

TRIBUNE

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U.N.P.'s FREE RICE MANIA

SEVERAL TOPFLIGHT UNP leaders want the Government to distribute free the 40,000 tons of rice received from China as an outright gift. It was the UNP which had originally issued free rice just as it had burdened the economy with subsidised food and free welfare measures. The latest UNP demand that the 40,000 tons should be distributed free conclusively demonstrates that the UNP is now bereft of even elementary political wisdom. For a long time, moreover, the UNP has not been able to formulate a practical, concrete and constructive programme of action, thus betraying political bankruptcy of a high order. It has taken refuge in satyagraha of a negative kind, worthless even as a gundu or a gimmick, either to galvanise diehard loyalists or rouse the frustrated and the discontented. Such satyagraha with slogans about free rice can only promote demagogic mischief. UNP demogogy has recently centred around free rice and semi-free food. History will neither forget nor forgive the Oliver Goonetillekes, the Senanayakes, and the UNP for two things: one, for corrupting and demoralising the *psyche* of the nation with free rice, subsidised food and free welfare benefits, and second, for making wheat, a grain which can never be grown in Ceylon, a basic staple of the diet. With reckless abandon UNP leaders still glorify free rice—which voters increasingly associate with national *hara-kiri*. THIS GOVERNMENT has had the courage to cut free rice from one measure to half, and it is only when this free rice is stopped completely that one can say that Sri Lanka is truly on the path of self reliant economic emancipation. The sooner the UNP gives up its free rice mania, the better it will be for the UNP, and the country. The Government cannot be blamed for banning a satyagraha which is only a smokescreen for free rice gimmickry. The Government has a duty to prevent demagogic mischief. Indeed, it is better that Government should ban specific acts of satyagraha straightforwardly than permit counter demonstrators to take the law into their hands.

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* UNP And SATYAGRAHA

AS WE HAVE MENTIONED elsewhere in this issue, the Government did well to ban the satyagraha at Anuradhapura on January 8 in a straightforward manner rather than knowingly or unknowingly permit Party loyalists and other elements seeking to curry favour with the Establishment to take the law into their own hands in order to prevent the UNP from conducting its satyagraha for political objectives under cover of religious observances. The Anuradhapura way is certainly better than the Attanagalla way. At least it cannot lead to another Ganemulla. We had condemned the Attanagalla episode in no uncertain terms. So did we condemn the happenings at Ganemulla.

Our support for the Government's action at Anuradhapura is because we believe that the Government has a duty to maintain law and order and to prevent situations which will directly or indirectly pave the way for extra-parliamentary confrontations that will lead to civil strife. The UNP's negative political strategy cannot but promote extra-parliamentary confrontations.

A political party must play its politics straight within the framework of

healthy parliamentary traditions. It is dangerous to mix politics with religion however innocuous it may appear at first. To stage a political demonstration on a day of religious significance within the precincts of a sacred temple area is duplicity not worthy of a political party. Any political demonstration has controversial overtones and polemical implications, and to seek to by-pass these through the subterfuge of satyagraha under religious pretences is demogogy on a new dimension.

The UNP is not playing the parliamentary political game straight. It has not yet done the first thing in the game: it has not yet formulated a political programme in concrete terms: it has no alternative plan of action to campaign for an alternative UNP-led government. Instead the UNP is seeking to foster discontent on demagogic slogans in the hope that such discontent will bring the Party additional political support.

This is unfortunately the kind of parliamentary politics which had prevailed in the leisurely days of the past when food was available and there were no critical confrontations under the shadow of urban and other guerilla politics. But this kind of politics today can only lead to situations which had erupted into insurgency in this island in April 1971. Negative politics rousing popular passions on demagogic slogans of free food, free medicine and free everything can under-

mine parliamentary government in a non-affluent democracy.

The UNP has no plan or programme to pull the country out of the present economic mess—which can constitute an alternative to the policies now being pursued by this Government. Instead, the UNP continues to hark on free rice. In the present circumstances prevailing in this country it will be within the rights of any government to make demands for free rice, subsidised food and other welfare benefits to be given free as something tantamount to high treason. All know that it was the giving away of free or semi-free food, free education, free medicine and a host of other things free that brought economic ruination to this country and also bred a dangerous political psychology where politics was made to turn on promises of more and more benefits for the populace free and gratis from the coffers of the state.

It was the Senanayakes and the UNP that had begun this business of free *this and free that* in the immediate post-second-world-war period when Independence was ushered in. This laid the foundation for the mounting economic and socio-political mess in the country today. The Left Parties, which did not have the word free in their political terminology—because Marxism insisted that those who did not labour were not entitled to anything—began to trail behind the UNP in the matter of promising things free to the common people. This

puerile tailism was completely contrary to the Marxist credo that in the first phase of the march to socialism it was from each according to this ability, to each according to his work—and it was only in the affluence of a communist society it was to each according to his needs. This surrender by the Left Parties to the demagogic slogan of the UNP on the question of free this and free that is one of the greatest tragedies which has befallen this country having arisen because of the imperatives of parliamentary politics in an under-developed economy which was anxious to leap frog into social welfare overnight.

The United Front government, in the year of grace 1973, took the first positive step to end this miasma centred around free rice and other things that were doled out free. It cut down the free measure of rice by half and has nearly ended the suicidal business of subsidised food. The Government, in spite of prognostications to the contrary, has been able to weather the impact of these decisive measures on the people. Most people have begun to accept the realities of the situation. Most people know that this country cannot enter an era of prosperity unless free food, free medicine and free education are done away with.

The UNP does not dare to put forward a manifesto in which it says that a system of free rice, free medicine and education should be established in full measure and

extended to all voters—probably because it has no concrete programme to show how the economy can be managed to make such free handouts possible. The UNP is not able to do anything besides to hark back nostalgically to the days of the Korean boom. And also to use such cheap demagogic slogans like free rice to rouse mob emotions in a bid to win electoral popularity. The worst of it is the attempt to push this free rice business, indirectly and invisibly, under behind the smokescreen of a satyagraha under the shadow and cover of a religious observance.

The UNP must grow up if it is to be taken seriously. It must outlive its free rice era if it is to survive. And it must give up negative political strategy, based on demagogic slogans if it is to insist on civil liberties to campaign for an alternative government.

At a time when the Government must be pushed into ending the free rice tradition altogether and this can be best done by growing more food, it is national suicide to talk of an era of free rice where, by implication, everything else will also be free. The UNP must come out into the open and say what it wants. It must set out its programme. It cannot hope to cry aloud for free rice to win power—and thereafter hope to re-establish, (by further subterfuges), the rule of vested interests where a few will be rich and dole out a few free handouts to keep the populace

happy and quite (under the bayonets of an Emergency—another UNP invention from the 1947-1955 era).

There is no point in harking back to the past. We have not done it for a long time. But the UNP's latest cry about free rice (starting with the 40,000 tons gift from China) makes it necessary to draw attention to the dangerous of going back to free rice and subsidised food—whereas what we still have of these free handouts must go as quickly as possible.

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CHRONICLE

Dec. 28 – Jan. 3

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

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 28: The CWC-led Joint Committee of Plantation Trade Unions yesterday unanimously decided to call off the ten-day old estate strike and give notice to the Government and employers to grant its demands within three months. The Bank of Ceylon has earned a profit of Rs. 23.5 million in 1972. No new cases of cholera has been reported yesterday. According to several teachers of English and certain teacher trade unions, English has proved to be a tough subject at the last GCE Ordinary level examinations. The Colombo Observatory announced a bad weather warning valid till 6 p.m. today. The city's water situation remains same. The United National Party's annual conference will get underway in Colombo tomorrow. The CWE flying squad unearthed several ready-made shirts hoarded by many traders in the Pettah and Fort area: this followed the price control imposed on ready-made shirts. The Minister of Public Administration, Local Government and Justice, Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike, has extended the terms of office of 23 local bodies. Israeli and Egyptian military negotiators continued talks on the disengagement of forces along the Suez canal.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 29: A top level team from the International Monetary Fund will arrive in Sri Lanka on January 20, 1974: this team which will be here for two weeks will revive the economy of the country and make recommendations for further aid. The United National Party's annual conference starts in Colombo today. The ten-day old strike of the plantation workers has been called off from today. In view of the outbreak of cholera the Ministry of Health has advised against the holding of meetings and festivals in the affected areas. According to a spokesman of the Ministry of Defence and External Affairs, the Government will not extend any support if the proposed International Tamil Confer-

ence is held in Jaffna. Israeli and Egyptian military negotiators met for over an hour and a half in the first session of resumed talks on separating their armies along the Suez canal: Egypt has announced that it is prepared for another round of fighting if Israel fail to withdraw from all occupied Arab territories.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 30: The new judges for Sri Lanka under the Administration of Justice Law which becomes operative from January 1, will be announced on Monday: Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike, Minister of Justice, said this yesterday. Two more positive cases of cholera were detected from the Wellampitiya also yesterday. Sri Lanka's foreign missions have been instructed not to issue visas to foreign nationals to attend the International Tamil Conference to be held in Jaffna next month. Mr. C. Kuamarasuriar, Minister of Posts and Telecommunications, has declined an invitation to the Tamil Conference. Mr. R. Premadasa, the Chief Opposition Whip in a press statement has said that we must be thankful to China for agreeing to supply us with 200,000 tons of rice at this juncture. An Israeli plane was shot down by Egyptian air defences over the southern sector of the Suez canal front: Israeli Defence Minister, Moshe Dayan, speaking at an election rally said that his country's border will not be determined at the Geneva Peace Conference.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 31: Mr. J. R. Jayewardene was unanimously elected President of the United National Party: Mr. Jayewardene said that the UNP in future would not look for financial support from the rich as in the past. Patients entering hospitals will have to take their rice ration books along with them else they will not be given the rice meals. Hundred and forty-three persons have been nabbed by the Bribery Commissioner's Department during this year ending tomorrow. The historic Kelani Duruthu Perahera will not be held on January 6 to 8 next year owing to cholera outbreaks. The Government has agreed to the holding of the International Tamil conference in Jaffna from January 3 to 9: this came about when Dr. Kopalapillai Mahadeva, Joint Secretary of the International Association of Tamil Research met the Prime Minister.

and gave an assurance that the conference will devote itself to academic and cultural purposes and will not be used for any political purposes. The US Court of Appeals ordered the release of convicted Watergate burglar E. Howard Hunt and Bernard Taker, pending their appeals against a conviction and sentence

TUESDAY JANUARY 1: The names of the 20 Supreme Court Judges under the new Administration of Justice Law were announced today: Mr. Victor Tennekoon has been appointed Chief Justice of the Supreme Court: the new judges will be sworn-in tomorrow morning at the 'Janadipathi Medura' before the President, Mr. William Gopallawa. Nearly 200,000 people in Colombo and the suburbs are immunised against cholera. Visas will be issued to the foreign delegates who wish to attend the International Tamil Conference. Government has informed the foreign missions abroad accordingly. The issue of extra half measure of rice at Rs 1 has been extended to all ration book holders from today. Nearly 1,300 persons were marooned by flood waters in 10 villages on the banks of Mahaveli, Ambanganga and Kuda Oya. Israelis go to polls today since their nation was established 25 years ago; the Israeli forces on the Egyptian and Syrian fronts went into an increased state of alert. Leading economist John Galbraith called for the impeachment of President Nixon and that Congress should wait atleast for six months before doing so.

WEDNESDAY JANUARY 2: Government yesterday invoked emergency regulations to confer sweeping powers on price control inspectors to check on commodities by co-operative stores and private traders. From today police will authorise public gatherings, meetings and processions in the city of Colombo only with the prior sanction of the health authorities: the police is taking this action in view of the cholera outbreak. New admissions to the universities will be delayed by two more months because of the delays in examinations for the second and final year students. A survey carried out in the Kurunegala district revealed that nearly 42,000 acres of paddy cultivation has been ruined by drought. The Petroleum Corporation has

announced price increases ranging from forty to sixty percent for bunker fuel and twenty percent for aviation fuel. Hospital patients will get two rice meals from today, the Ministry of Health announced today. About four million Nigerians face starvation as a result of severe drought which has already taken a large toll of men and livestock in the northern states. *Time Magazine* named Federal Judge John Sirica, who almost single handedly forced the Watergate scandal into the open, as its Man of the Year.

THURSDAY JANUARY 3, The Prime Minister, Mrs Srimavo Bandaranaike, in a New Year message yesterday said that the year that had dawned would be doubtless be one of greater achievement if the nation continued its effort to salvage the country from its critical conditions despite the difficulties it faced. At a brief and simple ceremony yesterday morning at the Janadipathi Mandiraya the Chief Justice, 19 new judges of the Supreme Court and 16 High Court judges took their oaths before the President, Mr. William Gopallawa. Several foreign companies have offered to prospect for oil off the shores of Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka will get an uninterrupted supply of oil from its supplies but will have to pay a higher price for it this year. The turnover of Sri Lanka's trade with China is expected to reach a new high of 400 million rupees this year. President of Pakistan has ordered the nationalisation of banking business. According to top rank party officials, Israeli Prime Minister appears to have won the General Election.

SUICIDE BRIDGE

San Francisco's famous Golden Gate Bridge is a favourite with suicides. Its guardians have been arguing for several years now whether to spend \$771,000 on a safety barrier. In the meantime the number of people to have ended their lives by diving into the chilly bay waters has increased to 478.

TWO DAYS

AT THE KURUNEGALA HOSPITAL

By GEORGE L. De SILVA

I entered the Civil Hospital Kurunegala on 5.12.73 for a check-up-blood—pressure and Puritus. My bill for two days was Rs. 60/ but the cost of various tests was Rs. 75/— excluding drugs.

The very day I made up my mind to enter hospital I simply walked into a Paying Ward. There were two going abegging. When I left hospital on 7.12.73 there were three rooms vacant. On 9.12.73 there were four rooms vacant. A loss of Rs. 120/- a day. I suppose this is the case in other government hospitals too. The reason for paying rooms going abegging is obviously because of the Minister of Health's "penny wise pound foolish" policy.

A couple of years ago when a paying patient had to pay Rs. 20/- per day no charges were made for various tests—some insignificant. At that time not a single room was left vacant. Either the room charges should be reduced or the charges for various tests should be knocked off. A government hospital should serve as a model institution.

On 7.12.73 there were 1006 patients on the board and ironically there were only four paying patients. Even if all four beds were occupied the money collected would be like a drop in the mighty ocean. So what is collected from the four paying patients (if rooms were occupied) would be hardly worth taking into calculation.

The Minister of Health has visited many foreign countries but what improvement has he done to some of our cattle shed hospitals. The toilet in the Kurunegala Pay-

ing Wards is anti-diluvian-filthy. Only the Merchants' wards where some Ministers and V.I.P's enter are spick and span.

It is adduced that only rich folk enter class I wards. This is poppy-cock. I entered as a pensioner. Some patients take loans and others mortgage their property to pay hospital bills. The Colombo Hospital Committee made a strong case for the reduction of hospital charges for class I and below but they fell on deaf ears.

This letter is not written against the Kurunegala Hospital Administration nor the Staff. I write this in the interests of the general public especially the not-so-rich who have the misfortune to enter government hospitals, but cannot afford to enter nursing Homes.

I challenge the Minister of Health to make a surprise visit without the fanfare of

trumpets to the Kurunegala "paying" toilets and even the "non-paying."

I noticed some tiles are missing in some hospital buildings and others broken. An electric fan in a paying ward is broken. The authorities do not seem to believe in that adage "a stitch in time saves nine". I hope that this letter will create public opinion.



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SHAMBA

COMPELLED TO RETREAT

by ANATORY BUKOBA

October 3,

Today I borrowed the best mammoty this shamba has seen, Ceylon made, it looks new, and it has a long and a light shaft. We used it to clear some of the land that had started to be filled up again with short weeds. I gathered up with my knife what had been uprooted. The knife I used in another way in the evening by resuming clearing. It was easier work than yesterday, because the last, almost-of the great creeper-thorns had been felled or so I thought. One-newly-made heap was set on fire and then I had to leave it while it was still burning. I do not think all the heap was consumed by the fire because there was so much that was green on it.

This time when I went away I left only one person here and because of this I was only away one and half nights. My friend has to earn money quickly and may stay only one more week. We are spending more than Rs. 5/- a day on food I think.

Some young fruit plants were pointed out to me, while clearing. One was *Karamba*, which as far as I could see, grows in some profusion. I am told it grows into a thorn tree about eight feet high. As far as I can make out it bears small edible berries, I wonder if

it would make *Karamba* pie, much as we have gooseberry pie in England. The seed, too, can be eaten, I am told.

Kong was another tree we found. It grows into a very large tree, and it bears a fruit that is eaten much the same as a Rambuttan is. Our *Kong* is quite high, it is in front of the house, growing near some *Siyembala* and wood apple trees. *Siyembala*, too, was an edible fruit, which is used to season curries.

We have a number of them, but none, so far as I know quite large enough yet to bear fruit. I am hoping to resume packing and selling seeds.

October 4,

This was just one of those days when no work really gets done. Despatched early to go shopping, it seemed to take me all morning, but I came back with a brand new mammoty, my first Ceylon-made and curved slightly, as it appears, a good mammoty should be. It is going to be like a new toy, so I hope I get some more work done. The mammoty cost me Rs. 19/85, and our local *bas* put a handle, which he had ready-made, on it for Rs. 1/25. He did not pass the handle-end through the mammoty at all, as I have always seen done and would have thought the

right and the only way, but he thinned down the mammoty-end of the shaft, hammered it home, and fixed it with a wedge. I thought his method looked the better way. At the same time as the mammoty, I bought some sugar at last, for the first time since the price rise, but my companion tells me he thinks the condensed milk is going to be more economical of the two. This costs Rs. 1/75, and the sugar cost Rs. 2/10 a pound.

With my mammoty I cleared away some of the thorns which lay like small unruly plants in front of the house. It cuts the soil well. It was chosen for me by someone standing beside me at the shop, and it was the third that was shown to me. The man gave as his reason the reason for his choice, that the mammoty was either slightly curved or that the blade would stand at a better angle to the shaft. So I understood, and so it seemed to work out in practice, for the mammoty cut the soil beautifully.

October 5,

Another day it was when little seemed to be done, and shopping took too long. Snake-gourd was forty cents a pound, and runner beans fifty, murunga was only thirty five cents, fat Murunga. It is my favourite vegetable, and I had a rare old meal of it today. If Murunga is my favourite with rice, *prado* is my favourite in a European dish, and it costs Rs. 1/20 a pound here. It may be that I buy my vegetables at

farm where they are not dear, for many vegetables at other shops cost around ninety cents, for instance, the best kind of cabbage, and beetroot. My companion has turned his face stoutly against *not-kol*, or whatever its English name is, and the poorer leafy cabbage, and what is called *Rabu*, which is erroneously translated as radish, so I shall be buying no more of these. The real radish is a delicacy that is eaten raw in England, while *rabu* has to be cooked. The leaf of the *rabu*, my friend says, takes too long to clean, and he has had enough of *Mallung* into which all leafy vegetables are made. Green gram or mungatta is Rs. 6/ a measure, and yellow grams, or whatever that may be, for it is also called *mungatta*, is Rs. 4/- a pound. Sow or sago is Rs. 3/- a pound. I had a delightful drink of it today, sago mixed with egg and a little coconut milk. Kitchen salt, as I call it, is twenty cents a pound, but it may be one of those food items whose price is controlled.

October 6,

This morning I did some clearing in the direction along our road. There was no help for it but to cut some large *Karamba* which, as far as I can make out, grows more like a vine than a tree or bush, leaning heavily on other trees, entangled with other large vines, so that it becomes well-nigh impossible to cut the one without cutting the other.

To compensate for this loss I felt some small *Karamba*

plants, growing in profusion like teak, but smaller, more delicate, a thorn, and looking not much different from the other thorny plants around. By my mass-acre, I thought of all the *Karamba* berries lost, the fruit pies with pastry that might have been made, *Karamba* growing very much, as I imagine, raspberries, blackberries and blubberies do in the Black Forest, just waiting to be picked in the season. I had a fine heap of thorns, and a very dark young lad in his early teens, who was passing by, said, weigh it down or it will not burn, so I beat my high pile down with a heavy stick, and it became quite a small one by contrast to what it was before.

A branch of *murunga* that had been lying around for quite some months or weeks in the blazing sun, I found was still green in places, and after trimming it, I planted it in the gap in my line of *murunga* trees. Two plantain trees, small ones, have died recently, they just healed over onto their side. Was it lack of water? I certainly had not watered them for quite some times.

October 15,

When I last wrote these notes, I really thought I was seeing the end of them, with my companion gone right at the beginning of the growing or planting season, and the evacuation of this house of all but myself, the position from the view of security being what it is, it was going to put me right back

Such was the question as regards people, but there is a financial angle, too, and that is that I have not drawn any profit from this place in all the eight months I have been here. Before I started, I gave myself six months in which to do so, so I have passed the deadline, but now comes a third side to the matter, I have done a certain amount of clearing, and done it the way I wanted it done, the effect looks good, and I am reluctant to leave it to the tender mercies of other people or of nature. It is unlikely that anyone else will be allowed to take this land on, and even if they are, it is going to revert to the thorny scrub that the portion that has not been cleared is, and I feel this will be a desertion. Nonetheless I should have to go into the question and see what is to be done. My good companion has decided to stay on, the clear understanding that he is not to be left alone at night again. I do not blame him making this condition. October 16,

By the week-end, this acre will probably be managed by someone else, a familiar man. I explained my ideas to him, such as the conservation of trees, before the day was out, I had read this in *Himmat* the weekly, managed by Rajmohan Gandhi; "when you kill a tree you are losing one to two hundred years of the productivity of the earth", this was uttered by an American, Professor of Environmental Concern at Wisconsin University, Dr. V. M. G. Nair, and I do

The One Acre Farm

not think he is far out in his estimate.

Another idea I tried to get across was that you should even conserve grass: do not be in too much of a hurry to uproot it until you are absolutely certain you are going to use that portion of ground more or less at once. Conservation: that is the word and just as I was seven years ahead of the times when I coined the phrase, *Grow More Food*, I suppose I shall be seven years too soon again in this idea of Conservation. I am aware that the Soil Conservation Society is already in the field, but the idea of conservation is a much larger idea than that of just Soil Conservation of which there is ample evidence on tea and coconut estates. My companion and I continued our work just as if nothing was afoot. He remade his *massa* bed, and I continued clearing by this road-side, there was a real cloud-burst this evening, and the wind!

October 17,

There has been a large clump of all kinds of thorny trees, creepers, and other kinds of trees as well, growing in a tight knot at a spot which obscures the inside of this house from the road. When I saw some people I know quite well having another shot at removing what little wood apple is left by me by throwing stones at the trees while they were obscured by this miniature thorny copse. I decided I

must forthwith make an effort to thin out the clump of trees and bushes, so this time I really attacked it, and after removing much I find there is still quite a lot of it left. Among the trees, in the clump that I want to save, is a tree that gives medicine, and a wood apple tree.

Snakes have done it once again. This time there were three, all of the same sort. One was killed and the other two escaped into the house.

So once more my companion has given me notice of his firm intention to leave tomorrow, and I should have to evacuate the house or lose many things I would not like losing. I killed a large rat barely five minutes ago. I held him mesmerized by the light of the torch while I felt for a stick, and I gave him a hard knock with it, then he flopped around obviously hit badly, and I finished him off by a rapier-like thrust with the stick where I could see him lying behind the *hal muth* the pot containing the rice for cooking.

October 18,

It took me four journeys to move everything that I wanted to move out of the house. The chatty pots left there, and odds and ends. I had best try to make clear here what I have been trying to do on my acre of land. I was hoping people would join me, who like me, had a small income. Not one did so.

The people I had from time to time had no income, and they lent on me and

relied on me to support them at every turn. Every-one of those who stayed more than just a day or two was a cook, which I was not; and the money I used to support them, or to send them home, was money which might have been used to stock the farm. I had certain ideas for this farm. I wanted it to look beautiful and in that I succeeded, in what was really an uninteresting landscape. The uncertain companions I had, wanted money fairly quickly, but they were not prepared to earn it on the farm, unless there was a case of some of them saving money from selling wood-apple on the sly, and of this I cannot be sure.

I do not think anybody felt that they would stay very long, and so no one ever really put in a full day's work on the farm, or if they did, kept it up. In the end

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I would have done better to have paid a boy a little to have done all the cooking and to have done all the farm work myself. At one stage watering was definitely beyond my strength, and I could have got the cook to some watering and supervised it to see it was done properly. Lastly there were some cases of over watering, and some of under watering. Over watering killed the plant by making its stem rot. In my opinion, once a plant, such as a tree, has lost its leaves it is better to stop watering it regularly.

October 19,

Barely an hour ago did I get back to find that my room had been entered, and a few coconut shells and a chatty pot, in which I have successfully grown a few things, had been carried outside from the front room, the chief bedroom in which I had put them to keep them safe from monkeys and too much sun, and been knocked to pieces; but nothing else was lost. I shall have to wait till daylight tomorrow to see if any damage has been done outside.

With the four snakes that had been seen in this house just two evenings ago, I was reluctant to return to this cadjan house, isolated as it is, alone, but alone it had to be, and, as usual, once I was really back, and had inspected the bed for snakes, and seen the worst that had happened, I found I was glad to be back, and I picked up my routine in a matter of minutes; only this time I had to spend a few minutes salvaging what

plants I could from the coconut shells that had been knocked or smashed on the ground. Fortunately, unlike as the other occasions when I had left this house alone, I had left some water in a *Kallageddi*, and it was still there, and so I was able to wash my hands of the mud.

October 20,

Rained it did soon after. I woke up this morning, and going down to the river to wash my clothes soon after breakfast, I saw the direction in which I ought to resume clearing.

In the space between the house and this place were a number of small thorny bushes, and these I removed with my knife, cutting into the soil to destroy the roots as much as I could. I must say I enjoy clearing, slow though I am. The transformation one effects is always to see, especially when it is done according to one's idea. I had a good breakfast, but no proper lunch or dinner; no cook. The family, that said it would come, has not materialized. I saw a fine yellow bird; and a noise, as loud as that of a bird, came from a squirrel. It was not far from me, inside the house but in the other room; it seemed either angry or demanding something like a sergeant-major, and it almost frightened me with its nose.

Being alone, I was at last able to read, and I read the chapters of a book called "God's Frozen People" by two authors, a book reminiscent of Chesterton's and Bel-

loc's best. It is not without its lessons, even in farming.

October 22,

There is a place for the amateur I learnt today. He is, you might say, the entrepreneur, the man who thinks things up, and who also finds the where-withal to carry them through. Such a one or not, I have this short story to relate. My kitchen has been leaking badly, and it had become well nigh impossible to get the fireplace lit the morning after a heavy shower. When I pointed out to my companion that a post was forcing the cadjans up, making a little well or scoop in the slope of the cadjans above it, he poured scorn on my idea of lopping off the top of the offending post so as to flatten down the cadjans about it and allow the rain water to run off straight, and he pointed out several other defects which he said would let the rain continue to pour in. So I let the matter bide. Last night it rained again, and I could see the offending post clearly, and when I went outside I could see the hollow in the roof that it caused. So I lopped off about three inches of it today, and when it rained this evening, not a drop fell into the kitchen. The bed nearest the kitchen did get a little wet, but by pulling up the cadjan above the bed, I soon put a stop to that leak.



POLLUTION**SPIRITUAL**

==== CHRISTIAN VIEW ====

By Jepharis

So far we have tried to deal with the problems of pollution as they have arisen on the material plane. Spiritual Pollution is the contamination of mankind brought about by SIN, which even affects life in the Animal Kingdom in many subtle ways. Indeed it affects ALL life on our planet.

However, the chief target of Spritual Pollution is MAN, and that is why, on this fair earth of ours "where every prospect pleases, only Man is vile" as Bishop Heber observed in the 1820s, an observation which holds good to this day, and which will continue to hold good till the end of time.

SPIRITUAL POLLUTION is a theological subject, and therefore not quite in keeping with a paper like the *Tribune*; yet I am trying to write something about it, as it is the last instalment of my articles on Pollution which appeared in earlier issues of this magazine, and without which my series would not be complete.

It is all about the interaction of human personalities how that "no man is an island" but that each life is linked up with the lives of those around it for better or for worse, by a kind of "continental shelf", under the surface may be, but still present. How thinking processes of individuals work together in the common interest or to the common detriment of mankind.

How, as in the 13th chapter of St. Mathew, we read the story of the man who sowed good seed in his field and how an enemy planted tares among the wheat while he slept. When he awoke he exclaimed

"An enemy hath done this!" The wheat and the tares were allowed to grow together until the time of harvest. Then the tares were gathered up, bound into bundles and burned, while the wheat was gathered into the barn. The explanation given is that the sower is the Son of Man. The good seed are the children of the kingdom.

The field is the world. The tares are the wicked. The enemy that sowed them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the world. The reapers are the angels. The tares, representing all things which offend and those who do inequity, will at that time be cast into a furnace of fire or hell. The tares, in this parable, like the weeds in a field, represent the incidence of spiritual pollution in an otherwise fair and good earth.

IF YOU visit the slums of "old Colombo", or even the rich, affluent homes of Colo-

mbo 7, the offices and factories of business, commerce and industry, our hospitals and prisons and court-houses, to say nothing of the overcrowded lunatic asylums at Angoda and Mulleriyawa; if you walk or drive through the streets, or travel in buses and trains, you would be able to observe the various subtle ways in which "spiritual pollution" has affected the common lot of suffering humanity whether it be by widespread poverty, by selfishness, greed and avarice, by unemployment, by sickness, by crime, violence and lawlessness, by intemperance and drug-addiction, or by various forms and degrees of insanity.

All these are examples of what "spiritual pollution" has done, is doing, and will continue to do to mankind until the end of time and Jesus' long-awaited return, when it will be destroyed off the face of the earth by the purifying fires.

It behoves us, therefore, that while probation is still open to us, and an all-merciful God is very graciously offering us an extension of time so that no sinner might perish: time for amendment of life we should use this period of grace not to indulge our own sinful selves, but to cleanse ourselves from all traces of "Spiritual Pollution" or SIN, if we desire to be saved. And who doesn't?



INANIA *Of This, That and The Other*

GIVEN TO THE POOR

By INNA

The English newspaper, *The Universe* of 9th June 1967 once said: "The Church in Brazil has decided to give all the land it owns to the poor peasants. The decision was taken at the 8th National Conference in Aparecidia, Sao Paulo State. All diocesan authorities were asked to surrender financial, technical, religious and social aids as well as giving the land. This action of the Church was setting an indisputable example to the government and owners of large estates" (9 June) in an outburst of example.

One could also read in the Catholic paper of Sri Lanka of November 23rd 1969, soul-stirring words: "A bishop of South America stopped the building of his cathedral recently and put up a marble plaque on its south, unfinished wall saying: a sign of our unfinished yearning towards the Father and a sign of our foolishness. He had spent millions on the Church building and left it unfinished so that all future monies collected would go to the building of houses for the poor".

The money that came from hard work from a Rubber-watta or a The-watta, sign of back-breaking work, has gone into the building of a very large building of the Catholics of Sri Lanka, and many within that fold deplore the flow of gold into brick and mortar: may be they are right, may be they are wrong. Depends on how conscious of evil and sin they are. Our opening to the Truth—neither to Left nor Right—demands that we do not squander.

My study into the early history of what is called christianity—part of our opening to christians—has led me into different views. Early christianity *built the community*. Tangible, sensible man wanted tangible, sensible realities for his self-expression, and so after the persecution of the Christians ended around 312 (or 319) of this millenium, they, naturally overjoyed, built kingly palatial buildings called *basilicas* (Basil meaning "king")

This triumphant edifice has no place in a world of today where such things are the expression of the rich and so-called 'free' world, and are a block of cement in the dough (not what George would call *leaven in the dough*) in the poor world.

Then and now, First world people can build basilicas. Then, not now, Second world people built basilicas. Now, Third world people should not build basilicas. If they do, they run the risk of saying they have nothing to say to

the poor and miserable but everything to so say to the neo-colonials and the upper ten in whose tentacles they are. (In this article, I take 'basilica' not in reference to such a building being done by a christian community in Sri Lanka, but only as a symbol of early christianity.)

My friend George is a catholic and I tried to defend the reasoning behind the expression of triumph, and he disowned me, but I do not like to lose his sincere friendship, and so I reserve judgement for the moment.

My christian friends generally trust in what they call Providence: the dictionary meaning says what we can all guess about the word. I thought that servants in christian churches are usually well-paid precisely because they know that God will provide, and he will never fail when you give even your final two-cents worth to the poor and to the well-deserved, and to the wage-earner.

Anyone can learn from the Sri Lanka church, if it is truly poor and with the people. Hawkeyed will find out if this is truly so, or not, Why not?



Rupees And Financial Realities

The settlement of the rupee problem between India and the United States is a constructive recognition of the realities of a situation. There was no good reason for either country to postpone settlement of the account. The bulk of the rupees will do what they were intended to do in the first place—accelerate economic development in the world's largest democracy. The United States has kept enough of the earnings from surplus grain sales to finance its own operations in India for another generation.

This, however, is only part of a bigger issue of working out financial problems between the United States and the nations of South Asia. The rupee transfer was essentially a question of doing the right sooner rather than later. Of greater consequence is the resolution of the enormous problem of accumulated debits in India, and also in Pakistan and Bangladesh.

India and Pakistan are the biggest debtors among all the world's developing nations. The United States is their principal creditor. Both nations, as well as Bangladesh, which formerly was East Pakistan, have serious problems in meeting their obligations. Debt service in Pakistan is so costly that it presently eats up half of all the convertible currency assistance that the country receives each

year. India owes the United States 3 billion dollars, Pakistan about 1.4 billion dollars.

In both cases, the United States has wisely decided not to take matters into its own hands but to join a Consortium of all the Western Creditors and have the World Bank negotiate the problems.

The result has been five Annual Debt - Re-scheduling Agreements with India and two with Pakistan, and a tentative Agreement with Bangladesh, which is still locked into an argument with Pakistan regarding division of the debt.

This approach seems to us the best possible way to face the problem. By involving all the creditors and the World Bank, the United States avoids the embarrassment of forcing issues alone. By extending generous rescheduling terms, the creditor nations together avoid the embarrassment of defaults in payments while easing the pressure of debt service at critical times for the nations.

Some members of congress are not satisfied, however, and want tighter controls. But the record doesn't justify such measures.

In the last 15 years, only 12 nations have required re-scheduling. In a few cases, as with Egypt and Chile, this has been forced on the United States by defaults in payments. But in most cases

the arrangements have avoided defaults and assured continued regular repayment. Nor has there been a pattern of forgiveness. Only one state, Israel, has received forgiveness, and that was 1 million dollars for payments due in 1971 and 1972, an action initiated by Congress itself. Tightening the rules could jeopardize the useful role of the World Bank as negotiator for all creditors, and it would embarrass bilateral relations with nations whose economic health is important to the US.

THE goal of economic assistance remains to speed the development of the poor nations of the world. It is not surprising that these nations have occasionally bitten off more credit than they can readily digest. The flexible approach being taken by the creditor nations is the best way to make sure that those loans, designed to accelerate growth, are not allowed to suffocate that growth.

For News Behind
the News

read

TRIBUNE

regularly

TRIBUNE, January 12, 1974

SIGNIFICANCE OF

French Arms Sales To Pakistan

By S. K. Ghosh

New Delhi,

The disclosure by the French Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Jean de Lipkowski, in his press conference at the Islamabad airport on 9 December 1973, that during his two-day consultations with the Pakistani authorities at Islamabad, they made "a general survey of the arms problem" and left the details to the experts, would cause considerable concern in this country. Further, the statement that "when one party receives an enormous amount of arms the other has the right to arm itself also." would tend to give an impression that the French Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs was referring to India and justifying Pakistani plans to acquire arms. Mr. Lipkowski also indicated that further discussions would be under way.

THE FRENCH sale of arms to Pakistan is not a new policy. Already they have sold about 50 Mirage III-E fighter-bombers and three Conventional 1,000-ton Daphne-class submarines and a number of Alouette-III helicopters to Pakistan. Alouette helicopters are also being manufactured in Pakistan under licence. There have been reports, from time to

time, about further orders^s by Pakistan for submarine^s as well as Mirage aircraft. There are also speculative reports about their acquisition of Brequet Atlantic maritime reconnaissance aircraft. Diplomatic sources in Paris suggested that Bhutto's principal aim during his visit to France in August 1973 was these arms (aircraft and submarines) "to help counter-balance the better-equipped Indian armed forces."

In this connection, it is also to be borne in mind that in this country there has been persistent advocacy in certain quarters for acquisition of either the French Mirage or the Anglo-French Jaguar for our Air Force as a counter to the Pakistani acquisition of Mirages. It is not, therefore, unlikely that by this disclosure Mr. Lipkowski was trying to promote arms sales to this country on a competitive basis by talking about the transfer of weapons to Pakistan. One might as well regard his statement as a hint to India for a deal with France for these aircraft.

THE BRITISH always had a grudge that while they were being violently criticised for their sale of arms to South Africa, the French who were

doing the same business, were getting away comparatively unscathed. Indeed, the French had been extraordinary successful as an international arms supplier over the years. In 1970, they sold 1300 million dollars worth of arms, constituting eight per cent of all France's exports and 25 per cent of its industrial exports. Since the boom of 1970, however, their arms sales slackened. It has been estimated that by 1972 the French arms sales had fallen by 40 per cent. This sharp fall was partly due to the Americans winding up their operations in Vietnam and consequently offering their surpluses in the world market. Secondly, with the devaluation of the dollar and revaluation of Franc, the American arms have become competitive. The French aerospace industry has suffered recently from a number of sales made in Europe by US companies aided by low prices of the dollar.

THE FRENCH made a particular bid in selling arms to the Arab countries and they concentrated on Saudi Arabia and Kuwait initially. Saudi Arabia plans to buy 38 Mirage III-E. It is also interested in purchasing "ack-ack" Crotale missile. The Kuwait Parliament has recently approved the spending of 422 million Kuwaiti dinars (approximating Rs. 1,000 crores) for arms build-up, and taking the cue from it, the French have offered their weaponry. Libya is already one of the steady customers for French arms, which include Mirage fighter-bombers and interceptors, as

well as Crotale and SS-12 naval missiles (not to be confused with Soviet SS series). It is not unlikely that Mr. Lipkowski's attempt at wooing Pakistan is related to their current negotiations with some of the Arab countries, including Saudi Arabia.

The prestigious Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) had pointed to a new French method of arms sales promotion initiated in 1972. It says: "Several countries in the Middle East were offered French weapons under contracts providing for technical support assistance from Pakistan. This arrangement, which would permit Pakistan to exchange the technical expertise gained as an old client of the French aerospace industry for valuable foreign currency, allows potential new customers to avoid relying on French after-sales services and to promote regional cooperation." Specifically, Pakistan has an agreement with France and Abu Dhabi whereby the former is to provide training and after-sales services for 14 Mirage fighters sold to Abu Dhabi; in return these aircraft would be available to Pakistan in case of emergency. It is likely that Pakistan has now proposed to use the foreign exchange thus gained on French weapons.

Speculative reports stemming from Premier Bhutto's recent visit to the Gulf States also indicate a possible new three-way deal between Pakistan, France and the Gulf Sheikdoms under which sophisticated arms factories will be set up in Pakistan with finance from the Gulf States

and expertise from France. This would also help Pakistan conserve its none-too-big foreign exchange reserves.

RECENTLY, however, the French have received a serious setback to their arms sales policy, particularly towards West Asia. After the spectacular performance of the Soviet SA -6 and SA-7 missiles in the recent West Asian war, there have been reports that even the traditionalist Arab countries might consider acquiring the Soviet weapons. This factor might have further added to the compulsions on the French to resort to sales promotion in this part of the world.

In these circumstances one has to put the attempts, in their appropriate perspective. Recently, in the Organisation of African Unity, the African states requested the

Arab countries to apply the oil embargo to South Africa, Rhodesia and Portugal also in order to bring about decolonisation and majority rule in Southern Africa. France has been one of the consistent suppliers of arms to South Africa.

The African countries recently demonstrated their solidarity with the Arab world. The time has, therefore, come for the Arab world to reciprocate that feeling of solidarity and look more closely at the French arms sales policy. The Arabs will also recall that Pakistan is associated militarily, economically and otherwise with countries who have not followed consistently a pro-Arab policy. All these considerations are likely to have a bearing on any future French Pakistani arms transactions.

—FN

BREZHNEV ON CONGRESS PARTY'S GOAL OF SOCIALISM

New Delhi,

In the course of his reply to the public reception accorded to him in Delhi yesterday, the Soviet Communist Party Chief, Mr. Leonid Brezhnev, said: The ruling party (in India), the Indian National Congress, has put forward an important democratic programme of broad socio-economic transformations designed to improve the life of the people. It has proclaimed socialism as its goal. Broad political and social circular in India are known to come out in favour of socialism.

"We have always believed and continue to believe that the choice of the road of social development is an internal affair of each nation, that this choice is determined by that nation's own motives, needs, socio-political traditions and the alignment of class forces. And if to-day in India mention is made of the development towards socialism this, in our view, stems from your historical experience as well. World capitalism endowed India with chains of colonial oppression. It is not surprising that your people do not want to pin their hopes for the future on that particular social system."

A PRELIMINARY EVALUATION

Lessons Of The Arab-Israeli War

By Subramaniam

*Institute of Defense Studies & Analyses
New Delhi*

AFTER EVERY WAR the General Staffs all over the world and students of strategic studies carefully analyse the war and attempt to derive lessons to be applied to future wars. The 1967 Arab Israeli war highlighted the risks involved in exposing a country's airforce to surprise disarming attack by an adversary's airforce and thereafter all airforces of the world tried to solve procedures and devise measures to minimise the damage caused by such attacks

Similarly, the Fourth Arab Israeli war will now be carefully evaluated in various countries though it may be necessary to wait a little longer to get at correct facts necessary for a meticulous analysis. Unlike in 1967 when the Israelis were very forthcoming with information they are now extraordinarily reticent on data, the reason being this time it was not a spectacular victory but a costly damage-limiting operation for them. Still certain broad useful lessons can be derived from the 18-day campaign.

Israelis did have prior warning about the Arab build up and the likelihood of an attack for as long as a period of ten days. The Beirut papers reported about the Arab concentration three days prior to the attack. In fact the

Israelis ordered the mobilisation on the morning of 6th October when in fact the attack was launched at 2 p.m. The question that has been raised is why they did not mobilise 24 or 48 hours earlier. The President of the Israeli Supreme Court is heading a commission to investigate into this failure. It looks as though the failure was not in intelligence reporting but in its assessment and initiation of action. One may see a parallel between this and the situation that preceded the Chinese attack on India on 20 October, 1962.

SUBSEQUENTLY, on the night of 15-16 October the Israeli forces crossed the Great Bitter Lakes and landed in the Deversoir area on the West Bank. The Arabs appeared to have treated it as a Commando raid and did not appreciate the extent, nature and significance of the operation. The Egyptian War minister General Ismail later admitted that serious mistakes were committed by the Egyptian Armed Forces in incorrectly assessing this development and taking appropriate action in time. This bridgehead was enlarged by Israelis and they were able to bring over sufficiently strong and large forces which were able to encircle the Egyptian III Army on the West Bank.

This recalls to our mind the failure of the Commander of IV Indian Division in Kameng in November 1962 to protect his flanks adequately, to prevent the Chinese infiltration via various trails and finally to take appropriate counter action. Instead he panicked and ordered a withdrawal which ended in the division dissolving without fighting.

President Sadat has recently revealed that the Egyptian command behaved in a similar manner in 1967. General Ismail also referred to the breakdown in communications between the front and the headquarters during the period immediately after Israeli crossover. This would appear to be more a human than a mechanical failure in communication. The recent replacement of chiefs of Staff and the Army Commanders may be regarded as supporting this interpretation. These two aspects cover command decisions and have valuable lessons for national leadership.

Let us now look at some of the lessons in regard to development of weapons. Except on the last night of the war, October 21-22, there was very little of night bombing and both sides, though they had bombers, did not appear to have used them except on one this occasion. It is quite likely that in the age of SA 6 and SA 7 missiles the role of the bomber will have to be very carefully evaluated. No estimate puts down Israeli losses at lower than 105 Phantoms, Skyhawks and Mirages. The Arab estimates are much higher. This would tend to show that

these aircraft, in ground attack role, were as vulnerable as Sukhoi-7 was during the Indo-Pakistan War. The Air war however highlighted that the Israeli Aircraft, with an active bombing missile like the Sparrow in addition to infra-red bombing missile like the Sidewinder (analogous to the Atoll missile with the Soviet aircraft) had a distinct advantage since it could use its missile armament against both an on-coming as well as aircraft flying away.

ISRAELIS ALSO had the advantage of US supplied Maverick and Shrike air to ground missiles and the Wall eye smart bomb. New anti-aircraft defensive tactics have to be worked out against aircraft using such weapons. The defensive perimeter for vulnerable targets will have to be wider and higher. The destiny of light man-portable SA-7 infra-red homing missiles may provide an answer.

Both sides used helicopters as transports for night Commando operations. The Israelis used the helicopter on 22 October along with para-dropping aircraft for the assault on the Syrian posts on Mount Hermon. They also used them for a deep penetration raid 100 km North east of Damascus against an Iraqi convey and in conjunction with their missile boats for attack on coastal targets. The Egyptians used the helicopters for raid on oil installations in Sinai.

At Sea, the war was fought entirely by the smaller craft such as missile boats and motor torpedo boats etc., and

there were no reports of larger vessels such as destroyers in action. The Israelis used the missile boat-helicopter combination in their attacks on oil installations at Baniyas and other shore installations at Latakia and Tartus. Both sides used missiles for ship to shore bombardment.

In land operations, the anti-tank missile played a major role in this war. The Arabs used the Soviet Sagger missile while the Israelis used the American Tow missile. The 105 mm rifled gun, which was the standard weapon on all Israeli tanks, appeared to have an edge over the Soviet 100 mm gun. The new Soviet tank T-62 with its 115 mm gun, though it made its appearance, could not be said to have been used effectively. Armour deployment and manoeuvring took place at night but there was no sustained armour battle. The Syrians used the FROG missile for bombardment over 40-50 km range. It was reported that one long range Egyptian missile Al-Zafir was fired on 22 October just before the ceasefire.

THE EGYPTIAN CROSSING of the Suez Canal and the overrunning of the Barlev line need to be studied very carefully and so does the crossing of the Great Bitter Lake by the Israelis. Whatever the Israelis may say in retrospect they did not spend £238 millions on the Barlev line for it to function as a trip wire. The Egyptian General Staff displayed great skill for detailed planning when they frustrated the Israelis from

executing their plan of setting on fire the water edge of the Suez Canal and to pump into it inflammable fuel. The Egyptian use of water cannon to breach earth traverses was a brilliant innovation. The promotion of the Chief of operations, Gen Gamassi as Chief of Staff may be a recognition of his role as a planner of the operation. The Soviet PNP bridges were not only constructed under air attacks but were subsequently kept in good repair under continuous attacks.

The Israeli operation of crossing over to the West Bank was a brilliant gamble but it succeeded. Of such gambles alone history is made of military successes. It showed a remarkable ability for contingency planning, and to foresee the necessary preparedness measures which would give them the capability to carry through the operation at very short notice. They must have trained themselves in night crossing operations. They appear to have ferried their tanks on powered rafts and sustained their forces across the Great Bitter Lakes through water borne logistics.

THIS WAR was very different from the one fought in 1967. It employed missiles on a large scale and electronic measures played a crucial role. The Israelis used remotely piloted drone vehicle Teledyne Ryan A-for reconnaissance. The American satellite reconnaissance and overflights with their sophisticated SR 71 A aircraft also supplemented these efforts.

This war is an illustration that the science and tech-

E D-OF-YEAR AWAR

Picking my 'Man of Last Year'

by CANAX

THEY'VE GONE and done it again I see. For the 47th time in as many years, *Time* magazine has named its Man of the Year. I don't know how they do it but all I know is they certainly don't ask me before they do. Forty-seven years is a long time and any man can stand only that much and no more. I decided I wasn't going to stomach such insults any longer.

What I mean is, even the worm will turn. So finally and at long last *Time* is in for a big surprise. I decided to make my own award and in the process return the compliment by completely ignoring you-know-who. Yes, and I did it all by myself.

No, that's not quite true. Ignoring *Time* was easy, but ignoring my wife wasn't. She does tend to take that one nology and hence the art of war change so rapidly that experience of previous battles can at best be only part of the knowledge required to plan for future wars. It is very essential for decision makers and planners in the armed forces to keep abreast of rapidly changing battlefield environment. In the absence of such detailed knowledge of current weaponry, tactics and doctrine, undue reliance on experience alone, without an effort to be current in one's knowledge, may prove more a liability than an asset in future wars.

—FNF

about us doing everything together to ridiculous lengths at times, but the alternative to consulting her was to have her make a rival award of her own, so I had to bring her into the picture. There's a lot to be said for making a virtue out of necessity.

It doesn't happen every day, of course, but there was, as the official communiques have it, "a free and frank exchange of views" when I conferred with my wife prior to making my award. I am happy to report that, contrary to my own expectation, we both emerged alive and—er...yes, that seems the apt word, kicking—from the pow-wow. THE EXCHANGE was not only free and frank but also somewhat heated (which no official communique will tell you, but I will). That, I think, is as it should be, for my 'Man of Last Year' is arguably the most prestigious award ever to be made From the Easy Chair.

Maybe I should say a word here on what I look for in my Man—and a couple of hundred words on what my wife looks for in hers. (Actually she picked me as her Man for No Reason, and proceeded to nominate yours truly for it, but I begged her not to lose sight of the objective of our pow-wow and refused pointblank to make the award, or accept it. Would appear as though were attempting to keep it in the family, so to speak,

and there's too much of that happening already).

Well, I know *Time* picked Judge Sirica as its Man this time, a choice my wife thought was a curious one, to say the least. She said a lot more, but I'll come to that presently.

What can one say, she asked, for lionising a man whose only dubious claim to fame lay in that he, single-handedly, helped catch a handful of third-rate burglars with first-class credentials, while we contemptuously ignore the man who has done more than any American dead or alive to sweep crime right off America's streets—and straight into the White House?

There's no incentive, I tell you—she said—and if *Time* doesn't watch it the time will soon come when crime will get unceremoniously booted out of the Oval Office and back into the asphalt jungle once more.

MY WIFE can go on and on like that, and she did go on and on like that. For she knows a good thing when she sees it, the only possible exception, I guess, being when she saw me the first time. (She can go on and on about that, too, and often does. "I don't know what I ever saw in you," she says now and then. Search me, so I've never been much help to her on that)

It is her considered view that it would be far, far cheaper and that much easier to carry on with Nixon's current policy of containment, keeping crime to a clearly defined, and manageable, area aro-

und Pennsylvania Avenue than to let it loose on all the high ways and byways that America boasts of. And she had the impression that Uncle Sam had enough problems already with the dollar crisis and the energy crisis.

Since *Time* picked on the judiciary for its Man I decide not to look in the same place here. People will talk, and say I was a copy-cat. Our judiciary, in any case, hasn't been wasting time catching third-rate burglars I explained to my wife. But she disagreed, and remembered reading about one such successful nabbing not long ago. So we went into the details. It turned out that the burglar himself was an amateur, and decidedly fifth-rate. So that was out.

Let's look at politics and politicians, I then suggested. So we both looked, and had quite an eyeful. Only what caught my eye didn't seem to catch hers, and vice versa. I mentioned this curious phenomenon and she felt it was because we were not doing it properly, in that she was looking with her eyes and I with mine. When it's time for next year's award, she said confidently, we'll both be looking with a common pair of eyes. She means hers, of course.

"How about Hector?" she asked without warning.

"Why, what's he done to deserve the honour?"

SHE THOUGHT I was joking and suggested that if I wasn't willing, or able, to treat the matter with the seriousness it deserved, I should call the

whole thing off and stop trying to compete with that magazine. I promised I wasn't.

"If you know what he's done that's so big, go on and tell me," I entreated her.

"Well, he invented agriculture, didn't he?"

So I put down Hector's name as a possible contender for my award.

"How about Felix?" I asked.

"Did he invent justice?" she wanted to know, but from her looks I could tell she wasn't being funny.

"Afraid not," I said, "but he's coupled a revolutionary jet-age idea to the age-old

concept of justice, so the wheels will grind fast enough to keep pace with the times."

She considered that for a moment and said, "But he's a boy."

"I thought as much," I observed. "And I've never seen him wearing a frock, have you?"

"I didn't mean that, silly," she snapped. "I mean he's so young!"

"What have you against youth, or what have you against Felix?"

"Nothing, and I haven't even met him," she cried. "But in ten years' time he'll be an ideal choice."

"What's wrong with now?" I insisted.

INCOME OF DEITY HELD TAXABLE

New Delhi.

A Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court has held that a Hindu deity is an "individual" within the meaning of this term in the Income-Tax Act, 1922 and can be treated as a unit of assessment. Mr. Justice Alagiriswami (who delivered the judgement of the Bench) was dismissing a batch of tax appeals against a judgement of the Calcutta High Court, filed by the Official Trustee of West Bengal on behalf of a private religious trust which dedicated certain properties to a Hindu deity named Thankur Radha Gobindjee. The Bench which included the Chief Justice, Mr. A. N. Ray, Mr. Justice Kania, Mr. Justice Mathew and Mr. Justice Bhagwati, after discussing the relevant case said that "we are of the opinion that a Hindu deity can hold property and be in receipt of 'income' and can also sue and be sued and there is no reason why its income should be held to be outside the ambit of taxation if it can be within it without straining the languages of the statutory provision."

The deity would naturally be taxed through its "shebait" (trustees etc) who were in possession and management of its property, the Bench observed.

— Hindu

"It'll go to his head," she said, sounding like a doctor cautioning against possible side-effects from a new and untried drug.

I HATE to hazard a guess on my wife's other strong points, but child psychology is the only one I know of, and respect. I have therefore jotted the name down for consideration at the right time. I'm sorry about this, but Felix will just have to wait until 1984.

We next picked up some of the other names that a lot of people keep dropping around with a vengeance these days, but my wife didn't favour any of them. So I didn't, either.

I felt I was scraping the bottom when I came up with the one name I should have thought of in the first place. "Badi's our Man!" I cried with glee.

She eyed me suspiciously. Or maybe she eyed Badi suspiciously, one never knows with her. "What's he done?" she demanded.

"What hasn't he done for, and with, education?" I asked rhetorically, and decided to fast-talk her into agreeing with my choice. "Why, he's raised education to the very heights!" I exclaimed, my voice itself making a dramatic climb to drive home my point. "Remember that, the very heights!"

"Of confusion," she said without enthusiasm. "As for your choice, its inexplicable." "You said it, girl," I cried. "That's the one word for his thoughts, words and deeds for all of '73."

I managed to win her over with that. "All right, then," she sighed. "He's our Man."

"Should I start the announcement with, "It gives me great pleasure...." ?

"What do you feel?"

"Nothing," I said.

"Skip it," she advised.

Okay, I will..The Winner, boys and girls, of my 'Man of Last Year' Award is the one-and-only Mr. Badiuddin Mahmud. give him a big hand, kids—hey! don't you children know the difference between three hearty cheers and an equal number of lusty hoots? What school have you been attending, huh? Hold on, hold on, and I'll note that down..yes, Badi sure would love to know the institutions..it'll help him standardise even beter..and your names? WHAT?..Say that again! (Good heavens, what am I saying?) No, no, dont you dare say that again.. L-O-V-E is the only four-letter word children your age should be familiar with..go wash your mouth with soap and water at once..

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INCORRIGIBLE

The neo-nazi weekly *Deutsche Nationalzeitung*, which is published in Munich, complained the other day about the "frightening decline of birth rate" in the Federal Republic of Germany and Austria. Why has this so upset the followers of the late Fuhrer? Here is the answer. "Who will fight the war to re-establish the Great German Reich?" the weekly wails.



WAY OUT

An international conference of insurance companies met in Toronto (Canada) to discuss ways and means of combating skyjacking. There were many suggestions but all of them were turned down as inadequate. Finally, a way out was proposed by an American representative. "Passengers should be made to board planes naked and with no hand luggage," he said.



THE DRUG HARD CORE

The hard core of drug addicts in the Federal republic of Germany is constituted by some 40,000 young people aged between 12 and 25 years, a government representative recently stated in the Bundestag: Last year the West German government allocated 22.3 million marks to combat narcomania.

THE WORLD IN 1973

by Spartacus

1973 began, to the great relief of all peace-loving forces of the world, with the signing of the peace agreements relating to Vietnam. Peace at last came to a war-torn land that has never known peace ever since the early 1940's. It was a famous victory not only for the brave, courageous people of Vietnam, but also for all those throughout the world who had supported her in various ways, and in particular to the socialist group of countries which rendered her massive military and other help that enabled a little Asian country to fight and win against the mightiest military power in the world today.

Though peace in the sense of cessation of armed hostilities as she has known it all these years has come to Vietnam, still sporadic fighting continues in that unhappy land. This is no doubt due primarily to the intransigence and stubbornness of the puppet regime of Thieu in South Vietnam. It was by going counter to his wishes that even the USA succeeded in agreeing to peace in Vietnam. It is by bringing him to heel that the further prospects of peace in Vietnam can be strengthened.

1973 can be truly called the Year of Europe. It was in Europe that the detente begun in 1970 with the signing of the treaties between

Federal Republic of Germany on the one hand and the Soviet Union and Poland on the other—began to manifest its most beneficial results.

Towards the end of 1972 the many bilateral treaties concluded between the FRG and the German Democratic Republic had culminated in the signing of the Basic Treaty between the two German states, restoring the relations between them to normality on the basis of the principles of peaceful coexistence. 1973 saw a further development of this process, at long last drawing a line under the Second World War.

Following FRG-GDR amity the stage was set for the normalisation of relations between the FRG and other East European states too, like Czechoslovakia and Hungary. The climax of all these developments was the successful conclusion in Helsinki of the long awaited Conference on European Security and Co-operation, which may be said to have put an end to the bitterness and conflicts that have prevailed between two rival blocs in Europe since the end of World War II and put the relations between all European states on a normal basis.

Following this political detente, the stage was set for talks that began in Vienna on

mutual balanced force reductions. These talks are still proceedings and will no doubt, be protracted. But if successful, they will lay the base for the political detente in Europe to be followed by a military detente as well.

The USA was rocked by the Watergate affair which bared open the scandals of the high and mighty in "God's own country" leading to the resignation of Vice-President Spiro Angew and the *Time* magazine calling for the resignation of President Nixon himself.

Western Europe was plagued with devaluation, floating currencies, rocketing prices and unprecedented scarcities of essential foodstuffs. North Ireland continued to

simmer with the bitter conflict with Great Britain.

Tragedy struck Chile when the Popular Unity Government was overthrown by an armed coup led by the military forces. Salvador Allende himself was killed when the Presidential Palace was attacked as the signal for the start of this uprising.

The non-aligned countries marked another stage in their development with the successful conclusion of the Algiers' summit.

The national liberation movement chalked up another victory with the setting up in the territories already liberated from the colonialists of the new state of Guinea-Bissau.

But the event of the year was the fourth war between

Israel on one side and Egypt, Syria and other Arab states on the other.

Ever since 1967, the Middle East has been a hotbed of tension as Israel held fast to the territories she had occupied in the six-day war. Attempts by interested parties to bring peace to these troubled lands had failed due to the intransigence of the Israeli ruling circles. It was in these circumstances that President Sadat, having achieved a degree of unity among his potential allies never known before, embarked on the October war in which his initial victories brought a new sense of pride among the Arabs and broke through the stalemate created by the Israeli occupation.

The initial Egyptian victories were followed by an Israeli counter attack in which she retrieved the military situation, though at an immense cost. But the October war led to the first direct negotiations of the Arab states with Israel which are bound to drag on for months and maybe years as the sides try to settle their long-standing disputes.

Another consequence of the Middle East war was the oil squeeze which the Arab states imposed on the USA and the West as their contribution to the struggle against the foreign patrons of Israel.

By the end of the year this oil squeeze had already begun to produce results as one Western country after another began to make an 'agonizing reappraisal' of their relations with Israel and to

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use whatever pressure was within their power to get Israel relent from its uncompromising stand concerning the evacuation of occupied Arab lands.

Two men dominated the international scene during 1973-CPSU leader Leonid Brezhnev and US Presidential Adviser Henry Kissinger.

Brezhnev, as the chief spokesman and emissary trying to implement actively the Soviet Peace Programme adopted by the 24th CPSU Congress, was forever on the move. His visit to the FRG symbolised that the cold war in Europe was over. His visit to the USA during which he concluded several important agreements (including one on the prevention of nuclear war which enabled the two Big Powers to exercise their moderating influence during the Middle East war) signalled that the era of Big power confrontation was now giving way to a new era of international understanding and cooperation. His visit to India towards the end of the year consolidated the bonds of friendship that the Soviet Union has always wanted to maintain with the countries of the Third World. His visits to the GDR, Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria etc. succeeded in further strengthening position of the Soviet Union as the leader and inspirer of the entire socialist world.

Henry Kissinger was the new American Machiavelli who had laid the foundation for the detente that the USA established with both the Soviet Union and China in 1973. In the course of 1973

he further succeeded in proving his indispensability to President Nixon in taking these new relations of amity among the Big Powers to a new stage. How he has crowned his career by becoming what commentators have described as the most powerful US-Secretary of State since John Foster Dulles.

On these two men—Brezhnev and Kissinger—depend

to a large extent the success or failure of the talks now on between Israel and the Arab world. If these talks succeed in making any headway in the course of this year, 1974 may bring to the Middle East region the same relaxation of tensions that Asia and Europe experienced in the course of 1973.

EXPORTING GEM

In the last two years the U.S. Food and Drug Administration has prohibited the sale of 400 medicines after a thorough check-up. Most of them are antibiotics which cause serious ailments, results in the birth of abnormal children, etc. Their makers, however, have decided that what is bad for the American is G. K. for the Brazilian. And so, the *Jeune Afrique* magazine writes, many of the medicines forbidden in the United States have found their way to Brazil's pharmacies and shops.

* * *

POP MUSIC PERILS

The 2,000th performance of the rock-musical "Hair" was due to take place in London's Shaftesbury Theatre. But fate decreed otherwise. On the eve of the show, the theatre ceiling fell in. It gave up the ghost, one newspaper quipped, at the prospect of the 2,000th triumph of a show which is invariably accompanied by wild hysteria both on the stage and in the auditorium.

* * *

VICTIMS OF INFLATION

Money markets are not the only place where the depreciation of the dollar and the sterling is causing a flurry. African game reserves have been hit too. Nature protection officials in Kenya say holders of these unreliable currencies prefer to convert them as quickly as possible into gold and Ivory. The demand for ivory has resulted in hundreds of instances of illegal killing of elephants and rhinoceroses in reserves. According to David Sheldrick, game warden at Zzwo, one of the biggest reserves in Africa, says 300 elephants and forty rhinoceroses have been killed since January.

IS IT TRUE?

Sherlock Holmes

✱ EELAMANI

✱ TIMES' LEGAL BATTLES

IS IT NOT TRUE that people are surprised that the *Times of Ceylon* has been permitted to start a new Tamil daily *Eelamani*? That newsprint has been made available to it? That when every newspaper has been compelled to cut down on newsprint it is unbelievable that the *Times* should be allowed to utilise newsprint for a new daily? That this is being done at a time of national as well as an international newsprint famine? That in Sri Lanka today there are many Tamil dailies covering a wide spectrum—*Thinakaran*, *Virakesari*, *Mithran*, *Dinapathy*, and *Eelanadu* and their Sunday magazine editions? That in normal times the *Eelamani* would have been a welcome addition to the Fourth Estate in Sri Lanka? That where newspapers are concerned it's always the more the merrier? That, in the present instance, however, many questions have been raised in responsible quarters which the Government will find difficult to answer? That it is a fact that after 1971 it was not possible to start a newspaper without specific official permission?

IS IT NOT A FACT that the gossip in newspaper circles

is that the *Eelamani* has been started by the *Times* only to obtain additional government advertising? That there is a vacuum at present in Tamil media advertising because all existing Tamil media dailies, except the *Thinakaran*, are not in the good books of those government circles which hand out advertising? That as a rule the Government has a practice of advertising each item in two papers in the same language media? That in a situation like this the *Times*, which is now temporarily exuding pro-governmental glory, feels it can garner in plenty of official advertising which is denied to long-established Tamil dailies? That newspaper circles point out that whilst the Government is free to withhold from or restrict advertising in, the *Virakesari*, *Dinapathy*, *Eelanadu* and *Mithran*, there is no reason why the Tamil advertising is not confined to *Thinakaran* alone? That there are good reasons for asserting that it is wrong for Government to grant newsprint to a new daily to enable a privately-owned capitalist company to collect common people's money from the Treasury?

IS IT ALSO NOT TRUE that the future of the present ruling hierarchy in the *Times* is very much in the balance before the Supreme Court? That the District Court of Colombo had held that the present Directors of the *Times* had to give way to other Directors who held the majority of the original share issue of the Company and that the unilateral issue of shares to change the balance was invalid? That pending an appeal to the Supreme Court, (which it has now been filed with much fanfare in its own columns), the *Times* had, with extraordinary speed, obtained a restraining order from Supreme Court Judge, Mr. Jaya Pathirana, in chambers, to prevent the order of the District Judge being implemented until the *Times'* appeal to the Supreme Court was disposed of? That as the matter is now *sub judice* it is not possible to discuss the merits of the *Times*, application before Mr. Justice Pathirana or the *Times'* appeal to the Supreme Court in the context of the judgement of the District Court (which the *Times* has so far not chosen to publish)? That, in the meantime, certain circles learned in the law, especially those who are not concerned with the personalities or the politics of the *Times'* ownership-control-management dispute, say that the former Additional District Judge Parinda Ranasinghe (and now a High Court Judge in the new dispensation) will go down to legal history in Sri Lanka in the same way that Judge Sirica has done in the USA?