

# TRIBUNE

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## ON PURCHASING PADDY

THE PADDY MARKETING BOARD has failed to deliver the goods. It has failed during the last three years, to purchase the whole, or even a substantial portion of the disposable paddy produced in the country. It has enjoyed a legal monopoly, backed with harsh emergency regulations, to enable it to fulfil its stated objectives. During the last three years of its existence sterner and sterner measures have been imposed, allegedly to curb the profit-greedy activities of the private trader and the middlemen who operate in the villages, but in reality these measures have sat heavily on the already much exploited rural community now wallowing in total frustration and this can lead to a further disintegration of our precariously balanced system of agricultural production. With the granaries of the PMB now virtually empty, even a few weeks after the beginning of the Maha harvests, there are good reasons for thinking that even more draconian measures than what obtains have been suggested by certain sections of officialdom which seem to think that heavy-handed, arbitrary and inquisitorial rules enforced with brutal, savage and pitiless severity, will help the PMB to become the successful cock-of-the-walk in the mixed market economy of Sri Lanka.

ALL FURTHER ATTEMPTS TO IMPOSE YET MORE COERCIVE REGULATIONS on the paddy producing community will vest the PMB with the absolute powers of a despotic tyranny, and this will undoubtedly boomerang on the Government. For a very long time now, Tribune has given the lead in drawing attention to the acts of commission and omission by the PMB with a view to constructively persuading the Government to reform the PMB and change its methods of purchase so that producers will voluntarily go with their paddy crop to the PMB. In this attempt we have failed so far. The PMB has been allowed to go from blunder to blunder, granting it more and more dictatorial powers to disrupt the normal and traditional market economy in the paddy producing areas—until the point has now been reached where the PMB must accept total and humiliating defeat. If corrective measures had been taken at the appropriate time, the present debacle could easily have been avoided. Instead the PMB has grown into a Goliath of ineptitude, inefficiency and corruption, behind the smokescreen that only reason for the PMB's failure was the 'smart alec' activities of private traders and middlemen, whereas the real culprit are the field officers of the PMB who do the actual purchasing of paddy utilising the iniquitous rules which have been framed to empower them keep the producer away from the private trader. The Government cannot hope to change the "human nature" of the officials of the PMB overnight, but the Government can change the rules which makes these officials the powerful petty despots they are not only in the purchasing depots where they reign supreme but also over the lives of the entire farming community.

IT IS A HAPPY AUGURY that Tribune is no longer alone in wanting a complete overhaul in the system of Governmental purchase of locally grown paddy. The prestigious *Ceylon Daily News*, after two thought-provoking articles in its columns by G. V. S. de Silva on the economic strategy for paddy purchasing, editorially suggested on 14-2-74 that it was necessary for Government to re-think and re-consider the question of the system of paddy purchase afresh. There are welcome indications that the Government will indeed study the whole question anew. It is well to remember that if the PMB functions efficiently and incorruptibly, under normal and democratic regulations governing purchase, distribution and transport, with the proper incentives offered to farmers, this country will become self-sufficient in paddy and other grains within a short time.

# Tribunania

## \* ON PADDY and RICE

THERE IS NOT THE SLIGHTEST DOUBT that the governmental system of purchasing paddy through the PMB must be overhauled completely. With the PMB reaching the point of no return, it was reported that the Government was on the verge of adopting rules that can be only described as draconian. It was said that all transport was to be banned, even the meagre one bushel of paddy or sixteen measures of rice; that the farmers themselves could retain only 10 bushels of rice or 20 bushels of paddy for their own consumption; and that the transport or sale of paddy by unauthorised persons would be totally banned.

The *Sun* of Thursday, February 14, in a report on the front page set out the gist of the emergency regulations which had been contemplated. This is what the report stated:

"Police and other law enforcement agencies of the Government will now be empowered to confiscate any quantity of rice or paddy transported without a valid permit. They will also be empowered to confiscate rice or paddy sold by unauthorised persons. Government has laid down that paddy cultivators can now retain only a maximum of ten bushels of rice or 20 bushels of paddy each for their own needs. They will be required to surrender all stocks in excess of these quantities to the Paddy Marketing Board under the Guaranteed Price Scheme. New Emergency (Paddy Marketing) Regulations were expected to be gazetted at midnight banning the transport of rice or paddy. In future the transport from one area to another of any quantity of these two commodities will be allowed only on a permit. These conditions, it is learnt, will apply even to paddy cultivators.

"The only exception, however will be in the case of rice issued to consumers on the ration. According to authoritative sources,

no permit will be required to transport these quantities since consumers will be able to prove through their ration books that they were drawn from a co-operative society or an authorised distributor. The same sources said that the sale of rice at outlets, other than those lawfully permitted, will be strictly prohibited. Only co-operative societies and distributors authorised by the Food Commissioner will be permitted to deal in rice, and that too on the ration. Permits for the transport of paddy or rice will be issued by the Chairman of the Paddy Marketing Board or his authorised officers who include DRO's in all parts of the country. These new Regulations will bring to a close the existing rule of allowing the transport of one bushel of paddy or 32 pounds (16 measures) of rice by any person.

"These tough measures are being adopted so that the Paddy Marketing Board may procure as much locally grown rice as possible. The PMB is said to have encountered difficulties in securing adequate quantities of paddy and hence its stock position is reported to be at a very low level. The adoption of these measures, it is claimed, will enable the PMB to provide sufficient rice to the Food Commissioner's Department for distribution on the ration in March and thereafter. Stringent penalties are to be imposed on unauthorised persons detected selling or transporting paddy or rice. Vehicles used in unauthorised transport will be liable for confiscation while persons involved will face a jail term and a fine or both."

The *Sun* of Saturday, February 16, re-iterated the same story with a little emphasis on the fact that all preparations had been made ready to enforce the Regulations. In a frontpage story under the headline BARRIERS UP FOR BAN ON TRANSPORT OF RICE—TOUGH NEW REGULATIONS TO BE GAZETTED TONIGHT, the *Sun* reported as follows: "Government yesterday began setting up barriers and checkpoints at district boundaries and other areas to prevent the illicit transport of paddy and rice. Police also began checking vehicles particularly those in and around paddy producing areas, to ensure no organised attempts are made by unscrupulous elements

to move out large stocks of paddy or rice. Checks were conducted at many points in the Southern, Central, North Central and Western Provinces yesterday. These measures were a prelude to the enforcement of new Emergency (Paddy Marketing) Regulations due to be gazetted at midnight today.

"Although it was originally planned to gazette the regulations earlier this week, it was delayed as certain technical matters had to be attended to. As exclusively reported in the *Sun* of February 14, the new regulations impose a ban on the transport of any quantity of paddy or rice from one area to another without a permit and prohibit the sale of paddy or rice by "unauthorised" persons. The decision to impose a total ban on the transport or sale of paddy and rice was made by the Government on Wednesday. Authoritative sources yesterday confirmed that the regulations had been framed, and dismissed as 'nonsense' reports in another newspaper that no decision had yet been made.

In terms of this decision, cultivators will be able to retain only a maximum of 10 bushels of rice or 20 bushels of paddy each for their own needs. They will be required to surrender all stocks in excess of these quantities to the Paddy Marketing Board under the guaranteed price scheme. The Co-ordinating Secretariat in the Prime Minister's Office, which is spearheading efforts to ensure that the PMB collects maximum quantities of paddy, is expected to send out detailed reports to the District Political Authorities on the ban.

"According to new regulations, even paddy cultivators will be required to obtain a permit if they wish to transport paddy or rice from one area to another. The only exception in regard to rice transport will be the rice issued to consumers on the ration. In this instance consumers will be required to prove, through their ration books, that the rice was drawn from a co-operative society or an authorised distributor. Only co-operative societies and authorised distributors appointed by the Food Commissioner will be permitted to deal in rice, and that too on the ration. Those dealing in rice without authority will be liable for arrest and prosecution,

bесides their stocks being confiscated."

But, for some reason, the Regulations were not gazetted on Saturday night, but an announcement was made that people in Colombo and its immediate suburbs would get an extra half measure from Monday, February 13.

THESE REGULATIONS will naturally tend to upset the rural community. It seems clear that the Government, or the most influential sections which can get things done, in their anxiety to keep the urban and trade-unionised section of the population happy is unmindful of the sentiments and aspirations of what is best described as the rural community. Under this government, the urban community has had the best of both worlds, so far, and now when some farmers, or most farmers, are in a position to make a little more money than they have ever done before, the Government comes down heavily on them under the smoke-screen of curbing middlemen and black marketeers.

The real culprits whom the Government should deal with are the bureaucrats who have bungled right down the line. In this connection the two articles which had appeared in the *Ceylon Daily News* of February 11 and 12 entitled *A suggestion On Rice and Currency and New Incentives To The Paddy Farmer* merit the most serious consideration. At least, Mr. G. V. S. de Silva is deeply conscious of the fact that the farmer is now at the wrong end of the stick and that unless some basic re-thinking is done in regard to governmental relations with him, the country will find it difficult to solve its food problem. This is what he says: "According to official statistics we produce enough paddy to give every person in the country at least a measure of rice a week. The snag, however, seems to be that every effort made by the Government to purchase an adequate quantity of paddy for equitable distribution has been frustrated by the operation of the open market for paddy and rice. Any solution to this problem, therefore, must necessarily be in terms of some form of Government action which the private middle man would find rather difficult to counter. A mere increase in the Government's purchase price of paddy

from Rs. 25 to Rs. 30 or even Rs. 40 per bushel does not meet this requirement. On the other hand, compelling the farmer, either directly or indirectly to deliver his paddy to the Government is too harsh a measure even to be contemplated particularly as it will be directed against an already exploited rural community."

Mr. G. V. S. de Silva makes a concrete suggestion based on what has been done to induce gemmers in this country to sell their gems to a state corporation and not those who smuggle the goods out of the country. What Mr. de Silva suggests has also been done in many socialist countries as an incentive to particular sections of the community which had to contribute something special to the nation's larder. "A fruitful approach to this problem seems to be on the lines of what is presently being done in respect of gems. The payment for gems partly in convertible rupees appears to have succeeded in diverting a fair quantity of these precious stones to the State Gem Corporation. There are undoubtedly many administrative difficulties in the way of operating a similar scheme for paddy particularly because of the multitude of small and scattered transactions that take place in the purchase of that commodity. An even more valid objection could be that a convertible rupee account in a bank may probably not have the same glamour for the simple farmer as it does for the more cosmopolitan gemmer. However even if the convertible rupee account scheme is not quite the answer to the paddy purchasing problem, the solution may well lie in a somewhat parallel direction.

"The essence of the convertible rupee account scheme is the creation of what is virtually a new currency more valuable than the rupee. The value of a currency depends on what could be bought with it. The convertible rupee is valued because it is for many purposes, freely convertible into foreign currencies, and hence could buy a wider range of goods and services than the rupee. Another example of this type of national currency differentiation is found in Socialist countries where workers are given token cards or coupons with which they could buy certain utility commodities cheaper than

in the open market. In this case the currency of that country when taken in conjunction with the token card or coupon constitutes virtually a different currency which is more valuable than the normal currency in relation to specific commodities."

Mr. de Silva then amplified on his suggestion and points out that such incentives and hidden currency subsidies already existed in this country. "Or for that matter, in our own country the rupee in association with the rice ration book and the token card is a new currency that has a greater value than the rupee by itself in respect of particular commodities. Thus the convertible rupee account scheme is only one of the possible

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methods of currency differentiation within a country. If this scheme is not thought suitable for a commodity like paddy another more satisfactory method could be found, provided we were to first decide that some form of internal currency differentiation is necessary to solve the paddy purchasing problem of the Government and even the larger food problem of the country. In this context, the term 'internal currency differentiation' means the simultaneous usage of two (or more) currencies within a country. The new currency could either be the old one in association with special bank accounts, ration books, token cards or coupons or it could be entirely different currency altogether."

SUCH INCENTIVES no doubt will, at least temporarily, tend to create a "privileged" class of

### Stretching the Fuel

London,

The National Institute of Agricultural Engineering estimates that farmers can "stretch their diesel fuel by up to 15 per cent and have issued a series of tips to help them do so. Mr. John Matthews head of the tractor and cultivation division, says that they can be summed up as "good maintenance allied to intelligent use of the right implement, the right ballast, the right gear and the right governor setting for the job." Checking the air and fuel systems are the main points to watch with tractor maintenance. Trials at the Institute have shown that the fitting of new injectors and servicing the air cleaner can reap a 15 per cent reduction in fuel consumption.

While using the tractor—for ploughing, for example—wheel slip can be reduced by keeping tyre pressures at the lowest levels recommended by the manufacturers. Wheel-slip can also be cut by the addition of ballast to the wheels or front end. It can also be cut by reducing the width of the implement by removing a tine. And the use of as high a gear as possible will also save fuel—and get the job done faster, says Mr. Matthews.

person, but there has been no society in history in which there are no "privileged" persons. The slave owner, the capitalist and the landlord have held sway at different times in different countries. The worker and the peasant have in more recent times become privileged persons, but it has more often been the worker (and not the peasant) and the personnel of the party of professional politicians who have been supreme. At the moment, the economic and food situation being what it is in this country, it has become essential to offer certain privileges to the farming community. "The possessor of the new currency becomes a privileged person who is entitled to buy commodities that are not available for purchase with the normal currency, or to buy a specified range of goods at a cheaper price. In concrete terms it means that the farmer who sells his paddy to the Government would be paid in a new currency which would give him the privilege of buying his agricultural implements, fertilizer and other inputs, textiles, processed food and drinks, bicycles, radios, watches, umbrellas, torches, batteries etc. at special prices. In other words, with the new currency which the Government offers the paddy farmer is sharply differentiated, in terms of the privileged prices at which he could buy his requisites, from the normal rupee currently offered by the private middleman.

"It is clear that the solution to the paddy purchasing problem of the Government does not lie in increasing the rupee price of paddy, for in such a price competition the private middle man could always outbid the Government. Nor is the escalation of rupee prices a solution to the bigger problem of providing an adequate incentive to the paddy farmer, since the higher price he gets for his paddy would be soon eroded by the higher prices he has to pay for his requirements. If we are serious about our intention of subsidising the paddy farmer, then it must be done in a realistic and meaningful way. What matters is not the price of paddy but the purchasing power of the farmer. His purchasing power must be increased and protected against the pressure of rising prices. The method of doing this is to pay him in a new currency which

will entitle him to buy his requirements at special prices."

Then Mr. G. V. S. de Silva goes on to discuss the mechanics of the manner in which the special privileges should be extended to the paddy farmer. "What should be the form of the new currency? It could either take the form of a ration card to be used along with the rupee, or it could be a totally different currency altogether. The ration card system is rather cumbersome and rigid in that it is intended to confine the privilege to a particular person. A different currency, on the other hand, is more flexible and extends the privilege to any person who is in possession of that currency. It thus makes the privilege a legally marketable one and consequently a more valuable one. Both methods have their advantages and disadvantages, but on balance the latter is preferable in view of the administrative difficulties and bureaucratic ineptitude that would thwart the implementation of a ration card scheme."

Mr. Silva is also deeply conscious of the ineptitude of the bureaucracy in this island and he displays great anxiety to evolve a scheme which will keep the bureaucrats at bay.

His concrete suggestion is for the creation of a special rupee which he calls *masurama*. In Russia, the special rouble which can buy imported hard-to-get goods at non-blackmarket prices is called colloquially the "golden rouble" and its relationship of the normal rouble is fixed on certain principles. It is something similar to this that Mr. Silva has suggested for Sri Lanka at this juncture of its economic development. "A different currency—let us call it the "Masurama" for convenience—should then be given to the farmer in exchange for his paddy when he sells it to the Government. The masurama prices of paddy and of the commodities that farmers buy would have to be determined. To do this we must first decide by what proportion the farmer's purchasing power should be increased. Let us assume for the purpose of illustration that it should be increased by 50 per cent i.e. that with a bushel of paddy a farmer should be able to buy 1½ times the quantity of goods that

he can buy now. For example, with paddy at Rs. 25 per bushel and cloth at, say, Rs. 5 per yard, he can buy 5 yards of cloth today with one bushel of paddy. We wish to increase this buying power by 50 per cent—i.e. to enable him to buy not 5 yards but  $7\frac{1}{2}$  yards of cloth with one bushel of paddy. We could do so by fixing the price of paddy at M 15 per bushel and of cloth at M 2 per yard. We could also achieve the same result with paddy at M 30 per bushel and cloth at M 4 per yard. Let us take another example, say bicycles. Today, 24 bushels of paddy are required to buy a bicycle priced at, say, Rs. 600. If the farmer's purchasing power is to rise by 50 per cent, the price of a bicycle should be such that he could buy one in exchange for only 16 bushels of paddy. Hence, if the price of paddy is fixed at M 15 per bushel the price of a bicycle should be M 240, and if paddy is priced at M 30 per bushel a bicycle should be sold for M 480. These examples demonstrate what has been said earlier, what matters is not the absolute price of paddy but the purchasing power of the farmer which depends on the relative prices of paddy and of other commodities."

AFTER GOING into some details about how the masurama rupee will operate in actual market transactions he sums up the conclusions in the following way. "The value of any currency ultimately depends on its commodity backing. The real value of the masurama too will be determined not merely by the arbitrary exchange rate that we choose to fix, but primarily by the ready availability of goods to be bought with it. Hence the village masurama shops (we already have a parallel in the special tourist shops) at which goods, at masurama prices are available for purchase exclusively with the masuram currency should be adequately stocked with a wide range of urban goods required by the farmers. To ensure this and also that these shops are well managed should be one of the main responsibilities of the Paddy Marketing Board. Some of the goods needed to support the value of the masurama will have to be imported. The foreign exchange necessary for this could come out of the savings on rice imports for distribution through the rationing scheme."

**There is no doubt that this suggestion will offend the susceptibilities of many who have so far placed the bureaucrat and the trade unionised urban worker at the apex of the economic pyramid in this country, but unless there is major rethinking on this subject, it will be extremely difficult, if not impossible, for this country to pull itself out of the present mess of economic stagnation.**

Mr. de Silva then puts forward the ideological content on which he has based his suggestion and it must be said that there is a great deal to be said for shifting the emphasis from industrial development to large-scale and intensive agricultural development. "It is time that we discarded the dogma that any saving of foreign exchange arising from reduced food imports should be channelled into industrial development. Surely, all-round rural economic development has a higher priority than narrow urban industrial development, and one of the essential pre-conditions of such rural economic development is a reversal of the terms of trade (i.e. the price relationships) between rural and urban commodities in favour of the rural economy. The strengthening of the value of the masurama by backing it with imported goods is thus an integral part of the development process."

In concluding his second article, Mr. de Silva apologetically explains that he has only set out a brief outline and not a blue print, but his suggestion does not need a blueprint if the top bureaucrats and top planners in this country realise the desirability of up-grading the rural community and intensifying agricultural development. "In this brief outline many questions are bound to have been left unanswered (some, probably not even thought of). This is only a suggestion and not a complete blue-print of a scheme with all the loose ends tied up. It is intended to stimulate some new thinking on the old problem of changing the rural-urban terms of trade in favour of the former. The suggestion made here is based on the view that if such a reversal is to give any real and lasting benefit to the rural people, it should be done in a deflationary manner by reducing the prices of urban goods to them

and not through an inflationary increase of the prices of rural products which is the orthodox doctrine of the apostles of free enterprise."

Even if what Mr. G. V. S. de Silva has suggested is not accepted and acted upon immediately it is something which cannot be discarded altogether or dismissed lightly. There is no doubt that a major emphasis must be enforced in favour of the rural community, and in the mixed economy to which we are committed in the Five Year Plan, private capital and private enterprise have as important a role to play in agricultural development as public sector, state and co-operative undertakings.

Up to the time of writing these notes, the new Emergency Regulations on the Sale and Transport of Paddy and Rice have not been gazetted, but there is no doubt that they will be. The Regulations will usher in a new era in the relations between the United Front government, especially its SLFP component, and the rural countryside.

#### Britain Strikes Oil—Ashore

Following major oil finds in the north east of Britain, good quality oil has been struck on land in southern England. The British Gas Corporation's exploration company working with British Petroleum reports that oil has been found in an exploratory well drilled in Dorset, near the coast. The well has yielded small quantities of good quality, in a sandstone formation. After further tests the commercial potential of the strike can be assessed, but the Gas Corporation says quantities so far extracted are "promising" compared with other on-shore finds. Oil is already being produced in relatively small quantities by BP from two other sites in the same area. Although minute when measured against the vast reserves of oil now being discovered in the North Sea, the latest on the shore find is attractive to prospectors because it can be recovered so easily. High quality oil is the most difficult of all to find.

## INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

BY ARIEL

\* The Unexpected  
Everywhere---U. K., U. S. A., INDIA,  
RUSSIA, CHINA

THE UNEXPECTED continues to add a bizarre note to the already weird pattern of events that are taking place in every part of the world today. Every day new and unbelievable developments make the Watergate cum Nixon affair more and more complicated as well as exciting. The much-publicised Energy and Oil Conference of the major oil consuming countries, which had met in Washington from February 11, had concluded with the tame decision to set up a Co-ordinating Committee to prepare for a Conference of both producers and consumers. But one major country had struck a discordant note. France was opposed to any "institutionalised" follow-up which might irritate or provoke the producers and exporters of oil. But all other ECM countries had followed the US lead.

In Britain, the fast tempo of electioneering for the General Election on Feb. 28 is hotting up with the odds in favour of the Conservatives whose panic measures to put the trade unions into the dock is likely to swing the British electorate away from the Labour Party—in spite of the many mistakes committed by the Heath government. In India, Mrs. Gandhi is faced with many serious problems, and the events in Gujerat have come as an eye-opener to many old Congress stalwarts who had taken the people for granted. In addition to internal problems which seem almost insoluble, the Indian PM is worried about two other matters: the expansion of the naval and air force facilities on the island of Diego Garcia by the USA and the UK, and the Summit of Islamic Powers which has been convened by Pakistan at

Lahore. Both, it is felt by New Delhi, is directed at the dominating position attained by India after the Bangladesh war not only in South Asia but also in the Third World of Non-Aligned Powers. Big Powers, which had looked with suspicion and apprehension at the enhancement of power by what they describe as the Indo-Soviet bloc, seem to be supporting not only the build-up on Diego Garcia but also the Islamic Summit at Lahore. Mrs. Gandhi has also pointed out that India has nearly a hundred million Muslims, but that India had not been invited to participate in the Conference. Whilst Sri Lanka has taken a firm stand against the expansion of the base facilities at Diego Garcia, Colombo has so far not expressed any views on the Lahore summit. The protests from India and Sri Lanka, and even Indonesia about Diego Garcia were not unexpected, but the position taken up by Australia and New Zealand reveals a new orientation among countries which have so far been closely allied to the Anglo-US bloc.

BUT TO THE DISCERNING OBSERVER of international affairs the current developments in the Soviet Union, on the one hand, and China, on the other, merit serious attention. It will be recalled that Solzhenitsyn's *The Gulag Archipelago* had created furore in the western world and a storm in the ruling circles of the Communist Party inside the USSR. Only the Russian and German versions of this book (about repression during the Stalin regime) have so far appeared and the English translation is expected to reach the book shops only in May or June. With what has happened now to Solzhenitsyn the book will no doubt be a best seller.

In the days of Krushchev exposures of the repressive measures adopted by Stalin were welcomed even by the Soviet Party hierarchy, but much water has flowed by the Kremlin since the days of Krushchev. Now, the Soviet Union is making every effort to create a new image of itself as a peace-loving democratic country with high norms of "socialist legality", especially under the benign leadership of Brezhnev "influencing" leaders of all countries and "making friends" with people everywhere. At a time

like this, Solzhenitsyn's book strikes a most discordant note in the Soviet propaganda campaign especially when the sins of Stalin are being quietly but effectively forgotten in the new way domestic history is being looked at in the USSR. In recent months there was very strong official criticism of Solzhenitsyn in the Soviet Union. He was denounced as a traitor for having smuggled his book out of the country to be published abroad.

But such denouncements were not evidently considered enough, because a small group of dissident intellectuals led by scientist Sakharov had gone to the defence of Solzhenitsyn, who was later arrested, but to everybody's surprise was exiled and has not been imprisoned or otherwise dealt with. There is, therefore, a major change from the days of the Stalin era when a dissident intellectual like Solzhenitsyn would have been dealt with much more severely. But, the socialist regime in the USSR continues to believe that "the enemies of the state" must be isolated from society, but there are many well-wishers of the socialist system who disagree with this proposition.

THOUGH THERE has been much that has been written about the repression in Russia in the days of Stalin and even after that, very little has been written about the prison camps in China. But a book was recently published entitled *Prisoner of Mao* which is the story of seven years in a Chinese prison by one Bao Ruo-Wang whose western name is Jean Pasqualini. When he was released on September 13, 1964, he wrote: "I am on my way to France, my homeland even though I had never set foot there. I was leaving behind an entire culture into which I was born, every friend in the world, a wife who had had to divorce me for her own sake, and two sons whom I shall probably never see again. But I learned about Lao Gai."

Lao Gai means Reform Through Labour—"or less elegantly, a term in a labor camp." Bao Ruo-Wang, half-French, half-Chinese, was a citizen of France but a native of China. He had worked for the U.S. Marines and a western embassy before and after the Communist take-over. Arrested in 1957, he

was charged with counter-revolutionary activities and sentenced to twelve years in a labor camp. His release came five years early when France established diplomatic relations with China. Today, he lives in Paris, where he works as a teacher of Chinese and Newsweek's office librarian. His book has drawn attention in many western circles.

The Newsweek, 21/1/74, after giving a few more details about the book stated that "even in Paris Pasqualini remains a careful observer of China. He predicts a cultural revolution soon and finds Westerners naive about China's international diplomatic intentions. 'The Americans hope the younger Chinese generation will want to work for peace,' he says. 'Not so. The Chinese will try to attain what they have always aimed at—being the top nation of the world'."

Pasqualini is not alone in anticipating a new cultural revolution. Western magazines like the *Economist*, *Time* and the *Newsweek*, and the *Hongkong Weekly*, *Far Eastern Economic Review*, all seem to think that the "hard line" which had been adopted at the Tenth Congress has begun to manifest itself in many ways and that another cultural revolution will soon become top news. There has been one long and sustained attack on the philosophy of Confucius. Lin Pao's thinking and strategy has been compared to the "reactionary and counter revolutionary" techniques of Confucius. There has more recently been attacks on western music, especially composers like Beethoven, Mozart and Bach as representatives of decadent art. Observers read into these polemical attacks the currents and undercurrents of faction fighting among various groups "in the ruling hierarchy of the Chinese Communist Party and the Government. The recent reshuffle of military leaders is also taken as part of this struggle. Discovering factions is a popular pastime of observers of international affairs in regard to any country, but in regard to China at the moment this game is at a premium because there is a curtain of silence and ignorance which nobody seems able to pierce, and the official news handouts from Peking and the Hsinhua despatches about official statements or editorials of party journals are

not of much value to a foreign observer.

IN THEORY, Mao believes in "upheavals" from time to time to keep the true flame of revolution going and also in order to keep the bureaucrats on their toes. The Tenth Congress of the Chinese Communist Party confirmed and re-iterated all the dogmas of Mao and the fairly radical leftwing group which has emerged into power makes many observers to think that another cultural revolution is around the corner. It has been noted that the Congress summed up the internal problems of China as the necessity to "continue the revolution". Chou En-lai characterised the very thought of the need to develop production as "an absurd revisionist theory", and summed it all up "as collected from the garbage bin of old revisionists." What was stressed with approval in the economic report was the Mao directives called the "policy of three banners" which had culminated in the Great Leap Forward of 1958. It was also mentioned that the Great Leap Forward had floundered "due to subversion and hindrances on the part of the revisionist line of Liu Shao-chi progress was slowed down." At the Tenth Congress both Chou En-lai and Wang Hung-wen had stressed that the "struggle of the two lines will be repeated ten, twenty, thirty times". From this the inference has been drawn that the Tenth Congress had sanctioned a series of new "cultural revolutions."

Another thing that stands out forcefully from the Tenth Congress was the confirmation of the line that China's main enemy was Russia, and that the main objective was to destroy the Russian revisionists and social imperialists, and that it was only after this was achieved China would turn to destroy the conventional imperialists. To achieve this objective China will seek to mobilise the third world of poor and developing nations which are expected, objectively speaking, to fight all kinds of oppression and exploitation.

The international policy which stems from the Tenth Congress is deeply rooted in the domestic confrontations within China itself. In a despatch from Peking on February 7, Hsinhua reported that:

"Today's Peoples' Daily reprints an article, "Lin Piao and doctrines of Confucius and Mencius", from the current issue of the Journal Red Flag (1974, no. 2).

"Written by the Mass Criticism Group of Peking University and Tsinghua University, the excerpts of the article read as follows:

"The vigorous current struggle to criticize Confucius is a component part of the criticism of Lin Piao, and is precisely a battle to pull up the roots of Lin Piao's counter-revolutionary revisionist line. Lin Piao and company resorted to these for restoring capitalism politically, tampering ideologically with the party's theoretical basis, mustering ranks of counter revolutionaries organizationally by recruiting deserters and renegades for a die-hard clique, tactically playing counter revolutionary double-dealing tricks and hatching schemes and plots. Once Lin Piao's disguise was stripped away and his thinking laid bare before us, he proved to be an out-and-out disciple of Confucius...."

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## CHRONICLE

# Feb. 5 – 13

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

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 5:** Education Minister, Dr. Badi-ud-din Mahmud, yesterday held out an assurance that all 3,500 students who qualified for medicine engineering and science courses in the university this year will be found room in the campuses: the Minister described as "most unreasonable", the position taken by the university authorities to admit only 1,000 of those who qualified. The Minister of Foreign and Internal Trade, Mr. T. B. Illangarante, said that there won't be an immediate price increase in the essentials and there will not be a shortage of commodities despite price hikes in the world market. The Methodist Church in Australia has voted 5,000 Australian dollars out of a million dollar fund to assist developing countries, for a seed project in Sri Lanka. The 'Satyakriya' organised by the Kandy-Senkadagala Bhikku Front takes place tomorrow at Kandy. Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, Leader of the Opposition, yesterday warned the police and the army officials not to be a party to any illegal acts against the people: if they do so he said, he would not hesitate to have them court-martialled on Galle Face Green when the UNP came back to power. Opposition moves to protest against the bus and rail fare hikes, will be discussed at a meeting of the Joint Opposition on Thursday. Unemployment is one of the major problems facing the Government of Sri Lanka, says a World Bank review of Sri Lanka for 1973. Several Trade Unions have demanded a pay rise following the bus and rail fares increase. Ronald Biggs, described as the 'great train robber' of England and who evaded arrest for nearly ten years, after he escaped jail, has been captured in Brazil. The Palestinian Liberation Movement officially dissociated itself from three guerrillas who on Saturday seized a Greek ship in Karachi and threatened to blow it up unless Greece released two guerrillas under sentence of death.

**WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 6:** The Minister of Foreign and Internal Trade has ordered a full scale inquiry into the cooperative textile fraud involving several thousands of yards of textile: the Minister said that no mercy will be shown on those who are found guilty and stern action will be taken. According to the *Sun*, thousands of Bhikkus performed *Satyakriya* near the Dalada Maligawa, Kandy yesterday: the *Daily News* said that a police headcount at 9 am yesterday morning indicated only 348 Buddhist monks and five Roman Catholic priests were performing *Satyakriya*. All sales of paddy to the Paddy Marketing Board will entitle farmers to exemption from income tax. Mr. Anura Bandaranaike, Chief Organiser of the SLFP Youth League, will visit Jaffna today on a goodwill mission to urge for unity between Sinhalese and Tamils of this country. Nearly 450 tons of kerosene oil valued at Rs. 3 1/2 lakhs were found to have leaked out of one of the large pipes from the Petroleum Corporation's

installation at Kolonnawa. The Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike, will today ceremonially hand over the historic Mahamaluwa to the Maligawa. Australian Prime Minister, Gough Whitlam, arrived in Burma yesterday for a three-day official visit. The Indonesian army has denied "rumours" that three of Indonesia's leading generals had been arrested following the anti-Japanese riots in Jakarta last month.

**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 7:** The Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike, will inaugurate drilling on the first oil test well in Pesalai today. The Prime Minister deplored the conduct of a certain section of the Maha Sangha who had staged the *Satyakriya* the previous day opposite the temple of the Sacred Tooth Relic. The Paddy Marketing Board's stores are virtually empty because of the failure of farmers to sell paddy to the Board. Chinese fisheries experts will arrive in Sri Lanka shortly to advise the Government on the implementation of a crash programme to develop inland fisheries. Sentences are due to be passed by the CJC (Exchange Frauds) tomorrow on the six suspects, who have been found guilty in the first exchange fraud case. A price increase of 60 per cent has been imposed on all products of the Steel Corporation, with effect from February 1. The Indian Supreme Court has ruled that Kachchativu belongs to India: this came about when a man fined by the Indian customs for smuggling appealed to the Supreme Court on the grounds that taking goods to or bringing goods from Kachchativu did not amount to smuggling as this tiny islet belonged to India. The Japanese Government accepted a demand by the guerrillas who seized its Embassy in Kuwait to provide a plane to fly four guerrillas in Singapore to the Gulf state: Kuwait government officials have said that Kuwait will not allow a landing by a Japanese Airliner bringing commandos and their hostages from Singapore in return for release of Japanese diplomats held hostage in Kuwait. The United States and Britain have agreed in principle to expand anchorage, airfield and other facilities on the British Island of Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean.

**FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 8:** The Prime Minister Mrs. Bandaranaike, inaugurating the first oil test well at Pesalai yesterday said that the country could save Rs. 600 million in exchange if oil could be found in the northern province. The People's Republic of China will supply 160,000 tons of rice to Sri Lanka under the bilateral trade agreement signed between the two countries. The Government's food subsidy bill which was originally estimated at around Rs. 1,583 million, may now go up by at least another 50 per cent. The Tamil United Front has decided that a group of youth should fast on February 9 in Jaffna as a mark of protest against alleged illegal acts by the police on the final day of the Tamil Conference. A motion of no-confidence on the Minister of Transport, Mr. Leslie Goonewardene, is to be moved in the National State Assembly, by the Joint Opposition. MPs representing paddy producing areas are to be asked to urge the farmers in their areas to sell the produce to the Paddy Marketing Board. Sri Lanka and India, the world's two largest tea producers and exporters, are expected to make a joint effort to obtain better prices for tea. British Prime Minister, Mr. Edward Heath, set February 28 for a general election in Britain and asked the coalminers' union to postpone their threatened strike for the three week duration



of the campaign. The American House of Representatives overwhelmingly voted to give its Judiciary Committee Power to subpoena President Nixon as part of its impeachment investigation. U.S. Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger, warned that the U.S. might consider it as blackmail if the Arabs maintained their oil embargo against the United States.

**SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 9:** Sri Lanka's chances of obtaining a standby loan of 24½ million Special Drawing Rights are considered excellent by official circles after the conclusion of discussions between the IMF team now in Sri Lanka and Government officials: the IMF team has also been examining Sri Lanka's claim for 5.9 million SDRs under the compensatory Financing Scheme. Discussions over the present rice crisis which have arisen mainly as a result of inadequate stocks being supplied to the Paddy Marketing Board by producers and a delay in the arrival of shipments, are due over the weekend. "When the Government was compelled to cut down not only luxuries but also essential commodities due to lack of foreign exchange, the imposition of a fine on persons found guilty of exchange control offences would be totally inadequate", Mr. E. D. Wickremanayake, Deputy Solicitor-General, told the Criminal Justice Commission (Exchange Frauds) yesterday. 107 more suspects were released by the C.J.C. (April insurgency) on suspended sentences of two years of rigorous imprisonment. In her first official visit to the Mannar district on Thursday the Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, thanked the farmers for doubling their efforts in response to the Government's food production war. President Nixon has ordered his special Watergate legal adviser, Mr. James St. Clair, to meet the Congressional impeachment inquiry panel. The Skylab astronauts splashed down in the Pacific on Friday after a record 85 days in man's first orbiting space laboratory.

**SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 10:** To cash a cheque at a bank one may soon be required to allow his thumb impressions be taken in addition to signing the cheque: Police are contemplating this method to prevent the alarming increase in cheque frauds and forgeries. Commuters held up a train at Nugegoda yesterday by lying on the tracks and placing logs: this the commuters did in protest to the frequent train delays. The CWE, from yesterday, took over the sole distribution of most products of the Sri Lanka Ceramics Corporation. Mr. Vernon Mendis, Director General of Foreign Affairs, will be Sri Lanka's new High Commissioner in Canada succeeding Mr. P. H. William Silva. The Mayor of Colombo, Mr. M. H. M. Fowzie, will ask the big industrial companies and hotels to have their own independent water system for non-domestic purposes by sinking wells. The Land Reform Commission has distributed 10,000 acres of land in the Ratnapura district alone. Three big trade unions of the United Front have posed the question as to what happened to the Charter of Workers' Rights prepared by a committee appointed by the Government and which was completed nearly one-and-a-half years ago: the draft bill promised by the Government in the election manifesto was to be placed before the National State Assembly in October 1973. Britain's coalminers spurned an appeal from Prime Minister Edward Heath for an election truce and decided to push ahead with a nation-wide strike. India has expressed deep concern to Britain and the United States over plans to expand

anchorage and airport facilities on the British Island of Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean. Six Arab gunmen released their hostages after holding the Japanese in Kuwait for two days and drove to the airport accompanied by Kuwait Government Ministers.

**MONDAY, FEBRUARY 11:** Sri Lanka is pressing for quick and concerted action by natural rubber producing countries to make the most of the current fuel crisis: the Minister of Plantation Industry, Dr. Colvin R. de Silva, said that he had called for a Ministerial Conference of the Association of Natural Rubber Producing Countries as soon as possible. Sri Lanka stands to benefit to the tune of £ 8,248,000 on this year's Sino-Sri Lanka barter agreement which was negotiated in Peking last December. The Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike, gifted the youth of Attanagalla with 50 acres of land which belonged to her: this land is to be used for farming. A five member Soviet parliamentary delegation arrived in Sri Lanka yesterday for a seven-day stay at the invitation of the Sri Lanka Inter-Parliamentary Union. Yesterday was observed as a day of mourning throughout the Northern Province—to pay homage to those who died on January 10 at the IATR Conference. New emergency regulations imposing a total ban on the transport of rice from one area to another, will be introduced this week: under these regulations no rice could be transported even by a farmer without a permit. British coalminers began their pay strike yesterday while the politicians began the election campaign. President Anwar Sadat of Egypt will visit India this month and he is expected to have discussions with Premier Indira Gandhi on Middle East and energy crisis. A 70-year old Yogi voluntarily stopped his heart beat for more than five days during a medical investigation in New Delhi, the doctors who examined the Yogi reported the work in the latest issue of the Indian Journal of Medical Research; they said that it is the first study to confirm the fantastic claim of Yogis that they can actually stop their hearts.

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 12:** The Advisory Board of Governors of the University meet today to decide the future of the 2,000-odd students who have qualified to enter the science faculties but are shut out due to lack of facilities. Two committees on energy—one to evolve an energy policy and another to study the present and future energy demands—have been appointed by the Government. A full-scale discussion on the Opposition Leader Mr. J. R. Jayewardene's allegation of a plot to "destroy the sovereignty of the

For News Behind The News

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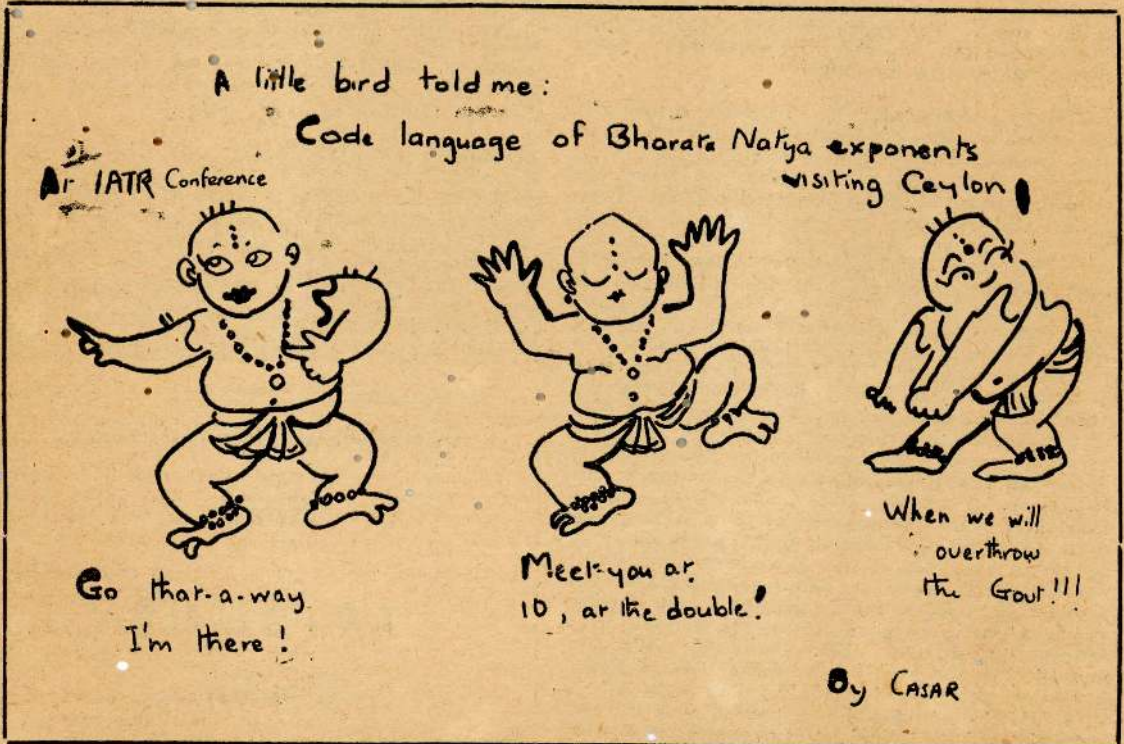
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TRIBUNE, February 23, 1974

people" is expected in the National State Assembly in early March; the Joint Opposition Group in Parliament has given notice of a motion for this purpose. The Medical Students' Union has come out strongly against Government proposals aimed at dissuading medical officers from leaving the country. In January this year the Paddy Marketing Board has collected only 30,000 bushels of paddy from the Maha harvest; in the past the Board has collected the average of at least 300,000 bushels a month during the harvest seasons. Sri Lanka is now faced with the task of finding an additional Rs. 1,500 million in foreign exchange during this year to finance bare essential imports, including food stuffs, crude oil and other industrial raw materials. The entire amount of £ 57,842 which was taken out of the country has been brought back to Sri Lanka; this was told at the CJC (Exchange Frauds) trials yesterday. A two-day conference of major oil-consuming countries was formally opened in Washington behind closed doors by Secretary of State, Dr. Henry Kissinger. Syrian and Israeli forces clashed in renewed artillery duels on the Golan Heights. British Prime Minister, Mr. Edward Heath, warned Britons that they faced tough times ahead in which a strong government was essential to take the measures that would be necessary.

**WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 13:** Stringent regulations, it is believed, will be enforced starting this week to prevent paddy being channelled into the hands of unauthorised traders and private individuals. The

Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, has protested to President Nixon and the British Prime Minister Mr. Edward Heath, on the agreement announced between the U.S. and Britain to expand facilities in the island of Diego Garcia situated in the Indian Ocean. The University's Advisory Board of Governors decided yesterday morning to inform the Minister of Education that it would not be feasible to admit an additional 2000 odd students to the science faculties this year. Two committees—one to draft the program and policy and the other to draw up a new constitution of the Party—were set up by the Working Committee of the U.N.P. According to a World Bank study, presented to the board of directors of the Bank last month, for a group of 14 developing countries including Sri Lanka, the oil bill will rise from 2.3 billion American dollars in 1970 to 5.2 billion dollars in 1973, and to 10.5 billion dollars in 1975 and 26.6 billion dollars in 1980. According to the *Sun*, relief in the form of a salary increase is expected to be granted to public servants and employees of State Corporations and Statutory boards from next month. The first-ever petroleum conference of thirty-one African nations ended in Tripoli with a call for the creation of an African Petroleum Organisation. Australia has criticised the Anglo-American decision to expand the naval facilities in the Diego Garcia island on the Indian Ocean: Soviet Union and New Zealand too have opposed this move. Author Alexander Solzhenitsyn was detained in his Moscow home by police to be taken away for questioning.



PICKING POCKETS

## For Pleasure Or Profit?

by CANAX

PICKING POCKETS, according to leading members of that nimble-fingered fraternity, does not pay. If you're inclined to put that aside as being no different from what most businessmen say all the time or all businessmen say most of the time, let me add that police intelligence, for what it is worth, confirms the lament.

I hate taking sides and, to follow my natural inclination, would neither accept nor reject that conclusion. Something tells me those 'leading' members lamenting about hard times are all males. And my own intelligence, which is a darn side better than what the police can come up with, suggests that anything a man can—or can't—do, a woman can do better. And thereby hangs a tale.

I know a female who has been picking pockets for years now and who has no complaints whatsoever. Having known each other a long time, we tend to be quite free with each other. At least as far as talking about picking pockets goes, in case you're wondering. So in case you were, you can stop right there and read on.

The secret appears to be to not make it a full-time job, as most males seem to be doing. When kept as a side-line picking pockets can be, from what she tells me, an enormously enlightening, lucrative and almost undemanding occupation.

I have never picked a pocket in my life except my very own, and while that may have proved enlightening quite often, it certainly hasn't proved worthwhile, let alone lucrative. Even enlightening seems too extravagant a word to describe the mere discovery that my pockets were invariably empty.

But let me give you her view<sup>s</sup> though I don't necessarily subscribe to them. Contrary to my own experience, there's job-satisfaction

all the way, I understand, and when done part-time it is also devoid of the dangers normally associated with full-time involvement.

WHAT IS important, according to her, is to not treat the matter too seriously, or as a chore. "It's all in the mind," she explained "and one must regard it as one would a game, though I don't particularly recommend our politician's approach."

She also has a fail-safe formula which she described thus: "You must never make the mistake of thinking big in this business."

"Oh, you mean, little things go a long way?" I asked.

"Precisely," she replied. "Just like the monkey said. No offense meant, of course."

"Guess it all adds up," I agreed "A buck a day keeps the dough moving your way, huh?"

"With your temperament," she said admiringly, "you'd be king in this game."

"If picking pockets is your side-line," I asked, "What is your main-line?"

"I'm a housewife, really," she sighed, adding, "God knows we need our share of kicks to keep us going."

"I suppose you meet with stiff competition from other part-timers?"

"Not the way I get about it," she confided.

"That's interesting. What, by the way, is your area of operation?"

She pointed at her feet. "Right here."

"You mean your own home?"

"Can you think of any place safer?" she demanded. I had to admit I couldn't, but was puzzled all the same.

"I thought you need crowds to work successfully, but this place has very little traffic."

She giggled. "I'm talking amateur and you're talking professional!"

"Whose pocket do you pick, anyway?"

"My husband's."

"Only?"

SHE NODDED "Live-and-let-live that's my policy, and I play fair by other women by letting them 'pick' their own husbands. My husband is good enough for me."

"But there can't be much from just one source," I cried.

"I'm happy," she said convincingly. "You go increasing turnover these days and, who knows NM may come chasing behind for BTT. So not for me the dynamic expansion that big business is always talking about."

"What I mean is, there isn't much profit the way you operate," I pointed out.

"Profit isn't everything," she said. "You mustn't forget the pleasure principle."

"I always thought there was no pleasure without profit."

She shook her head. "You're confusing it with what the monkey said."

"Huh?"

"No pleasure without pain, if I remember right."

Funny, I thought, that we should be falling back so often on what that primate supposedly said in discussing monkey business.

"Forgive me for asking, but where is the pleasure?"

"Where else?" she asked archly. "You can't imagine the enlightenment a pocket provides."

I LOOKED blankly and she smiled a knowing smile. "The reason men are never short of stories to tell is because they carry quite a few in their pockets, mostly untold, like the visit to the Taprobane bar which I thought was a visit to the boss' house on business."

"What made you think so?"

"Well, he told me so, though the bar bill told another story."

"Men are such fine chaps," I remarked. "They go to such lengths to protect their womenfolk from the ugly truth."

"They certainly take risks beyond the call of duty," she agreed.

"So do you in picking his pocket, which makes you a very brave girl indeed."

"It takes two to pull a marriage through life," she mused, "and

I feel it's unfair to expect only one partner to pull the fast ones all the time."

That's the spirit ideal marriages are made of. "Keep it up and you can't go far wrong," I counselled.

"Tell me," she asked as the thought struck her, "doesn't your wife pick your pocket?"

"Not that I know of."

"Good," she remarked grinning appreciatively. "Your missus is obviously an experienced hand at the game."

I had no reason to doubt that judgement, but somehow I wanted confirmation at source. So when I got home the first thing I asked as I walked past the front door was

"Do you pick my pocket?"

"When?" she wanted to know.

"Never mind," I said relieved, and changed the subject. At least I know my marriage was safe, even if my pocket wasn't.

### 39 Millions dead in World Wars

A new U.N. study estimates that about 54 million persons died in military service in the wars between the year 1600 and the end of World War II. But the 78-page book, "The world population situation in 1970," concludes that wars, famines and epidemics together have slowed down population growth by only about 10 years. Quoting a Soviet author, it says that from 1600 to 1945, about 4 million military personnel died of natural causes and 50 millions in battle or from wounds, diseases, accidents or other war-induced causes. Of the 54 million persons 30 millions died in World War II, between 1939 and 1945, an average of 11.1 military deaths a year for every 1,000 total population. The second highest number, 9.1 millions, died in World War I, between 1914 and 1918—5.3 military deaths a year for every 1,000 population.

# INANIA *Of This, That and The Other*

## Extraordinary Ordinary

By INNA

I had a most interesting interview last week.

A christian gentleman accosted his pastor in front of me and pointed out some things from an earlier *Inania* and then showed this: *Trent, Sessio XIII, de ref. cap...* which shortened form they could not explain. I however, understood that it was from the 16th century Catholic Council of Trent. The bone of contention of these two persons was this: "Are there only one type of Ordinary or two types? Is there or are there? (From what I have studied in books pertaining to the subject, there are Ordinaries (bishops) and other Ordinaries.

The text handed was significant:

"Bishops and other Ordinaries should remember that they are shepherds and not slave-drivers, and that they so rule over their subjects as not to domineer over them but to love them as sons and brothers. They should endeavour by exhortation and admonition to deter them from wrong doing lest they be obliged to administer due punishment after faults have been committed. Yet, if through human frailty their subjects do wrong they must observe the precept of the Apostle, and reprove, entreat, rebuke them in all patience and doctrine; for sympathy is often more effective for coercion than severity, exhortation better than threats of punishment, kindness better than insistence on authority" (Trent, Session XIII, p. 808. B. and Ellis)

What a mine of information!

What a code of active goodness in a world dying of hatred, in a power drunk world choking with 'authority'! That the christian organisations could have kept this spirit is praiseworthy and truly remarkable. If only you would ask

the subjects involved they would tell you the whole truth of how they have never been treated as slaves, and of how some truly try to treat subjects as brothers, friends, except when in frantic fear, but who doesn't live in fear, even now and again?

It is very human to live in fear: the thief fears in each bush a police officer. If anxiety and worry stalked other men as they do certain leaders, we would all have become neurotics. This kind of healthy subject-subject relationship (and not subject-object!) relationship makes for good feeling and a sense of brotherhood more than of sonship or childhood.

We hope the rest of the world could copy such traits from the books of old even if it cannot have the patience to copy them directly from the people concerned. They are no paragons, however. The Order father who handed me an old copy (it was really old!) of the Denzinger book hardly realised that my eyes would fall on a strange text as I perused the book.

"In AD 1302... Furthermore, We declare, say and define, and pronounce that it is a matter of absolute necessity for salvation, for every human creature, to submit to the Roman Pontiff" (So said Pope Boniface VIII) *Denzinger, Enchiridion Symbol. ed. 29, Herder, Friburg in Brisg., n. 469)*

This shows that men can be drunk with power and it can go to the head like heady wine. *It was not the Pope in him, but the man in him that said all this, and we must be human in our judgements.*

Boniface annulled all the acts of his predecessor and confined him for safe keeping until death. *The "divine" jurisdiction over kings!*

## A SHORT STORY

## LOAF OF BREAD

by SAYA

Somapala stood at the corner of the street picking his teeth, leaning on a wall. One foot was propped against the wall and one could see from his stance that he was utterly forlorn. People were rushing around hither and thither, busy about their own work, not casting a second glance in the direction of a man standing alone in a tattered sarong and a shirt which had seen better days.

As he stood amongst the thronging mass of people, Somapala's heart was like a lump of lead. There didn't seem to be a way out of his predicament. He had exhausted all avenues of finding a remedy. Since the day the factory he worked in had folded up, he had walked himself weary trying to find another job. The clothes on his back had become rags and the little money he and his wife had saved up had dwindled into nothing. Now there was a constant gnawing in his stomach and he was up to his neck in debt. No one was willing to lend him any more money. In fact he was ashamed to face any of his friends because he owed money all around.

The sun was relentlessly beating down on his head and he felt faint. What he could not bear to think about was his son Sunil's plaintive appeal as he left the house this morning. "Father, please bring some bread at least today. I am so hungry."

It must have been at least three days since his wife and son had anything to eat. The few small pieces of jewellery his wife had, had been pawned and now Somapala was at the end of his wits.

As he stood there in despair his friend Piyadasa approached. He too was in the same boat, having lost his job at the same time but one could say Somapala was in a slightly better position because he had only one child, while Piyadasa had four.

"Any luck today friend?"

"No, none at all", Piyadasa came and squatted in utter dejection on

some steps near where Somapala stood.

After chatting desultorily for few minutes, the two friends began walking together down the road. The whole afternoon they wandered through the city streets without success.

"You know Somapala, I really think we should take up Wijayaratne Aiya's suggestion seriously. To hell with honesty, where has it led us? It doesn't pay to be honest in today's world."

By this time it was night and they had reached one of the big hotels where another of their friends Gunapala, luckier than they, had found a job as a car park attendant.

"Hello you two, how are things going?" Gunapala greeted them.

"Can't you see, just by looking at us?" demanded Piyadasa.

The three of them stood there talking, looking at the opulent cars of the affluent parked all around them.

"Looking at these who would think there are the likes of us standing here without a scrap for days while they gorge to their hearts' content? Everyone talks of socialism and welfare. No doubt they are big words, grand sounding words, but I bet the very people who profess them do not themselves know their meaning. It's all very well for these people to ask us to grow our own food but can a man who has not an inch of land grow anything?"

As they were talking, a brand new, gleaming white Benz rolled up. The man who emerged from it was dressed in a white sarong and a brown coat. At least four dazzling rings glittered on his fingers. He was followed by his wife in a garish red and gold saree and festooned in jewellery from head to foot. It was obvious that they were of the *nouveau riche* of society.

"Do you know who that is?" asked Gunapala.

"It is David Mudalali. He was just a poor man like you and I a couple of years ago. He took to gem smuggling and look at him now."

"Indeed, did I not tell you just a little while ago Somapala that it doesn't pay to be honest these days?"

Somapala had a great deal to think about that day as he tread his weary way home. He hated to go back and see the hope die in his son's eyes and the misery written on his wife's face. As he saw the lights and signs of the eating houses in the city he spat out the words in utter disgust. "They are eating while we are starving."

Being at the end of his tether Somapala came to a decision that night.

Two days later there was an item in the newspapers which stated that one of the bakeries in the suburbs had been burgled and the thieves had got away not only with bread, but money and other items as well. That very same day in the early hours of the morning Sunil came running out of the house on seeing his father across the street.

He was overjoyed to see his father after an absence of a couple of days. There was a sudden screech of brakes, shouts from passers-by and a heart rending wail from Sunil as he called out to his father. There was utter silence and everything was still for a minute. Sunil's cries fell on deaf ears. Near Somapala's inert form lay a loaf of bread slowly soaking in blood. And in his pocket was a wad of notes.

## Alcoholism

Excessive use of alcohol is becoming an increasingly serious problem in the United States, the *U.S. News and World Report* writes. According to statistics, there now are some 9 million alcoholics in the country, 30 per cent of them women and young people. Addiction to alcohol annually causes losses running to roughly \$ 15,000 million, \$ 10,000 million of this falling to the share of industry owing to absenteeism and the low productivity of heavy drinkers. U.S. government expenditures on combating alcoholism studying its causes and treating alcoholics have increased six-fold since 1970. Nevertheless, the journal says, the number of Americans consuming alcoholic drinks in large quantities is steadily increasing.

MAHA SIVARATHRI

# Thiruketheeswaram

-- historic wonder of Mantota --

by R. C. THAVARAJAH

Superintendent of Police,  
Yavuniya Division.

Come February 20th—

and all roads will lead to THIRUKETHEESWARAM, the Sivan Temple in Mantai off Mannar. With unflinching zeal, year after year this ancient Temple is thronged by thousands of devotees from all parts of Sri Lanka to observe *Maha Sivarathri* which the Government has declared as a Public Holiday.

Right through the night you will see the unending procession of women proudly carrying urns of the crystal clear water from the sacred Palavi Aru to anoint The SIVALINGAM which went underground and remained immersed in sand for four hundred years when the Portuguese wrought their rapacity on the Hindu Temples. The anointing of the Siva Lingam with the water from Palavi Aru is *Theetha Kaavady* which is reverent consecration in fulfilment of vows.

The men lift their voices in harmony in ecstatic devotional songs, their "humble penitence rising to the ear of Heaven." The rich and the poor mingle freely—in the unity of worship. The whole atmosphere is charged with a high "voltage" of religious fervour so strong "like a silver chain uniting Heaven and Earth, temporal and spiritual, God and Man together."

**ANCIENT HISTORY.** The name THIRUKETHEESWARAM connotes something very sacred in ancient Hindu scriptures. According to the most knowledgeable Hindu Temple architect and consultant, V. M. NARASHIMAN of Madras, there is an early Chola inscription of the Eleventh Century eulogising the glory of Thiruketheeswaram. He also maintains that the recent excavations made by the Sri Lanka Archaeological Department indicate very clearly that the Temple was in existence before the Seventh Century A.D. "THIRUKETHEESWARAM PATHIKAM", the soul-stirring songs of poetic excellence

of Saint Thirugnanasambandhamoorthy Nayanar who lived in the Seventh Century, provide convincing evidence that a "rich and holy Temple was in existence in the Port of Mantota in the city of THIRUKETHEESWARAM which is a centre of occult power because of its association with KETHU." The Pali *Dathavamsa* also testifies to the existence of a Brahmanical shrine at the site in ancient days.

The Late Sir Kanthiah Vaithianathan, who most indefatigably laboured with divine inspiration for the restoration of this Temple, in his succinct but scholarly "THIRUKETHEESWARAM PAPERS", refers to the great and good Port of MANTOTA (Mahathitha in Mahavamsa) as a haven for innumerable large ships, the city itself possessing several storeyed buildings and the land around it rich in cultivation of all sorts—orchards, flower gardens, fields, etc. The good Port of Mantota stood at the mouth of a great river, PALAVI, in which "mountainous waves kept rising and falling."

In the Southern bank of the river were built the piers and warehouses. The village still called VANKALAI ("Vankam"—ships and "KALAI"—collecting place or station) and, on the Northern bank, the Temple THIRUKETHEESWARAM, and administrative and rich residential buildings refer to the modern village names: MAALIGAI—THIDAL (High Ground of Palaces), PAPAMODAI (Area for Priests), KOVIL KULAM (The Tank feeding the Temple lands) etc. Thiruketheeswaram and Vankalai are nearly four miles apart as the crow flies, which shows the width and importance of the estuary of the river, PALAVI, as it was then.

Mr. B. J. Perera in his inestimable article entitled "The Foreign Trade and Commerce of Ancient Ceylon" in the *Ceylon Historical Journal* of January, 1952 states "Although Mahathitha is first mentioned in connection with the landing of Vijaya's second wife, there is no doubt that it was used as a Port by the Tamils long before the Aryan Settlement in Ceylon. The existence of the Temple of THIRUKETHEESWARAM the origin of which is not covered by any existing records is an indication of the antiquity of this Port."

Of immensely invigorating and lasting interest to the student of

archaeology, the numismatist, and the iconographer are "the ruins of Roman pottery, coins, and articles of foreign origin found here" which indisputably affirm that Mahathitha was "a great Port in the early centuries of the Christian era."

Other items of interest are a pottery-rimmed well, two stone-lined wells, forms of pottery from Rome, Arabia and China, beads of considerable variety, and a small ivory chariot drawn by four horses.

**SIGNIFICANCE OF THE MAHA-SIVARATHIRI FESTIVAL.** Apropos the history of THIRUKETHEESWARAM is the great significance of the *Mahasivarathiri* festival, associated with it the chief prerequisite of which is the strict observance of cleansing, fasting and maintaining the night long vigil. It is universally accepted that the worship of Shiva as the Supreme, the Absolute is the oldest and the most wide spread of all religions of antiquity.

The Puranas record the interesting story of a Vedda hunter who was forced to spend the night atop a tree as the dark and eerie shadows of the night had overtaken him before he could reach his humble home. In order to keep himself awake to prevent his falling off the tree with the very certain but bleak prospect of being eaten up by the wild animals which were on the prowl, he conceived a rather clever idea. He started plucking the leaves of the "Vilva" tree which he had climbed for his safety and dropped them one by one to the ground below.

Like an unrelenting iron vice, Fear gripped him. Tears which welled in his eyes rolled down to the ground below mingled with the "Vilva" leaves. It is said that "God planted fear in the Soul as truly as He planted Hope or Courage". Night passed with anguish wearily and, at break of dawn, he found to his amazement that the leaves and his tears had descended gently on the SIVA LINGAM at the foot of the tree. This act of his, symbolic of steadfast faith and humility, acquired the grace of an offering "ABISHEKAM" and is now commemorated as the Holy Vigil of *Sivarathiri*.

The *Sivapuranam* also speaks of the rivalry between the Gods

BRAHMA (The Creator) and VISHNU (The Preserver). God SHIVA, who assumed the form of a column of fire, intervened, settled the dispute and eventually enunciated that, for the purpose of attaining union with GOD, a devotee should detach himself from worldly pursuits and assiduously observe the strict rituals of abstinence from food, comfort and rest. The Vedda hunter, who inadvertently performed these observances attained "Moksha" in due time.

SPIRITUAL CENTRE. THIRUKETHEESWARAM, according to yogis who have gained tranquility through the practice of spiritual disciplines, is a "spiritual centre where GOWRI KETHESWARANATHAN bestows easy success to an aspirant in Kundalini Yoga. In Kundalini Yoga, the mysterious Kundalini is symbolized as a serpent lying dormant in the sacral plexus (Muladhara) in three and a half coils. When it is awakened, it ascends to SAHASRARA, the abode of Eternal Bliss where Shiva and Shakti are in communion."

Even to those who may not have reached the heights of meditative power or acquired the esoteric knowledge of advanced Religion and philosophy, Thiruketheeswaram offers the healing balm of a strange and wonderful serenity. The uncommon phenomena of the cobra which wanders about the precincts of the Temple but does not inflict its deadly venom even when it is accidentally trod on and the peacock which, at the sound of the Temple bell, takes up its perch atop the pinnacle and remains motionless right through the Vigil like a lone sentinel, are part of the mystic lure of the Temple.

As a true devotee lifts his pilgrim soul to the height of the Raja Gopuram taking his mind away from the din and bustle of the world to concentrate his attention on the Deity, he removes the senses away from the mundane morass to feel in the solemn recesses of his own heart "the only proper and adequate relief of decaying Man." He thus equips himself with the strength to bear the sorrows of Life to lessen even the pangs of DEATH."

\* \* \*

## JAPAN

# Its Current Foreign Policy

by

Dr. Neelam Thiruchelvam

*The following article is excerpted from a Foreign Affairs Commentary, broadcast over the Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation. Dr. Thiruchelvam is a Visiting Reader at the Sri Lanka Law College.*

JAPANESE ECONOMIC INTERESTS in South East Asia, suffered a setback during Prime Minister Tanaka's tour of five South East Asian capitals. Although the goodwill tour was designed to assuage local sentiments on the Japanese economic presence in the respective countries, it had an opposite effect.

In Thailand, thousands, of demonstrators rudely interrupted Mr. Tanaka's motorcade in a public protest against his visit. The demonstrations, however, assumed a more violent form in Indonesia, when several thousands of young Indonesians rampaged through the streets of Jakarta. Some of the complaints against the Japanese economic presence were somewhat bluntly spelled out by Thailand's student leaders who have now emerged as one of the nation's strongest political forces.

They complained bitterly that in the Japanese dominated economy, Thai labour had been ruthlessly exploited. They further bemoaned the pollution of air and water by wastes from Japanese owned factories and the social and cultural insularity of the overseas Japanese businessmen. Prime Minister Tanaka, disturbed by these events, pledged on his return to Tokyo to erase the causes of such discontent. He further undertook to improve the terms of Japanese foreign assistance and promised to curb the business practices of Japanese firms.

THE ENERGY CRISIS may have a staggering impact on the Japanese economy. Unlike most western nations, Japan must import all of its oil needs from abroad. 43 per cent of Japan's oil needs are met

by Arab nations and 41 per cent from Iran. A reduction in oil supplies could considerably slow down the pace of industrial production. Although Japan's newly appointed Finance Minister has projected a 2 to 3 per cent growth rate for 1974, less optimistic economists have forecast zero or even a minus growth rate.

Galloping inflation, and possible shortages in food and other vital commodities may compound the economic woes of Japan and compel a re-appraisal of Prime Minister Tanaka's ambitious program for remodelling Japan. Tanaka's program called for the re-distribution of population from the pollution-clogged industrial centres, to newly created provincial cities, and the construction of massive complexes of super highways and railroads to speed commercial traffic.

The promise of massive economic assistance to Iraq, Kuwait and Egypt in lieu of oil concessions would also leave little surplus for developmental aid in South East Asia.

Japan's failure to come to grips with the reality of South East Asian concern over her economic expansion, and her delayed efforts to cope with the oil crisis are both related to an adherence to an outmoded foreign policy. This policy, growing out of fears and apprehensions which followed the Korean War, was based on a special relationship between Japan and the United States.

This relationship euphemistically referred to as the 'Tokyo—Washington Partnership' was symbolized by the U.S. Japanese Security Treaty. This Treaty for almost two decades defined Japan's relation with the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China and determined Japan's status in the regional power structure. There are a number of factors which have changed the foundations of this approach.

Firstly the very basis of U.S. Japanese special relationship (i.e. a common policy towards China) suffered a serious setback as a result of independent U. S. efforts, to normalize relationships with Peoples' Republic of China. Secondly protectionist trade restrictions against Japan became the source of bitter controversy and tension

between the two nations. *Thirdly*, high administration sources in Washington made it known that a conceptual change had taken place as to the meaning and effect of the U.S.-Japanese Treaty. The Treaty was no longer viewed as an instrument to protect Japan from possible external threats, but to police and contain extreme trends in Japan's internal political developments. Harvard Professor and former Japanese Ambassador, Edwin Reischauer, publicly disclosed that the Treaty was being now viewed as a deterrent against the revival of Japanese militarism.

THESE EVENTS forced Japan to review its role in international power politics; and the delicate diplomatic negotiations with China highlighted the growing need for Japan to charter an independent foreign policy.

Prime Minister Tanaka alluded to such policy in December 1972 and described it as the posture of equal distance between the major world powers which impinge on Japan's destiny—the Soviet Union, the United States of America and China. Logically the commitment to a policy of equal distance should compel the repudiation of military alliance between Japan and one of the powers and which is presumably directed against the other two.

In fact, there is a substantial left-wing sentiment in Japan which favours such an approach. But the dominant view in the ruling Liberal Democratic Party was opposed to the repudiation of the Treaty. The United States also made it known that it was staunchly opposed to a termination of the military alliance. Even if one disregards the internal policy contradiction in Japanese diplomacy, it soon became clear that there is no simple conceptual formula which would enable Japan to re-negotiate its relationships with the major powers.

The doctrine of equal distance was more easily formulated than implemented. Tokyo made a major concession in an outstanding territorial dispute with Moscow to negotiate a joint venture for the exploitation of energy resources in Siberia, vital to Japanese industry. Tokyo has, however, been more cautious in its response to repeated Moscow overtures for an Asian Collective Security, fearing that such an arrangement may endanger its relationship with Peking. Despite such shortcomings, one could discern some moves to assume a diplomatic posture consistent with Japan's economic power and independent national interests.

More recently Japan sharply reversed its neutralist Middle East

policy to adopt a posture which was unequivocally pro-Arab. Such a move in almost direct defiance of American counsel to the contrary, probably represents an incipient step towards a more autonomous foreign policy.

THE FOCUS must then turn to the meeting of twelve oil consuming nations which opened in Washington last week. The Energy Conference summoned by President Nixon involves the members of the European Common Market, Canada, Norway and Japan. The Conference promised to work towards a far-reaching Economic Co-operation Program that will include the sharing of energy resources in an emergency. The American proposals also called for co-operation in restraining demand, in conserving energy and in furthering research. The proposals also urged the participants to consider intensifying economic and monetary policy co-operation to deal with the consequences of the crisis.

In the wake of warning by both Libya and Iran against a policy of confrontation between consumers and products, it remains to be seen whether the Conference could in fact, produce a common program, which would avoid such confrontation. The Conference could also serve as a critical crucible to test the viability of the deeply divided and battered Common Market. The Conference could also provide a testing ground of Japan's willingness and capability of adopting an independent posture on the energy crisis.

If the bilateral economic arrangements recently concluded by Japan with several Middle Eastern nations, is a pointer to Japanese thinking, it probably suggests increasing Japanese confidence in her ability to deal with the energy problem through independent diplomatic and economic initiative rather than through collective arrangements.

India

### PUBLIC SECTOR PROJECTS MAKE PROFITS

For the first time public sector projects made a net collective profit during 1972-73. According to provisional figures the profit was a little over Rs. 9 crore as against a loss of Rs. 14.42 crore in the preceding year. Indian Oil Company with Rs. 20 crore was the largest profit earning enterprise in the country. It was followed by Oil and Natural Gas Commission with Rs. 9.18 crore and Minerals and Metals Trading Corporation with Rs. 7.49 crore. Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd. and Heavy Electricals (India) Ltd. have together shown a profit of Rs. 14.7 crore.

A number of other enterprises have reduced their losses. The losses of Hindustan Steel dropped from Rs. 44.84 crore in 1971-72 to Rs. 27.76 crore in 1972-73. Similarly Mining and Allied Machinery Corporation Ltd. reduced its losses from Rs. 3.38 crore to Rs. 24 lakh. The bulk of losses of the public sector relate to 16 enterprises each losing over Rs. 50 lakh. Their total losses during 1972-73 amounted to Rs. 81.18 crore. Of these three, companies, namely, Hindustan Steel, Heavy Engineering Corporation and Neyveli Lingite Corporation accounted for as much as Rs. 54.94 crore, their individual losses being Rs. 27.76 crore, Rs. 14.54 crore and Rs. 12.64 crore respectively. Bokaro Steel which is still partly under construction suffered a loss of Rs. 5.45 crore.





SHAMBA

✻ Africa in Kala Oya

✻ Life in the Village

By

Anatory Bukoba

January 31,

There was a wedding in the village, the spouses Roman Catholic and Kaffir. That once solemnised, we repaired to the house, the groom and his bride walking along cloths spread out for them. They were greeted by all their relatives across the threshold of doorway before they entered, and then the rest of us paid our respects. The cake cut, and the guests fortified with it and a drink, the songs started. Kaffirs beating out a tune is not quite the same as others doing it. There is a kind of forceful wild energy about it. I wish I could describe the songs as they followed one another. I should have had to have taken notes at the time to remember it all. The oldest women danced, and all the world knows that Africans do know how to dance. Age and youth combined in the songs, and in beating out the rhythm with drums, cans, coconut shells, and benches or forms, and the singing got stronger and stronger as each new song was started.

Then one lanky boy dashed over and said, for heaven's sake start that gramophone, they are going to play—and he mentioned the name. However, the singers prevailed, and what a song it was, right from the heart of Darkest Africa, the Dark Continent, the mighty Congo and Ituri forest, the land of the Nile and the Great Lakes. The language was certainly not Portuguese, and the singers did not know the meaning of the words, and as the singing got stronger, a woman near her time started the dancing, and the world was on fire. The song was typical of Africa, rather of Africans, a forceful energy, controlled the straining of every nerve, the call of Africa until diamonds and gold ruined it. In the evening, at night, it was the turn of the village. The night was cold, and I did not stop.

Order is beginning to prevail again at the Shamba. The grass verge which lies above the house has been shorn again of its long grass, and also the lawn which lies below it, and most of the bank which lies between the two. I carried the clearing right close to where the old bridge lies, or rather, the remains of it. The result of the work done can be seen a long way off, as the last bit of the road which leads to the Shamba is a straight one. It is like a little bit of civilization where there is jungle. Anybody who comes now, who came here a week ago, would see the difference at once, much more remains to be done, and I wish I would be here more to do it. People have started bathing again in the river, and everybody who passed by today had either a friendly smile for me, or a friendly word.

Two of our children are gone now, the last to a family locally, and so the youngest is only left. There was fever in the house today. I bought three pounds of potatoes and we ate these boiled with raw red onion. It was not very tasty because enough salt had not been put into the pot, and I dislike using, what I call, kitchen salt uncooked, as it looks so dirty. There was no sugar or jaggery in the house, and I was able to insist that we have tea without it nonetheless.

Two of the original *murunga* I planted are showing signs of life, the others have not a leaf. The plantains I planted are just not growing at all. Near the house, the sweet potato which has been planted there is doing well, and also the bean near it, but this last looks like cowpea. All the work I did the last two days has been done with the *Vici Katha*. I saw three mammoties lying around today, but I have not a clue as to whose they are.

I have started teaching English at an old rice mill near here. Yesterday's lesson finished at 10/30 p.m., and today at 11 p.m. I was so tired yesterday, I nearly fell off my seat when I dozed off. I found myself equally tired tonight, and I am writing these notes tonight after an hour's rest on two planks a foot apart. Sleep I must have done because the time passed very quickly. The energy

of the men I teach is indefatigable, and it was I who called a halt both last night and today.

I am writing beside a fire. Everybody awake is complaining of the cold. Very cold it is indeed.

February 10,

No rain, and so the weed and the grass have not grown. The little patch of long grass that I had been unable to do ten days ago is still there, but the grass I cut has been gathered up. One small patch of sweet potato and bean by the house looks all right, and so do the pineapple tops. They may look all right, but there is no sign of a pineapple yet after all these months.

I have been here a year now. It seems like three months though much has happened.

An old inhabitant says it will not rain till the middle of February, so I have a month to do all the clearing that needs to be done. The proper crop to sow then in the Dry Zone is gingelly, but I would like to have sorghum as it seems to do so well on this particular land in spite of the monkeys. The land on the acre is very undulating and a man said today that the best of the topsoil has been washed away. The passion fruit is a creeper at last.

This is not a day for manual labour, so I hope to start tomorrow. Someone said he would join me in two days. Complete stranger he was, but I think I shall have to begin to trust strangers just as I did years ago.

Food seems slightly cheaper in some places, *Koli-kuttus* for fifteen cents, a thing unheard of for about six months, and some cooked food cheaper, too. I think the attitude of people has changed, too, much kinder about making money; but one *mudalali* charged me Rs. 2/20 for a packet of envelopes. They did not stick. I returned them and bought a packet with the identical trade mark for Rs. 1/50 elsewhere.

There has been a murder, by shooting. A friend says that wild boar has eaten all his rice crop and he wants to get a permit to keep a gun, and he has asked me to try help have it expedited.

IN SRI LANKA TODAY

## \* RICE SHORTAGE

— A random collection of cuttings and excerpts from  
the local Press reflecting the State of the Nation —

Our puppy on the *Shimba* does not seem to be growing. She always gives me a great welcome. She is tiny, but looks fed all right. The nights are as bitterly cold as days are almost unbearably hot. I have caught the beast of a cold. There is, they say, much malaria around.

Tomorrow is the calendar feast of our local church, Lourdes, but it will be celebrated next Sunday. There has been another marriage, but this one took place near Colombo.

February 11.

A heavy cold made me feel as if I just had no life in me. I did not try to do any work, and, after all, it was the local feast.

My neighbour has encroached on my acre in two places, cut and all ready to burn, it is. I went over to see him almost at once. His clearing will certainly make my task easier, more clearing will make it much easier for us both with the monkeys.

There is going to be trouble with the family. Both husband and wife want to go out to work, and there is even talk of their leaving here altogether. I was greeted with that tonight, but, coming to think of it I was forewarned about it two nights ago. Someone else told me, and as I did not like to think about it, I did not want to broach the subject with them. It will be bad for me if they do go.

Paddy has been reaped in the neighbourhood, and some have even started to thresh theirs. Much else, it looks like, will soon be ready for reaping. Much, too, has been lost for lack of rain.

A chena cultivator is making jaggery, and I bought a packet for Rs. 3. I am doing now what I have not done for a whole year, and that is eating rice and curry in a *kadday*, and it costs me Rs. 2/50, which I think is cheap at present prices. It is costing me much more than Rs. 5/- a day to live, and to think that three of us used to live on that amount soon after I came here! Well, all I can do now is to wait and see what tomorrow brings. I am sure it bears a close relation to what we are, and that only because of Divine Providence.

### Price of rice drops to Rs. 3.30

*Ambalangoda:* The price of rice here has dropped from Rs. 4.75 to Rs. 3.30. There is a possibility of price going down further, perhaps to Rs. 2.50 when more maha kenne paddy and more yams, jak and bread fruit come into the open market.

— *Ceylon Daily News*, 28/1/74

### Rice not sold to Govt. will be taxed

Rice which is not sold to the Government will be estimated at Rs. 45 per bushel and taxed on this basis, the Minister of Fisheries, Mr. George Rajapakse said yesterday at a meeting held at the Hakmana Maha Vidyalaya.

Mr. Rajapakse was accompanying the Minister of Agriculture and Lands Mr. Hector Kobbekaduwa who is on an inspection tour of the Ruhunu area making arrangements to purchase paddy by the Government from farmers.

Mr. Kobbekaduwa said it was a national obligation for farmers to sell their paddy to the Government. At a time when an economic war was being waged it was a gross anti national act to sell paddy to outside sources rather than the Government. He appealed to farmers to consider national interests and sell every grain of paddy to the Government.

He said that an "unseen imperialism" was working against the war waged for economic independence and it appeared to be emanating from big owners of paddy fields and landowners. The Government had on many occasions increased the price paid for paddy to farmers but on each occasion private racketeers had jacked up the price in competition.

Mr. George Rajapakse said that if farmers sold their paddy to the

Government two measures of rice could be given to the people during the Sinhala New Year.

Mr. Roy Rajapakse, MP for Hakmana, and the chairman of the Paddy Marketing Board, Mr. M. J. Perera, also spoke.

— *Ceylon Daily News*, 2/2/74.

### Sales of paddy to PMB exempt from income tax

All sales of paddy to the Paddy Marketing Board will entitle farmers to exemption from income tax. The Department of Inland Revenue is now taking steps to inform farmers of this through Government Agents and the tax regional offices.

Lists of farmers have been obtained from the Government Agents and the tax authorities will inform farmers that if they wish to obtain tax exemption they will have to produce receipts from the co-operative sales unions or the Paddy Marketing Board. Co-operative Unions buy on behalf of the Paddy Marketing Board.

Those farmers who do not sell their paddy to the PMB will be taxed according to their earnings. Under that provision of the Finance Act all sales to the PMB are exempt from tax.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Lands has already made arrangements to issue identity cards to farmers in order to facilitate the package credit system now being adopted through the medium of co-operative societies and Agricultural Service Centres.

The issue of an identity card which costs Rs. 5 has already begun in areas like Kurunegala, Colombo, Galle, Kandy and Matale and the scheme will cover the entire island.

— *Ceylon Daily News*, 6/2/74

## Rice Shortage

### PMB's Stores Virtually Empty Samba now Rs. 6

The Paddy Marketing Board's stores are virtually empty.

Faced with this crisis the Government is now considering ways to get farmers to sell their paddy to the Board to help meet the commitment of the Food Commissioner to distribute the half measure of rice on the ration.

One step in this direction is to completely ban the transport of even the 16 measures of rice from one district to another as is now allowed and compel the farmer to sell paddy only to the P.M.B.

Another measure is to get the co-operative societies to offer the farmer a market price for their paddy so that the farmers would be encouraged to sell the paddy to the co-operatives.

According to this proposal rice so purchased could be sold by the co-operatives to the consumer at a marginal profit.

The 'Daily Mirror' learns that while certain Government circles feel that there should be a complete ban on the transport of paddy yet others feel that such a step should not be adopted as it would result in the price of rice in the open market rising further besides discouraging the farmer.

Those advocating the complete ban on the transport of rice point out that unless such a compulsion is used the Paddy Marketing Board would not be able to secure the 25,000 tons of rice required to provide the present half measure of rice on the ration.

With the harvesting season in full swing mudalalis are busy offering the farmer to buy their paddy at well above the G.P.S. of Rs. 25. As a result the farmers have abandoned the P.M.B.

Those advocating the policy of purchasing at the market price point out that if the transport ban is enforced the price of rice in the open market would rise even above Rs. 10 a measure. Instead, they point out, the Co-ops could purchase them at the current market prices and sell them to the consumer keeping a small profit.

—Ceylon Daily Mirror, 7/2/74

### Maharagama,

The price of Samba rice has shot up to Rs. 6 a measure here while varieties of raw rice are available from Rs. 5 upwards.

A brisk trade is done by rice dealers who buy rice at a rice mill at Rs. 4.90 a measure mix a liberal quantity of small stones and sell it at the Janata Pola premises at Nugegoda at prices ranging from Rs. 5.50 to Rs. 6.50.

The price of chillies, coconut oil and coconut has also gone up.

—Times of Ceylon, 7/2/74

### Expected rice doesn't come in: Urgent talks

High priority talks to discuss the present rice crisis are due over the weekend. The crisis has arisen mainly as a result of inadequate stocks being supplied to the Paddy Marketing Board by producers and a delay in the arrival of shipments of rice expected from abroad. Important decisions concerning measures to be adopted to ensure a regular supply to the Food Commissioner for distribution on the ration are expected to be taken. For distribution on the ration at half measure per ration book holder the Food Commissioner requires 25,000 tons of rice per month from the Paddy Marketing Board. In recent months the PMB has been unable to meet this requirement.

Tax incentives have been offered under Emergency Regulations to any individual (not necessarily producers alone) who supplies paddy to the PMB. Still, it is reported, large scale illicit trafficking in rice takes place in all parts of the country, as a result of which adequate supplies for regular distribution to consumers have not been available. Now, measures are likely to be adopted to ensure that whatever rice is available will be distributed on a fair basis all round. The PMB purchases stocks at the guaranteed price of Rs. 25 per bushel. In paddy producing areas it is available off the field at Rs. 45 per bushel. The price of rice in the open market has also fluctuated. Rice is distributed on the ration to income taxpayers at Rs. 2 per measure. Off ration

PMB supplies cost from Rs. 2.20 to Rs. 2.50 per measure according to quality. In the open market the price of rice ranges from Rs. 5 per measure upwards in different areas and according to quality.

—Ceylon Daily News, 9/2/74

## A SOVIET VIEW

### POP - Creedence Clear Water & Shocking Blue

#### A Soviet View

The *Creedence Clearwater Revival* group came into existence in Berkeley, California, in 1959. At first it consisted of four high school students—John Fogerty (guitarist and singer), Tom Fogerty (guitarist and later bass guitar player), Stu Cook (pianist, guitarist and double bassoon player) and Doug Clifford (drummer)—and was called Blue Velvets. In 1964 after five years of playing at school dances, the group made their first recording for Fantasy under the name of Golliwogs. In 1967 they changed their name to Creedence Clearwater Revival and somewhat renewed their repertory, concentrating more on rock 'n' roll. Most of their songs became big hits ("Proud Mary", for instance). Later on they went in for country rock. The group fell apart two years ago, when Tom Fogerty left it for personal reasons.

Holland is a newcomer in the world of beat music but already has several interesting groups, including *Shocking Blue*. It was founded by guitarist Robby van Lauen. The other members are Klassje van der Wal (bass guitar player) and Cornelius van der Beek (drummer). Their works (mostly songs) are distinguished for their lyricism and excellent arrangement. The group owes its popularity chiefly to singer Mariska Veres. It specializes in modern rock 'n' roll. Its best-known records are "Lonesome Road," "Venus" and "Send Me a Postcard". *Shocking Blue* is one of Europe's leading groups in its field. Last summer it scored a big success at the Bratislava Lyre Festival.

Lyudmila GERASIMOVA.

TRIBUNE, February 23, 1974

# IS IT TRUE?

## Sherlock Holmes

### \* NEWSPAPERS

#### Paddy Regulation and Diego Garcia

IS IT NOT A FACT that many people have become reconciled to the new Emergency Regulations on the sale and transport of paddy because it had been expected for some time? That whilst other papers had been silent, the *Sun-Dawasa* group had been very insistent that the new Regulations with a draconian touch would be promulgated through a Gazette Extraordinary? That as a matter of record this measure was first anticipated in the Sunday Observer of February 10? That the *Sun* had given more details about what the Regulations contained and had believed that the Regulations would be gazetted at midnight of February 13? That this was indicated in its news story in the *Sun* of February 14? Then on February 16 the *Sun* had proclaimed that the Emergency Regulations would be gazetted at midnight on that day? That the *Sun* had also reported that barriers and other coercive measures had already been made ready in all parts of the country to enforce the new Regulations? That in spite of the *Sun* reports the new Regulations had not been gazetted even by the morning of Monday the 18th February? That on that evening, the Observer had a further report about the terrible punishment awaiting those who moved or sold rice without a permit and there was a hint that the Regulations were on the brink of promulgation? That finally the Regulations were in fact gazetted at midnight of February 18 and that the news became widely known on February 19? That an actual copy of the Gazette has not yet come to hand and that it would not be possible to discuss the new Regulations in detail? That there is no doubt that there had been much hesitation and even greater thinking and re-thinking about these new Regulations in high circles than is

generally known? That there is no doubt that these new Regulations will make this Government be regarded as a totally pro-urban-population government, very unmindful of the needs and aspirations of the rural population? That people in the rural areas have already developed an inhibitory fear that the Government regards all those who seek to cultivate food crops like paddy as bad anti-social people who believe only in the unofficial open market which the Government describes as the blackmarket? That there is no doubt that the Government does not seem alive to the sentiments in the rural areas? That unless the Government took corrective measures the growing rumble in the rural areas will soon develop into a mighty volcanic explosion? That what is feared is that in all this it is the bureaucratic law enforcer who will reap the richest harvests?

IS IT NOT SIGNIFICANT that the *Ceylon Daily News* has not been building up the psychological background to present the new Regulations? That until the Regulations were gazetted there was hardly any mention of these draconian laws in the offing? That on the contrary, the *Daily News* did yeoman service in trying to impress upon the High Bureaucracy of Sri Lanka that governmental methods of paddy purchase should be radically changed if the PMB was to function effectively? That the *Daily News* even editorially pleaded for a new approach in paddy purchases? That this plea was based on a worthwhile suggestion which had been put forward in two articles by G. V. S. de Silva in the *Daily News* of February 11 and 12? That the Sunday Observer too had carried a series of articles on the bureau-

cratic red tape which had tied up the rural community in knots which could probably be untied only by a few who know the deft art of lubricating the correct cogs in the machinery which has been imposed from the top making life extremely difficult for the farmer? That the Observer on February 13 had published a plaintive plea from a reader begging the Government to make public the manner in which the PMB will make its purchases? That the details of the refraction test and the weight test should be made public over the SLBC? That if this were done the PMB would be able to function a little more acceptably (to the producers) than at present?

IS IT NOT A FACT that there has been talk in diplomatic and political circles about the manner in which the *Daily News* and the Observer handle different aspects of governmental news? That on February 13, the *Daily News* had a six-column main lead story about University "shut-outs" whilst the Prime Minister Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike's protest to Heath and Nixon about Diego Garcia only had a double column top left billing with half a dozen other stories on that page which also had double column headings? That the Observer that evening, February 13, had a six column banner spread for the PM's protest to Nixon and Heath with a fuller build-up with the editorial comments from the *Madras Hindu* on the same subject? That on many matters a discerning reader will detect many significant trends about the way in which the *Daily News* and the Observer present news—even news which has to be managed for the government machine and the Establishment? That owing to the manner in which journalism and the Fourth Estate have developed in Sri Lanka the "manufacture of news" by newspapers had ended with the fifties and early sixties? That in the latter half of the sixties news was still being "managed" news in more ways than one? That in the seventies, new and healthier trends have appeared in which the truth somehow gets out, but other difficulties like the shortage of newsprint have created fresh difficulties? That news will still be "managed"—with newspapers being what they are, but are readers not becoming more exacting?