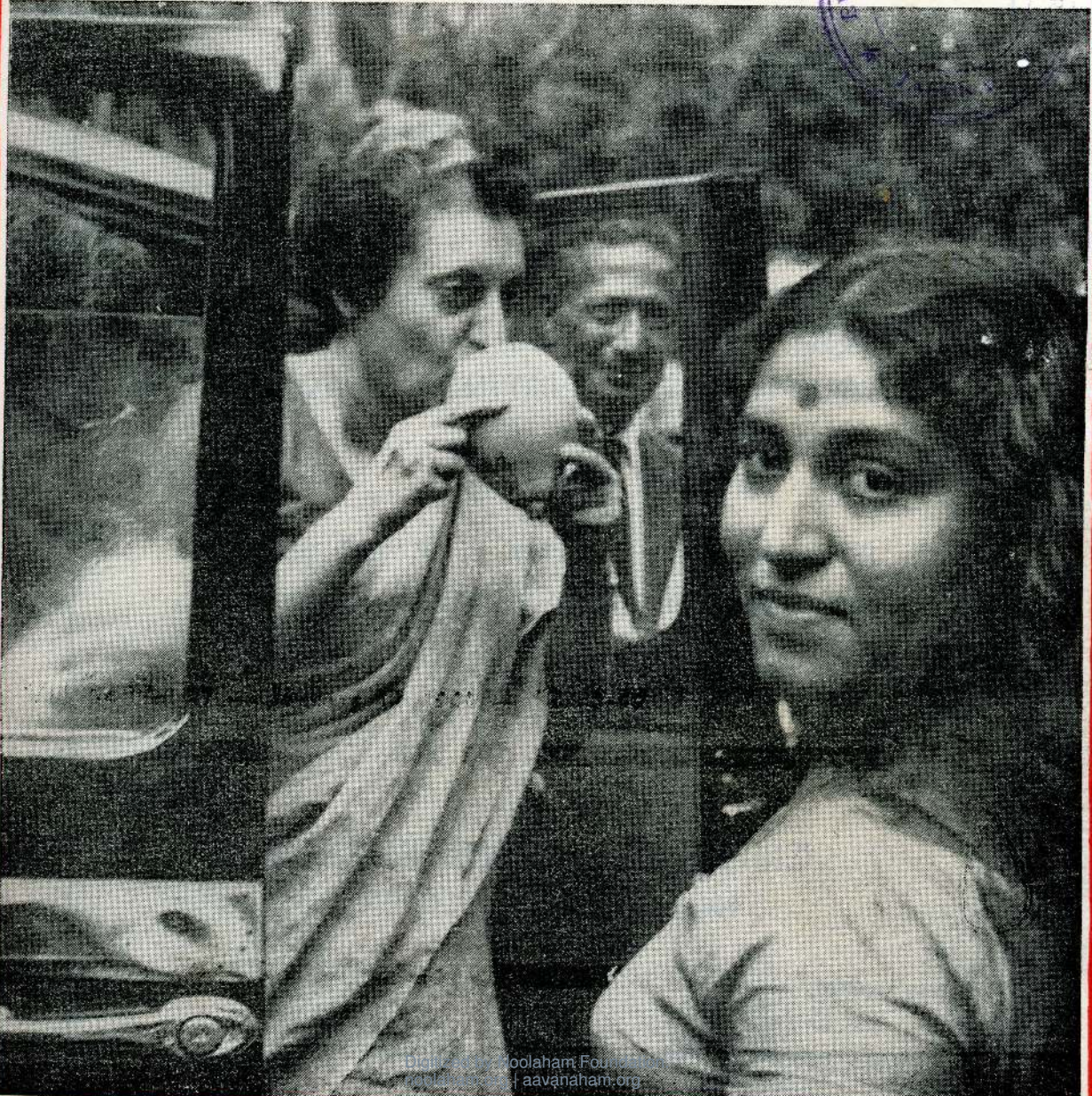


TRIBUNE

25TH YEAR OF PUBLICATION

5 MILLION NEWS REVIEW
KOLKATA LIBRARY

LEVEL 1
04570



BEWARE OF PICK POCKETS

BEWARE of persons who are pressing against you inside the bus, and when boarding and leaving! He may be a pick pocket.

DO NOT carry cash and valuables in open pockets. Have an INNER POCKET MADE IN YOUR TROUSER OR SHIRT IN FRONT TO KEEP YOUR PURSE SAFE.

IF YOU become a victim of a "pick pocket" report to police and assist the police to protect you.

CRIME DETECTIVE BUREAU
Headquarters — COLOMBO.

SPACE DONATED

Letter From The Editor

ON THE COVER we have a picture of Indira Gandhi in Sri Lanka (it was Ceylon then) way back in 1967 (or 1968?) when Dudley Senanayake was Prime Minister and (Minister of Trade) Dr. M. V. P. Peiris (seen in the picture) was the Minister in Attendance during her visit. The location was Pasyala en route to Kandy, and one of our local love-lies has gone down to history to be photographed with one of the most remarkable women rulers of all time. When the picture was taken, Indira Gandhi had just ascended the prime ministerial gadi (in 1966). She was Prime Minister for nearly 11 years before she was ignominiously thrown out in the March 1977 elections. Political pundits had predicted that she would fade out of Indian politics for ever in disgrace. Case after case was instituted against her and Commissions of Inquiry were set up—all to deprive her of civic rights and make her a non-person in politics. Son Sanjay—said to be head of a mafia determined to set up a durable dynasty of power and punch—was the target of several attacks and even after the glass house of Maruti collapsed all round him, he has risen like a phoenix to enter Parliament for the first time. There is not the slightest doubt that Indira Gandhi was a powerful and purposeful ruler, adept in that kind of manipulative politicking essential in a system of parliamentary government, to be successful and effective. Faced with opposition and confrontations from many powerful forces which wanted more elbow room to make more shekels, she had resorted to a special kind of Emergency rule from April 1975. In spite of some of the good the regimentation under emergency rule had brought, the excesses perpetrated by a group of politicians, bureaucrats and policemen—and notoriously in regard to the World Bank diktat on Family Planning and Sterilisation—rushed her government into total disrepute. Miscalculation or a desire to forestall possible unpopularity made her call a premature general election in March 1977 withdrawing the Emergency at the same time. This brought Nemesis. Every political pundit was certain that it was the end of her powerful political career and the finis of the Nehru tradition and dynasty. No one had expected her to stage a comeback—ever. But within thirty three months, she has come back in a way that has shocked a very large number of political observers in India and the world. Since the campaign began a few weeks ago, signs were not lacking that she would come back as a major force—if not the strongest unit in Parliament. Some had ventured to suggest that her party would have an absolute majority. But, she has done better than that. She has swept the country in a landslide in the North, South, East and West. At the time of writing with the results of nearly 500 seats declared, it looks as if she will be close to a two-thirds majority. Owing to the bad weather and other factors, the poll was low—about 50% only—and this, observers agree, reduced the majorities her candidates obtained. The return of Indira Gandhi to the centre of the Indian political scene is one of the most remarkable developments of the era. The Indian people evidently want a strong central government and of the main contenders for power the voters seem to think that she is the only one capable of achieving it.

TRIBUNE

Ceylon News Review

Founded In 1954

A Journal of Ceylon and

World Affairs

Editor, S. P. Amarasingam

Every Saturday

January 12, 1979

Vol. 24 No. 27

TRIBUNE

43, DAWSON STREET

COLOMBO — 2.

Tel: 33172.

CONTENTS

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK	
—K. mpuchea, Afgh nist.n p.	2
LANDLORD'S CHARTER	
—New Act	p. 5
SUBSIDIARY CROPS	
—Less And Less	p. 9
HAVANA DIARY	
—Third D y	p. 14
AFGHANISTAN	
—Soviet & US	p. 19
FOR THE RECORD	
—Sri Lanka	p. 21
20 DAYS BEFORE	
—In Kabul	p. 22
BABRAK COUP	
—Why?	p. 25
TAKING ADVANTAGE?	
—Uncle Nephew	p. 26
CHRONICLE	
—Dec. 25—30	p. 28
CONFIDENTIALLY	
—How Much?	p. 32

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

:: 1980's Realities

:: Kampuchea :: Afghanistan

Colombo January 8,

The New Year has been well and truly ushered in—this time on a Poya Day. In the rarefied zones of Colombo's five star jet set it was all jingle bells where money was of no consequence, but in all other homes there was a haunting sense of fear and uncertainty that stemmed from the increasing need for austerities, the growing burden of debt and the real fears of sickness and disease (because of the daily increasing cost of food with proper nutrition). But the daily newspapers presented only one side of the picture—with oversize advertisements of good things for the elite. Books are only rarely advertised, (not even as frequently, but inadequately, as they once were). Too late will those who now control the destinies of these newspapers realise that the euphoria of good times and sunshine as envisaged in the columns of the newspapers only add to the castles in the air built by speeches of politicians who make populist speeches to tell the poor and the under-privileged that the millenium was round the corner.

The latest election in India should be a warning to our media. With the entire press and the radio, totally, completely and viciously against her, the voters have brought Indira Gandhi back to power in a landslide victory. Our daily newspapers have not thought it fit to realistically portray the runaway inflation in Sri Lanka that is daily making life more and more difficult for the ordinary people. The price the ruling party will pay for this deceit is inestimable. The return of Indira Gandhi should be a lesson to over-enthusiastic Ministerial babblers in this country who fail to realise that an overdose of newspaper supplements about the great things Ministers were planning for a good life for the "masses" have become the butt end of jokes among street corner and tea-boutique gatherings. It is such ordinary people who ultimately make the public opinion that creates landslides in elections. The wily ones among them know what to tell bureaucrats

or newspapermen who want to sample opinion to keep the latter happy, and our politicians are thereby deluded into self-glorification in ivory towers of wishful dreams—until the next General Elections.

THESE SPECULATIONS based on the way politicians and newspapers in Sri Lanka have conducted themselves since Independence and on the fate that has overtaken them at general elections will not mean much to our present rulers exuberant in the wake of the post-Galle by-election euphoria that has gripped them in suicidal complacency. But the government cannot remain in this stupor of self-glory and self-praise of the wonderful things in store in 1980 for long. Hard realities—global and domestic—face the Government, but most if not all the Ministers do not seem to be even conscious about them. The Minister of Finance occasionally hints that dark clouds were hanging over world economy, but all this is lost in blah blah of the wonderful things the government will do in 1980.

IT WOULD BE USEFUL to remind ourselves of a few warnings that have come from conservative sources. Reuters, in a despatch from London on December 26, stated: "There has been so much economic gloom in the past decade, especially the last 12 months, that it is difficult to see how the 1980s could be any worse. However, according to most economists, they could. More and more people could switch their money and investments to gold, silver and such things as rare sea shells, depriving industry and trade of sufficient currency to provide its vital means of exchange. Nations could increase protectionist barriers against the goods of other countries, strangling international trade and thereby helping to dampen growth and provoke worldwide depression. Inflation could become so chronic that people would plan for it with child logic: spend everything immediately and borrow as much as possible before the value of money drops even further, and neglect industrial investment in favour of gold paintings and antique chairs. Unemployment could rise to crisis proportions. This would leave governments with what some commentators sarcastically called a social dilemma: whether to increase public spending (and inflation) by paying higher

and higher welfare benefits to those out of work, or whether to opt for 'economic discipline' and let the unemployed starve hoping they would do it quietly.... 'The struggle for the world's dwindling supplies of oil could become increasingly dangerous, threatening the chances of a smooth changeover to some alternative form of energy. The Communist nations could also feel the strain of their own economic problems, for inflation has hit them hard too. The Third World could be likely to become even more desperate over its poverty causing dangerous political tensions'.

IPS (with which Lankapuwath is now closely linked) in a despatch from London on December 27, stated: "The penultimate decade of the century looks as uncertain and dangerous as the 1930s with a serious threat of breakdown facing the economic, financial and monetary worlds. The monetary and financial mechanisms of the world, with their endemic instability, tend to reflect the profound structural crisis of the world, a crisis which can be seen both in the current models of development and in the interplay of international relations. This decade now drawing to a close has been marked by the energy drama and a decline in the productivity of the industrialised world. This has resulted in inflation, the passing on of higher costs, deviation of investment into monetary and financial speculation and a notable growth in the foreign debt of the Third World. The predictions range from the deep pessimism of the Club of Rome and the World Bank to the less alarmist, though not necessarily less pessimistic, view of the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development)—the developed Western countries' 'club'. All coincide in placing the average annual growth of the economy of the industrialised world at around two per cent and that of the developing world at around four per cent...."

THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION is pregnant with complexities that will strain the ingenuity of our government to tread the tight rope of "non-aligned neutralism" that will keep the Western bankers happy. This is not going to be easy. A few concrete examples will show this. In the past, Sri Lanka has tended to follow to a large extent India's lead in foreign affairs. Mrs. Bandaranaike did not go very much out of step with Mrs.

Indira Gandhi, and the Jayewardene Government proclaimed that it worked on the same wave-lengths as Desai's Janata. Desai has gone and Indira has come. Will Sri Lanka attempt to keep in step in Indira's India or claim that it wants to follow a truly independent Sri Lankan policy. And what will the policy be? The Jayewardene government, up to a point, has been following a negative policy of no comment and no action and this was successfully carried out during the time Sri Lanka was Chairman of the non-aligned under the pretext that she should not take sides. But now this is no longer possible. No sooner, the Chairmanship was over, Sri Lanka plumped for Pol Pot—not realising that Britain, Australia and other countries would soon "de-recognize" Pol Pot. To meet this situation China switched Kieu Samphan for Pol Pot, but France has backed Sihanouk. ASEAN, after all its noisy support for Pol Pot, is seeking to come to terms with Vietnam and the Malaysian Foreign Minister will shortly go to Hanoi.

With Indira back in power, there is no doubt that India will recognise the Heng Samrin government—she has set that out in the Congress(I) Manifesto—as one of the hallmarks of an independent foreign policy. Popular pressure in India had made even Charan Singh say that after the elections India would recognize Heng Samrin government. Down the grapevine news has come that the newly appointed Secretary of the Ministry of External Affairs (R. D. Sathe) had prepared a special report for the Foreign Minister (S. N. Mishra) on the situation in Indo-China which showed why it was logical to recognize the Heng Samrin government. China will not be happy, nor will the USA, if India recognizes the Heng Samrin government. What will Sri Lanka do? Will it continue to recognize Pol Pot in the way the USA had recognised Chiang-Kai-Shek's Taiwan (as China) for 20 years?

Or take Afghanistan. It was a welcome step to find Sri Lanka making a comment on current developments in Afghanistan. Elsewhere in this issue we have published the statement for the record. (On Kimpuciea, Sri Lanka has made no statement, but voted in the UN for a status quo of a ghost Pol Pot regime). Sri Lanka has now ventured on a careful and guarded statement on Afghanistan.

which is only a repetition of a part of the chorus that is being repeated in many countries. **NO DOUBT EVENTS IN AFGHANISTAN** have caused considerable concern in Sri Lanka and in other parts of South Asia and the world. Apprehension has naturally and understandably been voiced over the danger of "foreign intervention in Afghanistan" and about a destabilisation gaining further momentum following the recent coup in the whole region. Some of these apprehensions are no doubt well-founded. With all the complexities and dangers of the situation in Iran and the Gulf, the events in Afghanistan undoubtedly add to the uncertainties in the South West Asian scene.

But it is necessary and appropriate to view the situation calmly in the perspective of Sri Lanka's national interests. And one must not be blackmailed or intimidated by cold war cries that one was taking a pro-Soviet or pro-China or pro-US, or pro-India or pro-Timbucktoo line—if one analyses the situation in an objective manner from a Sri Lankan angle. What is important is that one must not get carried away by sudden moral indignation over the "introduction of foreign troops" in a nearby country.

One must study all the factors relevant to the situation and make a proper assessment before one ventures on an opinion. It is interesting to note that the circles making the most noise and who are uttering the most self-righteous moralistic platitudes over the presence of Soviet troops in Afghanistan have nothing to say over the continued presence of American troops as military advisers in many countries of West Asia.

The number of American personnel in Saudi Arabia is estimated to be nearly 30,000—and another 25,000 are known to be in various other parts of West Asia. There were at one time over 40,000 American military advisers in Iran. American troops, like Russian troops, are stationed in European countries, but Americans also have troops in South Korea, Philippines—and even in Guatanamo in Cuba.

It is also significant that persons who are expressing such righteous anger over Soviet presence in Afghanistan have been brazenly endorsing the open involvement of Pakistan and Iran in the insurgency in Afghanistan after the April 1978 revolution. If one is a participant in the cold war such vociferous outbursts are understandable. Is Sri Lanka to be drawn into this cold war?

One must examine all the available facts, allegations, comments and opinions before one can arrive at a conclusion—in the national interest. It is an empty platitude to talk of international morality—none exists, only the cold war is real. It is even more difficult to separate the wheat from the chaff in international politics. One has to sift a great deal to learn even a little of the truth.

In the case of Afghanistan one version that is currently held in many responsible circles in India is that "in August-September the Afghan government forces successfully ended a series of operations to stop the activities of rebellious elements. As a result of this offensive the rebels were smashed and their remnants had to seek refuge in Pakistan, Iran and other neighbouring countries and the conditions for normalisation of political and economic life in Afghanistan were created. It was at this time that Taraki went to Havana.

"However, such a turn in events didn't suit primarily the US and China, because they hoped for the success of antigovernment movement. It is alleged that Zia ul-Huq, prompted by US and China, had organised on Pakistan territory special training centres to send rebel groups, formed from refugees, to Afghanistan. The training, it is said, was with the help of Chinese experts for mountain warfare.

"It is also said that the US, Britain and China brought pressure on Pakistan through their representatives including intelligence services in order to make Pakistan to take active and energetic measures to unify various rebellious groupings of the Afghan emigrants hostile to each other and to set up any kind of an 'Afghan government in exile'. The existence of such government would have given the US, China and fanatically Islamic countries 'lawful grounds' to openly render various assistance to the insurgents in Afghanistan".

Landlords' Charter For Tenants' Ouster

by Satchi Ponnambalam

A SUBSTANTIAL PORTION of the lands under paddy in Sri Lanka is cultivated under tenancy conditions. According to the Census Report of 1946, 60% of the paddy lands were owner cultivated and the rest of the lands were under one form of tenure or other. The predominant form of tenure of paddy lands in the country is the *ande* system, which in 1946 comprised about 215,000 acres or 26% of the total area then under paddy. According to the 1962 Census of Agriculture, 282,000 acres or about 29% of the total area of paddy lands were under *ande* tenancy and the Census estimated that there were about 350,000 *ande* tenant cultivators representing about 30% of the total cultivators in the country. There are other forms of tenancies, comprising another 5% of both the cultivated area and cultivators in the country, making the total paddy lands under tenancies on a conservative estimate, to be about 35%, and tenant cultivators also to be almost the same proportion of the total cultivators in the country.

Generally, under the *ande* system of share-cropping, the tenant gives half share of the produce to the landlords as land rent. In the Southern districts, the customary share of produce has been a quarter. In certain districts, the landlords give seed paddy, manure or buffalo for ploughing. The cultivation of such large areas of the country under tenancy conditions in which a substantial portion of the produce has to be surrendered to the owner of land as land rent has attracted the attention of the various governments in the country from the early 1950s.

The first Paddy Lands Act of 1951 under the UNP government of D. S. Senanayake, in providing some measure of amelioration to the tenants proved abortive for the reason that it rested upon the co-operation and willingness of the landlords and not upon any coercive medium to mitigate the inequities.

This is one of the many reasons, it is said, for the events that led up to the Babrak coup in Kabul. We have published other articles on the developments in Afghanistan—to enable our readers a more comprehensive picture of the developments. What is true is not easy to find, but the stories put out by the media of the cold war participants is certainly not the entire truth.

There is no doubt that Soviet troops would leave Afghanistan no sooner the government want them to go. The sooner the Babrak government could ask them to go the better. But this should apply equally to the governments of Saudi Arabia and other West Asian states where there are US troops.

Sri Lanka has always endeavoured to keep out of the cold war and it would be a pity to be drawn into it now. How far do Russian troops in Afghanistan, or American troops in Saudi Arabia or South Korea, affect our national interest?

However, it must be said that Sri Lankan reaction to Soviet intervention in Afghanistan has been on expected lines. The fact that a large section of Sri Lankan opinion—much more than the customary anti-Soviet chorus—have urged the withdrawal of Soviet troops must be seen as the instant response of a country which has long opposed foreign rule and which has rejected the presence on its soil of foreign troops or bases, friendly or unfriendly. It is not the official government statement alone, but leader writers and commentators in the daily papers have asked for the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan. In neighbouring India, Charan Singh as well as Indira Gandhi have asked for the same. It would be wrong to conclude that all those who have disapproved of the Soviet forces in Afghanistan today have *ipso facto* turned anti-Soviet. Rather, there is confusion mixed with disappointment that the Soviet Union has had to take recourse to such a step.

Spontaneous emotional reaction, nevertheless, does not lead one to a clear and in-depth understanding of the situation and the implications involved in such a specific development as in Afghanistan. An effort must be made to understand what was and has been happening inside Afghanistan that led to the Soviet involvement in it.

The next measure was the *Paddy Lands Act of 1958*. This measure, as originally conceived was a very far-reaching and radical proposal aimed at giving security of tenure to the tenants, generating an internal socio-economic dynamism aimed at building genuine farmers' organisations and rural regeneration, etc. But the original proposal as envisaged by Philip Gunewardene, with the able assistance of G. V. S. de Silva, was thwarted by the conservative landed bourgeoisie within the MEP government and the *Paddy Lands Act, 1958* as finally passed by Parliament was merely the truncated remains of the radical original proposals. Phillip Gunewardene himself commented in despair that his original proposals were "castrated" by the Government Parliamentary Group.

THEFORE, the *Paddy Lands Act, 1958* as enacted failed to achieve the objectives of providing security of tenure to the tenants and effectuating the payment of the legally prescribed rent of 15 bushels per acre or one quarter of the crop, whichever was less. The Act, prohibited eviction of the tenants for any reason whatsoever and the landlords were prevented from taking more than the prescribed share or interfering with the occupation or use of the tenants' holdings. Despite these caveats and lofty protective provisions in the Act, during the first 10 years of the operation of the *Paddy Lands Act*, about 35,000 or 10% of the tenant cultivators were evicted.

Although the *Paddy Lands Act* was amended four times—in 1958, 1961, 1964 and 1966—to overcome the many legal problems encountered in its implementation, it failed to achieve the principal objectives of giving security of tenure to the tenants and the payment of the prescribed quantum by the peasant cultivators to the landlords. The traditional half share of the produce as land rent continued to be the rule and the payment of the legally prescribed quantum, the exception.

The landlords resorted to eviction on a massive scale—37,403 evictions up to the end of September 1969. Although the Department of Agrarian Services after due eviction inquiries made 15,319 restoration orders, only 6,675 restorations were actually effected. Thus, not only did the landlords resort to eviction

of the tenants on mass scale but even defied the restoration orders with impunity. Eventually, the powers of the Commissioner of Agrarian Services to adjudicate upon complaints of eviction of tenants and make restoration orders were challenged in the courts as *ultra vires* the Constitution, in that the Commissioner being an appointee of the Public Service Commission and not of the Judicial Service Commission was not competent to make quasi-judicial determinations.

During the period of the United Front Government (1970-1977), the *Paddy Lands Act, 1958* was repealed and replaced by the *Agricultural Lands Law No. 42 of 1973*. This law made certain alterations and modifications to the provisions of the earlier *Paddy Lands Act*. These included (1) the Cultivation Committee members were to be appointed by the Minister, (2) the Cultivation Committees were to be subject to the control and direction of the Agricultural Productivity Committee, (3) the area of jurisdiction of the Cultivation Committee was extended to include highlands as well as paddy lands, and (4) Agricultural Tribunals were substituted in place of the Commissioner of Agrarian Services for the making of eviction inquiries and restoration orders. Another law—the *Agricultural Productivity Law No. 2 of 1972*, enjoined the owner or occupier of agricultural land to maintain standards of good management. In default, the Minister was empowered to make order of dispossession. It also provided for the establishment of Agricultural Productivity Committees, comprising 10 members appointed by the Minister and also for the establishment of Agricultural Tribunals.

The different laws enacted up to then in the sphere of agrarian reform were aimed at least ostensibly, to safeguard the *status quo* of the tenant and to prevent the tenant being dispossessed of his land by the landlord at will. A drastic and significant departure has now been made to this genre of tenant protective laws by the *Agrarian Services Act, No. 59 of 1979*, enacted by the present UNP Government. The *Agrarian Services Act 1979* repeals the *Agricultural Lands Law No. 42 of 1973* and *Agricultural Productivity Law No. 2 of 1972* and re-enacts the core provisions of these laws, introducing changes beneficial to the

landlords and insidiously making leeway for the landlords to grab their lands from the tenants.

Whereas, both the Paddy Lands Act and its successor Agricultural Lands Law placed 15 bushels or one quarter of the total yield per acre (the latter Act also included customary rent), whichever is less (or the least) as the land rent the tenant has to pay the landlord, the new Agrarian Services Act provides that the tenant shall give whichever is greater of the two.

The unequivocal intent of the legislators is that the landlords should now get more than what they received in the past. Is there any ambiguity as to whose interest is being protected and furthered by this provision in the present Act? The consequence of the new level of higher share of crop will render cultivation under tenancy conditions uneconomical to the tenant and the lands would in consequence revert to the landlords.

Further, whereas under the previous two Acts—the Paddy Lands Act and the Agricultural Lands Law, there was no maximum extent of paddy land that the tenant could cultivate, the new Act places a ceiling of 5 acres as the maximum extent a tenant cultivator can cultivate (see Section 4). This new law also provides for even this maximum of 5 acres to be reduced on an order by the Minister, depending on districts and for deprivation of the excess from the tenant and giving it back to the landlords. When under the Land Reform Law, land ceiling for paddy landownership is 25 acres, a tenant cultivator who cultivates and gives a share of crop to the landlord is not permitted to cultivate more than 5 acres under this new law.

Most glaring attempt to permit the landlords to grab the land and dispossess the tenant is in regard to the consequence for non-payment of the share of crop as land rent. Whereas under the earlier laws, if rent was in arrears from the tenant the only course provided for recovery (as it should be) was for its recovery as a civil debt; the present Agrarian Services Act provides for eviction of the tenant by the Commissioner of Agrarian Services and to hand over the land to the landlord for cultivation by him (see Section 18).

The New Act makes no provision for the recovery of the arrears as a civil debt, as in the past. Is there any ambiguity as to whose interest is being protected and furthered by this provision in the present Act? Is this the new sword of democles by which more than 350,000 agricultural tenants in the country are to be decimated?

The earlier Agricultural Productivity Law No. 2 of 1972 cast a legal duty on the landlord to provide capital works and equipment necessary (unless expressly contracted out) to enable the tenant to farm the land and maintain an efficient standard of production (see Section 2). This factor was also to be taken into account to determine whether the tenant was farming and managing the land in accordance with the rules of good management (see Section 3). Thus, earlier both the owner and occupier (tenant) were held jointly responsible for good management, and to that extent there was no chance of deprivation consequent to landlord's default. Both these provisions, which cast responsibility on the landlord have been deleted in the present Act and the tenant is made solely responsible for capital works to the landlords' land. Failing which, the tenant is to be deprived of the land that he cultivates and the land is to revert to the landlord (see Sections 33 to 37). Is there any ambiguity as to whose interest is being protected and furthered by this provision in the present Act?

As to whose interests are being served is again unambiguously answered by the fact that whereas under the earlier law, the penalty that the landlord had to suffer for his violation of tenants' rights was a fine not exceeding Rs. 500/- and in default imprisonment for one month; under the present law, the punishment is only a fine of Rs. 500 with no punishment for default.

Thus the changes introduced by the new Agrarian Services Act are all designed to benefit the landlords, giving them legal cover to grab back their lands from the tenants. This landlords' charter will stand unparalleled in the whole legal corpus of agrarian reform anywhere in the world.

^ ^ ^

**The Land Acquisition Act (Chapter 455)
As Amended By The Land Acquisition
(Amendment) Act No. 28 Of 1964**

**Revocation of Vesting Order under
section 39(1) of the Act.**

My No. 03/J 75 L 663

G.A.'s Ref: K/Mahaweli 215

WHEREAS by Order No. 35 of 1976 dated 18.6.1976 under Section 38 proviso (a) of the Land Acquisition (Amendment) Act No. 28 of 1964, published in the Gazette No. 220 of 2.7.1976 of the Republic of Sri Lanka, the land more fully described in the Schedule below has been vested in the Republic of Sri Lanka.

And whereas possession of the land has not been taken over by the Republic of Sri Lanka, therefore, I Lionel Gamini Dissanayake Minister of Lands and Land Development by virtue of the powers vested in me under section 39(1) of the Land Acquisition (Amendment) Act No. 28 of 1964, do hereby inform all that the Vesting Order No. 35 of 1976 dated 18.6.1976 published in the Gazette No. 220 of 2.7.1976 of the Republic of Sri Lanka is hereby cancelled.

Gamini Dissanayake

Minister of Lands and Land Development,
Ministry of Lands & Land Development,
Colombo 10.
28th, September, 1979

Schedule

The following allotments of land situated in Nawaylatenne Bazaar Ward No. 10 Kihalla within the Municipal Council Limits of Kandy, Pata Dumbara D.R.O.'s Division, Kandy District and more particularly surveyed and shown in Advance Tracing No. Maha A 76/3 dated 31.5.1976 and bounded as follows:—

Lot 1—Nawaylatennehene—parts of Assmt. Nos. 322 and 324 Madawela Road

North : Madawela Road
East : Lot 2
South : Lot 22 in P.P. Maha 1406
West : Lots 21 & 22 in P.P. Maha 1406

Lot 2—Nawaylatennehene—Parts of assmt. Nos. 326 and 328 Madawela Road

North : Madawela Road
East : Lot 3
South : Lot 23 in P.P. Maha 1406
West : Lot 1

Lot 3—Nawaylatennehene—Parts of Assmt. Nos. 330 and 332 Madawela Road

North : Madawela Road
East : Lot 4
South : Lot 24 in P.P. Maha 1406
West : Lot 2

Lot 4—Nawaylatennehene—part of Assmt. No. 336 Madawela Road

North : Madawela Road
East : Lot 5
South : Lot 25 in P.P. Maha 1406
West : Lot 3

Lot 5—Nawaylatennehene—Assmt. No. 338 Madawela Road—Extent OA.OR.06.5P.

North : Madawela Road
East : Lot 6
South : Lot 26 in P.P. Maha 1406
West : Lot 4

Lot 6—Nawaylatennehene—Assmt. No. 340 342, 343 Madawela Road—Extent OA.OR.20.5P.

North : Madawela
East : Lot 7
South : Lot 27 in P.P. Maha 1406
West : Lot 5

Lot 7—Nawaylatennehene—Assmt. No. 346 Madawela Road—Extent OA.OR.04.4P.

North : Madawela Road
East : Lot 8
South : Lot 28 in P.P. Maha 1406
West : Lot 6

Lot 8—Nawaylatennehene—Assmt. No. 348 Madawela Road—Extent OA.OR.05.4P.

North : Madawela Road
East : Lot 9
South : Lot 29 in P.P. Maha 1406
West : Lot No. 7

Lot 9—Nawaylatennehene—Assmt. No. 350 and 353 Madawela Road—Extent OA.OR.05.0P.

North : Madawela Road
East : Lot 30 and 31 in P.P. Maha 1406
South : Lot 30 in P.P. Maha 1406
West : Lot 8

Current Trends In Production

There has been a great deal of wishful talk about agricultural production. Toward the end of 1978 it was proclaimed that the country would be self-sufficient in rice in 1979 and that in 1980 we would export rice. Symbolically shipments were sent to the Maldives and to Sri Lankans in Australia. But the reality is that in 1980 we will import at least 300,000 tons of rice and more than 500,000 tons of wheat flour. The excuse is the drought in some parts of the country. The magnitude of the wheat imports however shows the extent of grain shortage in the country. The statistics about paddy production are notoriously incorrect, but we will deal with that on another occasion.

We publish below a document issued by the Ministry of Plan Implementation on August 28, 1979 on *Current Trends in The Production of Subsidiary Food Crops*. The statement was prepared by Dr. Mervyn de Silva, Advisor, and Mr. Indra Premarane, Statistical Assistant. We have also published three of the six tables in the document which will help our readers to understand the trends, up to the end of 1978. The statistics for 1979 are not yet available but from a preliminary examination of some of the available data the situation in 1979 is much worse than in 1978. It is our firm conviction, moreover, that these statistics are compiled by officials of the Department of Agriculture who tend to play down the decrease in cultivation and production. The situation is really much worse than what these statistics suggest.

—Ed.

1. Besides the production of rice, the domestic agriculture sector is concerned with the raising of a wide range of subsidiary food crops. These crops which fall into seven (7) categories or classes totalling to about thirty one (31) species, are tabulated in Table I (not reproduced here). Of these, Onions, Chillies, and Potatoes occupy an important place

in the diet of every household in the country and since the early 1960's therefore, the primary objectives in the field of subsidiary food crops had been one of import substitution. In the light of this emphasis, numerous programmes of production backed by research and extension were started for some of these crops, especially Chillies, Onions, Potatoes and Pulses, the importation of which involved heavy foreign exchange expenditure.

2. Large scale cultivation of subsidiary food crops is feasible only in particular regions of the island where the soil is suitable, where there is a regular supply of water, and facilities for purchasing inputs and marketing etc., are present. Even so, there are several Diseases and Insect pests that cause considerable loss of crop which require the adoption of modern pest control techniques. In the circumstances, it would be completely unrealistic to expect the production of subsidiary food crops to expand at the required speed and close on the goal of self-sufficiency by relying exclusively on rainfed cultivation.

3. For, although crops like Maize, Sorghum, Kurakkan, Cowpea, Green gram, Ground nut, Mustard, Chillies and Onions can be grown under rainfed conditions, yields are generally low and there is little profit in the cultivation of these crops under these conditions. When these crops are grown under irrigation very high yields are obtained and their cultivation becomes very profitable. In fact, the only places where a settled form of Agriculture started with subsidiary food crops is in the Jaffna peninsula and parts of the Vavuniya District. Here underground water from wells is lifted and used for the successful cultivation of Chillies, Onions and ground nuts. In other parts of the Dry Zone, all available stored water has so far been used for the exclusive cultivation of paddy. Water, therefore, has been a serious limiting factor in the extension of subsidiary food crops in the Dry Zone.

4. The solution then lies in the provision of irrigation for those areas best suited for these crops and the establishment of their cultivation in a system of settled farming which grows not only Chillies, Onions and Pulses, but also a variety of other subsidiary food crops on a rotational basis. If subsidiary

food crops are to be undertaken on a settled basis, cultivated under different systems of irrigation in the future especially in those areas coming under the command of the Mahaweli Development Scheme the regular cultivation of these crops must prove economically profitable to the farmers.

5. Even if conditions for the cultivation of subsidiary food crops i.e., good soil, regular supply of water etc., are present, the dominant factor that would determine the expansion of production is the price obtained by the farmer. It was the ban on the imports of Eggs, Tobacco and Ground nuts that proved to be the most decisive factor in stepping up local production of these items to the point of self-sufficiency. No doubt, eggs, tobacco and ground nuts as against Chillies, Onions and Pulses cannot be compared because the latter are essential ingredients in the diet of our people. It is also an arguable point as to whether restriction per-se would act as a stimulant to increase the production of subsidiary food crops quickly to higher standards as in the case mentioned earlier.

6. The evolution of suitable policies for subsidiary food crops has been greatly hindered by an absence of a sound data base. Available statistics however show that the efforts of Government since the early 1960s has not been without results. It will be observed that the total areas under 17 subsidiary food crops had risen from 263,535 acres in 1972 to 655 661 acres in 1977 clearly evidenced by Tables 2 and 3. (published here)

7. The total acreage under all subsidiary food crops as at Maha 1975/76 was 741,720 acres. Stated differently, it was equivalent to 48% of the total acreage under paddy in 1976. This has significance because the production of subsidiary food crops and related activities are closely knit into the rural economy constituting an important item in the farmer's source of income as paddy was long recognized to be.

8. A close examination of the figures for 1978 given in tables 2 and 3 shows the beginning of an alarming reversal of the past trend, and a sharp drop in the acreage under production of most of these crops. The figures for 1978 expressed as percentages of the peak years in respect of acreages under

cultivation and total annual output shows a decline ranging from a maximum of 96% in some cases to a minimum of 1.2% in others. The decline in acreages under cultivation and total manual production show a correlation to the prices fetched, which also recorded a drop ranging from 55% to 3%—Table 4 (not reproduced).

9. Evidently, several other factors have contributed towards the present declining trend such as cyclones, droughts, pest and disease outbreaks, and escalating prices of agricultural inputs. And there is a case for examining the position of each of these crops separately. However, on the basis of available statistics presented in this note it seems distinctly clear that the future growth in the production of subsidiary food crops would depend on what concrete steps are taken to stem the present trend.

10. Loan repayment in the subsidiary food crop sub-sector has been comparatively encouraging during the years 1971 to 1976; but falling in line with the decline in the production of these crops, the percentage of

THE SAPUMAL FOUNDATION

is an approved charity for the

- * advancement of education
- * cultural activities
- * research
- * relief of poverty

Support a good cause generously
and obtain a reduction in your
assessable Income Tax!

Trustees:

Mr. Harry Pieris,
32/4, Barnes Place, Colombo 7.

Mr. L. S. D. Pieris,
Hatton National Bank, Colombo 1.

Prof. A. C. J. Weerakoon,
Sri Jayawardenapura University, Nugegoda

Hony Secretary/Treasurer:

Mr. E. don Gabriel,
16, Waidya Road, Dehiwela.

shows that the recovery rate too has dropped from 82% in 1971 to 35% in 1977.

11. Most Governments in the past have tried to ensure that those engaged in agricultural activities receive remunerative prices and income for the producers of their hard labour. With the accelerated Mahaweli Development Programme underway and new employment opportunities expected to be created in the form of agricultural pursuits, it would seem imperative that serious thought should be given to reviving this sub-sector of domestic agriculture even at the expense of a transient period of consumer hardship.

12. One crop worth analysing in greater detail is the case of *Chillie production* because the rapid expansion of this subsidiary food crop in recent years provides an excellent example of production responding to price incentives. Until 1972 almost the entire requirement of dried chillie was met by imports. According to trade statistics, imports amounted to 19,770 metric tons in 1972, but dropped to 1,196 metric tons in 1973 following the ban on its imports.

13. With the imposition of the ban, the price of dried chillies which was less than Rs. 4 per pound prior to the curtailment of imports, rose to an unprecedented level of Rs. 40 per pound. However, being a crop of short duration chillies responded rapidly to price incentives although unrealistic, and production increased remarkably. *Consequently, within a short period of time in 1974 the consumer price of chillies dropped and fluctuated between a rate of Rs. 18 and Rs. 7.50 per pound. Perhaps with time this fluctuation would have narrowed down.* Nevertheless, the extent cultivated increased substantially to 108,908 acres in 1977, and production shot up to 715,400 cwt. in 1976. In 1978 however, the acreage under-cultivation and total annual production dropped to 23.3% and 22.6% respectively of the peak year, in consonance with the declining prices fetched.

14. In this situation in order to satisfy consumer demand, 2304 metric tons or 45,257 cwt. of chillies were imported in 1978 at a cost of Rs. 30 million, which means that a pound of chillie cost Rs. 5.93. If local chillie production developed through one decade of concerned effort was maintained at the 1976 level of 715,400 cwt., the value of the

production at the 1978 import price of Rs. 5.93 would have been Rs. 475,140,064. The difference between the 1976 production and the 1978 production is 161,200 cwt. Priced at the import price of Rs. 5.93 per pound the value of the shortfall in chillie production is Rs. 107,062,000.

15. The impetus for the expansion of potato and onion production also came with the banning of imports of these two commodities in 1967 and 1971 respectively. The highest record of local onion production achieved was (1,541,400 cwts in 1976 and potatoes 922,000) cwt. in 1972. Both crops have shown a decline in the acreage and production in 1978 as in the case of chillies, Tables 2 and 3 also demonstrate a similar trend in the case of Sorghum, Maize, Kurakkan and Sweet-potatoes whose production increased significantly in 1972, but declined in recent years.

16. Subsidiary food crops include many of the crops proposed for high priority development for the reason that they are important in the food basket of the common man. Whether the present trend is running counter to expectation and anticipated overall production increases of 15% to 20% over the present production, is a matter that should be examined with urgent attention.

Sri Lanka Sumithrayo

Are you a happy,
well adjusted person,
without any
overwhelming
problems?

Would you like to

HELP

those who are less
fortunate?

Please call personally
on any Saturday 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

60 B, Horton Place,
Colombo-7,
Telephone: 92909

TABLE II
AREA UNDER CULTIVATION OF 17 SUBSIDIARY FOOD CROPS — 1972 - 1978
(in acres)

Crops	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	Drop in acreage	1978 acreage as a % of the Peak Year
Chillies	59779	90903	102672	81640	107088	108908*	83517	- 23.3	76.7
Red Onions	14253	17288	15956	15635	19135	20171*	15511	- 23.1	76.9
B. Onions	617*	440	447	349	433	603	557	- 9.8	90.2
Undu	n.a.	1122	3439	5026	12579	34279	34743*	- 1	101.
Cowpea	2376	3310	7395	21578	47516	74537*	68116	- 8.7	91.3
Soya Beans	211	387	3232	2818	1780	2502	4770*	- 47	147.
Green Gram	7053	12966	26417	22866	20667	30509*	30132	- 1.2	98.8
Dhall	63	502	3274*	665	169	07	102	- 96.9	3.1
Maize	40142	59928	95128	98970*	75092	90770	70718	- 28.6	71.4
Sorghum	196	2982	5405	9283*	2446	3431	1353	- 85.4	14.6
Kurakkan	52894	94701*	94571	66289	49019	63245	43605	- 54	46
Meneri	n.a.	2436	n.a.	2501	2647	2724*	1361	- 50.1	49.9
Potatoes	7809	7011	5728	6307	6914	7997*	6509	- 18.7	81.3
Sweet-potatoes	35918	n.a.	n.a.	52492*	37010	31698	21787	- 58.5	41.5
Manioc	n.a.	n.a.	225642	195696	171515	134804	98494	- 56.4	43.6
Ground nuts	11950	15379	19078	19209	16615	16012	20457*	- 6	106
Gingelly	30274	23952	32108	31422	46938*	33464	41952	- 10.7	89.3
Total	263535	333307	640492	632746	617563	655661	543684		

* Highest record

Source: Ministry of Agricultural Development & Research.

TABLE III
PRODUCTION OF 17 SUBSIDIARY FOOD CROPS — 1972 TO 1978
 (in '000 cwts)

Crops	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	Drop in Production	1978 Production as a % of the Peak year
Chillies	238.0	382.4	361.8	321.2	715.4*	613.4	554.2	—	22.6
Red Onions	1223.0	1242.9	1396.8	1423.1	1541.4*	1306.5	1417.6	—	8.1
B. Onions	36.1	26.5	21.6	26.2	24.6	37.9	70.0*	+	84
Undu	n.a.	10.0	12.8	20.6	46.5	230.4*	170.1	—	26.2
Cowpea	22.8	12.5	39.7	148.8	234.2	415.8	443.1*	+	6
Soya Beans	0.7	4.5	19.6	22.6	14.5	21.8	56.5*	+	150
Green Gram	24.6	58.2	116.0	116.7	91.0	153.6	165.3	+	7
Dhall	6.2	33.3	153.8*	44.8	6.0	.3	2.6	—	98.4
Maize	261.2	268.4	469.4	680.4	611.5	825.5*	692.8	—	16.1
Sorghum	0.6	22.2	61.7	120.0*	32.6	39.4	10.7	—	91.6
Kurakkan	540.6*	472.5	385.0	404.6	306.9	447.2	287.5	—	46.9
Meneri	n.a.	6.7	n.a.	9.7	16.5	21.2*	10.2	—	51.9
Potatoes	922.0*	780.0	538.0	750.0	762.0	752.0	588.0	—	36.3
Sweet Potatoes	1106.7	n.a.	n.a.	2835.9*	2539.4	1910.6	1608.2	—	43.3
Manioc	n.a.	n.a.	167.0	15093.1	1344.3	10774.2	9773.6	—	41.6
Ground nuts	107.7	181.7*	144.8	149.7	119.8	129.1	147.1	—	19.1
Gingelly	141.8	91.2	96.8	116.3	168.9	145.6	190.7*	+	12.9

* Highest record

Source: Ministry of Agriculture Development & Research.

TABLE VI
IMPORTS OF POTATOES AND CHILLIES (1972 - 1978)

(volume in Metric tons & value in Rs.)

Year	Fresh or Chilled Potatoes		Onions and B'Onions		Dried Chillies		
	Volume	Value	Volume	Value	Volume	Value	Price per lb.
1972	5,941	7,595,531	08	18,351	19,770	24,438,989	.56
1973	1,282	1,762,986	—	—	1,196	3,099,116	1.18
1974	10,024	5,540,630	497	114,396	—	—	—
1975	586	1,113,580	3,628	110,397	—	—	—
1976	870	2,143,906	—	—	01	2,000	.91
1977	141	606,392	—	—	—	—	—
1978	1,288	12,023,865	52	327,623	2,304	30,110,432	5.93

HAVANA DIARY—15

THIRD DAY—More Speakers

by S. P. Amarasingam

The afternoon session began late at 6 p.m. Fidel Castro took the opportunity to point out that they were behind schedule—a large part of the agenda had still to be gone through—and that a very large number of heads of state and government had not yet spoken. He mentioned that though there was no precedent for limiting speaking time, it was necessary at future meetings of this kind to agree on limiting speaking time especially because the number of members had quadrupled from the time the Movement was founded. Castro reiterated that all those who wanted to speak shall be given the opportunity to do so. In future there should be a time limit fixed for each speaker or the conferences must be longer. Even the 6th Summit may have to be prolonged, he said. He called on Kenneth Kaunda to chair this session.

THE PRESIDENT OF NIGER, SEYIN KOUNTCHE, rejected the attempts that had been made to divide the non-aligned countries and said that only fraternal and sovereign nations struggling against hunger, thirst, illiteracy and disease should belong to the Movement. He underlined the democratic nature of the Movement, saying that, "We have the right to disagree at times and to express diffe-

rent points of view," but he, pointed out, discussion sheds light on the questions up for debate. He condemned the system of apartheid and expressed his support for the struggle of the peoples of southern Africa for their liberation. He also stressed his solidarity with the Palestinian people in their struggle against "Israeli arrogance and aggressions." He said that the Movement should express its support to the Palestinian people by increasing its backing for the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO).

ROBERT G. MUGABE, COLEADER OF THE ZIMBABWE PATRIOTIC FRONT, said that they viewed the admission of the Zimbabwe Patriotic Front as a full member as a "demonstration by the non-aligned countries of their solidarity with us in the bitter and relentless struggle we have been waging for the overthrow of imperialism and colonial settlerism and for the achievement of genuine independence and peace in our country." Mugabe, who also spoke for Joshua Nkomo, coleader of the Zimbabwe Patriotic Front, gave an account of the Front's activities to date to free its people and denounced all the schemes to which imperialism had resorted, schemes to which are nothing more than a "cunning spider's web replete with traps for the destruction of the revolutionary movement."

Mugabe said that imperialism has failed to learn from the lessons of Angola and other countries and affirmed that, just as the United States sought to Vietnamize the Vietnam war

by propping up one puppet regime after another, the colonialists are still trying to do the same in Zimbabwe. In his speech, Mugabe blamed Great Britain for the fact that no solution had been found to the problem of Zimbabwe and added that armed struggle had therefore become the determining factor in the decolonisation process. Mugabe insisted that armed struggle would continue until the colonial situation in Zimbabwe was resolved. He asked for the support of the Movement of Non-aligned countries and gave his thanks for the support shown by the OAU, the Front Line states the socialist countries and other progressive countries in the world.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA, JULIUS NYERERE, called the election of Fidel Castro as Chairman of the 6th Summit Conference as fitting tribute to the Cuban people. He also said that the holding of the Summit in Havana was most appropriate and referred briefly to the situation in Cuba before 1959. He said that from the founding of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries to the present, the balance of forces had changed; but he added that the world order had still not given way to a new one, since other peoples are still being denied their freedom and attempts are still being made to neutralize independence. He asserted that the Movement can contribute to world peace and that this was not a conference of neutral countries, since we have commitments to struggle against imperialism in all its forms. He added that one aspect of this struggle was the joint effort to deal the final death blow to colonialism and that, though advances have been made in this undertaking, there is still much left to be done. The President of Tanzania maintained that the Movement of Non-aligned countries, jointly and individually should offer all its support to countries struggling for independence, whether or not they are members.

He analysed the situation in Africa and the Middle East and called for a condemnation of the imperialist policy of failing to recognize the right of the peoples of Namibia, Zimbabwe, South Africa and Palestine to freedom and self-determination. He discussed the issue of Western Sahara and expressed his hope that Morocco would accept the Western Saharan

people's right to independence. He went on to say that, in accordance with the Movement's principles, one non-aligned country can give help to another, even military help; and with respect to this point, he thanked the Cuban people for "their historic and timely support to Angola". He stressed that the non-aligned countries are by definition anti-colonialist and anti-imperialist, and that they were and are 100 percent against racism. Given this principle, he said, the members of the Movement are committed to fight such forces by all possible means.

He said that with respect to racism there can be no compromises; and yet it has been suggested that, because the member states are against Zionism, they are themselves racists. He condemned Israel's expansionism and firmly proclaimed the right of the Palestinian people to state of their own. He said that there can be no genuine peace in the Middle East if the rights of the Palestinian people are not satisfied, rights which are being denied by attacks and atrocities. "Peace is never achieved through oppression and injustice" he claimed denying Israel's right to occupy parts of Jordan, Egypt and Lebanon. He said that until the Palestinian people, under the leadership of the PLO have won their struggle to have their own country, they have the right to receive the support of the Movement of Non-aligned Countries; and he stressed that this support must be clear, unconditional and continuing. He said that, in order to achieve peace, the Movement must remain united and grow in strength and must not be divided by differences in ideology, geography or wealth. He ended by saying that the Conference must continue to be that of a group of countries proud of their independence, countries which stand for justice and equality between men and between nations.

DIDIER RATSIRAKA, PRESIDENT OF MADAGASCAR, said "Non-alignment does not mean non-commitment. We are committed to the anti-imperialist, anti-colonialist, anti-neocolonialist, anti-racist and anti-Zionist struggle". He devoted a large part of his remark to a detailed scientific analysis of social evolution based on revolutionary change and expressed full support for the right of the delegation from the People's Republic of Kampuchea

to represent their country in the Movement of Non-aligned Countries. Ratsiraka mentioned the vain efforts of international reaction to sabotage the Summit in Havana and re-affirmed his appreciation of the revolutionary solidarity of the Cubans with the Angolan's just cause. He mentioned the different forms of direct intervention by Imperialism in the internal affairs of the developing countries such as the use of mercenaries who specialize in political murder. He was critical of the hypocritical campaign sponsored by US Imperialism on the subject of human rights and asked: "How can there be talk of human rights while the rights of peoples are trampled upon."

He reaffirmed support for Panama which has scored a victory in the Canal Zone issue, the struggle of the Saharan people, the African liberation movements and the Palestinian people in their struggle for self-determination and the establishment of their own state, along with the independent and peaceful reunification of Korea. He resolutely called for making the Indian Ocean a demilitarized zone of peace and described the revolution in Nicaragua, Afghanistan and Iran as brilliant victories. He said the Third World demands a total overhaul of the world economy and called on the Non-aligned Countries to demand that international capitalism and imperialism recognize their rights. He discussed the energy crisis which is encouraged by the United States because it means big profits for the transnationals and called on the oil-producing countries to use this weapon to impose a new and just international economic order for all. In another section of his remarks Didier Ratsiraka also urged the Third World countries to cut down on the triangular trade carried out through the trusts and increase bilateral exchange for mutual benefit.

BIRENDRA BIR BIKRAM SHAH DEVA, KING OF NEPAL, regretted the world population explosion, mass unemployment and the exhaustion of natural resources and he noted that in many underdeveloped countries people are living at below subsistence levels. The King condemned the occupation of part of Cyprus by foreign troops, advocated the reunification of Korea and supported the SALT II agreement. King Birendra said the Camp

David agreement was "a partial step" towards a solution of the Middle East problem.

SELIM EL HOSS, PRIME MINISTER OF LEBANON said he wanted to bring up two questions of interest to his country; the Palestinian problem and that of South Lebanon, both of which have the same origin, that is, Israel and its policy of expansion. He referred to the Palestinian problem as a struggle waged by an entire people evicted from their land, drawing attention to the increased aggression by Israel beginning in 1967, when neighbouring territories, like Jerusalem, for example, were occupied. He categorically rejected the Camp David agreement adding that the Movement should take a stand against Israel for violating the principles of the Movement, the UN Charter and the Charter on Human Rights. Regarding the attacks against the southern part of his country, Salim El Hoss condemned Israel's indiscriminate attacks on the civilian population, with rockets, fragmentation bombs and other specialized weapons and which resulted in the death of hundreds of persons and the exodus of tens of thousands of refugees. He described the situation of his people as tragic. He went on to say that the problem of southern Lebanon was not only a national problem but also one that concerned the entire Arab world and that, therefore, the Arab world had the responsibility of solving it. He called for the holding of a summit conference to outline the general strategy to be followed regarding the problem of southern Lebanon, and he urged the Movement's member countries to contribute to finding a solution to what he called "not only a human but also a national tragedy". He also called on the Movement to give full support to Lebanon and to denounce the acts of aggression against his people and concluded by wishing new victories to the cause of peace and freedom.

JERRY RAWLINGS, CHAIRMAN OF THE REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL OF THE ARMED FORCES OF GHANA greeted the national liberation movement which, he said will also achieve victory and will be sitting among us as free states. On this subject he recalled the words of Kwame Nkrumah to the effect that Ghana's independence would attain full significance only when all the other African countries had won their independence. Raw-

lings referred to the systematic slander campaign being carried out against Ghana by the mass media controlled by the forces of reaction, adding that they "never make public the crimes committed by the imperialists against our country, but persist in spreading lies against it." He called for a struggle against the imperialists' information monopolies, which cause so much damage to the revolutionary processes with the venom they spread throughout the world. When our people acquire weapons with which to defend themselves against imperialism, he said, the imperialists' mass media distort the truth and succeed in deceiving a great many people.

Rawlings expressed his gratitude for the disinterested aid given to his country by Algeria and Libya, which supplied the people of Ghana with oil when they were faced with a difficult situation, even though both countries could have obtained great profits by selling the oil elsewhere. He went on to say that the Movement must face up to the ideological confusion spread by imperialism and that material aid to the national liberation movements must be stepped up. Rawlings denounced the Muzorewa puppet regime and demanded genuine independence and a genuine government of the African majority. He said that the POLISARIO Front was the only representatives of the Saharan people, adding that "very soon it will be seated among us a full member and independent state."

He went on to say that aid to and solidarity with the Palestinian people's struggle cannot be negotiated and that, even though the Movement of Non-aligned countries is a conglomerate of heterogeneous and democratic countries, care must be taken not to allow admission to it of elements that might cause a future disintegration. He spoke of the economic crisis caused by the capitalist world adding that the Movement's member countries should increase the possibilities for co-operation. This, he said, would open wider avenues for all of us. He concluded by saying that visiting Cuba and having a firsthand look at the Cuban Revolution was an experience he would remember forever, and that he hoped the 6th Summit would result in actions that would benefit all our peoples.

SOPHANOUYONG, PRESIDENT OF THE PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF LAOS

hailed Angola and Mozambique, "which have fought off imperialist attacks"; Afghanistan, Democratic Yemen and Ethiopia which have thwarted every plot and aggression against their peoples, and Nicaragua, for its great popular victory under the leadership of the Sandinista National Liberation Front which brought down Somoza's dictatorship. He said that though the imperialists have suffered defeats, they continue to try to sabotage peace and threaten the independence of the peoples. He recalled that after 1975's victories in Southeast Asia, the region started off being a "peace zone". But shortly afterwards the Peking reactionaries put the cruel Pol Pot-leng Sary regime into power in Kampuchea in order to begin provocations against Vietnam, while simultaneously starting a blockade against southern Laos. "When the cruel regime of Pol Pot-leng Sary fell, the Chinese hegemonists attacked Vietnam directly. But the Vietnamese drove them off, bringing peace to the entire region. We have to thank them for this peace. Nevertheless, China continued its attacks and then invented the refugee "problem". He concluded by expressing his concern over the underdeveloped countries' prospects for development. The solution, he said, was as agreed in the 5th Summit of the Non-aligned held in Colombo; the establishing of a new international economic order based on justice and equity. "It is regrettable", he said, "that the efforts undertaken in relation to the capitalist countries have made no progress due to the unwillingness on the part of some of these countries."

JOSEPH ISSOFOU CONOMBO, PRIME MINISTER OF THE REPUBLIC OF UPPER VOLTA spoke of the need to halt the arms race and called for further unity in the Movement to make non-alignment irreversible and added that "the quest for peace must be at the heart of our concern". He also advocated a new international economic order. How can we put an end to poverty, he asked and, went on to say that the onus was on the poorest countries and that what had to be avoided was that their natural resources be plundered by exploiters. "We must control our resources", he said emphatically. He touched on the problem of racial discrimination and said that it was outrageous that, towards the end of the present century when humankind

was conquering outer space and achieving so much, there should still be cases of "racial superiority", as in southern Africa. Such discrimination, such methods, "were a disgrace to our civilisation." Finally he spoke of how everyone was aware of the difficulties that beset the non-aligned but that nobody would be able to break its unity and goals which aimed at achieving the progress of our peoples. United, he declared, we will win.

JIGME SINGYE WANGCHUCK, KING OF BHUTAN, talked of the history of the Movement, describing the Movement as now coming of age, such that it exerts considerable influence on, and makes a significant contribution to world affairs. He also spoke of the little a for development that goes to small countries, while at the same time huge resources were going into the arms race. He described the Middle East as a grave threat to world peace and security, pointing out that just and lasting peace was only possible on the basis of Israel's total and unconditional withdrawal and the restoration of the rights of the Palestinian people. Likewise, on discussing the problems of Africa, he condemned the fact that the peoples of Zimbabwe and Namibia are denied their just, legitimate rights and described the recent election held there as totally unacceptable.

THE PRIME MINISTER OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL OF THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF KOREA, RI DIONG OK, took the floor when it was well past midnight and asked that military blocs be dissolved and that the military bases maintained by imperialism and other countries be dismantled. He likewise called for a struggle to build a world without nuclear zones. He declared the need for political, moral and material aid to peoples struggling for national independence. He condemned racial discrimination in southern Africa. He then went on to say that a new international economic order was indispensable and that the participation of the Non-aligned Movement was essential for the creation of such a new order. He proposed that an economic and technical exchange center be set up among member countries. Touching on the political situation in his own country, he denounced the presence of US imperialism in South Korea, and charged that the United

States, with its thousands of troops there, was conspiring against a peaceful solution leading to the reunification of the two parts of Korea. Carter, during his presidential campaign, had promised that US troops would be withdrawn from South Korea but once in power "the mask has been lifted." The US far from withdrawing its troops as promised, had stepped up its military presence in South Korea. This year alone, he charged, the air force has increased 25 percent and 975 million dollars were invested in arms there. He added that the United States had no justification for being in Korea and that it was up to Koreans to solve the problems of their country. The economic, political and cultural problems between North and South, posed within the framework of reunification, are internal matters which should be resolved by Koreans through dialogues and without foreign interference."

LEABUA JONATHAN, PRIME MINISTER OF THE KINGDOM OF LESOTHO said in regard to the racism that exists in southern Africa, that the political situation there was the direct result of apartheid. He thanked the international community for its solidarity with his country when it was threatened by apartheid, and he went on to say that Lesotho was still the object of harassment and armed attacks by the South African racists. Economically, he said, his country was paying the highest price for oil, and he called on the oil-exporting member countries of the Movement to help his country so that it wouldn't have to depend so much on the South African regime. He also thanked President Samora Machel for the aid given to his country in moments of danger.

SABUH AL AHMED AL JABA, DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND FOREIGN MINISTER OF KUWAIT said that no peace could exist in the Middle East unless the rights of the Palestinian people were recognized. He condemned the Egypt-Israel agreements, drawing attention to the fact that they had been condemned in the Baghdad Conference, the Islamic Conference and the Conference held in Colombo. He denounced the apartheid regime, which he called an insult to humanity, said the situation in southern Africa was a threat to peace; and called on the non-aligned

countries to step up their efforts to create a new international economic order.

THE LAST SPEAKER OF THE SESSION, which ended at 2 a.m. was a member of the Comores delegation, who was given permission by the head of his delegation to exercise his right to reply. (When the President of Benin concluded his speech, the representative of the Comores Islands asked for the floor allegedly to bring up a point of order and, according to one of the delegates, to correct some of the statements made by Matheiu Kerekou. The Chairman said that he doubted as to whether the request of the Comores delegate had to do with a point of order or a clarification and then concluded that the delegate would be given the floor at the end of the evening's session, due to the large number of speakers on the list, or else in his turn in the plenary session. In the end, it was decided that the delegate would be given the floor at the end of the evening's session). The delegate gave a run-down of the political struggle and taking of power in his country, in the process of which imperialism had been involved, as he himself recognized.



SOVIET VIEW

The Afghan Revolution

by Spartak Beglov

Moscow, January 1, 1980.

It is stressed in the Soviet ruling circles that when satisfying the request of Karmal Babrak's Government for urgent political moral and economic, including military, aid the Soviet Union acted in keeping with article 3 of the Treaty of Friendship, good neighbourliness and Co-operation signed between the USSR and Afghanistan in December 1978. The request of the Afghan leadership and the positive response of the Soviet government also stem from Article 51 of the United Nations Charter which provides for the inherent right of states to individual or collective self-defence in order to rebuff an aggression and restore peace.

A comprehensive analysis of the situation in Afghanistan, made in *Pravda* shows that in the past few weeks, outside interference carried out through armed detachments based beyond the Afghan borders, has taken increasingly intolerable forms and dimensions. Equally intolerable for the true revolutionary forces of the country and critically dangerous were the activities of Hafizullah Amin who had made his way to the leadership of Afghanistan and whose despotic actions had put the April revolution in jeopardy. Hafizullah Amin has virtually linked up with the enemies of the revolution. Having ousted him, the country's patriotic forces have restored revolutionary law order and legality in Afghanistan.

The fate of the April 1978 revolution remains in the hands of the Afghan people. This is stressed in Moscow. At the same time, a refusal of aid to Afghanistan at such a moment would be regarded by all its friends as an attempt to refute the entire experience of good and honest co-operation with Afghanistan and leave that country at the mercy of outside counter-revolution. As for the West's reaction to the events in Afghanistan, one cannot but take note of the following circumstances: the distortion of the Soviet Union's aid by the United States and former colonial powers which are acting at one with it, reiterating such stereotype allegations as 'Moscow's intervention.' and 'Soviet expansion' clearly reveals their disappointment and annoyance in connection with the failure of the plans for the expansion of interference in the affairs of Afghanistan and for the conversion of that country into a springboard of the West's intrigues against the Soviet Union, Iran and other neighbouring states.

No wonder that many details of the imperialist interpretation of the Afghan events have been prompted by the principle: "the more incredible, the easier believed." Thus, for instance, the *UPI* correspondent in Islamabad, William Holstein, writes that the immediate aim pursued by the Russians is the blocking of the "West's vital lifelines from the Middle Eastern oil fields", along with "breaking up of Pakistan by playing upon the separatist sentiments of the Baluchi" and the creation of a pro-Soviet "Central Asian bloc"

etc. Egyptian president Anwar Sadat has hurried up with a "happy" idea of a "possible Soviet intervention in Iran", and the Peking leaders, for their part, have added fuel to the fire by predicting "Soviet encirclement of Asia". All these scenarios could be well sent to a contest held under the motto: "Arabian Nights", if it were not for the fact that all of them are clearly intended for credulous people.

In the meantime, Moscow has pointed out that its aid to Afghanistan is not aimed against any of its neighbours, who are also the Soviet Union's neighbours. The sooner an end is put to the intrigues of alien forces which stake at the destabilization of the situation not only in Afghanistan but also in Iran, the South Asian sub-continent and other regions, the more these countries stand to gain. By an irony of fate, the allegation about "Moscow's intervention" is made precisely by those who are about to set in motion an unprecedentedly powerful machine of global intervention. The Pentagon has just received additional tens of billions of dollars for these purposes, and its forward based forces stationed in the Indian Ocean are already sabre-rattling near the shores of the Persian Gulf. Over the past 23 years this machine of intervention has been used to imperialism's advantage dozens of times in various countries—from Guatemala to Indochina.

If things are really to be taken at their face value, a natural question is: why do peoples which experience difficulties on the road of revolution and national liberation appeal precisely to the Soviet Union for help? The answer stems from the nature and historical mission of the socialist revolution of 1917. As has been borne out more than once already, by extending its helping hand to other nations, the Soviet Union has never done this in order to get bases or concessions for monopolies. As a matter of fact, there are no monopolies acted in order to gain any advantages for itself. Another truth is that the Soviet Union does not pursue aims other than the facilitation of progress and the sovereign development of peoples in conditions of utmost stability, i.e., without outside interference.

The Soviet Union never conceals that it is for revolutions. It also commands high prestige as a true friend in need. This has been

proved by numerous examples over the past few decades. The Arabs are well aware that they can always rely on the Soviet Union which shows solidarity for their struggle for the liberation of their occupied territories and the ensurance of their rights to justice and national statehood. It is not the USSR but countries of a different system—former colonial powers, that infringe upon the interests of the Arabs and trample the rights of the Palestinians in the name of separate deals and the ensurance of access to oil and bases.

Suffice it to remember the example of such a major country of Africa, the awakened continent, as Nigeria: it is the Soviet Union that was the most consistent advocate of the righteous cause of that country during recent events when its territorial integrity was endangered. India also knows from its own experience that only the Soviet Union came to the rescue of its great people, both diplomatically and materially, at a time of trial during the attempts to pincer their country with border conflicts and aircraft carrier diplomacy.

The Soviet Union confirms over and over again that fraternal alliance with the peoples which have thrown off colonial and semi-colonial yoke is one of the fundamental principles of its foreign policy. The Soviet Union will continue to be brought together with the vast majority of the states that arose on the ruins of the colonial system by the deep common allegiance to peace and progress and aversion to all forms of imperialist domination and exploitation and by the common vital interest in the protection of the cause of national liberation and social transformation from outside encroachments. —APN.

OO OO OO

U.S. VIEW

Soviet Intervention

Washington, Dec. 31, 1979, (VOA Commentary)

President Carter has sharply condemned this past week's Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan which resulted in the overthrow of the existing government and the installation of another. President Carter used

strong language in his comments on the Soviet Union, calling it a "gross interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan" and describing the Soviet Union's performance as a "blatant violation of accepted international rules of behaviour." The President went on to underscore the significance of what amounted to an invasion of Afghanistan as "the third occasion since world war II that the Soviet Union has moved militarily to assert control over one of its neighbours."

One does not have to go very far back into history to recall Soviet interventions in Eastern Europe—Hungary in 1956 and Czechoslovakia in 1968. Indeed, the Soviet Union, mindful of the criticism such actions have engendered has invented, at least for eastern Europe, a rationale called the Brezhnev doctrine in which it grants itself the right to intervene in the affairs of Communist-bloc state whenever it feels uncomfortable with Government policies in those countries. That doctrine is presumably designed to give an air of legality to the imposition of brute force. There are, of course, other legalisms the Soviet Union finds convenient to use in such situations. In the matter of Afghanistan, Moscow has made the audacious claim that it acted in accordance with the UN Charter's self-defense provisions—that is, that an existing Soviet-Afghan Friendship Treaty entitled Moscow to intervene. Nothing could be more absurd. Clearly, the Soviet Union intervened to overthrow an existing government, which obviously would not have asked for Soviet help in a process that cost the life of the incumbent Afghan President and brought in a new government apparently more to Moscow's liking.

Two points emerge—first, that the Soviet action in Afghanistan is nothing less than the use of force by a superpower to change an existing government in another country, and second, that having a treaty of peace and friendship with the Soviet Union can amount to an invitation to invasion.

There are added dimensions, however, to this latest example of Soviet disregard for international norms. The intervention in Afghanistan not only represents an action against a third-world country, but also contributes to the suppression in Afghanistan of

popular resistance by Afghan who oppose the idea of an Afghanistan totally subservient to the Soviet Union. As President Carter has noted, the Soviet Union's action in Afghanistan represents the first such direct military foray into the Islamic world since Moscow's occupation of Iranian Azerbaijan in the 1940s. That fact alone should underscore the seriousness of this latest example of Soviet interventionism, which has already stirred concern around the world.

Beyond that, it should be clear to the Soviet Union that its action in a region where there is already considerable instability can only further add to that instability, and in a real sense, threaten the peace of the world.

—USICA

W W W

FOR THE RECORD

Afghanistan

Colombo, Jan. 4, 1980.

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. A Foreign Ministry communique issued yesterday said: "The Government of Sri Lanka is strongly opposed to the interference by the Soviet Union or any other country in the internal affairs of Afghanistan a member of the Non-Aligned Movement. Consistent with our commitment to the principle of non-alignment, we support the sovereign right of the people of Afghanistan to determine their own destiny free from foreign interference. Outside interference or aggression cannot be condoned under any circumstances. Therefore the government and people of Sri Lanka call upon the Soviet Union to withdraw its military contingent from the territory of Afghanistan immediately. A Foreign Ministry spokesman said that Sri Lanka's position, set out in the communique, was conveyed to the Soviet Union's Ambassador here, Alexey Paislutine by the Foreign Ministry Secretary, W. T. Jayasinghe. Mr. Jayasinghe

deputised for Foreign Minister Shahul Hameed who had gone to the airport to meet visiting Maldivian President, Maumoon Abdul Gayoom. Earlier yesterday the government discussed the situation in Afghanistan in regard to the presence of Russian armed forces stationed in that country. It was decided that Mr. Hameed should discuss the matter immediately with the Soviet Ambassador and also issue a statement setting out Sri Lanka's position on the matter. —Ceylon Daily News

x x x

New Delhi, Jan. 1, 1980.

Prime Minister Charan Singh has asked the Soviet Union to withdraw its troops from Afghanistan "as soon as possible". He expressed India's deep concern at the substantial involvement of Soviet military forces in Afghanistan to Soviet Ambassador Yule Vorontsov in New Delhi on Monday evening. Mr. Vorontsov called on Mr. Charan Singh at the latter's instance soon after the Prime Minister returned to New Delhi after election tour. The official spokesman of the External Affairs Ministry told newsmen later that the Prime Minister thanked the Ambassador for the message delivered to the Indian Foreign Secretary on 27 December from the Soviet leaders relating to recent events in Afghanistan. The Prime Minister recalled that both the USSR and India had agreed in June 1970, that both sides were opposed to any foreign intervention in the internal affairs of Afghanistan. Charan Singh pointed out to Ambassador Vorontsov that the presence of Soviet troops in Afghanistan would have far-reaching adverse consequences for this region and for this reason expressed the hope that the troops would withdraw from Afghanistan as soon as possible as conveyed in the message from the Soviet leaders. The Prime Minister also reiterated that India cherishes its traditional close relationship with Afghanistan and would like its independence and non-alignment to be strengthened. Mr. Vorontsov who was with the Prime Minister for 45 minutes said that he would convey the message to the Soviet leaders.

—Patriot

INSIDE AFGHANISTAN

Twenty Days Before

This despatch, sent to our "Non-aligned Asian" Correspondent row in New Delhi (and who sent us an inside view of present day Afghanistan—vide Tribune Vol. 24 No. 24, 22/12/79) by some of his friends in Kabul, reached us only last week—some days after the Babrak Karmal seizure of power. The despatch was date-lined December 8 and though new and major developments have superseded the situation that had obtained at the time of writing the contents have great historical significance and throw a great deal of light on subsequent happenings. —Ed.

Kabul, Dec. 8, 1979.

Afghanistan's strong man, Hafizullah Amin, inaugurated the National Organisation for Defence of Revolution, (NODR) December 5, 1979 (vide Tribune, Vol. 24, No. 25, 29/12/79) amid much pomp while only a day before many of the Kabul citizens had heard a terrible explosion and a few jets streaking into the air to find out what or possibly who had caused it. Rumours had it that there had arisen a confrontation inside the Presidential Palace. Whatever the truth of the matter may be, he really needs a powerful organization to defend the oft-repeated "Saur Revolution" and perhaps himself.

Amin is not popular. Some call him the most hated man in Afghanistan from the time he was the Minister of Interior and the Secret Police Chief in Taraki's regime. Although through careful manipulation and beguiling arm-twisting, he has crushed the residuary resistance to him in the party hierarchy after reducing the "Great Leader"—Taraki—to a non-person, he has to grapple with his potential enemies and among them the most talked-about are the Russians. Despite the fact that even in his remarks at the Salam Khana Palace to open the NODR, he paid rich tributes to Soviet Union for its all-out assistance, he did not say like before that "had it not been



for the unsparing Soviet help, the Saur Revolution would have been smothered by its local and foreign enemies." The fact that he had asked Moscow to recall its Ambassador Puzanov, for his alleged involvement in a joint plot with the late Taraki to do away with Hafizullah Amin was corroborated by the appointment of a new Afghan envoy in Moscow. There is reason to believe that lately the Amin regime was anxious to placate the Soviets who were helping him to stay in power. Further, certain government agencies were also losing their Soviet advisers though they are still in the armed services.

And perhaps it is all a strategem. Amin is clever enough to realise that the atrocities committed by his party hatchet men and now all pinned on Taraki and those close to him have given rise to a nation-wide resentment towards the whole regime. Actually, even many young people who are in almost all developing nations pro-left to varying degrees have been disillusioned by the present oppression. Further, their disenchantment with Marxism-Leninism is heightened by the hue and cry raised through the official propaganda machine against the various forms of oppression presumably suffered by the masses, under the despotic regime of the past.

Therefore, many believe that he tries to show that he wants the Soviets out to win support in some quarters but he would get more popularity if he discontinued incarcerating members of the rival "Parcham" group—despite his assurances given to the people that after the termination of Taraki's personal rule, they would live in security and nobody would be arrested without an irrefutable evidence. Meanwhile, mention must be made that less and less political prisoners are released these days while this should have been the other way round to offset the tragic impact of the massacre of thousands of people since the inception of the "Khalqi"—meaning "Popular"—regime.

The Soviets, as in the past, are keeping a low profile. If they intend to continue backing Amin, this would be the safest move on their part. However, rumours have it that they are keeping Babrak Karmal, the leader of the Parcham, in the wings—to support him anytime he chooses to stage a coup against

Amin. But this sounds highly unlikely as Moscow has so far strongly denied any knowledge of the coup that brought Taraki to power. In other words, they are too cautious to resort to such a risky scheme. Meanwhile, the rebels are also keeping a low profile of another genre. Cold weather is curbing their operations and heavy snow may prove hazardous. But it can also serve as a double-edged sword, restricting manoeuvrability of the government armour too.

With insurgency going on in 21 of the 28 provinces in Afghanistan, the government of Hafizullah Amin does not utter a word about it. The mass media, all controlled by the administration, speaks of "the enemies of people, the Khalqi regime and the April Revolution" and how the rebels are discredited daily, but not who they exactly are, where they were beaten and how many of them were killed, let alone giving any figure of the government 'forces' casualties. Hence newsmen in search of truth are kept in the dark and have to rely on conflicting rumours, circulating everywhere or depend on wise guesses made by some diplomats. Even the latter are often guided by conjectures.

But it is true that Logar, an area 34 kilometers to the south of Kabul, has changed hands at least three times. When the rebels have the upper hand, they kill the government officials, some adherents of "Khalqi" organisations and loot the local treasury. When the government forces aided by aircraft, tanks and artillery, dislodge the insurgents, the massacre begins of those who cooperated with rebels or even suspected of this. So in both cases, quite a number of people get killed. The insurgents are of course far superior to government forces as guerillas ambushing strongholds but they are helpless with MIG-21s and MI-24 helicopters. Previously, the tanks also played havoc with the rebels but not any longer. Even a child can tarnish its peep-hole with a lump of mud and have the tankist taken prisoner by the outraged villagers.

Hafizullah Amin who has concentrated all the power in his house-hold, has officially admitted (sometime ago) that had it not been for the vast help and co-operation his government has been receiving from the Soviets, his regime would have already toppled through

the armed intervention made by the Imperialists, in collusion with the reactionary circles in the region. By the latter, he of course means Pakistan and Iran where more and more guerrillas are decidedly trained and sent to raid the border posts or replenish the bands roaming around the rugged territory.

It is said that there are 500,000 Afghan refugees in Pakistan some of them making good recruits. Their number in Iran may be less but they can still form a formidable force. The ruling circles in both Pakistan and Iran are making no bones about it. They are bent on destroying the Marxist regime in Afghanistan and they are naturally expected to be so inclined. Working people in the two neighbouring countries are leading lives of misery. Therefore the stability of this Khalqi order in a land inhabited by staunch Moslems would embolden their proletariat to rise and oust their rulers.

But as long as the flames of insurgency are fanned by Pakistani and Iranian rulers, the Soviets have to keep the present government in Kabul supplied with all sorts of military hardwares. Sharing 1,500 kilometers of common borders with Afghanistan, they are vitally interested in this erstwhile kingdom whose deposed monarch, Zaher Shah sought their friendship at the behest of his strongman cousin, Daoud. The latter who replaced him in a white coup in 1973 was eventually toppled through a bloody coup and killed at the palace with some members of his family including a few children by members of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan or shortly the Khalqi obviously with Soviet blessing.

What really destabilizes the Khalqi order is the oppression perpetrated either in Taraki's time or after that. Rumours have that between 4,500 and 12,000 people have been massacred, most of them without any interrogation.

The victims also include a few prominent singers who were perhaps loud-mouthed but not politicians to the least. One of them is known to have been Nainawaz, a highly talented

singer and composer whose father, a staunch anti-communist and one-time Foreign Minister had emigrated to the United States a few years ago and contributed a few articles to anti-Communist magazine in Iran. This was revealed by the death list made public some time ago upon which sight many a woman fainted because they noticed the names of their loved ones there. And so many men who learned the truth about the fate of their brothers and cousins arrested rather long time ago but nobody knew their whereabouts, raised their hands inside the compound of the Interior Ministry in prayer asking God to help the insurgents to topple this blood-thirsty regime.

Nor does the economic situation provide any hope. On the one hand, lack of security has hampered normal traffic of goods. For instance, the road between Kabul and Herat, a stretch of 1,000 kilometers, is often ambushed by the rebels almost daily. Convoys of buses have to be reinforced by tanks and with helicopters flying over them to reach their destination. Even in this way, some of the buses making the journey are either side-tracked or riddled with bullets. On the other hand, by doubling the salaries of the officers of the armed forces, the government has almost emptied the treasury. On the other, because of the strife rampant in so many provinces, the government is likely to lose the land tax this year which amounts to about \$ 10 million while dull markets at home are expected to result in less imports and reduced revenue from custom duties, approximately the same amount, more or less.

Yet the cost of living is rising especially with the winter around the corner. For instance, 7 kilos of burning wood cost \$ 0.50 and it is not plentiful because the road leading to Logar and then onwards to Pakteya province was blocked almost three weeks ago until the government forces, in a major clash with the rebels scored a victory. In order to keep up appearances, the government sends delegations from the Afro-Asian Peace and Solidarity Organisation or the World Peace Council to provincial centres which are decidedly under government control to convince them that the present regime is firmly in the saddle. But diplomats including UN experts are not

allowed to travel inside the country "for security reasons." For all this, Hafizullah Amin and his Khalqi colleagues blame imperialism and regional strains. The Pakistan presidential adviser on foreign affairs, Agha Shahi, who was expected to visit Kabul for talks to help both nations reach a workable understanding with reference to rebel activities has put off his trip. There is no hope that an Iranian official would pay the Afghan capital similar visit. Hence hostile propaganda continues between the Afghan mass media and those in the two neighbouring countries. The press in Kabul even blamed the Iranians for raiding the mosque in Mecca just for propaganda reasons. Pakistanis have so far scored better, at least in this context.

In short, so long as the present regime does not mellow down its harshness, the people as a whole would not be reconciled to it. And as matters stand, it is highly unlikely.

x x x

BABRAK COUP

A Pre Emptive Act

by Dewan Berindranath

SUAVE, SOFT - SPOKEN EXTREMELY CULTURED and articulate with a neat and clean but respectable portly appearance, Babrak Karmal seemed the last man capable of engineering a coup. His feudal lineage and upper class upbringing made him an ideal guest at social functions and diplomatic parties, highly sought after by those desirous of understanding the Afghan problem in depth.

I met him in April 1973, at the house of our common friend, J. B. Mehta, the then Indian Ambassador to Afghanistan. Babrak was closely involved with the students' movement which had emerged as the most important component of democratic upsurge in Afghanistan. Talking to him was, indeed a pleasure. He could speak with a type of candour and clarity not usually associated with politicians. His sense of humour, love for poetry and intimate knowledge about the good things of life reminded me instantly of the late Ghulam Mohammed Sadiq of Kashmir. Just like Sadiq,

Babrak, too, appeared an epitome of liberal aristocracy—the type which could be well described as an amateur politician and a professional intellectual. Having lived a long time in India, Babrak could speak with as much authority on the affairs of the sub-continent as Afghanistan. He had even then predicted that the danger Afghanistan faced was not merely from feudal reactionary forces but also from within the so-called Leftist movement. He was apprehensive of infiltration of anti-people elements into the democratic movement and told me that one of the major tasks of his Parcham (Flag) Group inside the Democratic Party was to consolidate a broad-based Socialistic Democratic Front and alienate sectarian elements.

It was these very sectarian elements, however, who had unleashed a reign of terror in Afghanistan during the last six months under the cloak of "Social Revolution". One of the main targets of these usurpers was a leader like Babrak, who for years had been the best known symbol of Afghan progressive, socialist and secular forces. Babrak, along with his associates, was exiled by Taraki on the advice of Hafiz Amin, who had surrounded the former with an unbelievably sickening atmosphere of a personality cult. One by one, Amin got rid of all leaders like Babrak, Abdul Qader and W. ttanjar. It is nevertheless remarkable how Babrak, described by an American columnist as the "world's most harmless Communist", could overthrow the entire apparatus represented by Amin's regime, which had brought nothing but shame and embarrassment to progressive forces, and pain and misery to the people of Afghanistan. The overthrow of Hafizullah Amin was on the cards for quite some time. Literally, there were writings on the walls of Kabul by the "True Khaliquist Movement" denouncing Amin as a usurper and a sort of Fol Pot of Afghanistan, responsible for the indiscriminate murder of thousands of people and totally uncalled for alienation of powerful and responsible sections of society, like religious leaders, intellectuals, civil servants and small peasants.

BABRAK'S REVOLUTION did, indeed, have Soviet support and even a commitment to sustain it. But it would be a folly to call it merely having been engineered by the Soviet Union. The Soviet involvement, sought to be

legitimised in terms of the Afghan-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, may not be justified from absolutely moral standards. I feel it is abhorrent to think that foreign troops would be on the soil of Afghanistan for any length of time or in any sizeable numbers. The freedom loving people of Afghanistan, known for centuries for their extreme sensitiveness against foreigners, would now allow any foreign troops on their soil, whether they come as friends or foes.

Having said this, one must also point out that the Babrak coup was, in fact, a pre-emptive move which foredoomed a counter-revolution that was being assiduously engineered by the CIA with the help of their friends in Pakistan. A massive coup was to take place somewhere in the first week of January, helped by forces from across the borders. Thousands of commandos had been trained in bases in Pakistan to be air-dropped in Kabul and elsewhere to facilitate a coup which would have undoubtedly gained public sympathy because of the reign of terror Amin had unleashed.

The time of the coup would have coincided with plans of direct American intervention in the Gulf. The Americans have been itching for an intervention in the Gulf, making the Iran hostage issue a pretext. Thanks to the total mishandling by Khomeini who, in turn, had been hoodwinked by the CIA planted as his close aides, Carter and Company have been waiting for an opportunity which could justify American seizure of the strategic area around the Hurmuz Straits and a stooge regime installed. To confuse the situation, the Americans had even tried to exploit the extremely deplorable incident at Mecca through a mischievous twist to fanning the Shia-Sunni sectarian trouble.

HAVING FAILED in that attempt, all attention was concentrated on Afghanistan. They wanted a sufficient diversion to be provided to the Right-wing religious elements to neutralise the impact of American aggression in the Gulf and on Iran. The American idea was that sup-

port for a Right-wing coup in Afghanistan would sufficiently please the religious reactionary elements in Pakistan and elsewhere, and their opposition to the American aggression would either be neutralised or confused. *The leakage of the pro-American coup plan appears to have persuaded the pro-Babarak elements to advance the date of their own upsurge against Amin. They decided to embark upon a decisive strike against Amin rather than wait for the building up of a mass movement from within.*

In plainer words, a Soviet-aided coup has actually forestalled and foredoomed an American inspired attempt to install their own man in Kabul, who, in turn would have been hundred per cent loyal to General Zia ul Haq, and helped in formation of a fanatical and an ultra reactionary bloc on our South Western borders.

—Blitz, 5/1/80

X X X

FOR THE PUBLIC GOOD

Taking Advantage

— of an Uncle-Nephew Relationship —

By Grassroots

At the UNP's annual sessions held on 14th December 1979 the President Mr. J. R. Jayewardene made an important statement on PARTY POLITICS when he stated that "the United National Party was no longer an UNCLE-NEPHEW-PARTY" as some people used to refer to it some years back—but that today it is truly a People's Party. However, the President added that this does not mean that close party supporters and relatives of Party members will not be helped or openly and deliberately discriminated against. Within limits party loyalists could and should be helped but there should be no Family Bandyism and Nepotism and undue favouritism for relations. For instance in the UNP there will be no automatic succession to leadership by Family ties like from Father to Mother and from Mother to Son and the Daughters etc.

While commending the President for emphasising this new trend in UNP party policies, we are disturbed that a Nephew (Upal)

Wijewardene) is doing something that must necessarily cause embarrassment to his Uncle (Mr. J. R. Jayewardene). Quite apart from *Time* Magazine photographs when the Nephew preferred his photograph to his Uncle's, we refer in particular to what the nephew is up to in KAMBURUPITIYA.

Mr. Albert Silva has been nominated as the UNP MP for Kamburupitiya and has accordingly taken his seat in Parliament. A few days before the Galle by-election, the President on a visit to Galle emphatically stated that Albert Silva is and will remain the UNP MP for Kamburupitiya. The President's reassurance came after "a poster campaign" in favour of Upali Wijewardene as MP for that electorate. According to the posters the youngsters (the young boys) of Kamburupitiya seem to like him and him they ("Api Upalita, Upali Apata" said the posters). There is no harm in that. But after the President's assurance that Albert Silva is the Government MP for Kamburupitiya, has Mr. Upali Wijewardene the right to canvass that decision? As a private individual he may have the right to do so—but Upali Wijewardene is NOT a private individual. He is a Public Officer since he is the head of the GCEC which comes directly under his Uncle, the President. Two questions arise. While holding that public and official post, can Upali Wijewardene lay claim to the Kamburupitiya seat?

In our view he cannot. Secondly, is not his persistence and continuing claim an open affront to the assurance given by the President that Albert Silva is the MP for Kamburupitiya? Or can there be two MPs for Kamburupitiya—one the official MP and the other an un-official MP. Is Upali Wijewardene doing all this with the blessings of the Party leadership? Would the same type of conduct (what Upali is doing or getting done in Kamburupitiya) have been permitted if a person other than Upali—say a Secretary of a Ministry or the Chairman of a Corporation did the same thing—contest the President's and Party leader's decision? Is it not time for the President to act and take disciplinary action against a Public official who conducts himself in this manner. If M. D. H. Jayewardene had to take the blame and resulting consequences for breach of the principles of Cabinet respon-

sibility, should not Upali Wijewardene be dealt with for breach of conduct as a high level official questioning or not being obedient to the decision of the Party leader and the President under whom the GCEC functions? Or is the UNP still an Uncle-Nephew Party? Many Party backbenchers are talking about this embarrassing situation and it detracts from the great respect with which the President is being held today in the country. Money and wealth and undoubted success in Business should not override basic principles of Party politics.



"Gross. Misrepresentation....."

Sir,

I was surprised to read this piece of news published in the *Tribune*, Vol. 24 No. 23 of 15.12.79 under the caption *District Ministers—Success or Failure* (in the column *For The Public Good*). This is what we read about the District Minister, M. Canagaratnam, "on an individual assessment the general talk is that the younger District Ministers are making better headway than the older ones, like the District Minister for Batticaloa, (M. Canagaratnam)....."

As far as I know and from what I have heard of Mr. Canagaratnam's performances as District Minister for Batticaloa, I should think the above assessment of his capabilities is gross misrepresentation of facts. Mr. M.C. is a devoted worker who works persistently day in and day out, with a very clear conscience, for the betterment of the cyclone battered Batticaloa District. His defeat is, if it may be called a defect, is that he works without expecting what may be called fringe benefits. For all I know he soft pedals unattended by any flare or fanfare. It is most unfortunate that we seem to have scant regard for such sincere workers as our District Minister for Batticaloa.

K. Kanapathipillai

52, Angle Road,
Batticaloa,
26.12.79

Dec. 25 — Dec. 30

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.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 25: Dr. D. R. Karunaratne, President of the Government Medical Officers' Association said yesterday his association would strive to co-operate with the Health Ministry in the cause of advancement of the nation's health. A new electronic telephone switching system is to be set up soon to end the recurring faults in the Colombo area, and to streamline the service Post and Telecommunication Ministry Secretary C. J. Serasinghe said yesterday. The government of the Kingdom of Netherlands gave Sri Lanka a Christmas gift when it announced on Monday that aid to the tune of 46 million Dutch Guilders (Rs. 360 million) will be made available next year. The Palmyrah Development Board has decided to continue the palmyrah tree planting campaign inaugurated in 1978 for a further period of 5 years, Mr. N. Kanagasuriar, Acting Chairman of the Board said yesterday—CDN. The Ministries of Health and Education are studying a proposal to reduce the MBBS course from five to four years to solve the problem of the shortage of doctors; there is reported to be a shortage of 800 doctors and the government had to get the service of UN volunteer doctors. The proposed Sheraton Five star de luxe hotel will now be built at the Night Bazaar, near the Parliament and along Baladaksha Mawatha. The Minister of Regional Development, Hindu and Tamil Affairs Mr. C. Rajadurai, has obtained Cabinet approval to undertake special

development projects in the Northern and Eastern regions next year—CDM. The government is to set up a special court or tribunal to sort out matters relating to lands where the ownership is in question; a series of amendments to the land Settlement Ordinance is now being examined by the Government to give legal effect to this move—SU. The government has decided to take stern action to prevent profiteering on essential consumer goods from the new year; as a result of this traders who make profits by selling the 150 items priced in the government gazette at prices higher than those indicated will be severely punished—VK. A team of World Bank specialists have pointed out to the government that the development of the country can be further accelerated if medium scale development projects are launched concurrently with massive development projects. A new high yielding paddy seed has been found by the Bomбуwala Research Center; they can be grown in the wet zone—DV. The manufacture of garments may become the second largest foreign exchange earner in the next two years beating coconut and rubber; this year's foreign exchange earning by this industry is Rs. 25 million and is placed on the 4th on the list of foreign exchange earners'. The PMB is to buy subsidiary crops from next year; the government will give floor prices for these crops—DM. The campaign launched by multi-millionaire businessman Upali Wijewardene to enter parliament from Kamburupitiya has become a headache to the government, a powerful group including the PM has pointed out this as a threat and a challenge to the government has told the Party heads to stop this campaign immediately. Mr. M. D. H. Jayewardene has refused to resign from his seat and accept an appointment abroad—ATH.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 27: The Public will soon be able to buy shares in money-making State Corporations, Free Trade Zone firms and in hitherto family-controlled private companies and earn attractive guaranteed dividends through a re-vitalised Colombo Stock Exchange, a Finance Ministry spokesman said yesterday. The Minister of Power and Highways has asked the Ceylon Electricity Board to take over immediately the supply and maintenance of electricity in the Negombo district on a request by the Greater Colombo Economic

Commission; this is being done to eliminate the recurring power failures which have become a big problem for the new industries that have sprung up in the free trade zone. The Colombo Municipal Council hopes to collect Rs. 1.5 million by giving out meat stalls in its municipal markets on tender; this scheme comes into operation from January 1, a Council spokesman said yesterday. Strict security measures have been imposed at the Central Mail Exchange, Colombo to prevent the pilferage of mail following the loss recently of several mail bags containing some 3000 air mail letters and some parcels at the Central Mail Exchange at D. R. Wijewardene Mawatha, Michael Liyanage, Superintendent, Central Mail Exchange (CME) said yesterday—CDN. Sri Lanka's total export earnings in value terms for the first nine months this year rose by 12 per cent making it easy for the Government to service the country's accumulated foreign debt. Forty percent of the rural population do not have proper sanitation in their homes; the Health Ministry is concerned about this problem—CDM. Small families may soon receive food stamps as part of Government's family planning programme; a proposal to this effect, made by Colombo Hospitals and Family Health Minister Ranjith Atapattu is being examined by the government, under the proposal all families with less than two children will be entitled to an additional food stamp as a bonus. There will be a public exposition of the Sacred Tooth Relic for one week from February 14 to next year—SU. 24,000 government servants of various categories will get transfers to new areas in January—DV. The PM has decided that the government services must be geared for next year to reduce wastage and minimise unnecessary expenditure—LD. The Colombo Municipality is holding discussions with the Ministry of Local Government to hand over the removal of waste to two private companies; this step has been taken because the PM has expressed dissatisfaction of the present system; Maharaja Organization and the Browns Group of companies are expected to get the contract for this—ATH.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 28: Trade Minister, Lalith Athulathmudali yesterday lashed out at critics of Government's trade liberalisation policy, emphasising that what was important

in the exercise was opening the doors for a flow of capital and intermediary goods to facilitate production and value added re-export. The Government would remove trade restrictions with Rhodesia shortly; Trade Minister Lalith Athulathmudali announced at the Chamber of Commerce yesterday. Terrorists rounded up by the Security Forces in the Jaffna district will soon be prosecuted in courts, Brigadier Tissa Indraka Weeratunga, Army Chief of Staff of the Security Forces in the Jaffna District has said. Twelve persons, including 10 employees of the Central Mail Exchange, Colombo and two former employees of the Postal Department, have so far been questioned by police in connection with the loss of mail especially those sent by air. It was a crime-free Christmas this year; police said there were no serious incidents caused from lighting of crackers. The new working hours for public servants announced recently would not operate from January 1, 1980, Mr. D. B. J. P. S. Siriwardene, Secretary Ministry of Public Administration and Home Affairs said yesterday—CDN. The state of Emergency which was declared in the Jaffna District last July will lapse with effect from today; the government decided not to extend the six-month old State of Emergency. The Ministry of Cultural Affairs has finalised all arrangements to hold the inauguration ceremony connected with the conservation work of the Jetawana dagoba, Anuradhapura on January 1, under the patronage of President J. R. Jayewardene and Mr. R. Premadasa, Prime Minister in accordance with traditional rites observed during the time of Sinhala kings in the past. The proposed Public Mobile Telephone Service would be available to private subscribers from next year after the payment of Rs. 100,000 as rental; call charges will have to be paid monthly thereafter—CDM. In any future trade sanctions against another country Sri Lanka will act only on a resolution by the United Nations and not according to any bilateral arrangements, Trade and Shipping Minister Lalith Athulathmudali said yesterday. Police have been requested to be on alert for any attempt at disrupting the first ever primary local post graduate examinations in medicine and other allied subjects to be held from January 1980. Government teachers will be compelled to serve an eight year period in schools, in order to seek admission to teacher training

colleges. The eight new corporations which will take over the management functions of estates coming under the Janawasama (JEDB) and the State Plantations Corporations (SPC) will each be entrusted with the task of managing 65,000 to 80,000 acres—SU. Stabilised floor prices will be fixed for chillies, onions and other subsidiary crops in the new year; a board will also be set up to purchase these items direct from the producers—DP. The government has devised a new three-phased plan to grant employment in the public sector; through job banks on a district basis, top jobs on merit and lower and medium grade jobs on a race proportional basis—VK. Students over 15 years of age who leave school are to be given a 6-month training; they will be enrolled in Poly-technical schools in each district and given training on agriculture, construction, art, animal husbandry, commerce etc. About 400 potato cultivators in the Nuwara Eliya District have decided to completely abandon potato cultivation because of the restrictions on seed potatoes—DV. The Speaker Mr. Bakir Markar has given permission to the Bribery Commission to investigate allegations against Mr. Albert de Silva MP, in Kamburupitiya of taking bribes—JD. A top level government investigation has been started to investigate promotions, appointments and transfers in the Ministry of Agricultural Development and Research because of allegations that such changes ordered by the Minister are irregular or financial and administrative Regulations—DK.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 29: The Tamil United Liberation Front yesterday welcomed the Government's decision to end the state of Emergency in the Jaffna district. Trade Minister Lalith Athulathmudali in a bid to stretch the consumer's rupee further, clamped down on manufacturers and traders with a revamped National Price Code; regulations governing the revised Price Code, now receiving the final touches of his ministry, seek to pre-empt and stop the gaps through which manufacturers and traders wriggle through to make unconscionable profits at the expense of the consumer. Non nationals in Sri Lanka seeking treatment in paying wards in the country's government hospitals will be called upon to pay enhanced rates from January. Imported white raw rice is being issued at

Rs. 1.80 per pound now by the Food Department to counter an artificial shortage of rice in the market. Air Ceylon staff comprising some 700 persons are being paid approximately Rs. 16 million in compensation by way of gratuity—CDN. Young doctors, in-terns and medical students are in favour of the establishment of the Postgraduate Institute of Medicine. A record of Rs. 5,600 million in foreign exchange was received by Sri Lanka in the current year according to figures compiled by Ministry of Finance. Public and Corporation Employees found abusing the use of official vehicles for their private errands will have severe disciplinary action taken against them from January. It will be my endeavour to ensure that every Ministry, Department, Corporation, Statutory Board have enough staff trained to work in Tamil and also have equipment like typewriters, so that, they are in a position to fulfil the requirement of the Constitution; this was stated by Mr. C. Rajadurai, Minister of Regional Development, Hindu and Tamil Affairs—CDM. The government is to withdraw the Rs. 50 dole now being paid to unemployed persons from June next year; this move follows requests made by government MPs after the discovery of large-scale abuse; it has been found that a large number of persons not entitled to the dole were drawing it. Mrs. Rhini Dias and her driver, Nimal Fonseka remanded earlier in connection with the death of former World Bank expert, Chandrasekera Dias, were yesterday further remanded till January 9 by the Panadura Chief Magistrate, Colin Amarasinghe. The escalation of factory operational costs and a considerable drop in prices of tea have made profit making very difficult, according to a progress report of the Tea Small Holdings Development Authority for 1977-1979. Teachers serving in some 295 parivenas in the island will be paid the same salaries as those in the government schools from January 1—SU. Minister of Justice Mr. K. W. Devanayagam speaking at a conference in Batticaloa stated that a new system in teacher transfers, similar to that of University admissions which are done on a proportional basis will have to be established soon—VK. The Telecommunication Department has given over 1000 telephones to various people; the telephone number of these are not in the directory and therefore are not paying the

annual rental; only the President, PM and Cabinet Ministers and other top persons have telephones without the number in the directory—JD. A crisis has erupted in the Cabinet on an expected Cabinet reshuffle; the President has postponed the Cabinet reshuffle because of this—DK.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 30: The new public service office hours will become effective from Wednesday, January 16, Mr. D. B. I. P. S. Sirwardena, Secretary to the Ministry of Public Administration and Home Affairs said yesterday. The government has decided to decentralise the functions of the Department of Agriculture into 37 accounting units—8 regional research centres, 24 district agricultural extension offices and 5 mechanical engineering workshops. The CGR expects to give rail commuters a better deal with the rescheduling of services for the new public service working hours, Mr. I. A. A. Peris the General Manager of Railway said—SO. The Police will guard all explosives magazines of the Ministry of Lands and Land Development and Mahaweli Development scattered throughout the Mahaweli Project areas; at a top level conference with the Police, the Minister, Gamini Dissanayake made a request for police assistance to guard the various magazines containing dynamite and the work sites where expensive equipment and machinery were stored. The Government has decided to register foreign yachts and pleasure craft under the Sri Lanka Registry and earn 500 US dollars (Rs. 7,750) per boat annually in foreign exchange. The output of major public sector industries dropped significantly during the first nine months of 1979—ST. A handpicked government task force went into action last week to crackdown on a highly organised racket in Geuda (milky white sapphires) Stones; these priceless gems are being bought up by hordes of Thai nationals who have taken up residence in the City and in several gem mining areas; they are purchasing the stones in large numbers and subjecting them to X-Ray treatment and through a chemical process converting them into Star Sapphires—WK. There will be a pay rise for state and private sector employees next February; this comes in the wake of the higher cost of living which will inevitably result from the oil price hike.

LETTER

The Editor,

TRIBUNE

Sir,

Editor's Notebook of *Tribune* issued on
December 29, 1979

I would like to refer to the Editor's Notebook in page 2 of *Tribune* (Vol. 24/No. 25) issued on 1979.12.29. This notebook states that ".....the JVP has been fiercely and aggressively using rowdy tactics to break up CP meetings in Colombo and even in Matara. The JVP has a 600-800 strong band of storm-troopers trained to break up meetings, and they showed their prowess by breaking up a joint trade union meeting in Hyde Park sometimes ago and more recently a CP meeting in Matara. This storm-trooping was done in spite of the fact that pro-JVP elements of the CP were also on the platform."

This statement is completely untrue, false, misleading and slandering the JVP. As we see, this is clearly an abuse of news journalism. We have never used rowdy tactics and we don't have any storm-troopers to break up meetings. We didn't break up any trade union meeting at Hyde Park or a CP meeting in Matara.

Please make arrangements to correct this statement by publishing this letter sent by us in your magazine.

Thank you,

Yours sincerely,

Daya Wanniarachchi
General Secretary of the JVP.

14, K. Cyril C. Perera Mawatha,
Colombo 13,
Sri Lanka
December 31, 1979

Copy to: Chairman Press Council of Sri Lanka

* If the storm-troopers were not JVP, who were they?—Ed.

Confidentially

How Much?

IS IT NOT TRUE that there is an airy-fairy make-believe euphoria in some hierarchical circles that even the common man had all the money to buy the wide range of imported consumer goods that were available during X'mas in the World Market and the bigger shops? That it is true that many did buy these "goodies"—how is another matter—but the more important question is how much it costs a family to live in these fabulous days? That to start the ball rolling with a dialogue among our readers and also to provide a formula we cannot do better than quote the editorial from the *Satyodaya Bulletin* No. 82 (January 1980): "In the May 1979 issue of *Satyodaya*, we published editorially a table of living costs for a family of five (father, mother and 3 dependents). We then found that, at barest subsistence level, a family would need Rs. 585/80 per month. And our table did not include items of food such as milk and eggs, nor did it include medical expenses, clothing, books for the children. If these things are also included we held that in May last year the family would need at least Rs. 750 per month. What is the position now? To answer this question, we merely reproduce here the May 1979 Table of Costs and juxtapose the cost of the same items at the end of December 1979:

	May 1979	December 1979
<i>Per day</i>		
Rice—3 chundus	Rs. 2.70	3.75
Bread—4 lbs.	4.00	5.00
Coconuts—2	2.00	3.00
Kerosene oil—1 1/2 bot.	1.15	3.00
Firewood—1/7 cwt.	1.50	2.50
Vegetables—2 lbs, condiments,		
Coconut oil etc.	5.00	6.00
Sugar and Tea leaves	1.75	6.00
	Rs. 18.10	25.00
<i>Per Week</i>		
As above for 7 days	126.70	175.00
Fish or Beef—1lb.	5.00	6.00
Dryfish—1 lb.	3.50	5.00

<i>Per month</i>		
As above for 4 weeks	540.80	744.00
Soap—4 cakes	5.00	6.40
House rent	40.00	40.00
	-----	-----
Rs.	585.80	790.40
	-----	-----

"Do our Ministers and Members of Parliament, our doctors, lawyers, accountants, our Marxist leaders, our bishops, mahanayakas and our priests pay Rs. 790.40 per month to their employees: drivers, peons, clerks, farmhands, handymen? And if they do not pay, is it because they cannot pay? Then how explain their own style of life, their own monthly budget for liquor and cigarettes, their expensive holidays, their unessential journeys by car, their regular parties? It is true that current government monetary and development policy has to take chief responsibility for the steep rise in living costs. But while employers of all kinds—doctors, lawyers, priests—lose no time in increasing their own charges for the service they render, the wages of employees tend to remain sticky at the old levels. It is possible that in the present climate of *laissez-faire* and rising prices the common man's family does not realize how rapidly their real standard of life is falling. Some second-hand Singaporean bauble they pick up the pavement may make them even forget that they and their children are eating less than they did seven months ago. But for how long more?"

WILL NOT MANY SAY that some of the figures in the *Satyodaya* Table are on the very low side? That the rent of Rs. 40 a month may be true in the remote outer suburbs of Colombo or the outer periphery of towns like Kandy, or Galle or Jaffna? That nobody can hope to get housing (a bare shelter) for Rs. 40 a month anywhere near his place of work? That travelling to and from the place of his work is an additional item of expenditure that cannot be avoided? That there are many other items which cannot be avoided—an occasional visit to the theatre, clothing, medicines, trips to see parents or relatives and so on and so forth? That when such expenditure arise they eat into the monies allotted for food? That *Tribune* invites its readers to send in their views, comments and observations on how much it costs a person or a family to live these days?

Subscribe Now And Receive A Calendar

	One year Rs.	Two years Rs.	Three years Rs.
SOVIET UNION monthly	16.00	25.00	32.00
SPORT IN THE USSR monthly	16.00	25.00	32.00
SOVIET WOMAN monthly	14.00	22.00	28.00
SOVIET LITERATURE monthly	20.00	30.00	40.00
ASIA AND AFRICA TODAY bi-monthly	16.00	25.00	32.00
FOREIGN TRADE monthly	110.00	165.00	220.00
SPUTNIK monthly	50.00	75.00	100.00
TWENTIETH CENTURY AND PEACE monthly	12.00	18.00	24.00
TRAVEL TO THE USSR bi-monthly	22.00	33.00	44.00
SOCIAL SCIENCES quarterly	36.00	55.00	72.00
UKRAINE quarterly	12.00	18.00	24.00
SOCIALISM Theory and Practice monthly	12.00	18.00	24.00
SOCIALISM Principles, Practice, Prospects	9.00	14.00	18.00
CULTURE AND LIFE monthly	16.00	24.00	32.00
SOVIET FILM monthly	16.00	24.00	32.00
NEW TIMES weekly	18.00	27.00	36.00
INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS monthly	20.00	30.00	40.00
SOVIET MILITARY REVIEW monthly	16.00	24.00	32.00
FAR EASTERN AFFAIRS quarterly	20.00	30.00	40.00
MOSCOW NEWS weekly	18.00	27.00	36.00
MOSCOW NEWS INFORMATION 104 issues a year	18.00	27.00	36.00
NEWS FROM UKRAINE weekly	16.00	24.00	32.00

Every subscriber regardless of the period of subscription will receive by registered air mail direct from the USSR an attractive gift calendar for 1980 with his first subscription.

ENTER YOUR SUBSCRIPTION NOW

PEOPLE'S PUBLISHING HOUSE

124, Kumaran Ratnam Road,
Colombo 2.

Telephone: 36111.

Let Forests Live

To destroy our forests is
to destroy ourselves

Trees can do without man but man cannot do without trees. Trees, big trees and forests are the very basis of our existence in Sri Lanka. They maintain our climate, sustain our animals, help the rains come on time, conserve our soil, retain the water, keep the country beautiful, preserve the ecological balance, and provide us with the timber for a thousand and one uses.

IN 1902 we had 2 acres of forest for each person. In 1956 this had reduced to 0.8 acres. And now in 1979 we have only 0.3 acres of forest per person. After the completion of Mahaweli we will be left with only 20% or one fifth of our total land areas as forest.

We must preserve what we have.

Forest offences will soon be punishable WITH IMPRISONMENT. And all tools, carts, and even elephants used in such activity will be confiscated. This will apply not only to those who commit the offences but also to all those who finance, instigate and in any other way help in the commission of these acts.

The protection of forests must not be interpreted as an impediment to the building construction. Other provision has been made for supplying timber for this purpose.

HOW IMMEDIATE NEEDS WILL BE MET

1. Big Builders and Contractors can import as much timber as they need: for timber can now be imported freely. 2. The State Timber Corporation will make imported timber available for all builders both big and small. 3. The needs of individual house builders for local timber will also be met by planned supply of local varieties. 4. School requirements for school furniture will be supplied from stocks of boron treated rubber wood. And 5. Ipil, ipil, a fast growing tree is being cultivated on a mass scale to meet the firewood requirements of the people.

PLANTING FOR THE FUTURE

Land Development Department will plant trees on a systematic basis, at its main function. The Forest Department which has already planted 300 000 acres as a man-made forest plantation will continue to plant 20,000 more acres a year.

**The government will play its part.
You must do your part
to save your national heritage**

.....**FOR YOURSELF YOUR CHILDREN AND POSTERITY.**
RELEASED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION FOR THE MINISTRY OF
LANDS, AND LAND DEVELOPMENT.