

# TRIBUNE



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**SEVAKA SEVANA**

Senanayake Mawatte,  
BANDARAWELA.

# Letter From The Editor

THE PICTURE on the cover this week is a reminder that Wesak falls next week on Thursday and Friday, the thirteenth and the fourteenth of May. We do not propose to indulge in the customary exercise of writing about the significance of Wesak and the manner in which what is known as the Bandaranaike Revolution has restored the rightful place of Buddhism in this island. Much, (indeed too much), has already been written about this, and very much more will undoubtedly be written about it now and in the future. And, with the next General Elections very much round the corner, (early next year), a great deal will no doubt be heard about this revival of Buddhism in order to induce a large segment of our voters to think along certain sectarian lines. This is no doubt one of the many unfortunate consequences of the kind of parliamentary government we have acquired from the British and the West in which religion is mixed with politics to assist vested interests to win power and to retain it—until other vested interests are able to concoct other amalgams of religion and politics to oust them. This is, of course, nothing new in Sri Lanka, or anywhere else. From the beginning of the Buddhist era, religion (in the form of the maha sangha) has been dominant in the politics of the island. The Portuguese, Dutch and the British had tried out a new amalgam by coupling military power and force with different versions of the Christian religion to transform the island into becoming an outpost of the West—but after 450 years there was a total reversal of the tide and an aggressive, intolerant and sectarian Buddhism, unknown before the impact of christian evangelism and western colonialism, has imposed a new theocracy in the nominally secular Republic of Sri Lanka. When the tide will turn again—we hope that a more tolerant Buddhism will help to establish the true dharma of the Buddha in the island soon—we cannot say. History's zig zags are today more unpredictable than ever. But there is one thing we can predict: that unless we in Sri Lanka are able to overcome the current malady of excessive holidays we will continue to stagnate in the morass of under-production and under-development. This is a topic on which we have written a great deal in recent times, and one on which we cannot help writing often in the future also. We have pointed out that Sri Lanka has one of the highest incidence (if not the highest) of public holidays in the world. We now have only 200 to 212 working days in a year of 365 days. We have a five-day week: and this is a luxury we cannot afford. We have 12 full moon Poya Day holidays: and this too is a luxury even for the religious fanatics—there are hundreds of millions of Buddhists in the rest of the world who do not undermine national productive activity by enforcing such holidays on a national scale. We have an excessively large number of public and mercantile holidays to appease (in some small measure) the non-buddhist communities and denominations. We have such a plethora of holidays—that our economy is sick. And, there is no way the island's economy can get better except by exorcising this psychopathic mania for holidays. What makes matters worse is that the work force—administrative, technical, manual, skilled, unskilled and all the rest—squeeze their statutory, annual, casual and medical leave in between the governmental holidays and the two-day week-ends in such a way that there are long stretches where everything comes to a standstill in the island. We had a supreme example of this last month. From Friday April 9 all the way right up to Monday April 19 there was a virtual shut down of all activity—governmental and economic. And as this long bonanza of official holidays coincided with the school holidays, more leave-taking was extended both ways—before the 9th and after the 20th—with annual, casual and even medical, leave so that legalised absenteeism reached unheard heights this year. And nobody dares to raise a voice of protest about such long absences. Those who grab what amounts to de facto french leave (from the point of view of the national productive effort) have only to complain to the MP or the Political Authority that some officious (bless his heart) bureaucrat had sought to check such absenteeism for dire retribution to fall upon the head of the said (unthinking) bureaucrat who had thought of getting some work done. After this mid-April holidays, all work was shut down last weekend—from Friday April 30 to Monday, May 3: the excuse this time was May Day which is now the traditional occasion to flaunt the capacity of the different political parties to bring a crowd to Colombo—thanks to CTB buses and lorries (from the public and private sectors). But before the public can get over the ennui (pardon the French, but there is no better word to describe "mental weariness from lack of occupation or interest"—Concise Oxford) we will have Wesak when everything will again be shut down from May 13th to 17th.

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## EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

## May Day And After

THE GOVERNMENT, of the United Front of the SLFP-CP, smarting under the defeat the SLFP candidate had suffered at the Ja-ela by-election, had doubled their efforts to make the May Day rally last Saturday a massive show of strength. Even before the results of the Ja-ela by-election were known, the SLFP-CP united front had wanted to demonstrate that, on their own, (without LSSSP collaboration), they could mobilise a turnout on May Day which would conclusively show that the Government had not lost very much by the exit of the LSSP. The constituent partners of the JCTUO, who had earlier proclaimed that they would stay together, went their separate ways in this May Day Rally, each trade union federation and their affiliates going behind the Parties to which they were linked.

There was no doubt that the SLFP-CP procession last Saturday was the biggest of its kind in Colombo. The procession took something between seven to eight hours to pass a point. It was an impressive show. Over a thousand buses, it was alleged, were deployed to bring the SLFP supporters and sympathisers to town. One does not know the number of buses the other partner of the UF was permitted, but the guess was that it was around 200 to 300. The UNP, too seemed to have the buses they had asked for—and here the guess is that it was about 600. The LSSSP had grouses, it would appear, about the number of buses allotted to them, but if they were discriminated against this year it was only a case of being paid in the same coin they had handed out to others when the LSSSP was in total control of the CTB. Gossip in political circles is that over 200 buses of the CTB were utilised to bring the crowds to Colombo last Saturday. Street corner speculation, on the basis of buses available for public transport in Colombo and elsewhere for four days from April 30 to May 3, was that very nearly 3000 buses (practically the entirety of the CTB fleet in road worthy condition) had been utilised for this May Day exercise. Over-crowding

and damage to the buses were such that the CTB has not yet come back to normal).

The former Minister of Transport Mr. Leslie Goonewardene, had pointed out in his speech at the LSSSP rally that the SLFP had been given a 1000 buses at the rate of 50 cts a mile and that this would mean a loss of 15 lakhs to the CTB. It is well to remember that it was the LSSSP which had made a fine art of utilising buses to bring crowds for political demonstrations to Colombo and it was LSSSP administration that had hit upon the 50 cents a mile for such buses. However, there has been a laboured attempt in some quarters to say that the present administration of the CTB had insisted on collecting Rs. 2.25 a mile from organisers who had hired the buses. It is likely that information on this matter will only become available in the National State Assembly when MPs ask questions.

Apart from the charges levied by the CTB for the buses, there is even greater speculative curiosity as to the mechanics of this mass mobilisation. Many say that anyone willing to come to town for the Rally to swell the United Front procession was able to do so from any part of the country for just fifty cents one way. Whether it was from Kandy, Jaffna, or Amparai, a person had to pay only a flat 50 cents for the ride. (What the UNP, LSSSP or the MEP charged their supporters is not yet known, nor what charge was levied for a ride in a lorry). Some say that the participants were asked to fend for themselves so far as food was concerned, but it is admitted that some

organisations had paid the men and women who had flocked to their stanards (and buses or lorries) a subsistence allowance of Rs. 5 to 10 per day. The May Day Rally enthusiasts from Jaffna were said to have been given subsistence allowance for 2 days. Where all this money came from is nobody's business, but organisers assert that the monies had come from their funds. How these units collect these funds is another matter which need not concern anyone at this moment. But the question whether the CTB collected its dues in advance or whether credit was allowed to favoured organisations is not known.

Anyway, the present mechanics of organising May Day rallies and other demonstrations was first started by the UNP in its heyday. The SLFP, CP and the LSSSP have now improved on it immensely streamlining the strategic and psychological processes by which the total mobilisation is achieved. It is a moot question for a student of contemporary politics to find out as to how far these rallies reflect nationwide consensus or opinion. Will the crowds drawn to Colombo for the May Day tamasha (that is what it is) vote for the Party under whose banner they marched—at the time of the next General Elections? Or will the few thousand genuine loyalists and enthusiasts who had organised this mass mobilisation of a few lakhs to parade in Colombo last Saturday be able to influence the 4 or 5 million voters who will be called upon to cast their votes in the next General Elections? Last Saturday's May Day rally was probably the last before the

## MERCURY PESTICIDES BANNED IN U.S.

Washington,

In a sweeping move to safeguard man and the environment, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency chief Russell Train has ordered an immediate ban on production of virtually all pesticides containing mercury. Mr. Train cited cases of nervous system disorders caused by mercury poisoning in Japan, Iran and the United States as evidence that unchecked use of mercurial pesticides would pose an unreasonable health hazard. The new EPA order will halt production of all mercurial pesticides used as bactericides or fungicides in paints, varnishes and lacquers. It also puts an end to the use of such pesticides on turf, including golf course greens and other golf course areas, and in the treatment of seeds. "Economic, social and environmental costs and benefits of the continued use (of mercurial pesticides) are not sufficient to outweigh the risk to man or the environment," Mr. Train said.

## May Day

General Elections, and the Government no doubt believes that this massive turnout will wipe out the political humiliation suffered by the SLFP at the Ja-ela by-election and a number of other by-elections after 1972/73. Knowledgeable political observers are inclined to think that this is only wishful thinking which will not have any direct bearing on the outcome of the next Elections.

May Day speeches at the United Front really did not provide any surprises. The Prime Minister was in an exultant mood and had a bash at the UNP and the LSSP. He promised to march forward to socialism whatever the obstacle that stood in the way. All other speeches echoed similar sentiments. Only Mr. Ilangaratne took the opportunity to hint that some local organisers of the SLFP did not want an election in 1977 lest the UNP and the "fascists" crept back to power. This is an echo of the LSSP and ultra-left cry that the reactionaries and fascists should not be allowed to stage a come back through a general election. If Mr. Ilangaratne and his breed of politicians persist in repeating this no-elections-in-1977 slogan the credibility gap which now envelops the Government will soon overwhelm it. The Prime Minister has given several assurances that elections will be held by May 1977 at the latest, and Mr. Ilangaratne's remarks that some local SLFP organisers were opposed to elections in 1977 run counter to the Prime Minister's promise. Of course, Mr. Ilangaratne can have the customary excuse that the press had wrongly reported him, or at least that what he said was wrongly translated.

The United Front rally also took up the CP cry of fighting "fascism" with noisy enthusiasm although

the term "fascism" has little or no meaning in the political vocabulary of the mass of people (especially in the rural areas) in the country. Fascism is a concept which today lingers only in the memory of the intellectual elite and a few of the top trade union hierarchy, but it leaves even the mass of our youth and student population cold—except many of them shout such slogans devised by some elders, unthinking and parrot-like,

The laboured slogan about "fighting fascism" did not evoke the enthusiastic response from the SLFP-CP processionists as the spontaneous slogan that the DASA empire should be nationalised. (This is something about which the top leaders of the UF should give some thought—because the mounting hatred among the common people against gem mudalalis, CRA capitalists and the multitude of new Mercedes, Peugeot and other cars are enough to lever an avalanche that will cause a landslide at the next elections. It will be pointless having postmortems after the event—because warnings on this score have been uttered by many people favourably disposed to this government).

THE UNP PROCESSION and rally, only a wee bit smaller than the UF's, was also an impressive turnout. If the UF procession took 8 hours to pass a point, the UNP procession took a little over 7 hours. The Hyde Park was not as large as the Galle Face Green, but independent observers were amazed that the UNP was able to mobilise such a large crowd which overflowed into all the streets nearby. The UNP, moreover, did not have as many CTB buses as the UF, nor was the UNP able to collect supporters from Corporations, State Farms, Youth Farms and the like for the May Day picnic in the Colombo. It was also evident that the UNP seemed to have much greater support on a local basis from city of Colombo and its environs. The UNP procession was clear indication that the political fortunes of the UNP were on the upswing and that the in-fighting centred Rukman Senanayake had not undermined UNP morale and support. Mr. J. R. Jayewardene and other UNP speakers continued to plug the line that theirs was a new party of genuine socialism.

They were a little cocky about Ja-ela.

The LSSP Rally and procession was not big or spectacular, but it was well-organised. The speeches of the LSSP leaders were on a low key compared to the bombast they had indulged in some time ago. The miserable showing of the LSSP candidate at Ja-ela was passed off as a practical demonstration that SLFP-CP united front could not hope to defeat the UNP and that only a new socialist coalition, (led not by the LSSP), could overwhelm the force of reaction (the UNP) at the next elections. If the LSSP candidate had polled more than what he actually did at Ja-ela, then the politically-minded common man would have been inclined to pay serious attention to the LSSP thesis. The LSSP had boasted before the by-election that it had fielded the candidate to show that there was a growing awareness among the "masses" that they wanted a new socialist coalition. The by-election results showed that the voters of Ja-ela did not show any such awareness. Either the voters did not want such a new coalition or the LSSP misread the writing on the wall.

The May Day tamasha is now over, but very soon the Wesak tamasha and festivities will overtake this country. Then, with four or five days of holidays in hand (taking french leave is a matter of course with the backing of the MPs), picnic crowds will rush round the country visiting one temple after

### NEXT ISSUE

There will be no issue of the Tribune on Saturday, May 15, because the intervening holidays for Wesak on May 13 and 14 makes it technically impossible to produce a paper. The holidays for the Wesak will in fact extend from the afternoon of May 12 to the morning of May 17 and we think that it would be realistic to have our next issue on Saturday May 22, which though a holiday (being Republic Day) will not entail a shut down of all purposeful activity for four or five days.

### LETTERS

The Tribune welcomes letters from readers. Short letters have a better chance of being published. All letters are subject to condensation for space reasons. Anonymous letters will not be considered for publication. Writers may request that their letters be signed only with initials or a pseudonym but preference will be given to those fully signed and bearing the writer's complete address.

another. Whilst this holiday making goes on, two sections of the community have been given pay increases. The salaries of trained teachers have been standardised and they will receive equal pay—and this exercise will cost the country an extra 26 million rupees.

Policemen are also being paid more and it is not yet disclosed what this will cost the Government. These wage increases will set in motion a chain reaction of wage demands from other sections of wage-earners which the Government will find difficult to resist. Wage increases are no doubt welcome. But what must not be forgotten is that without appropriate and adequate increase in domestic production, such wage increases will trigger a new inflationary spiral. Fish which now costs around Rs. 6 a lb will shoot up to Rs. 10 a lb and so on and so forth.

It is well to remember that in controlled socialist economies, wage

increases are dependent on the increase of total production as well as individual productivity. Under free enterprise, the capitalist laws of supply and demand operate and labour too gets its due by hard bargaining in the rat race which makes the economy tick over with some degree of realistic workability.

But in Sri Lanka, we have neither a controlled or planned socialist economy or a ruthless free enterprise system (where everything ultimately finds its true level and measure). What we have is a mixed hotch-potch where discriminatory welfarism is the guiding factor in nearly all matters. Welfarism, and not anything else, has prompted the new projected wage increases for teachers and policemen. With production lagging behind demands wage increases will result in domestic inflation, may be a little slow at the start but which will soon develop into a devastating gallop.

If the wage increase announced this week is intended to prepare the ground for the next elections, there has been inept thinking some quarters. For even those who receive the wage increase will be soon buried under the new price increases of ordinary consumer articles—and government spokesmen (even editorials in the *Lake House* and *Times* papers) after Ja-ela have spoken about elections being won or lost in the kitchens.

The Government will not be able to import enough to win the next election. Nor can the country go on living on borrowed money—the new British Prime Minister Callaghan has even told the British public that. Welfarism (without adequate production) has undermined Britain's economy. Welfarism has all but shattered Ceylon's ethos as well as its economy.

## SRI LANKA CHRONICLE

# April 19 — April 24

A DIARY OF EVENTS IN SRI LANKA AND THE WORLD  
COMPILED FROM DAILY NEWSPAPERS  
PUBLISHED IN COLOMBO.

CDN—Ceylon Daily News; CDM—Ceylon Daily Mirror; CO—Ceylon Observer; TOCSL—Times of Ceylon Sunday Illustrated; DM—Dinamina; LD—Lankadipa; JD—Janadina; VK—Virakesari; ATH—Atha; SM—Silumina; SLD—Sri Lankadipa; JS—Janasathiya.

**MONDAY, APRIL 19:** Speaking at a SLFP meeting at Ragama yesterday the son of late Mr. Paris Perera, former UNP MP for Ja-ela, appealed to the voters of Ja-ela to vote for the SLFP candidate at the forthcoming by-election: Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike speaking at the same meeting said that she would definitely dissolve Parliament and hold general elections in May, 1977: she posed the question whether Mr. J. R. Jayewardene would lead the party even at the time of the next general elections—CDN. Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike, Minister of Finance and Justice, will soon introduce a bill in the NSA to control and regulate non-banking financial institutions in order to protect the interests of depositors—CDN. Following complaints from the general public and bakers the Food Department assured that it will issue better quality flour from today—CDM. The special committee appointed by the UNP to probe the Ward Place incident has called for evidence: the committee has appealed to send written memorandas to the Secretary of the committee—CDM. The Muslim Majlis of the University of Sri Lanka has appealed to the Prime Minister, Minister of Education and the Vice Chancellor, that Tamil too should be one of the media of instructions

in all the campuses of the University: the Majlis in its appeal further said this proposal if adopted would strengthen national unity in the country in future—VK. *Aththa* editorially requested the Government that the promised Worker's Charter should be made law at least before the next general elections: the paper further said though it has been said that the Workers' Charter would be introduced from May 1, indications were that it will not materialise even on this date. *Janadina* in an editorial said the distribution of Mahaweli waters in certain areas were in a mess: the paper said after the Mahaweli scheme came into operation certain lands which used to receive water from tanks have been deprived of this service: the editorial requested the Minister of Irrigation to probe into these matters and help the farmer to receive his share of the water without any hindrance owing to certain policies of bureaucrats.

**TUESDAY, APRIL 20:** *Daily News* quoted an official of the Tourist Board as saying that it was unfounded to say the prices of essential food and other consumer items would go up in price during the Non-aligned conference: the spokesman of the Tourist Board said that during the last December/January there were 8,565 tourists in the country in a single month and prices of items did not show any significant increase; he further said that there will be only 5000 visitors during the conference and no tourists will be allowed during the conference period and it was a false prediction to say that an egg would go up to Rs. 2/-: the Tourist Board dismissed these fears as "middle class panic"—CDN. Mr. V. Dharmalingam, MP for Uduvil, speaking on behalf of the TUF told the *Virakesari* that promises by certain senior Ministers of the Government that "the Government realised the problems of the Tamils and was determined to solve same and as such the Tamils should not voice separatist slogans", were all false: the MP said the Ministers were trying this

diplomatic tactic in view of the Non-aligned conference and with the hope of conducting the Conference without a section of the country asking for a separate state. Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, addressing a meeting at the Ja-ela by-election campaign yesterday said that a vote for the LSSP candidate will be a vote for the UNP: she further said the sole purpose of the LSSP in fielding a candidate in Ja-ela was not with the idea of winning but to defeat the SLFP—CDM. *Janadina* in an editorial referred to a speech by Mr. Anura Bandaranaike at Ja-ela where he said that the leader of the UNP, Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, requested him to contest the Kalawewa by-election and promised that the UNP will not field a candidate against Mr. Bandaranaike: the paper said this speech indicated that there could have been several secret pacts between the SLFP and the UNP and as such requested Mr. Anura Bandaranaike to reveal everything to the voters of Ja-ela. Mr. Maithripala Senanayake, Minister of Irrigation, Power and Highways, will leave for Mexico today to attend the Inter Parliamentary Union meeting—DM. Ministry of Finance commenced investigations into certain exchange transactions of the American IBM Company in the supply of punch cards and computers to state institutions—ATH.

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 21:** Mr. Rukman Senanayke, MP for Dedigama, in a statement to the press said that he was shocked and horrified to learn that UNPers going to the residence of Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, leader of the UNP, to hand over a petition were brutally assaulted by men of their own party: Mr. Senanayake also released to the press the text of a letter he wrote to Mr. J. R. Jayewardene on March 6: in this letter Mr. Senanayake has denied that he brought to the notice of the Minister of Justice the contents of an earlier letter he wrote to Mr. Jayewardene—CDN. Mr. George Rajapakse, Minister of Health, instructed the University to make arrangements to admit more students to the medical faculties in view of the dearth of doctors in the island—CDM. Today is the last day for holding meetings for the Ja-ela by-election—CDM. Ministry of Education received over 170,000 applications for 1400 vacancies for assistant teachers in Government schools: out of this over one lakh of applications have been rejected after a preliminary perusal—CDM. The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Planning decided on a crash program of providing employment for 25,000 youth during the next few months—ATH. According to the *Virakesari* Bangladesh will establish an Embassy in Sri Lanka before the August Non-aligned conference. At an identification parade held regarding the incident at the Galle Hospital recently where two medical officers were assaulted by a group of people, related to patient who died, 12 out of the 13 suspects were identified before a Magistrate—DM. Mr. J. Guruge, a gem merchant of Kahawatte, distributed Rs. 500,000 to the members of the public in currency notes of all denominations on the eve of the Hindu, Sinhala New Year: large crowds from all surrounding areas flocked at the residence of Mr. Guruge to avail themselves of the money—DM. Six possible successors including Mr. Shirley Amarasinghe of Sri Lanka have been named to the post of Secretary General of the United Nations when the five year term of Kurt Waldheim expires at the end of this year—CDM (Reuter).

**THURSDAY, APRIL 22:** Bank of Ceylon will soon start exporting gems and will utilise the foreign ex-

change (C.R.A.) acquired to import equipment to the bank's use: the Chairman of the Bank of Ceylon, Mr. G. B. Wickremanayake, has already left for London to arrange for the Bank's London branch to handle the necessary documentation for the sale of gems in Europe—CDN. Ja-ela which goes to poll tomorrow will have 61,023 eligible voters and this number is 9137 more than the last general elections held in the year 1970—LD. The Ministry of Trade decide to cancel the licences of several traders who were caught selling Salusala cloth at more than the controlled price during the Hindu, Sinhala New Year season—LD. A total of 20 out of the 26 suspects have been identified by the complaints and witnesses of the Galle doctors assault incident: the parade was held in two parts before a Magistrate—LD. The committee of Police officers appointed to probe the Ward Place incident handed over the report to the Attorney General: according to the *Aththa* several witnesses in their statements to the Police have told that the people who came from Dedigama were unarmed but the people who assaulted them were armed and prepared for an attack—ATH. The NSA will meet today and the MP for Dedigama, Mr. Rukman Senanayake, is expected to make a statement regarding the Ward Place incident—ATH. Dr. N. M. Perera, Leader of the LSSP, addressing a by-election meeting at Ragama said that during the insurgency of 1971 Mrs. Bandaranaike, Prime Minister, wanted to bring troops from America to quell the insurgency but as the leader of the LSSP and a constituent partner of the Government he opposed this move and thereby saved the lives of the youths: Dr. Perera also said that if not for the LSSP's timely intervention in this matter thousands of Sri Lanka youth would have been killed: he further said that at that time if the Premier had refused to heed to the LSSP he himself with the LSSP would have joined the youth—JD. Police seized a cassette recording of derogatory songs about SLFP leaders in Ja-ela where the by-election campaign ended yesterday: according to the *Daily Mirror* the tapes will be played before Government legal officers to decide what action should be taken.

**FRIDAY, APRIL 23:** The World Bank team which visited Sri Lanka recently advised the Aid Consortium Group which will meet on Tuesday to consider a program of assistance to Sri Lanka: that despite the adverse economic circumstances the country has faced, there had been a fairly satisfactory level of economic activity in the country—CDN. Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, told the NSA yesterday that at no stage of the April insurgency did she make a proposal, nor the thought enter her mind of obtaining foreign troops to deal with the situation: she referred to a speech by Dr. N. M. Perera, leader of the LSSP, at the Ja-ela by-election where he said the Prime Minister wanted to get down US troops to quell the insurgency activities: she further said that she was astonished that a person of Dr. Perera's standing can fabricate a story of this nature: Dr. Perera in his reply said that what he said at Ja-ela was hundred per cent true—CDN. All arrangements for the by-election at Ja-ela today have been finalised and results are expected to be announced by 3. a.m. tomorrow morning—CDN. According to the proposal of Mr. George Rajapakse, Minister of Health, to reorganise the country's health services building of new hospitals will not be done and instead the present hospitals will be equipped with all necessary facilities—

## INTERNATIONAL DIARY

April 13 - April 21

**ATH.** Addressing a conference of Assistant Government Agents and District Revenue Officers, Mr. T. B. Ilangaratne, Minister of Public Administration, Home Affairs and Trade, said that his Ministry decided that in future public servants engaged in development schemes should be given first preference when effecting promotions **DM.** Mr. John Reid has been named as the new US Ambassador for Sri Lanka by President Ford: Mr. Christopher Van Hollen, former Ambassador left the island on the completion of his term—**JD.** One person, the father of a patient, was arrested by the Police for allegedly assaulting the Acting DMO of the Point Pedro Base Hospital—**CDM.**

**SATURDAY, APRIL 24:** Mr. Joseph Michael Perera of the United National Party won the Ja-ela by-election by a majority of 8,636 votes over his closest rival the SLFP candidate: Mr. Perera of the UNP polled 28,950 votes while Mr. Peter Mendis of the SLFP polled 20,314 votes: Mr. Noel Kurera of the LSSP polled 2,039 votes: the three independent candidates Messrs W. S. M. Abeysekera, D. H. Liyanage and M. W. Mohotti polled 81, 79 and 233 votes respectively—**CDN & CDM.** The World Bank, US, UK and Canada, members of the Aid Club, agreed for financial assistance for the stage II of the Mahaweli project which is expected to cost 15.2 million US dollars: under the stage II 71,000 acres of land on the Kala Oya basin will receive Mahaweli waters—**CDN.** Officials of the Education Ministry told the *Daily Mirror* that they would post two hundred and fifty science graduates to rural schools when the first batch of HNCE students commence their classes on May 3. Government earned Rs. 300 million by selling government lands to occupants—**DM.** Ministry of Justice will review the implementation of Sinhala and Tamil as languages of courts: this follows complaints that English is still being used as language of courts in several districts—**ATH.** Police will have strict check on all vehicles during May Day and reinforcements will be brought from Police stations outside the city on May Day: meanwhile political parties are making elaborate arrangements to have processions and mass rallies on May Day—**VK.** In view of the difficulty of transport on the day of the token strike, February 20th, Government has ruled that if the reason or the absence was owing to transport there should not be pay cuts from the salaries of state employees—**VK.** *Janadina* in an editorial referring to the US troops said that Dr. N. M. Perera was compelled to let a Cabinet secret out during the Ja-ela by-election because the Prime Minister falsely said that the LSSP was opposed to the rehabilitation of insurgents. The paper praised Dr. Perera for telling the country the truth.

**TUESDAY, APRIL 13:** The three Muslim hijackers who hijacked a Philippine Air Lines plane arrived at Benghazi and demanded to see Libyan leader Colonel Muammar Gaddafi. Negotiations were opened in Washington between the US and Philippines on a new agreement to cover US military bases in Philippines. Lebanon's Leftists extended the civil war truce till the end of April but called on Syria to withdraw its troops. China agreed to supply spare parts to Soviet made machineries used in Egypt. Ethiopia's provisional military government accused some unnamed Arab countries of interference in Ethiopia's internal affairs by giving financial and military assistance to anti-government guerrillas. Egyptian President Anwar Sadat decided to extend his stay in Vienna in order to have further talks with Austrian Chancellor Brund Kreisky.

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 14:** Mr. Sinnathamby Rajaratnam, Foreign Minister of Singapore, said that his country would be the last in the ASEAN to normalise relations with China. Seven men of the Democratic Party were arrested by the Pakistani Government on charges of conspiracy and rebellion. China refused entry to six Communist terrorists of Malaysia. Two major international oil companies—British Petroleum and Royal Dutch Shell Company—admitted having given more than 3 million sterling to Italian political parties between 1969 and 1973: the Ford Motor Company admitted that it gave 29,500 dollars to four Australian political parties in 1969 and 1972. Riot Police clashed hundreds of left-wingers in Lisbon who tried to break up a political meeting organised by Portugal's Conservative Centre Democrats.

**THURSDAY, APRIL 15:** Tun Mohamed Fuad Stephens was elected as Sabah's new Chief Minister. Protesting over the arrest of three Baluchistan senators. Opposition politicians of Pakistan's Upper House walked out. Philippines Airlines said that it recovered the US \$1.5 million it gave as ransom money to the three Muslim hijackers who hijacked an airliner. India announced that it would soon send an Ambassador to China for the first time since the 1962 war between the two countries. South African Prime Minister, John Vorster returned to his country after a four-day tour of Israel, he signed a trade pact between the two countries. Former American Defence Secretary, James Schlesinger



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told that there had been Cabinet level speculations of US giving military aid to China to blunt the Soviet threat. Syrian backed Paestlinian Guerill movement in Lebanon claimed that large scale intervention by Syrian troops in the Lebanon's civil war would help Syrian troops in the Lebanon's civil war would help stability in Lebanon.

**FRIDAY, APRIL 16:** Protesting against the reshuffle of the Thai military hierarchy two Senior Generals of the Thai military set-up resigned. Four leaders of the banned Pakistan National Awami Party were brought to trial on charges of conspiracy against the State. India announced new laws on population control; the law restricts marriageable age and the number of children a couple could have. A law requiring all Cabinet Ministers of Malaysia to declare their assets to the Prime Minister every year was passed in the Parliament. Minister of State at the Home Office (Interior Ministry) of Britain was sacked from the labour administration for his efforts to help black immigrants. Portuguese Communist Party appealed to its supporters to stop violence against the rightists.

**SATURDAY, APRIL 17:** Commander of the Thai Army turned down the resignations of the two Thai Generals. Cambodia celebrated its first anniversary as a Communist State. The Arab Group in the UN yesterday called for investigations and alleged Israel has secretly bought up Arab lands in the occupied territory. Moscow freed Nobel peace prize winner Andrei Sakharov and his wife Yelena after twice being detained by Police. US Secretary of State, Dr. Henry Kissinger, warned that if the Italian Communists entered the Government, this could produce a long-term dangerous trend in the West because other European countries will also be tempted to move in the same direction. Several soldiers of both sides were killed in fresh clashes reported from West Sahara between Moroccan and Mauritanian troops. Soviet Union and India signed a new trade agreement yesterday under which trade between the two countries will increase from 50 to 100 percent within the next five years.

**SUNDAY, APRIL 18:** Philippines President, Ferdinand Marcos, will soon set up a national council to advise him on the running of the country. Indonesia announced that it had withdrawn 300 of its troops from the East Timor. Japanese ruling party, Liberal Democratic, filed a libel suit against a Communist Newspaper over the Lockheed payoff scandal. US Secretary of State, Dr. Kissinger, will begin a seven-nation tour of African countries on April 23 and while in Zambia he is expected to make a major policy speech advocating a black majority rule in African countries at the same time warning against foreign intervention. Lebanese President Sulaiman Franjeigh yesterday signed a key decree enabling Parliament to elect his successor this move by the President is expected to give a new move towards stabilisation in Lebanon.

**MONDAY, APRIL 19:** Soviet Union and six other Communist countries boycotted a Chinese banquet given in honour of the visiting Egyptian Vice President Hosni Mubarak. Reports from Islamabad said that the Indian Prime Minister has indicated to her Pakistani

counterpart that she was prepared to discuss relations between the two countries. South Korean leaders will have discussions with the Defence Secretary of Britain, Roy Mason, who arrived in Seoul. Renewed clashes were reported between Arabs and Israeli troops in the Western bank of occupied Jordan. Violent student-Police clashes were reported yesterday in France. China praised Egypt for sacking five Soviet experts for deliberate negligence: the experts were attached to the Egyptian Iron and Steel works industry.

**TUESDAY, APRIL 20:** Laotian Prime Minister, Kaysone Phomvihane, began talks with Soviet leaders in Moscow. Visiting Egyptian Vice President, Hosni Mubarak, met Chairman Mao Tse-tung. Foreign Ministers of Iran, Pakistan and Turkey met in Turkey yesterday to discuss joint arms manufacture and closer economic co-operation between their countries. Lebanese leader, Muammer Gadaffi, pledged full support to the Arab Army in Lebanon. Libya's Ambassador to Egypt opened fire with a sub-machine gun on student demonstrators who besieged his Embassy office. Scientists in America warned Southern Californians to prepare with renewed urgency for a "large earthquake that some day will inevitably occur in the Sacramento area." Wife of the Egyptian President, Mrs. Jehan Sadat, said that new laws to punish couples with more than two children should be implemented to arrest the population explosion.

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 21:** Government of Bangladesh accused India for firing on one of its border outposts. Ugandan President Idi Amin, called US Secretary of State, Dr. Henry Kissinger, "the earnest enemy of free destiny in Africa"; he also said that it would be better for African countries to directly import oil supplies from Arabian countries instead of getting them through Western Oil Companies. In the biggest arms hold up in Australia bandits carrying machine guns robbed Melbourne bookmakers of 1.4 million Australian dollars. The French peace envoy to Lebanon, M. Georges Gorse, said that if the Lebanese leaders showed themselves incapable of solving their own problems foreign intervention would become inevitable.

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TRIBUNE, May 8, 1976

## VIETNAM

## Liberation And Re-unification

VIETNAM is very much in the news today. On April 30, 1976, the forces of the Democratic Republic in the North and the guerilla troops of the Revolutionary Government in the South completed the military defeat of the American sponsored government in South Vietnam. The Americans had started a total evacuation by April 20 when it was clear that neither President Thieu or his army could withstand the military might of the North.

One year has gone by and much has happened in that time. The two parts of the country above and below the 17th parallel have been unified. This has been regularised by the elections held on April 25 this year. Vietnam, though still suffering from the ravages of a 35-year war, beginning with the Japanese occupation in 1940/41, is now recognised as the most powerful military power in Southeast Asia. The US magazines, **Time** and **Newsweek**, have taken special pains to point this out in a number of recent issues. Apart from this, united Vietnam is one of the richest countries so far as natural resources are concerned. It is likely she will establish close links with Laos and Cambodia which form a natural geographical entity with Vietnam. The Indochinese peninsula, consisting of Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos, is inhabited by different groups with slight ethnic, linguistic, religious, and cultural differences.

We publish below two statements issued by the DRV Embassy in Colombo on the current situation in Vietnam. President Ford has proclaimed that the US will not recognise Vietnam. Has he forgotten China and the US refusal to recognise the Peking regime?—Editor.

### US will not recognise Hanoi: Ford

Indianapolis (Indiana)  
April 22,

President Ford said tonight he had no intention of extending diplomatic recognition to North Vietnam and statements to the contrary were irresponsible. Speaking during a radio interview, he said his statement was a reply to reported remarks by fellow Republican Ronald Reagan that the United States was contemplating recognition of Hanoi. Asked a general question about Vietnam, the President replied: "He must have pulled it out of the blue." Mr. Ford has authorised talks with North Vietnam, especially about Americans missing during the Indo-China war and still un-accounted. "There has been no serious discussion by me or the Secretary of State or anybody in authority in this administration that we were going to recognise Hanoi," he said.

—The Chinese story again?  
—Ed.

### A PRESS RELEASE ISSUED ON APRIL 26, 1976 BY THE EMBASSY OF THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM IN SRI LANKA STATED:

The Vietnamese people from the North to the South have actively prepared for the general elections to elect the national Assembly yesterday. The reunification of the country is the earnest aspiration of the entire Vietnamese people, the necessary development of the Vietnamese Revolution on the basis of national independence and socialism, the unique path of building a peaceful, independent, united and socialist Vietnam. The general elections electing the National Assembly of the whole country constitutes the fruits of the great victory achieved by the Vietnamese people in the 30-year struggle for independence, reunification and socialism. As for South Vietnam, after decades of years under foreign domination, the South Vietnamese people, for the first time are entitled to use their rights to elect their own representative body to govern the State and to build a new, free and happy society. Only one year after the complete liberation of South Vietnam, the general elections is held in conditions of peace, independence and reunifica-

tion. It is an occasion to demonstrate the powerful strength of the patriotic, socialist-loving people who participated in the past struggle against US imperialists for national salvation and who are now taking part in socialist construction. It manifests the people's will to build a peaceful independent, united and socialist Vietnam. The National Assembly for the whole country elected at the general elections is the highest authoritative body of the state of Vietnam. It is the manifestation of the highest concentration of the people's right to be their own masters. The election of the National Assembly must be participated in by the people voluntarily and willingly in keeping with Principles and regulations of election laws. Socialist and united Vietnam will create new favourable conditions and new strength so as to continue observing internationalist duties, making

### All Leading N. Vietnam Leaders Elected

Hanoi, April 27

All the leading North Vietnamese political figures who stood in Hanoi in last Sunday's legislative elections were elected without difficulty. Among the 22 candidates elected in the capital Mr. Le Duan, First Secretary of the Vietnam Worker's (Communist) Party, received 99.76 per cent of the votes cast. In second and third positions were Vice-President Nguyen Luong Bang, with 99.74 per cent and Prime Minister Pham Van Dong with 99.73 per cent.

Mr. Truong Chinh, Chairman of the National Assembly, obtained 99.6 per cent and Armed Forces Chief of Staff General Van Tien Dung, Deputy to Defence Minister Vo Nguyen Giap, 99.58 per cent. President, Ton Duc Thang received 99.35 per cent of the ballot and Gen Tran Duy Hung, the former physician who has been Mayor of Hanoi for 30 years, 98.92 per cent. Observers noted that of the five highest percentages, four were obtained by members of the party politburo—Mr. Le Duan, Mr. Pham Van Dong, Mr. Truong Chinh and Gen Hung.

—AFP

contributions to the strengthening of socialist forces, pushing up the struggle against imperialism, colonialism and neo-colonialism for peace, national independence and socialism throughout the world.

**A PRESS RELEASE ON THE OCCASION OF THE FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF THE COMPLETE VICTORY OF LIBERATION OF SOUTH VIETNAM (30TH. APRIL, 1975) BY THE DRV EMBASSY IN SRI LANKA STATED.**

45 million people of the united Vietnam filled with boundless happiness, are joyfully celebrating the definite victory achieved in the struggle against US imperialists for national salvation (30th. April, 1975). It is precisely at this time last year—the Spring of 1975, the Vietnamese people wrote down in their history one more extremely great victory: in 55 days and nights fierce and swift fight, the people and the armed forces liquidated over 1 million puppet troops led by traitor Nguyen Van Thieu, ruled out completely the system of the stooge administration, defeated completely the imperialist war of aggression and neo-colonialism completely in the South and gloriously ended the most and greatest patriotic war in the history of the Vietnamese people against foreign invaders. Vietnam is permanently independent and free, liberated completely.

The victory of the patriotic struggle of the Vietnamese people

**Election Results**

On 25th April 1976, the people of the whole of Vietnam held general elections. According to the primary reports of the National Election Committee: Voters going to the polls read as follows:

- Capital City of Hanoi 99.82%
- Ho Chi Minh City over 98%
- In other provinces also, voters went to the polls at high percentage, such as in Chang Minh province: 99.37%.

All the leaders of the Vietnam Workers' Party and Government scored highest number of votes.

—DRV Embassy Bulletin

is that of national independence, of the patriotism hampered through thousands of years of building and defending their country: "There is nothing more precious than independence and Freedom": that truth is the trumpet to encourage the Vietnamese people, from one generation after another, to march forward to fight against the invaders and traitors, is the invincible strength of the people of Vietnam who had smashed the chains of old colonialism and today break up the neo-colonialism. It is the victory of socialism, the loftiest ideal of mankind which at present becomes a reality of one third of mankind and in the part of Vietnam (Southern). The victory of Vietnam bears with profoundly epoch-making significance, reverses the US global strategy, it proves that the three revolutionary currents of the contemporary era are on the offensive position. Together with the great victories of the peoples of Laos and Cambodia, the victory of the Vietnamese people has made positive contribution to strengthening the world's socialist forces, creating new favourable conditions so as to defend peace, national independence in Indochina and South East Asia. The victory of Vietnam is that of the correct revolutionary lines and methods, the correct and creative lines of revolutionary war of the Vietnam Workers' Party led by our respected and beloved President Ho Chi Minh, in which the two banners of the national democratic revolution and the socialist revolution had been carried aloft, the strength of the nation with that of the era, the home strength with that of international had created combined strength to fight and to win victory over the aggressors. That victory is victory of the strength of militant solidarity and unity of the entire Vietnamese people, the great fighting strength, of the giant development of the Vietnamese people's heroic armed forces.

The aforesaid definite victory is of paramount importance which ushers in a new era with bright prospects for the Vietnamese nation, bringing the Vietnamese revolution towards a new strength with favourable conditions, but for the time being, still lying a lot of difficulties. Only one year has elapsed

since the complete victory, and the Vietnamese people in both parts have won significant achievements: stabilizing the situation, striving for to overcome difficulties and consequences left behind by the 30-year-long war of aggression by the imperialists and traitors reunifying the country step by step, pushing up and developing the economy and culture and building socialism in the whole country. In South Vietnam, the neo-colonialism left behind heavy sequel: about 3 million people unemployed, nearly 4 million illiterate, a lot of social evils prevailed, half million hectare of land left uncultivated, millions of hectares of forests were destroyed, a number of populated areas were heavily devastated, the complete dependence on the imperialism of the former economy of South Vietnam—left behind big difficulties for the restoration of production and stabilization of the people's life.

However, thanks to the great efforts exerted by the people, South Vietnam has done a great deal: (1) The revolutionary power has been promptly set up and consolidated with every passing day; (2) Order and security have been guaranteed; (3) Production has been restored, the people's life has been stabilized.

No sooner after the liberation had the revolutionary Administration given food reliefs against famine to millions of people, reclaimed lands and speeded up agricultural production. Recently, the peasants in South Vietnam have got a good harvest with high yields. The revolutionary governments Power has helped 500,000 people who formerly had come to cities from rural areas during the war or "evacuated" to return to their former villages or got to build new economic zones, it has done its utmost to supply raw material and fuel for the production, industrial and handicraft establishments. Most of the factories have resumed their operations. Healthy educational, health, cultural and sport activities to serve the people have been restored and developed. In the North, the US war of destruction left behind serious consequences, the majority of industrial establishments were levelled or heavily damaged, system of communication were severely bombed.

hundreds of thousands of hectares of cultivated lands were destroyed by bombing and shellings, many of irrigation and processing projects, husbandry centres, about 4 millions square meters of dwelling house in urban areas, 3,000 schools, over 500 health setups and 800 cultural sites etc. were destroyed. Yet, the North, with determination of the people, basically completed the post-war economic rehabilitation, the economic situation has been in good turn-out, out put of many economy branches has been rapidly increased.

Along with the implementation of the second five-year Plan (1976-1980), the Vietnamese people have carried out and are carrying out the reunification of the country, holding the general elections to elect the common National Assembly for the whole country. The National Assembly will meet and decide matters with important significance of the Fatherland, such as the name of the country, the emblem, the national flag, the national anthem, election of the State's governing body, committee to draft the constitution, declaration of internal and foreign policies of the United Vietnam.



**INDIA AND HER NEIGHBOURS—2**

# IRAN

by A Special Correspondent

New Delhi, April 26,

A Samachar report from New York datelined April 23, headlined in the Indian papers that IRAN "WORKING" TO IMPROVE INDO-PAK TIES, had read: *The Shah of Iran has told the United States Vice-President, Mr. Nelson Rockefeller that he was working to improve relations between India and Pakistan. Mr. Rockefeller stated this in an interview on his return from a seven-nation trip, including Iran, undertaken at the behest of President Ford—Samachar.*

This news had come at a time when Prime Minister Bhutto had done a little back-tracking on the original stand he had taken to the Indian Prime Minister's latest offer to resume negotiations to re-establish

diplomatic relations between India and Pakistan. It will be recalled that shortly after China had agreed to India's suggestion that India was willing to send an Ambassador to Peking and thus resume ambassadorial-level connections, Mrs. Indira Gandhi had invited Pakistan to resume negotiations to re-open diplomatic relations. Prime Minister Bhutto had abruptly and curtly rejected the suggestion by stating that Pakistan was in no hurry to establish diplomatic relations with India. But, within a short time, he had gone back on this and had expressed a willingness to resume such talks. **Political and diplomatic circles here feel that Mr. Bhutto's turn-around may have been prompted by two considerations: first, that if Sino-Indian relations developed into any kind of cordiality, Pakistan would have become isolated vis a vis India in South Asian region; and secondly, that the Shah of Iran had given Bhutto some friendly advice that he should not reject the Indian overtures for better and normalised relations in the manner he did.**

This has focussed attention once again on the increasingly important role Iran has begun to play not only in the Gulf area but also in the South Asian and Indian Ocean region. Even before the phenomenal escalation of oil prices induced by OPEC strategy, Iran with its oil millions had become a substantial economic and military power with the ambitions of the Shah to revive the glories of Darius and the Persian Empire-builders of ancient times. But with the trebling and quadrupling of oil incomes by 1972/73, Iran assumed a new importance. The Shah wanted to leapfrog into being mini-big (global) power within a short time.

India was at first suspicious about Iran and the Shah. He was regarded a king-pin of the western cold war creation known as the CENTO. Iran was thought to be a satellite of the USA and that Washington was seeking to make Iran a junior regional power to fit into America's global desires for dominance. Additionally, India had felt that as a Muslim power, Iran would be completely with Pakistan in the latter's hot and cold war against India. For these and other reasons, India had maintained a cold neutrality towards Iran.

But in the late 1960's and early 1970's when the cold war world of Dulles had ended and new world of Kissingerian detente had not begun, geopolitical considerations of a new dimensional level had brought India and Iran closer. The Shah had paid a visit to India and Indian leaders had gone to Iran. And by mid 1975 a new relationship had been forged between the two countries. Iran, with its new oil millions had offered to extend financial aid to India and in return had wanted greater trade and Indian technological know-how in certain fields.

An article by G. K. Reddy in the *Hindu* of October 2, 1975, on INDO-IRANIAN SIMILARITY OF APPROACH summed up the extent, scope and depth of the new relationship. The introductory paragraphs were a little apologetic explaining how a secular democratic pro-socialist republic like India could have anything in common with a still-feudal personal autocratic Shah's regime in Iran.

The concept of a strong Central Government with a dynamic personality at the helm providing the necessary political cohesion and administrative drive for carrying forward a developing society in an orderly fashion from undue dependence to increasing self-reliance is helping to bring India and Iran together in their common quest for rapid economic growth and better social dispensation. The Prime Minister of India and the Shahanshah of Iran, who preside over diverse political systems, have come to share this common faith in the imperative need for a well-established hierarchy of power in which different levels of society can be united by duty and obligation as well as service dedication through precept and practice.

It is against this background that the visit of the Commerce Minister, Mr. D. P. Chattopadhyaya, to Teheran has led to greater understanding between India and Iran over the basic objectives of their increasing co-operation by giving a bigger dimension to the mutual aspirations of the two countries for quicker economic growth in their respective spheres under conditions of political stability and peace. He is the first Indian Minister to visit Iran after the promulgation of the Emergency which has provided a fresh impetus for faster development through greater discipline.

## India And Iran

The Shah has given expression on more than one occasion to his deep conviction that Mrs. Gandhi's emergence as a stronger leader from the recent ordeals at home would facilitate the process of increased Indo-Iranian co-operation in pursuit of their common ideal of orderly development, since what he is seeking is not an identity of interests but only a compact of ideas that are essential for better understanding and peace in the region. He is prepared to commit a part of his phenomenal oil revenues to the growth of this concept by opening up new vistas of co-operation.

As the new understanding between India and Iran takes deeper roots, the Shah has started embarking on a policy of closer economic ties between the two countries without prejudice to their respective political and social systems. The Shah's vision of a new Iran has encouraged him to view the achievements and ambitions of his own country in this wider perspective of a more balanced and mutually beneficial approach to the problems of development in the region. A working monarch with an abiding faith both in the legitimacy and indispensability of the institution, he has cast himself in the role of a reformer to whom public service is an exciting experience.

The Iranian experiment thus involves a certain degree of closer co-operation with other developing countries like India, despite the Shah's heavy reliance on the West for technological assistance in transforming his ancient kingdom into a modern industrial State. The Shah has already offered India over one billion dollars in credits for various projects ranging from the Kudremukh Iron Ore Project and the Alumina Plant to the establishment of a joint shipping line. Now he has come forward with offers of further credits for projects like the Paradeep Fertilizer Factory and the Rajasthan Canal, besides increased trade through an exchange of processed goods, raw materials and food products.

After explaining the basis for the new understanding between the two countries which had led to the visit of the Indian Commerce Minister to conclude certain agreements, Reddy set out some fields in which immediate co-operation was possible between the two countries, and the difficulties that had to be overcome:

But there are many bottlenecks to be cleared before this Indo-Iranian co-operation can be placed on a firm foundation. In a country of only 32 millions with nearly half the population below 15 years in age, Iran is faced with an acute shortage of trained manpower in almost every sphere. The ports are clogged, the railways are not efficiently run, and road transport remains crippled by shortage of drivers and maintenance men. The bonanza of petro-dollars has brought in inflation in a big way, the profits are high, the people have taken to easier ways of life and affluence has widened the disparities, created false values and upset the social balances.

The Shah is thus faced with a superhuman task in making the Iranian miracle a reality. From a mere \$100 millions in 1954 to \$2,000 millions in 1970 and \$4,000 millions in 1973, the country's oil revenues sky-rocketed in 1974 to \$18,000 millions through an eight-fold increase in four years. The problems of a prudent utilisation of this staggering wealth by Iran are as formidable as India's own struggle to cope with the dilemmas of its meagre resources. The very contradictions of this extra-ordinary situation are inducing Iran to borrow skills from a neighbouring country like India instead of relying heavily on the affluent West, before its own younger generation grow up to face the challenges of rapid development.

The Indian doctors, engineers, educationists and technicians are quite popular in Iran, but the businessmen have yet to build up a better image. The Iranians know that India has a vast reservoir of surplus skills that cannot be utilised fully at home because of the paucity of resources, and they are prepared to employ more and more Indians in specialised fields as the political and economic relations between the two countries grow stronger with the passage of time. What matters most at the present moment is the image of India as a vibrant nation caught in the throes of development, going through the ordeals of change but retaining the basic faith in the future. And as the Shah and his advisers see it, the inner strength of India is, fully reflected by the presence of a strong Government strong both in fact and purpose, that is capable of governing this vast land and giving a positive direction to its aspirations amidst perplexing problems.

Relations between India and Iran had grown so quickly that Bathuk Gahani, Hindu's correspondent in London, was able to send a despatch datelined October 1, 1975 that IRAN WAS NO LONGER WILLING TO ASSIST PAKISTAN TO BUY U.S. ARMS. Although Iran is believed to have helped Pakistan to obtain arms in the 1965-66 and 1971-72 Indo-Pak armed clashes and wars, there are good reasons to believe that Iran has desisted in recent times in helping Pakistan overtly or covertly to obtain arms from the US or anywhere else. There is no doubt that Iran is big force in the Turkey-Iran-Pakistan hard core of CENTO and that Iran is sought to make this regional organization self-sufficient in arms on a regional basis under its own leadership and control. But the Iran has sought to arm Pakistan.

In what looks like another attempt towards a major shift in Pakistan's foreign policy, its Prime Minister Mr. Z. A. Bhutto, is visiting Teheran to seek more economic and financial aid from the Shah of Iran to buy sophisticated weapons for his country's armed forces and also to complete development projects which are languishing for lack of funds. Mr. Bhutto's visit (he left Islamabad for Teheran to-day) has a special significance in view of the fact that the United States has agreed to sell sophisticated weapons to Pakistan only on a "cash and carry" basis. Although Indian authorities have vehemently protested and warned the US Government against the consequences of tampering with the present balance of power on the Indian sub-continent senior Indian Government officials feel that India cannot take any chances by relying on American bona fides, especially in the background of present strained relations between Washington and Delhi. Obviously the Pakistani leader is trying to cash in on this situation and according to informed sources in West European capitals, Pakistan diplomats for sometime now have been scouting around for West European sophisticated military weapons. The West Europeans have not warmly responded to Pakistani requests. If the present West European diplomatic attitude to Pakistan is anything to go by, most EEC countries have deep reservations about the policy of cultivation relations with Pakistan at the cost of straining relations with India.

In Western capitals there is also a growing awareness about the impressive capability of India to manufacture and service sophisticated military hardware. In a decade's time, most Western military analysts agree, India will be a formidable producer and an exporter of military weapons.

For the last two years, Iran has not been much of a help to Pakistan, after a change in the Shah's foreign policy in India's favour. All along the Iranians have argued that since there is no fear of attack from India, Pakistan did not have to expand its armed forces. But such a caution and optimism on the part of the Iranians hardly impresses the Pakistani leader who has been making frequent visits recently to Saudi Arabia looking for more money to buy arms. The Iranians are also not particularly impressed by Mr. Bhutto's latest diplomatic moves and the Shah has his own reservations about encouraging the Riyad-Islamabad axis in the West Asian political sphere.

Mr. Bhutto visited Saudi Arabia recently on a similar mission which, according to Pakistani sources, was partly successful. Evidently King Khalid of Saudi Arabia wants to examine the Pakistan's request more closely. It should be noted that since Iran has suspended supply of weapons to Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Libya and United Arab Emirates have provided Pakistan with considerable financial assistance for military shopping. Mr. Bhutto will find that the Shah is still reserved in his political demeanour and is hardly in a mood for any wild political adventurism in West Asia. He has had a hard time with Saudi Arabia at the recent OPEC meeting in Vienna where the Iranians have grudgingly compromised on 10 per cent price rise of oil against their request of anything between 15 and 20 per cent.

Bartuk Gahani also analyses the ambitions of the Shah to make Iran a major economic force in the world, and more especially in the Gulf and the Indian Ocean.

The Shah has also launched one of the world's most ambitious economic development programme coupled with his ambition to create the most sophisticated military machine in West Asia. Iran could soon be in the red because of these ambitious projects whose costs have gone up dramatically as a result of an average 15 per cent inflation rate in Western countries. The Shah still

believes that there is no danger of an attack on Pakistan from India and that Mr. Bhutto's fears and apprehensions are founded more on his personal prejudices towards India, Iran at this stage, can hardly afford to finance Mr. Bhutto's political and military adventure against India. In the background, there is the issue of military presence of Super Powers in the Indian Ocean area, where Iran and India have commonality of purpose. There is also the issue of the energy dialogue between the Third World and oil producing countries and hence the Shah is likely to advice Mr. Bhutto to concentrate more on his domestic economic and political problems.

It is in this context and perspective that one must view India's closer collaboration with Iran since 1975. Iran, for its part, was willing to help India in many ways.

A news report in Indian Papers early in October, 1975 set out position in realistic terms: India will be submitting to Iran a detailed feasibility study for the development of the Rajasthan Canal command area which is expected to cost \$300 millions (Rs. 240 crores) on a mutually beneficial basis to the Iran Government. The Iran Government has responded favourably to this proposal from India and to India's request for the extension of financial facilities for this purpose. The Iran Government has also agreed to "consider positively" the establishment

of a fertilizer factory at Paradeep. This is in tune with Iran's policy to assist developing countries which would augment their food production. There are two major gains resulting from the visit of Mr. D. P. Chattopadhyaya, Union Minister of Commerce to Iran from September 27 to October 1 at the invitation of Mr. F. Mahdavi Iran's Commerce Minister.

These two proposed projects representing a further progress in Indo-Iranian co-operation have been taken up for consideration since it was considered advantageous to diversify the area of Indo-Iranian co-operation in agriculture and allied products. The other projects which have been reviewed include the Kudremukh project and the Alumina project. The agreement concerning the Kudremukh project had been finalised and the necessary documents concerning the financial agreement would be signed shortly. As for the Alumina project, the Iran Government expressed, its interest in the expansion of the Alumina plant in Karnataka for meeting the immediate requirements of the Iranian economy. Both sides agreed that the modalities for such co-operation need to be finalised soon.

During Mr. Chattopadhyaya's discussions in Teheran, it was also noted that the supply of cement and sugar by India to Iran was in accordance with the agreed schedule. Appropriate steps would be taken

#### FOOD CROPS FOR EATING

Sir,

The Editorial in Tribune for March 27 bemoans the fact that people are eating young coconuts and drinking the juice, and that as a result the manufacturers have fewer nuts for their business.

Is it so deplorable that the people of Sri Lanka eat food grown in Sri Lanka?

The principal reason for the present and foreseeable "food crisis" is precisely that the agribusinesses grow food crops for reasons other than to feed the people. They are not interested in seeing that more people get more food at lower cost. International traders look upon food crops as commodities, and their overriding interest is to see how much money they can make. They will even destroy food if they think that will enable them to make more money.

Be glad the people are finding something to eat. Let the merchants take what is left after the people are fed, rather than vice versa.

Claude R. Daly S.J.

31, Clifford Place,  
Colombo 4,  
1976 April 29

by both sides for smooth implementation of the commodity contracts during 1976. In view of Iran's requirements for long fibre pulp and paper, both Mr. Chattopadhyaya and Mr. Mahadavi agreed that co-operation in the field of pulp and paper projects would be mutually beneficial and that further steps for implementation would be initiated quickly. They noted with satisfaction the conclusion of the contract for the supply of rails to Iran and agreed to take immediate steps to ensure the smooth implementation of this contract. The parties agreed to extend their co-operation further in the field of consultancy services, electrification programmes and road and bridge construction projects.

The gains resulting from Mr. Chattopadhyaya's visit to Iran are considered significant in the present context of the 10 per cent price increase in crude prices announced by the Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). The protocol provides for the construction in Iran of other industrial units including welding equipment. Iran has also concluded contracts with the US International Systems and Controls Corporation and its Canadian subsidiary, Stadler Hurlter, worth \$250 millions covering the engineering and construction works of an industrial wood processing complex near the city of Sari in Mazandaran, in northern Iran. The project will be completed by the end of 1978. Given the necessary enterprise, it should be possible for India to benefit from any fall-out by way of sub-contracts for these and a number of other projects.

Though many in India have recently tended to play down Iran's geopolitical ambitions as being fanciful and unrealistic, Western and US commentators have betrayed the fact that Washington had entertained other ideas about the role Iran should play in the region, but it also obvious that they are perturbed that current developments were not going according to their plans. The *Christian Science Monitor* in a revealing article in September 1975 entitled **IRAN'S AMBITIOUS GEOPOLITICAL CAMPAIGN** had set out some interesting facts.

There is no doubt that the US had entertained hopes that Iran would be able to play the role of a minor policeman for the Pentagon in the Gulf and Indian Ocean region, but Americans were disturbed that other oil-rich countries were

also arming themselves to the teeth and that Iran would not be able to carry the Yankee burden in the area. Britain, US and other Western powers had always maintained a military and naval dominance to protect their oil wells in Gulf and Arab world, and they had hoped that Iran would step into the breach.

This is what the 'Christian Science Monitor' wrote. A new pattern of peacekeeping in the anarchic "third world" is being established by Iran, and it may set a profound trend. Iran has helped to maintain relative peace and stability in the explosive Persian Gulf region for a decade by acquiring military strength and using it to reinforce vigorous restraining diplomacy.

Among other major moves, the Shah of Iran, who runs his country as a personal fief has: (1) Built up enough modern military strength to force Russia or any other power to launch a major war for any attempted invasion of Iran; (2) Outflanked apparent Soviet attempts to dominate the Persian Gulf by placing it under Iranian control; (3) Reduced the probability of war with neighbouring Iraq by concluding a long-sought border treaty; helped to put a long rebellion against the Sultanate of Oman by sending troops to fight against communist-backed rebels in Dhofar; (4) Initiated attempts to clear his flanks of Soviet pressure by encouraging Iraq, through the border treaty and other methods, and Afghanistan. Through well-planned aid, to break loose from Moscow dominance, which both countries find stifling; (5) Underwritten peace on the sub-continent by making friends with India while publicly guaranteeing the territorial sovereignty of Pakistan.

This is the most ambitious geopolitical campaign by any non-industrial power, and thus far, the most successful. It is based entirely upon a pragmatic assessment that "new Persia" must defend itself by every means, particularly against a continually predatory Russia, because no other power can or will do so. The Americans agree and are co-operating heartily. The alignment is cemented by mutual interests, not a mythical nation-to-nation "friendship", and the Shah undoubtedly will continue to operate on an Iran-first basis, even though he is described as being personally pro-American. He has been for instance, a

a prime mover behind OPEC's demand for increasingly high petroleum prices, and he added profits have financed his geopolitics. Washington hoped for this type of extreme self-reliance when it initiated the foreign military aid programme two decades ago to give nations under immediate communist threat the arms and financial support to defend themselves.

The Iranian experience, however, could mark the defeat of Washington's long attempt to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons. The emergence of new empires and a rash of local wars. There is no guarantee that commanding regional powers, once ascendant, will renounce empire building or will refrain from developing a nuclear potentiality, as India has done. The pressure of to-morrow or even to-night, may change the more peace-minded leader.

Most of the oil-rich Persian Gulf States already are following Iran's arms lead because they too need stability to modernise and because they share the belief that a Soviet-directed counter attack is prospective, probably through a Russia-Libya-Algeria effort to sponsor radical "revolution" against ruling royalty.

There is no way to foretell the results of what has been described as an "alarming" flood of arms into this region. But it is clear, from this vantage point, that without them the oil nations would be extremely vulnerable and, with them, intra-mural peace may depend on how the Shah uses Iranian power—

It was only when it became clear that Iran would not fulfil this role as an American satellite and policeman that the US decided to come into the Indian Ocean in a big way and take the risk of offending nearly all littoral by updating the facilities on Diego Garcia.

But there are also other reasons why the Shah of Iran could not fit himself into the shoes the US had specially made for him. For one thing, he realised that if he became just a plain satellite of US in the way South Vietnam had become he was doomed not only in Arab world but also in the entire South Asian and Indian Ocean region. Secondly, Iran (like many other oil producing countries) had been hit by lower world demand for oil and the Shah's revenues had been greatly reduced

in 1975 and with further reductions projected in 1976.

The *Christian Science Monitor* in an article in February 1976 summed up the position in the most succinct manner. The article also analysed the complicated and difficult inter-relations in the Arab world and the Gulf region. The Shah had already sent his troops to help Oman and other sultanates to fight "Marxist" guerillas. The Shah had also broken off diplomatic relations with Cuba as a protest against the alleged presence of Cuban troops in South Yemen.

Shah Muhammad Reza Pahlavi has warned that Iran's drop in oil revenues means an end to new Iranian foreign aid, fewer purchases of United States goods, and possibly even a reduction in Iran's forward defence in the Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean. Fresh Iranian aid and investment abroad which may have exceeded \$4 billions last year, will cease "because we have to spend to the last dime for our own internal development," the Shah said in an interview at his Nivaran Palace residence here.

Looking fit and relaxed in the bright sunlight reflected from the snow-crowned Alborz Mountains above, the Shah repeated his frequent criticisms of Western oil companies working in Iran. He charged they were lifting 1.5 million barrels of crude oil per day less than they contracted to do in 1973 when Iran assumed ownership of the Western oil consortium. "This is a big blow to our revenues representing maybe more than \$4 billions this year," he said. "We are negotiating new agreements with them." Iran's crude oil production dropped from about 302 million tons in 1974 to about 269 million tons in 1975, the London magazine *Petroleum Economist* reported recently. Though Western oil firms in Teheran say they have actually boosted production of light crude, demand for the heavier varieties of Iranian crude used mainly for fuel oil, has fallen off partly due to fuel conservation measures and milder winters in Europe this year and last.

The Shah said the revenues loss will curtail purchases of US goods and may cause Iran "to revamp our foreign policy and maybe limit ourselves...to defending the interests of our country alone which is probably going to create an entirely new situation." Asked whether this meant curtailing Iranian naval and

air defence of vital oil shipping lanes from the Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean to the Far East, he replied "That is one aspect of it, yes."

He indicated that investigation of corruption in the Iranian armed forces—resulting in the recent demotion of senior Navy officers including the commanding admiral, and a number of arrests—as well as limited funds could affect the construction of a major naval base complex at Shah-behar, on Iran's southern coast facing the Indian Ocean. The Shah said he would "strike like lightning to keep Iran clean against corruption and illegal commissions, like those which the Northrop and Grumman corporations disclosed they had paid last year. Such firms would have to repay the commissions or have them subtracted from contract values, the Shah reiterated.

He said Iran's military forces would stay in Oman to aid the Sultan "if we are asked by the Sultan to do so," even though the guerilla rebellion in Oman's southern Dhofar province is said to have ended.

"What is alarming me", he continued; "is the news that mass Cuban experts or even soldiers have started to move into (South) Yemen," which supported the Dhofar rebels, "as in Angola... We have known for two years that there were several hundred Cubans (in South Yemen). But if we see that number multiplied, then we must ask ourselves is this the preliminary to what happened in Angola?" Iranian forces went to Oman in 1972 after the Shah warned that hostile Marxist guerillas could throttle the vital oil artery through the Straits of Hormuz between the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean.

The Shah said he had backed Syria's peace formula for Lebanon and that Iran would stay out of any new Arab-Israel war that might erupt from the Lebanese crisis or other causes. The Shah recalled that his recent suggestions that Islamic States meet in an emergency summit conference to deal with the Lebanese crisis was "welcomed heartily" but not taken up. "I supported (Syrian) President Hafez al-Assad's formula for Lebanon, believing this could be a good basis for reaching some kind of understanding between the communities," the Shah said. Syria-based Palestinian troops now are in Lebanon, trying to police a ceasefire in the Lebanese civil war under supervision of Lebanese, Syrian, and Palestinian officers. "But" the Shah

added, "if there is an addition to this communal war...then we have another problem on our hands."

Iran's position in any new Arab-Israel war "cannot" differ from its attitude in the last West Asian war of 1973, he asserted. At that time Iran stayed neutral while giving diplomatic backing and some material aid to the Arabs. It did not try to force the Arab blockade of the Red Sea which prevented Iranian oil supplies from reaching Israel. Despite a cut-off in new foreign-aid commitments by Iran due to lower oil revenues, the Shah reaffirmed that prior commitments to Egypt and Syria would not suffer. Iran has pledged over \$2.5 billions to both. The Shah said Egyptian President Anwar al-Sadat "followed the right path" in signing last September's interim Sinai accord with Israel. He said that the United States would eventually have to recognise the central role of the Palestinian problem. He recalled that Iran is "sticking to the 242 and 338 resolutions" of the United Nations Security Council, calling for Israeli withdrawal from occupied Arab land and a binding Arab-Israel peace.

But what the Americans were probably after was a security pact with Iran's leadership under the umbrella of CENTO and having Chinese blessings. With this end in view, the US had helped to resolve the disputes between Iraq and Iran. But Iraq has so far fought shy of such a security pact although Iran has made it out that it was to protect the oil resources of Gulf states. Other Arab States in the Gulf area and elsewhere have also made it known that they do not want to be drawn into any such collective security pact which they suspect would have links with the former owners of the oil wells in the USA, Britain and other Western countries. But the *Christian Science Monitor's* not if read carefully between the lines, revealed much more than was perhaps intended.

In the Persian Gulf, the Shah said he would welcome "any kind of firm or loose collective security pact, or even just an understanding" among Gulf littoral States, "or no pact at all...since we can defend ourselves." A security pact appeared possible after Iran and Iraq settled their disputes last year, but West Asian observers generally agree the idea has lost its appeal to many of the States concerned. He said there was



"no real significance" in continued US use of naval facilities at the Persian Gulf State of Bahrain: "Only to show the flag...you have one or two little tin boats there."

With the Colombo nonaligned conference and summit not very far away, and with pressures from certain quarters to relax the rules of admission into the nonaligned camp, there is serious thinking in New Delhi about the implications of Iran's persistent suggestion to the Gulf States that they should get together to form a Security Pact to protect regional interests. It has also become clear that Iran still entertains ambitions of becoming the dominant power not only in the Persian Gulf but also the whole of the Indian Ocean—and to denigrate thereby India's position in the region. To play this role effectively, Iran has been peddling its idea of a regional Common Market and also the establishment of land routes to link all countries from Turkey to India through Iran and Pakistan.

So far, Iran's suggestion about a Collective Security Pact for the Persian Gulf has not met with any response from the littoral states which are all Arab. With strong anti-western and anti-imperialist sentiments in most Arab countries (except perhaps a few like Saudi Arabia), Iran is not likely to go very far. Moreover Saudi Arabia and Iran have many differences many of which stem from being rival suppliers of oil in a world where demand has begun to contract especially with discoveries of new oil wells which will make a number of countries self-sufficient and not want Gulf or Arab oil anymore. This is why joint Iranian-Saudi proposals to create a "Persian Gulf League" on the model of the Arab League have failed. At the moment, Iran and Saudi Arabia seem to be at daggers drawn. In a recent tour of Gulf States King Khalid is said to have warned his hosts that Iran would employ its new military power to take direct or indirect control of the oil riches of the region. To meet this challenge Khalid had suggested the creation of a joint military force from Saudi Arabia and the Arab Gulf States and also the construction of a Saudi-financed pipeline running through the sheikdoms and linking them to a new oil port to be built in Oman. This second project is to lessen the strategic importance of the Gulf and the threat of Iranian naval power.

The Shah, on his part, is said to suspect the Americans of pushing the Saudis, and he has started a campaign of Pan-Islamic eloquence through his emissaries to prevent this new "imperialist" attempt to destroy Muslim unity. However, the Saudis seem to be going ahead with the plans for the pipeline to Oman.

Furthermore, these countries are aware of the sad fate which had overtaken military blocs even under the supreme world nuclear powers like the USA. Iran, which is not yet a nuclear power and which is by no means self-sufficient in arms (in the way India is) is not likely to inspire much confidence in its neighbours.

There are admittedly many problems facing Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean states. But these cannot be solved through regional military blocs and security pacts. But, greater regional co-operation, which among other things, will insist on the liquidation of all foreign bases and installations, will help to resolve many of these difficulties. In the era of detente (even though the world has frightened President Ford), in the era of Kissingerian give and take, in the era of Leonid Brezhnev's peaceful co-existence and Helsinki, military collective security pacts under the hegemony of countries like Iran have no place in the scheme of things. Helsinki has laid the foundation for solving the problems of Europe and even though really lasting solutions may take time having many obstacles to overcome, there is no doubt that a start has been made to establish peace.

India hopes very much that a solution to the problems of the Gulf Region, which abuts on the subcontinent and the Indian Ocean in which India is centred, will be dealt with in the same way America laid the foundations for a lasting peace at Helsinki. Differences, difficulties, disagreements, recriminations and accusations of violations are in the nature of things inevitable, but it is difficult to go back completely on what has been achieved.

Iran is not an immediate neighbour of India but in recent years both countries have come close together, to become "neighbours" with only Pakistan in between. Good relations have developed between India and

Iran and it is realised that mutual co-operation in trade, technology and finance will be of immense assistance to both countries. India has no ambitions of dominating Iran or the Gulf area or anywhere else, and as long as Iran does not fall victim to the wiles of global overlords who want to circumscribe India's growth and natural leadership in the area (on the basis of peace and friendship), the ties and friendship between the two countries are bound to grow.



MAHAWELI-4

## Development And Management

—Lessons Of Gal Oya—

By R. Kahawita

WE SAID, in our previous articles, the Master Plan provided for the development of 55% of the land mass of the Dry zone by controlling the flow of Mahaweli and the other rivers in the project area. It will enable the use of seven million acre feet of water with 75% frequency to raise crops annually. Unlike other natural resources water is one resource that is available to man in the same quantity and in the same place year in year out and can be harnessed to serve him if he knows how to manage it. Management is to control river flow by constructing storage reservoirs and other appertenant structures necessary for such control.

At present day cost of materials, labour, imports of fuel, engineering goods and materials, foreign expertise, the estimated cost is around 8,000 million rupees to complete the works covered by the Master Plan. This expenditure will provide, supply and distribution of irrigation water, infrastructure to serve the new settlers, development of farmsteads, health and educational facilities, and other social, commercial, and service facilities to about a million and half acres. Also will have an installed capacity of electric energy of 500 M.W. capable of an annual power output of 2,400 million k.w.h.

The estimated return from such an investment, also at current local and world prices, may be in the region of 1,250 million rupees nett per annum and the value of power generated will be another 90 million rupees nett per annum. These estimates are based on assumptions that lend themselves for mathematical evaluations after deducting the cost of operation maintenance and servicing the technology required to maintain the capital value at a reasonable standard.

These are the figures that interest the Bankers or financing institutions or such other bodies who have to count the rupees and cents at the end of the investment before lending. But to you and me and others who take a pride in our country there are many intangibles which cannot be estimated to satisfy the financing institutions. They are the general well being of our people in achieving higher standards of living, improving the quality of goods consumed, better living conditions, greater leisure they may be able to enjoy once they get over the search for the necessities of living.

THIS VAST EXPENDITURE cannot be incurred overnight, so the plan has been programmed for thirty years. If we take 1970 as the commencing year, then it will be 2000 A.D. by the time the plan is completed. And it may be another 30 years before the estimated returns from the investment can be fully realised. Thus it may be two generations before the resources of Mahaweli can be fully developed to enable our people to enjoy the fruits of the work of the present generation. This is true of any long-term development work in any country.

It may be worse if political—to use a local phrase—"thathumaru" gains dominance over the programme. Our country has experienced this kind of political see-saw all along and unless there is a radical change in the aspirations in party politics this project may end up like the first Multipurpose project—Gal Oya.

Various political parties operating in the country must have some weapon or wand to mesmerise the

voters to get control of political power. This explains why all the long-term development plans started around 1952 and after, has had tremendous setbacks, even neglect of schemes already completed with the changing of political power. This explains why some of our leaders were subject to frontal attacks by the Opposition for policies to give the people a chance to live a better life. The most recent attack and still fresh in the minds of the people is the ridicule rained on the "green revolution" of 1968/1970. Today who has the last laugh?

Long-term plans cannot produce results overnight; it must go through the natural gestation period to experience a change for the better. To overcome immediate economic unrest and unemployment problems, short-term plans, that can be implemented and results within the constitutional life of a Government must be formulated—not once a Government comes into power but before, so that implementation can be given effect to immediately the people vote a party into power. That is why in a party system of representation, each party faces the electorate with a clear cut manifesto explaining its policies and programmes.

This has seldom happened in this country. The political theme has been, "destroy this, destroy that, and go with hunting the political opponents and so on." Today even after six and a half years in control of the Government, we still hear the Ministers breathing fire and brimstone at those who were in power before them in earlier years. This kind of vengeance is of no use to the people, however, it shows how impotent and incapable the politicians we have elected are, to face national problems? If Sri Lanka is to be saved from her economic morass and raise her people above the starvation line brought on by irrational policies, the whole nation must work in harmony and in unison to win the war on want.

Take this over, nationalize that venture, redistribute what one has built up over the years or confiscate that, put that one into jail and all such activities mainly to strike terror and show of power to the people will not help production; a massive and persistent

production programme to create new wealth in what is Lanka. Sri Lanka cannot even claw up to the brim of the morass with the present day policies. The destruction of the economy, confiscation, setting one class against another may be ideologically impressive and this is what is claimed over the Government-controlled mass media system. But what the people pray for, and ask for, is one constructive step to pull them out of their present economic plight. What has gone before, was not all that necessary for an economic resurrection. If the nation and the people were placed before self, and our incapacity to deliver the goods and what was promised are admitted by those in power we will be soon out of our difficulties which are increasing hourly. This, of course, is crying for the moon.

If the development of Mahaweli resources get entangled with the political and communal squabbling and the kind of thinking as aforesaid the nation would have spent a generation of effort without result. This is what must be avoided at all costs and to achieve it, it must be placed at a national level above party policies.

WE HAVE OUR FIRST NATIONAL MULTIPURPOSE VENTURE—The Gal Oya Valley Development which was then conceived to benefit the Sinhala, Tamil and Muslim communities in a region where the latter two communities predominated. The exercise was to settle the Sinhala in the area, so that they could learn to live in harmony and cement one nation with three different ethnic groups. If not for our politics thereafter, the ideal would have been achieved. Taking Gal Oya as a case study let us see what happened there, before we elaborate on the development of Mahaweli Resources.

Gal Oya has its source on the Eastern slopes of Madulsima range of hills. It is one of the major rivers that enters the sea in the Eastern Coast. In the Sinhala occupied area it is known as Gal Oya and in the Tamil speaking region Pattipola Aru. In the lower reaches it irrigated around 33,000 Acs. mainly owned by Tamils and Muslims who have been living extremely harmoniously over decades. Economic well being breeds harmony in any multicomunity.

The problem in the valley was, periodical and unseasonal floods during the N.E. Monsoons. In this region harvesting of paddy is in January and February and this happened to be the flood season in the area, so crops were subjected to flood damage when ready to harvest. During the Dutch and British periods many hydraulic devices were adopted to mitigate flood damage, but this never took up the solution to the problem as an integrated one of irrigation, flood protection and drainage.

The fact that the scheme, as it was, served a Tamil and Muslim community did not deter the then policy-makers from giving relief to the two minority communities. They were a part of Ceylon's population. Their objective was to break-through communal barriers and build one nation, one people. So in the year 1948, work was started as a multi-purpose project—may have been the first of its kind this side of Suez as the saying used to be then.

The river was to be dammed just at a gorge where it enters the flood plane and provide irrigation water, hydropower, flood protection, improved drainage in the lower basin, river training, damming of subsidiary tributaries, and riparian bank protection. Other amenities were recreation facilities, conservation of flora and fauna, ... wild life sanctuaries, and a host of other activities expected to give birth to what may be termed a "full life" to the settlers of the region. But it did not end that way.

The technical concept of the project was perfect even by today's standards. All technical details, development schedules, organisations, management expertise, contractors and other requirements to establish twenty thousand farming units in a new region were worked out to every detail. It established a new management and labour relationship introduced by the "blasted American Imperialists" who were the contractors to the Head works. They improved the quality of living of our work force and set the standard for other work sites. Large numbers of executives, engineers and other technical officers of different disciplines were recruited and assigned work in the Development area or the area of Authority of the Statutory Gal Oya Development Board. Over two thousand Board employees were

brought to the area replete with all the necessities for a comfortable life. The American contractors were there for a short period and once their mission completed they departed leaving their imprint of disciplined management and execution of work for our people to carry on.

All these preparations were the forerunner to the main object of the Project—To establish a farming community of one hundred thousand souls to exploit the facilities established for their benefit in the Gal Oya Valley.

However as the work progressed and the work force increased, the ultimate objectives receded to the background, and the maintenance of a large work force and their welfare became the primary concern of everyone associated with the project; administrators, executives, worker leaders and so-called public spirited individuals get involved in the welfare of the employees. Soon trade unions, worker federations, groups for collective action, trade-wise, employment gradewise, community-wise, religious groups, etc. were formed to push their claims and rights with the result much time and energy were wasted to resolve the confrontations with the authorities.

Into this fray entered the politicians who found something to ignite to enhance their political chances. They all entered the fray regardless of development programmes, expenditure, and most of all, the welfare of the new set-

tlers who were brought to the region with the promise of an El Dorado. The people who were going to use the facilities and enrich our economy got neglected and abandoned in the wilderness.

The politicians found the Unions etc. good hunting ground and went all out to organise the work force to confront the administration; meeting a farmer and finding out his difficulties was not glamorous enough for the politicians as they—the farmers were not organised. He preferred the platform from where he could screen his head out get into a trance to wreak vengeance on whoever opposed them. Of course such historicities have never brought prosperity to a country. that did not concern them.

The struggle between the organised work force and the administration went on till the 1956/57 holocaust in the Valley. This is now history. Meanwhile the farmers who were to make this land of ours productive and prosperous languished in their new villages without anyone to take their problems to or seek any relief. The history of our national effort to develop the "first Multipurpose scheme east of Suez" is a sad and disappointing record. This is the period, 1956 to 1965, covered by "the Farmer Report" issued as a Government Sessional Paper.

THE PLANNERS OF MAHAWELI should take note of these events.

RUMANIAN COACHES

Sir,

Please publish this so that the G.M.R. may see light re Rumanian coaches.

If the idea is to cause maximum discomfort to the passengers the Railway has achieved that: it is a veritable hell having to sit on these seats—cramp and back-ache: getting in and out is a very difficult process. I saw ladies being lifted into the compartment and men jumping down to get out. The G.M.R. and his officials should do a run on these coaches to Kurunegala or Maho and back: then they will realise what passengers go through.

Simon Warusavitarana

37, Gregory's Road,  
Colombo 7.  
27.4.76

With this record before us, what can we expect of Mahaweli development? Will it go the same way? Or will it be stopped half way through like the present day Uda Walawe scheme? With the change of a Minister who may be all enthusiasm to finish at least a part of it, but with his departure or change the whole development outlook may grind to a halt as it happened in other major projects. And if this happens what of the loans we have taken to produce a nett return of 1,200 million rupees a year? Like the beggar who got the gift of a horse, will we have to starve with so much capital lying around us, because we have not the wherewithal to make use of it?

Like at Gal Oya, will we get embroiled in politics of the Unions and Labour organisations and neglect the farmers who eventually must deliver the goods? These are questions to which there must be clear cut answers and accordingly plan our actions to place the Development of Mahaweli resources above politics, above party antagonism, above administrative bungling, and direct all energies to it as a national venture with no political or party colours to divide the solidarity of purpose and take it forward phase by phase, stage by stage to its ultimate completion.

In this march forward, the most important individual is the farmer or the peasant who is going to test the claims made by the planners. It is he, who must be organised to maximise production, and he, who must dictate terms to the work force engaged in construction etc. This exercise failed at Gal Oya—nothing was completed to a finish as labour problems increased, work was abandoned and various ruses were adopted to get over the problems.

With the result, if the plan of development were compared with what was achieved during its 25 years of operation, the verdict would be that Gal Oya is a colossal failure. Walawe may follow suit. The country cannot afford to repeat the same performance at Mahaweli—not that we could afford the former two either. Mahaweli water resources are to be used for the development of land resources of the Dry zone where the economic future of this country lies as expressed by Dr. Weitz of Israel. Once the area is developed agri-

culturally, Agro-based industries should be started to give a balance to the economy of the region.

**THE FINANCIAL VIABILITY OF Mahaweli project** can be achieved only if a crop pattern, different to what is practised today in the region, is adopted. To do this a new farmer has to be created and trained to accept the new crop patterns and the new technologies needed to maximise return. Paddy alone is disastrous to the investment as cost per unit of production per unit of water is used is extremely high. The recommendation is to diversify agriculture to include other field crops than paddy, and some tree crops to maintain equilibrium of labour resources.

Whether we like it or not, diversification had to be the main programme of agricultural development to get through the World Bank Economic Analysts and without their support and endorsement the loan was not forthcoming—this explains why the World Bank made it conditional to Bank surveillance to granting the loan. They had very good reasons for this after they looked into Gal Oya and Uda Walawe results.

This was objected to by our Government and rightly so. Nevertheless it is up to us to follow the crop pattern that will yield the highest return for the investment. There is no politics in this, it is national survival. The development programme must be viewed that way. Our own fear is that once the Mahaweli water is turned on to the various political constituencies and with a Political Authority in control of development in his area of authority, paddy will be the only crop grown—the crop our peasants are used to. To prevent such a thing happening, there is the need for a separate policy decision making body outside a single Minister's portfolio.

*The recommended crop pattern is: Paddy, Green-gram, Black-gram, Cowpea, Groundnuts, Maize, Red onions, Bombay onions, Chillies, Vegetables, Sugar-cane, Cotton, Kenaf, Citrus and Pasture and Fodder for milk production. This crop pattern will result in the cultivation of about 2 million crop acres per agricultural cycle.*

(To be Continued)

## HERE AND THERE BY DOPEY

### What Next?

The other day for the umpteenth time the Imperial flag was lowered and the National flag was hoisted to mark the occasion of take-over of a million rupee building complex of an Agency house. This august ceremony was followed by the usual hot air-letting by the politicians and other command performers on such occasions. It was said in all seriousness, fitting the occasion and those present at the flag lowering and hoisting: "Our war against Imperialist power is over. This marks an important achievement towards the economic Independence of Sri Lanka." My informant did not say whether all this was said in Sinhala or in the "Imperial language". However it does not matter; it was "an important achievement". It was really a difficult achievement, even though the take-over was supported by all legal and punitive measures to subdue the presently departed imperialists. Of course, before "the achievement" was set in motion, there were back stage activities where the "Imperialists" tied us down hand and foot to a massive loan at five (five) percent interest so that the "Imperialists" can compensate their nationals who suffered by the economic conquest.

Without winning this war with the Imperialists, the economic future of Sri Lanka could not be secured, in spite of the fact these latter-day "Imperialists" provided employment, very gainful employment at that, to thousands with several fringe benefits, much better than what the Public Sector employees got. Of course, introvertly this difference of treatment of the exploited was the nagging pain of the Government.

Because of the delay to conclude a successful war with the "Imperialist power" we were being impoverished hourly—all wars do impoverish the belligerents, except the generals. It must be the same in Sri Lanka—and we are still far away even to get a glimpse of the promised star of hope in the horizon. Anyway thank goodness that an armistice has been signed even though it preceded

tying the nation to a multi-million (sterling) loan to be paid by the next Government or by the generations yet to be born, anyway those of us who witnessed this war of liberation and those who fought the imperial war will be saved from the ordeal of squeezing ourselves to pay back the loan. Our benevolent Government is aware that you and I cannot be squeezed any more—fighters may be but there is inequity in squeezing only that section, so we got away scot free.

Now what about the troubles of the generations to be born who have to pay back and service the loan—well, one way out of it, is prevent the future generations being born. There are several devices to achieve this; family planning, legalised abortion, the pill, sterilization, gifting unlimited quantities of "preethie" to those who want to have a good time without bearing the consequences. There are many others in our armoury to control the numbers so that those who survive can bear the burden of repaying the loan in an expanding economic independence. This is of the future, but what about you and I who are ageing fast in the midst of shortages? Well, if you and I do not make sacrifices today, do not think of providing something to the toddlers who may not see the light of day with the intensification of family planning etc. etc. So bite your teeth, tighten your belt, if it has not gnawed into your spine yet, stand in the queue for the monthly ration of 3/4 lbs. of sugar at the black market controlled price, wait in the rain for the bus that never arrived, because of a lightning strike by the conductors due to a difference with drivers over the division of day's spoil, spend hours patching your pant seat or if you got the dough and the energy get into the thick of a melee to get the span of cloth issued under Police surveillance on the ration card, or avoid all this by going without a meal. Many do this today. Truly one could not appreciate the winning of the economic independence without experiencing such hardships.

We were on the march for this war of Independence since 1932 but as things are, we have not reached the end—the end may be when the multimillion sterling loan is paid back and who knows

there may be several more loans to pay back this one. It is our present financial policy to raise a loan to pay interest and principal of another loan because of our "stag-economy" or a backward slipping economy. Though the country is made to believe, over the SLBC, the country never had it so good. Don't believe it.

\* \* \*

## Inania of this, that and the other

### Big Colleges, Small People?

By INNA

It was in the latter half of 1974.

A bright young lad came up for a Conference in Colombo; brought two friends the second day. Invited me to his school—a large private school run by a religious denomination, and that within the W/Province. The meeting or assembly was organised for the Chapel. No one should talk but listen in silence. No questions. But bits of paper came coming up to me under the pews. The talk was on Dives and Lazarus, on avoiding the pitfalls of Scylla and Charybdis, of decadent capitalism and rabid communism. The spick-and-span fellows who made regular excursions to the capital city and hobnobbed with the large of the land, sent papers with such legends as:

—"Jesus did not find it too easy to convert rich men; and do you hold out any hope? True, your Dumont says that Ceylon spent or budgeted 700,000,000 Rs. for defence in 1971-1973, but we have to defend ourselves when attacked. Isn't it so?"

—"What will you say if clergymen hoard money"? Isn't that as bad, or worse than, an ordinary man hoarding wealth?"

—"On being told that there seems to be an unequal distribution of wealth in Sri Lanka, note came: "if they get close to fifty cents a day, they could have a chinese feed, a chinese roll would do."

—"Rinso is used for washing clothes. Read the papers more care-

fully. You said just now 'Buy Rinso and keep your car clean'.

—"I don't think it wise nor possible to uproot the rooted oppressors. So Don't try."

—"You said Social action is the answer. What about the spiritual aspect of man. Read the Bible. That's enough. More than enough."

—"On being told in passing: "It is unfair to look at Maradana as if it were only the breeding place of thugs and criminals", one scrap came up with the words. "How many thugs are there at Sulaiman terrace?"

And so on up to fourteen scraps of paper of all shapes and sizes, and a last one, a minute before the end, a small dirty scrap of paper, which I still keep as the juiciest bit of amusement: "Hi! Karl Marx II". I came back and read two passages for my consolation, because I had heard in season and out of season that christian schools were being kept for their religious fervour and religious atmosphere, etc: The first was:

"Take care, Christians, my brothers Beware of invoking the fear of Communism as an excuse for avoiding a change in the structures which confine millions of the sons of God in a sub-human condition" (Archbishop He'der Camara at Liverpool, 24 June 1972). Issued by the SCM Press, People with a Purpose, 3/p.19.

The second was:

"Education means teaching people how to base the whole of their lives on the Gospel. But, all too often, education simply teaches them how to get on in the world. Much of the human race has been steeped in that mentality which glories in possessions. Schools tend to be taken up with the established order of things, so much, that all they manage to produce is a carbon-copy man whom that order wants produced in its own image, a far cry from the new man of the Gospel" (Synod of Roman Catholics, on Justice, 1971, n.25)

One out of 14 slips of paper (over two hundred were present) asked: "What measures do you think should be taken to remove exploitation".

And now, with collar and tie, they'll sing at Christmas 1976—Christians Awake Salute the Christmas Cake."



# Confidentially

- Rumanian Coaches
- Lake House Profits

IS IT NOT A FACT that the new Rumanian coaches have made train travel, especially for medium and long travel, more difficult and more uncomfortable for passengers? That we mentioned in this column last week the seats were uncomfortable and the coaches were badly ventilated? That the footboard steps to entrain and detrain were so microscopically small that it has become an gymnastic feat even for the most athletic of passengers to get into and get out of the coaches? That a reader has written to say that some ladies had to be carried into and out of the coaches? That our special investigators have not yet sent in their reports about their experiences in these Rumanian coaches? That when we do receive the reports we will make them available to our readers? That another major complaint is that there was no leg room even for small-made persons to sit on the seats facing each other (as they are expected to do)? That knees knock into each other's? That it would be embarrassing if women and men are placed on opposite seats even in the reserved compartments which have taken the place of the much more comfortable sleeperettes? That on seats meant for two (in the Rumanian coaches), only one can sit with some degree of comfort if one sat sideways (and for how long can one sit sideways on a long distance route?) That the charge for the reserved third class and the reserved second class compartments on the Rumanian coaches is the same as for seats on the sleeperettes? That this is tantamount to highway robbery because passengers have really to be paid a compensatory allowance by the CGR to sit in one of these Rumanian coaches? That seats on the Rumanian coaches should be made cheaper? That one of the matters we have asked our investigators to find out is the names of the bureaucrats from the CGR who were responsible for ordering these coaches on the present specifications? That these gentlemen should be espe-

cially decorated for picking on railway coaches which will impose new forms of torture on railway commuters? That the coaches from China were among the best that had ever been received in the island? That Indian coaches suit our conditions and our passengers equally well? That specifications for coaches and carriages suitable for the CGR have been laid down long long ago? That for a mistake of this kind to have arisen it means that the bureaucrats who chose and ordered these carriages have to be subject to psychiatric tests (remember Patty Hearst the US insurgent!) to know why they chose these carriages? That only a small race of mini-dwarfs and pygmies can use these compartments with any degree of satisfaction or comfort? That the CGR and the railway travelling public of Sri Lanka will now be saddled with these 140 carriages for a number of years? That the Minister should investigate whether the carriages, still not delivered, can be altered to suit local requirements and conditions?

IS IT NOT IRONIC that the Lake House papers should proclaim that the Associated Newspapers of Ceylon Ltd (ANCL Ltd.) made a profit of Rs. 53 lakhs for the year 1975? That this amount was before taxation? That the draft accounts had been approved by the Board of Directors? That the Board had also recommended that shareholders be paid a dividend of 10% for the year ending December 31, 1975? That the press report had also boasted that the "company's profits are nearly double that earned in the preceding year and have been achieved despite the continuing high costs of newsprint and other raw materials affecting the newspaper industry not only in Asia and other parts of the third world but also in the rich industrial countries...the ANCL Ltd which came under new management on July 20, in 1973 continues to be the biggest printer and publisher in Sri Lanka of newspapers, periodicals and magazines in three languages..." That this is a mouthful, a big mouthful? That this self-congratulatory back-scratching suppresses some of the most important facts? That the biggest amount of Rs. 53 lakhs (before taxation) is held out as a kind of smokescreen to hide all the current sins of ANCL Ltd.? That it must be

remembered that the price of newspapers have been doubled since 1973? That advertisement rates have been trebled and in some cases quadrupled in the relevant period since 1973? That ratio of advertising to reading matter has been increased so much that a reader does not get his money's worth in the daily papers he buys? That the quality of reading material in the newspapers, periodicals and magazines, has deteriorated so much that a cultural desert will soon overwhelm Sri Lanka if ANCL Ltd. is permitted to continue publishing the way it is doing today? That apart from all this, newsreporting has become so slanted and distorted that an ever-growing credibility gap has come between newspaper readers and ANCL Ltd.? That additionally the present attempts to "manage" the news are so clumsy and ineffective that all efforts to build a pro-government image through the papers published have begun to boomerang by the ANCL Ltd.? That circulation figures are deceptive? That the records of unsold copies are not what they should be? That the 53-lakh profit has been made in spite of the extravagant and unconscionable expenses incurred by some Directors and other ANCL elite wining and dining at five star hotels (as has been revealed in many Opposition papers)? That it is no doubt a good thing to earn profits? That the 53-lakh profit made by Lake House can no doubt be held out as an example that a government-run institution can make also profits? That the Bank of Ceylon and the People's Bank have made enormous profits although they were state-owned institutions? That profits are not the sole yardstick to measure the success or otherwise of a state-controlled publishing concern intended to establish soul-uplifting models for newspaper and magazine publications to pave the way for a cultural renaissance? That the ANCL Ltd has become a farcical mockery of what those who fought for its emancipation from the Wijewardenes had wanted and had hoped for? That if the bosses of ANCL Ltd outlined plans to improve the quality of their publications and also to give more reading matter in their pages, it would inspire greater confidence in the future of Lake House?

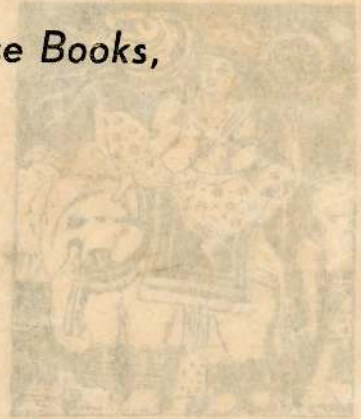


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