states such as Egypt turn desperately to the Soviet Union in the deepest hours of national crisis, China's writ does not seem to run very far outside its immediate Asian neighbours."

Goodstadt's considered verdict was that "the Middle East war and China's subsequent embarrassment in the Security Council will do nothing to strengthen the position of the Prime Minister and the rest of the Chinese Government." There

is no doubt that Chou's critics have emerged more and more into the open in recent months. The *Newsweek*, 5/11/73 and the *FEER*, 19/11/73 reported the renewed and suddenly vitriolic outbursts in the Chinese press against "Confucius" who had died over 2400 years ago and both asserted that this campaign was only a cover for a king-size political barrage against Chou En-lai whose brand of dialectics, politics and diplomacy is being covertly branded as reactionary "Confucianism." Chou's "softness" to the Soviet Union also seems to be under fire. The new Maoist line seems to be that the contradictions between developing countries and Soviet "revisionism" were insoluble (but those with imperialism and neo-colonialism were on a different footing), and that for this reason Third World countries should close their ranks, "courageously take to arms and wage struggle...and they will necessarily defeat Soviet revisionism."

WESTERN COUNTRIES, according to this line of thinking, were "allies" of the "third world" in a new world order. The Peking theoretical journal *Hunchi* recently stated: "...the peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America should not only support and assist each other to achieve victory in their national liberation movement, but they also must and can unite with the struggle of the second intermediary zone (i.e. western powers) against hegemony, serry all forces that can be serried, develop the broadest united front..." It

is on the basis of this thesis that Peking now supports NATO as a defensive alliance against the aggressive intentions of the Warsaw Powers. It is also known that China does not object to the US stationing armed forces in Southeast Asia and there is naturally much co-operation with the USA on many matters on anti-Soviet basis. And this includes China's downgrading its propaganda against imperialist military, political and economic alliances in South, Southeast and East Asia. Very little is now said by Peking against SEATO, ASPAC and the like whilst, when in Teheran, the Chinese Foreign Minister welcomed CENTO which is being revitalised by the Shah of Iran.

It is not yet known what new perspectives the recent discussions Henry Kissinger had with Mao and Chou have opened. Kissinger has been cautious and circumspect about what he has said about the recent talks, but it is clear that Southeast Asia was one of the main topics of discussion because he said that US relations with China would ultimately depend on "stabilisation of the situation in southeast Asia." Where do the countries of Southeast Asia come into it? Will they be left out of any plans to stabilise the situation on the basis of a "revolutionary compromise" with imperialists as hinted in Premier Chou's Report to the Tenth Congress.

Whilst China has its interests in Southeast Asia, there is no doubt that China has also spent much time, money and effort in stabilising its

position on the continent of Africa. During the period of the "cultural revolution" the advances registered earlier had suffered many setbacks, but now Peking has started a major diplomatic and political drive in Africa with greater finesse than before. Whilst China condemns aid from "imperialist and revisionist" countries as self seeking and bristling with strings, China claims that its aid is altruistic. Apart from the much publicised Tanzam Railway, China is now building a 1045 long kilometre highway in Somalia and a major port in Mauritania— if completed it will be the biggest in West Africa. Chinese loans are interest-free and have no visible strings, but it is only the naive who cannot see the big political profits which accrue from these aid agreements.

THERE IS not the slightest doubt that China has major political interests in Africa. The *New York Times*, towards the end of last year, published some papers of Edgar Snow which had become available only after his death. Snow had recorded that Chairman Mao had said "We are reproached with interference in the revolutionary process and internal affairs of the countries of the African continent. But we have more right to it than anyone else. Don't forget that the Chinese were the first to discover Africa. A few centuries before the Europeans came around the Cape Verde Islands a Chinese colony had already existed in Zanzibar. And the Chinese traded with the indigenous population of the re-

gion. Europeans and Americans availing themselves of the weakness of our state penetrated into Africa and consolidated their positions there. They would want to stay there for ever. But this they will not achieve. China is becoming a powerful state and will try to eliminate this historical injustice by acquiring strongholds in the African continent and pushing out foreign influence." Edgar Snow, for some reason, did not make this discussion public soon after the statement was made. It was only published posthumously.

China has many advantages in its quest for friends in Africa. Nearly all African countries are resentful of and antagonistic to the colonialist western countries which had exploited their resources for many decades whilst keeping them in political subjection. China is a new friend offering interest free loans and assistance without visible strings. And in this way, China has become a force to contend with in many African countries: in Guinea, Dahomey and in the Congo all overlooking the Guinean Gulf; in Mauritania on the open Atlantic coast; in Zaïre which is strategically located in Central Africa; in Somalia, Madagascar, Tanzania and Zambia which have lines of communication through the Indian Ocean and to the oil-rich Persian Gulf and elsewhere.

President Sengor of Senegal is scheduled to visit Peking soon and it is likely that agreements will be written for the construction of dams and irrigation works for the

development of agriculture. But, there are indications that apprehensions have now grown in many African countries that Chinese aid involved the arrival of large contingents of Chinese workers "experts" with the virtual inevitability of buying Chinese consumer goods some of which are of inferior quality.

WHILE CHINA has made some headway in African countries with lavish interest-free assistance schemes, it has suffered a setback in the Middle East where Peking's call to the Arabs to fight the Israeli aggressors "until final victory" and at the same time also defeat the machinations of the two-super-powers went unheeded. In spite of oil embargo, the US has made

headway among the Arab nations. It was American-initiated negotiations that brought about the final Middle East cease-fire agreement which has held to some extent.

The US is also maintaining its dialogue with China on a high level. Henry Kissinger paid a visit to Peking after his Middle East interlude (in which he brought off a cease-fire agreement and quick diplomatic rapprochement with the Arabs) and at the conclusion of his talks with Chou En-lai and Mao Tse-tung a communique was released simultaneously in Washington and Peking. Among the highlights of the communique were: "The U.S. acknowledges that all Chinese on either

side of the Taiwan Strait maintain there is but one China and that Taiwan is a part of China. The United States Government does not challenge that position." It continued: "The Chinese side reiterated that the normalisation of relations between China and the United States can be realised only on the basis of confirming the principle of one China."

The communique indicated that the liaison bureaux of the two countries in Washington and Peking would progressively be raised in importance to a higher level. China and the United States also agreed to boost exchanges in science, culture and trade. On international relations, the two countries stated their opposition to "efforts by any other country or group of countries" to dominate over any region.

The communique noted that trade between the two countries, has leaped rapidly in the past two years (from 14 million dollars to 800 million dollars) and agreed "to take measures to create condition for further expansion of relations in the economic field." The two sides noted that "international relationships are in a period of intense change." In an obvious reference to China's fears of a Soviet threat, the communique reiterated that no State "should seek hegemony in the Asian Pacific region or any other part of the world and that each is opposed to efforts by any other country or group of countries to establish such a hegemony."

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ON TRUTH

My Wife and Watergate

By Canax

IT CAN'T be helped, I suppose; there are as many views on Watergate as there are people. Aunt Lilly, as you observed last week, has hers, you no doubt have yours, and I have mine. I also have my wife's for good measure.

I didn't know she had one, but I should have known better. After all these years I still keep forgetting that if she doesn't have a view, or a couple of them, on anything, it's obviously not worth having.

She put the evening paper down the next evening (though that is not to say that she had been holding it up all that time; just that she's always a day behind catching up with the news) and said, cryptically, "They're being truthful, at last."

Accustomed as I am to having her start a story somewhere in the middle, or thereabouts, with not the slightest hint if she intends to move from there toward the beginning or toward the end of the tale, I decided on a safe, neutral and noncommittal reply, which was to echo what she said in the form of a query.

"Who's being truthful at last, dear?"

"The Whitewash House."

I couldn't figure out the general direction, but I did realise she was moving aimlessly, guided purely by femi-

nine fancy, and nothing I could say or do was going to stop her. But I tried all the same. "Some people are born with the Truth," I said, "others attain the Truth, and still others have Truth thrust upon them."

"Nixon's in the last category," she advised me, "and he reminds me so much of you."

"Why me, for heaven's sake?" I cried, startled.

"You men are all alike, and won't admit to anything until you can't do anything else."

"You were talking about Truth," I reminded her.

"So that's the truth, no," she shot back. "Now Nixon's Press Secretary has at last been telling newsmen that his boss was very determined and very much in charge, and that he had the ruins of Government in his hands."

"Nonsense!" I cried. "He wouldn't dare say a thing like that, and what for?"

"Because it's the truth", she said simply. "If you don't believe me, read for yourself."

SO I READ for myself. There was Ronald Ziegler saying, as she claimed, that Nixon was very determined, even conceding that his boss was very much in charge, but at that point the Press Secretary parted company with my wife. I read the rest

twice over just to make sure before I spoke.

"Just like you to get it all mixed up," I announced. "He says his boss still had the reins of Government in his hands."

She dismissed it out of hand. "That's an obvious Printer's Devil," she cried. "I know exactly what he means."

"You mean you read it right the first time?"

"I didn't read it as ruins on purpose, if that's what you mean," she replied. "But I'm sure I got it right, anyway."

I know a lot of people, all of them misogynists, who claim that the weaker sex has the uncanny ability to intuitively hit nails on their heads, even when aiming somewhere else. I'm not one of them, though, and I doubt if Nixon is, either. Ziegler, of course, is an inoperative cypher.

"The next thing we'll have," my wife went on, "is an open admission that Nixon did, in fact, steal all those tapes." "Easy, girl, easy," I cautioned in bewilderment. "I don't think I'm quite with you on that."

"What's the matter," she demanded, "don't you read the papers?"

"Of course I read the papers," I snapped, "but you seem to get a lot more out of them than I do. Maybe I need a new pair of glasses."

"I suppose you don't think he stole the tapes?"

"Now that you say it, yes".

"Then why did Judge Sirica demand that he surrender them?"

I thought fast. "Because the Judge, poor man, wasn't sure of his diction and wanted a little scholarly assistance on how some four-letter words should be pronounced."

"Tell me another," she sniggered.

"All right, have it your way," I sighed. "But stolen from whom, for God's sake?"

"Are you pulling my leg, or don't you really know?"

"Do I sound like one who knows?"

"Very well," she said at last. "You can't know everything, I suppose. At least do you remember the burglary?"

"In our house?"

"No, silly," she snapped. "The one by Nixon's plumbers."

"That's the unkindest cut of all," I cried. "As far as I know, Nixon tried to do them a favour because he felt the Democratic Party HQ badly needed a fire-alarm system and they didn't have the dollars to do it themselves, so he decided to instal one as a gift, and on the quiet."

"You never get anything right, dear," she said, looking sympathetic. "That was

a clumsy attempt to bug the joint."

"You're being ridiculous!" I shouted. "Why would Nixon want to bug the Democrats?"

"Because he's a Republican, for one thing," she told me, "and also because he's not God yet, a fact Nixon has reluctantly had to admit to himself, or so it seems. Bugging unfortunately, doesn't have some of the built-in safety features the omniscience has; it leaves tell-tale wires around the place. But I wasn't referring to the bugging caper, anyway."

"What then?"

"I meant the burglary of the psychiatrist's office."

"Whose, Richard's? They keep saying he doesn't have one."

"No, this was Daniel's head-shrinker," she replied, adding, "You really are ignorant of the facts, aren't you?"

"Thanks to you, now I'm not," I said gratefully. "Tell me, how did Daniel what-his-name get the tapes in the first place?"

"That's another story," she said, "and a long one at that but I'll give you the gist of it. When Eilsberg pinched the Pentagon Papers, the tapes went too, but Nixon didn't want to make a noise about it at the time."

"So Nixon only stole what was his anyway."

"Maybe, but the American Constitution expressly forbids stealing, so the interpretation is that by stealing back, Nixon has failed to uphold the Constitution and deserves to be impeached."

"I wonder where I got the idea Sirica wanted the tapes to brush up his vocabulary," I said.

"That's no great mystery", my wife said. "Nixon is an acknowledged expert on explosives. It's a well-known secret."

"Really," I exclaimed, marvelling at the things she knew. "Did he exhibit his expertise in his Inaugural Address?"

"He didn't want to waste it on that," she explained. "He reserves his talents largely for private conversations."

"He must be a great guy to talk to," I suggested.

"Some of his subordinates didn't think so."

"That's the trouble with bureaucrats," I said. "When they have their heads in the clouds, how can they appreciate down-to-earth language?"

A THOUGHT seemed to suddenly strike her. "Maybe it was to bring them down with a bang that he phoned one and called him a sonofabitch."

"Coming from the President, that was a singular honour," I said admiringly.

"Yes, but instead of leaving well alone, Nixon followed up by asking if the guy didn't understand the English language."

"He probably didn't want his compliment to go unappreciated," I suggested. "Who knows, if need be he can say sonofabitch in seven different languages, and was only marking sure."

Thanks to my efforts she seemed at last to see Nixon in a more favourable light. "Nice of him to go to all that trouble," she said.

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Inania Of This, That and The Other

BEYOND OPIUM

By INNA

Communists are perhaps beginning to see that there are Christians who are sincere men; that it is not all who deaden their nerves with the opium of empty ritual; that true Christianity takes ritual out into life to deepen its obvious meaning, for if the Eucharist is what they say it is, it must find its way into life.

The summary of its doctrine as I have been told is this: that Christ said: this is "my body for the life of the world". Even today, heretical bishops might be existing who look at rite as a closed-in affair. Who was bishop Jansen, but one who answered to the term "heretic"? Who was "bishop" Arius, but another who was and was labelled a 'heretic'?

AS FAR as I know and have learnt, by the very fact of being ordained, one does not get infused knowledge, but on the other hand, truly open men, be they bishops or not, they can be guided and sincere.

Bishops Frago and Helder Camera are outstanding in their orthodoxy in doctrine and in their orthopraxis in practice: may be a lesson to many people who open only one eye on reality, be it religion or social theory. A Sri Lanka sociologist, a Catholic priest working in the Kandy district, once wrote quite oppositely in an article:

"If you wish to go somewhere, start from where you are;

If you are poor, start with something cheap;

If you are uneducated, start with something simple;

If you live in a poor environment and poverty makes markets small, start with something small;

If you are unemployed, start using your labour power, because any productive use of it is better than letting it lie idle." IMPACT/P'pines 1971

COADY of the Antigonish movement in Canada had said: "Give a fuller life to every man; go and let down the nets where you are"—a line redolent of the Gospel, to every Christian. Isn't this a praiseworthy effort—among many—on the part of Christians? Why could they not be emulated by more groups of all religions, if many believe, as we do, that religion is not the opium of the people, after all?

At last that, we are prepared to concede even as a

working hypothesis, and that, not because of the assertion of a Russian about God when he referred to oil in Sri Lanka, some months ago! Buddhists, believers in *bodhi* (enlightenment) rightly pioneer eye-donation (giving of the light of the eyes): why cannot others follow them and enter their eye-donation scheme?

WHY couldn't men of all types, men of sheer goodwill band together, regardless of creed or class or race or religion and help in a progressive technology for Sri Lanka, one which is not capital-intensive but labour-intensive? Why wait for compliments? And I can assure you it is being done, slowly, thanks again to the initiative of deeply enlightened people. But....

There stares at one a board called SEDEC; another called SETIK in a provincial town; there are centres of "Society and Religion", and "Religion and Society" in a proliferation which comes from a healthy pluralism.

Only the fearful — who are not free — will get jittery about pluralism, and will make dastardly efforts at centralization. Co-ordination is one thing; desperate at tempts at centralization and subordination and 'discipline' are quite another.

Smacks of 'heresy', what!



SRI LANKA VIEWS ON

Brezhnev's Visit to India

By T. DURAISINGAM J.P.U.M.

Member, World Peace Council

THE VISIT of Leonid Brezhnev, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, has been warmly acclaimed by all circles in Sri Lanka.

He is a champion of and an ardent fighter for world peace. He was awarded, this year, the International Lenin Prize "For the Promotion of Peace Among Nations". He has taken a most active personal part in the implementation of the policy of the peaceful co-existence of states. This policy is based on the principles of peace and friendship, of mutually beneficial co-operation among peoples, of respect for the sovereign rights of the bigger and smaller nations and a policy of resolutely rebuffing aggression.

He has visited many countries as head of missions of peace and friendship. Wherever he went he has succeeded in bringing about better understanding and firmer friendship. Where there was hostility he brought about rapprochement and detente. Where there was friendship he made it more cordial.

BY HIS EFFORTS he has brought down tension in Europe. While he is in India it is expected that successful efforts would be made to bring about a settlement of outstanding problems between the three countries in this sub-continent — India,

Pakistan and Bangladesh. The achievement of peace in the Indian sub-continent will promote the setting up of a collective security system in Asia.

We in Sri Lanka enthusiastically welcome this visit of Brezhnev to India. Prominent personalities in Sri Lanka attach great importance to this visit.

T. B. SUBASINGHE, Minister of Industries and Scientific Affairs, who is a member of the Presidential Committee of the World Peace Council, in a message-welcomes "this kind of personal contact between statesmen because it promotes mutual understanding and close relations between nations."

L. ARIYAWANSA, Secretary of the Sri Lanka Peace Council, states that "the Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Co-operation between the Soviet Union and India has made a great contribution to strengthening peace and security in the Indian sub-continent and India has benefitted greatly by the strengthening of friendly ties between the two countries. The visit of comrade Brezhnev, General Secretary of the CPSU, will no doubt bring the two great countries still closer together and open up wider perspec-

tives for international peace and co-operation in line with the initiatives taken by the Soviet Union to strengthen the forces of peace and social progress."

A. AZIZ, President of the Democratic Workers Congress and Secretary General of the Afro-Asian Solidarity Association of Sri Lanka, in his message states as follows:

"In his address to the World Congress of Peace Forces last month, Mr. Brezhnev paid a glowing tribute to the economic development of India and the progress that India has made in the political and social fields. Mr. Brezhnev's visit to India, therefore, is not only a further evidence of friendship between the two countries but is also an appreciation of India's efforts in a difficult economic situation. The Soviet Union, which is pursuing a confirmed Marxist philosophy, has for several years shown an awareness of the role that the philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi and Pundit Nehru has played in the moral, material and political development of modern India.

"The Soviet Union, in search for World Peace and peace in Europe and Asia, has taken several steps to advance this cause. In pursuance of this objective, Mr. Brezhnev has visited many important Capitals in the world—Bonn, Washington, Paris. Now his visit to India is a recognition of the importance that the Soviet Union attaches to the role of India in the cause of World Peace and Peace in Asia."

T. B. ILLANGARATNE,
The Minister for Foreign & Internal Trade, who is the President of the Sri Lanka Peace Council states that "lasting peace is possible only in an atmosphere where all manner of exploitation is eliminated — exploitation of man by man of nation by nation and of group by group.

"While marching resolutely towards that goal all steps should be taken to understand and appreciate individual and national problems, which differ from man to man and from nation to nation.

"To reach this goal, personal contact and friendly dialogue are extremely useful.

"It is heartening that of late leaders of large countries too are fast moving in this direction.

"The old song "O East is East and West is West Ne'er the twain shall meet" now sounds reactionary.

"Brezhnev's visit to India will be a significant event. The struggle in India for a socialist democracy would be further strengthened by the meeting of the two leaders of these great peoples.

"Such get-together of leaders of big nations should not tend to neglect the rights and privileges of smaller men and nations but rather help them stand up shoulder to shoulder striving together for peace and plenty."

* * *

IN SRI LANKA

The Future of "Private" Schools

By LANKAPUTRA.

The lead story of the *Daily News* on 10th November under the title "Catholic Schools fight for survival" carried the news that parents may request the state to take over the few remaining Catholic schools that are still being run as private, non-fee-levying schools.

"With the rising living costs and other problems the parents themselves are facing," the report said, "there has been a sharp drop in the assistance these schools have been receiving." It was also stated that the recent 10 per cent salary increase to all employees drawing less than Rs. 400 per month was the last straw that broke the camel's back as far as these private Catholic schools were concerned.

It will be remembered that prior to the take-over of assisted denominational schools by the government of Mrs. Bandaranaike soon after she became Prime Minister for the first time in 1960, education in Sri Lanka was dominated by the missionary bodies who owned and ran the best schools in the Island. They were what were known as the English schools (though the national languages came to be introduced as the media of instruction towards their last days) and were attended by the sons of the well-to-do.

MEANWHILE, the overwhelming majority of children hailing from humbler homes continued to get whatever education they could in what were once known as "vernacular schools" housed in buildings that were little better than cattle-sheds.

The take-over of Grade III / assisted denominational schools by the state in 1960

was intended to establish a national unified system of education. But unfortunately, a loophole was left to the best-conducted schools to opt out of the national system. Grade I and Grade II schools were permitted to exist as they were, provided they did not levy any fees from their students.

Since then these Grade I and Grade II Catholic schools, as well as a few others belonging to other denominations, have continued to function as what came to be known as "private, non-fee-levying schools." They are private all right, but certainly not non-fee-levying. Through various ruses and subterfuges those who control the destinies of these schools have been taxing the parents who send their children to these schools through "welfare societies," "donations" and what have you that make a mockery of the entire system of free education that we are

supposed to enjoy in this blessed land of Sri Lanka.

APART FROM these schools that went "private" in 1961, it must also be borne in mind that there is still another class of private schools, like St. Thomas' College, St. Bridget's Convent etc. These are the ones that opted to be private earlier—in 1951. They have the legal right to charge fees from their students, unlike the ones taken over in 1960 which do so only in illegal, indirect, clandestine ways.

From 1961 till 1965 the Catholic schools that opted out of the national scheme went through all kinds of sacrifices only with one hope—that the UNP would soon come to power and hand back these schools to the former managers or at least give them the right to change fees legally. That is why they underwent all those difficulties thinking that they would last only for a mere five years and that after that all would be well. That is also why Catholics went all out to ensure the return of the UNP in 1965.

IT WAS NOT only the rich Catholics but also the poorer families of fisherfolk etc. living on our coastlands, that went through considerable difficulties and made numerous sacrifices in the belief that these were temporary. His Eminence Thomas Cardinal Cooray once released to the newspapers correspondence that had passed between him and J. R. Jayewardene (then acting leader of the Government and present leader of

the UNP) on the eve of by-elections held in predominantly Catholic constituencies like Negombo and Nattandiya. By this, the Cardinal exposed to the light of day the lavish promises made by the UNP only to be broken no sooner their purpose was gained.

Today, all Catholics from the Cardinal down to the poor Catholic carpenter are sadder but wiser men. (This incidentally, perhaps explains why the Cardinal has more than once recently warned Catholics about those who are trying to capitalise on the present food crisis offering pie-in-the-crust promises of which he has direct experience.)

The position today in regard to the schools that carried on bravely from 1960 to 1965 is that perhaps they are on their very last legs. Those who run these schools are hard put to it to run them as efficiently as they undoubtedly once were. Schools which once boasted of some of the islands' most renowned teachers are today forced to employ unqualified old boys and girls who work for pittance for the old school's sake. Laboratory and library facilities in these schools once famous for both are now either non-existent or scandalous.

PARENTS TOO who send their children to these schools not only have to pay high fees under the cloak of 'donations' monthly and annually but are also, under various pretexts, made to fork out tidy sums in the shape of tickets for concerts and other

entertainments at these schools. Carnivals, fancy bazaars, raffles etc. are also held to swell their swindling funds. All these make heavy drains on parent's purses.

Many of these schools, unable to make ends meet, have already been voluntarily handed over to the state. Others carry on regardless only from a false sense of prestige or pride. Still others do so because their managers think that this is the only way of preserving the religious atmosphere and the old traditions associated with these famous schools.

But even the richest of these schools find it increasingly difficult, if not impossible to carry on as before. Hence the latest moves to work out some formula whereby they could be handed over to the state.

Sometime back too there were suggestions relating to such handing over. One proposal made by interested quarters was for the government to pay the salaries of teachers in these schools while the present managements, through their Old Boy's Associations etc. would look after the buildings, laboratories, libraries etc.

IT WOULD DO well for the Government to consider such suggestions sympathetically. Relations between the Catholic Church and the government are very different today than they were way back in 1960 when a lot of unnecessary ill-feeling was created, mostly by interested parties

who try to capitalise on any situation for political gain.

That is why it is not impossible for the Government today to work out some scheme where the Catholic and other denominational schools that are still run as private schools (whether fee-levying or non fee-levying) could be integrated into the unified national system in a way that guarantees the autonomy of these schools. Such a scheme if worked out and successfully implemented will further cement the good relations that exist today between the Government and various religious bodies who have pledged their support for the food drive, for example, ignoring other differences.

Neither the Government, nor the managers of the schools still run as private schools, nor the parents who send their children to these schools, nor the children themselves nor educationalists, teachers and others interested in the future of education in this country can be content with the present dual system.

Any scheme devised to achieve at long last a really unified system of education in keeping with our national traditions and multi-racial and multi-religious culture will satisfy them all and prove to be a lasting asset to the whole country.



SHAMBA

To Be or Not To Be

by ANATORY BUKOBA

August 23,

Since these notes were written last, I have not been here long enough when I have been here, to justify writing them.

Everything here seems touch and go. It all depends on the watering, and I just have not the strength to carry the water up from the river. Others have done it quite well, on the whole, the watering was missed last evening, as my only companion was here alone. We looked at everything this morning and decided to wait till this evening. Now he has gone off on urgent business leaving me alone with a temporary companion. I wonder what watering he will be able to do. I had a fall this morning carrying the bucket of water up from the river. I did not just trip up; we both, the bucket and I "fell over", but I did not hurt myself, nor did I go down the bank. So I am not anxious just yet to rush into my watering, in case I really am in need of this rest.

One of the plantain trees had fallen over last night. Where it was bent and had broken appeared to have been eaten into by a grub. The two papaw trees were without their tops. I think monkeys would have done this damage. They were all right yesterday. I am quite incompetent, it seems.

Only a little watering was done, and that by me with the small bucket, which leaks. The seeds in the coconut shells got done first, and then the red onion. The young tree plants which fared so badly when I first started are in a strong position now. It is the vegetables which feel the first pinch of the lack of water.

I have only one water melon plant left, and it looked very healthy, but today it looked a little starved of water. So I watered it and the vine and the *cadju* and *ratta cadju*. The monkeys, after being up and about early this morning, beating me to it, were away this evening, nor did people come importuning us for wood-apple. They are falling now and I had my first, a half of one and it tasted very fine indeed.

This house must be re-done, remade, but we must first get on with the clearing. Everything looks so dry, and it is really hot and fierce at midday for a few hours. You would not think at its worst that there was any life stirring at all. When it is hot you need to eat, and it is a wise precaution against the effects of the heat.

Today, was quite peaceful and I sorted out what was in the house and had a sort of spring clean. All that I forgot, or had not time to do, was to rub our odd assort-

ment of cups with ash and water to remove the stain and tannin.

One thing borne in on me is that I would not be here if God was not sustaining me and making it always possible to stay another day more. The friend seems to always turn up.

August 24,

This is what I wrote last but the friend did not turn up today. The tomatoes and chillies have not been watered for two days, there with today, and they will probably have had their chips. They certainly looked as if they would have to have that watering today or die. I, too, am alone and hungry. My temporary companion had to go, after leaving me as well provided far as he could, when he went this morning. All the cooking pots were nicely cleaned up, and unsmoked, he drew a full bucket of water, a big one, to see me through the day. The remains of this I tipped over accidentally this evening. Except for the early morning, I have not been able to leave the house or this place all day. Two strangers offered to share their lunch with me and did so. I had not quite got enough rice, but I offered to let them cook that, but it was going to take too much time. I am alone and hungry now, but the vegetables are much worse off than me.

Mice have been attacking the seeds I have sowed. There has been a rat about, and I set a newly brought trap last night for it, but it did not

come, I wonder what tomorrow will bring. People have promised to join me. What if they should come after I clear out?

August 25,

Yesterday did some thinking about what I am about, and I went to the first principles from which I started. I met a man who told me some interesting things. He analysed the eastern and western approaches to the business of daily living, and he thought I should adopt more of the eastern. He thought I would be more successful about what I am trying to do, if I changed.

This was what he said. He said that when an easterner, a one brought up in that tradition says he will meet you at 5 p.m., he quite probably has no intentions of doing so until 7 p.m. and one just has to live with that and that it is no use getting annoyed. When the westerner says five, he means five. Strangely, he thought, there was something to be said for both systems, although the western bent itself more easily to the running of a farm of a country. I can see that the western system can be almost a vice as well as a virtue. If the western system is essential to the running of underground trains, there might also be a case made out against underground trains.

Well, I have lost my chillies. I would swear I heard some rain last night. I do not suppose it lasted long, and it was not heavy.

August 26,

Today was nearly the end of this Shamba, its first death, for I had no intention of giving it up altogether, but to merely, do what, perhaps, I should have done long ago, and that is beat a retreat, make a tactical withdrawal. I was held up, and here I still am. Someone joined me, a person when I have been meeting occasionally for months, seeing him a few days or times regularly, and then not at all. I would have had him join me when I first met him, but he turned his face resolutely against it. He did not come to join me today, but he is here after he had promised to come tomorrow evening. It was too late for him to take the jungle route home. I think, the fact that I was about to move out temporarily shook him, and the fact that this was a theft today, while I was out, moved him too. He saw what would likely happen if I was to be away for a few days and leave no one here. So I have moved everything back, what I had moved out preparatory to my impending departure. In a way I am very relieved, providing he stays.

August 27,

We have had very slight showers of rain, the last almost in the middle of the morning. My companion needed no telling what to do, he did everything right, even informing me when he went down to the river on various jobs, so as to cause me no momentary anxiety, for I was out with his *katha*, lopping off some of the thorns

now dead—looking, no leaves, that I had left, when I first started clearing the area. This was by the entrance to the *Shamba* and the net result will be to have a better, more unobscured vision between the road and the house. In view of the losses I suffered from the house yesterday I think this will be to my advantage. A thief may feel he has a better chance of being seen now.

My companion had gone off with a cold this morning, and this may be why he has not turned up yet, he is now two hours overdue, and it will soon be dark. I am of a mind to evacuate this house tonight, should he not come. It was his arrival yesterday and promise to come today, that decided me to stay on when I was about to go last night. In the end he stayed the night too, as it was so late. He went off to do the jobs that he was going to do today, before moving here.

August 28,

My friend did not turn up. I was ready to make my deferred tactical retreat again today, but I am still here, as I have not been able to really hand this place over to anyone to keep an eye on. I do not want anyone to move in, but just to keep an eye on this place. I have written off what vegetables have to be watered. If any of these are still alive when the watering can be resumed, then I will do what I can do for them.

In front of the house, there has been a mass of flowers.

Someone had been breaking these off by the branch. He started yesterday and resumed it today, two branches at a time. I have picked up my first wood-apple, and I took these along to the church, these being the first fruits as it were, and offering to the priest. The villager especially if he is a buddhist, is very particular about customs like these, and I do not think I am much wrong in saying, he never forgets them. He would probably make his first fruits with *kiribath*, cooked where the offering is to be made, and then eat it with great joy, inviting the special friends of the moment to take part. I am beginning to love this piece of land, and I shall be very sorry if I have to leave it. This evening I had a visit from our highest local official. It was nice to see him, although I do not think he had really come to see me. He had come to see someone else, and explored the full length of the road.

August 31,

Some of the vegetables have done remarkably well for all their being not watered. There is still hope for the tomato. Quite large fruits are on some of them. The little lady's fingers are seem to be managing to stay alive. There is nothing really wrong with the spinach. I think it is the cowpea which has survived too. The chillies have come off worst. Most have dried up, and a few of the older ones, standing well in the shade, are left. The luffa and the beans I think are "govers" I really have not looked at them too closely.

The mango in its coconut shell seem to be alive; the solitary passion fruit is, the *ratta cadju* and the two ordinary *cadju* and the two *lauerlu* are. Some of the plants seem to be dying off. The *murunga* seem to have gone into winter quarters and the pineapple, too.

My house is still intact, after having been unoccupied for two days and more than a night. I was away, and left only the cooking pots and some magazines and odds and ends. Some one took a liking it seems, to the magazines. I hope he makes good use of them. I think he took them away to read, stole them, to be exact.

We had dinner tonight on bread and sambol. Someone has joined me who will be able to pay towards his upkeep, or rather his fee. I wonder how it will go, and if we shall really get off the ground now. The auspicious, I hope that the word spelt correctly, are not too good, but one can never really tell.

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CHRONICLE**AUGUST 29 - SEPTEMBER 10**

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

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 29: The Department of Inland Revenue made a record collection of Rs. 410 million during the first six months of this year. According to the Sun lead story, Sri Lanka getting the 24.5 million dollars stand-by credit from the IMF now hinges on a basic political question: one of them, is to continue Sri Lanka's time-honoured association with the World Bank and connected international lending institutions: the other is to make a clean break with these credit agencies and go it alone along the path of self-reliance. Sri Lanka has signed an agreement with India to get machinery and equipment worth Rs. 50 million: on credit basis. The prosecution has closed its case in the CJC inquiring into exchange malpractices. India and Pakistan has signed an agreement which will lead to the repatriation of tens of thousands of Pakistani prisoners of war from India: Bengalis from Pakistan and Pakistani civilians from Bangladesh.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 30: More than 230,000 acres of land have already been vested with the State under the Land Reform Law. The second stage of the UNP's boycott campaign gets under way on September 1 at Kandy. Goods worth around Rs. 200,000 smuggled into Sri Lanka are being detected every month by the combined Army-Navy-Police anti-smuggling units. British Premier Edward Heath has formally turned down an invitation by President Idi Amin to visit Uganda.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 31: The Government Clerical Service Union has lodged a strong protest against the sudden withdrawal of the promotions of 130 of its members from class II to class I: according to the GCSU, no reasons have been given for this action. Addressing a Youth League meeting at Sri Kotha, Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, leader of the UNP, said that it was the duty of all UNP youth leaguers

to ensure that the country did not fall into the hands of the extremist elements. Premier Chou En-lai warned the Chinese people against a surprise attack by the Soviet Union.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 1: In view of the impending food crisis, leading hotels and restaurants in the city of Colombo are contemplating to curtail rice meals to their patrons: Galle Face Hotel, one of the leading tourist hotels in the island, has announced that it would stop serving rice meals to its patrons on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, left for Algiers yesterday to lead the Sri Lanka delegation in the non-aligned conference. Puttalam election petition has been dismissed with costs. President Nixon announced yesterday that he would appeal against a court ruling requiring him to yield secret tape recordings.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 2: Sixty drivers of the Ceylon Transport Board have been interdicted for failing to pick up passengers at bus stops. The Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, who arrived in Rome today will have an audience with Pope Paul. The 22nd anniversary celebrations of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party takes place today. Mahatma Gandhi's grand daughter, Mrs. Ela Rambobin has been placed under house arrest at her home by the South African Government.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 3: At the mass meeting held in Kandy on Saturday, Mr. J. R. Jayewardene called on the people to shake off their fears and act with courage and conviction to force the withdrawal of the repressive and anti-democratic measures of the Government. At the 22nd anniversary celebrations of the SLFP held yesterday, the acting Prime Minister, Mr. Maithripala Senanayake, said that the SLFP has the unique advantage that it is not shackled by fetters of dogma. The Soviet Communist Party has issued a warning to the non-aligned nations against the Chinese claim that rich states cannot have the same interests as poor states.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 4: Five of the seven suspects facing trial before the CJC inquiring into exchange frauds, were yesterday remanded to Fiscal's custody by the Chairman

Mr. Justice G. P. A. Silva. The Government has approved a Maldivian Trade Centre to be set up in Colombo. At a top level summit to be held on the 12th of this month it will be decided whether the Communist Party can remain in the United Front. Malta has been given entry into the "Third World" club of the Non-aligned nations. Shiali Mislimov, the Azerbaidjani peasant, who claimed to be the oldest person in the world died aged 168.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 5: Owing to increased world market prices, governments gross food subsidy bill is expected to rise almost to a record one thousand million rupees: at the beginning of the year, the bill stood at Rs. 732 million: the expected increase is in the region of Rs. 265 million. In connection with offences committed in Jaffna, during the April Insurgency, 64 out of the 87 charged pleaded guilty: suspended sentences of 2 years each were passed on 53: the trial and decision on the remaining were postponed. Britain declined to comment on Malta's entry into the non-aligned movement.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 6: The Eastern Paper Mills Corporation has said that it has got enough newsprint to keep the four major newspaper organisations in the island going till March 1974. At a meeting held at the Ministry of Food and Agriculture, hoteliers have agreed to give their fullest support to the Government to popularise substitutes for rice and wheat flour. C. P. sources indicated that unless they are forced out, it is not their intention to pull out of the United Front. A Superior Court Judge in Los Angeles has ordered the arrest of former White House aides involved in the Watergate bugging scandal.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 7: In a clean-up of local administration throughout the country the Minister of local Government has dissolved nearly 40 bodies for proven maladministration. A water cut is expected to be imposed in the city of Colombo from next week. D. A. Gunsekera, the 11th suspect, giving evidence in the CJC (Insurgency) said that the LSSP and CP rose to power on the backs of the workers whom they have betrayed now. Mr. Colvin R. de Silva said in Parliament yesterday that the present Government will

not surrender to the World Bank. Palestinian guerillas who raided the Saudi Arabia Embassy in Paris held thirteen people as hostages demanding the release of a imprisoned guerilla leader in Jordan.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 8: Messrs. Vincent Perera, (UNP), Ananda Premasinghe (LSSP), Julian Perera (Independent), Amir Sheriff (Independent), and Upasena Akmeemana (Independent) handed over their nominations yesterday to contest the Colombo North by-election: the over enthusiastic supporters of different candidates engaged in a free-for-all in the Registrar General Office premises after the nominations. Police intervened and this was brought under control soon. The Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, welcomed Third World Leaders to the Fifth Non-aligned summit conference to be held in Sri Lanka next year.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 9: At a Federal party conference held at Mallakam, the President, Mr. Amirthalingam, said that Tamils of this country constrained to seek separation. The proposed seven-day token strike which the pro-government plantation unions threatened to launch in support of monthly wages for estate workers, was called off yesterday. President Nixon appealed against a court order asking him to hand over the clandestine tape recordings of the Watergate bugging scandal.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 10: The creation of a Special Fund for Agricultural Development and a Clearing House for information on agricultural practices were suggested by the Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, in her address at the Non-aligned nation's conference now being held in Algiers. "It is the same old song," said the Deputy Minister for Defence and External Affairs, Mr. Lakshman Jayakody, commenting on the FP's non-violent campaign. China yesterday accused Soviet Union for what China called 'Detente Myth.'



IS IT TRUE?

Sherlock Holmes

* SYNTHETICS * QUEUES

IS IT NOT TRUE that the *Janawegaya* of November 17 had published a report of the amount of textiles seized from certain manufacturers? That these manufacturers had kept these stocks in secret hoards to divert them into the garment—making industries (most of them allied to and interlocked with these manufacturers) so that they could make greater profits and also by—pass the governmental measures to reduce the price of these textiles? That the *Janawegaya* report stated that officials of the Ministry of Industries had seized and sealed as follows: *Jafferji Meetotamulla Industries*—40,000 yards of shirtings; *Dasa Industries, Kelaniya*—150,000 yards of shirtings; *Cyntex Industries*—140,000 yards; *Kundanmala*—35,000 yards? That the *Janawegaya* further reported that officials of the Ministry of Industries had found that the seals placed by them on the stores of *Dasa Industries* had been tampered with and that the Ministry had ordered the closure of this industry until further notice? That in the meantime some of the daily papers had also carried news reports about these seizures and one paper had also hin-

ted that the seals had been tampered with in the stores of one manufacturer? That *Kundanmala* had thereupon issued a press statement that they were not the manufacturer where the seals had been tampered with at the store? That in spite of the efforts of the Government to control the prices of synthetics produced by these manufacturers (who had grown rich on fabulous tax holidays and other concessions), consumers continued to pay unconscionable prices? That something must be done about this and that pretty soon?

IS IT NOT TRUE that the suggestion, made in this column last week, that Ministers, Deputy Ministers, MPs, permanent Secretaries and all VIP bureaucrats should, by law (if necessary by emergency regulations), be compelled to stand for a minimum of 4 hours every week (that is, what the ordinary householder has generally to suffer every week), has found wide response and support? That this column has been inundated with telephone calls, letters and personal requests that this suggestion should be pre-

ssed home? That the suggestion that all ruling politicians and bureaucrats should be prevented from obtaining the daily, weekly and monthly supplies at co-ops through proxies (servants)? That even more important was to prevent supplies reaching these VIPs through the backdoor? That Ministers, instead of railing against profiteers and the like, day in and day out, in season and out, should take their place in the lengthy queues at the co-ops? That they will then learn that in the same co-op there are queues for every single item of essential food stuffs? That there is one queue for rice, one for flour, one for sugar, one for subsidiaries and so on and on? That the number of queues proliferate according to the number of excess employees who have found remunerative refuge and asylum in the co-ops?

That Ministers and MPs who take their place in the queues should go through the normal routine of transferring themselves from one queue to another to get their supplies? That they will then learn that the bosses of the co-op movement in Sri Lanka have devised a devilish system to inflict maximum torture on the ordinary public they pretend to serve? That such compulsory queue-standing will bring down to earth our ruling hierarchy and elite from the ivory towers in which they are buried today?