

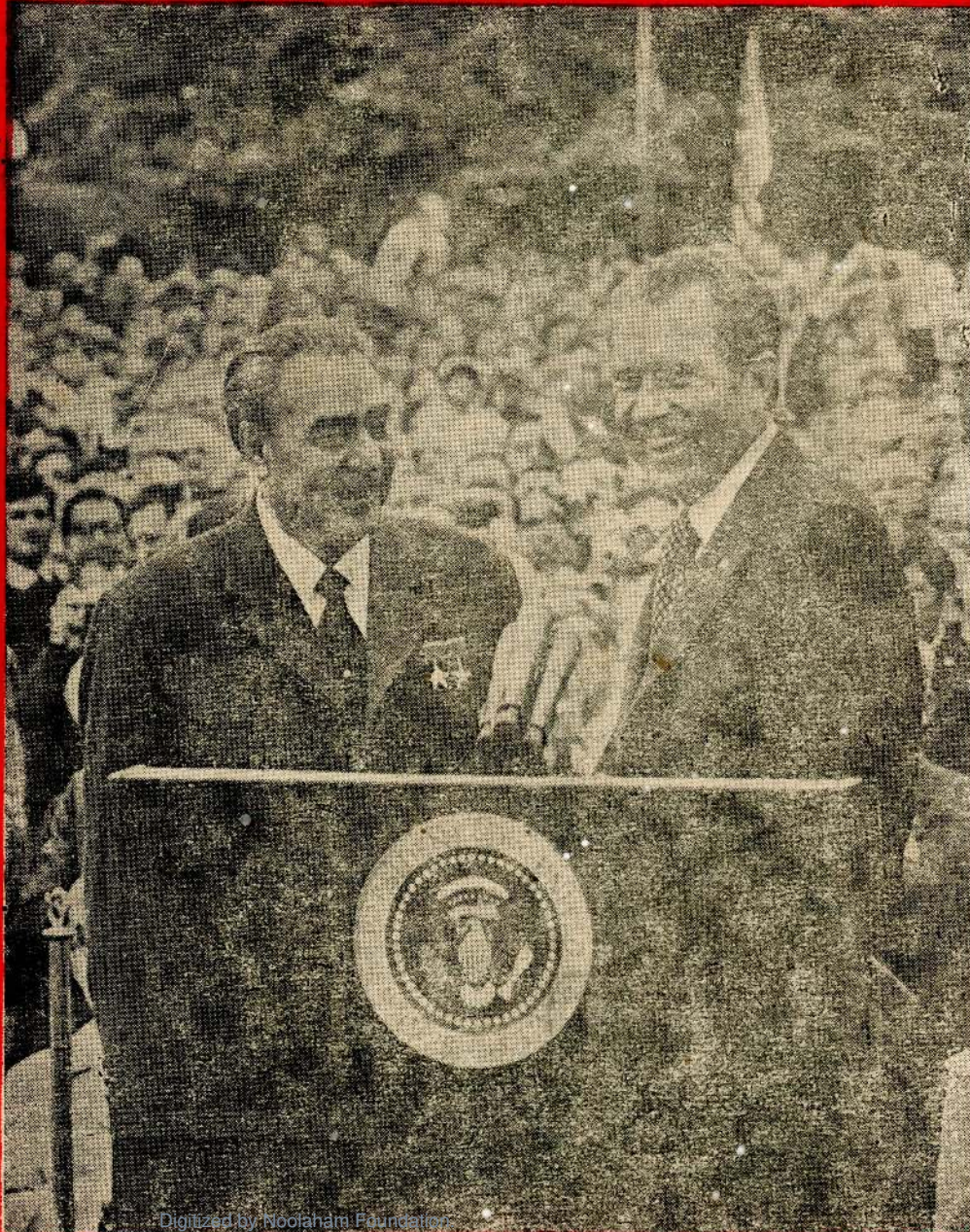
# TRIBUNE

CEYLON NEWS REVIEW

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ASTROLOGY &  
CLIMATE  
DMK & TODDY  
DEDIGAMA  
TRUTH &  
PRESS COUNCIL

NIXON-  
BREZHNEV

SHAMBA

SINGAPORE  
INDONESIA  
CHINA

HOTELS



# Tribunania

- ✱ Astrology and Climate
- ✱ DMK and Toddy ✱ Dedigama
- ✱ Truth and the Press Council?

OUR COMMENTS on astrology last week has brought a flood of queries from our readers. Many of them want to know whether we believed in the *hocus-pocus* known as astrology. What we pointed out did not imply belief or unbelief on our part (two sides of the same dialectical process). All that we did was to point out some matters which are claimed by astrologers as irrefutable. They trace a correlation between the movement of the planets and their configuration with the affairs of man and the world. Whether all that they say is intelligent anticipation, or a continuous (and curious) series of coincidences, it is difficult to say, but there is no doubt that the world is undergoing vast changes, and that this was predicted as early as the first decade of this century.

Speaking of changes, cold facts accepted by scientific-minded rationalists relate to the climate of the world. When the rains recently came to the vast parched and barren areas in sub-Saharan Africa and central India, meteorologists and climatologists once again referred to the profound changes which seem to have overtaken the world. In both regions referred to there had been a succession of inadequate

rainy seasons for many years now and which had brought a calamitous drought. If adequate rain falls this year in these two areas, 25 million Africans and 200 million Indians can hope for some regeneration. But the FAO has issued a warning that the economic and social dislocation in the six stricken west African states (Upper Volta, Chad, Senegal, Mali, Mauritania and Niger) was so bad that recovery will be long and slow. The FAO is shipping half a million tons of food (and the EEC is organising an airlift to distribute it) but even with the most benevolent of donors and the kindest of weather, the immediate prospects for the drought zones are not good.

This is so because the "water shortages of the past few years seem to have been much more than local dozes of bad luck". It is known that the World Meteorological Organisation is now preparing a report "which links the prolonged droughts in Africa and India with last year's poor harvests in Russia and China, and even the present dry summer, in Britain, as symptoms of a major world-wide climatic change".

Professor Lamb, who led the reporting team and is

the director of the only climatology centre in Western Europe, at the University of East Anglia, and is now the foremost "advocate" of "change" theory. (He is a scientist and not an astrologer.) He insists that the world will soon manifest what may be the greatest shift in the world's climate since 1700. Other scientists claim that the change would be even more profound in that we are on the threshold of a new ice-age. According to Professor Lamb, however, this present shift had begun about 1950 and that it had taken definite shape in the 1960s, but that it had not meant drier weather everywhere or all the time. The first sign of the shift was because of an excess of rain in equatorial Africa, and Lake Victoria had started rising to dangerous heights. Climatologists charting patterns of rainfall and wind observed that the whole of the equatorial zone was wetter while the arid and semi-arid zones north and south of the equator were correspondingly drier. Changes were also observed in the temperate zones, but these were more uneven than in lower latitudes and had resulted only in alternating bouts of higher and lower rainfall. But, there was a pattern in the USA: in the 1960s rainfall in the east coast had dropped by a significant 7-8 percent.

METEOROLOGISTS are tempted to ignore these variations as mere year-to-year changes, but climatologists like Lamb argue that these indicate a far-reaching change which was likely to persist for the rest



of the century unless man tilts the climatic balance "inadvertently or otherwise"

One thing seems to be clear is that the drought areas which have been only marginally productive at the best of times cannot support their present populations. This has been described by one geographer as desertification, or the southward movement of the Sahara. Another has called it the new ice age because the expansion of the polar ice is one of the symptoms of the recent change. Professor Lamb does not think that we are on the verge of another ice age, but that we are on a "downhill slope, heading for conditions as cold as the coldest period in the past few hundred years."

"This climatic shift was probably set off by the fluctuations in the sun's heat. These fluctuations, possibly linked with sunspot activity, produced as expansion of the polar ice cap, which in turn pushed circulating winds down toward the equator. The winds also grew weaker so that instead of blowing out over the semi-arid areas and carrying equatorial rains with them they left clouds hanging over the equator which dropped the rain there. Weaker winds have similarly prevented rain from reaching areas far from the oceans, such as central Asia. Another aspect of the shifting winds is an increase in their variability. So while the general trend is towards colder, drier times, the changes from year to year may be even sharper than before."

SOME PEOPLE had wondered whether such agricultural practices as over-grazing had accelerated the southward march of the Sahara. But experts agree that land use has been a trivial factor compared with the overwhelming importance of climatic change. Increasing human and animal population are no doubt putting increasing pressures on scarce resources. The simple fact, however, is that man can do very little to change these climatic trends which have begun to overtake the world. He can plant forests on a large scale, as the Chinese are doing, but only in suitable soil and only to alter the distribution of rain not to increase its quality. Artificial rain-making is still in an experimental and unproven stage and at best it can only affect the timing and distribution of rain. Man can also reallocate water resources by diverting rivers, as the Russians are doing, but this kind of vast irrigation project might have "unforeseen and potentially disastrous consequences—if it melted the Arctic ice, for example." What the ecological and other geographical consequences of the diversion of the Mahaveli river in Sri Lanka will be, is yet to be seen, and nobody has yet paid adequate attention to this aspect of the matter.

It is not likely that man will be able to avert the dangerous climatic changes which are taking place. Man may go up to the moon, but he cannot consciously or purposefully alter nature. From the moon and from space stations he can

study changes in the earth's crust and in its climate—and thus be able to predict the trend of possible climatic and ecological changes. But he cannot definitely device techniques to fashion climate the way he wants it. Nature is still the master and mistress of the planet, the solar system and the universe, and the unknown is, in many matters, still supreme.



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TRIBUNE, July 7, 1973



ALL THIS may seem a far cry from astrology, but what we had sought to say last week was that vast and sweeping changes were overtaking the world and the creatures which were inhabiting it. We had only pointed out that a tribe called astrologers had, at least a hundred years ago, put down in print and writing much of what has become history in the last fifty to sixty years. What about the future? Climatic change is only one of the many changes anticipated.

In the meantime, as anticipated in this column the eclipse has come and gone without any planet-shaking events, like a further tilting of the earth's axis. The eclipse had maximum darkness of seven minutes.

Relative positions of the sun, moon and earth made the solar eclipse on June 30 one of the longest total eclipses in 1,000 years—more than seven minutes in north-western Africa and five minutes in Kenya—and gave scientists a comparatively leisurely chance to study phenomena visible only when the moon blots out most of the sun's light.

The heart of the darkness was a 258 km wide total eclipse shadow moving east at nearly 2,240 km an hour in a 14,560 km arc from Brazil across the Atlantic Ocean and across ten African nations to the Indian Ocean.

Twenty-nine nations and hundreds of scientists co-operated in 100 eclipse projects. About 400 astronomers, were assembled at Loyengalani, a palm oasis on Lake Rudolf 480 km north of Nairobi.

A supersonic Concorde airliner carried French and American scientists and raced the eclipse across Africa, spending 80 minutes in the shadow—eight times as long as in previous eclipse flights. An American jet from the Los Alamos scientific laboratory took a 41 member international team into the shadow over Mali in north-western Africa.

Astronomers from Kitt Peak national observatory in Arizona launched a photographic "aerobee 200" rocket from Mauritania. Astronomer Keit Pierce told newsmen: "The earth is very closely tied to the sun. If we can understand how the sun generates energy perhaps that could be applied to general engineering and physical problems on earth."

Astronomers hope for fresh clues to puzzling solar temperature changes—from 10,000 degrees on the sun's surface to three million degrees in the corona. The corona, a thin solar atmosphere that stretches through space to envelope the earth, is visible only during a total eclipse. Magnetic and gravity effects of the eclipse were also studied.

At the time of writing these notes, no further information has become available to us about the impact of the eclipse, either physical or scientific. Only those committed to a particular way of thinking (mainly believers as opposed to unbelievers) will want to see whether the events which astrologers have said will occur, after this particular eclipse, do in fact occur. The unbelievers,

comprising of rationalists, sceptics, materialists and others, will dismiss such events (which may have been predicted) as happy coincidences, and argue that it would be necessary to examine the predictions which went wrong or never took place at all.

IN THIS COLUMN last week, we also referred to the decision of the DMK in Tamil Nadu to shut down toddy shops from September 1. Even before the ink was dry on this column, this decision was reversed by the government of Tamil Nadu. It has now been decided that the arrack shops should be given another year's lease of life: because the licencees would be hard hit and the consumers too would be angry. But the auctions for the toddy shops' licenses, proclaimed to be the "last", will take place as previously scheduled in August this year and the new licenses would run up to September 1974.

The General Council of the DMK had passed a resolution that prohibition should be re-introduced, and it was in pursuance of this resolution that the Government at first decided to close down toddy shops by this September. Then, it had second thoughts. It even considered the feasibility of having a six month's licence, but this plan was given up on account of administrative and legal difficulties.

Instead of shutting down the arrack shops, there was also a proposal to confine the sale of arrack to arrack-in-bottles alone. But this could not be done because



even the distilleries owned by the State could not cope with it without additional equipment for bottling—with fresh investment for the bottling equipment.

How many more changes the DMK government would be compelled to take owing to pressure from the public and from its own Governing Council, and also pressure from the Opposition Parties, it is difficult to say.

THIS ISSUE of *Tribune* will appear two days before the polling at Dedigama, but no predictions or even guesses about its outcome have yet been made. Daily papers are at a disadvantage, and they seem unwilling to say anything lest they be accused of partisanship, but *Tribune* which usually endeavours to indicate the results of our elections and by-elections thinks it wiser not to do so—in view of the Press Council Law.

It is not that *Tribune* cannot make a fairly good guess as to who will win the Dedigama seat and even venture a guess as to the likely majority. Even if we are accused of partisanship, what we say on July 7 is not likely to have any impact on the electorate, taking into consideration that we are not a mass-circulating Sinhala daily. But the Press Council Law stipulates, under section 8 (2), that papers should "publish as news true statements of facts and any comments based upon true statements."

Now to make an anticipatory guess as to who will win the Dedigama seat is nearer a comment than a

statement of fact, but the fact not having occurred such comment would violate the provisions of the Law. And in making a statement of fact about what one thought about the possible outcome of the election one can get into even greater difficulties. If we said that the SLFP would win hands down, and it lost ignominiously, we will be accused of making fun of the ruling party. If, on the other hand, we said that the UNP would win, and it lost, we will be accused of having been partisan wanting to help the UNP.

Or, look at the matter from a different angle. If we said that the SLFP would lose, and it won the bye-election, we will be accused of having been anti-government, anti-national, pro-reactionary and what not, because we had wishfully betrayed our inner feelings through a wrong statement of fact. But if had said that the UNP would lose, and it won, we will be accused of wanting to rouse the apathetic voters of conservative vintage to rush to the polls to help the UNP.

In these circumstances, as somebody said in *Alice in Wonderland*, (Sri Lanka is truly a *Wonderland* today), it is wiser not to say anything—to prevent some fanatic from shouting "off with the head, off with the head." *Tribune* will therefore wait for the result of the Dedigama bye-election before making a comment. To make a guess as to its outcome could very well land us into the jeopardy of being accused of violating "journalistic ethics" and

transgressing against the "highest professional standards"—though we have not been told as yet what these "ethics" are and what the yardstick of "professional standards" will be.

AND THOUGH the question of truth, and what is true, has been debated, and debated inconclusively, from the dawn of history to the present day, there is very little chance of any debate on the question of what is truth and, what is not, under the Press Council Law. Matters can, of course, be made worse if the Press Commissioner chooses to become a censor and decide on what is true, and *sui generis*, bring up newspaper editors before the Council. And then there is very little chance that five busy men, who make the Council, will want waste time probing into the philosophical mysteries of what is truth.

But having met the Press Commissioner at a cocktail, we feel that though young and ebullient (as youth should be) he would not rush into territory where angels will fear to tread. But Press Commissioners come and they go, but the Press Council Law will remain on the Statute book until it is repealed or amended, and we will invite the finest brains of this country to tell us what would amount to a "true statement of fact" and what it is not, in the context of the complex politics of Sri Lanka and the uncertain language of the Press Council Law (and will the Sinhala version or the English



translation be accepted as the gospel?).

If a newspaper said that a particular Minister was "mad" because of some of his actions, would the paper be hauled up before the Council because the Minister had not, as yet, been certified a lunatic by a court of law. Will it be of any avail if the offending newspaper argued that it had used the word "mad" in a metaphorical sense within the licence usually permitted to journalists and not in a strictly legally literal sense?

What is "true" is not merely something of content, but also of idiom?

Until we know what meaning the present Press Council and its officials will attach to the phrase "true statement of fact", it will be difficult to make comments on many matters because the burden of proof of the truth or otherwise of a statement will be upon the newspaper. If, for instance, a Minister or a Deputy Minister, is reported to have made a statement of fact, will it be safe to comment on it until the report is certified to be true by the Minister or the Deputy Minister himself?

In these matters, it is common experience, that truth sometimes varies from day to day, reflecting the changing vagaries of our times.

And then, where do newspapers stand with regard to the all-important yardstick of a "true statement of fact"? And will some bright spark think that what we have said above is tantamount to contempt of the Press Council Law?

## RAMBLING NOTES

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

✿ Nixon - Brezhnev Summit:

✿ The End of the Cold War?

OWING TO THE VAGARIES of the daily press in Sri Lanka (newsprint shortage but more than that an inherent desire to play down the detente between the USA and the USSR), many people in Ceylon do not seem to realise that the Nixon-Brezhnev summit has been a most momentous event. The *Economist*, even before the summit was fully concluded, had Nixon and Brezhnev on the cover and the first lead was an editorial on *The Brezhnev Game*. The British are naturally cynical about the whole thing.

After insisting that Brezhnev has been trying to make up to Nixon, (to play down anything *mutual* in the "game"), the *Economist* went on to say: "...It all seems to fit into the fashionable argument that the Russians have been unnaturally and unaccountably passive in the world in the past few years. They have gone on helping North Vietnam, of course; they even picked up some important advantages on the Indian sub-continent; they have tried, and failed, to set up a missile submarine base and a military colony in Egypt. But, that apart, they might almost have been going out of their way not to exploit the long American crisis of self-confidence that has culminated

in the Watergate. Stalin and Krushchev would not have been so polite if Harry Truman or Dwight Eisenhower had got themselves into a mess on the Watergate scale. *The Brezhnev approach is something new all right...*" (italics ours)

The *Economist* was at pains to find out why Brezhnev was doing what he was doing. It says that various theories had been put forward: that Brezhnev and Nixon were kindred spirits, that the Soviet Union had so much trouble with its economy and with China that it had no alternative but to go to the United States "cap in hand and a smile on the face," and that the Russians were closing 25 years of cold war "because they no longer regard the democracies of the west as an adversary". But the *Economist* felt that none of these explanations were "good enough". It ventured an answer: "the probable answer is that the Brezhnev policy is the result of two things. Mr. Brezhnev has recognised that the Soviet Union's weaknesses require several years of help from the west; but he has also recognised that the western world's own weaknesses, of a different sort, make it entirely possible that he can get this help and turn the balance of power



in Russia's favour at the same time."

After setting out the economic problems confronting the USSR centred around growth rate, productivity and food production, and the two-way cold war it had to face, the *Economist* stated that it was in Russia's interests to have better relations with the West, and more particularly the USA. The paper then pointed out the weaknesses of the West: "the trouble is that the countries of the Atlantic Alliance have their own particular weakness. One part of this weakness is the fact that the United States has become an unconfident power—because of Vietnam, because of the problems of the dollar, perhaps even because it is too open a society to ride easily through rough seas—before the European community has found out how to act as a power at all. These may be only a temporary difficulty, but it is an opportunity for Mr. Brezhnev while it lasts. The other part of the weakness is a permanent one. The uncomfortable truth is that democracies are bad at dealing with period of low-tension confrontation; with the phenomenon that marxists call the ideological struggle, and Clausewitz could have called the continuation of war by other means.

"There is an almost universal human desire that peace is the natural condition of man, that armies are temporary nuisances, that conflicts of interests can be dissolved by a policy of goodwill. None of these things is true, but people like to believe they are; and one of the differences

between democracies and the other sort of political systems is that in democracies people elect politicians who can form governments which behave as if wishes were facts."

And from this, the *Economist* goes on to say: "Mr. Brezhnev may have hit upon the discovery that eluded both Stalin and Krushchev" (italics ours) This is the paper's way of saying that Brezhnev has done better than Stalin and Krushchev in dealing with the West, but the *Economist* puts its reader on guard by insisting that "the struggle for primacy between marxism and liberal democracy that has dominated the past 28 years" has not come to an end.

The *Economist* finally sums the perspectives in the period following the present *detente*. It says that in the west, the idea that the threat from Russia was over was now a "received idea". And this is how the paper projects into the future: "Give that idea half a dozen years to put down roots, and by the end of the 1970s it may be possible for Mr. Brezhnev to hope that the connection between the United States and the European community will have grown weaker, without the community itself having grown decisively more united; that communist parties may be taking part in the government of two major west European countries; and, above all, that there will have been a measure of unilateral disarmament in western Europe that will have its effect, like a weight removed from the scales, on

every dealing across the dividing line. This is the possibility that Mr. Brezhnev is certainly intelligent enough to see, and that is why he knows what he has been doing in Washington this week. The period of manoeuvre that is now under way in east-west relations is different from the past in one respect: each side is now in a position to exploit the other's central weakness. Mr. Brezhnev is going to win if the west does not even realise what its weakness is."

This is candid writing, and there is a great deal to be said for this way of looking at the problem. The language and analysis of the *Economist* is "bourgeois" and its logic "machiavellian", and this irritates intellectuals who have been nurtured on fabian or marxist idiom and "dialectical" logic. Nevertheless, it is clear what the *Economist* wants to say: it is afraid that Brezhnev might succeed where Stalin and Krushchev had failed. And it wants the West to be on guard.

IN SRI LANKA, the only paper which has written a reasoned and lengthy comment on the US-USSR summit is the *Daily News*. In an editorial on June 28, the editorial closely follows the argumentation of the *Economist*, but in idiom and style which typical of *Daily News* in recent times. The lengthy preamble is a brave attempt to view the Brezhnev-Nixon summit from a "people's angle"—shades of the United Front. Thereafter, the editorial raises the same question which the *Economist*



raised: why did Brezhnev go to the United States, and the CDN gives almost the same answer. Russia was faced with a sagging economy, it said, a drop in the rate of growth, low productivity and a major setback in food production. Russia wanted technology which the West had, and the US was the logical place to go for it. Brezhnev, said the editorial, was more realistic than Krushchev, who 14 years ago had foolishly boasted that he would bury capitalism and that the USSR would outstrip the USA in a few decades. This had proved "to be plain nonsense."

Then, like the *Economist*, the CDN analyses the weaknesses of the capitalist west—which Brezhnev was aware of and which he was seeking to exploit in a quiet and subtle way: Vietnam, the Dollar and things like Watergate (but this evil word is not mentioned). And, the editorial stressed that the Russians had some things which the Americans needed like oil and gas. And the *Daily News* then argued: "Thus the objective conditions (that is the natural needs and interests of these two countries) were ripe for peaceful co-existence and detente to move to a new phase of US-USSR inter-dependence. And the logic of this inter-dependence is also valid in the sphere of strategic arms and conventional forces abroad."

After stressing that Mr. Brezhnev "has understood the American mind very well" the *Daily News* has praise for the Soviet leader. "And since Mr. Chou is as much

a firm friend of Mr. Nixon as Mr. Brezhnev now is, and Mrs. Chou has been lately issuing testimonials to the CIA, there is unlikely to be any blast from Peking against US-USSR collusion. Mr. Brezhnev has done very well for his country, and the agreements he has signed with President Nixon are certain to strengthen the new stability introduced into the international power structure by Mr. Nixon's realistic initiative on China."

It is interesting however to see how Mr. Nixon and Mr. Brezhnev view these talks. Their public statements are "official" and must necessarily be guarded and cautious. But one can read between the lines. On June 18, at the end of the first day of the summit, there was an exchange of toasts, at the White House. This is the significant and relevant part of what Mr. Nixon said concerning "the first year of a historic new departure in relations" between the United States and the Soviet Union. "...The result of our discussions today allow us to praise, indeed, our day. We have resumed the talks that ended just over a year ago. But we have resumed these talks on a new foundation of significant accomplishments in reshaping relations between our two people and our two countries. We have been able to embark on this course because we have recognised certain fundamental factors. We have recognized that despite the differences in our ideology and our social systems, we can develop normal relations. We agreed that in the nuc-

lear age, there is no alternative to a policy of peace. We have recognized that we have special responsibilities to work for the removal of the danger of war, and of nuclear war in particular. We accepted the great task of limiting strategic arms. We have recognized that our responsibilities include the scrupulous respect for the rights of all countries, large or small."

Mr. Brezhnev, in his reply emphasised what was important from his point of view was that "...The time that has elapsed since our Moscow meeting has, I feel, convincingly confirmed the correctness of the jointly taken line of enervating the relations between the USSR and the USA, and of reshaping them in accordance with the principles of peaceful co-existence which were set out in the document you and I signed a year ago. I trust you will agree, Mr. President, that we are on the right track, for it meets the fundamental interests of the peoples of our countries and of all mankind. Of course, the reshaping of Soviet-American relations is not an easy task. And the crux of the matter lies not only in the fact that the USSR and the USA have different social systems. What is also required is to overcome the inertia of the 'cold war' and its after-effects in international affairs, and in the minds of men. However, mankind's development requires positive and constructive ideas. I am convinced therefore that the more persistently and speedily we move towards the mutually



advantageous development of Soviet-American relations, the more tangible will be the great benefits of this for the peoples of our countries, and the greater will be the number of those in favour of such a development, who are known to be in the majority even today. That is why we are in favour of building relations between the Soviet Union and the United States on a properly large scale and on a long-term basis..

And he went on to make one more important point "...And let me make one more point. It is well known that the initiated process of bettering Soviet-American relations is evoking a broad response throughout the world. Most comments indicate that the peoples and the governments of other countries are welcoming this improvement. And this is quite natural. They see in it an encouraging factor for the enervation of the international situation as a whole, and as a major contribution by the USSR and the USA to a stronger universal peace.

It is absolutely clear to anyone who is at least slightly familiar with the real

course of events, and with the nature of the development of Soviet-American relations, that their improvement in no way prejudices the interest of any third country.."

When the Conference ended on June 24, Brezhnev made an enthusiastic speech over the TV. He said that the summit was highly successful: that nine agreements had been signed, and one which sought to reduce the chances of a war to minimum was hailed as the most important. The main burden of Mr. Brezhnev's speech was that the cold war was virtually over except for the continuing confrontation in West Asia (about which the US and the USSR could not agree) which Brezhnev called a "hotbed of dangerous tensions endangering world peace."

Most western papers continued to stress that it was the economic difficulties which beset the Soviet Union which had made Brezhnev make a "new departure" from the policies pursued by his predecessors. These papers pointed out that official statistics in the Soviet Union

showed that growth rate of the Soviet economy had fallen from 7% in 1965-66, the first two years of the Brezhnev regime, to 5% in 1971, the latest year recorded, "largely as a result of the slowing down in the growth of industrial output." It was also stressed that the collectivised farming system had not done well and that the slightest variations in the weather had resulted in major setbacks.

But what these powers gloss over is the fact that the USA (and the West) were also in serious economic difficulties. Wall Street economists had predicted a major world slump by 1975. The USA was no doubt anxious to soften the impact of the threatened slump by increased trade with the communist bloc countries which the US had boycotted for over 25 years.

One aspect of the matter which has received inadequate attention is what the cold war had cost. The liberal democratic magazine, *The Progressive*, from the USA had an interesting piece in a recent issue about what the cold war had cost the



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USA (no similar estimate is available about what it had cost the other countries involved).

"One way of casting the Nixon Administration's penurious approach to the domestic welfare into proper perspective is to compare the President's pleas for 'economy' with the monstrous sums that continue to be squandered on the arms race. A useful—and shocking —reckoning of the costs of the Cold War has been compiled by Professor James L. Clayton of the University of Utah, who estimates that 'on a per capita basis, the first twenty-five years of the Cold War will eventually cost American's about \$ 10,000 each.' Professor Clayton's careful calculations, published in the *Western Political Quarterly* are based in a research study financed by the American Philosophical Society. They show that between 1947 and 1971, the Government of the United States spent a total of \$ 1.7 trillion on war-related matters, and that more than one trillion dollars of this total was directly attributable to the Cold War.

When the ultimate expenses of veterans' benefits and interest on the national debt are added, the cost of the Cold War's first quarter century will rise to about \$ 1.4 trillion. Compared with other wars the United States has fought, Professor Clayton continued "the first twentyfive years of the Cold War is by far the most expensive war this nation ever has engaged in..more than three times the original cost of World War II, thirty-six

times the original cost of World War I and almost 300 times the initial cost of the Civil War."

"To put the \$ 1.4 trillion cost estimate in perspective, he said that this sum: 'Represents more than three times the value of the total assets of all American non-financial business corporations..twice as large as our total corporate after-tax profits since 1940.. somewhat less than the total financial assets of all American households..five times the total national wealth when the war began, ten times our currently outstanding consumer credit, and twenty-six times the total money in circulation in 1970.'

"Professor Clayton estimates that with the money spent or committed to the Cold War, the United States could: (1) Pay the cost of operating the nation's public school system for the next decade; and (2) Give the head of every poor family—as defined by the Social Security Administration—an annual subsidy of \$ 5,000 in each of the next ten years, and (3) Pay for the operation of all institutions of higher learning for the next twenty-five years; and (4) Pay for police protection for the next half century; and (5) Still have enough money left to buy up everything of value in Canada.

"What the Cold War has cost", Professor Clayton writes, 'implies that an answer be given to the corollary questions, namely, who will eventually pay these costs and what have been the political, economic, and social

consequences of these costs. Only when these questions have been answered will we be able to ask the most fundamental question of a 'Was it worth it?'

"We think we can answer that question right now with a resounding No."

That is what the cold war has cost the United States. It could have cost the Soviet Union only a little less. Though the *Economist* thinks that the ideological "struggle" between marxism and liberal democracy will go on, there is no doubt that ordinary people everywhere do not want their governments to spend so much money on this "struggle."

Mr. Brezhnev is more optimistic than many other people that the end of the cold war was almost in sight. The coming weeks will show.

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## ON DAILY CHORES

MAY 13-17

by ANATORY BUKOBA

May 13,

Two's Company, three's a crowd, they say, and never more so, it seems, than here. It was a day of relaxation, and we did what watering we felt was necessary in the morning, and we were more liberal with the water in the evening. Fish from the river has become one of the main items of our diet. The kind of fish which we always seem to catch is called *petiyo*. It is a small fish with a distinguishing solitary black mark like a dot on its body, one on either side. The fish we fry in very hot coconut oil until it becomes crisp, and the bones become like the bones in dried fish, edible.

The water melon plant that I cut carelessly yesterday seems to be making the miraculous recovery that I thought it might, but the damage I did it already looks as if it has retarded its growth. The red onions are in ground that looks as if it has been baked really hard. No doubt the ground it is in would become a quagmire if it rained, but just now the water we put on it seems to run off over the surface, and to hardly penetrate the ground at all.

Our house which strangely kept mosquitoes cut when it was small, even though it was an open house even then, now has mosquitoes in it after it was enlarged. This

has set us a problem. If we close up the house by raising all our cadjan walls to the roof, there will not only be no certainty that it will keep mosquitoes out, but we shall not be able to see into the house when we are working a little distance away, and we shall not know if an intruder or house-breaker is around or not. We have set fire to an old fallen tree tonight, which we carried near the house, to keep the mosquitoes away.

May 14,

This life certainly catches people's imagination. There is the anxiety as to whether we shall be a financial success, and people seemed inclined to leave on this score, but they all grant it is a great life. We are gradually learning to be always busy. The others, I would say, seem to work twice as hard as I, for they do the cooking, which I abhor, but which they seem to like. We are not governed by hours; in fact, we have not a watch between us. We have been very diligent with the watering. There is always the tendency to yearn for the old chena system, cut and burn, and the devil take the hindmost and I have to be ready to fight any inclination towards this. They grant my ideas seem better, to preserve rather than to destroy

and to be financially independent of the money you earn by growing what you eat, but old habits, which seem to have been sanctified or condoned by centuries of practice die hard.

The clearing continued and as always the case the progress we made could be seen. The mamoty was used to uproot the thorn where it grew thickest on the ground that had already been cleared. It was not difficult scraping away at the top soil with the grass and knocking away the thorn roots. The bigger ones needed a few blows with the mamoty shaft, but these were few.

The person who did the actual primary clearing with a light *katha* because our neighbour's heavy *katha* was not available, soon found that it was safer for a man with reasonably hard soles to his feet, to work barefoot than with rubbers like Bata's sandals, for he grows careless with sandals, and is more likely to prick his feet. In fact, many thorns have gone right through the soles of my sandals, and the worst are those which get you on the side. These last are the ones which can get infected and cause you weeks of trouble. The man who works barefoot is more careful to avoid both, the thorns on the flat, and those that catch you on the side.

There are some remarkable birds here. A fairly large blue bird, I mention only the predominant or most striking colour, is the *dumborma* and another is the



*kaha kurulla*, a yellow bird as its name implies. Both birds are among the finest I have seen anywhere. A fairly frequent companion is the *tit-koha*, who reminds me of a crow, but who is better behaved and seems always looking for insects.

We also started preparing today large beds to receive the plants which have grown from the seeds which we sowed and which have been germinated; that it is to say, the land was dug over in beds and much water was carried up from the river to wet the soil turned over. I understand that this will help to break up the soil, and this wetting the soil will have to go on for a few days.

Our poet climbed a tree and came down two trees away. The middle tree was a thorn one and the trees were by no means bunched together.

There is a river below our land,

That is a river full of rocks,  
And the rocks are matched with trees,

That give us plenty of shade.

This is a verse he has just made up.

May 15,

It was a day much like the last few as regards the work we did. We have fitted windows to the house merely by fitting up the space between where the window is and the roof, just leaving a tidy gap for the window. It was done neatly not as cadjan walls are usu-

ally made. These windows are look-outs and look-ins; we can still lie in our beds at nights and look out at the crops, and work in the field and be able to look in to see that all is well. I continued clearing much of the space where our house will eventually stand. This was done with the v.c. *katha*. The ground backs on to the river. Later on when I was working near the road, the iron sheeting (it is only used to cut grass) of the *katha* tore. I cannot really say I struck a stone. Working on our incline it is not easy to give the *katha* full play. The incline forms a natural obstruction, and when working uphill, offers its own resistance. This may have caused the *katha* to break. I was able to get it repaired later on in the day for Rs. 2.50

Our windowed house feels rather hot at a time when it used to feel no such thing. On the other hand, it is more endurable at a time when the heat was worse, when the sun beat in. It looks more finely finished than the house, when it was open, did. This house, as it was, had a kind of rustic or gypsy charm that it lacks now. It had a wild look which the house, as it is now, has not.

There has been a complaint that we have too many people to meals, any casual caller is invited to stay, even if the meal has been cooked. It is certainly hard on the larder, or the cook.

May 16,

Some of the seeds we sowed have grown into quite

big plants now. The seed beds were made where there is much shade. We must try and do some transplanting soon. The bean or mackerel are the biggest of our young vegetable plants. Next biggest is the beet-root. Then the *bandakka* or lady's fingers and the water melon. Seeds which have also germinated are *vatta-kollu*, *malu miris* or cap-sicum, ordinary chillies, *kekiri*, *labbu*, *battu*, *labbu* or *gas labbu* is of course papaw.

Watering is, I think, very necessary at this time. My two energetic companions water everything at least once a day, and that in the evening. A little watering may be done in the morning. It is hard on the man when he has to do watering in the evening, for it is a time when most people have finished their work. It is only companionship which makes it endurable.

This evening I sat on a fallen tree and read a book. Then five or six people turned up to see me. They want English lesson. Their chief concern is to be able to talk it. They said they would come regularly four times a week.

Some of the sores on my feet just do not seem to heal in spite of the penicillin. If walking is painful, standing about is an agony. Especially with a mammoty or *katha*, it takes my mind off pain, because I have to think of what I am doing.

It is difficult not to revert to the fact that this is a life and that it is a very full one.



Problems abound, but friendship overcomes them.

May 17,

We had a visit from the colonisation officer, impromptu on his part, and informal. We had just sat down to our "tenses" the English farmhand's meal at his ten o'clock break, when he turned up. He sat with us but would not eat, and then we showed him what we have grown.

This evening I set fire to all the heaps of vegetation that had been accumulating. There were five, and the result was quite a transformation, for, from our house, it gives us an uninterrupted view of what we have cleared. To me it looked like a great stretch of prairie backed by a forest in the distance.

We had something like porridge today. We cooked a little rice with coconut milk, plantain and sugar and it tasted like porridge and was every bit as good. My friends called it "pol kiri kandha" So we have discovered three things we would like to sell in our shop when we put it up.

There is so much to do, and so few hands and so little time to do it in.

Someone was bitten by a lizard, of all things, today. There was a large swelling which quickly subsided after the application of a stone not my own. My own stone fell on the floor and broke into two pieces.

## THE REAL U.S.A.

# THE 'INNER GOVERNMENT'

When *New York Times* reporter Neil Sheehan read through the entire documentary history of the (Vietnam) war, that history known as the Pentagon Papers, he would come away with one impression above all, which was that the Government of the United States was not what he had thought it was; it was as if there were an inner US government, what he called "a centralized state, far more powerful than anything else, for whom the enemy is not simply the Communists but everything else, its own

There is a constant tussle between working this place up, and going out to work to earn "quick" money, and my task is cut out to hold everybody together.

Newspapers are a thing, I have not seen, hardly, for weeks. Frogs have taken up their abode in our cadjans, and they make a lot of noise. They are better, than mice.

The village seems a more friendly place than when I first came here, and I have learned to fit in, and it is strange how much we are accepted.

We are still collecting seeds from whatever we eat, and these seeds are sown within two or three days at the most, and not kept in packets for weeks like the seeds I had before were.

press, its own judiciary, its own Congress, foreign and friendly governments—all these are potentially antagonistic.

"It had survived and perpetuated itself," Sheehan continued, "often using the issue of anti-communism as a weapon against the other branches of government and the press, and finally, it does not function necessarily for the benefit of the Republic but rather for its own ends, its own perpetuation; it has its own codes which are quite different from public codes. Secrecy was a way of protecting itself, not so much from threats by foreign governments, but from direction from its own population on charges of its own competence and wisdom."

Each succeeding administration, Sheehan noted, was careful, once in office, not to expose the weaknesses of its predecessor. After all, essentially the same people were running the Government, they had continuity to each other, and each succeeding administration found itself faced with virtually the same enemies. Thus the national security apparatus kept its continuity, and every out-going President tended to rally to the side of each incumbent President.

— David Halberstam in  
"The Best and the Brightest"



LAXA PANA

## A 'Mendis Special'—or Darkness At Noon

By  
CANAX

I HAVE KNOWN this friend of mine for so long now, but suddenly I seem to see him in an altogether different light. I called over at his place the other day around seven in the evening—and saw him entirely by candle-light.

His contribution to Electricity Board Chairman Mendis' efforts to popularise the saving habit amongst us is to not use the blessed thing at all, and he proposes to continue that way, without letting the light shine in his eye, from now on forever and a day or till his dying day, whichever takes longer.

The last time my friend got similarly carried away, when NM exhorted us to rally round his bankrupt Treasury and save till it hurt (offering us a Compulsory Savings Scheme as inducement), he actually decided to stop using money altogether. The trouble was that, for some strange reason, his choice of substitutes didn't have the same buying power. The closest he got to by way of explanation, if one can ever explain the inexplicable, was that it had something to do with his never redeeming either his word or his IOUs, though always on principle.

This time, however, he had no such problem. To be or not to be (in the dark) was a

question he, and only he, had to decide. Of course, he was a considerate enough husband to discuss the matter fully with his spouse before he arrived at a decision. He gave her the choice of staying with him, and in the dark, or going back to mother. Hers, naturally. She stayed, he says, which again he finds strange.

MY FRIEND says everybody has been unkind to Mr. Mendis, which is why he decided to give him all the support he can. Much of the criticism, in his view, has been based on hearsay, that the south-west monsoon has gone someplace else for no rhyme or reason, or on downright falsehood, like the story that the water up at Norton Bridge was refusing to flow down, saying it had already found its level.

Everybody's doing it these days, says my friend, and the few who don't sit back and sing the praises of those who do, but the moment poor Terrence tries to get into the non-traditional export act he gets abused from all sides as though he was attempting to sell secrets to the enemy. Nobody's talking about it, but all he was trying to do was sell some power, but with all this ho-ha it looks as if he won't be able to do

even that while the current crisis lasts.

The demand for power is from across Palk Strait, and is quite considerable, according to my buddy. It's not that the Indians don't produce their own power; it's just that they think the imported stuff is better than the local product, the same way we here think when it comes to Indian sarees, Japanese transistors or British sterling. So one can, or should, understand Mr. Mendis's eagerness to cash in on the demand, since it means valuable foreign exchange for the country.

Says my friend, "The Marketing Department has done it quite successfully with our pineapples and mangoes. The locals at first merely grumbled they weren't getting the fruits of our labour, or rather that they weren't getting enough but soon accepted it as an unpleasant though desirable fact of life under socialism. After all, China showed us the way years ago when it starved its millions just so we could have all the rice we wanted. Doing without pine and mango, even power, isn't going to kill us, or if it does it's worth it."

GETTING into the non-traditional export market means persuading the home folk to use less of whatever it is one wants to export, and this is where the CEB came up against its first problem.

Consumer-resistance was obvious from the start, and hardly anybody would lift a finger to switch off that



extra light burning brightly and to no purpose. The way the Board figured it, electricity users had been molly-coddled by having power piped right into their homes and brought literally to their finger-tips.

"People never had to sweat for their power needs, like they have to do for their chillies, their onions and their milk foods," says my friend. "All they had to ever do was flick a switch. It's as bad as giving them water on tap—and you know how difficult it is to get them to save on that."

The Board, he says, was about to drop the whole money-spinning idea when Chairman Mendis came up with one of his own. The problem as he saw it was that where the Marketing Department can, he can't. If only the Board could find a way to at least bottle its product, it was suggested, there would be no need to plead with people for their support.

Seems an emergency session of the Board's research team burnt the midnight oil (instead of the lights) exploring all possible leads—Live, Neutral and Earth—and finally reported back that our hydro schemes weren't advanced enough to entertain the Chairman's idea, let alone contain it.

Only then had the Treasury Rep. on the Board spoken up and said his piece. To produce more was not enough, he had reportedly stressed in a brief but impassioned speech; we had to export or perish. As if to

drive the point home he had added that to call the whole thing off now because of 'some trifling technical difficulties', as he put it, would break NM's heart if not his forthcoming Budget.

THIS WAS an emergency, he had explained, and it called for emergency measures besides regulations. For a start he strongly advocated cutting off all street lighting throughout the island between 6 p.m. and 6 a.m. daily or, if it came to that, even the other way round.

His was a most persuasive theory, that automobiles were expected to provide their own lighting at night, and that went for motor cycles and bicycles, too, so other users of the road such as pedestrians couldn't really complain if they were asked to do likewise—in which case street lighting became not merely superfluous but also a criminal waste of power, to say nothing of the potential foreign exchange loss to the country.

The proposal, says my friend, would have been adopted had not someone suggested that snatch-thieves and cat-burglars would get the wrong impression that the Government was, after all, on their side and that crime, in fact does pay.

A lengthy discussion ensued and took in the relative merits of letting crime march on, since it in its own way helped toward the equal redistribution of wealth, a laudable objective no socialist could seriously quarrel with. The proposal was put aside for future consideration, for it

was felt the Board should plunge the streets in darkness gradually, say over the next 200 years, thus giving people time to evolve sufficiently to be able to see in the dark, like cats can.

My friend is not sure who it was who suggested the plan that was finally accepted and implemented on June 15, but he agrees with it though he feels it doesn't go far enough. Forcing consumers down to a maximum of 50 per cent of the previous month's quota with a 100 per cent surcharge over that is okay, he says, if by that Terrence can add his name to the list of non-trad exporters. He would, of course, like to see people follow his example and do without lights altogether in their homes. Terrence deserves no less, he feels.

The nation's finances apart, my friend says his unilateral decision has made a world of difference to him. When the lights went out, he confided an indefinable something else came back in to his life.

It's obviously still around, for when I left him that evening he was ogling his wife as though he had never seen her before in his life. Of course he hadn't. Not by candle-light, anyway.

For News Behind  
the News

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## CHRONICLE

June 13 - 16

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

**WEDNESDAY, JUNE 13:** The *Daily News* reported that three Ministries were mobilising the Government Agents to plan for maximum production for the Maha season: the PM was to review the work each month. The Associated Newspapers of Ceylon Ltd. (Lake House) has raised objections to the panel of judges on ground of bias which was inherent in former SLFP member, Mr. Justice Jaya Pathirana. The Ceylon Petroleum Corporation it is reported, has decided to set up a second refinery at Trincomalee. Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike, it is reported, had sent a special message to the Indian PM on the situation in Sri Lanka through Mr. W. T. Jayasinghe who has gone to New Delhi for routine talks with officials there on Indo-Ceylon matters. The Minister of Labour, M. P. de Z. Siriwardena, is reported to have fallen ill in Geneva when he was attending a meeting of the ILO: his wife and daughter have flown to Switzerland: his condition is said to be "bad but not critical". Three gunmen hijacked a Nepali Airlines plane and escaped with Rs. 3.8 million (about 141,000 sterling). Sweeping changes have been announced in the Spanish cabinet. *Reuter* reported that the Chinese Foreign Minister, who is on a visit to Paris, had apprised French authorities of Chinese fears over Soviet threats. The astronauts in the *skylab* were studying the earth and the sun. China and North Vietnam made a joint appeal to the US and South Vietnam to implement the peace accord signed about Vietnam. Colonel Gaddafi announced the nationalisation of the Bunker Oil Company in Libya saying that the time had come to threaten American interests in the Arab region.

**THURSDAY, JUNE 14:** The Constitutional Court over-ruled the objections raised by ANCL Ltd. regarding the panel of judges: it was held that the objections about "bias", alleged earlier were groundless. The Government has retained private counsel to appear

on its behalf before the Constitutional Court. A gazette extraordinary was issued decreeing that the use of electricity should be cut down by 50 percent by private consumers, and that any excess of the 50 percent (on the basis of the previous month's consumption) would carry a surcharge of 100 percent. The GMOA—the trade union of government doctors—have threatened to resort to trade union action if their grievances are not redressed (regarding the suppression of posts and the intimidation of posts). The Press Council (General) Regulations, 1973 and the Press Council (Inquiries) Regulations, 1973, made by the Minister of Information and Broadcasting and approved by the National State Assembly, have come into force from June 11: these regulations covering the registration of newspaper proprietors and journalists and inquiries on complaints made to the Press Council were gazetted on June 12. *Lake House* papers made a statement on the newsprint situation showing that it was the delays on the part of the EPMC which had led to the present grave crisis. The National Federation of Livestock Associations issued a statement yesterday that consumer resistance to the price of milk, at which liquid milk was being retailed by the Milk Board now, was causing alarm to dairy farmers: the federation while welcoming the increased price now being offered to producers stated that strong consumer resistance must ultimately affect the producer, and the benefits of an increased price may well be offset by a limited demand: it pointed out that the increase in the price of milk to the consumer was double the price offered to the producer and that the—Milk Board must review the price so as not to damage the producer as well as the consumer; what was essential was that the cost of cattle food should be reduced. Thailand has imposed a total ban on rice imports until the domestic rice shortage was eliminated: but existing government to government contracts with Indonesia would be honoured. President Nixon was under pressure to issue new economic measures to meet the new wave of inflation which has hit the US.

**FRIDAY, JUNE 15:** This was Poson Poya Day and over seven lakhs of pilgrims were expected to flock to Anuradhapura and Mihintale: Mihintale rock was expected to be a blaze



of light tonight. The *Daily News* reported that a team of 40 soviet experts were due here soon to begin work on the first test drilling for oil expected to start about October: the first stratigraphic well will be done in the island of Mannar, and later two more wells will be drilled one of them offshore: the Economic Counsellor of the Soviet Embassy, Mr. Kalinin, at a press conference outlining the programme of work, had also said: "If God has granted oil to Sri Lanka, it will be struck." Three Ministers of the Government were expected to be in Jaffna from June 28 to June 30 to boost United Front prestige in the area by opening various government institutions: the Ministers were, Dr. N. M. Perera (Finance), Mr. Ariyadasa (Health) and Mr. Kumarasurier (Posts and Telecommunications). Sheet rubber (RSS 1) had touched the highest price of Rs. 1.42 per lb on last Wednesday—the highest since 1956. The following had been selected to constitute the Press Council: A. K. Premadasa, Nissanka Wijeratne, Alavi Moulana, S. S. Wijeratne, K. Shanmugalingam and Indrapala Abeywira. Pro-UF Tamils led by the SLFP in Jaffna and branches of the LSSP, CP and TC (progressive) had adopted a resolution opposing the demand for a separate state for the Tamils. The USA, North Vietnam, South Vietnam and the Viet Cong signed a new agreement to implement a new ceasefire, but they could not come to any agreement about Laos or Cambodia. The wedding of Princess Anne to Lt. Mark Phillips was fixed for November 14. A new Centre-Left government was likely to emerge in Italy out of the present governmental crisis. An Israeli Cabinet Minister has stated that Israel was prepared to "trade territories for peace". The Chinese Foreign Minister in a statement in Paris had stated that China did not wish to be a super-power.

**SATURDAY, JUNE 16:** The *Daily News* reported that the Railway will soon have additional rolling stock worth over Rs. 110,000,000 to streamline both the suburban and long distance trains—to implement the programme under the Five Year Plan: the Kelani Valley line would also be developed. In future, students need not enter the University the same year in which they qualified for admission on the results of the GCE (A) examination: instead they could enter the

University within five years of the year in which they qualified. The Education Ministry has turned down appeals from the heads of some leading private schools to relax its ruling which requires students to leave school after they had completed two years in the final class of the GCE (O) or GCE (A)—some schools wanted this rule waived until the ruggar season was over. The Minister of Health has ordered a full inquiry into the grievances of the GMOA. During the Poson celebrations at Mihintale, the GA and the Nayaka Thera thanked the *Lake House* (ANCL LTD) for having spent the money to provide illumination for the sacred area in Mihintale. The *Sun* and the *Daily Mirror* reported that the Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs was likely to approve the request by the CTB and the Minister of Communications for foreign exchange (or credits from the Consortium) to import 450 buses costing over Rs. 15 million. The Central Electricity Board (CEB) has stated that, because of continuing drought in the reservoir area, further power cuts were likely in the near future. The curfew which was clamped down over parts of Delhi on Wednesday after clashes between Hindus and Muslims has been extended until Saturday morning with only short breaks every day. The second ceasefire agreement in Vietnam was hailed a great victory by Le Duc Tho. There was a major Cabinet reshuffle in North Vietnam after delegates, who had gone to China and had met Mao Tse-tung, returned to Hanoi: North Vietnam was pleased about the Chinese promises of military and economic aid.

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TOPICAL

## BREZHNEV'S U.S. VISIT - 2

by BASIL PERERA

BREZHNEV has concluded a very successful one-week visit to the USA. When we last summed up the results of his visit, he had concluded four Soviet-US Agreements on Agriculture, World Ocean Studies, Transportation, and Cultural Cooperation. Since then further agreements have been concluded.

The two world leaders have signed an agreement on Scientific and Technical Cooperation in the field of peaceful uses of Atomic Energy. It is said in the preamble that the agreement is intended to establish a more stable and long-term basis for cooperation in this field for the benefit of both peoples and of all mankind.

Under this agreement the USSR and the USA will expand and strengthen their cooperation in research development and utilisation of nuclear energy, having as a primary objective the development of new energy sources.

A protocol on greater cooperation in air traffic has also been signed between the USSR and the USA. The protocol provides for the extension of air links between the two countries on a mutual basis, specifically, for extending air service beyond Moscow and New York to Washington and Leningrad and for greater frequency of charter flights.

A NEW CONVENTION on taxation has also been concluded. Its basic aim is to create favourable conditions for a further development of mutually advantageous relations between the USSR and the USA in the field of trade, economic, scientific, technical and cultural cooperation. The convention envisages mutual exemption from taxes on returns from the use, sale or exchange of licences, patents and technical information, credit operations connected with the financing of trade between the USSR and the USA, transportation by sea and air, purchasing, storage, demonstration and advertising of exported commodities.

Noting with satisfaction the growth of Soviet-American trade since the last Brezhnev-Nixon meeting in Moscow last year, the two leaders have declared their aim to raise the total turnover of trade between them to 2000-3000 billion dollars over the next 3 years.

To help achieve this target they have decided to set up a trade representation of the USSR in Washington and a commercial office of the USA in Moscow. A Soviet-US Chamber of Commerce is also envisaged.

Two of the most important agreements entered into by Brezhnev and Nixon during their recent summit talks

relate to the limitation of strategic arms and the prevention of nuclear war.

It will be recalled that during Nixon's visit to Moscow last year the USSR and USA concluded an important agreement on the limitation of anti-ballistic missile systems and an interim agreement on certain measures with respect to the limitation of strategic offensive arms. These agreements, for the first in history, placed actual limits on the most formidable types of modern armaments.

Now having reviewed the progress of the implementation of these agreements, the two countries have pledged to make further efforts to work out the provisions of a permanent agreement on more complete measures on the limitation of strategic offensive arms, both as regards their quantitative aspects and their qualitative improvements, subject to adequate verification. The understanding reached on the basic principles of further negotiations over this problem holds out the hope to mankind that an end will be put to the nuclear missiles armaments race.

THE AGREEMENT between the USSR and the USA on the prevention of nuclear war has as its main purpose the removal of the danger of a US-Soviet nuclear war and of the use of nuclear weapons. It also has as its purpose the prevention of the outbreak of nuclear war between either side and other states. To achieve this object the parties agree to refrain from



the threat or use of force against the other party or its allies or against other countries, and to act in such a manner as to avoid military confrontations or the development of situations capable of causing a dangerous exacerbation of their relations leading to nuclear war.

Brezhnev has referred to the importance of this agreement "for the peace and tranquility of the peoples of our two countries, for improving the prospects of a peaceful life for all humanity," while President Nixon has said "that when the two most powerful nations in the world agree not to use force or the threats of force in their relations with each other and also not to use force or the threats of force in their relations with other countries, this step really instils great hopes, because in a world community, real peace can prevail only when the weak have the same security as the strong."

William Fulbright, Chairman of the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee, has hailed this agreement as adopting a new "code of conduct" between the two powers. He has noted that this agreement is the result of the change for the better in US-Soviet relations and the consequent greater confidence in each other, and welcomed the agreement as "a really rational and sensible approach to the solution of important problems."

THE PREAMBLE to the agreement on the prevention of nuclear war states that both parties are conscious

## LETTER

# Singapore, Indonesia and China

From A Correspondent

Singapore, Singapore's Prime Minister, Lee Kuan Yew, and Mrs. Lee, paid an official visit to Indonesia from 25th to 28th May, and thereafter paid an unofficial visit to Medan and Prapat from the 28th to the 31st. The Prime Minister was accompanied by Minister of Foreign Affairs, S. Rajaratnam, and Senior Minister of State, Inche A. Rahim Ishak, and a group of officials. This visit, as evidenced by the joint communique issued at the end of the meeting, showed that the misunderstandings and difficulties which had arisen from the time of

of that "nuclear war would have devastating consequences for mankind," and that it is their desire to "bring about conditions in which the danger of an outbreak of nuclear war anywhere in the world would be reduced and ultimately eliminated."

They also re-affirm that the development of relations between the USSR and the USA is not directed against other countries and their interests. This should be sufficient assurance to those who peddle the myth of so-called US-Soviet collusion for nuclear blackmail and domination of the world.

In their review of the international situation Brezhnev and Nixon have noted the positive trends that are deve-

Sukarno's policy of "confrontation" had disappeared finally. After Suharto had come to power, visible and invisible ties had developed and increased between the leaders of the Singapore government and the more influential among the Generals in power in Jakarta.

ONE of the more important matters agreed upon was formalised in a Treaty defining the delimitation of the territorial seas of the two countries in the Straits of Singapore. This was signed in Jakarta on May 25th. Apart from discussing the quest-

loping in favour of detente and relaxation of international tension, both in Asia and Europe. They have expressed their intention to contribute towards further peace in these continents by seeking to end the conflict in Cambodia, and making a success of the coming conference on European Security and the negotiations of Mutually-Balanced Force Reductions (MBFR).

But on the question of the Middle East, the US and the USSR, apart from exchanging opinions and setting forth their respective positions on this problem, have made no headway at all, so that this area will remain a hotbed of dangerous tension for some time more yet.



ion of the safety of navigation in the Straits of Malacca as well, the communique noted the growing ties of cordiality and friendship between the two countries. Plans were also laid for economic co-operation between the two countries. This has already led a 'products' exchange and products' sales agreement' between Indonesia's state-owned Pertamina Oil Corporation and the quasi-government Singapore Petroleum Company. Singapore's giant and sophisticated refineries will in future process Indonesian crude, and the invisible trade which had slowly developed between the two countries in products like kerosene and bitumen will now be fully regularised.

Pertamina's President Ibnu Sutowo had rounded off his talks in Singapore with a well-publicised call on Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister Goh Ken Swee. Goh is reputedly the Singapore leader closest to the ruling generals in Jakarta, but these contacts had, up to now, been kept out of the limelight. It must be remembered that the overseas Chinese in Indonesia still have very close business and financial ties with Indonesian ruling circles, and though these Chinese may claim to be anti-communist, their emotional and other loyalties to Peking are as deep-rooted as they are invisible.

THAT is why there was a special clause in the Suharto-Lee joint communique about relations with China. The communique showed a great deal of understanding between the two countries on

questions like Vietnam, ASEAN, Indo-China, South-east Asian regional security and non-alignment. But on the question of China, the communique stated: "The two Heads of Government also discussed the problems of stability in the West Pacific region, including the problem of relations with the People's Republic of China. They agreed that the establishment or normalisation of relations with the People's Republic of China should take into account the domestic situation in their respective countries, regional cohesiveness as well as the problems of peace in general."

Although it is not openly admitted, one of the psychological barriers against the normalisation of relations with China centres around rice. Last year there was a rice crisis of great magnitude in Indonesia which had cost the Government foreign exchange reserves for some 600,000 tons of rice at \$ 135 per ton, and common people as well as influential sections of the ruling group associate the rice crisis with local Chinese merchant manipulators who it is alleged, rightly or wrongly, were either inspired by or prompted by Peking to make things difficult for the Suharto regime.

In 1972, the food (rice) crisis in Indonesia had become extremely acute, especially from the beginning of the year. The rice shortage in the most densely populated parts of the country (central and east Java, South Sumatra, South Sulawesi) resulted in sky-rocketing the price of rice, two times over.

Famine occurred in parts of Java and Sumatra, and at the same time the price of other consumer items too rose sharply—kerosene, sugar, salt, dried fish, etc. One kg of rice in Jakarta in December 1972 cost 120 rupiahs whereas it had only been 40-50 rupiahs in June. Naturally, the food crisis brought civil disturbances and this led to bitter denunciations in parliament, and students and other political groups had also become restive.

WHY did the crisis become so bad? Why did the measures the Government had taken at the initial stages prove futile? The Government had acted with a certain amount of promptitude in regard to its own reserve buffer stocks, but the crisis could not be contained. This year again the price of rice is rising, but this they say is usual when the main crop is being harvested in April, May and June, but unlike last year everybody seems to be on their toes to prevent a repetition of the 1972 fiasco.

What really had happened last year?

It is true that the weather was not favourable for rice growing. A severe drought had lasted nearly six months and around 20 percent of the crops had perished. The second crop for the year also proved to be bad. Furthermore, it was extremely difficult to purchase rice abroad: the US had no surpluses, Japan lacked processing equipment, dockers were on strike in Pakistan, and in any case there were only very few



freight carriers to transport rice. The Indonesian government had been aware about all this as early as March/April, and the Government had taken what it thought were adequate measures to secure reserve stocks of rice in its granaries. Neither the government nor the people had even remotely anticipated that they would be faced with a rice crisis which in turn generated a crisis in many other consumer articles.

THE GOVERNMENT had set up a purchasing organisation, the National Committee for Food Supplies (known by the local abbreviation BULOGNAS), some years previously and it had done excellent work. In 1972 when the danger signals were hoisted about rice shortages, the Government had pinned all its hopes on BULOGNAS to purchase every grain of available rice for the government's buffer stocks. But something went wrong. For some unaccountable reason, BULOGNAS changed its procedures for purchase from peasants for the 1972-73 season. In 1971, BULOGNAS had purchased rice from cultivators at the price of 36 rupiahs per kg allowing 35 percent of broken rice. This allowance was given because the local rice mills could do no better: the smaller mills could not improve on its quality and the distant ones were faced with increased transport charges.

In 1972 the peasant cultivators were reluctant to sell to BULOGNAS because they did not get ready cash as in previous years. And BULOGNAS became more

choosy about quality. The budget allocations for rice purchases, channelled through the Central Bank, had also been strangely delayed. In the first six months of 1972 the procurement of rice by BULOGNAS was only 70,000 tons as compared to the 240,000 tons for the same period in 1971, and it must be remembered that the drought had only affected 20 percent of the crop.

At the time the crisis broke out in August/September 1972, BULOGNAS had a buffer stock of only 180,000 tons of rice (though it was officially indicated through the press—to prevent any panic—that the buffer was 387,000 tons as on April 1, 1972). As result of its inability to procure enough stocks locally, BULOGNAS had no alternative but to look for stocks abroad. BULOGNAS had so badly handled its affairs in 1972 that it was not even able to estimate the rice stocks in the country, governmental buffer stocks excluded.

However, the Government was able to know through its Intelligence Services that the private sector had accumulated large stocks of rice for speculative and profiteering purposes. Strangely enough 90 percent of the private sector in the rice trade in Indonesia was in the hands of the local chinese: rice crushers, mills, flour-grinding mills, bakeries, rice markets were all controlled by local chinese merchants. This class of compradore chinese traders had a firm grip over the procurement and distribution of rice in

the country. This had been their monopoly for a long time dating back to Dutch times. BULOGNAS had been set up to reduce the viciousness of this monopoly and to start a small public sector in the rice and food supplies' trade. But in reality, the private sector had secretly "taken over" BULOGNAS, and in many distant regions outside Java, difficult of access, private chinese merchants worked in close collusion with the representatives of BULOGNAS. The private sector offered lower prices to the peasants, often 13.5 rupiah per kg, but the chinese merchant paid spot ready cash for his purchases and he did not raise stupid difficulties about quality and other specifications.

WHAT WAS even more strange was that these private merchants were able to get considerable bank credits from the Central Bank on preferential rates when BULOGNAS was not even able to get the funds budgetarily allocated to it. The red tape (or worse) in the Central Bank had held up these funds to BULOGNAS, and the field was thus left open to the private sector to operate in the rice market in 1972. And with this advantage the private merchants were able to build up enough stocks to influence and control the market. These private merchants began to shoot up the prices once it was clear that the Government and BULOGNAS were in no position to influence market prices. The fact that the Government had no reserves created a panic and



the rice which the private merchants released into the market soon began to fetch twice the price it did a few weeks previously. To make matters worse, a good part of the rice in the granaries of BULOGNAS went bad owing to bad storage and carelessness. In some areas, the merchants did not even want to sell the rice at the enhanced prices, and the result was riots and disturbances in places like Lampung.

All these facts set out indicate that the extreme gravity of the rice crisis in Indonesia in 1972 was more man-made than anything else, created by the selfish anti-national activities of the local merchants of Chinese origin. The Government had been lax about changing the balance of economic power to help nationalistically-minded Indonesian bourgeoisie to step into the shoes of these expatriate elements. Certain observers feel that the rice crisis was also politically motivated in order to denigrate the Suharto regime. If things had gone on in the normal way, the culmination of rice crisis would have gathered head by February-March 1973, at the beginning of the first session of the new Parliament, which was to elect the new President and Vice-President. The rice crisis, if it had not been contained, could have created a seething anti-government atmosphere in many areas, especially in the outer islands far away from the capital.

IT IS also felt that these local merchants would not have acted in the way they did to politicise the rice crisis

—without inspiration from abroad, and that this could have come, it is alleged, only from Peking. This had become so much of a talking point in Indonesia that Foreign Minister Adam Malik had to refute a statement issued by the Ministry of Defence and Security on November 17, 1972 that a subversive ring had been unearthed in Indonesia which had for its objective the undermining of the country's economy.

Although Malik prevented a major flare-up on this score against the local Chinese, the Government has taken action to reorganise the BULOGNAS and its security services are even now investigating how and why it had blundered in 1972.

As a result of this sabotage by BULOGNAS, Indonesia had to import rice in 1972. Up to November 1972, 700,000 tons of rice had been imported into the country, 95 million dollars in aid, and 81 millions on commercial terms. From November 1972 to March 1973, 1.3 billion tons of rice (23 millions on aid and over 100 million on commercial terms) were imported into Indonesia.

Jakarta has also asked for increased assistance for 1973/74 from the west for food purchases, i.e. to push up credits to 160 million dollars. Before the end of 1973 it is expected that such purchases will be over 200 million dollars, which is twice the imports of rice during the period 1960-65 and four times that of 1971. The demand for rice from Indonesia from the world markets pushed up

the price of rice in every part of the world, and Indonesia was compelled to buy rice from the most unlikely quarters.

THE SUHARTO regime had even to put aside its ideological predilections and ask China for rice, and in October 1972 Indonesia purchased 115,500 tons of Chinese rice through Hongkong for just over 16 million dollars. China was one of the rice exporters which benefited by the increased world prices for this commodity.

This is the reason why President Suharto when he opened the new Parliament (People's Consultative Congress—MPR) in March this year, after denouncing the "megalomaniac policies" of the past, ridiculing the Old Order of "crises and upheavals" and pointing out that the New Order "only inherited economic ruin", went on among other matters to discuss the normalisation of relations with China. He said: "With the People's Republic of China, which manifestly supported the September 30 PKI rebellion, we are willing to resume diplomatic relations provided it really demonstrates a friendly attitude towards us, is not hostile to us, and ceases to render assistance and facilities to former PKI leaders who were positively involved in the rebellion.."

It must be remembered that this speech was made long after Nixon had established a *detente* with China, and Australia under Whitlam had declared a new policy



of friendship with China. Malaysia is known to be pressing hard for the full recognition of China in ASEAN and elsewhere. Nevertheless, Suharto was still adamant about China, and the recent Suharto-Lee joint communique made this clear:

IT IS ADMITTED that if the local Chinese had not played the role they did in 1972's rice crisis, Suharto would have been softened a little more towards Peking. Though he defended the local Chinese in his speech against the chauvinists and fanatics (that the non-indigenous group who were citizens should be accorded the same rights as the indigenous people), he went on to say that since the Chinese "generally enjoyed greater wealth and better economic position", they should give indigenous Indonesians opportunities and "the possibility to participate in their enterprises and share the gain." What this meant was that Suharto wanted to stimulate "social solidarity" which would "level off the economic capabilities of the two groups," thereby making the indigenous more prone to welcome the non-indigenous "right to live and right to economic enterprise."

What Suharto wants is that the local Chinese traders and merchants should come to terms with their counterparts among the Indonesians. If and when this happened, the Suharto regime would find it easier to normalise relations with Peking. And the population would not blame the Chinese merchants alone for any crisis in rice.

## ABOUT DUDLEY

By  
A Student of Politics

A number of strange things were said and done after the demise of the late Mr. Dudley Shelton Senanayake. One strange claim made by some admirers was that Dudley had been Prime Minister of this country no fewer than FOUR times in 25 years.

THERE is a very interesting book written by a former political correspondent of the Associated Newspapers of Ceylon Mr. J. L. Fernando. It is "Three Prime Ministers of Ceylon." It is published by Messrs. M. D. Gunasena & Co. It first appeared in 1963. Under a photograph of Dudley is the statement that he had been Prime Minister from March 1952 to October 1953 and from March 1960 to July 1960. We know that in July 1960 Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike became Prime Minister. We also know that Mrs. Bandaranaike's Coalition Party fell late in 1964 for want of one vote.

As a result of the following General Election Dudley Senanayake came to power with only a very slender majority but allying himself with some six other minor parties he was able to form a government known to the people as the "Hath Havulla" Government. This party under Senanayake ruled for the full five year term, then went to the polls in May 1970. In that General Election Dudley and his party were defeated more igno-

miniously than any previous ruling party in the history of Democracy.

**As I see it, Dudley Senanayake was therefore prime minister exactly THREE times and not more as claimed by enthusiasts at his funeral.**

Old newspapers of the year 1959 record the fact that Dudley Senanayake had "prophesied" the fall of Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike's government before the year was out. A good prophet.

In "Three Prime Ministers of Ceylon" on page 51 there appears a touching letter of gratitude written by Dudley to the author of the book who, at the time, was the political correspondent of the Associated Newspapers of Ceylon. The letter was written to Mr. J. L. Fernando on the 27th March 1952.

Writing from Temple Trees on his becoming Premier for the first time (upon the death of his father) Dudley shows that he is happy to become Prime Minister and he wishes to thank Mr. J. L. Fernando—the political correspondent—and also Lake House (the Associated Newspapers) for the part they played in his gaining this position. The letter is signed and is written in acknowledgement of Fernando's letter of congratulation. Mr. Fernando has done a service to the public in writing this interesting book.



# IS IT TRUE?

## Sherlock Holmes

### ❁ ON HOTELS

IS IT NOT TRUE that the Ceylon Hotels Corporation (CHC) has invested heavily in the new hotel's business intended to boost the tourist industry? That for the year 1972 that the CHC investment had totalled Rs. 6,199,303 out of a subscribed share capital of Rs. 7,232,000? That the investments are as follows: Associated Hotels Ltd.—Rs. 2,316,435; United Hotels Ltd. Rs. 932,848; Hotel Services Ltd—Rs. 2,500,000; B. Arnolda Ltd—Rs. 200,000; Pegasus Reef Hotel Ltd—Rs. 250,000? That, on simple arithmetic this represents 94.7 percent of the subscribed capital? That the Auditor General himself has remarked that "the results of the Ceylon Hotels Corporation depend to a great extent on the performance of the above investments?"

That in a supplement to mark the opening of the new Hotel Ceylon Intercontinental it was revealed that the Secretary to the Treasury (i.e. the Government) had Rs. 14,707,690 in preferred stock of the total of subscribed capital of Rs. 23,207,690? That this represented 63.37 percent? That of the common stock of Rs. 8,500,000, the Ceylon Hotels Corporation held Rs. 2,500,000 which

represented 10.77 percent of the total capital? That over 74 percent of the capital of the new Hotel Ceylon Intercontinental is held by the Government and the CHC which is virtually another government outfit? That the Inter-Continental Hotels Corporation Ltd. of Bermuda held Rs. 3,500,000 which represented 15.08 percent of the sharecapital? That the shareholders of the earlier company known as Hotel Intercontinental Ltd. which was succeeded by the new company known as Hotel Services Ltd., was Rs. 1,248,150, representing Rs. 5.39 percent of the capital? That the balance was made up as follows: Union Co. Ltd—Rs. 400,000 (1.72%); The Autodrome Ltd—Rs. 400,000 (1.72%); Gardiner Motors Ltd—Rs. 200,000 (0.86%); Hotel Intercontinental Ltd—Rs. 181,850 (0.79%); Mr. Cyril Gardiner—Rs. 70,000 (0.30%)? That in addition to the above capital subscription, a loan of 3,362,000 US dollars (approximately Rs. 22 million) had been obtained from the Import-Export Bank of the United States at 6% per annum repayable over a period of 12 years with a year's moratorium on repayment of loan instalments?

That with the loan from the US, the new Hotel represented an investment of Rs. 55 million? That at the end of the first year the Hotel must pay the US Import and Export Bank not only interest at 6% but also make capital re-payments in instalments? That with the income and other ceilings in this country not many people can afford the luxury of even having a meal at the Hotel Ceylon Intercontinental? That foreign tourists have to make this investment pay? That it will be interesting to see how much will come in during the first three years? That the airlines and travel agencies get the pickings first from the tourists?

That a time may come in the not too distant future when it will be held that an investment of Rs. 55 million in a more constructively purposeful industry than "tourism" would have been of greater benefit to Sri Lanka? That when the real beneficiaries of "tourism" are known, in local currency and in foreign exchange, it will be a Watergate in Sri Lanka? That the employment generated by the Rs. 55 million in this hotel will be minimal? That it is now recognised the world over that tourism is an ephemeral "industry" which will disappear before a slump and depression? That Wall Street already anticipates a major world slump in 1974/75?

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