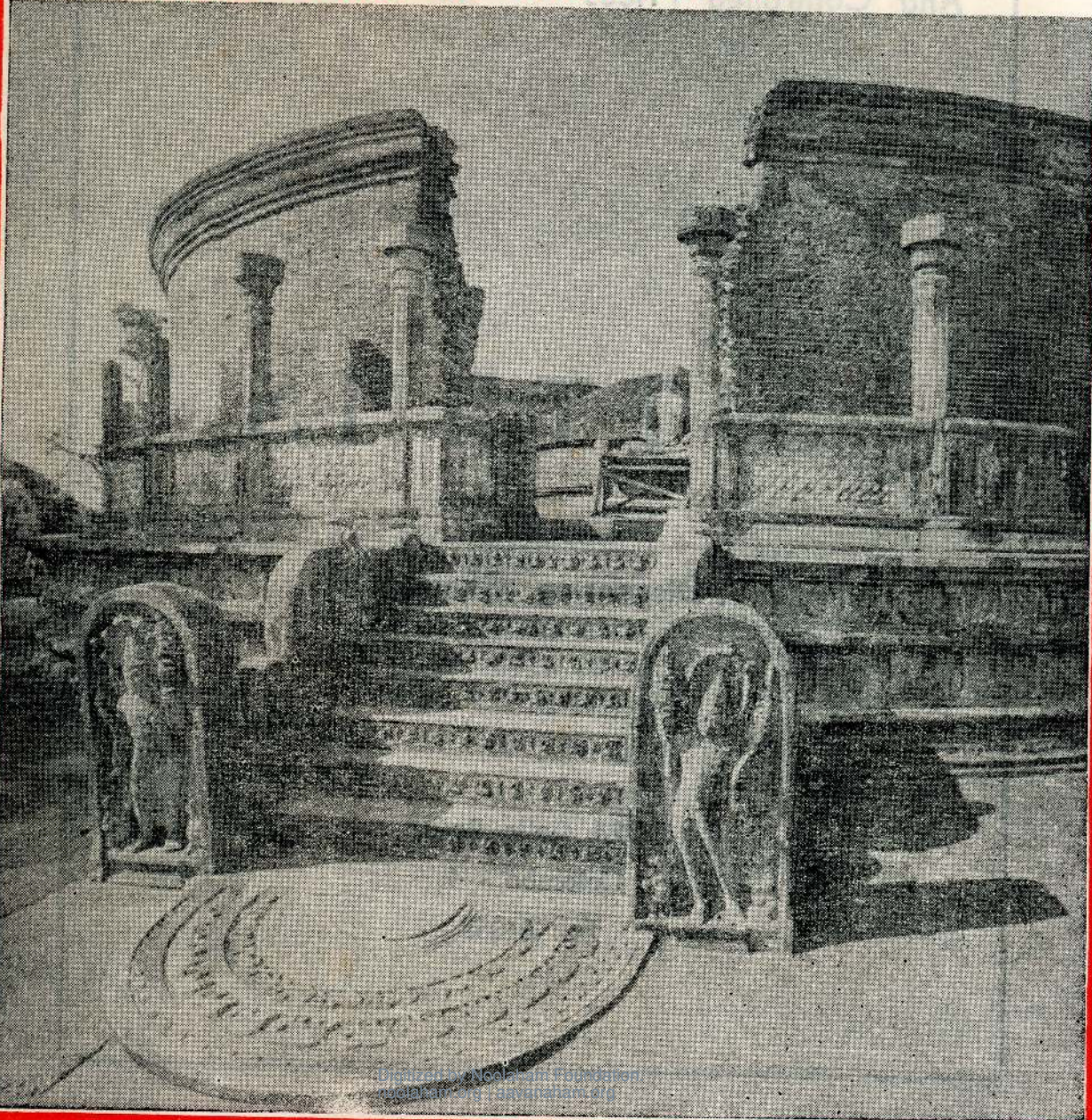


Vol. 24 No. 28 — January 19, 1980 — No. 2-50

TRIBUNE



25TH YEAR OF PUBLICATION



Printed by the Ceylon Government Press, Colombo.

At The Fixed
And Controlled Prices

SITTAMS

Dispensing Chemists

259/1 Galle Road,
Colombo - 4.
Tel: 84058

Letter From The Editor

THE PICTURE ON THE COVER is only to remind ourselves that whilst we glory in our ancient civilisation and devote time, energy and money to restoring them to their pristine splendour (even with the help of UNESCO), there is an even greater need to concentrate on restoring the presently ruinous state of major aspects of our rural agriculture to reverse trends of decreasing production. Last week we published a survey published by the Ministry of Plan Implementation on the current state in the production of subsidiary food crops in 1978. The situation is really much worse than depicted in the survey because it is based mainly on the questionable statistics of the Department of Agriculture which has a vested interest in pretending that everything is on the up and up in agricultural production. Furthermore, newspaper reporting and the developmental journalism of all our daily papers without exception is only an echo of what ministers and officials retail as news. There is no attempt to check whether what is said is true or even possible. Leaving aside subsidiary food crops which is in a dangerously parlous state, let us look at the way newspapers have dealt with rice production which is undoubtedly the most encouraging sector of our rural agriculture. According to the *Daily News* of October 2, 1979 (other papers too carried the story) the Minister of Agricultural Development and Research, E. L. Senanayake, told an International Seminar on Crop Insurance sponsored by UNCTAD—this country is now plagued by an epidemic of time-consuming and money-robbing seminars—that “the country was well on its way to self-sufficiency” and spoke on the virtues of Crop Insurance to meet the vagaries of the weather especially rain. It will be recalled that in 1978 when a very small quantity of rice was exported to the Maldives, there were mighty tamashas at the Dalada Maligawa (and other places of worship), and at the Colombo Port when the few sacks were loaded on a vessel. In addition several thousands of rupees (part of the millions so wasted) were spent on newspaper supplements to tell the public that by 1979 Sri Lanka would be self-sufficient in rice and in 1980 this country would be in a position to export rice. Minister of Trade, Lalith Athulathmudali, also sang his usual hosannas about the certainty of exporting rice. No daily newspaper—even after its representatives had attended several well-funded seminars on the mystiques of developmental journalism—thought it necessary to investigate and report on how far these claims were valid or whether this 1978 boast of self-sufficiency in 1979 and export in 1980 were valid. In agricultural “developmental” reporting allowances are always made for possible shortfalls, due to drought, floods or adverse weather conditions—for exports are only undertaken when sufficient buffer stocks have been built up against such natural calamities. After all this hallalujah talk about rice-exports, the *Ceylon Daily News* reported on October 10, 1979 that “Sri Lanka will import 300,000 tonnes of rice next year (1980), 200,000 tonnes will come from China and the balance 100,000 tons from Pakistan.”

(To Be Continued)

TRIBUNE

Ceylon News Review

Founded In 1954

A Journal of Ceylon and

World Affairs

Editor, S. P. Amarasingam

Every Saturday

January 19, 1979

Vol. 24 No. 28

TRIBUNE

43, DAWSON STREET

COLOMBO — 2.

Tel: 33172.

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EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Sri Lanka, India, Afghanistan

Colombo, January 12.

After the official Sri Lanka government 'Withdraw from Afghanistan' call to the Soviet Union on January 4, there has been silence in official and non-official quarters about the developments in Afghanistan. Only CPSL (pro-Moscow) and the CPML (pro-Peking) have issued official statements about predictable and expected lines. Neither the UNP nor the SLFP have made statements. The UNP can claim that the government statement on January 4 represented its policy view.

Why the SLFP has been silent so long is difficult to understand. Apart from the CPSL the SLFP is the only party in Sri Lanka that reacts to important political developments abroad. There is no doubt that the SLFP wants to be ultra-cautious after its *faux pas* over Pol Pot's non-existent regime in Kampuchea. Furthermore even those inside the SLFP tempted to toe the Peking line have become unhappy with China's adherence to the same kind of capitalist development policies as the UNP, and also Peking's new found enthusiasm for US and Western policies on foreign affairs.

Even in regard to SLFP's hobby horse of the Indian Ocean Peace Zone, China now backs the US military presence there—no doubt as a counter to its pet enemy the Soviet Union. China, much to SLFP's chagrin, welcomes (vide *Sinhua* statement 9/1/80) USA's plans to "develop naval and other facilities on Diego Garcia." All this has naturally created problems for the pro-Peking inclined section of SLFP policy makers. It is this dilemma that has probably kept SLFP silent on a large number of foreign affairs questions those days.

The LSSP has been silent so far. So also the JVP. Both these parties are usually vociferous about certain aspects of foreign developments, but this time they have been silent on the Afghan matter for nearly three weeks. The TULF and the CWC have also not said anything, but they do not usually comment on foreign affairs unless there are particular reasons for making statements.

In the past, right up to the last days of Morarji Desai, Sri Lanka has tended to keep in step with India in matters of foreign affairs. Mrs. Bandaranaike had never moved away much from Mrs. Indira Gandhi and Mr. J. R. Jayewardene was willing to be on the same wavelength as Morarji Desai. Today Mrs. Gandhi is again in supreme power whilst Mrs. Bandaranaike is skulking in the opposition. Morarji Desai and the Janata are out, Mr. Jayewardene is left alone on the wavelength.

What will the SLFP do? Mrs. Indira Gandhi has taken a line on the Afghan issue which Morarji Desai would never have adopted. Here is an independent line in the national interest of India. What line would be in the national interests of Sri Lanka?

At the time of writing, Indira Gandhi is still Prime Minister designate, but she has made various statements which give an inkling of her thinking. A DPA despatch from Paris datelined, Jan, 11 stated: "Indira Gandhi, India's future Prime Minister, said yesterday in an interview with the French Radio that a Sino-American military co-operation would be 'very dangerous for India and for the entire region'. Talks about such co-operation as a result of the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan were held this week by US Defence Secretary, Harold Brown during his visit to Peking. Mrs. Gandhi said China had expansionist aims and India had already suffered from them in an apparent reference to the 1962 Sino-Indian border war. China was also supporting Pakistan, she said, adding that she hoped that she would not have to ask for Soviet aid. In her opinion, US arms supplied to Pakistan could be used 'either against Afghanistan or against us or against the people.' If Soviet statements were correct there could be no question of Soviet aggression in Pakistan, Mrs. Gandhi said, but there was a danger that other interventions would follow.

"Mrs. Gandhi said: 'I do not want to name the countries but there are western countries which opened the door to the Soviet Union. Mrs. Gandhi said her country did not want to have an atom bomb. But India would not join the "unjust" nuclear non-Proliferation

agreement which allowed the major powers to do what they like, she said. Commenting on the Non-Aligned nations—to which Afghanistan belongs—she said Fidel Castro, the Cuban Head of State and the Non-Aligned Movements present Chairman, was a pro-Moscow man. However, she said she did not know whether this had a bearing on the movement. The Soviet Union, she said, was supporting the Non-Aligned countries on the issue of independence and de-colonialisation. We do not turn toward Russia but Russia is turning towards us, she said”

On the same day, January 11, *Reuter* from New Delhi stated: “India has no reason to doubt Soviet assurances that Russian troops will be withdrawn from Afghanistan when the Kabul government asks that they leave, an official spokesman said today. The External Affairs Ministry spokesman said the Soviet Union had assured India that the “Soviet presence” in Afghanistan would be withdrawn when the Afghan Government asks Moscow. India has no reason to doubt this assurance from a friendly country like the Soviet Union, he said. The spokesman’s statement was the first on Afghanistan since Prime Minister-Designate Indira Gandhi was asked to form a new government yesterday.

“The spokesman said India would speak in the UN General Assembly debate on Afghanistan later today and, in line with Mrs. Gandhi’s assessment of the situation, point out that recent developments in Afghanistan could not be looked at in isolation. These were part of developments which were of concern to India, such as the building up of bases and supply of arms in Asia and the Indian Ocean region, he said. The spokesman indicated India would refer to outside powers which interfered in Afghanistan’s internal affairs by training, arming and encouraging subversive elements to create disturbances. The spokesman said India’s Permanent Representative Brajesh Mishra would make the following points when he addressed the Assembly: The Soviet Union has indicated to India that it came to the assistance of Afghanistan at the specific request of the Afghan Government, first made by President Hafizullah Amin on December 28 (Mr. Amin was over-thrown and killed in the Soviet-backed coup which installed in power

Babrak Karmal the following day). A debate on Afghanistan in the General Assembly would not be any practical help and might only lead to an intensification of the cold war and threaten peace and stability in the region.”

SRI LANKA’S NATIONAL INTERESTS are much less complex than those of India, but we can learn from the Indian policy formulations to help us evolve a line of our own—the most important aspect of which is to keep out of the cold war of big power geo-strategic power policies. The Sri Lanka Government statement of January 4 is an eminently correct one which does not drag the country into the international cold war politics. (The UNP has taken umbrage because the CPSL had called the Government statement an echo of the “Carter Chorus” and replied, by saying that the government statement was “non-aligned” and was neither “Carter Chorus” nor “Brezhnev Barkies”. Polemical exchange of this kind do nobody any harm—as long as Sri Lanka is not pushed into the fast growing cold war that is threatening to become hot in parts.

One thing to which Mrs. Gandhi is understandably opposed is the growing possibility of a Sino-US axis. Even if the axis has not yet taken concrete shape, Carter seems to have adopted the Hua-Deng strategy of “teaching a lesson” to a country that refuses to “play the game” according to the rules laid down by one side. According to the *New York Times*, the Soviet Union has violated an unwritten code of conduct agreed on by the USA and USSR by intervening in Afghanistan in the way Moscow did. Therefore, Carter has set out to teach the Russians a lesson and seems to think that by depriving them of grain from the USA and other capital countries, the USSR could be “taught a lesson” that will not only make her withdraw from Afghanistan but also refrain from taking similar actions in future.

It is not clear who will have the last laugh. And Carter also seems to hope that resolutions in the UN Assembly would perform miracles. The USA herself had paid little or no attention for decades to UN resolutions on Palestine, Israeli aggression, on South African apartheid and a whole lot of other matters.

Hua and Deng failed to teach the Vietnamese a lesson by launching an invasion of their territory. Can Carter teach the Russians a lesson by denying them grain? These are academic questions (with important lessons no doubt) for Sri Lanka. But as long as the Government keeps out of cold war involvements, Sri Lanka's non-alignment can be preserved.

There is no doubt that the world is entering a new stage in the cold war. Detente has been pushed to the background. And small countries like Sri Lanka will have to tread the paths of international policy cautiously if she is to continue to be non-aligned.

LETTER

Food As A Weapon

President Carter's order to halt shipments of grain from the USA to Soviet Russia, and his efforts to persuade other grain-shipping nations to co-operate in a blockade are incompatible with his publicly asserted concern for "human rights".

During the war in Vietnam the United States supplied to the South Vietnamese chemicals which were used to destroy rice and other food crops in territories held by the Viet Cong. The stated aim of the programme was to starve the Viet Cong by destroying the food rations. In essence, this aim was similar to that of every food blockade, such as the one imposed against the Central Powers in World War I. There has never been a famine or a food shortage—whatever might have been the cause—which has not first and overwhelmingly affected the small children.

In the United States in 1865, the Confederates had to be beaten militarily; Sherman did not starve them into submission. The Paris Garrison held in 1871 and neither its operation nor that of troops of the Commune was ended by the food shortage, though children died by the thousands. The 1918 food blockade caused deficiency, diseases and starvation among German and Austrian children, but did not interfere with the operations of the armies of the Central Powers. Leningrad held in 1941 and 1942, even though by January 1942 the deaths from starvation rose to as many as nine thousand per day—most of

them deaths of children and the elderly.

The process begins with the death from starvation of small children first, then older children, and then the elderly. Adolescents are likely to survive, and adult men are far less affected. Thus the bands of armed men who make up the invading troops are not likely to starve. They are not hampered by family ties with people in the communities where they move, and they feel entirely justified in seizing any available food in order to have the strength to continue to fight.

The point is not that innocent bystanders are hurt by food blockades. The point is that only innocent bystanders are hurt. Imposing a food blockade on Soviet Russia, even if it could be done, would not have any effect on Soviet troops in Afghanistan or elsewhere. If anyone starves, it will be young children and the elderly—non-combatants.

What about their "human rights"?

Claude R Daly SJ

31, Clifford Place,
Colombo 4.
11 January 1980

Note: See Seymour M. Hersch, *CHEMICAL AND BIOLOGICAL WARFARE*, A Panther Book, 1970, pages 162-163.

Notice Under Section 7 Of The Land Acquisition Act (Cap. 460) As Amended By The Land Acquisition (Amended) Act No. 28 Of 1964.

Ref. No. 2/310

It is intended to acquire the lands described in the Schedule below. For further particulars see the Gazette No. 72 (Part III) of 18-01-1980 of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.

Schedule

Situation:— Igal village, within the T.C. limits of Elpitiya in the D.R.O.'s Division of Bentota Walallawiti Korale (East) in Galle District.

Name of land:— Igalwelaudumulla and Para Addara Owita

Plan and Lot No.:— Lot Nos. 1, 2 & 3 in P.P. Gaa 1510

W. E. L. Fernando
Acquiring Officer, Galle District.
The Kachcheri, Galle. 27.12.1979

Dec. 31 — Jan. 6

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; ST—Sunday Times; SO—Sunday Observer; DM—Dinamina; LD—Lankadipa; VK—Virakesari; ATH—Aththa; SM—Silumina; SLDP—Sri Lanka-dipa; JD—Janadina; SU—Sun; DV—Davasa; DP—Dinapathi; CM—Chinthamani; WK—Weekend; RR—Riviresa; DK—Dinakara; EN—Eelanadu; IDPR—Information Dept. Press Release.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 31: 1980 would be the year of greatest development seen in Sri Lanka in recent times, Finance Minister Ronnie de Mel has said; "more money has been voted for development than in any previous budget in Sri Lanka; through development we hope to give employment to the youth and to raise the living standards of the people", he told a meeting which followed the opening of the Pallepola People's Bank Branch Office yesterday. Trade and Shipping Minister, Lalith Athulathmudali has decided to make specific provisions in the new draft company law, now before the public in the form of a White Paper for the registration of off shore companies in Sri Lanka—CDN. The A I-Ceylon Union of Teachers expects the proprietors of private-non-fee-levying schools to substantially reduce the monthly donations collected by the schools now that the government has decided to pay the salaries and pensions of teachers; a large section of parents too, expect the proprietors of these schools to reduce the donations in view of the high cost of living. A Bill will be introduced in Parliament shortly to conserve the finance of Hindu Temples and bring the management of the less well managed temples under proper management. Crowds started flocking into Anuradhapura yesterday for tomorrow's historical ceremony of the laying of the foundation stone at the Jetawana Dagoba by President J. R. Jayewardene at the auspicious time of 3.25 p.m. The team from the European Economic Organisation

consisting of 40 members from various parts of Western Europe which was here recently has expressed satisfaction with the climate in Sri Lanka for foreign investment. The Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) which claims to be the largest and most influential left party will apply again to the Commissioner of Elections for recognition as a recognised political party—CDM. Experts from China have arrived in Sri Lanka to help the government go ahead with a project to set up microhydro power units; this project, which comes on the initiative of Mahaweli Development Minister Gamini Dissanayake will initially be set up at Kalawewa and thereafter in Colombo. Sri Lanka will have to face considerable inflation in the coming year, Finance Minister Ronnie de Mel warned yesterday—SU. If food stamps have been given to those not eligible to obtain them the officers in charge will have to pay damages up to the value of the stamps issued; Grama Sevakas who proposed the names of those not eligible for food stamps will be dismissed; these decisions have been made by the Ministry of Public Administration and Home Affairs—DP. At a meeting of the Deputy Minister of Defence, high officials of the Defence Ministry, the three service chiefs and the IGP it was decided that anti-terrorist activities should continue in the Northern Province in order to bring many terrorists now operating underground to book—VK. The Youth Front of the TULF has asked all TULF MPs who praised the Government Ministers in the budget debate to apologise to the Tamil people; the Youth Front has threatened to break up with the TULF if this is not done—JD. A number of very important Departments, and institutions and the Ministry of Agricultural Development and Research Mr. E. L. Senanayake will be taken away from him; a new Minister headed by Mr. Chandra Bandara the present Deputy Minister of Agricultural Development will be set up and the institutions taken away from him will come under this Ministry—ATH. A general meeting took place at the President's house between President Jayewardene and Rohana Wijeweera leader of the JVP; a proposal by the PM and the Finance Minister that Mr. Wijeweera must be taken into the government was discussed in this meeting but the

leader of the JVP has refused the offer saying it would harm their present position in the country; Mr. Wijeweera has argued that there must be some sort of unity between the JVP and the UNP but has said that this must not be known to the public and press as it would harm both the UNP and the JVP—DK.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 1: Sri Lanka's expenditure on petrol and oil would exceed seven billion rupees in 1980 at present world oil prices; this represents almost 45 percent of the total foreign exchange earnings of the country, Finance Minister, Ronnie de Mel said yesterday. In a New Year message Prime Minister, R. Premadasa has urged the people to gird themselves to face the New Year and go forward—CDN. Air Lanka—the country's national carrier—last night decided to buy a Lockheed L 1011—500 Tri Star 275—passenger plane to form the nucleus of its new jet fleet. History will be re-enacted today in Anuradhapura, when President J. R. Jayawardene inaugurates the restoration of the Jetavana Dagoba by laying the foundation stone at the auspicious time of 3.25 p.m.—CDM. Local and foreign letters which amount to around a million on normal days, have increased to around three to four million daily now due to the New Year season. A massive government offensive against the trafficking and consumption of narcotics in Sri Lanka is expected to get under way in the new year—SU. The government has decided to draw up a scheme for 1980 to face a possible oil crisis this scheme will be drawn up in bid to continue the present development projects and public services despite such problems; committees will be appointed to each ministry to continue the planned work despite outside problems—DV. A large number of Co-operative heads will be removed in 1980; those who will be sacked first will be Chairmen of Corporations which are running at a loss and chairmen against whom charges of alleged malpractices and corruption are proved will also be removed—DK.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 2: Symbolising the birth of a new era with the inauguration of the Rs. 100 million UNESCO/Sri Lanka Cultural Triangle Development Project President J. R. Jayawardene yesterday laid the foundation stone for the conservation of

the 1700 year old Jetavana Dagoba in the sacred city of Anuradhapura. A cotton cultivation authority to promote the cultivation of cotton on a large scale will be set up soon, Textile Industries Minister Wijayapala Mendis has said—CDN. Airlanka has finalised with Thai Airways International to set up an ultra modern international flight kitchen at Colombo Airport, Katunayake—CDM. President J. R. Jayawardene yesterday called upon political leaders to ensure that democratic freedoms continued to exist and development took place within that framework—SU. Far-reaching legislative enactments providing the legal structure for the proportional representation and the executive presidential electoral systems are expected to be ready for the consideration of Parliament by next month, authoritative official sources said today—CO. The President is reported to be trying to create a cordial atmosphere to have good relations with India if Mrs. Gandhi comes to power; it is reported that the government has sent representatives to meet Mrs. Gandhi—DK. The last meeting of the present Cabinet will take place on January 3; a cabinet reshuffle is expected after that in which a number of present Ministers will lose their cabinet ranking; the President is reported to be considering a small cabinet of 10 members and to appoint a host of non-cabinet ministers in charge of various projects and institutions.—ATH.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 3: Police yesterday patted themselves on their backs when statistics of last year's crime record went on Police tickers; 1979 had the lowest crime record for the decade with 943 homicides recorded till midnight on December 11. Sri Lanka Customs yesterday introduced the use of stickers on passengers baggage replacing the old system of marking baggage with chalk. President J. R. Jayawardene yesterday said that he would go before the people for another mandate in 1983; whether they should give him another term of office or not was their duty. The ready-made garment industry has swiftly pushed its way up as the third highest foreign exchange earner, only below that of tea and rubber, Deputy Minister of Textile Industries, R. M. Dharmadasa Banda said yesterday—CDN. Since the present government led by the President Mr. J. R. Jaye-

wardene assumed office Sri Lanka's foreign debt service ratio has dropped by 7.4—CDM. Iran has responded to a request by Sri Lanka for oil supplies in the new year; Ceylon Petroleum Corporation Chairman Daham Wimalasena who led a two-man oil purchasing mission to Teheran, has concluded a deal with the state-owned National Iranian Oil Corporation. President J. R. Jayewardene yesterday warned of substantial increases in all other commodities when the price of oil goes up. Police Chief, Ana Seneviratne has declared 1980 as Crime Prevention Year—SU. The MP for Kamburupitiya, Albert de Silva will pay his first visit to the electorate with special police protection—JD. Airlanka is to buy a wide bodied Aircraft from Lockheed Company though the international Airlines advisory institute has recommended Boeing and DC jet planes as the most suitable Aircrafts for Airlanka; Lockheed Company had bribed heads of countries to sell their Aircraft—ATH.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 4: The Sri Lanka Government yesterday called upon the Soviet Union to withdraw its military contingent from the territory of Afghanistan immediately, the Foreign Ministry said. The first stage of the island-wide distribution of free textbooks to students up to Grade 10 began yesterday when 13 million text books were despatched from the Maharagama Training College in Army trucks to 31 education circuits in the five education regions. A new floor price scheme for subsidiary food crops was introduced by the Ministry of Agricultural Development and Research with effect from January 1,—CDN. The President will soon be empowered to take over any land which is urgently required for any urban development project for the general good of the people; this provision is being made in the Urban Development Projects (Special Provisions) draft legislation which is to be presented in Parliament by the Prime Minister, R. Premadasa shortly—CDM. The Special Presidential Commission examining the misdeeds of the previous regime is likely to take up the inquiry against ex-Premier Sirimavo Bandaranaike next. The Norwegian Parliament's Committee on Foreign and Constitutional Affairs arrived here yesterday on a five-day visit—SU. A loan of Rs. 50 million is expected this year for village development; a part of this loan will come from the Asian Development Bank while another

part is expected from Japan—DP. The Labour Department is to draw up a Code of Conduct for Foreign Employment Agencies. Mr. Anura Bandaranaike 2nd MP for Nuwara-Eliya-Maskeliya said that he will be the first to leave the SLFP if it is not reorganised. 1150 new rural electrification projects will be inaugurated soon; the government hopes to obtain the full cost of Rs. 145 million from the Asian Development Bank. The Government is to give electricity to houses on an instalment payment basis in a bid to reduce the consumption of kerosene oil; 150,000 gallons of kerosene oil is used per day at present; the Minister of Trade has also requested the government to reduce the import duty of electric cookers—DM. From January 16, public servants will have to do their full work and be in office for the full office hour; heads of Departments etc., have been given the responsibility to see that this is implemented successfully—DV. There is an acute shortage of teachers in every University according to the Minister of Higher Education. The Japanese government has agreed to give a loan of Rs. 1690 million for rural development work—DV.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 5: Persons who undergo voluntary sterilisation now enjoy financial and leave incentives under a Rs. 2.5 million scheme which went into effect on January 1; under the scheme prepared by the Ministry of Plan Implementation, employees in the public and private sector and unemployed married persons who undergo voluntary sterilisation will be entitled to a "financial incentive" of Rs. 100. The Asian Development Bank will provide Sri Lanka a loan of approximately Rs. 175 million to help implement the Rs. 250 million Rural Credit Scheme, Dr. S. T. G. Fernando, Director Development Finance Department of the Central Bank of Ceylon said yesterday. Police say that there is no underworld in Colombo now; not a single incident of serious underworld gang warfare was reported in 1979, a Police spokesman said. The Sri Lanka army has established four Task Forces covering the entire island; they have been set up in the Southern, Central, North-Central and Northern Regions with their headquarters in Galle, Kandy, Anuradhapura and Jaffna, respectively an army spokesman said yesterday—CDN. The

World Bank will assist economic development of the northern and eastern regions; this aid will be used for the integrated development of the districts in these regions; Mr. C. Rajadurai, Minister of Regional Development & Hindu and Tamil Affairs said yesterday that the integrated plan would be based on that pattern already operating in the Kurungala district. The National Agricultural Diversification and Settlement Authority (NADSA) has a projected expenditure estimate of Rs. 48 million this year. Sri Lanka will import more rice this year. This is a result of the Yala Crop recording a drop in production. However, the Maha paddy crop is expected to be a bumper crop. A Water Resources Council will be established soon; the Council would control, regulate and develop conserve and utilise the water resources of the country—CDM. The United States will be the next western industrialised country to send a delegation of businessmen to explore investment possibilities in Sri Lanka; a visit by a team of American financiers and industrialists is expected in May this year, according to official sources. Fisheries technology of science will soon be introduced as a subject at degree level in Sri Lanka's six universities—SU. Petitions like that to be sent to the OPEC for concessional rates, are to be sent to developed countries for similar rates for the supply of rice, flour, sugar and vehicles—VK. The National Price Control Commission is to conduct a full investigation to find out whether prices of some consumer articles are reasonably priced—DV. The CID is now finalising a case against Mrs. Bandaranaike, leader of the SLFP; the report has already been sent to the Attorney-General—DK. Police fired tear gas to disperse pro-Upali Wijewardene demonstrations in Kamburupitiya yesterday. About 8000 people demonstrated in protest of the first visit to the electorate by the new MP Mr. Albert de Silva. Number of persons have been arrested. The President is expected to visit Kamburupitiya soon to discuss the situation with UNP organisations in the area. Mr. Upali Wijewardene launched campaign in Kamburupitiya for the seat in Parliament—JD. The bicycle rickshaw service which is very popular in India is to be introduced in the main cities soon. 1000 such cycles will be imported from India by the

National Youth Services Council and given to unemployed youth who will pay back the cost in 30 instalments; the fares are to be decided later. The government has decided to give permission to the private sector to set up one seed paddy farm in each electorate—SLDP. Students from all universities are complaining that they do not have the basic facilities in new campuses—RR.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 6: Private sector employers will be required by law to pay 3 per cent of each employee's wages to a special trust fund that will shortly be set up to invest such funds to provide retirement benefits for those employees; the 3 per cent will be in addition to the EPF contributions both employers and employees already make; the additional payment will provide benefits over and above those offered by the EPF to retiring members. The cinema industry which feared that the advent of television in Sri Lanka would affect its profitability says that this has not been so up to now—SO. Sri Lanka has succeeded in its diplomatic moves to contain the activities of certain pro-Eelam elements in Europe; at the request of the Sri Lanka government, France has now clamped a prior visa requirement on all Lankans visiting the country—ST. The exodus of Sri Lankans to West Asia, may hamper Sri Lanka's development programme if the outflow of skilled manpower keeps increasing in the future, according to a survey by the Ministry of Plan implementation—WK. The State Film Corporation has requested the government to grant permission for it to close down theatres which do not provide the required facilities to entertainees—CM.

OFFICIAL EXCHANGE RATES

Official Exchange Rates of Commercial Banks to their customers for Telegraphic Transfers fixed on Tuesday this week were as follows:—

CURRENCY	PER 100 UNITS	
	Buying Rate	Selling Rate
U.S. Dollar	Rs. 1544.50	Rs. 1547.50
Sterling Pound	Rs. 3520.50	Rs. 3526.50
Deutsche Mark	Rs. 891.70	Rs. 893.30
French Franc	Rs. 382.00	Rs. 382.70
Japanese Yen	Rs. 6.4625	Rs. 6.4775
Indian Rupees	Rs. 195.55	Rs. 195.95

Why Subsidise Coconuts?

by Dr. M. L. M. Salgado

B.Sc. (Lond), Ph. D. (Cantab), Dip. Agric. (Cantab)

IT IS TIME that someone made some criticism of the present Government Policy of subsidising the consumer of coconuts at the expense of the owner of coconut lands, now mostly small holders of 50 acres extent after the Land Reform catastrophe fell on the owners of these lands in 1974. The few coconut LATIFUNDIA of the pre-Land Reform period went overboard, and even the so-called Coconut capitalists went overboard to the category of small holders, while some landless individuals and so-called peasants got balances of such lands dissected into half acre proprietors.

Coconuts have been the Cinderella of the 3 plantation crops—tea, rubber and coconuts. Coconuts fetched even in so-called boom times what were marginal prices. Though the majority of coconut owners even before Land Reform, were petit bourgeois school masters, small businessmen, rural mudalalis with little capital, and peasant small holders, the coconut industry had barely survived.

Even in 1933 nearly three decades ago, when I joined the Coconut Research Institute copra fetched Rs. 35 per candy, and nuts were sold for Rs. 20/- per 1000 nuts from Bandiripuw Estate owned by the CRI. At that time even husks were sold for Rs. 5/- per 1000 while today husks are bought by coconut fibre mills at Rs. 60 per 1000 while in contrast nuts till recently were controlled at Rs. 750 to Rs. 800 depending on nut size till the recent increase to Rs. 1000 to Rs. 1100 per 1000 nuts.

While tea and rubber represent former Sterling Companies and foreign capital, local Rupee Companies and now state organisations such as Janawasama, the State Plantations Corporation, and Janawasa (called Janavasamas in recent Parliamentary debates), enjoyed good market prices and did even enjoy boom profits at some time during the last 3 decades; from the post-Depression period after the thirties, coconuts never shared these good fortunes and yet remain the CINDERELLA of

these three crops. Only in 1933 there was a temporary boom when copra went up to Rs. 60 per candy, which did not last long. Even during World War II the Commodity Price Agreement let our country down and let down owners of coconut lands.

Instead of BOOM prices those who negotiated the agreement were not sharp enough at a time when we should have got our pound of flesh for coconut oil, copra and ponnac—we were bought over cheap and caught napping. Surely charity begins at Home.

At that time during World War II, Rubber was slaughter tapped and in spite of Sir Oliver Goonetilleke's pleadings, the price of rubber too though high when compared to the corresponding coconut prices offered by the British Government, was low in a monopoly market. We may have been caught up in the sentimental appeal to help the War Effort, we were in the end ultimately cheated in the deal.

SINCE THEN the cost of production (COP), cost of inputs of coconuts, have risen steeply, the rupee devalued. The World Market of Coconut Oil is today Rupees 8000/- per metric ton and on the plea that coconut enters the domestic economy, its local price is artificially controlled at a very low level, contrary to all principles of the Free Market Economy and Liberalised Market Economy. Rs. 1000 per 1000 nuts today is on a devalued currency, is a cruel joke on the coconut economy and the coconut producer. The Government only talks loud-mouthed about a FREE ECONOMY but does not apply it to coconuts.

Today, in fact, the uncontrolled coconut market in a Free Economy should be at least Rs. 2,500 per 1000 nuts or more. But in spite of the Free Economy, nut prices are controlled via the Coconut Oil and copra market, and export control by Government contrary to all Free Economy rules and Principles.

Coconut owners have become the MILCH COW for Sri Lanka consumers for their pol Sambol and rich curries. Similarly for the benefit of local consumers, why not supply tea at a subsidised price now that the State really is the owner of tea plantations managed by JEDB and the State Plantations Corporation? The price of a cup of plain tea (*khata* as it is called) costs 40 cents, a very high cost of an essential beverage as essential for all classes

of Sri Lankans both rich and poor to whom it is dope in an age of stress and strife, that keeps the worker up and doing and free from ennui depression.

So why not have a tea price for the locals at least half the export price? A subsidy of 50 per cent of the export value for the local population to whom tea is an essential article of diet as coconuts, would be a reasonable economic and social measure. What is good for the coconut producer should also apply to the tea producer. What is sauce for the Tea Goose should be also sauce for the Coconut Gander. So why not fix a price for tea for the local market quite irrespective of the world Market Free Economy and the Market economy go to hell as in the case of the coconut Economy. Let the large balance be exported on a Free Economy based on World Market trends. While at the same time increase production of Tea as it should be.

Now that the State (LRC) via the JEDB and the State Plantations Corporation owns and manages the coconut estates or the bulk of the good productive estates, let the National Livestock Development Board, which is vested with some of the highest yielding estates (coconut estates) such as Marandavila and Melsiripura estates which are some of the highest yielding in the Island provide the nuts to the consumer at any subsidised price and produce livestock in preference to coconuts say at cents 75 per nut so that the consumer can have adequate supply of POL SAMBOL to eat his expensive bread to form a balanced diet. Recently it was stated in the press that the young Member of Parliament for Ch.law had arranged to issue nuts to Ch.law consumers at 75 cents per nut from Palugaswewa Estate. So why not extend this liberalised market economy to all State LRC plantations, instead of fleecing coconut producers. Let there be some consistency in this game of a FREE ECONOMY.

ALL THIS TALK of protecting the consumer and his rice and POL SAMBOL at the expense of the coconut producer is very unfair by a large section of producers, both socially and morally. Certainly there should be a more reasonable way of assisting the Sri Lankan

consumer instead of victimising the coconut producers.

If eggs are now Rs. 1/50; Rice Rs. 4/50 a measure or more today, Bread Rs. 1/25 a lb., and the cheapest vegetable "Bandakka" Rs. 2/50 to Rs. 4/- a lb., onions at Rs. 8/50 and chillies Rs. 15/- to Rs. 18/- per lb., why should the coconut owners be victimised to relieve consumers and receive Rs. 1000/- per 1000 nuts as the wholesale price or Rs. 1/- for a nut. It is a meaningless discrimination. There is talk of Paddy price being raised to Rs. 60 as the inputs are very heavy. The Hon. Minister of Coconut Industries and the ADA are preaching in Nattandiya Electorate that coconut palms should be manured. We give Bank Loans, they say, but there is no response. They will not manure at the present prices with the present cost of Inputs and labour costs at Rs. 12/50 per day, cost of fertilisers, transport costs, high cost of picking and on top of all these disincentives, the deterrent caused by mass organised stealing of nuts today in all estate areas which necessitate employing extra watchers unheard of in the good old days. Today an extra watcher means Rs. 300 per month (Rs. 3,600 per annum).

It is a very simple process to stop exports of copra, DC and oil and poonac. But it is a fatal method of subsidising the local consumers. D/C millers till recently had windfall profits, though they were not the primary producers of coconut. They are in fact the middlemen making good money by a system of forward contracts. Even from DC millers the coconut producers never had a fair price for their nuts.

The world international nut market is based on the World Oil market. Coconut Oil at Rs. 8500 per metric ton, can be equated with a local Nut Market of at least Rs. 2500 per 1000 nuts on an equivalent conversion basis for oil, copra and DC fresh nuts and taking into consideration the value of poonac which too is fetching Boom prices on an export market (Rs. 1250 per ton of poonac).

WHY SHOULD THE COCONUT OWNER WHO IS THE PRIMARY PRODUCER ALONE BE PENALISED BY PRICE TAGGING BY STATE INTERFERENCE IN A FREE LIBERALISED OPEN MARKET?

WHAT IS GOOD for Tea should also be good for the Coconut. The prices controlling the world economy is correlated to the general World Economy. We cannot have it both ways, and keep the cake and eat it at the same time. We cannot have it both ways and have a Free Economy for Tea, Rubber, Gem and Plumbago merchants, Textile Manufacturers and Corporation Industries and sell tractors at exorbitant Free Economy prices of Rs. 157,000 for a 4-wheel tractor, (that formerly was Rs. 17,000/-) and Rs. 27,000 for a untested Japanese Tractor (which formerly was Rs. 7,500). Heaven alone knows who gets the fat commissions—the Corporations or any individual who negotiates the tenders and/or contracts.

The Coconut Industry today represents an economy of 50 acre owners and 65 per cent comprised even before the implementation of Land Reform; 65 per cent of the total coconut acreage and not even 5% "Estates", even those managed by the JEDB (Janawasama) and the State Plantations Corporation which are now the ultimate owners on behalf of the State. The days of Coconut *Latifundia* of the pre-Land Reform days are no more.

In Rupee companies comprising coconut lands, there are numerous Shareholders who are people with marginal incomes who have invested their Provident Fund moneys, their gratuities, which were taken over by the Land Reform Commission, who have not yet been paid a cent compensation, while Sterling companies and individual proprietors have been paid by the Compensation Board adequate compensation, while the small investors of this land of ours who have invested in coconuts have to undergo privation.

LET FREE ECONOMY AND THE LIBERALISED FREE MARKET APPLY TO EVERYBODY AND MORE SO TO THE COCONUT PRODUCERS WHO SUPPLY THE NUT FOR THE POL SAMBOL AND OUR CURRIES, and not only to the WORLD MARKET in Duke Street.

BOOK REVIEW

Local Government

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND DECENTRALISED ADMINISTRATION By Dr. G. R. Tressie Leitan, B.A. (Hons) Ceylon; M.Sc. (London); Ph.D. (London.) Published by Lake House Investments Ltd. Paper back: Rs. 80/- Hard cover: Rs. 115/-.

"The case, indeed, for a strong system of Local Government in any State is clear almost beyond the need of discussion. We cannot realise the full benefit of democratic Government unless we begin by the admission that all problems are not central problems, and that the results of problems not central in their incidence require decision at the place, and by the persons, where and by whom the incidence is most deeply felt" wrote Harold J. Laski in *A Grammar of Politics*. In order thus to ensure that the fruits of economic growth are more evenly spread and become the heritage of the many and not remain the preserve of the few, Governments will need to find a vehicle through which this objective can be achieved. That the local government system is pre-eminently the best and cannot be excelled is a premise that can hardly be questioned.

Having read for her doctorate at the London School of Economics, it is hardly a matter for surprise that Dr. Tressie Leitan should have chosen this subject for her thesis. She writes "this book is basically the thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy which (she) presented to the University of London, modified and revised to include later developments of importance." Prof. Peter Self of the LSE, under whose guidance and supervision Dr. Leitan completed the thesis, in his preface to the work, writes "a future reader of Dr. Leitan's work will find it a fascinating study of an administrative system in evolution."

THE FIRST CHAPTER commences with the historical background of the administrative infra-structure from as far back as the 3rd century B.C. and brings us to contemporary times. Under the monarchy, Sri Lanka could boast of an administrative system no less viable than later. Dr. Leitan states "the picture that

emerges is of an orderly hierarchical system deriving from the authority of the king and operating through a provincial and district administrative structure reaching down to the villages." Is it any different now?

One of the greatest problems of the present day, anywhere, is that whenever there is an increase in central control, we lose or tend to lose control of much of what is being done. Moreover there is the inevitable delay and buck passing. At a time when demand is severe, when elected governments have to keep faith with the people who elected them to govern, delay, buck passing and playing safe all the time will not be tolerated. The citizen will not stand it and government cannot countenance this. Hence the case consciously and deliberately to decentralise and to devolve responsibilities assumes an important dimension. In this context we should be thankful to Dr. Leitan for making her work available.

There surely is a limit to the drive and initiative that a Cabinet Minister can apply to the multiplicity of local situations that emerge from time to time. Therefore what is required is a rational determination of what is to be centralised and what decentralised with respect not only to general governmental functions but also to economic and social activities. In this situation would anything be more desirable than to promote a local government system that could best provide "some sub-stations of social power throughout the country and thereby contribute to the infra-structure formation of the country aimed ultimately at the improvement of living standards" (Prof. Henry Maddick). Such a system when well developed could be a tremendous force for improvement and development.

IN CHAPTER II the author traces the development of local government starting from the Gamsabhawas. Unquestionably Sri Lanka has had an excellent system of local government over the centuries—from as far back as the 3rd century BC. Quoting Governor Sir Henry Ward, the author comments that modern local government "may be supposed to be built on the foundations of the Gamsabhawas". Dr. Leitan further points out that "it was in 1946 that the culminating piece of legislation of the period put an end almost

completely to the tutelage of the Government Agent, for in that year was passed the Local Government (Administrative Regions) Ordinance 57 of 1946". It will be noted therefore that it was only during the last 35 years that the local government system in this country was able to develop once more an identity of its own in an environment that nourished the full flowering of an ancient system that had intimately been woven into the very web of our national life.

Referring to the development of local government, Dr. Leitan states "Thus today local government in Sri Lanka continues basically as it was in the Donoughmore era. Independence and the imperatives of planned development have had no effect on it: its functions have not increased appreciably, cramped and made impotent by (mainly) financial inadequacies". She adds "consequently, local government occupies a minor place within the administrative system which is dominated by government departments operating parallel to each other." The author has expressed concern that "unless there is radical overhauling of the entire administrative system which associates democratic local government more closely and more vitally with the overall programme of action this pattern which has developed over the decades is likely to continue."

Prof. Henry Maddick has also expressed similar views. "Administrators and public servants" he says "soften single hearted enthusiasts for their speciality, easily forget that the citizen is a single integrated person not to be approached by different agencies of government on different days with conflicting suggestions and requests different ways of getting about their work." Anyone who has knowledge of how the bureaucracy operates in the rural areas will understand how this multiplicity of village level organisations, many of them performing the same functions as the local authority, creates confusion in the minds of the rural population.

MOST DEPARTMENTS of the central government have their field organisations in the district, independent of the local authorities. When there is a legally constituted body in the village, which in fact is a legal person with powers to undertake the same tasks, it would appear to be an eminently desirable arrange-

ment for the institutions (the local authorities) elected by popular vote to be given the necessary powers and other infra-structure facilities to carry out those functions. Perhaps the "financial inadequacies" referred to by Dr. Leitan can be a major constraint. But there is a massive infusion of central government funds already into the local authority exchequer. Whether and how this could be improved is a matter for decision at the highest political level. What, however, should be encouraged even in the existing context is greater rapport between the state officers in the districts and the local bodies. The administrators and technocrats are drawn largely from a different milieu from the rural people and the leadership thrown up by it. It has been observed, as Dr. Leitan herself points out at page 76, that this rapport is possible where an understanding but not condescending attempt is made.

We now stand at the edge of a New Frontier for local government under a Minister whose complete dedication to local government is the surest guarantee for its continued growth and certain survival as an instrument of intimate citizen participation. Proportional representation and the supremely desirable election of Mayors and Chairmen directly by the people themselves will contribute to a stable and representative local government system. The setting up of Rural Councils in due course will be yet another watershed in its evolution.

In the same Chapter II, I find that Dr. Leitan has quoted a comment in the Choksy Commission (SP 33 of 1955) which is of complete relevance to contemporary times as well "If the business of government is always to continue to remain in the hands of officials, controlled from the centre, then the gap that has existed in the past between those who are governing and the governed will remain as wide as it has been". The question that needs the serious attention of all concerned is to determine how this gap can be eliminated. Should the transfer of authority from the national capital be by deconcentration to field officers of the state or by devolution to local government authorities?

THE CHAPTER ON CENTRAL - LOCAL RELATIONS is of special significance—to state officers and practitioners of local government.

It has been said that the bureaucrat who has a sub-culture of his own, finds it difficult to come to terms with the elected organs of local self government. Dr. Leitan refers to four types of central control—Legislative, Judicial, Ministerial/Administrative and Financial. She discusses each type in depth, and separately. The question that immediately comes to my mind is whether central surveillance of local authority activity should be in the nature of policing, of unceasingly looking over the shoulder, or in the nature of the classical concept, repeated ever so often, of being a friend, philosopher and guide. If local government is to grow, if the elected representatives of each local authority are to deliver the services, then it should unquestionably be the latter. Else initiative will be stifled, growth emasculated and lines of communication choked and the gap about which the Choksy Commission expressed some fear will become a reality. This Chapter deserves special study.

In the next chapter Tressie Leitan refers to what she describes as "Vertical Departmentalism", in relation to Government Departments and about the relationship with Local Authorities. She pointedly remarks "In many developing countries it is not uncommon to find field services of ministries providing most services while local authorities are relegated to a relatively minor role". She makes reference also to Prof. Henry Maddick's observations in Democracy, Decentralisation and Development that "in the early stages when local government is not well developed, the relationship between central and local government will necessarily be that of tutor and pupil, the central government agencies providing basic services with local authorities taking over what they can and when they can."

In our country local government authorities discharge specified mandatory functions and provide the logistic and infra-structure support for the delivery of a wide range of services needed by the community. Their response to the needs of the community differs from the central government agencies, which also deliver services to the people, by the 'grass roots' involvement of the people. Local authorities can be said to constitute the sensors at the very smallest unit of a community. They are not extensions of the central government

field agencies and services. They are autonomous bodies deriving their powers from the statutes enacted by the national legislature itself.

AN IMPORTANT SECTION in this book is the chapter on the Role of the Member of Parliament within the District. "Despite Sri Lanka's transition to Independence there was no fundamental re-shaping of her politico-administrative structure" Tressie Leitan writes. She continues "Independence was accompanied, however, (especially after 1956) by a politically awakened electorate, able to articulate its demands for a share of state benefits. The result was the politicising of the system, but mostly in the sense of an increase in the power and influence of the Member of Parliament". The appointment of District Ministers, now provides political direction at the summit of district administration.

Commenting on the institution of Ombudsman adopted by Sweden in 1809, the author writes "a number of countries have found the institution of Ombudsman a very useful device for the investigation of citizen grievances." Finland, Denmark, New Zealand and Britain have their versions of Ombudsman, while Yugoslavia, Poland, USSR and Japan have their own variations of the system. An interesting remark by a US Senator has been referred to by the author. "Why in the world would anyone want to have another Ombudsman in Washington? After all we have 535 of them already in Congress?"

In the concluding chapter the author writes "In attempting to devise a rational decentralised model for Sri Lanka which can effectively combine democratic viability with efficiency in administration, a number of factors which are of importance in the country have to be taken into consideration. Some of these are social, political, cultural and sociological factors (the impact of which will inevitably affect its working) its centralised tradition and administrative arrangements which have developed over the years, as well as the need for rapid and sustained development." Such a 'rational decentralised' administrative infra-structure has become an imperative now when the country has undertaken massive development programmes and projects cutting right across a number of de-

partments and Ministries. Success would depend to a large extent on a multi-disciplinary approach which also means an integrated strategy. An administration sensitive to the 'social, political; cultural and sociological' compulsions is an indispensable need.

THERE HAVE off and on been critical comments on the public service. The Sun of 10.9.79 carried an excellent and dispassionate editorial comment on the vexed problem and concludes "a careful study of both sides of the coin is long overdue" referring to the complaint "that public servants have a tendency of passing the buck and that they lack a sense of urgency politicians have" and urges much study into the roots of the problem. The same editorial adds that "he (the public servant) is not protected by a Public Service Commission anymore though it has been promised that such a Commission on the lines of the independent Judicial Services Commission will be established" Dr. Leitan makes a brief reference to the present position at page 254 of her book. Her observations at pages 37 et seq are also of interest.

Dr. Leitan deserves our thanks for undertaking this study, particularly at a time when reform in relation to district administration are engaging the serious attention of the authorities. In a process of decentralisation and devolution, local government authorities will unquestionably be called upon to play a vital role. With the appointment of District Ministers, the decision making process and the determination of priorities in respect of district needs, is shifting to the periphery from the national capital. A study of Dr. Leitan's book will be a most rewarding exercise for all of us, but particularly to the public servant and the local government servant.

This is a book that should find a place in every local authority library.

Devaratnam Danforth

SIXTH SEPTEMBER

by S. P. Amarasingam

In the morning and evening plenary sessions of the Sixth Summit on Thursday, September 6, a further 25 heads of state or governments and heads of delegations made their statements—bringing the number who had spoken at the end of the day to 54. The speakers in the morning session included Commander Daniel Ortega of Nicaragua and Maurice Bishop of Grenada—from countries which had just joined the Movement. Others who spoke in the morning session were Zia Ul Haq, President of Pakistan; S. N. Mishra, Foreign Minister of India and head of the Indian delegation; Brigadier General Moussa Troaore, President of Mali; Sekou Toure, President of Guinea; and Godfrey L. Binaisa, President of Uganda. The morning session was chaired by Fabes Burnham, Prime Minister of Guyana.

The evening session was chaired by Sergio Ramirez of Nicaragua. The first speaker was Adam Malik, Vice-President of Indonesia. The others were Mannel Pinto da Costa, President of the Republic of Sao Tome and Principe, Abdul Fateh Ismail, President of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, Seon Ma biane, Prime Minister of Gabon; Heo Sango Amba, President of the Legislative Council of Zaire; Pedro Pires, Prime Minister of Cape Verde; Maati Bouabih, Prime Minister of Morocco; Moumoon Abdul Gayoon, President of the Maldives; Cecil Dennis, Foreign Minister of Liberia; Hassan Makki, first Deputy Minister of North Yemen; Sam Nugoma, President of SWAPO; Joseph Brincat, deputy Prime Minister of Malta; Asan Mufa Camara, Vice President of Gambia; A. M. Mogve, Foreign minister of Botswana; S. M. B. Mubarak Al Khalifa, Foreign Minister of Bahrain; Mustafa Niasse, Foreign Minister of Senegal; Simeon Ake, Foreign Minister of the Ivory Coast; Ahmedou Ould Abdillan, Foreign Minister of Mauritania. The session was concluded at 4.30 a.m. on Friday (September 7).

ZIA UL-HAQ, PRESIDENT OF PAKISTAN, called for a fundamental restructuring of the

world economic system, adding that the developing countries should participate in the discussions on the adoption of decisions that have a bearing on their future. The existing trends, he said, leading to the further impoverishment of developing countries and to the widening of international economic inequalities must now be halted and reversed. For I believe that there is no more urgent issue for the international community than to provide the opportunity for two thirds of the human race to be delivered from the scourge of hunger, sickness, ignorance and degradation." Zia Ul Haq also said that he hoped that the participation in the 6th Summit would make it known that they have renewed their dedication and commitment to the objectives and principles of non-alignment. He drew attention to the special significance of the 6th Summit's being held in Havana, adding that it represented "a landmark in our collective struggle for political and economic independence." Regarding his country's relations with the Soviet Union, he said that they were developing in many fields, adding, "we appreciate in particular the invaluable assistance given to us by the Soviet Union, especially in the development of our heavy industry." He said that Pakistan's relations with "its great Asian neighbour, the People's Republic of China, have been close and friendly". He concluded by saying that the reform of the world monetary and commercial system is one of the most crucial issues in the struggle for a new international economic order and that the present system was actually a perpetuation of colonialist and imperialist exploitation.

INDIA'S FOREIGN MINISTER, SHYAM NANDAN MISHRA said that his country would never let up in its opposition to oppression, racism and exploitation. He said, "For us, non-alignment was never equidistance or neutrality." Regarding the most pressing issues in the international situation, he said, "We cannot allow ourselves to act in any way that is contrary to the principles of the Movement," which are dedicated to safeguarding peace, and he brought up the question of the dissolution of military alliances. He cited the Final Declaration of the Colombo Summit Conference to back up what he had to say regarding economic problems, and he

said that the historic role of the 6th Summit in Havana rested on "making our ideas more operative." Speaking of the problems in Southeast Asia, he said they continue to be a source of concern. Regarding the Middle East, he said that the Egypt-Israel agreement had aroused fears and that Israel's intransigent attitude had become even more marked since the agreement had been signed. He emphasised, "If peace is to be lasting, Israel must first withdraw from the occupied territories," adding that a solution to the Palestinian problem was basic to solving the Middle East conflict. He called for developing countries to take an active part in the international economic negotiations, mentioning the failure of a number of forums due to the lack of a political will on the part of the developed countries. He concluded by saying, "To be non-aligned means to be aligned with truth and truth always wins in the end."

BRIGADIER GENERAL MOUSSA TRAORE, PRESIDENT OF MALI, underlined the fact that the Movement of Non-aligned Countries that was meeting for the first time in Latin America was a tribute to the courageous people of Cuba. In appraising the situation in Africa and Asia, he said that the peoples of Namibia and Zimbabwe, led respectively by SWAPO and the Patriotic Front, will defeat the policy of racism and apartheid and win their independence. He also dealt with the problem of Western Sahara, whose people he said, have an inalienable right to be free. He brought up the matter of recognizing the Palestinian people's right to independence, self-determination and the establishment of a state of their own. Regarding the situation in Cyprus, he called for the demilitarization of the conflict. He also called for consolidating the unity of the Movement through the strict observance of its principles and regulations and for the Movement to maintain its concept of solidarity since the forces of reaction persist in their hostility. He concluded by saying that the Movement must continue to serve the interests of peace and a fairer world order.

AHMED SEKOU TOURE, PRESIDENT OF GUINEA said that imperialism continued to be a grave danger to all the peoples, chiefly those in the developing countries "that are demanding a new economic order and calling

for fair changes that will guarantee a fair remuneration of the efforts made by the working people." He said that non-alignment did not mean compromise nor indifference, since the Movement was neither neutral nor indifferent when it came to distinguishing between good or evil. "We've made our choice between colonization and national independence," he said, "between apartheid and racial equality, between racism and non-discrimination, between the economic plundering of nations and the free and full enjoyment of the people's productive efforts.... In Guinea we have opted for a socialist revolution, which liberates man and the masses, socializing the individual and humanizing society." He called for the withdrawal of Israeli troops from all the territories occupied by them and for the exercise of the right to self-determination and the establishment of an independent and sovereign Palestinian state. He proposed that all delegations to the 6th Summit "cast aside all reservations, that the delegation of the non-aligned people of Peoples' Kampuchea, of the effective government of Kampuchea, might take up its rightful place in the Conference, contributing to its success."

At this stage, Forbes Burnham who was presiding over this part of the session, read a report on the devastating hurricane that recently hit the east Caribbean island of Dominica causing widespread damage and many deaths. It was also reported that close to 60,000 people out of the island's total population of 80,000 lost their homes. Bananas and other crops on which the island's survival depends, were ruined. The island's economy was destroyed and its infrastructure is almost non-existent. The chairman urged the members of the Movement to give their full support and assistance to the people of Dominica. He then announced Sri Lanka's contribution of 25,000 dollars to Dominica's rehabilitation fund. Cuba "is going to contribute a significant and fundamental sum that President Fidel Castro with his proverbial modesty, won't allow me to announce": the Palestine Liberation Organisation 10,000 dollars; Cyprus, 25,000; the United Arab Emirates 100,000; Iraq, one million dollars, Kuwait one million; India, 50,000; Pakistan 25,000, Syria, one million.

SANDINISTA COMMANDER DANIEL ORTEGA commented on a capitalist news agency's despatch that had reported in a biased way that Nicaragua had recognized the People's Republic of Kampuchea. Ortega said that, according to the despatch, by so doing Nicaragua had aligned itself with the Soviet Union. The problem is, he said, that imperialism can't conceive of a country liberating itself. "When we won our war against Somoza-ism", he said "these same agencies charged Costa Rica, Panama and Cuba with having intervened." He said that Nicaragua officially recognizes the government of the People's Republic of Kampuchea as the sole government entitled to fill that country's seat in the Non-aligned Movement. After supporting all liberation movements in Africa, Asia and Latin America he referred to Nicaragua's internal situation, the Sandinista National Liberation Front fighter said that the war had paralysed the country. He drew attention to the fact that the wars fought against three Yankee interventions had cost 200,000 lives and the war against Somoza 50,000 most of them children, teenagers between 8 and 20 years of age. Ortega also charged Israel with being an accomplice of Somoza and the instrument on which imperialism had relied to the last. Ortega condemned the Camp David agreement signed by Egypt and Israel under US sponsorship. Again on the subject of Nicaragua's current problems, he said the external debt stood at 1500 million dollars, the losses sustained by the war amounted to 580 million and another 741 million are needed to reactivate production.

MAURICE BISHOP, PRIME MINISTER OF GRENADA gave a brief outline of his homeland, from slavery, colonialism and neo-colonialism to Eric Gairy's tyrannical times. He pointed out that the neo-colonial heritage resulted in full dependence on imperialism with the resulting dire poverty, unemployment, malnutrition, illiteracy, superstition and mass migration, among other evils. He said that with the advent of a revolutionary era, a new, just, free and revolutionary life is open to Grenada whose people now enjoy the right to social and economic justice, and the right to work. He referred to all the more important problems of the world today and

in a discussion of regional problems he said there are signs of a collapse of colonialism and expressed support for the independence and territorial integrity of the people of Belize and solidarity with the Puerto Rican Socialist Party and its people who are struggling for independence. He also congratulated Malta for the elimination of the NATO military bases on its soil and said its example served as a reminder that there are some 30,000 imperialist soldiers in the Caribbean.

If there hadn't been a Cuba, the world would have never seen the first socialist revolution in the West in this century and neither would it have learned that blockades and isolation do not prevent the consolidation of a revolutionary process when the people want it and do not give in. He also cited Cuba as an example of what socialism can accomplish in a small country and this is what imperialism fears most; the example of the successes of the Cuban Revolution. Bishop said the Movement must break down the artificial barriers set up and maintained by colonialism and neo-colonialism in this region for countries, adding that Grenada would do all it could to have the peoples of the region become a single Latin American people.

He went on to say: "Last week, shortly before coming to this Conference, we received a cable from the Secretary of State of the United States which said that if we participated in the conference we would be in the front ranks of the efforts by Cuba to try to destroy and divide the Movement. They said these were efforts aimed at destroying the OAS and undermining the pacifying role of that organization, and it was hoped that we in Grenada would join with other forces to prevent that from happening. Of course, there were several options open to us. We could have replied to the Secretary of State telling him that we have never given advice to any country and especially not to the United States on how it should conduct its own affairs in any organisation to which they belong. But we didn't decide on that course, on that alternative. What we did was to be sure that our participa-

tion in the Conference, our uninhibited remarks, in line with the interests of the suffering peoples and countries which are struggling for their freedom, for their independence and for their rights to self-determination, along with 93 other countries, would be the most categorical reply we could give to any suggestion that we were going to try to divide or undermine the process of non-alignment."

Maurice Bishop also expressed support for the effort of some progressive and Third World countries for a new world based on social and economic justice for the peoples. He backed the proposal by Saddam Hussein for the creation of a world fund to fight inflation in addition to calling for universal solidarity with Dominica which was hard hit by Hurricane David. He also expressed appreciation to the Movement members who have announced that they will give economic aid for this purpose.

THE PRESIDENT OF UGANDA, GODFREY L. BINAISA, was the last to speak in the morning session. He stated, "We are committed to the struggle for upholding the sacred principles and the noble ideals that sustain the Non-aligned Movement," and he said that the National Liberation Front of Uganda and its government "are ready to extend a friendly hand to even those countries that gave aid and support to Idi Amin during our war for national liberation." He pointed out that non-alignment did not mean that Uganda was not going to have relations with countries that are outside the Movement. "Therefore," he added, "we will accept economic aid and foreign investments in certain areas of our country's economy, as long as this aid and these investments do not compromise our country's independence."

The President of Uganda expressed his support for the struggles being waged by the peoples of South Africa, Palestine, Zimbabwe, Namibia and Western Sahara for their independence. With respect to the Middle East he said that any peace effort that failed to take into account the Palestinian people—through their legitimate representative, the PLO—was doomed to failure. He exhorted all the countries to respect the territorial

integrity and independence of Cyprus, and to give it the opportunity to find a solution to its problems without external pressure. On the situation in Indochina, he called on all the parties in this conflict to abstain from taking actions that could aggravate the tensions in this area. Binaisa said that "in all humility, I would like to suggest that the time has come for the Non-aligned Movement to begin to struggle for basic human rights."

Speaking about the need for the establishment of a new economic order which the non-aligned and other developing countries have called for, the President of Uganda urged that new forms be sought for reducing the price that the developing countries pay for oil. His was the last of the seven speeches of the morning session which ended at 4.46 p.m.

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WINDOW ON INDIA—23

The Return Of Indira

by R. Varadachari

Press Trust of India Correspondent in Colombo

MRS. INDIRA GANDHI has done it: she has swept the polls and, in a landslide victory, has obtained a two thirds majority, winning 351 seats out of the 525 which were at stake in the general elections to the seventh Lok Sabha (the lower house of Indian Parliament) held on January 3 and 6. The total strength of the seventh Lok Sabha is 544 out of which two seats are reserved for the Anglo-Indian community to be filled by nomination. Elections in seventeen other constituencies have been either postponed or countermanded. There is however little doubt that with her winning spree she will retain the two thirds majority in the house even after the polls in the remaining seventeen constituencies are over. In addition she has the support of sixteen members of the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) of Mr. M. Karunanidhi, former Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, and of the three members of the Muslim League, both of whom were her election allies.

Mrs. Gandhi's superb performance this time has even surpassed, according to latest

estimates, her spectacular two thirds majority victory in 1971 by way of percentage of votes won by her party which went to the polls then on the catchy slogan of 'Gharibi Hatao' which means "banish poverty". If her slogan in 1977 was "India is Indira" then, it was "Bring back Indira and save India" this time. The Indian political commentators have generally proved wrong for the third consecutive time in their election forecasts. In 1971 they did not expect Mrs. Gandhi to romp home with a two third majority. In 1977 they did not predict her rout and thought that they she would come back to power with a reduced simple majority. In the current elections the furthest even the pro-Gandhian analysts went was to forecast a simple majority for her. But most of the so-called detached political pundits believed that the Indira Congress would emerge only as the largest group without an absolute majority and would have to form a coalition Government with one or the other of the three other major parties in the election fray. She has convincingly belied their expectations and has scored a victory unparalleled in the post-Nehru era of Indian politics.

Mr. Jagjivan Ram of the Janata Party who was himself an aspirant for the Prime Ministership has aptly described her victory as a "magic or a miracle". After congratulating her over the phone, he told reporters that the result had established her tremendous hold over the voters. This is plain truth simply and succinctly put. Undoubtedly it was her personal charisma which gave her the unprecedented victory of her political career highlighted by eleven and a half years as Prime Minister.

This is no mean achievement either. It was a magnificent performance. With most of the senior politicians who were in the undivided Congress having deserted her and become her bitter opponents, she was almost left alone. She fought the elections single-handedly with a personalised slogan centring round her leadership. She showed amazing energy in making a whirlwind tour of the sprawling country and visited almost all the constituencies.

It was verily a solo performance done with grim determination and unflagging spirit. It was a Herculean task well

accomplished. She has pulverised all the parties who had made a combined effort to discredit her and a determined to block her return to power. It was an Indira wave again but this time the wave was not visible at the surface till it burst into a bang at the elections. What was expected to be only a sweep for her in some states turned out to be a tidal wave of massive victory in all but two of them.

It cannot also be contended that her spectacular victory was due to split in the opposition votes. The massive majority won by most of her candidates who were unknown and new to politics belies this theory. Of course the non-performance of the Janata Party and the infighting within it and the power-pursuit at its top echelons had disillusioned the voters. But they did not turn to Mrs. Gandhi as a negative choice. They positively decided to vote for her. They were fully convinced that she alone could deliver the goods and provide a strong and stable government which is the crying need of the hour. As has been stressed by this commentator earlier as necessary the voters have shown distinct discernment to ensure that the largest democracy in the world does not slide down to a weak and anaemic nation with no sense of purpose and direction.

THE JANATA PERFORMANCE during its Short regime had done enough damage to the country's image and had distressed many of India's well-wishers abroad. Mrs. Gandhi's victory has brought about a refreshing wind of change in the Indian political scene lately tarnished by opportunism and self-aggrandizement. Mrs. Gandhi's victory is all the more convincing because she had no well-knit organisational base and had to build up the party almost from scratch following the second vertical split in the Congress party after the Janata victory at the last polls. It is also remarkable that such a massive victory for her had taken place with a big swing of the political pendulum through the ballot box without any major upheaval or bloodshed. It is a tribute to the political consciousness of the Indian electorate, most of whom are illiterate and chose their candidates mainly by their election symbol. Their native wisdom and

rustic discernment had done the trick. It is their robust faith in the ballot box which needs to be stressed and hailed.

THE OPPOSITION PARTIES without exception assailed Mrs. Gandhi as the weakest point in her armour namely her 21-month old emergency rule. They sought to frighten the electorate into the belief that she would revert to her "authoritarianism and despotic rule" if she was voted to power again. The Indian voters by and large, did not fall for this bait. They have placed trust in her repeated assurance that the emergency rule was a "shock treatment" and it was enforced in "very special circumstances" which would not recur again. She confessed from political platforms that there had been number of instances of excesses during her emergency rule although she was not aware of them or was personally responsible for them. She had also no hesitation in publicly apologising for the emergency aberrations which had enraged the Indian masses. In this context apprehensions voiced in the Western mass media that the massive majority Mrs. Gandhi has secured might tempt her to resort to a rigorous and centralised autocracy seem to be ill-based. Her election speeches have clearly indicated that she has realised that the Indian masses, steeped in democratic traditions, would not tolerate dictatorship, even if it is a benevolent one. Once having paid heavily for her mistake, she will not repeat it. As the proverb goes, once bitten twice shy.

Mrs. Gandhi has now regained the mass base which she had in North India before the imposition of the emergency. She has also further consolidated her position in the southern states. The Western mass media have said that she has emerged as the "Empress" of India. In these days of democratic values, it would be more apt to say that she had become the "uncrowned queen" of India. Only to regain this all-India stature she had fought both from Rae Bareilly in Uttar Pradesh and Medak in Andhra Pradesh in the South. She has been returned with an avalanche of votes in both these constituencies. This is a clear proof that her leadership of the Indian nation is beyond challenge both in the Hindi belt and in the South. Only in the North-eastern State of West Bengal and the Southern State

of Kerala, she has emerged as the second best, with the Marxists and the Communists retaining their prime hold on them. The two states had been the traditional stronghold of the Left with their high literacy rate, pressure of population and intense political consciousness. Otherwise it was a personal triumph for her everywhere else in India.

The Indian voters have also rejected the opposition's election theme that she wanted to foist dynastic rule in the country by pushing by design, her son, Sanjay, into political limelight and to ensure the Naruru line of succession. She has been able to effectively blunt this line of reasoning. However, she did not mince words and made it clear that her son, as any other Indian citizen, had the right to enter politics. She has also assured the nation that she would not give her son any government post. Sanjay has also been returned from Amati constituency with a massive majority. So also the two other controversial personalities of the emergency era, Mr. Bansi Lal, Defence Minister in her former ministry, and Mr. Vidya Charan Shukla who was then Minister of Information. This is also a clear indication that the Indian masses are inclined to treat the emergency era as a bad dream and as a thing of an unpleasant past.

WITH MRS. GANDHI HAVING RE-EMERGED SUPREME in the Indian political scene, moves are afoot to unite the opposition, now in disarray. Mr. Devraj Urs, Chief Minister of Karnataka state has already proposed a merger of his faction of the Congress, the Lok Dal of Mr. Charan Singh and the Janata Party into one single opposition party. In throwing up this suggestion he is motivated by desire to forge a strong united opposition in Parliament.

The Janata Party under the leadership of Mr. Jagjivan Ram was regarded as the main challenger to Mrs. Gandhi but it has emerged as a poor third, with the Lok Dal, considered as a non-starter, as the surprise second and the leftists as the unexpected third. It is clear that Mr. Jagjivan Ram could not rally behind him fully the one hundred million Harijans. The minorities in general have pinned their faith once again on Mrs. Gandhi. Mr. Devraj Urs has established a healthy convention by

resigning from the Chief Ministership of Karnataka State in the wake of utter rout of his party there. He has not however recommended the dissolution of the state assembly and fresh elections. The Indira Congress is likely to get into the saddle in this South Indian state. But Mr. M. G. Ramachandran, Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, whose All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam fared miserably is not willing to follow Mr. Urs' example. In his view it is neither anti-ADMK nor pro-DMK sentiments but politics at the central level which was the prime issue at the polls in the state.

Whether the poll verdict will induce floor crossings in States where parties in power have been discredited is the question which is uppermost in the minds of Indian political observers now. Demands have already been made by several Indira Congress leaders that assemblies of states where her party is not in power and where she has won a majority should be dissolved and fresh elections held. *This means that they want fresh elections in all states except West Bengal where the Communists have held their own and Andhra Pradesh where the Congress (I) is in power. Janata Party took recourse to this step after its victory in the last polls. Mrs. Gandhi has to decide before long whether she should also follow the Janata example.*

Mrs. Gandhi has reacted to her spectacular victory with humility. Her first comment to pressmen was "I am a balanced person. I do not go overboard this way or that." She has also ruled out vendetta and vindictiveness. She has called on her followers to work with determination and dedication for the welfare of the country. She has a gigantic task before her. This will begin on Monday when her Government is scheduled to be sworn in. SLBC Talk 11.1.80.



KATUNAYAKE MYSTERY?

Jets And Rain

by Buvanarasundaram

FEBRUARY 1979, the air was still over Katunayake airport. Plane after plane descended, bringing in tourists from the snow covered lands of the northern hemisphere. They left them here and went off northwest again and again to bring in more and more. The southern hemisphere held the sun till March 21st and this shuttle went on, even into March. It was no accident that in February, Katunayake airport received 23.86cm, the highest authenticated rainfall for the entire island. It is just as well to remember that 1/2 cm of rain on a square kilometre is a million gallons of water.

Rains fall out of clouds, that are formed by the lifting of moist air. When lifted, the air cools, with expansion under reduced pressure at higher levels of the atmosphere. The amount of water vapour required to saturate the atmosphere decreases with decrease in temperature, so that, at some level in its ascent, the temperature would have dropped sufficiently for the water vapour present at the commencement of the lifting to saturate the rising air. The relative humidity at that level is 100% and that level is called the condensation level of the atmosphere. This is the highest of the base of cumulus, the cauliflower shaped clouds, we see in our skies. Over our tropical island, it is about 1,500 to 2,500 ft, 450 to 750 metres. The feet level is preferred for cloud base and height since the flight level of aircraft is coded in feet.

Relative humidity is the % of the actual water vapour present to that required to saturate it at that temperature. When the rising air is lifted above the condensation level, it would get supersaturated with a relative humidity of over 100% and we would expect the excess water vapour to condense to liquid water. In a pure atmosphere, where even ions are not present, this does not happen so easily for water vapour can exist in a supercooled state even up to -40C and saturation has to reach 7 times its normal, before a pure atmosphere could be made to give up

its water vapour. When ions are present, which usually cannot be avoided in the atmosphere, it requires 3 times the normal saturation to condense the water vapour on to these ions.

When there are foreign particles, called condensation nuclei present in the atmosphere, condensation then takes place sooner. John Aitken discovered that there are two essentially different types of nuclei present in the atmosphere. There are the hygroscopic nuclei, like salt particles that have affinity for water and condensation takes place on them even before saturation. Then, there are the non-hygroscopic nuclei that require some degree of super-saturation before condensation can take place on them. The degree of super-saturation required for condensation will depend on the size of the nuclei. Bigger its size, less the super-saturation required.

The sizes of these aerosols, another name for these nuclei, range from ions that are a millionth of a millimetre in diameter to large salt or dust particles that are a hundredth of a millimetre or more. The latter are the giant nuclei that cannot remain in the atmosphere for long. They may be carried away by strong winds from the source but fall to the ground fast owing to their size but while they are there, they are the most efficient rain givers to us of the tropics. The large drops formed on them, coalesce easily with the smaller ones formed on smaller nuclei and become big enough to fall with gravity, against the strong updraft in clouds and reach ground as rain. During the day, the falling drops will have their size reduced by evaporation under the tropical sun.

THE COALESCENCE PROCESS of rain formation is the more common process in the tropics, though the Bergeron-Feindiesen process, first suggested by Wagner in 1911, may also exist at the same time. The latter requires the presence of some ice particles to initiate the process. The initiation of this process uses a peculiar property of water that after -04°C , the saturation vapour pressure over ice is less than that over water. At -10°C , it is 2.86mb over water and 2.60mb over ice, so that the water vapour that saturates an atmosphere with water droplets at -10°C will be 10% super-saturated with respect to ice particles. At -20°C the super-

saturation is 21%. If water droplets and ice particles are present together in a super-cool cloud, water droplets will evaporate and the vapour will sublimate on the ice particles. This process will continue till the hail so formed is big enough to fall against updrafts in the clouds. In warm tropics, they usually melt on the way and reach ground as rain.

If ice particles form at 0°C , then this process will begin at the freezing level itself, which is the zero degree isotherm in the atmosphere, but the difficulty is to get some water droplets to freeze to ice. Solid carbon dioxide can chill some water droplets to freeze to ice but better still is the discovery of B. Vonnegut in 1946. Silver iodide crystals, whose hexagonal shape resemble that of ice crystals could dupe water droplets to freeze on them. Silver iodide initiates this process at -4°C and there are others like lead oxide and cupric sulphide, whose shapes are also hexagonal and they initiate this process at -6°C . Recently, many others have been found, whose shapes though different, tetragonal, monoclinic, cubic and orthorhombic but are still able to initiate this process at a lower temperature. Orthorhombic iodine can do it at -14°C . It is this fact that made Bowen postulate, under very severe criticism that freezing nuclei come from above but Mason and others think that they are taken all the way up from ground, because all these nuclei mentioned are found on Earth. If the material of the Earth and the material of the meteorites and even the solar system are the same, then we may have to agree with Mr. Bowen,

The freezing level over us is about 14,000ft. during the winter months of January and February and about 16,000 or more when the Sun is hot in our hemisphere. Most of our clouds precipitate before their tops reach this freezing level, beyond this level only, ice crystals can be present in clouds. Coalescence process using giant condensation nuclei is more common in the tropics, though the freezing nuclei process may be simultaneously present. The concentration of giant and ordinary condensation nuclei vary from only a few per cubic centimetre over the oceans to millions in industrial cities. The concentration over villages and farms depend on many meteorological factors, particularly the wind,

its speed and direction and a nearby source of pollutions.

The exhaust fumes of aircraft, particularly the jets are a good source of pollution. When an aircraft descends, it descends with its engines shut-off and the atmosphere is hardly polluted by the waste products of its internal combustion. In ascent, which is always against the prevalent surface wind, the engines are at full throttle, quickly accelerating to maximum speed to clear the runway, soon. Even after take off, its ascent is almost vertical to about 30,000 ft and the waste particles of combustion are sprayed against the winds to great heights.

The giant nuclei among them, if they fall into a cloud, they would initiate precipitation sooner and the rains would fall closer to the airport. Even the freezing nuclei if present could initiate the formation of clouds, followed by thundershowers. The temperature over Katunayake airport at and even over its neighbourhood like Colombo is— -04°C at 20,000ft, -10°C at about 25,000ft and at 30,000ft it is -30°C . Most of the aircraft, that leave Katunayake airport ascend up to 30,000ft and cruise at that level. This is an improved method of bringing down rain by lighting fires on hill tops, as done by our ancients and African witch-doctors. In Switzerland they rang church bells to bring down rain.

The runways in Sri Lanka are all oriented northeast—southwest to cater to our monsoons and to the land and sea breezes at our coastal airports, during the intermonsoon months. In the direction of the runway to the northeast is Wester Seaton farm, to the northwest at right angles to the airport is Negombo and to the southeast is Walpita farm and of course to the southwest is the sea. Among the rainfall recording stations functioning now, a little further away north is Lunuwila and Kankaniyamulla to the northeast. To the southeast is Hunumulla and a little further down is Henerathgoda, to the south is Alexandra estate Jaela.

In February, though the winds were light, they were predominantly from

the northeast, particularly at night, when the land breeze is on. An aircraft taking off against these winds would have sprayed nuclei, not only at Katunayake Airport but over vast areas in the direction of the runway, northeast. This is over land and many places in that direction enjoyed good rainfall. The airport got 23.86cm, the highest in the land, adjoining Wester seaton got 18.25cm, 222% above its normal for February and it was higher than any main station in the island. Even the distant Mediyawa tank had 10.95cm, 186% above its normal, Wariyapola experimental station 13.09cm, 185% above, Kurunegala, much in the news with its drought, 12.59cm, 111% above and many others all in that direction and near the airport.

There was an abrupt decrease in rainfall at Ridi Bendi Ella (5.61cm), immediately after Wariyapola experimental station and at Batalagoda (3.05cm) after Kurunegala. They recorded only 50% of their normal for February. It is therefore suspicious that the effect of this seeding, suddenly stopped at Wariyapola and at Kurunegala. There was a similar minimum of 9.40cm at Franklands estate, Veyangoda. At Karukuwa, a coastal estate near Chilaw, the fall was 16.79cm and the rainfall from here decreased in the northeasterly direction, Hankrle 13.39cm, Katupota 13.23cm and the Wariyapola, mentioned earlier 13.09cm. This is very suggestive that the aircraft after a northeasterly take off had turned northwest to the lands of tourists.

MARCH, the month that followed is an intermonsoon month, before the onset of the monsoon in May and the winds in March over the airport are predominantly from the southwest, particularly during the day, when the breeze comes off the sea to the coast, that has been preferentially heated by the sun. Planes taking off against these light southwesterly winds, would have besides their throw out at the airport itself, lost most of their nuclei to the sea. The airport got 16.81cm, the highest among the main stations, even higher than rainy Ratnapura, which got 16.37 cm. It was drought in March over the entire island and this fall at Ratnapura was only 69% of its normal for March of 24.16cm.

Wester Seaton farm, faces the exhaust fumes of an aircraft on a southwesterly run and take off. The nuclei it sheds off will not only seed the clouds that would rain over the airport but more of them will be carried past the airport into the clouds over Wester Seaton farm and it rained in March there as it would normally rain at Ratnapura. 24.15cm, more than double its normal for March. All places adjacent to the airport got beautiful rains. Alexandra estate, Ja'ela got 91% above normal, Henarathgoda, Gampaha 75% above and Negombo 14% above its normal for March.

There was a remarkable decrease in rainfall and severe drought beyond this area of above normal rains. Horagahlanda 2.57cm, Pathragala 3.94cm, Kankaniyamulla 3.81cm and Lunuwila, closest of them all near coast, 1.74cm, a mere 13% of its normal for March. Rains further decreased from Lunuwila to the north, till at Chilaw it was only 1cm. Then, there was a sudden increase of rainfall in a north-easterly direction over land, Hankele 7.87cm. Redi Ella 6.89cm.

The aircraft in its southwesterly take-off seeded the clouds on its path and it rained heavy at the airport and in its neighbourhood, particularly to the south. The seeded clouds being carried by southwesterly to westerly winds from the sea. Those that would have rained along the coast from Lunuwila to Chilaw, rained at sea.

Then the aircraft turned northwest to bring in the tourists, it seeded the clouds that rained at Hankole and Redi Bendi Ella and even far away Mediyawa tank got 9.40cm. Maha U-wewa in the dry Puttalam district got 17.12cm. March, being an intermonsoon month, would have had, particularly at night a northeasterly wind over the runway and planes taking off against these winds and then turning northwest for the tourists would have contributed to these falls and to those at Hankele and Redi Bendi Ella.

(To be continued)

Next: "Runways Rob Rains From Peter To Pay Paul".

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DELHI LETTER

The Afghan Story

The Tribune Correspondent
On Afghan Affairs

New Delhi, Jan. 10,

The changes in Afghanistan have come in the midst of the crucial midterm poll. Nevertheless, whilst disapproving Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, the then Prime Minister Charan Singh in a letter to President Carter on January 2, expressed misgiving and reservations about the reported intentions of the US to enhance arms supplies to Pakistan and emphasised that competitive induction of arms into the region would only heighten tensions and contribute to instability in the area.

On January 7, after it was clear that she would be the next Prime Minister on the basis of a landslide election victory, Mrs. Indira Gandhi in an interview with PTI had said that if the crisis following Soviet Union's presence in Afghanistan escalates, it might pose a danger to India: more so because the US has been giving arms to Pakistan. She also said that she did not approve of foreign interference by anybody. She said others (Western Powers) were also dabbling in the region. "The presence of one side attracts the presence of the other side." Earlier, in an interview to American correspondents on the eve of the election, Mrs. Gandhi said that because of the events in Afghanistan, she felt "a war situation was creeping towards us." According to the interview, published in New York, she coupled a condemnation of the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan with the charge that the Western powers had also been guilty of meddling in the area. "For a long time there has been foreign interference in Afghanistan of one kind or anotherOf course, there is no excuse for Soviet troops going in, and the more direct intervention the more we are against it, especially bringing in troops. But as I said about the Indian Ocean, one presence attracts another and that is most dangerous." Further as reported by the *New York Times*, she had said that the Soviet Union, by itself, "will not do anything to us and so

the situation depends on what the reactions are to the Soviets and how the situation develops after that." Mrs. Gandhi said that the suggestions made in the US that she leaned toward Moscow were "maliciously implanted" by her enemies. Since the time her father was Prime Minister, the Soviet Union had agreed to provide assistance to India on easier terms than had the US. But, this was not a factor in determining the foreign policy while she was the Prime Minister. She had tried to convince the Western diplomats, including Americans, that she was not anti-Western or anti-American, but merely "pro-Indian". Mrs. Gandhi said the Russians had acted in Afghanistan to counteract what they regarded as Western interference. "They think the Western presence in Afghanistan was very strong which was a constant thorn of irritation, and there has been Western interference all along, not just now." Asked what kind of interference she meant and whether she was referring to the training of Afghan guerillas at secret bases as alleged by some Soviet newspapers, Mrs. Gandhi replied: "I mean a much more subtle kind, attempts at trying to have pliable Governments." She expressed concern about American plans to supply arms to Pakistan again. "We are always against rearming because of our own experience."

IN THE MEANTIME, the Congress (U) according to UPI, urged the Soviet Union to withdraw its forces from Afghanistan since their presence might accentuate tension in this region and lead to confrontation between the super powers. Party General Secretary Banka Behary Das, also condemned the US decision to resume arms supply to Pakistan because that would worsen the situation in the region which was already tension-ridden. He urged the UN Security Council to review the situation in the Indian sub-continent and to ensure that the balance in the region was maintained. The Janata Party general secretary, Surendra Mohan, told newsmen on Saturday that his party was opposed to stationing of the Soviet troops in Afghanistan and resumption of arms supply to Pakistan by the United States. If it is returned to power, it will initiate diplomatic moves for reducing the tension in the region and for attaining the twin objectives. Acharya Kripalani has said that the United States' argument that the arms

aid to Pakistan was to "oppose and resist" any possible attack from Russia "has no substance." In a press statement issued to New Delhi on Saturday, Mr. Kripalani said Pakistan would never be able to check a "possible Russian attack", despite the US aid. If Russia is to be checked, US will have to take the burden of doing so upon itself, alone or with whatever allies it may get." That Pakistan will not use the US arms against India but against Russia "is a vain hope", he said. In the past too this condition was accepted by Pakistan. "By it did use those arms against India, and US could do nothing to stop it", Mr. Kripalani added. He said it was his firm opinion that the arms supply to Pakistan posed a danger to India.

While the CPI-M and CPI have supported the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, the general consensus among all national parties is disapproval of the Soviet action coupled with alarm with the supply of arms to Pakistan. There is also universal acceptance that the USA and the Western powers have been encouraging and assisting anti-government forces in Afghanistan after the April 1978 revolution. Mrs. Indira Gandhi has repeatedly made the point that US and Western Powers were meddling in Afghanistan had provided the Russian action—but that she was unhappy that Moscow should have acted in this way. What is clear is that Mrs. Indira Gandhi and all other major national parties refuse to see the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan as an isolated action where a super-power was swallowing up a small non-aligned nation. It is realised that it is not to take the situation in Afghanistan out of the context created there as a result of the prolonged US and Western subversive activity against legitimate government of the country.

IT IS ALSO WIDELY ACCEPTED that the United States and other reactionary forces have organised and armed Afghan reactionary groups, sent its military advisers to train them and used territory of two non-aligned countries for continuous military aggression against Afghanistan. At the beginning of March 1979,

it is recalled that the US Deputy Secretary of State Warren Christopher appealed to the Pakistani government with direct demand to concede to the Americans an opportunity of free use of Pakistani territory for arms supplies to counter-revolutionary forces in Afghanistan. Americans have built up military camps of Afghan reactionary elements and training centres of subversive groups in certain areas of Pakistani territory—Chitral, Drosh, Peshawar, Parachinar and Quetta. More recently according to AP (5/1/80) the same Deputy Secretary of State Warren Christopher had said the Indian Government "ought to see the action of the Soviet Union as a threat to India as well as other countries of the region." He had said he was puzzled that the Indian Government had been more concerned that the intervention in Afghanistan might lead to US weapons sales to Pakistan. He said that the US position on arms sales to Pakistan should become clear in a week or two. In any case, the US "is determined to maintain good relations with India". Mr. Christopher said there were "some elements" in the Indian government which agreed that the Soviet action posed a threat to India. He also said he believed that the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan represented a threat to India.

It is also believed that on American inspiration, the Pak Government sent Agah Shahi, the President's adviser on Foreign Affairs, to try to convince the Iranian leadership to support anti-governmental forces in Afghanistan. Reports reaching Delhi have revealed that in opposition to Khomeini, Shahi had managed to persuade some fanatic minded reactionary groups led by Gulbeddin to provide bases on Iranian soil for the military detachments of the Afghan rebels. There were also reports that Washington kept contact with a leader of one of the Afghan rebel groups, viz., Seid Ahmed Veilain—who called himself President of the Islamic National and Revolutionary Government of Afghanistan—and his representative Zia Nasser. The present US decision to increase arms supplies to Pakistan is seen in India as a cover to supply the Afghan rebel and counter-revolutionary forces with weapons to smash the Afghan government. There are also apprehensions in India that the geo-strategic objective of US policies and actions in the region was only

to denigrate the non-aligned movement in West Asia (Middle East) and South Asia but also to push Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan into a new military-political Islamic bloc to replace the now disintegrated CENTO.

THE BACKGROUND TO THE DEVELOPMENTS IN AFGHANISTAN was set out very clearly in an article in *Mainstream* (5/1/80) "When Noor Mohammed Taraki overthrew President Daud in April 1978, even at that time there was a hue and cry in the West about Soviet involvement, though it has long been known that Moscow had established good relations with the Afghan rulers much earlier, Pakistani rulers, under goading from the West and also because of their failure to satisfy the urge for autonomy of the Pakhtoons and Baluchis, have long taken a hostile position against Afghanistan, so much so that they had always tried to choke off Afghanistan's access to the seas; and it was only through the Soviet Union that Afghanistan could find a way to the world market....."

"The Afghan armed forces are heavily equipped with Soviet weaponry; this is a course nothing new; from the days of Lenin onward every country standing up to Western colonial pressures, including China under Sun Yat Sen has depended on Soviet help in building its own indigenous defence. As for the West, it has always insisted on a subservient status through military alliances, as has happened in the case of Pakistan. Incidentally, this Afghan tilt towards Moscow, which dates long back has never been a threat to India. In fact, Afghanistan has always stood friendly to India even when Pakistan had been engaged in armed attacks on our country. One may contrast this Afghan friendship with the stand of Iran under the Shah who supplied arms to Pakistan every time it was in conflict with India. It was but natural that Taraki's take-over received warm response from Moscow, because Taraki represented a determined band of revolutionaries who stood for a socio-economic change of the backward tribal and feudal set-up in Afghanistan from literacy to land, Taraki regime's radical programme brought new life to the down-trodden masses—a development which was testified even by Western critics; their only

concern in those days was whether the regime would be able to stand up to the likely resistance of the tribal vested interests to the radical reforms.

"There was more than a grain of truth in this concern, though it might have been voiced by quarters not friendly to the new regime. To introduce radical reforms in a near-primitive society is not an easy job. The consequent churning up could have been handled and channelled effectively had the leadership of the 1978 April Revolution been a unified and organised body. Here lay the weakness of the new men at the helm of Kabul. Apart from the prevailing situation in Afghanistan which did not permit them to gain political experience, the leadership of the ruling People's Democratic Party was rent asunder by two factions, the Khalq (people) and the Parcham (flag). Taraki was acceptable to both but the ebullient and ambitious of leader of the Khalq, Hafizullah Amin, managed to instal himself in the key position as Prime Minister under Taraki who became the new President of the Revolutionary Council. Very soon after taking over, in fact within a few weeks of the 1978 April Revolution, Amin's purge of the Parcham elements began, and within a few months it assumed the character of a major drive. Many of the dedicated elements were thrown out, imprisoned or killed in prison or outside, and a good number had to flee the country. The irony of it all was that all of them had high regard for Taraki, who was virtually reduced to the position of a helpless onlooker of this anti-Parcham drive.

"Meanwhile, the elements of the old order, antagonised and affected by the drive for reforms in the countryside, began to move towards Pakistan, the newly-installed Islamic Republic, the reinforced bastion of obscurantism and all forms of reaction. Some of these elements physically went over to Pakistan, while others remaining within Afghanistan established their linkages with Pakistan. It was here that the West, particularly the USA, as also China, came in. The new radical ferment in Afghanistan could not possibly be to the liking of US authorities who have specialised in boosting reactionary, obscurantist regimes from Saudi Arabia to South-east Asia to Latin America. In the explosive proxi-

mity of West Asia, with Iran already slipping out of control with the exit of the Shah, and Pakistan under a precariously perched military junta, Washington regarded the new emerging Afghanistan as both an eye-sore and menace; hence came the full-scale support, both moral and material, to the Afghan insurgents in Pak camps.

"Many Western observers have testified to the running of these camps quite blatantly by the Pak authorities. The *Indian Express* of December 15, 1979, published an interesting despatch from its correspondent in Washington, quoting the well-known American journal *Counterspy* which specialises in CIA exposure to show that 'the CIA is directly involved in the training of Afghan rebels in Pakistan Camps and is in contact with them in Afghanistan', and refers to an amazing case: 'Interestingly, two of the Afghan rebel leaders—Zia Nezri and Zia Nassery—are in fact US citizens, and the State Department is in touch with at least one of them.' *Counterspy* also mentioned that the US drug enforcement agents hunting down heroin smugglers stumbled on to 'one of Pakistan's most dangerous and best kept secrets: the presence on Pakistani soil of Chinese army officers and instructors. They were here to help train and equip right-wing Afghan Muslim guerillas for their holy war against the Moscow-backed Kabul regime.' This Pakistani operation started quite early during Taraki's time.

"Meanwhile, the situation within Afghanistan was getting from bad to worse because of Amin's adventurist methods. Taraki gave sufficient indications in private talks in Havana during the non-aligned summit in August 1979 that serious steps would soon have to be taken to consolidate the gains of the new regime and not fritter them away by ultra-radicalism on the one hand and factional purge within the People's Democratic Party on the other.

ON HIS WAY HOME, Taraki stopped in Moscow where the Soviet leadership gave him a red-carpet reception—a signal for Amin that his adventurism might soon be stuffed out. Within a few days of Taraki's return in

September 1979 there was a violent palace coup and he was removed and later died, while Hafizullah Amin installed himself as the new President. This was followed by unbridled adventurism on his part antagonising a large section of the people. He also overhauled the party staffing in its higher echelons with his own men. As many as 23 of Afghanistan's 29 provinces went out of his control. While he went in for the so-called "politicisation" of the armed forces, creating serious rift among the officers and ranks, the regime faced a serious crisis. **It is too early for any observer to assess the role of Hafizullah Amin. Was he just a ruthless, ambitious adventurist without any idea of the problems that adventurism might land his country in? Or, was he an agent provocateur planted by the enemies of the Afghan Revolution? It is too early to come to an objective conclusion amidst current tension.**

"However, one should not overlook certain ominous developments. The Pakistani President's Foreign Affairs Adviser, Agha Shahi, was due to pay 'an official and friendly visit' to Kabul towards the end of December; the initiative for this was taken by Amin's Government. A few weeks before that, the deposed Afghan King, Zahir Shah, had visited Islamabad where he had met not only Pak officials but a large number of Afghan rebels. Interestingly, rumours started floating from Amin's circle that Moscow would not mind the return of the monarchy—rumours which found no credence in Soviet circles. *The flash-point was approaching. The exit of Amin was a matter of weeks or months. Babrak Karmal, who has now succeeded him is no non-descript. He has been one of the top leaders of Parcham, and it is believed that he has rallied the remnants of both Parcham and Khalq who were disturbed by Amin's costly antics.*

Thirty of his fifty years Karmal has spent in revolutionary activities from his student days in Kabul University, out of which five years was spent in prison. He led Parcham into alliance with Khalq in mid-1977, paving the way for the April 1978 Revolution. Under Taraki he and Amin were both made Vice-President and Deputy premier, but Amin succeeded in intriguing Karmal's exit from

Government, shunting him off as Ambassador in Prague in June 1978, followed by his dismissal three months later. Recalled home, Karmal chose to stay in exile in Prague biding his time; not a career of a flyweight puppet as Western detractors are now trying to make him out to be.

"If this is the internal background of the developments in Afghanistan, the emerging situation outside its frontiers has been equally ominous. The US administration has been facing a serious situation with its powerful armed base in Iran going into shambles with the Shah fleeing the country, and cimaxing with the US Embassy personnel held in hostage. Rumblings could be heard even in the placid backwaters of Saudi Arabia. The swift deployment of the nuclear warhead carrying Seventh Fleet with the aircraft carrier Kitty Hawk entering the Gulf area; the permanent stationing of over 50 thousand US troops in West Asia and the full-scale activation of the Diego Garcia base—all these could very well be interpreted by any sensitive person sitting in Kabul, not to speak of Moscow, to mean that a serious danger threatens this part of the world, particularly Afghanistan with her new revolution in its birthpangs. **Whether under such circumstances, it has been proper for the new leader of Afghanistan to call in Soviet armed forces and ask them to stay on, they themselves are the best judge. Any outside judgement on this question can only be tentative, liable to be misunderstood. In a different context, the Indian position in Bangladesh in 1971-72 was widely misconstrued not only by Western powers but even by a friendly country like Yugoslavia.**

"India's sharp reaction to Carter's latest decision to send sophisticated arms to Pakistan on the plea of defending an ally against the Red menace from Moscow via Afghanistan is also along expected lines. However, it is not enough for our country to react sharply to any accretion of arms to the present, not too friendly regime in Pakistan. It is necessary to understand that Carter, desperately trying to play to the gallery at home in the year of presidential election has begun sabre-rattling. Brezezinski has long ago described

the entire zone from Saudi Arabia to Bangladesh as the "arc of crisis"—thereby implying that Washington has the prerogative to police this zone. Even the so-called massive Soviet build-up in Afghanistan about which much noise is heard from the West—with the repeat performance in our country—has to be understood against the background of the far more menacing deployment of US armed might in the region. The US newsmagazine, *Time*, no mouthpiece of Moscow, has warned in its latest issue (December 31, 1979) that "Western experts believe that the build-up (by Soviet Union in Afghanistan) may also be Moscow's deliberate reaction to the increase of American naval and air power in the region around Iran; an oblique Soviet warning of the dangers of super-power confrontation. When we follow the serious developments in Afghanistan, both internal and external, it is worthwhile bearing in mind all these elements of a rather explosive situation."

This article in the *Mainstream* has had profound impact in political and intellectual circles in the country. The public awaits detailed policy statement from the new Indira Gandhi Government and the actions she would take to cope with the dangerous situation that has arisen in the region.

there is just as important to me as the first one. I think most people who have studied the situation and who have looked at the map, who have seen where the Embassy is located within Teheran can see that a strike force or military action that might be oriented toward the release of the hostages would almost certainly end in failure and almost certainly end in the death of the hostages. They are being held in small groups, two or perhaps three in a group, with heavily armed militants constantly guarding them and the hostages constantly being tied with their hands bound at all times. We will continue to persist. Our next step will be in the United Nations to have sanctions imposed against Iran. I cannot predict to you that the imposition of those sanctions, if we get the nine requisite votes, will cause an early release of the hostages. We pray that something will happen and that eventually Iran will recognize that the threat to them is not from the United States but even more vividly from the Soviet Union who have, on Christmas eve, invaded Afghanistan. In my own opinion, shared by many of the world's leaders with whom I have discussed this matter, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan is the greatest threat to peace since the second world war.....

EXCERPTS FROM PRESIDENT
CARTER'S ADDRESS ON

AFGHANISTAN

Washington, Jan. 9.

In an address to a Congressional group today, President Carter outlined US policy on Iran and Afghanistan. After detailing the more salient features of the hostages question, he pointed out that "the most difficult part of the Iranian question is that there is no government entity with whom we can communicate or negotiate or register a complaint or request." He concluded his remarks on Iran before going on to the Afghan problem thus: "I am determined that this country will not forget for a moment those hostages and the last hostage

ON THE QUESTION OF AFGHANISTAN, Carter said that: "We were informed, other leaders through the world were informed, by Soviet Ambassadors and direct messages from Moscow that the Soviets went into the nation to protect it from some third force that might be threatening Afghanistan. When questioned about where was the third threatening force from, the Soviets have never been able to give a reasonable answer. They claim that they were invited in by the Government to protect Afghanistan. As you know, the leader of Afghanistan, President Amin, who was supposed to have invited them in, was immediately assassinated as soon as the Soviets obtained control over Kabul, the capital city, and several of the members of the President's family were also killed. **We are the other super power on earth, and it became my responsibility, representing a great nation, to take action that would prevent the Soviets from this invasion with impunity. The Soviets had to suffer**

the consequences. In my judgement, our own nation's security was directly threatened. There is no doubt that the Soviets' move into Afghanistan, if done without adverse consequence, would have resulted in the temptation to move again and again until they reached warm water ports, or until they acquired control over a major portion of the world's oil supplies.

I talked to the President of Pakistan immediately after this Afghanistan invasion and also talked to many others of the world's leaders and sent them direct messages. The action that we could take was confined to three opportunities. One is to take military action, which I did not consider appropriate. Our country has no desire nor could we have effectively implemented military action to drive the Soviet forces from Afghanistan, which left me with two other options which chose I to exercise. One is political action and the other one is economic action. Politically we joined with 50 other nations to take to the Security Council two propositions, one, to condemn the Soviet Union for the invasion and therefore the threat to world peace, and secondly, to call upon the Soviets to withdraw their troops. The vote was cast after the debates were concluded. The only nations voting against the vote, against these two propositions, were East Germany, again a Soviet Puppet nation, and the Soviets themselves. The permanent members, as you know, have a veto right and now a move is under way which I think will be realized, to take this case to the General Assembly for further condemnation of the Soviet Union.

"It is difficult to understand why the Soviets took this action. I think they probably underestimated the adverse reaction from around the world. I have talked to many other leaders or allies and those representing nations that might be further threatened, and they all believe that we took the right action. It was not done for political reasons. It was not done to implement some foreign policy. It was done in the interest of our national security.

"We did take economic action, which I think was properly balanced. It was carefully considered. We will try to impose this action on the Soviet Union in a way that will have a

minimal adverse effect on our own country, where the sacrifices will be shared as equitably as you and I together can possibly devise and at the same time let the Soviets realize the consequences of their invasion. We will not permit the Soviets to fish in American waters within two hundred miles of our land area. They have a very large fishing fleet involving hundreds of thousands of tons of fish harvested. They will not have those permits renewed. We will not send high technology equipment to the Soviet Union or any equipment that might have a security benefit to the Soviet Union. This will include drilling equipment, for instance, used for the exploration and production of oil and natural gas. We will restrict severely normal commerce with the Soviet Union, which is highly advantageous to them, and of course, I have interrupted the delivery of grain, which the Soviets had ordered, above and beyond the eight million tons which our nation is bound by a permanent agreement, five year agreement, to have delivered to the Soviet Union.

"We have taken steps to make sure that the farmers are protected from the adverse consequences of this interruption of grain shipments to a maximum degree possible. It will be a costly proposition. I understand this when I took the action and my estimate is, based on fairly thorough but somewhat rapid analysis, that this year the extra cost to purchase this grain and to change the price levels of corn and wheat and to pay the extra storage charges, will amount to about two billion (2,000 million) dollars. That is in fiscal year 1980. In fiscal year 1981 there will be an additional cost of about 800 million dollars. It may be that as the season progresses and we have more experience in substituting for the Soviet Union as the purchaser of this grain that there will be an additional 200 or 300 million dollars spent in 1980. If this should take place, then that would reduce by the same amount, roughly, expenditures in the 1981 fiscal year. So the total cost will be in the neighbourhood of 2.8 billion (2,800 million) dollars. This cost will not fall on the farmer's except to the extent that they are taxpayers like every other American. This will be shared by all those in this country who pay taxes to the federal government. This grain will not be

permitted to go back on the market in such a way as to depress agricultural prices, and in a few minutes I will let one of the representatives here of the agriculture department, Jim Williams, outline to you the details, and I have a sheet prepared for handing out to all of you with the exact loan prices for wheat and corn and the other prices for the redemption of corn and wheat from storage.....

"The last point I want to make is this. It is very important that we understand that our allies are working very closely with us. I talked to several of them before we took this action. All of them agreed that it should be taken. We have got the maximum practical assurance from them that they will not substitute their sale of goods, including grain, for our own. There are three major nations that ordinarily have grain to export, Argentina, Canada and Australia. Argentina does not have adequate grain to make any significant difference. I talked to President Giscard D'Estaing today who represents West Europe. They do have substantial quantities of grain ordinarily on hand, particularly barley. They will not substitute their grain for ours that is being withheld from the Soviet Union. We anticipate that this withholding of grain to the Soviet Union will not force them to withdraw their troops from Afghanistan. We understood this from the beginning. We don't think that economic pressure or even condemnation by the United Nations of the Soviet Union will cause them to withdraw their troops. But we hope that we have laid down a marker and let them know that they will indeed suffer now and in the future from this unwarranted invasion of a formerly independent non-aligned country.

"I need the support of the American people..... We want to pursue a long-range analysis and a schedule of actions to strengthen American interests and presence and influence in this troubled area of the world, in south-west Asia. You know about some of these from news reports that have already been issued, and we will take actions with the Congress' help, to strengthen Pakistan. Our desire is to do this through a consortium of nations. That is also the desire of Pakistan. I talked since lunch with President Zia of that country.

I have talked to him before about this matter, and other nations in the region who might be threatened by the Soviets from Afghanistan will also know that we and many other nations on earth are committed to their adequate defense capability so that the Soviets will be discouraged from their expansionism in the area.....

"Because of the Iranian question, we have greatly built up our naval forces in the Arabian sea. Those will be maintained at a higher level than they have been in the past, and as you know, there has been a marshaling of worldwide public opinion, not only in the condemnation of the Iranian terrorists who hold our hostages, but also against the Soviet Union for their unprecedented invasion of Afghanistan in this recent few weeks...."

My No. 3/40/1/322
Kachcheri, Matale.
26th Dec. 1979

**Land Acquisition Act (Chapter 460) As Amended By The Land Acquisition (Amendment) Act No. 28 Of 1964.
Notice Under Section 7**

It is intended to acquire the land described in the schedule below for a public purpose. For further particulars please see Part III of Gazette No. 72 dated 18-01-1980 of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.

Schedule

Situation:— Thalagoda Village, Gangala Pallesiya Pattuwa, Naula D.R.O.'s Division and Matale District.
Name:— Hunganwela Pillewa
Extent:— A.20.R.O.P.03
Plan and Lot No.:— V.P. 535—Extract 2—
Lot Nos. 59, 74, 200, 201, 202, 203, 205, 206, 207, & 208.

R. Pitakotuwa
District Land Officer,
Matale District.

Confidentially

Vegetables

WILL IT SURPRISE our readers that one among them did not waste any time in responding to our plea in this column to send information or their views on what costs a family to live nowadays? That last week we had published the *Satyodaya* Table that totted up to Rs. 790/40 a month for a family of five on the barest subsistence? That the reader has sent three receipts for vegetable purchases from the Kacheri Road Market Traders' Association (of 212/45 $\frac{1}{2}$, Gas Work Street, Colombo 11. Tel. 34417)? That this Association, in SLFP as well as UNP times, has been very close to certain Ministers and governmental bigwigs? That this Association, if our memory serve us right, was started under the benign auspices of R. G. Senanayake when he was Minister of Trade? That the aim and purpose of this Association was to organise the private traders to provide the public with vegetables at reasonable prices? That at that time there was a hue and cry that the big Pettah market dealers were cornering vegetables to sell them at blackmarket prices? That at the same time there were protests from the private traders that the Marketing Department (MD) was undercutting the traders to drive them out of business? That this was a long long time ago and much water has flowed under the bridges since that time? That for many years now, the purchasing officers in the outstations have been in cahoots with the purchasing agents of the big Pettah vegetable dealers? That this tie-up flourishes to this day? That the victims are the producers in the rural areas and the consumers in the towns? That whilst some Ministers utter sanctimonious platitudes about unseasonal rains and about vegetables-in-season, the producers have no urge to produce more and the consumer is deprived of nutrition he and his children need? That the three receipts—they bear no date (none of them ever do)—relate to purchase on the same day, January 8, 1980? That on Receipt No. 1 the following items and prices are listed: 2 lbs. beans, Rs. 6/40; 2 lbs. carrots, Rs. 12/00; 3 lbs. potatoes,

Rs. 12/75; and 2 lbs. cabbage, Rs. 5/60? That on Receipt No. 2, 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ lbs. cabbage, Rs. 4/90; 11/2 lbs. brinjals, Rs. 4/20; 1 lb. long beans Rs. 2/80; 1 lb. Kohila, Rs. 2/-; 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. Red Onions leaves, Rs. 5/25? That on Receipt No. 3, 1 lb. snake gourd, Rs. 1/70; 1 lb. Khulkol, Rs. 2/50; 11/2 lbs. beans, Rs. 4/80; and 1 lb. cucumber, Rs. 2/80?

THAT IT WILL BE SEEN that vegetables that are out of season or have been ruined by unseasonal rains (e.g. carrots) cost Rs. 6/- a lb.? That all vegetables in season today e.g., snake gourds, brinjals, kohila, cabbage etc., cost Rs. 2/- a lb. and upwards? That *Tribune* investigators have found that in the last six months no vegetable was available at less than Rs. 2/- a lb.? That even the "poor man's" *Wattakka* fetched fancy prices over Rs. 2/- a lb.? That this is the season for the maximum production of *Wattakka*? That *Puhul* now costs at least Rs. 4/- to 5/- a lb. if available and that is rarely? That in spite of the continued imports of onions and dried chillies, the prices have continued to mount? That a mixed second quality chilly—the only one available—is Rs. 15/- a lb. or more? That the poorer qualities are around Rs. 12/50 a lb.? That red onions—whenever available—costs nearly Rs. 8/- to Rs 10/- a lb.? That the imported Bombay or Dutch onions (sold at Rs. 3/31 by the CWE to Co-ops; and traders) are openly sold just outside the CWE stores at prices ranging from Rs. 6/- to 7/50 a lb.? That a visit to half a dozen MD sales outlets revealed that the vegetables were old, dried up and generally unfit for cooking? That prices were little less than the private traders but the latter had them fresh? That red onions were not available in MD stalls? That Bombay onions had been sold out? That the much published Consumer Protection Societies existed only in Ministerial speeches and newspaper supplements. That if Ministers talked less and listened more (and let others talk), they would learn more of what is really happening in the country and also what ordinary people think and feel? That whatever achievements this government may be able to boast of in the form, of high-rise buildings, the FTZ, foreign investments, in Mahaweli, etc., in the field of rural agricultural production—vegetables, subsidiary food crops, poultry, eggs, meat and milk—the record is poor and is getting worse?

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