

TRIBUNE

CEYLON NEWS REVIEW

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COMMITTEE
OF TWENTY

P.M.'s INDIAN
VISIT

LAW REFORMS

CHRONICLE

SUEZ

CHINA

COUP DE
GRACE

DOUBLE
STANDARDS

SHAMBA

MORE AND MORE WELLS

FOR MANY YEARS NOW, *Tribune* has been consistently carrying on a campaign for the sinking of agricultural wells to develop highland dry farming and also at the same time increase the scope and extent of small scale irrigated-paddy farming. For a long time, we were a lone voice crying out in the wilderness—the wilderness of Lanka, now Sri Lanka, where the giants of the jungle had unwisely decreed that cultivation should be done only with big and small tanks, and that wells were only useful to eke out a bare subsistence in the arid wastes of the North on lands which were really not fit for agriculture. Now, all this has changed. The population explosion in the island and elsewhere coupled with global food shortages has compelled new thinking, and more and more are now willing to concede grudgingly that groundwater tapped through surface, deep and tube wells would help to vastly increase food production. Even the sophisticated snobs, who had chosen to ignore the fact that countries like India and China had started on crash programmes of sinking more wells, have now woken up to realities. With millions of wells sunk in both these countries food production has reached all-time high in spite of adverse climatic conditions.

THERE HAS RECENTLY BEEN FANFARE, conch-blowing and drum beating about sinking more wells in Sri Lanka. It has been reported that cash and credit will be made available to those who desire to sink wells. It is one thing to give the green light, but it is another thing to get things done. For decades, peasants and agriculturists have been brain-washed into the belief that it was the Government's duty to provide the water—mistakenly, solely through tanks and big irrigation river valley schemes. And now, even when the emphasis has shifted from tanks to wells, these farmers expect the Government to sink the wells for them and continue to provide the water, cheap as a government facility. The Government has a duty to make farmers and agriculturists realise that the government cannot possibly do everything, and that the farmers themselves should self-reliantly sink the wells themselves, either individually or collectively through co-operatives or mutual aid societies, or through the Development Councils in each area. This is a sector, where the Political Authority in every district can become the motive force for action. The Government, moreover, has to provide at a reasonable cost the equipment for sinking wells—pickaxes and mammoets for manual digging and deep boring outfits and drills for mechanical power operations. In addition, the government must ensure adequate supplies of water pumps, for surface wells, deep wells, and also tube wells which are not gushers. These must be locally produced in plenty at a cheap cost, even if subsidies are essential in the early stages. Even while these are being manufactured, the Government must immediately start a HYDROLOGICAL SURVEY to map out the ground water resources in areas where dry farming is being already carried on and where it can be started without delay or difficulty.

Tribunania

- * Ourselves
- * Committee of Twenty
- * France Floats the Franc

FROM THE LAST ISSUE, *Tribune* is being set in a smaller type face. It is still an experiment to find out what best we can do in the new circumstances where everything has gone up in cost. With a smaller type we can get more material for reading, and if necessary cut down on the number of pages.

We have so far only restricted the print order in order to meet the scarcities of paper, but with the increased costs we will no doubt have to adopt further restrictions if we are to survive. We are trying hard not to increase the cost of each copy, but we are not yet certain what the oil crisis will bring in the form of new and additional costs.

The price of paper is bound to go up soon—it has already gone up substantially during the last one year, and there is no doubt that the price will go up even more during the course of 1974. Printing charges have understandably shot up. We had for some time now endeavoured not to cut down our reading material with advertisements, but it may be difficult to continue this policy for long. We are awaiting the reactions of our readers to the smaller type we are using, and we are also keeping a tab on the increased costs to make decisions about what should be done to keep *Tribune* going.

We are read, and we are talked about in circles that matter, and among readers who help to fashion opinion, and even in the difficult circumstances that have arisen we have a duty by our readers to provide as much reading matter as possible. It is too premature to say anything more at this stage, but we cannot rule out the inevitable

imperative of a higher price for each copy, (with a consequent change in subscription rates), reduced pages or even reduced reading matter to accommodate advertisements. *Tribune* is not an institution for making profit, but in the new situation which has arisen very harsh and drastic measures may have to be taken in order to continue the role *Tribune* has played in this country for well nigh twenty years.

LAST WEEK, we published *in extenso* the statement made by the US Secretary of the Treasury, Mr. Shultz, at the meeting of the Committee of Twenty which had met in Rome in mid-January. The Committee was set up last year by the IMF, under the overall patronage of the World Bank, to work out a workable scheme for international monetary reform, primarily for the capitalist world which still holds sway over two-thirds of the earth's surface. But the Finance Ministers who met in Rome this year were not able to make any progress, and on January 18 they officially postponed the reform of the world payments systems for at least another year pending an improvement of the situation in the world monetary scene.

Mr. Helmut Schmidt of West Germany, who had presided over the two day deliberations of the world's top Finance Ministers, had commented as the talks ended inconclusively that there would be "strong variations" in the relationships between currencies in 1974 and in 1975, and "even perhaps beyond". He said that "a new fixed rate system therefore, cannot be implemented before 1975 at best." Though this meeting had especially stressed that there should be an immediate definition on an interim basis of the SDRs of the IMF, the Committee could not arrive at any agreed conclusions.

The final communique betrayed the deep crisis in which the IMF now finds itself. On SDRs, the statement said the Ministers had agreed that they should be defined for a two-year interim period on the basis of a suitable mix of currencies. SDRs will also be guaranteed against devaluation. But the Ministers failed to specify which currencies should form the basis of the SDRs new value, or what

interest rate this monetary asset should carry.

In this situation, developing countries like India and Ceylon had suggested some interim measures like a re-cycling programme to help the problems of payments. But the Committee of Twenty decided against "the immediate adoption of a re-cycling proposal, favoured by many developing nations, to help members finance the effect of the oil crisis on their balance of payments. Instead, the Ministers agreed to submit the re-cycling plan to IMF technocrats for further urgent study, though the representatives of India and Ceylon had stressed that the crisis had caused lasting and deep damage to their economies.

The Committee of Twenty seemed to be chiefly concerned with the impact any decision they would make on the economy and financial structure of the leading industrialised capitalist countries—and the problems of developing countries were always relegated to a subordinate position. To the giants of the capitalist world, developing countries existed only as areas from which profits could be made, by buying raw materials cheap and selling manufactured goods at high prices. The Committee also made a number of pious resolutions.

"The statement said the oil consuming member countries committed themselves not to implement policies aimed at overcoming the effects of the crisis that could be harmful to other countries. They specifically pledged that they would not have recourse to such measures as devaluation of their currencies or trade restrictions. Consumer countries are bound to see their balance of payments positions swing dramatically into the red because of the huge increases in the cost of oil. The statement also called on developed countries to avoid any reduction of their development aid efforts in spite of the drain on their reserves which will result from the new high levels of oil prices."

It was still a question of patronising charity to developing countries through aid—rather than other measures which will enable developing countries to find their feet.

The powerful leaders of the IMF now seem willing to admit the

OPEC countries into the circle of the Rich, and "the Committee of 20"—which consists of Ministers representing the leading financial powers as well as the developing countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America—also issued a timidly worded appeal to the oil producing countries to spend part of their additional earnings for aid to developing nations.

"IMF experts have calculated that the developing countries will be faced with an additional balance of payments burden of some \$9000 to \$10,000 millions this year alone because of the four-fold increase in oil prices since mid-1973. This could cancel out the benefits of development aid granted by the advanced industrial western nations and Japan."

Thus, the latest meeting of the Committee of Twenty ended in a futile stalemate. It could neither arrive at any decision, even of an interim nature, about the SDRs nor the setting up of a Board of Governors composed of Finance Ministers in order to strengthen the IMF. This meeting could not even decide whether the new executive Board of Governors should consist of the 20 Finance Ministers or whether a new body should be created out of the 150 Ministers and others who constitute the governing body of the IMF. Finally, the Committee of Twenty decided to work out the technical details of the decision to set up a Board of Governors at a new meeting in Washington on June 12 and 13.

ONE OF THE IMMEDIATE EFFECTS of the inability of the Committee of Twenty, which had met shortly after the yen had been devalued by Japan, was that France decided to float the franc during the weekend of January 20 for a period of six months. On Monday 21st, the money markets in Europe were in turmoil. They were closed immediately. The price of gold skyrocketed to US \$ 158* an ounce, whilst the official price was still \$ 42 an ounce. The franc dipped in value and the sterling also took a severe beating until the Bank of England stepped in to shore up its values by selling dollars. The US dollar improved its position in this scramble for bullion.

The French decision was regarded as a unilateral one which had

struck at the very roots of the economic and monetary concepts of the European Community. Europe's monetary system—at least what is left of it—was thrown into further disarray, and unless some unexpected events occur, the German mark too will have to float within a short time although Bonn has over \$ 35 billion in reserves, and can afford to support the mark if it wants. The Germans may watch the situation for some weeks before either deciding to devalue the mark or float it. Japan too will have to make hard decisions whether or not she should devalue the yen further to keep her exports competitive with countries which have devalued their currencies.

Seven West European countries, however, meeting shortly after France had decided to float the franc agreed to keep their currencies tied tightly together despite the French decision. France had previously been a member of this Agreement which was sometimes called "snake". The seven also decided to re-open the foreign exchange markets which had been closed immediately after the franc floated. The countries still in the Agreement are West Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg and Netherlands, all members of the Common Market, and Norway and Sweden which are not. Britain, Ireland and Italy which are members of the ECM, never joined the "snake", preferring to let their currencies float freely against all others—as France has done now. As before, the currencies will not be allowed to fluctuate by more than 2.25 % from one another, but together they will float freely against the dollar.

In the new situation, which is really the outcome of the oil crisis and the failure of the Committee of Twenty to meet the new challenges, the US has good reason to think that the dollar has become overvalued in relation to some of the other major currencies because of the over-reaction to the world oil crisis. Secretary of the US Treasury Shultz, on his return to Washington from Rome, urged countries with large dollar holdings, particularly West Germany, to unload some of them on the foreign exchange markets to hold down the value of the US currency.

The French decision to float the franc has brought to the sur-

face the differences among the rich industrialised countries in regard to world monetary reform. In Rome, there was a behind-the-scene dispute between Germany and the USA as to who should unload dollars to support the dollar. But even more than this, the main bone of contention was in regard to the strategy to be followed in regard to oil prices demanded by the OPEC countries. US and Germany did their very best to impress upon Britain and France that they should not go-it-alone in coming to terms with Arab countries. But they do not seem to have met with much success. West Germany is now likely to join the mad scramble for oil.

THE UNITED STATES has been at pains to impress the oil producing



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countries that it was in their best economic interests to reduce oil prices. The US feels that the oil producers will ultimately lose all if consuming countries cannot cope with the sharp increase in oil prices resulting in recession and turmoil in the international financial markets. High oil prices will also promote the development of other energy resources and present oil producers may find that in the years to come the value of their oil holdings may drop in a marked manner. It has also been pointed out to the Arabs that by insisting on abnormally high prices, the Arabs will tend to lose the support of developing Third World countries which had so far supported them politically on most issues. Countries in Asia and Africa, it has been pointed out, which had broken off diplomatic relations with Israel in sympathy with the Arab cause will naturally tend to reconsider their political strategy if the Arabs continued to insist on maintaining a rigid policy in regard to oil prices.

It has also been pointed out that within a decade Britain and the USA will have no use for Arab oil—the discovery of oil off the coast of England is expected to bring about a marked change in the situation in Britain whilst USA can quickly attain self-sufficiency. France and Germany have no oil, but they are sophisticated enough to create new energy sources. It is also believed that there are vast oil deposits in India, along the Cochin coast and in the Bay of Bengal. India is also developing her nuclear energy resources. Sri Lanka too may strike oil in the north-west sector of the island.

All this may portend a different future, but the immediate prospects are grim.

MINISTER SUBASINGHE has returned from his Middle East journey, and though the full report of what he has achieved has not been made public, he has indicated that Sri Lanka had been assured of all the oil she needed, but the price factor has not been disclosed. But whippers reported in a section of the daily press hinted that Sri Lanka was likely to get oil from the Persian Gulf at about \$ 3 less than what was quoted for others, whilst Libya had offered oil at a slightly higher price. Firm and major decisions

are likely to be taken only after the return of the Prime Minister from India. She is also likely to have discussed the oil problem with Mrs. Gandhi and Marshal Tito.

With the new oil prices, Sri Lanka's foreign exchange budget for 1974 has already been shattered. The gap was wide enough with the increased food imports consequent on the shortfall for Maha because of the continuing drought, but with the oil crisis the increased foreign exchange needed even for reduced quantities of oil and for the enhanced prices of foodstuffs, Sri Lanka is in real difficulty.

In the past, part of the foreign exchange gap had been covered by IMF stand-bys and aid from the Aid Consortium. This year, owing to the oil crisis and the inflation which has struck the richer nations, Ceylon may be deprived of such assistance. It is still problematic whether oil producing countries will extend such assistance, and it is even more problematic whether countries like Sri Lanka should import oil on borrowed credit even though it may be given under the generic name of aid assistance. It may be better to cut down on oil imports rather than get indebted to the oil producers.

Sri Lanka's import bill in 1974 is expected to be Rs. 3500 million, with food imports taking nearly Rs. 1000 million. To import the crude oil imported in 1973 at the posted price of \$ 15 a barrel, Sri Lanka will require close on Rs. 1500 million. It had been originally estimated, when the Budget was presented last November, that the budget deficit would be only about Rs. 60 million. This deficit will now be much greater—it is impossible to estimate how much more it will be. The Consortium countries and the IMF, which were expected to help in this matter, because of the austerity measures adopted by the Government, may not be in a position to help this year.

What does Sri Lanka do in these circumstances?

There is no alternative but to cut down on all imports and grow all the food we can—which will mean lesser and lesser imports of commodities we can easily grow here. People must be induced and persuaded to grow more food.

This can easily be done. It is foolish and futile to threaten people, who are in a position to grow food, with dire consequences if they do not do some bureaucrats' or even politicians' bidding.

COMMENT

* Indian Visit * Law Reforms * Rice

PRIME MINISTER. At the time of writing these notes the final communique about the discussions held in New Delhi between Sri Lanka's Prime Minister and the Indian Prime Minister have not yet been released. With the five-day week and the other restrictions which have now arisen, we have to go to press much earlier than previously. However, even before the final communique, it is possible to say that the talks in New Delhi had been held in the most cordial atmosphere, and the indications are that, if nothing else was achieved, the problem of the 150,000 residual stateless persons has been "solved". The details about how this is to be achieved will no doubt be set out in the communique which will be released simultaneously in New Delhi and Colombo soon after the return of Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike on Tuesday, January 29.

In a T.V. interview before she left Delhi, Mrs. Bandaranaike had said "Before I leave your country I am confident that we will be able to find a solution to the problem of the repatriation of persons of Indian origin in Sri Lanka." Questioned, she has disagreed with the suggestion that there had been aloofness in the relations between India and Sri Lanka. Mrs. Bandaranaike had also stated that the issue concerning stateless persons was a legacy of the colonial past and that things had changed since then paving the way for the 1964 Agreement and the subsequent developments. She had also stated that the feelings of the Sri Lanka people over this issue had "died down a great deal." She was confident

that the issues could be settled before long. In reply to another question she had said that Sri Lanka was interested in a joint venture with India for the production of automobile spare parts and chassis in exchange for tyres. The matter was still under discussion, she had said. She had also stated that she was confident that Sri Lanka would be self-sufficient in a year or two. Replying to another question, Mrs. Bandaranaike had said there was "no justification" for any fear of Indian domination over her country.

At the time of writing, the indications are that the question of Kachchativu has not been finally resolved, but cartoonist Vijayan in the *Hindu* had a splendid drawing depicting both Prime Ministers looking at the little island of Kachchativu through a long telescope— and Mrs. Gandhi saying "The trouble Sirimavo, is the island's occupied by your Opposition and mine." This apart, the *Hindu* had an editorial on January 21, the day before Mrs. Bandaranaike arrived in India which we reproduce in full below. The editorial, entitled *Talking About Tea*, reflects what the consensus of opinion in India seems to be about between the two countries.

"THE SRI LANKA Prime Minister, Mrs. Bandaranaike, arrives in India tomorrow for a week's visit during which she will have wide-ranging talks with Mrs. Indira Gandhi. The two Prime Ministers will no doubt cover all the issues affecting relations between their two countries like the implementation of the agreement on the stateless persons of Indian origin in Sri Lanka, the enlargement of trade with a view to reducing the adverse balance that Sri Lanka faces and the speeding up of the many industrial projects in the island for which Indian collaboration has been vouchsafed. Kachchativu, the tiny island off the Indian coast, may also be expected to be discussed. All these issues have been there over the years and considerable progress has also been made in sorting them out. The meeting of minds achieved by Mrs. Gandhi and Mrs. Bandaranaike during the former's last visit to Colombo has also strengthened Indo-Sri Lanka ties of friendship and fortified their agreed approach to global problems, including their

common concern to keep the Indian Ocean area a zone of peace.

"While a review of these matters during the forthcoming parleys is natural, it will be hoped that the grievous blow struck at the economies of both countries by the oil crisis and the burgeoning import bill that it has inflicted on them will receive the high priority it demands. Appeals have been made by Sri Lanka as well as others to the oil-producing Arab countries in the name of the friendship and sustained support to their cause extended all along, for some special concessions in oil prices to enable the developing countries to survive. But it is doubtful if such special treatment will be forthcoming or even feasible. Economic survival for Sri Lanka and India, under the circumstances, would depend on their own exertions. Sri Lanka's import bill for this year is said to amount to an all-time high of Rs. 3,770 millions. This can be met only if exports are also able to earn much more than they do now. It is in this context that one would hope that the two Prime Ministers would resurrect that promising proposal for an Indo-Sri Lanka tea consortium, mooted some years ago but allowed to fade away.

Tea is a major foreign exchange earner for both the countries, but unfortunately it seems to be the only article that has benefited least by the global commodity boom. If there seemed to be a good case for co-operation rather than competition between Sri Lanka and India in promoting the orderly and mutually advantageous marketing of tea in the world markets in 1969, when the idea was first proposed, it is surely much stronger now. The oil producers have shown what concerted action can be achieved to swell export earnings. A joint effort by India and Sri Lanka is bound to secure for both better prices, since between them they account for 80 per cent of the world output. The idea then was that they should come to an understanding about the quota of exports for each and form a consortium of two separate national companies which were to conduct joint marketing surveys. While in the initial stages the two were to market their tea separately, they would go in for joint blends

later in the light of experience. Such an arrangement could not only help spread the tea habit to vast areas of the world, not yet converted to it but help contain the deleterious depression of prices from what is only marginal competition from the newer producers of tea in East Africa. It appears that, thanks to the absence of labour welfare measures on the plantations of East Africa, the cost of production is much less there than in India or Sri Lanka, thus enabling it to sell at low prices. But such competition can be countered and a reasonable price, consistent with the high prices one has to pay for imports of machinery, oil and other industrial raw materials, can be secured, if an Indo-Sri Lanka tea consortium can be worked out even at this late hour, by not letting unfounded fears of each other thwart the main objective."

LEGAL REFORMS. On January 24, with a great deal of fanfare, the reformed legal system of Sri Lanka based on the Administration of Justice Bill enacted last year by the National State Assembly was inaugurated. This legislation was approved by the NSA with a rare degree of unanimity; and well-deserved praise has been showered on the Minister of Justice, Mr. Felix R. Dias Bandaranaike, and also his Permanent Secretary Mr. Nihal Jayawickreme.

Nearly all that need to be written about the new reforms has been written at great length in the daily papers and many of the significant changes introduced have been widely welcomed. But, as in everything else, the proof of the pudding is in the eating, and one can discuss the reforms only after the new system has been worked for some time. There was no doubt that the legal system which had for long prevailed in Sri Lanka needed drastic reforms and change, and there is equally no doubt that the Administration of Justice Bill has introduced reforms which on paper appear appropriate and suitable. But, we have to wait for the actual working before venturing on any studied comment.

But there is one thing which inspires confidence in the new system: that the personnel chosen to man the Supreme Court, the High Courts and the other Courts

are about the best persons who could have been appointed under the circumstances. The new Chief Justice is a man of eminence who can be expected to set the new system on the right course, whilst the new Attorney General enjoys the confidence of the official as well as the unofficial Bar.

RICE RATION. From this week, the extra half measure which had been issued in December (in 13 districts) and in January (in all districts) has been suspended. Minister Illangaratne has stated that this half measure would be restored if there was "good harvest", but persons who have gone round some of the best rice producing areas in this country recently are pessimistic about the harvest because the rains, which had flattered in December had failed completely in January. Without the January rains, the best will not be got from what was sown, but it must be remembered that large areas of tank-irrigated paddy fields were not sown this year because the tanks had not filled up.

It is also good to remember that only a part of the tank-irrigated fields were sown this year, and that the rain fed crops will not produce high yields because there was hardly any rain in January. The Government must launch a programme of sinking wells if this situation is to be remedied for the future, but in the meantime the Government must go on the footing that the rice production will not be as high as anticipated and proper arrangements must be made to meet this situation.

POST SCRIPT. The communique about the PM's visit to India was released shortly after her arrival in Colombo. The most important matter which was accomplished was that agreement was reached about the 150,000 left over as residuary stateless after the 1964 agreement had dealt with 825,000 stateless persons of Indian origin. It has now been agreed that India and Ceylon will go 50-50 in regard to the 150,000: that India will accept 75,000 as repatriates and that Ceylon will absorb 75,000 as citizens. This is indeed a reasonable and workable solution,

and this will also automatically mean that India will re-open her registers for applications for Indian citizens. Sri Lanka too will admit new applications. In this process a great many anomalies that had arisen in the implementation of the 1964 Agreement could be sorted out.

The Kachchativu matter still remains unresolved and the final decision, which is expected to be made shortly, will be made after the boundary line between the two countries in the Palk Straits and the Adam's Bridge has been drawn. On all international questions, the communique stated there was close identity of views: on West Asia, on Indo-China, on the Indian Ocean Zone and about the need to keep the Indian Ocean free of big power rivalry. The spread of the spirit of detente and peace was noted with approval and satisfaction including the efforts India had made to normalise relations in the Indian sub-continent. The oil crisis had also been discussed and greater understanding reached on economic co-operation between the two countries.

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CHRONICLE

Jan. 13 - 20

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

SUNDAY, JANUARY 13: Over 2000 Buddhist monks from various parts of the country assembled at the Bandaranaike Memorial International Conference Hall yesterday and pledged their support to the Prime Minister's food production campaign. Teachers who were interdicted by the previous government for political activities and who are now being reinstated by this government will get 50 per cent of their arrears salaries as compensation. Landlords who fail to declare their surplus houses to the government or make false declarations are liable for heavy fines or imprisonment, or both from today, according to the Minister of Housing and Construction, Mr. Pieter Keuneman. The *Times Weekender* reported that the police are now investigating complaints made regarding a coup alleged to have been organised by the U.N.P. All accused in the Udugama D.M.O. assault case were found guilty and sentences put off for January 23. New bus fares following the increase of price of fuel are expected to be announced on Thursday. Soviet Communist Chief Leonid Brezhnev is expected to meet, during the course of next few months, West German Chancellor Willy Brandt, British Prime Minister Edward Heath and U.S. President Richard Nixon in the USSR. White House Chief of Staff General Alexander Haig was named by a major radio and television network known as the ABC as a key figure in the latest American Political bombshell—the reported spying by the Pentagon on Dr. Henry Kissinger.

MONDAY, JANUARY 14: There were no English dailies published today on account of Thai Pongal holiday.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 15: The fuel price hike will have a serious impact on the plantation sector, the Minister of Plantation Industry, Dr. Colvin R. de Silva said the oil price hike will shoot up the production cost of tea at least by 15 cts per pound. The C.P. (Hardline) Central Committee has endorsed a move by Dr. S. A. Wickramasinghe to bring about a settlement with the softliners. The first five-day week in the history of Sri Lanka comes into effect from today. The first transfer of houses under the surplus houses scheme will be effected today at a special ceremony by the Minister of Housing and Construction. The second round of talks between the Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike and the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. J. R. Jayawardene on the allegation of an impending coup commences today: A high-powered trade delegation from Libya will arrive in the island today for talks with the Government; this visit is said to be about the oil crisis. The I.G.P. Mr. Stanley Senanayake has issued a stern warning to all policemen not to use police vehicles for private journeys. Dr. Henry Kissinger, US Secretary of State left Israel for Egypt after having discussions with the Israeli leaders about the disengagement of forces along the Suez Canal. According to a congressional economic study

the Nixon administration has misled the American public on the extent of inflation in the United States during 1973.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 16: Pre-dating of deeds is the latest ruse adopted by some land-lords to dodge the ceiling on housing property: the Ministry of Housing and Construction is inquiring into a number of complaints regarding this and the Minister of Housing and Construction, Mr. Pieter Keuneman, said yesterday that those landlords who are found guilty will be punished severely. A leading private oil company has agreed to supply Sri Lanka with a 30,000 ton shipment of crude oil at about six dollars below the price quoted by Arab oil producers. Sri Lanka's Minister of Industries and Scientific Affairs, who is now visiting Saudi Arabia has had talks with Saudi officials on supplying this country with its requirements of oil, the Saudi Radio reported. The Sri Lanka Malay Workers' and Students' Socialist Front yesterday appealed to the Arab leaders to relieve the developing countries of the heavy burden cast on them by the oil price hike. Opposition Leader, Mr. J. R. Jayawardene, did not meet the Prime Minister yesterday nor did he produce the man who he said had given him information about the plot he referred to in Parliament last week: deputy Minister of Planning and Economic Affairs, Mr. Ratne Deshapriya Senanayake, yesterday wrote to the Attorney General asking him to prosecute the Opposition Leader for criminal defamation for falsely alleging that he was involved in a conspiratorial plan to seize power. Government is expected to decide today on how to make up for the additional Rs. 135 million to run public transport services following the oil price increase. United States Secretary of State, Dr. Henry Kissinger arrived in Tel Aviv with the reply from the Egyptian President, Anwar Sadat, to Israel's proposals for disengagement of forces on the Suez Canal. A curfew until further notice was imposed on Jakarta following big student demonstrations against Japanese Prime Minister Kakuei Tanaka's visit.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 17: The oil price hike has seriously affected the Ceylon Electricity Board, which depends for one-third of its power supply during this season—the drought period from December to May—on the Kelanitissa Thermal Power Station. Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, yesterday replied to Opposition Leader, J. R. Jayawardene's letter: the Premier in her reply has stated that it is inappropriate to appoint a select committee to investigate the charges. The Prime Minister will leave for India on January 22: she will, along with other foreign dignitaries participate in the Indian Republic Day celebrations. A new Department of Development is being set up in the Central Bank from this month. A positive case of cholera has been detected in the Kandy area: the patient who is from Katugastota died in the Kandy hospital. The communist Party (Hardline) has called for an impartial inquiry into the Jaffna incident in which nine people lost their lives. Bus and rail fares will not be increased immediately: the Government will decide on this later after studying in detail the possibilities of obtaining oil at cheaper prices. Drug manufacturers will have to market their products only under generic names from April, this year. The Congress Party of Mrs. Indira Gandhi suffered further set backs in by-election results declared yesterday in Maharashtra State, normally a Congress stronghold: It had lost a parliamentary seat in a

result announced on Monday. Yesterday it lost three more seats. The Indonesian Government kept the visiting Prime Minister of Japan, Kaukei Tanaka virtually imprisoned within the State Guest House next to the Presidential palace, threatening to make his Jakarta visit the toughest of his South East Asian Tour: Massive student demonstrations by thousands of students has made President Suharto to face his worst political crisis since taking over power: In yesterday's student rioting against Tanaka's visit one youth was killed and eight others were seriously injured.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 18: The gap in Sri Lanka's foreign exchange budget is expected to widen further following the sharp increases in prices of food, fuel and other essential imports. A Superintendent of Police, Mr. D.D. S. K. Ranasinghe, was yesterday acquitted on the charge of accepting an illegal gratification: however the charge of soliciting this gratification still remains. The police are investigating into statements made by the Leader of the Opposition on matters connected with the national security. Mr. J. R. Jayawardene refused to the speak to the police officers. Twelve senior undergraduates of the Katubedde Campus were suspended from lectures for allegedly ragging freshers. In a move to provide cheaper transport the government has decided to allow the import of bicycles as 'gifts' from abroad provided the value of such gifts are below Rs. 250/-. Talks of far reaching importance are expected to be held in New Delhi this month between the Prime Ministers of India and Sri Lanka when Mrs. Bandaranaike visits India this week. Sri Lanka has resumed purchases under the American PL 480 law after many years. A contact of a positive case of cholera in the Colombo Municipal area is reported: this patient who is now isolated at Angoda is said to be from Kuliyaipitiya. There is no move by the Government to put up the prices of sugar though the world market prices are rising again. About 500 persons, belonging to the World Tamil Youth Federation and the Burma Tamil Repatriates Association, yesterday went in procession to the Sri Lanka Deputy High Commission office in Madras to protest against the alleged ill-treatment to Tamils in Sri Lanka. White House yesterday announced that President Nixon did not make any erasure in a crucial tape-recording—either accidentally or deliberately: the White House spokesman for the President, said this yesterday in evidence to a barrage of questions by experts on electronics.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 19: Taxi drivers will soon be authorised by law to charge Rs. 2.20 per mile. Several scholarships for under-graduate studies in various fields have been offered to Sri Lanka by the People's Republic of China. As a further measure of conserving electricity, street lights will not be lit except at important junctions. Emergency regulations will be promulgated with immediate effect prohibiting floodlighting of tennis courts, swimming pools, shop window lighting and neon signs. The University of Sri Lanka yesterday announced details of the scheme for admissions to the university this year which would be on a district basis in proportion to the population of each area. An emergency meeting of the UNP Working Committee has been summoned for Tuesday 22 to discuss the developments arising from the statement made by the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. J. R. Jayawardene, in the National State Assembly on

January 10. Ministers of the inter-governmental 'Group of 24' now having their meeting in Rome elected Dr. N. M. Perera, Minister of Finance of Sri Lanka, as one of their vice-Chairmen. The Tamilnadu Chief Minister, Mr. M. Karunanithi, has urged the Indian Government to ascertain the facts concerning the incidents at Jaffna during the World Tamil Conference recently. Egypt and Israel yesterday announced agreement to separate their forces on the Suez front line and President Nixon immediately hailed it as the first step towards a permanent settlement for peace in the Middle East. Syria has threatened that it would sever diplomatic connections with Egypt in the event the agreement is implemented.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 20: "AL-ESLAM"—Sri Lanka's only Islamic English newspaper—has called upon the Arabs to either offer outright grants or foreign aid to cushion the effects of the staggering price increase for Arab oil. The Government does not propose to revise the present electricity tariffs. The Marketing Department has set up several new collecting centres and brought more lorries to meet the need of utilising excess vegetables, fruits and other foods which are expected next month. One of America's foremost dance groups, the Dan Wagner Dancers, will arrive in Sri Lanka on Tuesday. The Minister of Irrigation, Power and Highways, Mr. Maithripala Senanayake, has directed the Irrigation Department to request a Chinese delegation working in Sri Lanka for the past several months to explore the feasibility of constructing a reservoir on the Gin Ganga. The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) announced its rejection of the Israeli-Egyptian disengagement agreement describing it as a surrender on the part of Egypt: India described this agreement as a positive step towards lasting peace in the Middle East.

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MIDDLE EAST. The agreement to secure the disengagement of forces between Egypt and Israel was signed on January 19 and the withdrawal of troops to the agreed positions began on January 25. The whole disengagement operation is scheduled to take 40 days. This agreement has been called a first step towards a permanent peace in the Middle East, and though the agreement has been generally welcomed it has not received universal acclaim.

Syria, Iraq and some other states have expressed their disappointment with the agreement which they think is only a piecemeal interim solution which may not bring lasting peace. Russia has made cautious and guarded statements that the peace could not be considered permanent until a solution was found for the problem of the displaced Palestinians. The Executive Committee of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation had condemned the agreement, but Yasser Arafat, its leader, has denounced this condemnation as "illegal and unauthorised." President Sadat has gone to Saudi Arabia and other Arab capitals to explain the agreement and also persuade the oil producers to withdraw the oil embargo.

In the meantime, Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko is expected to go to Cairo, probably to sort out the latest development in the light of Moscow's cautious scepticism about the Agreement. The agreement was no doubt a personal triumph for Dr. Henry Kissinger, and the USA has now taken the first faltering steps towards re-establishing its presence in the Middle East. Dr. Kissinger is undoubtedly pleased with what he

achieved* for the United States and has gone on record that the US is now a "referee in the Middle East conflict" and that it was no longer "a mere supporter of Israel". How far the Arabs will accept this new role is problematic, but Dr. Kissinger has with his personal diplomacy gone far towards creating a new image for the USA in the Arab world. In return for USA's intervention to persuade Israel to withdraw from the west bank of the Suez Canal, Dr. Kissinger has made it plain that the *quid pro quo* he expects is the lifting of the oil embargo and possibly a reduction in the price of oil.

The agreement to disengage forces has certainly reduced tension in the Middle East, especially in the Suez Canal area, although there have been ceasefire line incidents on the Golan Heights. There are so many under-currents and cross-currents in the Middle East that it is difficult to see what will erupt where. Libya and Tunisia, it was announced, would merge, but there are now forces within Tunisia which violently oppose it. Gaddafi's attempt to merge Libya and Tunisia may end on the same tragic-comic note on which his efforts to merge with Egypt had ended.

INDIA. The Republic Day celebrations took place in New Delhi on January 26 with Sri Lanka's Prime Minister as the guest of honour. Although the celebrations went off without incident, trouble is now endemic in India in one part or another. The latest flare-up has been in Gujerat where violence has erupted in a big way in many places. Such trouble had erupted in several States during 1973, and, as things stand, such troubles will continue during 1974 as well. Furthermore, recent by-election results, particularly in Maharashtra, has given a big jolt to the ruling Congress High Command.

The year 1974 has certainly not opened on a happy note for the Indian people. The worst is depressing crisis of confidence because the leadership at all levels seems paralysed under the impact of whole host of man-made problems which seem to defy solution. Factionalism, Inner-Cabinet politicking, squabbling in State governments—and intrigue at every level of leadership seems to make things

go wrong for the most inscrutable reason. On the Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, has fallen an immense burden, and it is a matter of wonder to many people that she has not been overwhelmed by the prevailing despondency and pessimism. But, as one commentator, G.K. Reddy in the *Hindu*, has observed, "even her worst critics will concede that the country must stand by Mrs. Gandhi for some more time, if only because there is no viable alternative to her at present on the national scene. If her political base gets abruptly eroded by either the follies of her supporters or the machinations of her opponents, the country will have to go through a period of uncertainty until it regains its equilibrium. But in a turbulent society like India which has been described as the "largest practising democracy in the world," the real test of power is not parliamentary majority but ability to take timely decisions and act with a clear purpose. If prices cannot be brought down by strikes and street violence, the people cannot be pacified either with a flurry of foundation stones. And in the absence of Governmental inability to shed the prejudices of the past and avoid the earlier mistakes, these marble slabs will remain only as monumental symbols of the country's failures."

But in this situation, there is one silver lining for India: the massive economic support she gets from the Soviet Union. Following the general trade and economic co-operation agreement concluded when Brezhnev visited India, a Trade Protocol was signed recently which will provide India with a major lever for further development. A number of important commodities will be supplied to India by the Soviet Union under the trade protocol. These include substantial quantities of kerosene, fertilizers, industrial raw material, newsprint, components and spare parts for Soviet assisted projects in India. The Trade protocol envisaged a trade turn-over of approximately Rs. 670 crores both ways in 1974, as against the figure of Rs. 430 crores for 1973. The other commodities which the Soviet Union will be exporting to India are asbestos, palladium, rolled steel products, zinc, nickel, copper sulphur, sunflower seed oil, besides

capital goods and machinery of various types.

Among the commodities that India will export to the Soviet Union are engineering goods, cotton textiles, ready-made garments, garage equipments, storage batteries, detergents, hand tools, footwear, cigarettes, power cables, surgical instruments, woollen knitwear, aluminium etc. The traditional exports include de-oiled cakes, cashew kernels, tea, coffee, spices, tobacco, jute manufactures, handicrafts, etc.

It is admitted that the economic and trade Agreement between India and the USSR at the time of the Brezhnev visit is one of the most significant and important of all agreements ever signed by India. Along with the agreements on co-operation between the planning bodies of the two countries, the agreement has ensured India with economic growth on a long-term basis. This is the view of many circles in India and it seems to stem "not from a euphoria perception of events but from confidence based on years of experience."

As in all things, there are political groups who overtly pretend to support the growing ties with the Soviet Union while covertly doing everything to denigrate it. They are for it, but yet against it. Jana Sangh and Swatantra leaders applauded Brezhnev in the Lok Sabha, but immediately after had criticised the Indian Government for entering into the agreements. According to these parties, Mrs. Gandhi has "sold out India's sovereignty" through the agreement on economic co-operation. This view was stressed forcefully on many occasions by S. D. Pande of the (Organisation) Congress. These elements have also hinted that in exchange for the economic aid, Russia had wanted military bases in India, but these fears have proved groundless. On the other hand, it has been pointed out that India has been assured of Soviet economic assistance for at least 15 years during which period there can be constant economic growth without being dependent on the fluctuations of the world capitalist market.

The most virulent critic of the Indira Gandhi government is the Jana Sangh Party's paper *Motherland*, but what this paper says will

go unnoticed but for the international publicity its stories receive through the Chinese News Agency *Hsinhua* which makes it a point to publicise everything critical said of the Indian Government even if the criticism emanated from diehard communalist organisations like the Jana Sangh. Even if Chinese venom is prompted by India's close affinities to Russia it is incomprehensible to many how Peking which makes a fuss of being anti everything reactionary could quote with approval what the rightwing Jana Sangh says of the Indian Government, especially because, for along time, Jana Sangh's political vituperations against the Indira Gandhi government had found a ready response only in the propaganda agencies of the West. This is one matter which seems to have been commented upon even in many papers of the different Opposition groups in India.

CHINA. China is once again in the news. For some weeks now, there were only simmering stories about the attacks on the philosophy and cult of Confucius and the second Cultural Revolution which was said to be round the corner. The shake-up of top-level military leaders, all of them members of the Central Committee and some of them members of the Politbureau was also a matter of comment, and China watchers naturally had a field day explaining what all this meant—and this was possible because very little or no analytical and interpretative material is regularly forthcoming from inside China. Once in a while Edgar Snow has written an analysis which can be taken as authoritative, but Edgar Snow is no more, and no one seems to have taken his place.

But while these speculations were afloat about recent developments inside China, there was a sudden eruption of fighting over the Parcel (Hsisha) Islands between Chinese and South Vietnamese forces. This is the most serious incident of its kind in the South China Sea to date, but it is not the first nor is it likely to be the last. The offshore resources of the shallow sea-bed of the South China Sea will become a major question of controversy in the near future.

On January 19, news agencies reported that a Chinese Naval

Task Force had fought South Vietnamese military forces in these islands. The Chinese are now reported to have occupied all the important islands in the Archipelago which is about 175 miles south of China's Hainan Island and about 250 miles east the South Vietnam coast. The Islands, or Archipelago, stretch for about 750 miles north to south, and is said to be rich in minerals like phosphates, guano resources and rich fishing banks. But what is more interesting is that in the shallow 895,400 sq. mile area of the South China Sea lies one of the world's major sedimentary basins, shallow enough to exploit with existing technology. Oil, tin, manganese and other minerals, it is believed, are exploitable from the sea bed.

The South China Sea is also of immense strategic value. It links the Indian Ocean to the Pacific. The major sea lane from the Persian Gulf to Japan goes through it. Further, China and all the countries of Southeast Asia, except Laos and Burma, open out on this Sea. The American Seventh Fleet has shown that the power which dominates in the South China Sea can influence the future of its littoral states and their relations with one another.

The ownership of the Parcel Archipelago has been in dispute for a long time. When the French ruled Indo-China, they held sway over these Islands. During the second world war, the Japanese occupied them, and at the end of the war it was handed over to China (Chiang Kai-Shek's). Since 1949 it has been a kind of no man's land with China, South Vietnam, Taiwan and even the Philippines (on the ground of some ancient ethnic ties) making claims for them, but with the American Seventh Fleet in the area nobody took steps to enforce their claims.

But South Vietnam, from all accounts, seems to have taken the first step in wanting to establish its hegemony over these islands in spite of earlier Chinese presence there. It despatched a naval assault force around January 15, and *Hsinhua* has reported that these South Vietnamese naval vessels had harassed Chinese fishing boats in the area and also carried out provocative acts against a Chinese phosphate mine in one of the Islands.

China therefore sent a Task Force on January 19 and within two days of fighting completely vanquished the South Vietnamese. The question that is being asked is why South Vietnam started the rumpus at this juncture, knowing fully well that China had established its presence in these islands for a long time. President Thieu may have had other motives for his actions. If he had hoped that the USA would intervene he was disappointed. The US has made it clear that it was not interested in the matter. South Vietnamese requests to the USA to intervene in the naval battle had been turned down by the State Department, which has taken up the position that the dispute is "for the claimants to settle among themselves."

This attitude strengthens American influence in the region and blunts the Peking charge that "the policy of aggression and expansion of the superpowers and their frantic competition in plundering the resources of other countries have been seriously impairing and endangering the economic interests and state sovereignty of the numerous developing countries." A neutral position in East Asia would serve American interests well just as a neutral position in the Middle East too will help America.

But China's action, however well "explained" as a defensive action, will create anxieties in most South-east Asian capitals. Coming in the wake of the reshuffle of military leaders and the incident concerning the Soviet diplomats—also timed for the same day (almost) as the Parcel Islands adventure—has raised numerous speculations about the true significance of recent developments inside China. The hullabaloo about catching Soviet spies red-handed in the act, it is said, will take the edge off the Parcel Islands attack, and the Soviet denials only tend to raise a question mark over the whole episode.

Knowledgeable observers writing in magazines like the *Far Eastern Economic Review* of Hongkong, which provides some of the most informative and factual articles about China, have for some weeks now wondered what was likely to happen in China next. Their hunch was that a second Cultural Revolution was in the offing. Though they admitted that the

top level military shake up in eleven of the country's most important military regions could well amount to the increased civilian and party control over the army, in that top generals who had been in charge of particular regions for many years were moved out to new commands without any repercussions. It was also pointed out this shake-up was the biggest and most decisive action taken in regard to the Army after the Lin Piao purge. What many commentators apprehend is that this shake-up is only a precursor of a bigger purge and shake-up in the army in the near future—at the moment and time Mao Tse-tung decides is opportune.

The present reshuffle has evoked recollections about many things which had happened in the Chinese Army in the past: the assassination of Marshal Yeh T'ing in 1946, the poisoning of Marshal Chen Yi, the sudden and inexplicable death of Air Force Marshal Liu Ya Lou, in 1965 and the attempt on the life of the Minister of Public Security, Sie Fu Chi, at the end of 1971. All these incidents are tied up with the life and demise of Lin Piao.

There is no doubt that the resuscitated Communist Party under Mao has taken important steps to bring the military under the control of the Party. Not so long ago, the Peoples' Volunteer Corps were withdrawn from under the direct control of the Army and it was transferred to Party control. The Peoples' Volunteers or Militia is undoubtedly a force which can counter-balance the influence of the Army—should an occasion arise for political confrontations within the country.

The main "consensus of opinion among all observers is that the reshuffle of military leaders is indeed a prelude to another Cultural Revolution especially when taken in conjunction with the barrage against bureaucrats and intellectuals who had not outlived their Confucian upbringing and logic. The fact that a new Defence Minister has not been appointed—no permanent one after Lin Piao—is clear indication that much more remains to be done to clear the Army of Lin Piaoism. Army men have been called upon to shed themselves of "revisionism". This no longer means Liu Shao-chi, but Lin Piao.

According to all independent observers, there is a haunting fear as to who will be the next Lin Piao, who was so high up the ladder that nobody could have ever imagined that he could be thrown out as a traitor. Judas Iscariot was one of Christ's chosen men, and he had betrayed him, and it is therefore argued that even men like Lin Piao could turn traitor though there seem to be many who like to believe differently.

LIN PIAO. At the Tenth Congress, Lin Piao was accused of the same crimes as Liu Shao Chi, that of the intention to "usurp supreme power in the Party and in the State," "to restore capitalism" and "to surrender to revisionism". At

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the Congress, Lin Piao was "expelled from the Party for ever." This was the end of the political career of one of Mao's closest associates that had begun in 1925 when Lin Piao had joined the Communist Party and became a student of the Officers' School.

In February 1928 Lin Piao was appointed a battalion commander of the Chu Teh troops. After in April 1928 those troops entered Kingkangshan, Lin Piao for the first time met Mao Tse-tung. Since June 1930 Lin Piao was in command of a division of the First Army group of the Red Army where Mao Tse-tung was political commissar. With the latter's help Lin Piao already in the autumn of 1932 became commander of the Fourth Corps and in March 1933—commander of an army group of the Chinese Red Army.

In January 1935 a meeting was held in Tsuenli. At this meeting Mao Tse-tung "reorganized" the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party and assumed the leadership of the Party. Lin Piao supported Mao Tse-tung in his struggle to become the leader of the Party.

In the summer of 1936 Mao Tse-tung created the Military and Political Academy of Resistance to Japan, and Lin Piao was nominated its chief.

In 1943 Lin Piao was appointed pro-rector of the High Party School in Ylenggan. Holding this post, he helped Mao Tse-tung to pursue the "purge" in the Party and in the Army which is known under the name of the "movement for correction of style."

In April 1945, at the VII Congress of the CCP Lin Piao was elected a member of the Central Committee of the CCP. In 1945-1950 Lin Piao was in command of the People's Liberation Army in the North-East, later he commanded the IV field army of the People's Liberation Army which liberated Peking and the provinces of Central and Southern China. In 1950 Lin Piao was nominated Chairman of the Military and Administrative committee and commander of the military district of Central and Southern China. While remaining at those posts, Lin Piao also was nominated Deputy Chairman of the Military and Revolutionary Council.

In February 1954, Liu Shao-shih criticised Lin Piao who at that time commanded the troops in the south-east of China. After being accused by Liu Shao-shih Lin Piao for quite a long time had not been seen in public. But, it is known that he still enjoyed Mao's protection and favour. Moreover, supported by Mao Tse-tung, in September 1954, Lin Piao was appointed Deputy Chairman of the State Defence Committee and Deputy Prime Minister of the Chinese Peoples' Republic. In 1956 Lin Piao was elected a member of the Politbureau of the CC of the Chinese Communist Party. On May 25, 1958 Lin Piao became Deputy Chairman of the Central Committee of the CCP and member of the Permanent Committee of the Politburo of the CC of the Party. In August 1959 he took part in the Lushan plenary meeting of the Central Committee where he supported Mao Tse-tung and helped "to overthrow" Peng Te-huei who criticised Mao's policies in regard to the economic problems of the country, which had climaxed in the Great Leap Forward.

On September 29, 1959, Lin Piao published an article entitled "Let Us Rush Ahead, Holding High the Red Banner of the General Line of the Party and Military Ideas of Mao Tse-tung", which was aimed at eradicating Pen Tehual's influence in the Army.

In 1962-1965 when as a result of the failure of the "Great Leap Forward" Mao Tse-tung's prestige was considerably undermined under attack from the Liu Shao-chi group, Lin Piao started an active political and ideological work in Army units and companies, educating the personnel to support Mao Tse-tung. In September 1965 Lin Piao published another article "Long Live the Victory of the People's Army!", and in December 1965 he pointed out in an Army order the necessity to pay much more attention to politics, which practically meant that the Army should in the first place solve not the problems of the country's defence, but the internal political questions.

In the years of the "Cultural Revolution" the Army, headed by Lin Piao, helped the Red Guards and Tsaofans to raid the Party, trade-union and young communists committees, as well as

constitutional bodies of power, and became the most important element of Mao's military and "proletarian" dictatorship.

In 1968-1969 Mao Tse-tung, together with Lin Piao, twelve times "received" representatives of the Red Guards, Tsaofans, Army cadres, participants of rallies of activists, studying "Mao Tse-tung's Ideas." In December 1968 Lin Piao on the instructions of Mao Tse-tung visited South-West China in order to persuade local leaders in the provinces of Szech'wan, Yunnan and Kwangsi to take part in the IX Congress of the CCP.

In April 1969 Lin Piao presented the summary report of the CC at the IX Congress of the CCP. In the Party Rules of the CCP, adopted at the IX Congress, it was pointed out that Lin Piao "always holds high the Red Banner of Mao Tse-tung's ideas," is "a close associate" of Mao Tse-tung and a "continuer of his cause." Lin Piao was elected Deputy Chairman of the CC of the CCP, a member of the Permanent Committee of the Politburo of the CC. At the Congress he was officially proclaimed the "successor" of the "Great Helmsman", Mao Tse-tung.

• Suddenly, in September 1971 Lin Piao became a "bourgeois go-getter plotter, counter-revolutionary double crosser, betrayer and traitor of the Motherland" and a "superspy". It is said in the Tenth Congress materials that Lin Piao "had been active" in the Party "for several decades", that notwithstanding all the efforts of Mao Tse-tung he "did not change his bourgeois and idealistic outlook."

What caused such a cardinal re-evolution of Lin Piao's personality and activity.

The answer will provide a clue to the political history of China under Mao.



THE DONE THING

LET'S HAVE A COUP DE GRACE

by CANAX

I'M NOT like some people you have doubtless heard of who, to hear some other people tell it, cry wolf and then, when help arrives or is offered, refuse to show where the beast is. When I cry wolf it is only after I make jolly sure, first, that nobody will take the slightest notice of me and, second, that there really *isn't* any wolf around. Or maybe I take the second first and the first second, because it is the safer course to follow for survival.

The few times someone did take notice and put me in a spot, I proved quick-witted enough to produce for public view an animal which is far more common than wolves are around here. Scapegoats, as you've probably discovered for yourself already, can be had by the hundred. I've got so accustomed to their easy availability I sometimes wonder what I'd ever do without them.

Before I stray too far away from the point, as I seem to do week after week, let me make at least a token attempt to get to it, so no one can say I didn't even try. If memory serves, the point is no point at all, but I'll go ahead and make it anyway. It is only an observation, and was made by my wife who makes observations as often as she makes tea every day, which is twice.

"One more word," she cried the way Liza Doolittle did in *My Fair Lady*. "and I'll scream"! But unlike Liza she didn't sing it; she screamed it instead and not very musically, either.

Ah, now I remember the point I intended to make. It's the same one she made along with the scream, which is that people who have nothing to do shouldn't waste their time and ours planning, or discovering, coups but rather put it to good use by doing nothing in a constructive way.

I KNOW, you think that's not possible, which only shows how

much you know. It is not only possible to do nothing in a constructive way, I tell you it's being done already. Further details could of course be had on request from Mr. J. R. Jayawardene, the inventor of the latest mind-over-matter fad called the Big Squat. It can be practised by the faithful anytime, anywhere, though preferably on a public highway.

Those interested enough to seek membership will receive, absolutely free, the latest pop hit titled "Roads are Meant For Sitting", featuring the UNP Youth Orchestra conducting itself. The silent score is by JR himself, the lyrics by the sensational Premadasa, who also plays solo drum. A chorus of thousands, thrown in for sheer stereophonic effect, plays the devil. With traffic.

I haven't worked myself up to screaming point yet and I'm hoping you haven't either, for I have a few more words to say about coups and don't want to chance them on her, not the way she's ready to go up the wall.

She was in such a state there was a time she was even off her food, complaining she just couldn't stomach coups for breakfast, coups for lunch, and coups for dinner. I can well imagine how tough it's been on her. The trouble is, she has never acquired a taste for coups.

It's just a thought, but I did seriously consider helping her out by dropping a line to the Prime Minister strongly urging that, thanks to China's generosity, we can now go ahead and declare Tuesdays, Thursdays and maybe weekends as coup-less days. Unlike in the case of rice, we are having a surfeit of coups right now, so the restriction would be only to guard against over-indulgence.

You make people sick by letting them have too much too soon and the next thing you know the whole nation will develop an intense distaste for coups and with that Democracy as we know it would have reached the end of the road. How, then, can any Opposition function effectively? Or any Government, for that matter?

OF COURSE imposing curbs is not enough. Anyone detected

servicing coups prepared in any form whatsoever on the specified days, be it in private or in public, deserves nothing less than the coup de grace.

We must not also forget the vital need to conserve available supplies. All right, so we have a surplus now but merely because we now have an abundance of coupmania is no reason to squander it with no thought for the future. There are indeed a lot of lessons to be learnt from the current energy crisis even by us in little Sri Lanka. Mr. Subasinghe does not appear to have got much out of his recent Kissingeresque Middle East tour, probably because he didn't resort to anything as crude as actually oiling Arab palms.

I know of some friends who have displayed a remarkable sense of responsibility by going easy on the coupmania already, not waiting for an official directive to tighten their imaginative belts. One couple have forced themselves to do without it from Monday to Friday and partake of coup-snacks only over the rest of the week, and that too in moderation. If, say, they've had coup on Saturday, they choose to keep off it the whole of Sunday. It's tough, they tell me, and have sometimes been forced to nibble on Sundays too just to keep company at a party.

It happened to me, so I know how effcult it is to keep off yourself when everybody else won't. I was at this party the other day when, without warning, someone asked, of no one in particular, "Is this the season for coups?" Someone else said no, and a third said, "This is fantastic. We go all out to grow rice and end up harvesting a bumper crop of coups. It must be the weather."

Then I was asked a direct question, and there was no way I could dodge. "Heard anything new about the coup?", and all I could think of was "whose coup?", which was considered funny, or else I don't know why everybody laughed.

ANOTHER THING I picked up in the course of conversation is that the coup that's coming round the corner will prove a big surprise. There was this know-all type of guy at the party who obviously knew little about coups but wouldn't let that stop him from talking a

lot about it. He seemed to have concocted some hair-raising yarns about alleged coups to the right of us, coups to the left of us, coups above and coups below us, coups behind and coups in front of us, and a few coups originating from dead centre as well.

"Mark my words," he announced with a knowing air, "our better halves will be on the front lines when the next battle begins."

I took the cue from that and whispered, "Between you and me I hear they are planning to use a secret weapon next time."

I had him hooked all right, for he promptly dropped his voice two full octaves to croak almost inaudibly, "Good God, what on earth is it?"

"Nobody knows for sure," I said, "but it's code-named Y."

He looked blank, so I pressed on. "Have you heard of Y?"

Obviously he hadn't, for he replied "Why Y?"

"Because that's also a better half you were talking about."

"It must be a rocker, then," he suggested.

"Worse," I said. "It's a guided missile."

By now his voice was so low one could imagine it sweeping the floor. "What's its range like?" he whispered, looking furtively all round him.

"Care for another drink?" I asked instead, pointing to his empty glass, but he shook his head. All he cared for was the range, and he repeated the question.

I pretended he was far too technical and was way above my head which is as high as my understanding goes even now. I never thought I could succeed in looking the complete idiot, but apparently I did then, for he launched forth on a long explanatory discourse.

"I'll make it simpler for you," he began. "All guided missiles are capable of going from one point to another. What I mean is, you can't launch one from here to eternity, get it? The distance between the two specific points is what is termed the range in military parlance. Now what is Y's range?"

"Deadly," I said with a show of understanding. "From what I hear, this one is capable of moving not merely between two points as you suggest, but on to a third and maybe fourth, depending on how many targets there are."

Believe me, I have never seen any man look so screwed up in all my life. "Impossible!" he cried "they have to be either ground-to-air or ground-to-ground. And they can't have more than one target."

"This one sure has," I assured him, "and that's what makes it so deadly."

"What sort of target can it zero in on?"

"Mostly fashion parades," I said, "but rumour has it that cocktail parties are equally vulnerable."

Even he couldn't help but catch on at last. He straightened himself and asked, "Are you talking about a woman or a weapon?"

"A bit of both," I said truthfully.

He moved away without another word and didn't talk to me for the rest of the evening.

For small mercies, much thanks.



HAND IN GLOVE

Pappy Looksi And Phil The Puller

by
Double Diamond

Pappy Looksi and Phil the Puller were hand in glove in small 'crime'. Pappy was so-called because his daughter till recently called him Pappy, a diminutive form for Pappa. Born and bred in Ceylon, Pappy befriended Phil the Puller (of fast ones) whom he met on a ship in one of his travels. To hear their antics was a treat:

Pappy Looksi: Well, what's it today. Whose reputation shall it be?

Phil the Puller: Look through the list. We'll get a good one.

PL: Oh, you always want a good one. Why not a 'bad' one, I mean one who is good and pious and friendly and social and doing his best....

PP: Goodness-badness! I don't understand you. For you it's a topsy-turvy world.

PL: Survival, man, survival. I am not on a raft for Kortiki purposes. I'm just drifting. The likes of us are fading out in other countries, flushed out ruthlessly. Unless we do head-hunting how survive? You've no head!

PP: Survival of the misfits, eh?

PL: Say what you like. When I joined your underground betting-rag, "SOCKS", it was not what you told me.

PP: What did I tell you?

PL: You don't remember, "Puller". That's your trouble. You said the more bawdy the joke, the lower the tale, the more "below-belt" I'd write, the easier you'd advance me the money, and now you're saying something else!

PP: What advances. Don't make advances to me. Now all that is over.

PL: Oh, well. There's time, o king crime. Say, I'll have my way. Pardon my rhyme (or is it rhythm?)

PP: There you go again, you one-track mind with little traffic on it! Your article for SOCKS (I know "Socks" is low enough, very low!) on rhythm wasn't so good. Not enough spice for the long-dressed reader.

PL: I write the stuff and the district patrol—Leader connives at it. He won't knife you and me. No kniving, just conniving.. and the "Barber keeps on Shaving" (remember the old song).

PP: Did you have any racing lists today? Are you putting that article on the sacred (fire) Works of Lalade Mc Carbon? I met a chap on the bus who spoke of virtue, goodness, piety social awareness, ecumenism, land reform, but I'm not interested in all this. I was absorbed in my experience I had..A superb one, if you ask me.

PL: I know you're not interested. You hate all this. Me too. I know when it all started.

PP: Me too, I recall when, I should know. The time Brio Atthakar was elected president of the top-of-the-world club. How I hated him on that day. I became head of the underworld and haven't looked back since.

PL: Don't I recall! All because of your jealousy, carefully concealed. Cut-throat fellow!

PP: Talk another word and I'll slash you from ear to ear!

PL: Nice language for 'leader'. No wonder you're called cut-throat. Get on with it. What was this experience you had?

PP: I went for a big (beeg) banquet at our friend's (Berrando's in Dalawala). Beer flowed freely with other liquors. Boy, what brands! There were fashion people, biz-people, cars crammed the garden. Three levels of tables (In the name of what I do not know) with seven kinds of meat and unobtainable sea-food. Retired ghouls, one with a dash of purple on his face, in anger, evidently. He looked pious as if he was saying his prayers. Lot of money had gone into it: over 50 at the dinner. (We're ok, you know, for we are with them and won't get nabbed). It was a fine clean gang. Sure we write against women and all that in the "SOCKS", but they were very friendly and companion-like there, you know. That's the line. Show the world we are against them and all for single-bachelor living, and therefore very "holy" and all that, anti-women's liberation and all that; and secretly have our little places, donchyou know, I mean to say. Plug the line about austerity etc. poverty add a dash of "Gospel", bit of conservatism, tradition and all that and secretly plug our own little line: betting, racing, "womanzing" (a little bit won't do harm).

PL: That's right. Double standard?

PP: Double standard!

PL: Chuck your mangy paw, Puller, at last you have converted yourself....

PP: Into what?

PL: No, I mean publish one thing and live something else. Lovely game. And it took me three to four years to get you on to my line. Now I can retire.

You can take over my underground racing biz and even my "SOCKS". I've done it.

PP: Were there bawdy jokes? You didn't ask me that.

PL: Yes, I meant to...

PP: I circulated some real low ones (I mean 'high'). Real freedom comes from being lascivious and licentious quietly, and then in public gangster—gatherings, just draw a red herring across the trail, and talk of charity, piety and donchyou know. (I know I am being mean, while some gangsters go abroad from "our group", because we make life a very hell, we send them out by what we write. But we too must survive and feel wanted and that we are doing something.)

PL: Done it. Now you're talking. Partners in crime. Sounds nice. Sure, you and I are respectable. We are not sinners. We just lop off reputations, and we don't kill do we? No blood. And we are not christians—it is they who worry about commandments (thou shalt not kill and all that) or Buddhists with their pranatipato etc) I don't like to be tied down to religious systems and to goodness. When you write a racing rag like "SOCKS", you must be low and act low. Not like when you write for a pious magazine that upholds goodness and tradition etc.

PP: For the next issue of "SOCKS", why don't you take up Bolour and his wonton attacks on Ridigam?

PL: We are not ready to answer. I haven't read a book for years. I don't like this scientific stuff, etc. Important thing is to attack. Don't find out what or why. Just find out who is saying something and hit hard (in the dark). Draw a few cartoons, write a few filthy jokes and insinuations and there you have it. Like some of the clerics of some of the medieval centuries.

PP: Leave those fellows alone. Clerical people have nothing to do with this. Can't you see the difference between a scholarly review like our rag (all scientific racing and sexology) and an impious magazine like the "Philosophical and Science Quarterly."

PL: But you are contradicting your self. Listen, you're getting fat.

PP: That's part of the red herring I ate. I am beginning to think...

PL: Go ahead. I never heard you could! That's a wonder, you obese fool.

PP: Come now. Prepare the next issue. What language: "obese" "mangy"...

PL: And may you die without leaving any issue! Amen.

PP: Would to God the gift He'd give us: to see ourselves as other see us!!!

THE FUTURE

Edible Fruit From Rubber?

Kottayam.

"Fantastic it may seem at the moment, if rubber trees may yield, besides latex for rubber production, edible fruits on its branches", says Dr. C. K. N. Nair, Director of the Rubber Research Institute of India.

Dr. Nair said the fusion of dissimilar cells would result in the evolution of plants with unknown potentialities. "In this manner it may become possible in the next quarter of a century to evolve plants which may produce several commercial products rather than a single product."

He added that it was possible to develop clones (rubber seedlings) which could yield latex of any desired shade and colour, which would be permanent and which would completely avoid the necessity of admixing artificial colour at later stages of rubber goods manufacture.

Dr. Nair said advances and perfection in tissue culture techniques would enable factory production of high-yielding seedlings by the millions for distribution to planters.

Tissue culture is the production of a whole plant from a single cell. He claimed that production of petroleum-based synthetic rubber might go entirely by 2000 A.D and natural plantation rubber and biologically synthesised natural rubber alone would be available by then.

SHAMBA

THE SPECTRE OF HUNGER

by ANATORY BUKOBA

November 9.

A late start, but I worked till my hand ached from holding and swinging the *vici Katha*. The long grass made the work difficult. I did the bank below the road, the part between that and the path that leads to the nearest bathing place, and the corner of the bank above the public footpath that leads to the same place. Our housewife and mother swept up the grass behind me, and some of the children joined in. The hot sun did not deter me. Tea was served quite often; jaggery took the place of sugar. We had Indian corn and red onion at lunch. Yesterday it was manioc, and the day before it was sweet potato. I had *Cander*, too, made from the rice left over in the cooking pot; it is like a thick soup and tastes good. One snake I saw under pile of cadjans; it just vanished. A neighbour killed one of the biggest cobras I have seen; long and as thick as my wrist, it was. There are plenty of signs of wild pig just outside the acre. The weather is cold at night, and there is no rain; all signs of a drought, I am told. This place presents quite a contrast to what it was three weeks ago: all grass now and green, what grass there was, burnt the colour of the earth, then.

November 10.

The teak sapling has sprouted leaves. The two *laverlu* or *lawulu* saplings, of which only the stems are left, have stayed supple, but they have yet to show a leaf. I do not recall saying that I weeded the pineapple and loosened the soil round them. The passion fruit looks all right but it is not growing much. The plantain trees are small, except for one, but they look well after the rains. The solitary papaw tree is taking on new life. The *thiringu* has done well, come drought and rain; planted as an experiment it was, and it is a pity it was not sown extensively. We

might at least have had something to show on the farm, if we had. The manioc is growing again but we have not as much of it as we had. I have brought six plantain suckers, and after two days they have yet to be planted.

The married family occupies my house. I intend to build myself a *palla* to stay in. The man of the house hires himself out to support his family, and so I am cleared of the regular responsibility of having to feed them. His wife helps me with the work when she can. The small children are helpful, too.

November 16.

Away was I from this *Shamba* longer than I have ever been before. The six plantain suckers never been planted, but they all look far from well. They were planted in a new place, where I hope the soil will be better than where all the earlier plantains went in. There was rain yesterday and today after a short drought. I used the *Vici Katha* this evening in front of the house, on the other side of the path, and by the road.

The mosquitoes are bad. I hope my cutting of the grass will disperse them. The mosquitoes were always bad at dusk outside the house but for some strange reason they did not come into the house, except for a short spell of about a month, and that was about the middle of the year.

The head of the family, that occupies my house, cannot lay off work on Sunday. He gets about Rs. 5/- a day by working out, and it takes him all that money to feed his family each day. So he cannot lay off work even on the day of rest. He cannot even get to Mass on Sunday, because he has to be at work. He can see the church, too, from the road that runs alongside our *Shamba*.

November 17.

This morning I cleared the rest of our frontage with the road; it was a case of using the *Vici Katha* again. Then I took it into my hand to start clearing where the footpath, past our house, leaves our land, and on the side opposite to the river. There was a lot of *Karamba* that I left, as the berries will help the children in the season. It will be at a time when we are going to

be really short of food, because everybody else will be short, too, two months before the paddy harvest.

As is usual, when I am clearing, I save what firewood I could by putting it into a separate heap.

The eldest of our farm children is nearly seven, and he already knows the names of many trees and creepers, and their use. It was he who assured me it was *Karamba* that I saw before me, and he was able to put me wise about some other plants, too, such as the one that would have a white flower in the season. One bunch of saplings I cut I set aside for making a new broom; he knew the name of that, too. Our two girls are younger than he, and the eldest of these is getting on to knowing a thing or two herself about plants and trees. The youngest is little more than a baby, and she is the most active of the lot. These children and their mother only have soup for lunch, soup made out of rice, called *cander*, unless I bring them something. Today it was papaw.

November 18.

As I was not going to be in for lunch, I took a pound of luffa to the family for their lunch, and it was all they had. Their breadwinner told me tonight that he has given up trying to buy rice, it is too expensive on his pay, and he took a lot of manioc home instead... He had to travel far to find it, and he got back home after dark. Then his wife had to start cooking, the children were very patient. My own companion and I were faced with the prospect of having no dinner at all. He just had not the money to buy the rice, and I am more or less his guest. I was down to my last Rs. 2/-, which I am saving for our breakfast. So he was left wondering what to do. Then he thought of borrowing some flour, and so it will be rot! we shall have for dinner. I told him about my idea of having just vegetables if it comes to the push, and he said he had not thought of it. I had lunch with friends who do not seem to lack for rice. Food is appearing again in the *Kaddays*, cooked food, the baked kind, but none of it is really nourishing, certainly not at the price we have to pay for it.

November 19.

It was the *Vici Katha* again, and I cleared what hit you in the eye as you walked along the road to the footpath that leads to the house. Easy work it was, weed of the kind that cut easily, and growing in the shade of trees. I met a boy who had to walk four miles along the main road to his home and there was a stationary bus in sight that was going his way. I was sorry I did not spare him thirty five cents out of my break fast money—two rupees and two cents was all I had left. On reflection, I was appalled, and not a little angry, that soldiers with rifles should have been guarding tourists in a hotel lounge, such a contrast was it to our carefree life, and what a wrong impression it would give the tourists about our country.

Change likely in Japan's Policies

Tokyo, Jan. 17.

Japan is shocked at the rioting which took place in Jakarta on Tuesday following protests against the visit of Premier Kakuei Tanaka to Indonesia. The worst outbreak of anti-Japanese feelings in any South-East Asian country since the end of world war II.

Observers here are agreed that in the light of anti-Japanese sentiment in Thailand and Indonesia Japanese trade and aid policies to South-East Asia will have to change from the present pattern of importing raw materials and exporting finished consumer goods to generally assisting only, projects in these countries which contribute to Japan's own economic enrichment.

The Chief Cabinet Secretary, Mr. Susumu Nishikado in a statement has admitted that Japan would have to re-examine its Asian diplomacy. From now on he said, the Government would actively participate in working out overseas development plans by private Japanese business houses. He called on them to be more prudent in their activities abroad.

—Hindu

Anyway, the soldiers, I am sure, were a bit of our real Ceylon. The genuine article, and if these tourists had not had this chance of talking to them, they would, like all the others of their kind, have left the island having met no one. You do not get an idea of the real people of any country by meeting waiters, guides and other professionals in this walk of life. I had dropped in to see if anybody would be interested in buying some pictures by Ceylon artists. They were not, just then anyway; looking at drawings and paintings under the cover of rifle would have been ludicrous. When two tourists in France were murdered not many miles from me, at a place where I spent the whole night on my feet, waiting for a chance lift from a vehicle that never came, not until dawn. Police were not put on to guard us.

November 22.

All the family were ill with eating manioc, but they seemed to have made a fairly quick recovery when I met them this morning. One spell of vomiting has been enough though, and we were lucky that the trouble stopped short of anything really serious. I was out for the day, and when I met them again when it was night, they were going to get to bed without having cooked anything, there was no food, they said, so I gave them half the measure of rice I had with me.

It looks as if this island is in for a hard time. I have heard that flooding in some places will have destroyed the paddy, and that lack of rain in other is doing almost as much damage. As matters are at the moment, it looks as if the N.E. monsoon has failed, and if that is so, the Yala is going to be a big disappointment. So much for confident reports of how much grain the Yala season is going to yield. This gives me grounds for believing that a suspicion I have had all along, is right and that little less reliance on statistics, population censuses, and planning and more on divine providence would not be out of place. In fact, I would be inclined to say, to hell with statistics, census, and planning.

November 23.

On my way to the Shamba, I picked up some spinach for twenty

cents. Our housewife or her husband had collected a vegetable that grows well. I found five loaves of bread in a shop, and managed to persuade the owner to part with one of them. Later I was to find another loaf; so bread has come back to our village after an absence of months. Our housewife made a *mal-lung* of both green vegetables "prepared" with salt, like a European dish, instead of the usual chilli and pepper, and it tasted very good. I had instructed her to throw out the water; in Ceylon cooking, this is never done, and what water is left is known as *hoddhie* and served as part of the curry. Besides, salt is never added direct to the pot in Ceylon, but cooking salt, when consists, for the most part of lumps, hard lumps, is added to water in a coconut shell, and it is a part of that water which is put on the pot. The family consumed both loaves for lunch, and I was able to give them half a loaf for their dinner, which was all I had money for. They were going to eat this with more *mallung*. So the reader can see that food is difficult to come by.

November 24.

Without breakfast were the family this morning, the husband out of work since Thursday, the day he fell ill. I think they had missed breakfast yesterday, too I bought them plantains (*anamalu*, cheap at fifteen cents) and papaw (two, at ten and twenty cents respectively), but I could not get that to them till nearly noon. There was a ceremony or an offering at the *devale* this morning, and, as is the custom, I think they were able to collect some *dana* from there. The only other food I was able to get them, were a tin of condensed milk, at Rs. 1/75, and a packet of jaggery, at Rs. 3/25, jaggery or sugar goes a long way towards helping, because by drinking tea often, they manage, I think to keep away the pangs of hunger. For some reason, they will not take tea, especially tea without milk, and without something to sweeten it with. It is a fad or a custom, and it is hard to break.

As for the work on the Shamba, I clear when I can, what with the rain, I have to go over again what I did before. There was much talk of work, but no signs of it

yet, from the husband, as far as the Shamba goes. He has been thrown out of work, because our present short drought has brought all hired work to a standstill. I have found another family, I think and I wonder if the two will consent to live on the same piece of land. As I see it, there is room for them both.

November 28,

On my way to the Shamba I bought two pounds of luffa at twenty five cents a pound, and I took it to the family. They could hardly have plain luffa for breakfast, and I sent them back, later, through their son, two *koli kuttus* at twenty cents each, and also a quarter pound of sugar, which the housewife specially asked for. The sugared tea keeps them going short of food as they are.

The husband has found work these last two days, and he came back tonight without any food at all. Rice at Rs. 4/50 a measure is prohibitive. It was too late for me to do anything about it. I had been asked earlier to find them some bread, and all I could get them was three rock buns at thirty cents a piece, small ones, hardly worth buying at all, but the best that could be got for the rough money equivalent of a loaf of bread. Potatoes were Rs. 1/60 a pound, too expensive to buy, and how far would a pound go anyway among five?

It is not just the price of food, and food in the present circumstances means rice or manioc, but it is jolly hard to find. People have to cover many miles to find it.

November 29,

The husband missed half a day's work; his daughter had fever. I was asked for some money towards the day's end. I had already spent a rupee on their breakfast and a rupee on their lunch, the last on two exotic vegetables which they said they could not eat without rice, but I gave the husband Rs. 3/15, the fifteen cents representing all the small change I had, the whole of the sum being two thirds of what he would have earned had he sweated ten hours in the sun for it; and still it was not enough. All the rice he bought with that money was one *hundoo* or *chundu* of rice, and how far

would that do among five? I was strongly tempted to give him half of the two *chundus* I was carrying. He has had two or more days of work, and he has had to get his foodstuffs at a *kadday* on tick, and now he is being made to work for nothing, as it were, to pay off his debt.

A message came back through his son this morning, that he would be bringing no food with him neither for their dinner nor for their lunch. That seemed to throw the burden on to me, and I did not see why I should carry it.

December 5.

Business takes me away every week. On my return today, I found the jungle again springing up. So I cleared the slope between the road and the house. The *Vici Katha* is quite blunt, and cutting is extremely hard; I must take it to the blacksmith when I return after my next absence, which will be a long one, my longest yet. The amount of jungle then will depend on the rain we have while I am away.

The *murunga* looks nice, fresh leaves and branches, stalks going up straight, the trunks, that we originally planted, quite fit now. All the old plantain trees look good, small, but very green, none throwing out any suckers yet. The five or six fence plants that I planted myself, where the grass verge of the road meets the bank or slope which falls away from it, are growing straight and stout, looking very nice while those which were planted by someone else, do not look half as good.

Our only flowering shrubs have flowers again, not in much profusion. There is quite a patch of weeds on the other side of it like a jungle, but short. The pineapples do not yet show any fruit.

There was *wattakka* in a *kadday*, and I took some of it along to the Shamba. Our housewife told me that it can be used as a substitute for manioc and rice, and I got her another four and a half pounds of it. It had all gone by night, with the family's evening meal. The English name for *Wattakka* is pumpkin.

With the rains the weeds can be pulled out by hand and I showed the six-year old lad how it can be

done. Just in front of the house the ground is covered with stones and so it is not easy to use the *vici katha*. It is more efficient, too, to pull the weeds out.

The house looks different now. There was some spare *cadjan*, and with these, all the open parts of the house have been closed up: What used to be the veranda, is now like a passage way, with a bed, a *massa* bed. This opens out into the main room, which is like a hall, but with two beds, and in the far corner to the right is the kitchen, the section nearest is the pantry, and the bed here is used

Tanaka's 'No' to Singapore P.M.

Singapore, Jan. 12,

Japan's constitution prevents any military co-operation with South East Asian nations. Premier Tanaka said here today. He was referring to the Singapore Premier, Mr. Lee Kuan Yew's suggestion that Japan join a US-Australian task force to preserve military stability in the region. Mr. Tanaka, who was here for 27 hours said his proposals for stability in South East Asia would be assisting nations in their economic development and rehabilitation of Vietnam on a multi-national basis.

Mr. Tanaka, who is on a five nation tour of South East Asia, sought in Singapore more bunkering facilities for ships and offered in return increased supply of newsprint, plastics, synthetic fibres, iron, steel and cement. Japan he said, had no intention to seek economic domination or excessive gains and would correct the huge trade imbalances by more imports. He also indicated that to counter criticism of Japanese businessmen, in future many of the joint ventures would be on a Government to-Government basis.

At Kuala Lumpur airport about 50 placard-carrying students shouted "Tanaka go home and 'burn Tanaka'" as the Japanese Prime Minister landed in the Malaysian capital.

—Hindu

as the pantry table. This leaves the family with only two beds of the original three. At the back is the room, the private part of the house, and now without the door, which has been moved to become the front door, at the entrance to the passage or front bed room.

December 10,

There are changes at the *Shamba*. More murunga trees have been put down, and plantain trees, and also manioc. These have gone down where the old vegetable cultivation used to be. As the ground vegetation is rather rank, what has been planted newly does not show up easily. I like the fact that the emphasis has been on trees. In place of the mammoth that has been lost, I found three mammoths lying around, none of them ours. Anyway, it was not I who borrowed them, and I shall not be responsible for their loss.

In spite of all the rain the last week, the grass has kept within manageable proportions, and by that I mean it still looks tidy. My first self-appointed task after I got back was to take our *vici katha* to the blacksmith. He hammered the cutting edges, and used a file on them. As this *katha* is made of ordinary iron, there is not much really that he can do about improving edges. Anyway the *katha* was much better when I took it back to the *Shamba*. It was so blunt before, the work was really slow and hard. Without delay I started cutting the grass on the verge of the corner of the *shamba*, without going to the house first to put down the bags that are my constant companions. I just held them in one hand while I worked with the other, changing hands as often as the working hand got tired; and *vici katha* work is as tiring on the hands. I had not gone very far when the church bell rang to summon me away.

There has been illness in the house, this time the head of the family. So goodness knows how they managed about money. I got them some pig's meat today, pork, as well as five and a three quarter pounds of *wattakka* or pumpkin.

INANIA *Of This, That and The Other*

THE RAPE OF THE ROCKS

By INNA

World resources are being slowly and steadily depleted. As a boy I used to wonder how much longer coal would last. I know the answer now. In later years I came to realise that matter is decadent and would not last forever.

World gold resources will last 29 years more; mercury will last 41 years more; copper will last 48 years more; natural gas 49 years more, petrol 50 years more; aluminium 55 years and zinc 50 years. Tin will take 61 years, lead 64 and cobalt a hundred years and chromium 100, not two-hundred. Iron will last 173 years while Coal will last 150 years—all at the present rate of consumption (Dumont, *Utopie ou Mort*, 1973, p. 20)

BUT PETROL can also furnish proteins. Each time our people use their cars do they think of the children of the Third World, our world? This planet is not the monopoly of the rich and powerful of the western countries and of the neo-colonials scattered all over the world, including our own sweet Sri Lanka—the people who speed by in their cars watching bread queues; the rusty, ruddy politicians who hoodwink the people with their special bogus brand of socialism all the while kowtowing with officials of certain religious institutions watching while the race is being slowly led to ruin.

When will they learn?

When will the mask be drawn off? Will not the Tribune Sherlock take up the study of the cordon drawn round certain people as regards visas, as regards publication in certain news papers—how closely, hand in glove, certain religious officials hobnob with the government at top level and how degrading a sight, how scandalous, if scandal is all that some are looking for.

THIS PLANET is common property not owned by a few. This common patrimony of mankind is worthy of being spared, preserved as the apple of our eye. Is this happening? Those who saw Hawaii will not say this has happened. Those who saw the Philippines will not say this has happened.

Bloodsuckers sucked them dry, as bloodsuckers sucked our country from 1500 onwards and left only the 'bulath hapa' and a bad name that "stank to high heaven". The

rape goes on in the form of exports of a certain type; of bad planning in certain sectors; of bribery and corruption; of a close hugging of the status quo, and the mockery goes on, the lip service to founders and leaders who wanted to bring classless class going apace.

Conurbation—a new word. *Meagalopolis*—a key word of the future! All this means that cities will multiply over many times their size. Sao Paulo has 9 millions now, but foreseen are 20 millions in 1984. Tokyo will be linked to Yokohama as a double city. Arab manipulation, they say, made ghost cities of Sunday-rest in Europe in December of 73.

There was no oil.

A Pope and a Prime Minister took to buggy carts. Why not drop cars entirely on a Sunday and leave the people to walk about in the streets?

Is Dumont wrong when he says "that the principal enemies of this end of the century are armaments, the private car and the giant cities (Utopie, p. 75). The terrible indictment of this prophetic voice rings clear: "The rich of the rich countries are responsible for the world tragedy today."

We are a *samadhic* people. Right Livelihood is one of the Lord Buddha's steps of the Eightfold Path. Can't we contemplate on this truth: is it only the rich of the rich countries who are to be blamed?

Who has the 5 Sri and the 6 Sri generally? Is their conscience clear?

IS IT TRUE?

Sherlock Holmes

✳ LAW ✳ FOOD ✳ JANAWEGAYA
✳ TIMES ✳ ATHTHA

IS IT NOT TRUE that the new legal system of Sri Lanka is being watched very closely not only by knowledgeable observers in this island but in all countries in the South Asia region which now have a legal system derived from the Dutch and British? That there is no doubt that there are many interesting features in our new system which revolutionises jurisprudence as we have understood it? That in the new world which has emerged in South Asia and in Sri Lanka it had become very necessary that there should be far-reaching changes in the legal system? That the reforms introduced offer new concepts of law and jurisprudence which stem from law as it has developed in many parts of the world? That in about a year's time it would be useful to survey how the system has progressed and what further changes are necessary to make it work better? That the objective of establishing a good system of justice with an independent judiciary is a noble ideal and the new system endeavours to sustain this objective?

IS IT ALSO NOT A FACT that many countries in this region are watching Sri Lanka's efforts to grow more food and become self-sufficient? That if self-sufficiency is attained, this country will save a tremendous amount in its import bill? That many foreign observers are conscious of the fact that if Sri Lanka is able to pull up its socks

it will be able to grow enough food for export? That they are wondering when the many factors which now restrict production in Sri Lanka will be removed? That countries like Japan, Malaysia, Singapore and Hongkong will for instance, buy all the soya bean we can produce? That Singapore and Malaysia will be in the market for exportable rice—no sooner we produce a surplus?

IS IT NOT TRUE that the *Janawegaya* is the only party-oriented political paper which has consistently insisted that top priority must be paid to food production? That its columns are full of stories and comments about the bureaucratic obstacles which hold back food production? That the *Janawegaya* has also endeavoured to co-relate the impact of the oil crisis to food production? That the *Janawegaya* does not indulge in personal attacks to pull other people's chestnuts out of the fire? That where it attacks persons and personalities it is on political grounds? That JR is now the current target of *Janawegaya* attacks, but these attacks are confined to his politics, political strategy and political somersaults? That other party-based political papers would do well to follow the journalistic standards now being established by the *Janawegaya*?

WAS IT NOT FUNNY that the *Sunday Times*, 20/1/74, should have

a banner head-lined (red colour) frontpage lead story about a film shown at a cocktail party in the Chinese Embassy? That the Political Correspondent or the Special Correspondent began his piece with the mournful dirge "I have never been to the People's Republic of China. That is my misfortune"? That if the Chinese have any sense they should forthwith invite this Correspondent to spend six months in China so that he can fill pages of the *Times* with reports about his travels in that wonderful country? That it would be wrong to think that this Correspondent had caged for an invitation through his opening sentence? That it was just what he felt when he saw the wonderful film about life and work in the People's Republic of China?

WAS IT NOT EVEN FUNNIER to see the Marxist-Leninist *Aththa* dabble in rank communalism in order to rush to the rescue of the present hierarchy in the *Times*? That the *Aththa* seems to forget that *Tribune* has indulged in its characteristic jabs at the *Times* for the whole of its twenty years of existence (in the same way it has dealt with Lake House from time to time)? That the *Aththa* has now descended into the lower hell of personal vilification in order to protect the *Times*? That this vilification is not on political grounds but on rank communalism? That it is clear that *Aththa* has lost its prestige and reputation because it indulges in such stunts for the sake of friends and clients? That if the *Aththa* wants to indulge in this type of journalism it is asking for war? That if the *Aththa* thinks that blood is thicker than water it will be interesting how regular ties are maintained between a Marxist-Leninist communist paper and a rank rightwing bigtime capitalist newspaper group? That the latter should be able to look after itself without looking for succour and salvation from a communist paper? That it is time, however, that the bigwigs of the hardline CP should look into the ties—not blood, which is thicker than water, but spirits, which bind non-kindred souls—that bring certain personalities in the *Aththa* close to personalities in the *Times*? That it is not yet necessary to name names, as the *Aththa* regularly does, but skeletons in the cupboard will spell these names out?