

TRIBUNE

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• • •
● RICE IMPORTS

● CHRONICLE

● SHAMBA

● INANIA

● POLLUTION

● MIDDLE EAST

● KAMARAJ
& GANDHI

● ATTANAGALLA

FISSIPAROUS

The United Front Government will have only itself to blame if deeply fissiparous, dangerously disintegrationist and parochially separatist tendencies proliferate in this country, and begin to gather momentum subverting all efforts made to achieve national integration, communal cohesion and civil harmony in multi-racial, multi-lingual, multi-religious and multi-caste Sri Lanka. Not very long ago, it was revealed that a Committee of Experts had recommended that seventy percent of the admissions to the Universities should be made according to (1) the total population of districts and (2) the communal ratio of Sinhalese, Tamil and Muslims. Only thirty percent were to be selected on merit, that is, on the results of the Entrance examinations. The reason for this method of selection was said to be that "students from the Western and Northern districts dominated the science-based courses." In actual practice, the Committee of Experts had only attempted to formulate what the Ministry of Education had practised, in fact, from 1970 under the cover of a subterfuge called *standardisation*. And the categorisation itself is insanely peculiar, two are on a racial basis whilst the third is on religious footing. If Muslims deserve special treatment, what about depressed class Christians and low caste Buddhists and others? The Report of the Specialists only made public what had been done in secrecy for four years—and when there was an uproar from many quarters, including some U.F.ers, the Minister of Education pretended that he would remove all communal taint in the scheme of admissions and make the selections on a district basis. This kind of political humbug will undermine any chance there may be for genuine national unity based on consensus—*majority power and army power cannot bring about such unity. And, now "the people of Attanagalla" have been glorified as heroes for taking the law into their own hands. Their unlawful actions are said to be in the right of self defence. Nobody will have any use for a Constitution whose fundamental provisions lend themselves to such pettyfogging casuistry and quibbling.*

Tribunania

* How Much Rice Must We Import In 1974?

THE DECISION to issue an extra half measure of rice to every ration book holder at Rs. 1 is a welcome step. It was first decided that in December this extra half measure would be issued only in 13 districts which have been classified as deficit areas, while 9 districts which are said to be in surplus as rice-producing areas were denied this extra half measure. But when protests started mounting that these nine surplus districts had been depleted of stocks of off-ration rice by purchases from other areas, the Government has taken a realistic view and decided to issue the extra half measure to all ration book holders in January. This will bring a great deal of relief to ordinary people who have recently been hard put to find anything to eat at all. The Government is no doubt able to issue this extra half measure because of shipments of rice which have already come in from China and more of which are on the way.

This is a sane and sensible decision taken opportunely without being sidetracked by stories of hoarded stocks and profiteering traders. Price control of off ration rice at this juncture, would be a futile exercise

because there are no worthwhile stocks to price control—and, moreover, such restrictive measures will have the most depressing effect on production. What the Government expects from the Maha is not known, but it would be unrealistic to expect too much.

In recent weeks, daily newspapers have been speculating on the possible crop estimates because this was important for the trade talks which opened in Peking on December 15. How much rice should Sri Lanka get from China under the barter Rice and Rubber Agreement? One year ago, on December 7, 1972, the *Times of Ceylon*, in a frontpage report, reflected the optimistic enthusiasm then being exuded by Governmental circles under the following headlines: BUMPER MAHA HARVEST EXPECTED: LESS RICE FROM CHINA IN '73. The report read as follows: "Sri Lanka would be importing less rice from China in 1973. This is because a bumper harvest is expected this Maha season. Apart from this, the acreage under paddy has also been increased. A Government spokesman said that next year Sri Lanka would be importing about 150,000 tons of rice from China. Under the Rubber Rice Pact, Sri Lanka had been importing 200,000 tons of rice from China every year. The spokesman, however, said that Sri Lanka would have to find some other items to be imported from China to honour the pact.

"The production target for 1973 is 87 million tons of

paddy. The actual paddy harvest during 1972 was only 71 million tons. Maha 45 million tons and Yala 25 million tons. Burma which had to supply 60,000 tons of rice during 1972 failed to do so due to a bad harvest. She is expected to supply this quantity of rice during 1973. Sri Lanka has also entered into an agreement with Pakistan for the supply of rice and about 50,000 tons is expected to arrive early next year.

"Meanwhile, the Japanese Economic Mission which was here recently had shown keenness to help Sri Lanka achieve self sufficiency in rice production by imparting improved cultivation techniques and the use of a better variety of seed paddy and fertilizers."

IN THE FIRST quarter of 1973, the Minister of Agriculture and his officials painted rosy pictures of the gloriously bumper crop that would be harvested in the Maha of March/April 1973. Most of the daily newspapers swallowed this sugary talk of harvests, and *Tribune's* report and commentaries that both the Maha and Yala would be less than half of what was expected were ridiculed by official circles. When the final PMB purchase figures were known, it was found that even *Tribune's* expectations were not attained.

In the past, such shortfalls in crop estimates, as compared to actual yields, were covered by imports, but in 1973 this could not be done because of global grain shortages, which had also pushed

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up the price of rice from £50 a ton to £ 150 a ton. Wheat prices had also trebled. One unfortunate aspect of the food situation in Ceylon was that in the war years and in the years after that the Senanayake regimes had found a convenient way of meeting insufficient rice production by importing wheat flour which was comparatively cheap.

By 1969-70, at the height of Dudley Senanayake's grow-more food campaign, Ceylon was importing very nearly 400,000 tons of wheat flour in addition to the 300,000 odd tons of rice. In getting the people of this island to get accustomed to wheat — a grain that does not grow in Ceylon — is an economical crime that has no parallel.

The United Front government had also failed to take the necessary corrective steps to ensure adequately increasing food production. On the other hand, it stopped the momentum which Dudley Senanayake's grow-more-food campaign had gathered. It was only in mid-1973 that the UF discovered some of the true realities. This crisis was met as reported by B. H. S. Jayawardene in the *Observer*.

"The Prime Minister Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike's decision to head the production team to bring the largest possible acreage under paddy cultivation during the coming Maha season is significant, welcome and timely: This is particularly so because production of rice in Sri Lanka during the past few seasons has been low and targets have been missed by wide margins.

"The government has decided to minimise imports of rice and if possible totally ban rice imports in 1974. This of course could be achieved only if local production is satisfactory if not adequate. Official figures reveal that in 1972 Sri Lanka was still only at 62 percent near the ultimate target which is really a drop from an earlier year when she was producing 74 percent of her requirements.

"The drop in production was caused by a variety of reasons mainly weather conditions. On paper, if not in practice, there have been ceaseless efforts by co-ordinated government agencies to improve and increase production. But, results have not been as anticipated. This is possibly because activity on the fields is something quite different to theories worked out in files in government offices. The proposed co-ordinating body headed by Mrs. Bandaranaike may well bridge this gap....."

A new administrative machinery was set up by the Prime Minister to direct the food production drive and a great deal was expected. On paper, officials showed how Ceylon could become self-sufficient—mainly on the basis of what they claimed had been done earlier. But these pundits did not realise that the tanks, depleted by three partial monsoons over three years, could not sustain the large acreages under them even if the initial rains were not extra plentiful. In fact, after a slight promise of rain in October and early November, the northeast monsoon

has been sluggish. The rains however, were not enough, to fill up this tanks, and most of the tank-fed paddy fields are still not sown. It is now too late in the day to turn to sources of groundwater which is plentiful and adequate even for paddy cultivation. In India, it was two

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years of hard work, with equipment manufactured in India itself, to lift adequate ground water supplies in rain deficient areas to grow rice and other cereals.

The realisation that the monsoon was inadequate brought consternation to governmental circles which had expected something very different from the food production drive which had been inaugurated with fanfare and the blessings of religious dignitaries. The *Times of Ceylon*, on November 27, cautiously reflected the difficult situation under a tendentious headline: **GRAIN SELF-SUFFICIENCY IN INDIA BY NEXT YEAR, BUT, OUR MAHA CROP HIT BY DROUGHT.** The report began: "... While India which was in the world market for rice is expected to be self-sufficient in this grain next year, Sri Lanka's Maha crop is not likely to come up to expectations. This is because the Maha rice growing areas such as Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa have not had sufficient rain...."

FURTHERMORE, with so many conflicting figures about paddy production which appear in the newspapers, it is difficult to decide where one stands. The closest we can get to something official (and much of this we believe is based on approximations) is as follows: 1966-66 m bushels; 1967-55 m bushels; 1968-65 m bushels; 1969-66 m bushels and 1970-77 m bushels. This production is for the two seasons, Maha and Yala. Since 1970, production has fallen, partly due to weather conditions and part-

ly due to the acts of commission and omission of the Government.

When Ministers and government officials speak about paddy production they are not specific about whether they refer to one season or both seasons, and newspapers which report these statements do not take the trouble to get immediate clarification either. With the result there is a great deal of muddled thinking on the subject because of the confused presentation of statistics much of which is questionable.

IT IS THE UNCERTAINTY about the statistical computations which make it difficult for the Government to decide now the amount of rice they should import in 1974. At one time, it was suggested that Sri Lanka did not need anything more than the 40,000 tons which the country was getting from China as an advance on the 1974 contract. This quantity was believed to be sufficient to provide half a measure per person until March 1974 when it was predicted that a bumper crop would make Sri Lanka self-sufficient in rice.

But these hopes have already been dashed to the ground. The mere half measure of rice has been found to be totally inadequate and the manioc, battala and other substitutes which governmental optimists had fondly hoped would bridge the gap have not been grown or produced in sufficient quantities or as expeditiously as expected. There are also no hoarded stocks of rice to unearth as some blinded witch hun-

ters in the government had believed. The result is that the Government has decided to increase the half measure ration, in two territorial stages, to one measure, and have expressed the pious intention of making this increased issue only for a month. This is again based on the hope that early Maha crops would bring in off-ration rice into the market by February and thus relieve the pressure on the governmental rationing scheme.

Optimists who believed that the Government need not import anything more than 100,000 or 125,000 tons of rice for next year are fewer today, but there are still many of them in high places. More realistic officials, it is said, have stated quite clearly that anything from 200,000 to 250,000 tons must be imported if minimum requirements are to be sustained. It is difficult to speculate on the kind of brief which has been given Minister Illangaratne who will negotiate the 1974 Protocol under the Rice and Rubber Agreement with China. The newspaper reports on this subject reflect this dilemma. The *Daily News* on December 12, under the headline **ILLANGARATNE GOES FOR PEKING TALKS: 100,000 TONS OF RICE FROM CHINA IN 1974** reported as follows: "The Minister of Foreign and Internal Trade, Mr. T. B. Illangaratne, leaves for Peking at midnight tomorrow December 13 to sign the 1974 Sino-Sri Lanka barter agreement. A team of officials is already in China for preliminary talks. Mr. Illangaratne told the *Daily*

News that under the 1974 agreement Sri Lanka will negotiate to purchase 100,000 tons of rice with the option of purchasing more in the event of it becoming necessary later next year. He added that in addition Sri Lanka proposed to purchase other commodities such as tractors, raw materials, textiles and crude oil from China and to induce China in turn to purchase a larger quantity of non-traditional commodities from Sri Lanka."

Reading between the lines, it is clear that Sri Lanka was laying the foundation for importing much more than 100,000 tons, and this is what the *Sun*, now not very sympathetic to the Government, stated in a report, also on December 12, under the headline: NO REDUCTION IN RICE IMPORTS FROM CHINA: 200,000 TONS NEXT YEAR, AS USUAL:—

"Sri Lanka is to negotiate for 200,000 tons of rice from China, after all. Despite earlier proposals to cut down on rice imports from China next year, the authorities have finally decided to negotiate for 200,000 tons—the quantity which Sri Lanka has been buying from China in the past years. Among the reasons for this move are the anticipated shortfall in the Maha paddy targets due to the drought and the necessity to build up a substantial buffer stock.

"Particularly in view of the big increase in the price of rice, the Minister of Foreign and Internal Trade, Mr. T. B.

Ilangaratne, it is learnt, has been authorised to work out how the 200,000 tons should be sought and provided for in the Sino-Lanka trade pact for 1974. Official sources say Sri Lanka is not in a position to expect all the rice to be given in return for our rubber, particularly in view of the price differences that may arise. Hence, Mr. Ilangaratne is expected to negotiate for as much rice as possible for our rubber. This barter deal is expected to be covered by the Rubber-Rice Pact (categorised under Schedule "A" of the trade agreement).

"Whatever quantity that will remain is expected to be covered under Schedule 'B' of the agreement. Informed sources say Sri Lanka is expected to offer a wide range of non-traditional goods as payment for quantities under Schedule "B" or, in the alternative, seek favourable long term credit facilities. In the event of the quantity of rice on Schedule "A" being agreed upon at 100,000 tons, indications in trade circles yesterday were that Sri Lanka would in turn offer around 30,000 to 35,000 tons of rubber. The rubber market is having a boom time at present with prices steadily rising due to the oil crisis and its effect on synthetic rubber production."

There is no doubt that the *Sun* is nearer the mark than the *Daily News*. Certain government circles seem to be still labouring under "we will be self-sufficient in 1974" hangover and the *Daily News* seems to reflect this.

Sri Lanka cannot hope to be self-sufficient in 1974, and the Government will have to do much more than assert its authority and make a show of its parliamentary strength—in this country is to attain self-sufficiency in 1975 or 1976. For one thing, cultivators and farmers must be induced to grow more—threats and scare stories alone will not do.

Bhutto's Plane Fired at in NWFP

Anti-Islamabad elements opened fire on the Pakistan Prime Minister Mr. Z. A. Bhutto's plane during his recent tour of the North West Frontier Province, Radio Kabul said quoting reports from Peshawar. Anti-Bhutto slogans also rocked the meeting addressed by Mr. Bhutto in the province during his tour. The radio, added that a substantial number of anti-government pamphlets had been distributed in Chitral where telephone and telegraph lines were also found cut.



Hideouts

The Bangladesh Government forces, now engaged in a "flushing out operation" against the extremists, have at last located their main hideouts in the Sunderban jungle, according to reports received here. The operation was launched on November 15

CHRONICLE

Nov. 11 – Dec. 14

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

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 11: According to the Health Ministry, cholera is well under control. India and Sri Lanka have agreed to start a joint shipping service between the two countries. The UNP sponsored second Satyagraha takes place in Nuwara Eliya today. Egypt and Israel will sign the American Six-Point Peace Plan tomorrow.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 12: Several export commodities of Sri Lanka including Tea and Coconut are expected to be affected by European Economic Community tariffs that have now been adopted. The ports of Colombo, Trincomalee and Galle have recorded a loss of Rs. 40 million due to drop in cargo handling. Egypt's Minister of War has issued a warning to his country's soldiers to be ready to resume fighting if Israel breaks the ceasefire agreement.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 13: At a meeting held in the New Town Hall yesterday, Dr. N. M. Perera, Minister of Finance, said that from next year Sri Lanka would go ahead without any dollar loans. According to the *Sun*, Sri Lanka will import 125,000 tons of rice next year. Israeli and Egyptian officers met for several hours to discuss the implementation of the ceasefire agreement.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 14: The Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, meets the political authorities of the 22 districts today to review the food production campaign. The Minister of Trade has summoned all bakers in Colombo and the suburbs for a meeting on Saturday. The Chief Justice, Mr. H. N. G. Fernando retires on November 17. Government representatives from 130 countries who met in Rome yesterday were warned that food rationing may have to be introduced internationally.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 15: Mr. G. P. A. Silva, Senior Justice, has been appointed Chief Justice in succession to Mr. H. N. G. Fernando who retires on November 17. The FECCs arrangements with the IMF have strangled an agreement which Sri Lanka has attempted to conclude with the Soviet Union for embarking on a joint fishing expedition in the Indian Ocean. President Nixon who met several Republic Congressmen denied involvement in the Watergate scandal.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 16: The Central Bank is probing into a massive currency racket. It is believed that old and punched currency notes meant to be destroyed are now back in circulation. A sum of nearly Rs. 95 million is due to Sri Lanka from many countries on bi-lateral trade agreements. President Nixon has once again declared that he will not resign over the Watergate scandal.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 17: Dr. N. M. Perera, Minister of Finance, said in the National State Assembly yesterday that CID has been called into investigate the leakage of condemned currency notes. Mr. Maithripala Senanayake, Minister of Irrigation, Power, and Highways, has appointed a team to find ways and means to end the water problem in the city of Colombo.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 18: Air Ceylon will have a second DC 8 by April next year. The UNP launched one of its anti-Lake House campaigns in Kalutara yesterday. The House of Representatives has approved one million dollars to finance preliminary impeachment proceedings against President Nixon, over the Watergate scandal.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 19: According to Health Ministry sources, cholera outbreak which is milder now will be completely wiped out in a month's time. Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, miraculously escaped injury when the entire stage collapsed on her and 25 others on stage, a few minutes before she inaugurated the food production rally at Kurunegala. Libyan President, Colonel Gaddafi, has said that he would not attend the Arab summit meeting to be held in Algiers late this month.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 20: Government is to close down the Department of Official Languages: in view of the adopting of the Republican Constitution it is said that now this Department is superfluous. The Cost of Living Index for October this year has hit a all time high figure of 173.9. Several European countries have imposed severe restrictions on the use of oil.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 21: Emergency Regulations to control bakeries come into effect this week: Government Agents are empowered to take over bakeries if they discover any malpractices by the Bakery owners. The Government hopes to earn around Rs. 9 million through Sri tax on cars. The famine crisis in the north-eastern areas of Ethiopia is gradually abating as relief aid continues to pour in.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 22: The expert's committee appointed by the Minister of Education to inquire into the method of selection to the universities has recommended that 30 per cent should be selected on merit alone and the balance on area, population basis. Dr. Gamani Corea, one of Sri Lanka's best known economists, is strongly tipped to be the next Secretary General of the UNCTAD. Hungary rebel groups operating near Burma's border with Bangladesh, have killed more than 100 elephants for meat because of a food shortage in the area.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 23: The Government is reviewing the agricultural targets set for the forthcoming Maha season in view of the continued drought. The Railway will run as a state corporation from early next year. Australian Government has offered 50,000 tons of wheat flour to Sri Lanka: Sri Lanka signed another agreement to buy another 20,000 tons of flour from the United States. Leader of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation, Yasser Arafat, has arrived in Moscow for talks with the Soviet Committee of Solidarity with Afro Asian Nations.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 24: The Ministry of Justice is working round the clock to effect the proposed new courts system from January

next year. The first shipment of flour from the United States is expected to arrive in February next year. Rice Imports from China are likely to continue next year. President Nixon conferred with his advisers on the measures to be adopted to face the Arab oil squeeze.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 25: The Ceylon Conference of Headmasters and Headmistresses has protested the 'quota plan' recommended by the Committee of Inquiry into University Admissions. The Opposition has decided to launch its next Satyagraha campaign at Attanagalla, on December 9. According to the Weekend, fuel cuts may be enforced in Sri Lanka soon. West Germany has banned car-driving on Sundays as a measure to conserve fuel.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 26: The Communist Party of Sri Lanka led by Mr. Pieter Keuneman, Minister of Housing and Construction, has purchased a new printing press and a party office. UNP has decided to hold its annual conference at Matara on December 29 and 30. A team of officials from the World Bank will arrive in the island on Tuesday to review the country's economic position. The MP for Mannar died yesterday. Greece's armed forces overthrew President George Papadopoulos in a coup d'etat.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 27: A delegation of British Members of Parliament representing the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association arrives in Sri Lanka on December 2. The fourth international conference seminar of Tamil studies organised by the International Institute for Tamil Studies which was scheduled to be held in Jaffna from January 3 to 9 has been put off indefinitely. The Shah of Iran has predicted a ten-fold increase in the price of Iranian crude oil.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 28: Mr. T. B. Subasinghe, Minister of Industries and Scientific Affairs will lead a top level mission to Arab oil producing countries to guarantee an uninterrupted flow of oil supplies next year. The Colombo Municipal Council has made an appeal to the Minister of Irrigation and

Power to obtain machinery to increase the supply of water to the city. Soviet Communist Party leader, Leonid Brezhnev, arrived in India on Monday, continued talks with the Indian Premier.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 29: Eight inquiries have been listed for hearing by the Sri Lanka Press Council in December. The Government is to set up a special committee to report on substitutes for wheat. The Communist Party led by Mr. Pieter Keuneman will resume publication of its paper *Satan Maga* on December 1. President Nixon handed over the Watergate tapes to the Federal Judge.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 30: Four cases and one death of cholera have been reported from the Jaffna district. CWE's Flying Squad conducted several raids in many parts of the country and discovered hoarded bread and flour by bakery owners. The distribution of 6 million school text books will commence from the first week of December. Chinese leadership is deeply suspicious over Brezhnev's visit to India, according to reports from China.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 1: Multipurpose co-operative societies will distribute school books to registered book sellers. From the beginning of this year to August, the PMB has purchased 25 million bushels of paddy. 19 thousand tons of flour was issued to bakeries last week: this amount was 7 thousand tons more than the previous week. Dr. Gamani Corea has been nominated to the post of General Secretary of UNCTAD. Soviet leader Brezhnev, left India on Thursday on the conclusion of his five day visit.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 2: Buddhist leaders of the country appealed to the nation to join the food production campaign. The new headquarters of the Keuneman led Communist Party was opened yesterday at Maligakande Road, Colombo: at the opening ceremony, Mr. Pieter Keuneman reiterated his party's support to the United Front Government.

David Ben-Gourion, first Prime Minister of Israel, died at the age of 87.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 3: Government is considering a proposal to make paddy and rice available in the free market with price control tags attached. Six members of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association arrived in the island yesterday. Non-traditional exports from Sri Lanka has earned 32.7 million rupees during the first half of the year. The third UN Law of the Sea Conference which gets underway today is expected to be chaired by Sri Lanka's Ambassador H. S. Amerasinghe.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 4: The Rubber Rice Pact for 1974 between Sri Lanka and China will be signed in Colombo: the Minister of Trade, Mr. T. B. Illangarante, is expected to go to China on December 10 for discussions. The Soviet Union is to provide a large quantity of wheat to Sri Lanka on 'favourable terms'. Bakery owners have sought the assistance of the police to control bread queues in the city. US Secretary of State, Dr. Henry Kissinger, will visit Egypt on December 13 for talks with Arab leaders.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 5: Mr. Justin Siriwardene has been appointed Sri Lanka's Ambassador in India. The Food Commissioner said that there is ample stocks of sugar to last till the end of March '74. If the present drought continues for another three weeks, the Maha paddy yield in April next year, is likely to record a major shortfall. American officials predicted that hopes for Middle East peace is brighter.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 6: The rice ration will be increased by half a measure in 13 deficit rice producing areas from next week. Members of all three Nikayas of the Maha Sangha will converge in Kandy on Saturday to finalise plans for a protest march and Satyagraha against the rising cost of living and the cut in rice and flour rations. Arab countries have decided to increase oil exports only if there is a complete solution to the Middle East conflict.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 7: The Government Clerical Service Union has opened its own anti-corruption bureau to fight corruption, wastage and mismanagement in the public sector. The Ministry of Plan Implementation expects the production targets for the coming Maha season to be exceeded. The British Government imposed new energy cuts but insisted there was no need to ration petrol.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 8: A section of the Maha Sangha and various bhikku organisations have protested against the proposed march and Satyagraha by bhikkus from Kandy to Colombo. Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike, Minister of local Government, said in the NSA yesterday that elections to Local bodies will be held only after complete re-organisation. US Secretary of State, Dr. Henry Kissinger, has said that the US is considering a proposal to send US and Soviet troops to police the ceasefire.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 9: The Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, has told the Maha Sangha that the Government has no intention of taking over the *Sun-Dawasa* group of newspapers. UNP is holding its Satyagraha at Attanagalla today. Initially, the Sri Lanka delegation now in Peking is expected to buy 100,000 tons of rice under the Rubber-Rice Pact. The Tri-Nikayas Bhikku Front of Kandy yesterday decided to put off the proposed Satyagraha and the march.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 10: The UN General Assembly has ratified the appointment of Sri Lanka's Dr. Gamani Corea as the Secretary General of the UNCTAD. Several incidents have been reported from Attanagalla: The people of Attanagalla and the surrounding areas have prevented the UNP Satyagrahis entering the electorate: Vehicular traffics were blocked along the roads to Attanagalla by placing trees and other types of barricades. Both Egypt and Israel confirmed their willingness to participate in the Middle East Peace talks to be held in Geneva.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 11: According to the *Daily News*, Sri Lanka's food import bill is expected to rise higher because of a

phenomenal increase in freight rates resulting from the oil crisis. J. R. Jayewardene, Leader of the Opposition speaking in the National State Assembly deplored the use of Police personnel to prevent peaceful Satyagrahis from entering Attanagalla. Israel's Cabinet considered the internal security situation following several Guerilla attacks along the Suez front.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 12: For the first time in the history, Sri Lanka has produced a world Champion in an international competition: this came about as Sri Lanka's M. J. M. Lafir won the world amateur billiard title now being held in Bombay. Sri Lanka will purchase 100,000 tons of rice from China in 1974, with option to buy more if necessary, according to Mr. T. B. Illangarante, the Minister of Trade, who leaves for China tomorrow. I am proud of Attanagalla people's fight, said the Prime Minister, Mrs. Bandaranaike in the NSA yesterday in reply to the Opposition charges on the Attanagalla incident.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 13: The Government has decided to issue the extra half measure rice throughout the island from January next year. 20,000 tons of flour will arrive in Sri Lanka in February and March next year under PL 480, from the United States. The fourth International Conference Seminar on Tamil Studies will be held in Jaffna from January 3 to 9 next year. Libyan Prime Minister, Abdel Salam Jalloud, arrived in Cairo for talks with Egyptian leaders.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 14: The UN Secretary General, Mr. Kurt Waldheim, has asked Sri Lanka, India and other countries in the Indian Ocean area to send him factual reports with regard to Big Power naval activity in the area. Government is seriously considering a ban on the UNP's Satyagraha campaign. Mr. J. R. Jayewardene called for a clarification on the statement made by the Prime Minister over the Attanagalla incident. A select Congressional Committee is probing into Nixon's financial transactions to see if he owes more federal taxes.

SHAMBA

ON GOING IT ALONE

by ANATORY BUKOBA

September 13,

After three days away, I came back to find the house deserted. It was too late in the night for me to follow up the reason and the next morning I learnt that my friend had had an attack of malaria, a mere five hours after I had left, and that he had been put into hospital; he had neither kept an eye on this place nor arranged for any one to do so while he was ill. I lost a few more things from the house, and I suffered most as regards the wood-apple; nor was there any watering done. One or two of the tomato plants which have otherwise nothing particular to commend than seem to have survived mysteriously in a small sea of dead tomato plants. The only explanation I can think of is that these two might have struck deeper roots than the rest, and that in the case of at least one of these, it may have done so because it had more than its fair share of left-overs of water in cups, pots and so on.

One *cadju* plant is doing quite well; the other is dead. Here again I think the explanation for the survival of one and the death of the other is in the nature of the soil; although planted not far from other, the dead one was in whitish hard earth. The *ratta cadju* also began to weaken, but the passion fruit has not done too badly. The

two *lawerlu* are a mass of dead leaves. The spinach still looks all right.

We have just had a prolonged spell of rain, about two hours of it; not too heavy, but heavy and prolonged enough to give everything the water they have needed, and to last them a day or two. These notes are being written at 3 a.m. in the morning. The cocks are crowing and that gives me the time.

I was so tired soon after I began this, I just lay down and slept till now, waking up to hear the cocks crow, and to find the lamp out, as it had used up all its oil. So I, at once, trimmed its wick so as to have it ready for tonight.

The relations of my companion, or at least an important one of them, does not want him to come to this "jungle place" although he is willing, so I am alone once again. However I have learnt not to be physically tied up to this place as I was when I first came here. The only things I leave in the house are those things whose loss I will not feel too much if I wanted to use them.

September 15,

It was another day when I tried to get away early from this *Shamba*. It rained, a really heavy shower, which quite held me up and caused me to miss a proper lunch

too. I was curious to know what effect the rain would have had on the land, and I wondered how the house fared. The house fared very well, the bed, the one I use, dry, the room, too, and no stream of water running through the house. As rain water disposes of itself so quickly, you have to be present during a shower, a heavy one, to know what happens to the water, how it runs, and where it accumulates.

With no one here, I eat in *kaddays*, and avoid rice as it is so expensive. My breakfast is a good meal of string-hoppers, seven cents each followed by rock cakes at thirty-five cents, thirty cents in some places, to round it off. I would have more string-hoppers at lunch and dinner, if I could, or something more substantial, but I have to fall back on rock cakes for these meals. I am lucky to get these, because nothing else gives one quite so much of the money's worth at a meal.

The survey people were busy just beyond my boundary when I was not here, and I have used the passage they cut through the jungle to get a look at my acre from an angle or viewpoint that I was unable to do so before.

September 19,

There was a fine crop of wood-apple on my trees two months ago, but these have been systematically picked off the trees in my absences, and there is not much wood-apple to be seen now. I doubt if most of the wood-

apples sold in the streets will ever really ripen. They all have been picked, and picked early off the trees, instead of being allowed to fall first. I planted a teak tree today that I brought up from Colombo. It had been wrapped in earth and bound in cloth, and I planted it like that without undoing anything. The cloth will rot, and I only hope the teak will have vigour enough not to rot, too, or be eaten up by white ants or grubs. The alternative was to let it face the scorching sun without the protection of the earth with which it has been wrapped.

The last vine went today. It had probably died some time ago, because it was eaten by some fungus and just crumpled in my hands.

One or two who were to join me today did not turn up. I had impressed on one of them that three of us would have to live on Rs. 5/- a day for our food, or Rs. 3/- for the two of them if I was away. I told him to tell it to his friend, and ask him if he thought he would be able to manage on this, and then to make his decision whether to come or not. Anyway, they are not here, not even the first fellow, who said he would come alone if the other did not.

September 20,

It was a day spent away from the *Shamba*, not on my own business but on that sort of business that must inevitably crop up when one has taken up one's abode in the countryside for some

time. To call it village business sounds far too officious, to call it by any other name would smack of something that is not altogether true. Anyway, the *ratta cadju* plant has disappeared, and I am still on my own. I do not like sleeping in such a lonely situation as this without somebody to keep my company. I had the chance of sleeping elsewhere tonight, but I felt I ought to be here. In this decision I was moved by the remembrance of a neighbour I saw, soon after dawn this morning, who was wondering around looking for wood-apple. He politely said that he had not known that I was in.

Some time ago, I bought, as I think I said, one of those long necked knives that are a favourite with coconut estate watchers. It can almost serve as a *katha* or slasher. I was clearing some of what I had left behind before, so as to have a clearer view from my bed of people trespassing on this land directly from the road people looking for wood-apple.

September 21

Our village is really short of food. I eat now at a *kadday* where I can buy string hoppers for five cents. I buy ten, and eat them with *parippu* and coconut sambol. This morning I finished off with two plantains. They were fifteen cents each. Lunch and dinner do not seem to be served anywhere. Rice and curry are expensive, there is rarely bread on sale. When it is, it is sixty five

cents a loaf. All the old biscuits and rock-cakes, usually thirty five cents each, have been sold out, and there have been no fresh supplies for nearly a week. Monkeys have eaten the last of my manioc, and all the sugar cane has gone, too.

So it is not only human thieves I have to contend with. All I have left now is one passion fruit plant, and one *cadju* sapling, and the spinach, this lot has remained green without watering, and the monkeys do not seem to want it. I did a little clearing to bring some of my furthest *dimbul* trees closer into view, so as to save what little of the wood-apple is left.

Lon Nol Ready to meet Sihanouk

Phnom Penh, Nov. 29.

Marshal Lon Nol said yesterday that he was ready to meet Prince Nordom Sihanouk at a conference table to reach a settlement of the Cambodian problem.

The Cambodian head of State, in an interview with a French radio correspondent at Phnom Basset said he wanted peace at any price-but there was a precondition, the departure from Cambodia of the North Vietnamese.

It was the first time that Marshal Lon Nol has said so clearly that he is ready to meet Prince Sihanouk.

INANIA *Of This, That and The Other*

"A Lot To Learn" From Them -2

By INNA

People in Sri Lanka have a lot to learn from those who have thus opted for and adopted a course of action, as early as 1966, to smooth out and to level differences of class.

We continue this amazing document issued by that important body called the catholic church:

8. We (bishops) will give all our necessary time, reflexion, heart, means, etc, for the *pastoral* and *pastoral* service of persons and groups, which are weak and economically underdeveloped, without detriment to persons and groups of the diocese. We will maintain laymen, religious, deacons or priests whom the Lord calls to evangelise the poor and the workmen by partaking of their working life and work (Lc. 4:18; Mk. 6, 4; Mt. 11:45, Acts. 18:3,4 and 20:33, 35.; 1 Cor. 4:12, 1 Cor. 9:1 and 27)
9. Conscious of the demands of justice and charity and their mutual relation, we will try to change the *works of mercy* into *social works* based on charity and justice which will take into account everyone and every exigency. This will be at the humble service of competent public organisations (Mt. 25:31 and 46; Lk. 13:12, 14; Lk. 33:34)
10. We will do what is in us to see that those responsible in our government and our public service decide and put into effect the *laws*, the *structures* the necessary *social institutions for justice*, equality and development, full and harmonious development of the whole man and of all men, so that thence might arise a new social order, worthy of the sons of men, and sons of God (Acts, 2:44; Acts 4:32, 33; Acts 5:4; 2 Cor. 8 and 9; 1 Tim., 5:16)
11. The collegiality of bishops finding its fullest evangelical realisation in a common charge of the masses of men in their physical misery; their cultural and moral deficiency—about 2/3 of mankind—we undertake to participate according to our means, in urgent needs of the bishoprics of the poorer nations; to work together on an international level, but as witness to the Gospel, as did Pope Paul at the UN, towards

a rearrangement of economic and cultural structures which will no more produce proletarian nations in a world getting richer and richer, but structures which will help the poorer masses to get out of their misery.

12. We commit ourselves to share in pastoral charity, our lives, with our Brothers in Christ—priests, religious, laymen, so that our ministry may become a true service. Thus: we will compel ourselves to review *our life* and revise it with them; we will raise up collaborators so that we might be better animators according to the Spirit, rather than chiefs according to the spirit of the world; we will seek to be more humanly present and welcoming; we will show ourselves open to all, whatever be their religion. (Mk. 8:34, 35; Acts 6:1, 7; 1 Tim; 3:8,10)

And having said all this, the document adds as the last point:—

13. Having returned to our dioceses, we will make known to our diocesans, our resolves, asking for their help by their understanding, their collaboration, their prayers. May God help us to be faithful" (issued at the Vatican council II, by an unknown number of Bishops. It begins with "We bishops"—from the *Informations Cath. Internationales*, 1 January 1966, no. 255, pp. 26-27.

STRICTLY FOR ADULTS ONLY

by Canax

I HAVE been asked, if only by my better half, whether I have the faintest idea of what I'm talking about. Now that is what I would call, in any context, a good question. She posed it in relation to my shooting my big mouth off these past couple of weeks about fiction and what a favourite it is with us. I don't know whatever gave me the idea, but I imagined I could say anything and get away with it; maybe it was the feeling that nobody reads me, anyway. From what I can gather, nobody does, but that's hardly a help when my wife isn't one of them. She's been following every word of mine the way a lawyer follows his opposite number's strategy in court.

Having asked one good question and not getting a

This splendid document will take perhaps less than three years—it will be a decade after its publication—to be fully realised in Sri Lanka. Given our pace, it is sure that a fulfilment of this will come on all levels of mankind, especially in the irreversible trends in our country started ten years before the document.

Whether anything has been done in this line, is the secret of the people with whom the subjects of the document are strictly involved. It is a long-term plan. Very likely.

satisfactory reply, she followed it up with another. Did Marga, she wanted to know, have the faintest idea what it was talking about? I didn't think so myself, but I couldn't, wouldn't, admit it to her.

Should Marga, I asked in return, have the faintest idea what it was talking about? She thought it should, unfortunately, and I doubt if even she knows why. It's one of those spare, pointless thoughts she keeps around for just such occasions.

The point she is driving at is simply this: if fiction is indeed as popular as Marga makes it out to be, who's providing adequate supplies to meet the enormous demand? Seems she has done a bit of quiet checking on her own and has drawn a blank.

Her enquiries from one source had prompted the indignant reply that "fiction is not our line of business". All I can say is that she was plain crazy to call the Information Department in the first place.

She didn't, of course, stop with that. The CWE confirmed they would be giving an extra half measure in certain districts, but disappointed her by adding it was only rice they would be doling out; they had received no instructions about issuing fiction on the weekly ration.

AN OFFICIAL of the Establishment was clearly alarmed by my wife's enquiry. "Our storage problems are terrible as it is," he had cried, and hoped out loud they wouldn't have to accommodate fiction as well. "Food is our speciality," he had said finally, "not food for thought." Fiction, I understand, is best served fresh, but its been known to keep well in cold storage provided the temperature is right. And freezing.

Having done her homework, she knew there was apparently no blackmarket in fiction and had therefore made the shrewd deduction that supply was well ahead of demand. And having come that far, what she found galling was her inexplicable inability to trace the source of this abundant supply.

Since at first I didn't wish to get involved, my assistance was confined to the suggestion that she keep asking around some more. I wasn't thinking of any place in particular, but fortunately she is not prone to such vagueness of thought. She was on the phone in a flash.

I wasn't paying much attention but I heard her ask obviously for the second time, "Sure you don't have a separate Department of Fiction?" after which she looked at me and shook her head.

"Ask them what they have," I prompted. So she did.

"He says they only have a statistical unit. Is it the same thing?"

"I doubt it", I said. She thanked the man and cut

off the call. "Who were you phoning, anyway?" I asked.

"The Ministry of Planning."

"A very efficient unit they have there," I told her. "When it comes to the production race, they make such speedy projections on, say, the current Maha or the coming Yala, that the crops themselves are left at the post every time."

"What a shame," she said. "I suppose they'll have to slow down the statistics?"

"That would be even more of a shame," I cried. "The crops will just have to pull up their edible socks and learn to keep pace. It's important to level up, not down."

"I still can't find where the fiction is coming from," she complained suddenly. "Sure you have no idea about it?"

I COULD see the poor girl was in a state. If anybody was in dire need of help, she was. The give-and-take went something like this:

"You checked every place?"

"You know I have," she cries. "Just about everywhere except under my bed. Worth giving that a try?"

I give it a few minutes thought. "No," I say finally, "but the newspapers are a better bet."

She hasn't thought of that, and apparently doesn't want to even then. "You're pulling my leg," she says.

"Well, think about it," I advise. So she thinks about

it and says, "You're pulling my other leg."

"Marga said fiction is very popular. Right?"

"That's the subject of my inquiry."

"Forget that and follow me for now," I say. "Thank Marga, and then think of the newspapers."

She does, at last. "You mean, that's why newspapers are so popular?"

"Smart girl," I say with feigned enthusiasm. "I love your questions because they come with built-in answers."

"What about facts, then?"

"Well, what about them?"

"I remember reading somewhere that facts are sacred to newspapers."

I pretend to stumble on to a discovery as major as Marga's. "Oh, so that's probably why they don't print them."

"Very funny," she cries but, good access that she obviously is, she conceals every trace of enjoyment. "You make a joke of everything."

"No more, no more," I promise without the slightest intention of keeping it. "Now where were we?"

"Facts," she intones. "Are they sacred or aren't they?"

"As sacred as they come," I assure her.

"Then where's the fiction?"

"Right there," I say cryptically.

"You're up to your pranks again," she complains irritably.

I promise her I'm not. "The fiction starts right

there," I explain. "That facts are sacred. Once you get that across, the rest is easy."

"But newspapers claim they always tell the truth."

"Well, so do I."

That gets across all right. "I thought newspapers were different," she sighs. "Why do they have to pass off fiction as fact?"

"Because one man's fact is another man's fiction," I say.

"That goes for us women, too," my wife agrees.

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GROWING MENACE

Human and Animal Pollution

By JEPHARIS

HUMAN POLLUTION increases along with the Population Explosion. As long as there are nearly 4,000 million human beings all over the world, nearly 14 million of them scattered within our own native shores, together with the animals and birds of the air, all sucking away with their lungs at the precious oxygen in our atmosphere, and other bloodstreams converting this precious oxygen into the carbon dioxide which is used up by plants, which in turn supply the atmosphere with its precious oxygen it is important for this oxygen-carbon cycle to maintain its balance that there should be a generous amount of forest, greenery and 'wide open space' in this old earth of ours.

Indiscriminate felling of forests, whether to feed timber complexes, or even for agricultural purposes, is therefore unwise, in the interests of our own and any future generations there may be. Not only would the logging of trees, the cutting of bushes, scrub and undergrowth, deprive us of a valuable storehouse of oxygen; but it would also upset the weather-pattern, for it is well known that the destruction of forests reduces the precipitation (i.e. rain) in the atmosphere and, also makes the area warmer and less shaded for humans.

Wholesale demolition of jungle generally effects the rain drought pattern a great deal, and generally adversely. Apart from its being a valuable "gene-pool" and sanctuary for so many species of animal and bird life, this is why the Wildlife and Nature Protection Society of Ceylon and other ardent nature-lover's Associations so agitated the Government against the logging of Sinharaja (some 25,000-odd acres of primeval 'virgin' forest—one of the last of its kind in the West Zone) in order to feed the proposed Rs. 10 million Kosgama Plywood Complex.

The latter, incidentally, situated in the Kelani Valley, would justify the continued existence of the narrow-gauge (2'6") K. V. line which runs some 85 miles from Colombo to Openaika, and which for many years now has been a 'white elephant' to the Government, while running at a great loss. You will recall that soon after the war, the newly Independent Government of Sri Lanka not only removed the branch section from Avissawella to Yatiyantota, but also the popular Uda-Pussellawa line so beloved of holiday-makers and planters (which used the same gauge) from Nanu Oya up through Nuwara Eliya, passing the highest point of the C.G.R. at Kandapola (6,336 ft.) down to its terminus at Ragalla (5,000 ft.)

EXCUSING this short digression, I now come back to my main subject by advocating that the food drive now being conducted with such vigorous enthusiasm throughout the island in order to meet the present and coming economic crisis, commendable though this campaign may be, placed as it is on a 'war footing' with the P.M. herself as a great Lady-General or Commander-in-Chief heading and co-ordinating all operations, would fail in its long-range objectives if it would mean the indiscriminate felling of trees in the Vanni, for instance as well as in other areas, in order to bring these vast, uncultivated tracts of land under food cultivation. Certain tracts of forest and jungle land, and even green fields and meadows, ought to be preserved as valuable oxygen factories; sanctuaries for wild-life; storehouses of ayurvedic herbs; rain belts and water-sheds; feeding our rivers; and last but not least, in order to maintain as a sacred trust unto posterity, the great natural beauty of this island home of ours.

I haven't written very much about ANIMAL POLLUTION and even about human pollution in its baser forms, wish but to suggest that the former, such as cow dung, and other forms of dropping, provided in its natural, untreated state, one of the finest and cheapest forms of natural manure available to maintain all his attempts at coaxing the fertile soil of Sri Lanka to yield more food crops.

THE MIDDLE EAST

The War And After — II

By Spartacus

ANY PEACE SETTLEMENT in the Middle East has to be based on the UN Security Council's resolution adopted on 22nd October 1973 through the joint initiative of the USA and the USSR. This resolution calls for the cessation of armed hostilities and the setting in motion of the mechanism for negotiations between the parties concerned under the appropriate auspices with a view to establishing peace based on the earlier Security Council resolution of 22nd November 1967.

The 1967 resolution, as is well known, called for the withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied during the 6-day war, respect for and recognition of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every state in the region and their right to live in peace within safe and secure borders, free from the use or threats of force. It also provided for the freedom of navigation in international waterways in the area and the just settlement of the problem of Palestinian refugees.

It will be seen that the first point in the 1967 resolution called for the withdrawal of occupied territory as an essential pre-requisite for a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. This

was further stressed by the preamble in the resolution which referred to the impermissibility of gaining territory by means of armed aggression. But for the last six years no headway could be made in the implementation of this resolution despite frantic efforts made by several intermediaries like Gunnar Jarring, Joseph Sisco and others, not to speak of representatives of the USSR and the USA. There is more than one reason for this stalemated situation.

In the first place, Israel's *blitzkrieg* victory in 1967 was followed by intransigence regarding any settlement in the Middle East. From the side of Egypt, Syria and other Arab states too, any willingness towards negotiations would have appeared as an acknowledgement of weakness following their humiliating defeat. That was why all moves by interested parties to re-establish peace in the Middle East failed. The Arab states stressed that part of the Security Council resolution which called for the evacuation by Israel of occupied Arab territory. Israel on the other hand not only indulged in pottifogging saying that the resolution called for withdrawal from occupied territory, and not 'all occupied territory.' On its part, it emphasized that part of the resolution which

called for direct negotiations between the parties concerned regarding 'secure frontiers' before any withdrawal could take place.

THE RECENT OUTBREAK of hostilities has changed this situation. As President Anwar Sadat has said: "Our wounded nation has restored its honour and the political map of the Middle East has been changed." This change itself is a reflection of the changes that had taken place in the region during the last six years, thanks mainly to the Soviet Union making good the military losses suffered by Egypt's and other states in the 1967 war.

The myth of Israeli invincibility was shattered during the recent war. Egypt's initial successes gave rise to a new wave of pride in the Arab world. And though Israel was able to launch a brilliant counter-offensive just before the ceasefire on October 22nd and even isolate the Egyptian troops on the east bank of the Suez Canal, her unexpected early reverses during the war and her huge losses in men and material would have made it clear to her the futility of trying to achieve her own security through the retention of other people's lands.

As important as the military configuration is the new political configuration in the Arab world. Just before the start of the latest Middle East war, President Sadat had succeeded in achieving a degree of unity among the Arab states that even the late President Nasser failed to establish. This

unity is now being consolidated even more than before with one Arab state after another joining in tightening the oil squeeze on the USA and the West as part of their contribution to the fight against Israel and her patrons.

The Arab countries' cut-backs in oil production and shipments has further aggravated the crisis within the Atlantic alliance which came under heavy strain during the recent war when the USA's allies openly voiced their disappointment at not being consulted in the 'super-power' diplomacy that ended the Middle East war. Thus, Israel faces growing international isolation, not only with 24 African countries severing diplomatic relations with her, but also many Western states like Britain, France, Italy and Spain cooling in their relations towards her and some even calling for her withdrawal from occupied Arab territories.

All this brightens the possibilities of peace in the Middle East. But, as the Arab-Israeli cease-fire talks at the military level have already shown, negotiations towards a lasting peace will be full of pitfalls and dangers that might unduly complicate and protract any settlement beyond the dreams of the worst pessimists.

For instance, as the Paris talks regarding peace in Vietnam showed, many months might pass before the two sides agree on the parties to the talks and even the shape of the conference table. The position at these talks

of the various representatives of the Palestine liberation movement is bound to give rise to numerous complications, objections coming not only from the side of the USA and Israel but from some representatives of the Arab states themselves.

Then regarding the question of Israeli withdrawal from occupied territory, hitherto the opposing sides have taken up almost irreconcilable positions. While the Arabs have insisted on total Israeli withdrawal, Israel has made it clear that such withdrawal is totally out of the question. But indications have not been lacking recently that both sides are now prepared to consider minor deviations from the pre-1967 positions to ensure the security of all states concerned. There is bound to be hard bargaining on all sides and long, arduous work ahead before a settlement is reached on this territorial question.

But with the growing detente in US-Soviet relations and with both countries as

sponsors of the Security Council resolution which ended the latest Middle East war, they can be expected to exert their full pressure and influence to achieve negotiated settlements of the questions in dispute satisfactory to all the states and peoples in this region.

There is no doubt that "the Soviet Union is prepared to take part" in the relevant guarantees relating to the "peace, security and the inviolability of borders in the Middle East." There can be no doubt also that the USA too, especially in view of recent international developments, will join the Soviet Union in this. It is to be hoped that the cooperation of these two Big Powers will bring to the Middle East the new era of detente and mutual understanding that they have already succeeded in bringing to Europe and Asia to replace the period of confrontation and tension that existed there since the end of World War II.

RUPEE NOW WORTH ONLY 36 PAISE

New Delhi Nov. 27,

A rupee now is worth only 36 paise compared to its value in 1949, the Minister of State for Finance, Mr. K. R. Ganesh, told the Rajaya Sabha to-day. He said the purchasing power of the rupee as computed on the basis of the consumer price index with 1949 as base, was 99 paise in 1960, 80.6 paise in 1965, 44.6 paise in 1970 and 36 paise during the period January-September 1973. He said there was a stabilisation in rupee value between 1963 and 1969 but again there was a sharp decline between 1972-1973. Mr. Ganesh said there was no proposal to devalue the rupee, or to demonetise the currency.

AMERICAN VIEW

On The Middle East And The Soviet Union

Chicago Dec. 12,

The following are excerpts from an address by Kenneth Rush, Acting Secretary of State, before the Council on Foreign Relations, in Chicago, Illinois, December 12:

IT IS BITTERLY ironic that the Middle East, an area which gave our world so many of its basic values, should once again remind us how fragile our progress is towards achieving these values. From the time the most recent round of fighting erupted on October 6, we ought to end the bloodshed in a manner which could lead to a secure and decent peace for all peoples in the area. This goal demanded first an early cease-fire as a prelude to getting at and resolving the causes of the conflict.

From the outset of the fighting we were anxious to avoid two possible outcomes: exhaustion, which could produce enormous human suffering and almost certainly lay the basis for a renewal of the fighting at a later date; *Second*, that as the struggle was prolonged, the United States and the Soviet Union would be drawn into a direct confrontation with one another, making the Mid-East war a catalyst to a far greater threat to all men.

But if our fears were real so was our concern for and

commitment to more positive purposes. The task was to use statesmanship in the midst of war to point the way to peace. Thus, the Soviet Union and we used our improved relationship and communications not only to ease the chances of direct confrontation between us but also to make a contribution to bringing an early halt to the war and a start towards peace. We also sought to impress upon both sides that in a time of crisis new possibilities had arisen for creating a desirable peace. We sought to turn the situation into an opportunity for the U.N. to play a vital role in restoring and keeping the peace. The fighting in the Middle East has been stopped but progress towards a secure and lasting peace has only just begun. In the past Arab and Israeli concepts of self-interest and their perceptions of the other's intentions have made peace impossible. But if the latest war has proven nothing else it has demonstrated that an equilibrium of armed camps is not enough. For Israel the issue remains security. The United States has a special affinity for Israel and is committed to its safety and survival. President Nixon's ordering of the resupply in October demonstrated the depth of that commitment. For The Arabs the issues are justice, dignity and

sovereignty. The peace we seek for the Middle East must take into account these aspirations if it is to be something more than a halt in the cycle of fighting.

We believe that the goals of the Arabs and the Israelis can, through negotiation, be made compatible. We want to be helpful in this process. For the first time in years, we have engaged with both sides in a serious dialogue. But only the peoples of the area can make the decisions that are prerequisite to accommodation. And only they can build the structure for a lasting peace between them. For lasting peace to come about, both sides must accept that peace involves self-imposed compromise and limitation....

THE MID-EAST WAR came at a time when this nation was asking itself—what are the goals of detente with the Soviet Union? There has never been any doubt in this administration of the profound differences between ourselves and Moscow. As President Nixon stated in 1972: "Our National experiences are disparate and our peoples are conditioned by fifty years of distrust and hostility. We are ideological rivals and military and political competitors on a global scale. But, if we were aware of our differences, we were also concerned with the imperative and unprecedented opportunity to construct a relationship between the two super powers based on something beside sterile confrontation. For 25 years international relations had been

dominated by the fears, the threats and anxieties of the cold war. By 1969, both nations had the power to annihilate not only the other but also all mankind. But by 1969 international conditions had evolved to a point where it was deemed possible to push back that awesome spectre by bringing closer a truly constructive relationship between our countries.

We never expected that as we sought this new relationship the Soviet Union would sacrifice its interests. We never intended to sacrifice ours or those of our friends. But *detente* was also based on the expectation that each nation would exercise self restraint in the pursuit of its interests. We believed most fundamentally that *detente* had to be based upon a mutual recognition that a general improvement in our relationship demanded an end to the pursuit of narrow advantage.

The violence in the Middle East tested the Soviet commitment to these principles. But in the wake of the war we can draw several conclusions. That without the very considerable progress we had made over the past five years in changing the nature of the relationship between our two countries the hostilities between the Arabs and the Israelis could have immediately become a direct confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union. That in today's world there is no rational alternative to establishing a productive and positive U.S. Soviet relation-

KAMARAJ AND MRS. GANDHI

Will the Two Congress Parties Get Together

New Delhi Nov. 24,

After the Congress party split of 1969 the Kamaraj-Indira Gandhi talks now may well mark a significant development in the Indian political scene. The initiative for such talks was taken by Mrs. Gandhi herself. It was at her instance the late Mohan Kumaramangalam and others met Kamaraj and put across the idea of closer cooperation between him and the ruling Congress party. Tamil Nadu is one State where the ruling Congress party's position is very weak. At the time of the Lok Sabha elections in 1971 Mrs. Gandhi, uncertain about the political future, entered into an electoral arrangement with the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK), the party in power in Tamil Nadu. Under the arrange-

ment while the Congress party was allowed to contest in ten seats to the Lok Sabha it was obliged to agree not to set up any candidate to the State Assembly elections. For a party which claimed to be an all India one the arrangement represented a big mistake. But political expediency necessitated such a deal.

ship; and that the new relationship is still fragile, and the commitment of both nations to it must be broadened, deepened and strengthened.

In the past, changes in U.S.-Soviet relations have been brief, and usually occurred in climate rather than in substance. We remain convinced that there is a unique opportunity to establish a long-term cooperative relationship with the Soviet Union, so that both countries can make a major contribution to world peace..

But the result of the parliamentary election, which gave a massive majority to Mrs. Gandhi, brought about a new situation. She did not need the support of the DMK in Parliament. Gradually, for a variety of reasons, the alliance between the Congress party and the DMK came to an end. But the Congress party in the State was too weak to stand on its own legs. In Tamil Nadu the prestige of Kamaraj stands very high because of his unimpeachable character and the able administration he maintained in the State. After the Congress split Kamaraj remained with the organisation Congress.

Kamaraj's party had a greater hold among the masses in Tamil Nadu than Mrs. Gandhi's party. There were not many leaders in Mrs. Gandhi's party who could inspire the masses in the State. Apart from this role in getting Mrs. Gandhi to succeed Lal Bahadur Shastri as Prime Minister, Kamaraj has always

been regarded as a man of the masses though leftists would describe him as a 'progressive'. It was natural for Mrs. Gandhi to think in terms of soliciting Kamaraj's cooperation so far as Tamil Nadu was concerned.

From Kamaraj's side the question was approached from another angle. He is 71 and still continues to tour the State almost without a break. He attracts huge gatherings wherever he goes. But he cannot go on doing this endlessly. He has of course been drawing the younger generation round him in order to build up new leadership. But no other leader has so far emerged on the Tamil Nadu scene to take on the mantle of Kamaraj and attract the attention of the masses. Secondly, his own followers in the State must be asking questions as to the future role of the organisation Congress in the State and elsewhere. Is there any prospect of the organisation Congress coming to power in Tamil Nadu in the foreseeable future? How many parties can the organisation Congress fight? The DMK, the Anna DMK, the ruling Congress and the two Communist parties are all active in the State. In such a situation if the rank and file in the organisation Congress felt frustrated it should not be surprising. One of such frustration may be a gradual defection in the direction of the ruling Congress party. Kamaraj has a responsibility to give a proper lead to his followers.

To Kamaraj, the situation in Tamil Nadu was quite diff-

erent from other States. In Tamil Nadu both the organisation Congress and the ruling Congress are in the opposition. What is wrong in two opposition parties coming to an understanding to fight the ruling DMK? In politics there could be no permanent friends or permanent enemies. Why should the organisation Congress entertain any deep hatred towards the ruling Congress whatever may have happened in the past? If there is any party whose policies and programme are close to that of the organisation Congress, it is the ruling Congress. If the two Congress parties could work together it would reduce the number of parties Kamaraj has to contend with in the State.

A limited arrangement with the ruling Congress so far as Tamil Nadu is concerned is what Kamaraj had in mind. And this suited Mrs. Gandhi also. Although many thought that Kamaraj may merge his party with the ruling Congress he himself was not thinking on these terms. He is aware that if he alone left the organisation Congress to join the ruling Congress he would be regarded as a defector and consequently his prestige would suffer. Mrs. Gandhi would have no use for a person who comes with his prestige badly damaged. There is therefore no question of his leaving the organisation Congress. A limited arrangement has been reached by which the two parliamentary seats, one in Tamil Nadu and the other in Pondicherry, for which elections are due, are to be shared between the two

Congress parties. Also, when elections are held to the Pondicherry Assembly early next year the two Congress parties would jointly select the candidates.

Kamaraj's move to come to an arrangement with the ruling Congress of Mrs. Gandhi has provoked strong protests from some members of his party. Some were angry, not with his move, but with him for not taking them into confidence at every stage. The organisation Congress leaders in Uttar Pradesh felt that the arrangement, coming on the eve of the election to the Assembly in their State would weaken their party's position. Mrs. Gandhi, whose sense of political timing is superb, has not hesitated to exploit the development and she has said that the organisation Congress leaders in many States wanted to join her party. Mrs. Gandhi is leaving no stone unturned to win the election in her home State. In Uttar Pradesh one party which can gain by the weakness of the ruling Congress is the organisation Congress.

Would not the talk of merger or cooperation between the two Congress parties weaken the position of the organisation Congress? The organisation Congress leaders, who want to contest all the 400-odd seats in the Assembly hope to win a good number of seats. But Kamaraj thinks that the assessment of the Uttar Pradesh organisation Congress leaders is too optimistic. He thinks that the ruling Congress will be returned to power though

probably with less majority than before. In any case Kamaraj is aware that if in Uttar Pradesh elections the organisation Congress did not fare well he would be held responsible for it.

One must analyse what the strength of the organisation Congress is in the country. Besides Tamil Nadu, the organisation has a foothold in Mysore, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. Few except the blind optimist would suggest that the organisation Congress would be in a position to capture power in any of these States in the foreseeable future. Of course a party can function in the opposition. But what would be the special appeal of the organisation Congress to the average voter? Is there a policy or programme which the organisation Congress can advocate which would be quite distinct from that of the ruling Congress? If the organisation Congress continued to function as an independent party it may well invite the fate which overtook the Praja Socialist Party. But if the party desired to function independently why should it not make political adjustments with other parties.

If the party could think of an arrangement with the Bharatiya Kranti Dal in Uttar Pradesh, why should it not also think of adjustments with the ruling Congress party where both are in the opposition? Kamaraj has pointed out that Mrs. Gandhi has not hesitated to enter into arrangements which would benefit her party. While Mrs. Gandhi described the Muslim

League in Kerala as a good party and allowed a coalition government of her party with the Muslim League, she has denounced the Muslim League in Uttar Pradesh as communal and poisonous. Similarly, in Tamil Nadu, her party is opposing the Communist Party of India while her party is working in close cooperation with the CPI in Uttar Pradesh, Kerala and West Bengal. This is politics and the organisation Congress too must play politics. If Mrs. Gandhi wanted Kamaraj's cooperation, Kamaraj could have bargained for similar cooperation in Uttar Pradesh. But the organisation-Congress leaders would not allow him to discuss the subject with Mrs. Gandhi.

Kamaraj would also look at the problem from another angle. Supposing the organisation Congress is able to capture power in one or two States, what would be the effect on national politics? If a number of purely local parties came to power in the States what would be the position at the Centre? It is because of the strength of the ruling Congress party at the Centre the country's unity is being maintained. Can the organisation Congress or any other party hope to replace the ruling Congress in the near future? Would not a weakening of the strength of the Congress party at the Centre result in instability? It would have been a different proposition if the opposition parties could merge and form one all India party to fight the Congress. But the attempts made in this direction have not yielded any results.

A large number of organisation Congress leaders have reacted favourably to Kamaraj's move. Kamaraj has said that in the context of the current difficult economic situation in the country the efforts of the government to tackle it should be supported. Mrs. Gandhi has welcomed such cooperation. This may well mean that she is not averse to a larger number of leaders from the organisation Congress cooperating with her party at various levels. The only leader who has firmly opposed any kind of cooperation with the ruling Congress is Morarji Desai and Mrs. Gandhi too is equally firm that Morarji Desai could not have a place in her party. Further developments must probably await Uttar Pradesh elections and the experiment of cooperation in Tamil Nadu between the two Congress parties.

—Foreign News & Features

Protein From Cotton Seed

Two American food scientists have made highly nutritious food products with cotton seed flour. During their research, the scientists developed recipes and made a study of the consumer acceptability of cottonseed flour products. They altered the recipe of conventional bread to replace 18 per cent of the wheat flour with processed cotton seed flour. The resulting bread's protein content was about 25 per cent.

—The American Reporter

Can Foreign Culture Survive In India?

by BETH MERKLINGER

Since the dawn of history the Indian plains have been an object of foreign conquest. Like a great temptress, the subcontinent beckoned strangers into her snare. Once the invaders reached India, they merged or were absorbed into her bowels. It was as if foreign cultures could not live on Indian soil.

There are three "open doors" to India: the sea, the land route leading through Baluchistan into Sind, and the route which leads over the Hindu Kush through Khyber Pass. All invaders, whether religious, military or commercial appeared through one of these gateways. By far the most important door was the one that led over the Himalayas, the Khyber Pass.

Each of the invading hordes brought with it its culture, language and religion. From each of them India took what it needed, returning the rest. Each of the conquerors left behind at least the small gift which was absorbed into Indian culture.

THE FIRST nomadic peoples who poured into the subcontinent from Central Asia were the Aryans who, at the end of the second millenium B.C.; invaded Hindustan and displaced the indigenous Dravidian peoples, pushing them further south to the tip of the peninsula. It is the Aryan invaders that India must thank for the Sanskrit language.

Between the 6th and the 4th Century B.C., the Persian Achaemenid Empire stretched east into the Indus Valley. Persian stone masons came to the Mauryan court at Pataliputra and brought with them the art of large-scale building and carving in stone which up to that time had been virtually unknown in India. The first dressed stone objects

in India were produced. Asoka's giant pillars although conceived by the Indian mind, were technically the work of Persian craftsmen.

In 183 B.C., a Greek Bactrian, Demetrius, crossed the Hindu Kush and conquered parts of the Punjab. Bactria, one of the Greek colonies founded by Alexander the Great in the first half of the 4th Century B.C. lay in the province of Balkh between the Hindu Kush and the Oxus River in today's Northern Afghanistan. Greek rule east of the Indus soon died, but the fruits of Greek civilization lived much longer. The Kushans, successors of the Bactrian Greeks on the subcontinent were Philhellenes. Their written language was Bactrian, an Iranian language written in the Greek alphabet. The mingling of the Bactrian Greek with Indian elements produced the famous style of art known as "Gandhara".

DURING the Gupta period, in the 3rd Century A.D.,

the Sassanian Persian Empire influenced the land east of the Hindu Kush. Classical Gupta art absorbed many Sassanian motifs and techniques.

From the 7th Century A.D. on begin the long series of Muslim invasions over the Hindu Kush. The new conquerors were mostly Central Asian tribesmen who had fallen under the spell of Persia during their wanderings and who, therefore, brought various influences to the subcontinent. They also introduced the Persian language to be used at Court and in literature. And out of Persian a new indigenous language was later evolved, Urdu, which soon became the most common language of northern India.

The new invaders brought with them a new religion, Islam. Islam first appeared in South India, having entered through the first door, the sea. Arab traders and missionaries found their way to the Malabar Coast many centuries before the actual occupation of Hindustan by Muslim armies. Islam also penetrated into the subcontinent through the second door, through Baluchistan into Sind. Here as early as the 8th Century A.D. there are to be found Muslim colonies with protecting troops stationed close behind. These early Arab invaders never reached far beyond the Indus valley and in general India remained unaffected by Islam until the 11th Century.

BY THE END of the 10th Century A.D. one of the inde-

pendent Turkish chieftains of Central Asia, Mahmud of Ghazni, assumed the title of Sultan and made his power felt beyond the Indus, conquering Kannauj, the capital of northern India. Of Ghaznavid art nothing remains, for, the capital, Lahore, was brutally destroyed by the next Afghan invaders, the Ghorids. Ghazni, however, we know was a great centre of learning and Mahmud an enthusiastic patron of all the arts. The Persian poet Firdausi lived and worked at the Ghazni Court and there composed his masterpiece, the *Shah-nama*, a vast epic of ancient Iran, some 60,000 verses in length. Firdausi's great achievement was a constant model for later poets who tried to equal and surpass it. Amir Khusrau, the greatest Indian Muslim poet, who found favour at the Court of Sultan Balban and the Khalji rulers, was one who found great inspiration from this immensely popular work.

The Ghorids, who next overran Hindustan at the end of the 12th Century A.D., were Afghan highlanders. They conquered Sind, Peshawar, Ajmer, Kannauj, reaching as far east as Gaur in Bengal. The Ghorids planted in their new capital in Hindustan a monumental tower of victory the Qutab Minar, which was an almost exact duplicate of the Minaret which to this day stands in their Afghan highland capital of Jam.

DELHI was also affected from another source which was then powerful in Central Asia. In the 12th Century a

nomadic tribe from Central Asia, the Seljuk Turks, began their westward movement, settling in Asia Minor. By the 13th Century the influence of the Seljuk Empire could be felt as far east as the border of India. The Mongol invasion which followed put an end to the great Seljuk Empire and forced many refugees over the Hindu Kush into Hindustan. The influence of these Turkish artisans may be seen in Delhi in some of the early works of architecture. The beautiful screen, of arches across the sanctuary of the Quwwat-ul-Islam Mosque was certainly inspired by these Turkish artisans in Delhi. The surface decoration of the Qutab Minar is also reminiscent of a technique existing in Khorasan. And nothing is surley more Turkish than the gateway added to the Qutab Complex by Ala-ud-Din Khalji, the 'Alai Darwaza.'

In the 16th Century another Turkish people, the Uzbeghs, invaded Persia and although they themselves never crossed the Hindu Kush, they forced Timur's successors, the Timurids, across the Himalayas. When these new invaders settled in Hindustan, they founded the Mughal Empire which was to last for nearly three hundred years.

With the conquering armies and artisans came also Muslim ascetics and Sufis across the Khyber Pass. The founder of the Chistiya order of Sufis in India, Khwajah Mu'in-ud-Din Chishti of Sistan came to Delhi in 1192 A.D. with the Ghorid army.

He later settled in Ajmer and remained there the rest of his life. Among his descendants may be counted some of the most famous saints of India including Khwajah Qutb-ud-Din, Bakhtyar Kaki and Hadrat Nizam-ud-Din Awliya.

SUFISM does not belong to Islam exclusively. Sufism is the universal human yearning for union with God. In India the atmosphere has always been charged with *moksha*, a deep longing to release one's personal soul to merge into the Principle Soul. It is not surprising therefore that Sufism found the new soil very conducive for further growth.

For centuries India had been absorbing foreign elements which had reached her via the Khyber Pass. These she merged with her own culture producing in the end something primarily Indian, although the motivation had been foreign. In the 16th Century however, the Deccan became a nucleus for the development of a new major cultural style. The Marathas were its spokesmen. They defeated the Great Mughals the last invaders and pushed them back up the Khyber Pass. The circle had been completed. The Himalayas would never again afford a gateway to Hindustan. India had absorbed enough from this direction. She had taken from each of the conquerors who had descended into her plains. In the end it was India which remained the real victor.

-F M F

IS IT TRUE?

Sherlock Holmes

Attanagalla "Self-Defence"

IS IT NOT TRUE that thinking people in Sri Lanka are aghast that the legal wizard who is also the father of the Constitution had sought to interpret the constitutional provisions regarding fundamental rights in such a way as to say that the action taken by the "people of Attanagalla" to take the law into their own hands on the occasion of UNP Satyagraha was an act in pursuance of the "right of self-defence"? That the great lawyer placed this argument on the high pedestal of principle without placing any emphasis on the political logic which was crucially foremost that a "progressive" had every right to thwart a "reactionary" by any means whatsoever—on the argument that "reactionaries", the world over, resorted to dirty tricks? That if this two-yardsticks' logic was the supreme factor—one yardstick for "progressives" and another yardstick for "reactionaries," then the kind of law we pretend to enact and even glorify is a mockery? That it would be better to set down in the Constitution only one law that whatever was considered by the Government in power as "progressive" prevailed over what was considered as "reactionary"?

That the sanction behind this was the parliamentary majority the ruling party in the Assembly? That a straight forward 'Law' like that would be far better than high-sounding democratically platitudinous formulations which now grace our Constitution?

That, as it stands, the law is said to be applicable on the merits of a matter without being swayed by such considerations as whether the participants were "reactionary" or "progressive"? That the legal maestro—as one newspaper commentator described his performance—had based his argument on the very correct metaphysical 'law' that nothing was absolute, that nothing was absolute for all time, that nothing was even absolute for a tiny moment in time—as everything was changing, was in flux, all the time? That because of such arguments, the wizard of Sri Lanka (shades of the Wizard of Oz) received the approbation of the multitude in the National State Assembly? That because this particular multitude has parliamentary power, the wizard can get away with his big talk? That, if there is a

shift of power, the "progressives" of today may become the dangerous "reactionaries" of tomorrow? That the law will then be subverted to bolster another group in power?

That is why law makers, who seek to benefit from the lessons of history, endeavour to set out laws which could be applied without taking into consideration the colour, race, religion, caste, or even politics of the parties concerned? That if the Constitution and Law of Sri Lanka is interpreted and applied in the Attanagalla manner, then it would be difficult to resist the demands of different racial, religious, caste and linguistic groups in this country, particularly where they occupy contiguous territory, when they demand that they have the right to do what they want under cover of the right of self-defence in the interests of the people of the particular area? That for the moment the UF has got away with this Attanagalla's peoples "democratic self-defence" against the UNP? That very soon people in all parts of the island will stage similar "self-defence demonstrations" and the UF government may have to use its armed forces to suppress such acts of "self-defence"? That if the UF loses parliamentary power—no party or coalition stays in power for all time—then the government in power will suppress all efforts of the UF in opposition to stage demonstrations or hold meetings by invoking the Attanagalla right of self-defence?