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43, Dawson Street,
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Tel. 33172

Letter From The Editor

ON THE COVER we have a picture of young innocence. Children like these are the future of Sri Lanka. But, what kind of future has Sri Lanka to offer them? What kind of education can this child look forward to? What kind of employment opportunities can this child expect? What kind of life can this child hope for in ten, twenty or thirty years? Those who see a bright vista in the new scheme of NCGE education, with its stress on vocational bias, believe that this child of today has a better future than children of the years immediately after Independence who, it is said, continued to be the victims of cultural imperialism. The promoters of the NCGE boast that the new scheme is designed to eliminate every trace of colonialist culture and ideology which the czars of our educational world say has been infused into the system of education by "foreigners" who had ruled this country for 450 years. Very interesting questions arise from this boast. When does an invader stop being a "foreigner"? When does a new idea introduced into a country stop being "foreign"? How long after Vijaya and his band of adventurers conquered this island did they stop being "aliens" and "foreigners"? When did the official wives whom Vijaya and his men had brought out from the military powerful state of Madurai in Tamil Nadu (after deserting the weak Kuvani and her tribe) stop being "foreigners"? Admittedly, people had come in groups (and in large numbers) into Ceylon from Bengal, Orissa, Andhra, Kerala, Tanjore, Madurai and the Coromandel Coast, from the beginning of time right upto British times. Some of them combined to become the Sinhalese Buddhist Community and some into the Tamil Hindu group, and yet others were assimilated by the Muslims who had obtained a foothold in the island from the sixth century. Many tend to forget that the Mughols—Persian Muslims—and their allies had ruled major parts of the subcontinent of India for nearly 800 to 900 years, and that the predominance of Muslims rule accounted for the presence of a still aggressive and arrogant Muslim units in practically every region and area in India and Ceylon to this day. The Portuguese, Dutch and British had never succeeded in establishing such a religio-cultural "imperialism" as the Muslims had in the Indian subcontinent and the other parts of the world where they had exercised even temporary politico-military control. When did the Muslims (and Islam) stop being aliens (and foreign) in India and other parts of the world where they did not succeed in establishing permanent rule? The same questions can be asked of even Buddhism in Sri Lanka, although they are not, only because the people, the religion and the culture, which prevailed in Ceylon at the time Vijaya and later Mahinda had come to the island, have been successfully wiped out. It is jingoistic chauvinism of the highest order for anyone to claim that the Veddhas and the Kuvani tribe are the only true Sri Lankans and that all others are "intruders" and "foreigners". In the same way is it correct to brand the Burghers and Eurasians (who had made Ceylon their home) "foreigners" and "aliens"—although large numbers have been compelled by Sinhala Buddhist jingoism to seek asylum and new homes in other countries? The world is one today in more ways than many in Sri Lanka seem to realise. Ideas have no barriers or boundaries. The NCGE is not something that has grown out of the soil of Sri Lanka in total isolation from everything in the rest of the world. The NCGE is an addled connection of every educational experiment recently tried out in the advanced industrial countries. It also seeks to combine in the syllabus some of the more controversial and still embryonic (cultural revolution) educational experiments from countries like China. The NCGE is an eclectic hotchpotch and if a child is driven to assimilate the entire syllabus mapped out by the promoters from grade one to grade nine, the resultant product, according to many sane educationists, is likely to be a nervous wreck totally incapable of being any use either to himself (or herself) or the country. Apart from this, the NCGE system is a guinea-pig experiment devised by impractical idealists (all idealists are impractical romantics) to create a brave new world. All attempts to fashion such brave new worlds have failed from the beginning of time, and only practical attempts to cope with current realities have produced any good. What has the future in store for this young Sri Lankan on our cover smiling the smile of rural innocence? Is she (it's a she) to be cast into the world of the Nath Amarakone's where she will have to be anatomically and ideologically dissected to see if she was a Sinhalese and a Buddhist to divide if she will qualify for privileges under the 75% rule? Is she to be tossed about in the angry waves of racial chauvinism? Is she to be ruined by the stress of religious animosities initiated by fanatics? How will she fare under the NCGE dispensation? Will the vocational studies she undertake will help her to find a job and make her a useful citizen?

TRIBUNE

Founded In 1954

A Journal of Ceylon and
World Affairs

Editor: S. P. Amarasinghe

Every Saturday

March 13, 1976

Vol. 20, No. 42

TRIBUNE,
43, DAWSON STREET,
COLOMBO - 1,
Telephone: 33172

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EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Change in
China - 2

Though China experts in the rest of the world felt certain that Teng would be chosen as the Prime Minister, there was a major surprise on February 7 when it was announced that Hua Kuo-feng was appointed as Acting Prime Minister. Below we quote extracts from an AFP despatch from Peking dated February 7: "China to-day sprang a major surprise by announcing the appointment of the Public Security Minister, Mr. Hua Kuo-feng, as acting Premier, a month after the death of Mr. Chou En-lai. A Foreign Ministry spokesman passed on the news to foreign correspondents here by telephone. He did not reveal when or how the appointment was made. Fifty-four year old Mr. Hua is the sixth Vice-Premier and is ranked 11th in the Chinese hierarchy. Though one of the fastest-rising figures in the leadership, he had not been identified as a likely successor to Mr. Chou.

"The man generally tipped to take the post was Mr. Teng Hsiao-ping, the most senior Vice-Premier, who had fulfilled major State duties during the past year in the absence of the ailing Mr. Chou. Some observers speculated Mr. Hua had been given the post of caretaker because the Communist Party hierarchy had been unable to agree yet on a permanent Premier. He apparently would carry out the duties of the Premier until a definite successor to Mr. Chou, who died on January 8, is named. Mr. Hua, a sturdily-built, bespectacled figure from Chairman Mao Tse-tung's home province of Hunan, is not openly identified with either radicals or moderates in the leadership such as Mr. Teng.

"Many diplomats here linked the surprise development with an extraordinary attack in the People's Daily yesterday on 'capitalist roaders' and rightist deviationists in positions of power. It accused them of opposing Chairman Mao's revolutionary policies and 'trying to change the colour of our whole country'. The article which appeared in other Chinese news

papers to-day, criticised some of the politicians who were vilified by Red Guard leftists during the 1960's cultural revolution but subsequently rehabilitated. The emotive language was the strongest that has appeared in print here for years. Mr. Teng was one of the main victims of the cultural revolution and disappeared from public life for six years. He did not return to the national scene until 1973.

"Observers said it was too early to interpret Mr. Hua's promotion as a major setback for the diminutive 71-year-old Mr. Teng. News of the appointment came after correspondents had asked the Foreign Ministry about a Hong Kong newspaper report that Mr. Hua had been made temporary acting Premier. Several hours later a Ministry spokesman telephoned Reuter a six-word comment: 'Mr. Hua Kuo-feng is acting Premier.'

"Mr. Hua, who has reputation as a top-class administrator and a tough talker, is a civilian technocrat. For a long time he had been a party functionary in Hunan and was named to the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party in 1969. He became one of its most powerful figures when he was appointed Minister of Public Security during the fourth National People's Congress last January. For more than two decades till then the public security chiefs had been drawn from the military. The Public Security Ministry under China's latest Constitution has been vested with extensive powers.

"Mr. Hua played an important role in Hunan during the cultural revolution in using the security apparatus and disrupting and arresting the extremists who got out of control. He was also in charge of the investigation of Lin Biao's crimes.

"Mr. Hua has been in charge of the Chinese agriculture programme and in recent months has been doing extensive tours and holding discussions with commune leaders. He has expressed himself in favour of rapid mechanisation of Chinese agriculture, which he has said should be achieved by 1980. He has also predicted 'China will be in the front rank of the world by the end of the century.'

"Mr. Hua was appointed Vice-Governor of Hunan Province in July 1958. In 1959 he became Secretary of the Secretariat of the

Hunan Provincial Committee of the Communist Party.

"In September 1964 he was appointed deputy for Hunan to the third National People's Congress in Peking. During the cultural revolution in 1967 he became a member of the preparatory group of the Hunan Provincial Revolutionary Committee, moving up to deputy head and then to vice-chairman in April 1968."

There was no doubt that Hua Kuo-feng was the dark horse that had romped home victor as the Acting Prime Minister. Below is a despatch from Tokyo on the implications of the selection of Hua Kuo-feng. "Acting Chinese Prime Minister Hua Kuo-feng's two chief rivals—First Vice Prime Minister Teng Hsiao-ping and Second Vice Prime Minister Chang Chun-chiao—are expected to be given commanding positions in the Communist Party and withdrawn from Government administration, the Peking correspondent of Kyodo news agency reported today. The Japanese news agency's report said Mr. Hua was named acting Prime Minister by the 16 member party politburo, but the 149 member party central committee had not yet met to confirm or reject the appointment. Mr. Hua appears to have the inside track for the Prime Ministership, but it seems likely that both Mr. Teng and Mr. Chang will make a fight for it unless the prospect of party seniority satisfies them the Kyodo report said.

"There has been no indication when the central committee will meet. Speculation that a power struggle was under way was heightened by reports from Peking that dozens of posters have appeared on the walls of Peking University indirectly attacking the 71-year-old Teng. Such poster campaigns were one of the chief propaganda weapons of the radicals during the 1966-69 cultural revolution in which Mr. Teng was a casualty, and they often reflect the thinking of Chairman Mao Tse-tung. Several hundred big-character posters (Dazibao) have appeared in higher education establishments in other Chinese cities also.

"Here are the main accusations levelled through the posters against Mr. Teng and other un-identified figures and leaders (the official press is carrying out a parallel campaign against 'rightist devia-

tionists' but also in an anonymous manner). Having attached too much importance to production; having stifled the class struggle; having declared that ideology was not important and that economic progress was the sole subject of real importance; having formed 'cliques' around themselves, and having supported the opponents of the policy of Chairman Mao in the field of education. In a general manner Mr. Teng whom the posters accuse of having shown his 'true face' last summer, is charged with having 'sabotaged the dictatorship of the proletariat' and of having 'opposed the strategic line and person of Chairman Mao directly.' The poster writers declared that Mr. Teng and his 'acolytes' had told the students when they took power that the students were not working hard enough, that they had no culture and that they were neglecting science. Those same people, the authors of the posters went on, had attempted to make their 'own rules' in education, science, culture, agriculture, the economy of the armed forces. The posters attacked 'capitalist roaders' and resurrected a well-known Teng quotation: 'I do not care whether a cat is black or white—the important thing is whether she catches mice.'

"Mr. Teng's observation meant that Chinese problems have to be tackled with realism, the end justifying the means. But ideology comes first to radical leftists led by Mr. Mao's wife, Chiang Ching, and possibly encouraged by the 82-year-old party Chairman himself. In their view, it is more important to uphold the Maoist cause than to improve the operation of the Government and increase production.

'Nothing has been heard of Mr. Teng, 71, since he delivered the funeral eulogy on January 15 for Mr. Chou, his comrade and mentor who died last month. The radicals, who engineered Mr. Teng's disgrace during the 1966-69 cultural revolution, have issued other thinly disguised criticisms in the Peking People's Daily of those—presumably Teng—who would cancel out leftist gains in education and other areas.

China observers find it hard to believe that the shrewd and resourceful Mr. Teng has been counted out. Mr. Hua's appointment, which Western observers generally

feel was Mr. Mao's personal choice must be debated in the Daily of those—presumably the party Central Committee, which only a year ago raised Mr. Teng to the party Vice-Chairmanship and in which he presumably has some strength.

"The outcome of the struggle is of immense importance both inside and outside China. If Mr. Teng wins, Mr. Chou's moderate line at home and policy of detente abroad are sure to be continued. If on the other hand, the radical left emerges on top, the emphasis domestically will be on ideological purity.

But, *The Economist*, February 14, 1976 had an editorial which sought to unravel the Chinese puzzle according to the information available to it—from a very British point of view. The note was entitled **MAO'S SURPRISE** with a subtitle "The unexpected choice of Hua Kuo-feng as acting Prime Minister shows Chinese radicals are fighting fit." For the record we quote *The Economist* piece in full.

"Mao Tse-tung, at 82, may no longer be strong enough to appear in public but he has not lost the power to turn Chinese politics upside down. Only he could have engineered the latest upset whereby the relatively young and relatively unknown minister of public security, Hua Kuo-feng, was jumped over the heads of half the politburo to be named acting prime minister of China. Mao's object in overriding what had looked like a perfectly programmed succession to Chou En-lai was probably much the same as when he launched the cultural revolution 10 years ago. He wants to make China safe for revolution by wresting power from men who cannot share his own radical vision. Not that Hua Kuo-feng is a certified maoist. A dyed-in-the-wool radical would almost certainly have been opposed by a fair section of the central committee and the army high command. Hua must have been selected as a man of the right age (mid-50s) and, as the nearest thing to non-aligned in the politburo, likely to be acceptable both to the resurgent radicals and to the still powerful moderates. But the main reason Mao made him acting prime minister last week was to deny the job to the apparent heir-apparent, Teng Hsiao-ping. Teng was no compromise candidate. As the second most senior victim in the cultural revolution, he had

been identified, even more closely than Chou En-lai himself, with the bureaucratic structure and pragmatic policies that movement set out to destroy. He was brought back to political life by Mao and Chou in 1973 because nobody else could match his administrative skill, and because nobody else would have been trusted in those still unsettled times by the army. (In retrospect it is clear that Chou already knew then that his days were numbered.) But to the radicals who had led the assault on Teng six years earlier, his rehabilitation must have seemed a standing rebuke; and their distrust and resentment could only have been reciprocated.

"The sniping between radicals and moderates never stopped altogether. But Teng's former pursuers seemed to have swallowed their objections to his role as Chou's chief stand-in, especially after the former radical leader, Chang Chun-chiao, was promoted to government, party and army jobs just a rank behind Teng. The truce ended, however, with Chou's death on January 8th. Since then the temperature of China's press has been rising day by day, reaching something approaching boiling point on February 6th, the day before Hua's appointment was revealed, with an attack in the People's Daily on 'those capitalist roaders who were subjected to criticism and exposure during the great proletarian cultural revolution but have refused to show any repentance'. Teng has not appeared in public since he delivered Chou's funeral oration on January 15th.

"Hua still has two hurdles to cross. According to China's year-

Latest Fashion?

Platform shoes are not a recent fashion. They were worn in Venice 500 years ago. There was nothing extravagant about it then. Such shoes were simply indispensable. Women wore them to keep their feet clear of muddy streets and their long dresses dry when boarding a gondola. That platform, however, soon became so high that a law was promulgated to restrict it to "more reasonable proportions." Shoemakers who broke this law were jailed for three months and their women customers fined.

old state constitution, his nomination must now be proposed by the central committee and seconded by the National People's Congress and there is an outside possibility that he could be rejected by a determined coalition of moderate bureaucrats and soldiers. Another possibility is that the summoning of both these conclaves could be delayed. This would give Hua a chance to dig in and to avert, or at least postpone, the confrontation that seems to be building up between radical and moderate factions over a wide range of fundamental issues. What makes Hua's career remarkable, apart from the fact that he rose from a minor provincial post to prime minister in 10 years, is the way he defied political gravity during the cultural revolution. When so many of his cadre colleagues, from the party secretary-general Teng Hsiao-ping, down were stripped of their jobs and their dignity by the Red Guards, Hua steadily gained in prominence. He caught Mao's eye by forming the country's first provincial party committee after the cultural revolution in Mao's home province of Hunan. And a year later in the autumn of 1971, he got the nod from Peking when he was selected head of a secret group under the central committee charged with investigating the ramifications of Lin Biao's abortive coup. This job was presumably what put him in line for his appointment a year ago as minister of security. And the security post—which gave him control over the police—was presumably another important qualification for his latest promotion.

"Hua assumed a visible central role for the first time last October when he gave the keynote address at a conference on China's new agricultural programme. At the time the public security minister seemed an odd man for the part, but Hua has since been reported to have been actively involved in drawing up the five-year economic plan that began last month. Hua's speech at the agricultural conference, which was redolent of some of Mao's economic speeches in the 1950s, cannot be read as a direct expression of Hua's own political views, if only because so important a document would have to be collectively agreed. Even so, it is more likely than not to represent Hua's brand of Maoism: radical goals (70% mechanisation

of farming by 1980) and systematic means (strict control by party committees, detailed supervised planning). Hua puts the new farm programme in the line of the three great agricultural movements in China since 1949—land reform, collectivisation, communes—but he seems determined to avoid the disaster caused by over-ambition in the last crash development drive, the great leap forward. Still, there are hints in Hua's speech of some of the very same leaps towards true communism which aroused strong peasant resistance in the late 1950s and forced swift official backtracking (by Teng Hsiao-ping among others) in the early 1960s. For example, there is the plan for progressively enlarging collective farming units—which means levelling out peasant incomes. Hua left the timing of these moves open. But this is the kind of opening to egalitarianism which is almost certainly being seized on by the radicals in their current

attempt to push Chinese policy to the left.

"The great debate which has brought cultural revolutionary invective back into daily use began, much as the cultural revolution did, with a struggle at Peking's leading universities. A group of bold academic spirits protested last summer against a lowering of university standards which they blamed on a politically-slanted admissions policy and which they claimed was holding back the modernisation of China's economy. A counter-attack on this "right deviationist wind" was launched last November and has steadily gained force. Significantly, the leaders of the campaign at Tsinghua university, where the education minister and the university vice-president were attacked by name, were two cadres who had previously served as personal emissaries of Mrs. Mao. The fact that even atomic research institutes have now been brought into the campaign is a measure of its serious-

SUMMERTIME SAGA

The continent of Europe is not about to isolate itself totally from Britain after all. The EEC commission has dropped its plans for all the continental member countries to introduce summer time, all on the same date, which would have made for pleasing synchronisation on the continent but left Britain and Ireland permanently out of step (rather than in the winter months only). It was, of course, Britain's own decision just before joining the EEC which put it out of step with the rest. During the three-year experiment with British Standard Time (a kind of year-round summer time) preceding that decision, Britain's time was perfectly in line with that of the rest of the community. It was mainly Scottish objections to those long dark winter mornings which prompted a return to good old GMT. But meanwhile confusion over time is growing in continental Europe too. The Italians already have a summer time of their own which, however, lasts for a shorter period than Britain's. Now the French, too, are planning their own summer time, starting this year, which again will cover a different period from either Britain's or Italy's. The commission is now trying at least to persuade those members who do go in for summer time to align their switchover dates

Does it matter? A lot of businessmen think so. The London Chamber of Commerce went to the trouble of writing a letter to the EEC commission to protest against the summer time proposals, and likes to think that its arguments played some small part in the commission's decision to drop these. The hour's time difference between Britain and the continent is only part of the problem, magnifying the differences between British and continental working hours. Most continental office workers come in at eight in the morning or even earlier and many are at lunch by 12, but leave correspondingly earlier than their British colleagues in the afternoon. This means that telephone and telex communications are crowded into two very narrow time bands in the morning and afternoon, making for massive congestion. British businessmen are also unhappy about the effect of the system on air travel. With Britain an hour behind, their continental colleagues can get up at a reasonable time, fly to London and still do a useful morning's work there, while British businessmen are unable to get to Europe much before lunchtime. Still, what's wrong with a business lunch?

ness; during the cultural revolution scientists were granted privileged neutrality. If there had been any doubts about the wider implications of the education debate, these were eliminated on February 6th by the People's Daily article which defined the 'revolutionary mass debate' on education as 'a continuation and deepening of the great proletarian cultural revolution.' It went on to suggest, in highly coloured language, that the criticism of the education system was part of 'an all-round attack on the proletariat, politically, ideologically and organisationally' and that it was backed by the same high-placed bourgeois revisionists who had been the targets of the cultural revolution. This definition fits nobody so well as Teng Hsiao-ping and the other party pragmatists he has restored to power in the past few years. For the moment the radicals, with Mao behind them, appear to be riding high. But it has yet to be seen whether they can force shifts in basic and foreign policies. The invitation of ex-President Nixon last week discomfited the American government but it indicated that the radicals in China could not overrule this affirmation of the American connection: they so dislike. The new five-year plan, if it is revealed, will tell something about their influence on economic policy, as will the level of unrest in factories and farms. But the first clear test of their strength will be the sticking power of the acting prime minister, Hua Kuo-feng."

It is known that Hua Kuo-feng had made front page headlines with his address at the last party session in October 1975. He had outlined a plan for a two-fold drive for national agricultural development programme and mechanisation of farming by 1980. He had overshadowed earlier speeches especially that of another rising star deputy premier Chen Yung-Kuei who had risen to the Politbureau by his leadership of the Tachai brigade. But at the last Congress, Teng Hsiao-ping had been accorded, according to the Hsinhua News Agency, had been given "outbursts of stormy applause" compared to Chen's "prolonged applause", and Chiang Ching's "important" speech was not been published and therefore not officially "applauded". But within four months, immediately, after Chou's

death, Chiang Ching and the radicals have been able to mount a major (and successful) offensive.

The *Time* of February 16, 1976 in a comment entitled SURPRISE CHOICE TO FOLLOW CHOU stated:

"Since Premier Chou En-lai died a month ago, most China analysts have been expecting Peking to name Teng Hsiao-ping, Chou's hand-picked First Vice Premier, as his successor. Most surprisingly the Chinese leadership last week passed over Teng and appointed a relative unknown as Acting Premier, pending eventual approval by the rubber stamp National People's Congress. He is Hua Kuo-feng, 56, Minister of Public Security and No. 6—ranking Vice Premier (among the twelve in all). The leadership had difficulty agreeing during several Politburo meetings in Peking. Any Premier has to be acceptable to a diversity of factions, including the military, the government bureaucracy, the leftist leaders in the Politburo, and of course, Chairman Mao. Teng, as a chief victim of the Cultural Revolution of 1966-69, was obviously not the favourite candidate of the left, though he evidently had the support of most other factions. Last week's decision indicates that the radicals usually thought to be led by Mao's wife Chiang Ching, had enough strength to block his expected promotion.

"Hua may have emerged as a compromise choice in part because his very lack of visibility made him a man with few enemies. Affable and soft-spoken, with a thick Hunanese accent, Hua is described by foreign visitors a politically adroit and non-doctrinaire. It helped that he comes from Mao's native province of Hunan, where he spent most of his career as a high regional party official and became an expert in agriculture, which is the backbone of China's economy. Significantly, he went to Peking just after former Defense Minister Lin Piao tried to overthrow Mao in 1971. Mao at that time was presumably trying to bring trusted officials to the capital. In 1973, Hua was named to the 22-member Politburo; early last year he became a Vice Premier and head of China's little-known security apparatus. In recent months his public role has increased. Last September he led an important

government delegation to Tibet. Soon after, he presided over the highly publicized agriculture meetings held in Shansi province and later Peking, where he gave the keynote speech. It was very Maoist, emphasizing that China must continue to advance toward Communism since the present system of wages and material incentives is "unequalitarian."

"Possibly the former security chief's elevation indicates that Peking intends to get tough with China's chronic problem of factional strife, especially when it leads to work stoppages and violent confrontations, as in Hangchow last year. On the other hand, Hua's almost complete lack of experience in foreign affairs may mean that Foreign Minister Chiao Kuan-hua and Teng Hsiao-ping, in the spirit of collective leadership, will continue to concentrate on relations with other countries. If that is the case, there is no reason to expect any major changes in China's foreign policy. What has changed, however, is Teng's status. He still outranks Hua in the all-important party hierarchy, but Teng's hopes of ever becoming Premier, though perhaps not entirely snuffed out have been considerably dimmed."

The *Newsweek*, also of February 16, 1976, found the supersession of Teng Hsiao-ping A NEW CHINESE PUZZLE. The story was written by Fay-Willy and Paul Brinkley - Rogers from Hongkong and it read:

"Teng Hsiao-ping had it all sewed up—or so most China watchers in the West believed. As China's day-to-day boss and the man who played host to President Gerald Ford last December, Vice Premier Teng seemed virtually certain to succeed the late Chou En-lai as Premier of China. But last week, in a laconic English language radio broadcast, Peking announced that Hua Kuo-feng—the nation's top cop and its eleventh-ranking politician—had just held 'cordial and friendly talk' with Venezuela's new ambassador. The broadcast identified the 54-year-old Hua as China's new 'Acting Premier.'

"That was all the Chinese had to say. There was no word about how Hua's appointment had been made or whether he would be given the job permanently. But the announcement indicated that something had changed drama-

tically in China's plans for orderly succession to a new generation of leaders. The announcement surprised the White House and U.S. China watchers, who were hard put to piece together the latest Chinese puzzle. Less than two days before the news came, President Ford told Richard Nixon—who plans to visit China later this month—to give his best wishes to "Chairman Mao, Premier Teng and the others." And recently Mao Tse-tung himself told a foreign visitor that Teng would succeed Chou. Thus the choice of Hua raised questions about Teng's future—and the role of the 82-year-old Mao.

"Outsiders have only a sketchy knowledge of Hua's background. He comes from Hunan, which is Mao's home province, and as a protegee of the Chairman he made a name for himself as an effective agricultural commissar. Five years ago, Hua was promoted to a post in Peking, where he was put in charge of all the nation's farms. Last year, during behind-the-scenes scuffling over the succession, Hua was promoted again—to Vice Premier and Minister of Public Security. In the latter job, he bosses more than 1 million border guards, policemen and internal security agents.

"A tough, jowly man who wears a crew cut, Hua is a politician for all seasons. Though his two chief sponsors—Mao and Teng—have often been on opposite sides of the poli-

tical fence, Hua has managed to stay on good terms with both men. He found it necessary to go along with Maoist excesses early in the Cultural Revolution, then suppressed the radical Red Guards when moderation came back into vogue. As a result, he was denounced by the militants. Hua is still no favourite among party radicals. Whereas they have made it clear they would rather be Red than well fed, Hua has pushed for the modernization of agriculture. He has been out in front on another big issue: the Soviet Union. In a key speech in Tibet last September, he declared: "We should firmly implant in our minds the concept of holding out on the frontiers."

"In view of his anti-Soviet reputation, Hua's appointment seemed unlikely to alter the relationship between China and the U.S. What it meant for internal Chinese politics was less clear. Some U.S. analysts speculated that Hua's promotion might be a victory for his friend, Vice Premier Teng. "Until we know more, it is at last conceivable that instead of taking the Premiership, Teng has decided to promote Hua to that job and concentrate on positioning himself to become Chairman of the party when Mao dies," said the University of Michigan's Michel Oksenberg. A contrary theory was that the elevation of Hua might reflect a falling out between Teng and Mao. Experts also suggested that Hua might be merely a care-

taker appointed to hold down the post while the party's rival moderates and radicals battle for control. The future was clouded by the fact that there is no precedent for picking a Premier. The nation has had only one, Chou En-lai, since the 1949 Communist victory. In theory, the Premier is selected by the National People's Congress, and no meeting has yet been announced. In practice, the final decision will be made by a handful of top party members.

"Peking's political pecking order may become clearer when Richard Nixon visits China. He will surely be greeted by Hua; what role Teng Hsiao-ping plays during the visit will shed some light on his status and on his prospects. The final word on Chou's successor, however, may depend on months of maneuver and intrigue behind the walls of the Forbidden City."

But it was after the announcement of Hua's appointment that the significance of the "press" campaign against "capitalist-roaders, reactionaries and revisionists" which had begun shortly after Chou's death, began to dawn on those interested in Chinese politics.

An examination of this press campaign as revealed in magazine like *The Far Eastern Economic Review* of Hongkong present an insight into current Chinese politics

(To be Continued)

CHRONICLE

Feb. 28 — Mar. 8

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

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

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 28: Official sources told the *Daily News* that the Government will continue to grant tax holiday concessions to entrepreneurs who have set up large scale industries in collaboration with foreign capital investment: the paper sought clarification on this point following a Budget announcement that the tax holiday scheme would be reviewed which created a suspicion among industrialists regarding tax holiday. The Executive Committee of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party will meet today at the party headquarters and several crucial issues are expected to be discussed

at the meeting—CDM. According to the *Virakesari* trade unions on strike at the Government Press have indicated their willingness to meet the Prime Minister regarding the strike and this is likely to solve the problem: the paper further said that all indications are that by next week the strikers will return to work. According to the *Aththa* Mr. Tennyson Edirisooriya, SLFP MP for Tissamaharama, has sent in a cheque for Rs 100 to the Editor of *Aththa* to be credited to the fund for strikers at the Government Press. Mr. Ananda Dassanayake, General Secretary of the Sri Lanka Independent Trade Union Federation, addressing a trade union meeting in Colombo said that no elections will be held in 1977 and also said that election in 1977 is a dream of Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, leader of the Opposition—LD. The *Janadina* editorially posed the question as to why the Prime Minister was silent and also said there was a possibility of some sort of 'secret' in spite of repeated statements by SLFP stalwarts that there will not be a general election in 1977. Government will soon appoint a commission to probe the working of the State Gem Corporation during the last five years: Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike, Minister of Finance, has proposed the appointment of this commission—DM. The one-man committee inquiring into the delay in making the school texts available for students will

soon submit its interim report on the subject to the Minister of Education, Dr. Badiudin Mahmud—DM. Western diplomats indicated that Richard Nixon's trip to Peking may well have given a badly needed fillip to Sino-US relations despite the anger it aroused in the United States. Hundreds of wall posters attacking senior Vice Premier Teng-Hsiao ping by name were pasted up at a Peking University in a major escalation of China's fiery anti-rightist campaign. UN General Secretary, Kurt Waldheim, said that there was a dangerous stagnation in the Middle East peace efforts and something urgently must be done to get over it and start negotiations.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 29: According to the *Sunday Times*, Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, addressing the Executive Committee meeting of the SLFP yesterday directed all members of the SLFP to disband forthwith any organisation or classes run by them outside the axis of the parent body: she said she was not making a request but giving a firm order: she further said that all trade unions managed by the SLFP should have no truck with the unions with allegiance to the LSSP: she ordered the SLFP trade unions to work with the CP trade unions and if they could not jointly run the JCTUO with the CP they should quit the JCTUO: Mr. T. B. Illangaratne, Minister of Trade and Public Administration, said though he once tried to bring about a unity between the SLFP and the LSSP now he condemned the LSSP as saboteurs. According to the *Sunday Times* three major trade union federations—the Sri Lanka Independent Trade Union Federation (SLFP), The Ceylon Federation of Labour (LSSP), and the Ceylon Federation of Trade Unions (CP) have accused Mr. R. S. Perera, Minister of Information and Broadcasting, for anti-working class attitudes in regard to the strike at the Government Press and for deviating from the procedure adopted by other Ministers in the event of a strike. Mr. Stanley Tillekeratne, Speaker of the NSA, told the *Observer* that so far he did not have any communication from the Opposition regarding the No-Confidence Motion against the Minister of Finance and as far as he was concerned the debate was closed. According to the *Observer* thousands of Ceylonese students studying in UK will be badly hit and may have to abandon their studies if a secret Cabinet policy of the UK Government to increase fees for overseas students as much as five-fold was implemented. Referring to a statement by the Deputy Minister of Defence and Foreign Affairs, Mr. Lakshman Jayakody, regarding interference of the Indian DMK party in the internal affairs of Sri Lanka Mr. A. Amirthalingam, General Secretary of the Tamil United Front, told the *Virakesari* that the Tamil United Front has no connections either with the DMK or any other political parties overseas. Dr. N. M. Perera, addressing a seminar of the LSSP trade unions in Colombo yesterday said that the working class must be in a state of preparedness to face several worker's struggles before the end of this year—VK. US Astronaut, Alan Bean, will arrive Sri Lanka today on a three-day tour: he will meet the Prime Minister during his stay in the country—SM. A delegation of SLFP youth leaguers led by its Chief Organiser, Mr. Anura Bandaranaike, met the Minister of Finance and Justice yesterday and had formal discussions in order to get a remission of sentence and other reliefs for those youths sentenced to terms of imprisonment for involvement in the April insurgency—SLD. According to the *Janasathiya* thousands of students

who passed the NCGE examination held last December were unable to continue their studies in the HNCE classes owing to the non-availability of text books: the *Janasathiya* further said that text books cannot be printed owing to the strike at the Government Press. The Chinese Press joined for the first time in the mounting criticism of Vice Premier Teng-Hsiao ping who is vilified in current student wall-posters as "anti Chairman Mao and anti Party."

MONDAY, MARCH 1: According to the *Daily News* the Executive Committees of the two SLFP trade union federations in the JCTUO will meet today to discuss their future with LSSP trade unions in the Council: this follows an order by the Prime Minister that SLFP trade unions should not have any connection with LSSP trade unions. Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, Prime Minister, was present at the ceremonial handing over of the West German Training Institute for CTB at Moratuwa yesterday—CDN. State Secretary to the Ministry of Economic Corporation of the Federal Republic of Germany, who arrived in the island, told pressman that FRG will give Sri Lanka this year capital aid to the tune of DM 29 million subject to confirmation in the FRG budget—CDN. According to the *Daily Mirror* the sudden transfer of a few high officials in the Ministry of Finance has created tension among trade unionists in the Ministry: these trade unionists alleged that these sudden transfers were an aftermath of the no-Confidence Motion on the Minister of Finance. The Minister apparently has suspected that certain pro-LSSP officials in the Ministry has leaked out information in support of the No-Confidence Motion. Following the possession of copies of letters sent by Mr. Rukman Senanayake, MP for Dedigama, to the UNP leader Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, in the hands of the Finance Minister at the debate of the No-Confidence Motion, the *Daily Mirror* said that this has created a suspicion by UNPers about Mr. Senanayake. According to the *Virakesari* Mr. L. W. Panditha, General Secretary of the Ceylon Federation of Trade Unions, has said that the CP unions in the JCTUO would not allow the LSSP to be ousted from the JCTUO. Pilgrims to the annual Kachchativu festival this year in March will have to carry their identity cards and unlike the previous years will not be allowed to carry Sri Lanka spices with them: in addition the quantity of other rations of coconut oil and certain consumer items too would be restricted—VK. The *Janadina* in an editorial referred to an editorial of *Dinamina* in which was said that the recent No-Confidence Motions against the Prime Minister and of late on the Minister of Finance, were a utter wastage of the NSA's precious time: the *Dinamina* editorial also said that knowing that the Government cannot be defeated on these No-Confidence Motions, the Opposition was making a vain effort: in reply the *Janadina* editorial said that these No-Confidence Motions are intended not to defeat the Government but to make the country know through democratic ways the pseudo-socialist policies of these leaders. From today onwards work will resume in the Thulhiriya Textile Mills, stage by stage—DM. Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike, Minister of Finance and Justice, decided to release the money acquired from wage earners under the compulsory savings scheme: these monies will be released to those who are willing to utilise same on development projects and if the monies released would be definitely used for development projects more than

the prescribed sum will be released in instalments—LD. A senior Chinese official said that Vice-Premier Teng Hsiao-ping under attack as a "capitalist roader" now has no chance to remould himself. Angolan Prime Minister, Lop Do Nascimento, said that Angola would follow an independent and Non-aligned policy and will not be a military base for any other country.

TUESDAY, MARCH 2: According to the *Daily Mirror* Mr. S. K. K. Suriarachchi, Minister of Co-operatives and Small Industries, on behalf of the Government had discussions with trade union leaders of the Government Press and the unions apparently accepted the formula of the Government: the paper said that it was likely that the strike at the Government Press will end today. According to the *Daily News* the Government's view on the discussions yesterday the Minister of Small Industries and Co-operatives had with the unions at the Government Press will be intimidated to the latter today and this was likely to end the strike today. The *Janadina* referring to the Prime Minister's order that SLFP trade unions should have no connection with LSSP trade unions said in an editorial that this is an action to betray the working class and a sell-out of the working class to the capitalists: the paper expressed its sympathies at the Prime Minister's decision. According to the *Lankadipa* the LSSP is secretly having discussions with its trade union leaders in the public and private sectors in an attempt to launch a general strike. Following the detection that Rs. 41 million were in arrears by Government Departments to the Railway Department on warrants issued to Government servants, Mr. V. T. Navaratne, General Manager of Railways, stated that unless this amount was settled the Railway will have to stop issuing warrants to Government servants—CDM. Mr. Alan Bean the US astronaut currently in Sri Lanka told a press conference that by 1979 it will be possible to send an aero-bus with passengers to the moon—LD. The National Assembly will meet today for the first time after the final day of the No-Confidence Motion against the Minister of Finance, Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike, was debated—CDM. The 32nd commemorative celebrations of Munidasa Kumaratunga will be held today at the Thurstan College Hall in Colombo—ATH. At a United National Janasamatha Party propaganda meeting held in Kandy, Mr. J. R. P. Suriyapperuma, former UNPer said that Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, President of the UNP, would never become the Prime Minister of this country: Mr. Suriyapperuma further said that before May this year Mr. J. R. Jayewardene will lose even his present post of Leader of the Opposition—CDN. President Anwar Sadat of Egypt at a press conference in Kuwait warned Israel and Syria against starting a new Middle East war: he also said that something was being cooked between Syria and Jordan. The Soviet Communist Party approved the policy speech made by General Secretary, Brezhnev. While the CPSU Congress was on nearly 80 political prisoners in Moscow launched a hunger strike protesting against low quality foods and other facilities in the prisons.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 3: Following a question by Dr. N. M. Perera, MP for Yatiyantota, in the NSA yesterday Mr. Stanley Tillekeratne, Speaker, said that he would consider the submissions of the Opposition regarding the debate on the No-Confidence Motion against the Minister of Finance on February 19 and give his ruling on the matter as soon as possible: the Speaker also said that there was some confusion in the House.

during the debate on the night of February, 19—CDN. The three-member committee appointed to probe the Railway catering service in its report stated that the 'take it or leave it' attitude should not be followed by waiters if the Railway catering service is to improve—CDN. The unions in the Government Press have still not got any intimation from the Government regarding the discussions the unions had with Minister of Food and Co-operatives, Mr. S. K. K. Suriarachchi—CDN. In a reply to the Trade Union Federation in the private sector which wanted the agreement between the employees and employers in 1971 reviewed according to the present-day cost of living the Employers Federation said that it considered the demand as unjustified: according to the *Janadina* this reply has been handed over soon after the Prime Minister announced that the SLFP should not have any connection with LSSP unions: the paper further said this indicated the highhandedness of the capitalist class soon after the Prime Minister's order which the paper claimed was in favour of the capitalist class. The two trade union federation belonging to the SLFP will hold a delegates conference to decide on the Prime Minister's order to sever connections with the LSSP trade unions—ATH. According to the *Daily Mirror* the consensus in the CP trade union circles are that the Communist Party trade unions will not quit the JCTUO. With the return of the leader of the UNP, Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, moves are afoot to get Mr. Rukman Senanayake, MP for Dedigama, pushed out of the party—CDM. Mr. S.S. Kulatilleke, Minister of Social Services, introduced a bill in the NSA yesterday to allocate Rs. 2.8 million for use in rehabilitating beggars—VK. The Department of Examinations decided that in future application forms for the GCE O Level will be sent only by post for private candidates: this decision follows complaints that certain organisations which obtain large quantities of application forms sell same to private candidates—DM. According to the *Lankadipa* Government will pay back Rs. 150 million which was deducted under compulsory savings since 1971: nearly 14,000 wage earners whose monies are with the Government will be paid back with an interest of 5 percent per year. The entire proceedings of the Non-aligned summit to be held in Colombo this year will be flashed over to world countries through communication satellites—CDN. China's campaign against "capitalist roaders" reached several provincial towns too. The White House yesterday investigated ways and means to contact former President Nixon officially to obtain first hand impression on China's political situation. Libya has agreed to establish diplomatic ties at Ambassadorial level with Cuba and Jamaica.

THURSDAY, MARCH 4: Mr. C. Kumarasuriar, Minister of Posts and Telecommunications, met the leaders of the JCTUO regarding the dispute at the Government Press: according to the *Daily News* only two issues remain unsolved: the Minister indicated that he is hopeful that the strike would be settled within the next few days. According to the *Aintha* the strike was likely to be settled today. According to the *Janadina* Government was unwilling to solve the strike at the Government Press: the paper further said that agreement reached on certain issues between the Minister of Posts and Telecommunications and the JCTUO had to be approved by the general membership of the trade unions of the Government press. Mr. Stanley Tillekeratne, Speaker of the NSA, giving his verdict on the No-Confidence Motion against the Minister

of Finance in the NSA on February 19, said the vote was a negative one and as such the motion has been lost—CDM. The State Plantations Corporation will receive 175,000 acres of the 400,000 acres of land that were nationalised last October and the vesting will be done in mid March—CDM. SLFP and CP trade union leaders will meet again tomorrow to discuss the Prime Minister's directive to the SLFP unions to sever connexions with LSSP unions—CDN. Mr. Batty Weerakoon, General Secretary of the CFTU commenting on the Prime Minister's order said the JCTUO cannot be broken according to the whims and fancies of the Prime Minister and if the leaders wanted to sever connexions they can do so but the working class will remain in the JCTUO—JD. The *Janadina* commenting on certain statements made by SLFPers regarding the holding of the general elections in 1977 said following the speech by Dr. Colvin R. de Silva, LSSP MP for Agalawatte in the NSA recently there is no necessity to discuss this matter any further and the Government is compelled by the Constitution to hold elections in 1977 failing which it will be plunging into dictatorship. On the 18th of this month the Mahaweli waters will be diverted to the Kalawewa: Mr. Maithripala Senanayake, Minister of Irrigation, Power and Highways, will preside—DM. Railway Department decided to do away with the narrow gauge trains from May this year—LD. Following a series of reports regarding persons taken into Police custody committing suicide the Director of Public Prosecutions has called for immediate reports from Police stations—CDN. Former US President, Nixon said that he would inform in writing to the State Department about his visit to China.

FRIDAY, MARCH 5: On a formula offered by the Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, the 43-day old strike at the Government Press was settled yesterday and the workers are expected to report for duty this morning: the unions representing the workers of Government Press conveyed the acceptance of the Prime Minister's formula through Mr. C. Kumarasuriar, Minister of Posts and Telecommunications, who had been conducting negotiations with the unions on behalf of the Government: according to the *Aththa* on a written assurance by the Government that the demands of the strikers would be met workers of the Government Press will return to work today: the paper in its lead news said the workers will return to work victoriously: the apprentice who was dismissed and for whose sake the entire working class went on strike will be interdicted and charges against him would be inquired by the Commissioner of Labour: the paper in its editorial said the settling of the strike at the Government Press revealed the wisdom of the Government and also has taught a good lesson to the adamant attitude of the Minister in charge of the Government Press: the paper further said this is a victory for the entire working class and praised the workers of the Government Press for their unity which has given them the strength to fight: According to the *Janadina* for the next one and a half months Mr. C. Kumarasuriar, Minister of Posts and Telecommunications, will be the Minister in charge of the Government Press: the *Janadina* in an editorial said though the strike at the Press is settled still the unpopularity the Government earned will not be erased from the minds of the working class and public: the editorial further said the unity and the strength shown by the workers of the Government Press should be an example for the working class for future struggles. According to the *Lankadipa* removal of Police guarding the Gov-

ernment Press will not be done immediately. Answering a question by Mr. V. Dharmalingam, FP MP for Uduvil, Mr. Lakshman Jayakody, Deputy Minister of Defence and External Affairs, told the NSA yesterday that the Government had authentic and truthful information that the Tamil United Front had connexions with the Indian DMK party—CDN. Mr. Robert Senanayake, father of Mr. Rukman Senanayake, UNP MP for Dedigama, has complained to the Press Council that the UNP journal *Siyarata* of November 14, 1975 has reported that he, Mr. J. R. P. Suriyapperuma and Mr. Jinadasa Niyathapala are responsible for the publication of the Sinhala weekly *Sathipatha* and this has been done with the intention of influencing members of a particular caste against him: when the inquiry was taken up at the Press Council the defendents asked for a postponement as their senior counsel was not available for participation—CDM. Muslim MPs of the NSA yesterday met the Prime Minister and had discussions with them regarding several problems and shortcomings facing the Muslim community of Sri Lanka—VK. The Republic Day official celebrations this year will be conducted in Kandy on May 22—DM. According to the *Janadina* Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike will leave the island on March 14 and will be away till April 10: She will leave for Yugoslavia on March 14: the paper said the trip will be for health reasons too. Mozambique severed Rhodesia's trade lifeline to the sea across the former and the President of Mozambique in an announcement over the Radio asked the people to get prepared for a war by digging air raid shelters: Zambia and Tanzania have expressed support for Mozambique.

SATURDAY, MARCH 6: Strikers of Government Press who went with Mr. C. Kumarasuriar, Minister of Posts and Telecommunications, to commence work were yesterday stopped at the entrance by the Government Printer who said the order from his Minister was not to permit anyone to enter the premises: following this Mr. Kumarasuriar contacted the Prime Minister on telephone who in turn instructed Mr. Ridgeway Tillekeratne, Secretary to the Ministry of Broadcasting and Information, to visit the Government Press and make arrangements for the workers to enter the premises—JD. *Aththa* editorially referring to the dispute at the Government Press said the steps taken by the Prime Minister regarding the settlement of the strike was a great blow to the Minister of Broadcasting and Information, Mr. R. S. Perera, under whose Ministry the Government Press was functioning: the paper said from the lessons the Minister learnt either he should reform or should resign from his portfolio. Jewellery worth Rs. 1 million and cash Rs. 500,000 was stolen at gun point from the Peoples Bank branch at Puttur, Jaffna: according to the Police five youths came in a car and robbed the money at day time: Police sealed off all exits from the peninsula and so far no one was arrested—CDN. According to the *Daily Mirror* Sri Lanka is expected to receive wheat flour amounting to 100,000 tons from the USA under the PL 480 agreement. Talks between trade unions controlled by the SLFP and the CP regarding their future in the JCTUO with LSSP trade unions were postponed—VK. People's Bank has drawn up a plan to assist textile weavers to obtain raw materials through loans provided by the bank and also to sell their produce—DM. Members of the Government Parliamentary Group in a letter to the Prime Minister requested her to take immediate steps to implement the Pirivena Bill—DM. According to reports from anti malaria campaign there

are nearly 600,000 persons affected by malaria in Sri Lanka—*LD*. A member of the North Korean U. N. observer mission said that America has stepped up its preparations for an attack on North Korea and war might break out at any time. Mrs. Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister of India, has ruled out any possibility for an early discussion with the Opposition on the eight-month-old internal emergency in the country.

SUNDAY, MARCH 7: Defence Ministry sources told that another Taiwanese fishing trawler was captured by the Sri Lanka Navy while poaching in Sri Lanka waters—*CO*. Interpol alerted local tourist hotels travel agents and tourist shops of an international racket in counterfeit travellers cheques operated by a gang using forged passports and posing off as tourists—*CO*. According to the *Sunday Times* in Sri Lanka every sixteen out of hundred thousand persons are afflicted with syphilis and this rate of incidence of the disease is the highest in any part of the world: even a few school girls and boys have been found carrying this disease. A panel appointed by the Minister of Finance, Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike, has reported that the State Gem Corporation has paid over Rs. 24 million in excess of the actual worth for gems and semiprecious stones purchased by the Corporation over the past few years—*ST*. The *Observer* reported an incident where a wealthy lady, owner of a Colombo 7 bungalow, was mistaken for a vagrant and taken into custody by the Police while she was going to the market: the relatives of the lady managed to find her after seven days at the Gangodawila Home for Vagrants where she had been sent by a Magistrate: according to the paper all her appeal to the Police that she was not a vagrant was not considered. Government has given the order to print text books for students of grade 10 through private printers—*CO*. Leader of the Joint Council of Trade Unions of the Government Press told the *Virakesari* that it would take another 10 days to start work at the Government Press: according to Mr. P. Wimalasena, leader of the trade unions front, during the strike at the press machinery have been damaged the leaders of the trade unions of the Government Press are expected to meet the Prime Minister today—*VK*. Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, addressing a meeting at China Bay yesterday where she inspected the Air Force's Training School said that it was wrong to say that the Government utilised the monies received from abroad to strengthen the forces: she said major part of foreign money was used to develop, the country—*VK*. According to the *Janadina* the foreign investment plan proposed by the Minister of Finance was actually a proposal of the Prime Minister for which she got the necessary advice from West German leaders when she visited that country in 1974. Following a steep increase in the price of coconut products in the local market Coconut Marketing Board has temporarily stopped the export of coconut oil till the end of April: the Board also reduced the price per ton paid to the manufacturers of coconut oil—*LD*. At the end of the 25th CPSU Congress held in Moscow Soviet Agricultural Minister, Dmitry Polyansky was ousted from the Politbureau: observers said soon he will be replaced from his portfolio too. 92 out of 129 overseas doctors failed the English proficiency test held by the British General Medical Council.

MONDAY, MARCH 8: Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs approved 400 new private sector projects and most of the projects are export oriented: an official of the Ministry told the *Daily News* these

projects would provide employment for nearly 500,000 unskilled workers. Police investigating the robbery at the Puttur branch of the People's Bank said one of the gangsters told the people of the bank before he got away that they have robbed the money not for their personal use but for the sake of a movement: Police rescued the driver of the car in an unconscious state at a point nearly 2 miles away from the scene of the robbery from the boot of the car: according to the driver the youth have hired his car on the guise of taking a patient to a hospital and later gagged him put into the boot of the car and drove off—*CDN*. According to the *Virakesari* Police arrested four people in Mannar yesterday on suspicion in regard to the Puttur bank robbery earlier five youths who were arrested in Jaffna on suspicion in connexion with the robbery were later released as the bank officials said that they were not the men. Trade Union leaders of the Government Press who met the Prime Minister last night discussed the problems facing the workers of the Government Press: they pledged that they would do all printing work in connexion with the Non-Aligned conference on a Shramadana basis—*VK*. According to the *Aththa* fresh hands recruited to the Government Press during the strike have damaged machinery there and the loss is estimated at 2.5 million. According to the *Janadina* in addition to the damage several spare parts of machinery and small items used for printing have also been removed by the new recruits. The *Janadina* editorially referred to a statement by the Prime Minister at the Air Force Training School in China Bay where she said that it was the duty of the forces to safeguard the Government and the country: the paper said that during the insurgency of 1971 and during the UNP's threats in 1974 the Prime Ministers appealed to the masses of the country to safeguard the country and the Government but now she has forgotten the masses and is dependent on the armed forces to safeguard the country and the Government: the editorial further said that history has taught the ultimate fate of those leaders of countries who depended much on arms for their activities. Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, Leader of the UNP, addressing a well-attended meeting in Dehiwela yesterday said that the UNP would even seek the assistance of the LSSP to prevent any attempts to oust the Prime Minister and prevent elections by interested elements: he further said that the Prime Minister has promised elections in 1977 and he was sure that she would not continue even one day after May 27, 1977 which is the end of the seven year term—*CDM*. Mr. S. K. K. Suriarachchi, Minister of Food and Co-operatives, appointed 110 officials to the 22 district Co-operative Authorities throughout the island: the Government Agent of each district has been appointed as the President of each district association—*DM*. Several local bodies have failed to remit the employees provident funds to the Central Bank and this has created uneasiness in local government trade union circles—*LD*. Sri Lanka decided to establish diplomatic ties with the Government of Panama—*CDN*. President Amin of Uganda urged the countries of the Organisation of African Unity to render military support and other assistance to Mozambique with its decision to close the country's borders with Rhodesia. After four days of talks between Canada and India in New Delhi the countries failed to reach agreement on resumption of Canadian nuclear aid to India.

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MAHAWELI-3

Our Priorities In Development

By R. Kahawita

It never happens with us.

However, the other day we decided to dine out and very rashly selected one of those five-star joints, designed to entice the dollar rich tourist, as our "dining out" place. To us the place we chose was paradise on earth. Everything was in the superlative. Illumination was intriguing, decor still better and the place was teeming with security guards, major domos etc. to guide you, and keep away locals whom they may think were undesirable. Fortunately we were able to get through these barriers and arrived at a well womaned reception counter to find out our location for dinner. It was the ultimate in everything, polished slippery floors, expensive wall to wall carpeting, elegant furniture and rich sumptuous surroundings in which we were really uncomfortable—a set up we could not enjoy over hundred rebirths.

THE DINING AREAS were fantastic, service and attention were beyond expectation. However food was average, neither western nor oriental. Nevertheless we enjoyed the food as such occasions as this were very rare in our humdrum life. And when the bill was presented we almost disgorged the food we had just enjoyed, with the pressure shooting up to the ceiling, and calculating how we could get through the rest of the month.

It cost us a modest Rs. 120/- per head.

Flushed with anger we thought it was a foolish thing to have done, to dine out in a place like this when we were earning no more than a hand-to-mouth existence. That amount of money we do not spend a whole month for our food. There was no point in bleating over this excessiveness so we came to our van to get home. And, as we approached the van, we were surrounded by a whole family in rags begging for twenty five cents for a "piece of bread", nothing much to ask for from us who had just paid Rs. 480/- for a single meal.

Our plight was very near theirs and we could not help them even

with this meagre "demand". Before we could be abused, we hurriedly got away. They—beggars in the city—are an ever increasing problem. There are many families like the one we encountered, in our cities, urban areas, and now even in the rural areas, begging for food.

While driving home, we began to think, "What is happening to our beautiful country, once flowing with milk and honey and boasts of a 2,500-year old culture and a civilisation grown out of one of the oldest religions of man. Is this the road, after having destroyed that 2,500 year old culture, to socialism? As one reader has bemoaned, beggars and begging have become a profitable enterprise since we started on the road to socialism or communism or whatever ism you prefer to assign for the new socio-economic structure we hope to build from the rubble of a 2,500 year culture we are destroying.

WE HAVE PLANNED, we suppose, to push us along this road to the ism, we have set our hearts on to get there, foreign exchange or earning of foreign exchange is a prerequisite. So to earn the much wanted foreign exchange tourists and tourism have gripped the imagination of our politicians and planners. To attract them to Sri Lanka we have laid out everything on an Arabian Nights scale. And who are these tourists? They are no others than the erstwhile "despicable capitalist, colonialists, etc." whom our children are indoctrinated to hate and despise over the systems of mass media, under Government control. They do not hesitate to mix words in hating them. Nevertheless with the same breath we sing songs of welcome and put over the radio a "tourist hour" and beg for their dollar.

To extract this dollar we provide them with everything the tourist demands. All this is done at the expense of our people whose right to live and work in this country is almost denied and have reduce them to the border lines of starvation, and with no choice, but to beg around the tourist hotels.

This is where our development priorities have got mixed up. These places of entertainment and sojourn for our erstwhile exploiters are built with

money and labour, that should go to free our people from poverty. Yes, they were and are exploiters according to our socialists; but when they were exploiting us as rulers and colonialists there was not so much poverty and shortages of this and that.

OUR SOCIALISTS will not understand the plight of our people. They also haunt the five-stars; for while we were searching our pockets to pay our bill we noticed some of them dining and wining merrily as if they owned the establishment—of course they do, they are the guys who spent our money to put up the "tourist palaces", to boost up the socialist regime while our people who should have a right to everything in this country starve in the streets or scrounge around the garbage bins.

The tourists, we invite today, were one time masters. Then they came here in search of adventure and easy fortunes. They demanded nothing then, they came to live in shanties, in improvised camps, or whatever shelter they could get for their money. They experienced hardships and exploited the country and staked their money. They spent more foreign exchange than a million tourists do now in a whole decade.

They asked nothing from us, they took a chance and roughed it out. There were no red carpets or "magul bera" to welcome them. Nevertheless they spent their money freely to enrich the country with foreign currency. Today to attract them we have to build five-star hotel complexes, that cost us one hundred thousand rupees per bedroom, provide new luxury cars for their use, air-conditioned buses and rail cars, imported food and wine, grand roads to take them to holiday resorts and whatever they ask they have it, while you and I grind through the mill, waiting in queues, bus stands, or around broken-down buses, co-op shops and go about searching for the basic food and clothing. If it is for a tourist project, Government coffers are open, all laws relating to ceiling on houses, ceiling on income, land reforms, taxes etc. are of no consequence Priority No. 1 Tourism. How silently our people endure hardships is illustrated by a person whom we met and who has lost his house in road widening. His story "I have lived here sixty years

and every year there is a very big church festival that lasts almost a month. During this period thousands of pilgrims come by cart, bus lorry, cars, motor and push cycles and on foot. All these years no one ever thought of widening the road, as a matter of fact provide any conveniences. Today to receive the tourists in grand style who will use the road twice a visit, I had to surrender my house to be demolished." This is where we have messed up our Priorities.

THE TYPE OF TOURIST we want is from the capitalist countries, so that they can spend what the socialists call "blood money of the workers". This blood money has become our life line and so urgent to us, that we pay him back sixty five cents for every rupee he spends in Sri Lanka. Who pays this sixty five cents back? We the people of this country who are being asked to make sacrifices in the name of our children. We experience all the difficulties in living in the new society we are attempting to rebuild after destroying the 2,500 year culture and social heritage.

The other day we garlanded and spread the red carpet to the 100,000th tourist and have programmed a lavish schedule of entertainment to boost our tourist trade. If we already had 100,000 tourists and if each of them spent a rupee a day, we would have paid them back Rs. 65,000/- a day from your and my money, as a bonus or rather a bait to entice them to come and spend that subsidised rupee in Sri Lanka.

This is paid to a class of people who once came here and took a chance and spent their money without any inducement; we have to invite them now on their own terms and promise them the best, even though we cannot afford them, and at the expense of our people. To provide for their comfort and well being we spend Rs. 100,000/- per room in a five-star hotel complex. This is a lot of capital outlay to earn a few dollars in foreign exchange. If our country is to be developed to provide our people with the primary essentials, then self-sufficiency in food is the first priority.

If we achieve this then there will be no beggars, nor will our people be haunting the garbage bins or hotels or eating places. If we appreciate

the urgency to produce our food then the expenditure on a bedroom could bring 40 acs. of new land under paddy cultivation, provide employment for eight peasant families, produce 1,200 bushels of rice annually or 34 tons and save Rs. 20,400/- in foreign exchange in importing our rice. What do we earn annually from a single Rs. 100,000/- room?

To our people, what is important? A square meal or a Government collecting a few dollars from tourist from a hundred thousand rupee outlay? We seemed to have lost all sense of values in our eagerness to change our society into something no one knows what. In our desire to do better than a previous Government, we are prepared to hand over our fair island to foreign pleasure seekers and give them a *carte blanche* to do what they want.

In the olden days we had signs to say "not for natives". Today we have the same put up by our own people who enforce it—"Sudanta iterai"—"Only for whites". This was my experience at a Rest House in a "Tourist town". All this is to earn the dollar, while our normal foreign exchange earning economy is being deliberately and calculatingly destroyed by our policy makers.

Our tea, rubber, coconut and spices were earning a million times more foreign exchange than 100,000 tourists do. It was such commodity trade that left 1,200 million rupees in foreign exchange in 1956, when that Government fell—So our politicians say: This was a bad policy of the Government that fell. Let them not do it again, so that source of earning foreign exchange must be destroyed.

It will never happen again. This is our new political thinking and the priorities we need to take us to the socialist goal. In the meantime what happens to the country and the people? What do they get? What will happen to their children? Will they get a reasonable chance to earn a living and be useful members of our social set up? These problems are yours and mine, they do not concern our policy makers and planners. Their plate is full; they are happy and content; they can wine, dine and dance in the tourist palaces their policies have created, they know the correct channels to get what they want—a privilege few in the socia-

list society—we go scrounging around—you know what?

The trust our people have placed in our politicians, policy makers, and planners is to feed clothe and shelter them. As things are, we are drifting away from these essential needs of our people. Why? Because our thinking has been politically and party biased. To get away with it, the powers that are say, "the good times are around the corner," the corner the early navigators went in search to go round the world. They never found it, they arrived at the starting point. We are still at the starting point. So are our policies and priorities.



BUILDING A VILLAGE HOUSE—71

More Plans For The Village House

By Herbert Keuneman

Nothing is more directly comforting to the naturally indolent than to begin a day, or an article, with a really fat platitude, and I have a good one. Circumstances Alter Cases. Alas for brighter writing, this not only states the fact succinctly but like all platitudes is unarguably true.

My justification for such prodromal profundity is that I must keep my promise—I do hope that not many readers will regard it, rather as a threat—to describe my plans for doing over considerable sections of this house.

They are still plans. And at the rate at which the cost of building materials is rising (locally made bricks, for instance, from Rs. 50 per 1,000 which was their price when I began building to Rs. 75 or even 80 per 1,000, a price made possible by the demands of the Mahaweli Scheme constructions going ahead not far away though far enough away, thanks to the lie of the land, to offer the Ehetuwewa region only similar accidental benefits; cement has climbed in four years from Rs. 12 to Rs. 22+ per bag; 'Calicut' tiles from Rs. 35 to Rs. 65 (per 1,000) I cannot foresee my plans ever coming to actual fruition. Nevertheless, plans I have, all of them dictated by circumstances vastly changed from

On Building Costs

those in which my village house was originally designed.

Some of the circumstances were not so much changed as misremembered: they already lurked for me, but either they had not previously fallen within my operative experience; or they were so painted over with rose in my idealized memories of the village in 1962 that the village in 1972 proved a disconcertingly different reality.

Examples: I had not foreseen that the so-th-west wind, which had seemed so balmy and merely heat-tempering a breeze in the old tree-shaded bungalow my wife and I used to occupy would at the site on which my new house stands, with the open tank-bed below it, become a monster ravenin, without pause at my cadjan roof for the half-year during which it blows; nor that the house-sparrows we used to think (under our protection of tiles) only comically philoprogenitive would become an honest-to-goodness menace as they nested in incredible swarms in my thatch, tearing out the palm-fronds that bind it and lifting each leaf the better to catch the always eager monsoon. *I must get a new roof, and not a cadjan one.* I had forgotten that squirrels are so partial to the jute linings of bamboo tatts; now that I know, I see *I must have greater protection against the wind and the rain than the intersticed skeletons that remain can give me.* Many such necessary revisions have revealed themselves.

The most immediate change I must make in the house, however, concerns the downstairs bedroom. Part of the necessity springs from carelessness: I had counted on being always able to engage a 'boy' to work for me—the work was light for an able-bodied youth and the remuneration (in 1972 conditions) adequate—and I had made no special provision for his accommodation, a camp bed and a share in a cupboard seemed sufficient, he would certainly have no more in his own home. I have related how such an arrangement worked with Nesiak and Sitale! But part of the necessity springs from developments I consider fairly described as unforeseen and unforeseeable.

I could not have foreseen my good fortune in eventually having Dinga, with no word formally spoken, virtually take up her residence here to look after me; I could

not have foreseen then *her* good fortune and Banders' in having the baby they had despaired of for five years; I could not have foreseen the precipitous rise in prices of every sort that after three years of Dinga's devoted, though almost unrewarded, services would raise the wage of any comparable substitute beyond what I could possibly pay; nor could I have foreseen that before ever I could reasonably hope to have Dinga back, with her baby and a chaperon—she assures me she would like nothing better than to come—I should be forced to admit village probity so utterly debased from I had known as to make it only humane to make 'secure' the more formal quarters she would now require.

In the average household security is a state of mind, a misapprehension induced by placing even quite a fragile screen—what more is a door, still less a louvred window—between ourselves and what we regard hostile. There is little one can actually do against the more determined thief: it is impracticable to live in a bank vault—besides bank vaults too, in more 'developed' countries, get often broken into—and even if it were not I should hate to live nursing such a passion for possessions as to want to. Yet, without some degree of the illusion we should sleep ill. And of course it saves a nuisance to discourage petty picking and stealing.

Accordingly, my original intention when designing this house was to have half of it that much proof against casual thievery but leave the other half, with any good it contained, to look after itself: there is nothing in the open half placed there without calculation of the risk. I therefore planned the downstairs bedroom, at that time meant for guests, with no more than a heavy cupboard that could be locked; the room itself lies open, for coolness, either to the open air or to a freely accessible corridor (still to be) only half-walled on one side leading from the rear entrance.

This room, which I now propose for Dinga is my present problem. At the moment it is nothing but a largish open hall with arched embrasures—half-walled archways—giving directly onto the garden; even the sliding—windowed wall which while some-what reducing the size of the room would create

the corridor to which I have referred has never gone up. This wall, which I wanted built in the fascinating basketwork of withes used locally to form the framework of our beautiful pot-shaped paddy-storage bins, was not for security—the windows were only to control air and light—but to mark off bedroom from corridor, inhibit through traffic and provide such an obstacle-course to the further reaches of the house as to discourage unauthorized incomers completely.

Now, of course, this conception of the room will have to be greatly modified. My precious screen of withes will no longer suffice; there must be a brick wall. But I shall keep the sliding windows.

This whole question of windows, and doors, requires a lot of thinking out. If there is any 'architectural feature' in my house it is my brick arches—eleven of them—in which I delight. Nothing, not even the provision of a permanent apartment for Banders and Dinga, must spoil nor despoil them nor alter their proportions (as inserting door-frames into them would). So, sliding doors as well. Moreover sliding doors would save the space that the swing-back of a conventional door would demand.

I say it 'as shouldn't'; but I had considerable experience of devising sliding doors—which worked, and still do 19 years later—for a house my wife and I owned in Colombo, which sought to avoid the even then prohibitive prices of regular sliding gear, and succeeded within the limits we found acceptable. The cost proved but a fraction of the 'real' thing, and the doors (though they certainly did not glide at a touch) did not need all that much greater expenditure of energy to open and shut. Those

LETTERS

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

MURDER AT ETILIWewa-2

Eternal Triangle ?

by R. C. Thavarajah
Retd. Supdt. of Police

"Make a thorough examination of the scene, objects may have a bearing on the case, interrogate witnesses intelligently, make your observations carefully in writing without omitting a single detail and prepare a sketch" were the instructions of the Boss before leaving the village. I was to remain in the village, continue investigations, establish the motive for the crime, gather all evidence,—direct and circumstantial, return to Badulla Headquarters and 'submit' the Crime File in three days' time. My inquiries resulted in the denouement of the sad but tragic episode.

Mr. M.B.—I am using the honorific 'Mister' on purpose. It is seldom or never that the title prefixed to a man's name is used when it is referred to a villager. Somehow, foreign domination and influences have either proscribed or discouraged this elementary courtesy. The distinction of being referred to as "Mr." appears to have been confined to the so called city folk, the 'trousered gentry' some of whom in spite of their pretended knowledge of the English language and the Law, display anything but the hall-mark of a gentleman. I am maintaining the anonymity of Mr. M.B. out of a distinctly deserved deference to his true Kandyan origin and of the indomitable qualities of the type displayed by patriots of the genre of Puran Appu, the brave hero who laid down his life in Wellasa.

Mr. M.B., a carpenter by profession, was fairly advanced in years. After the death of his first wife he had taken unto himself a winsome village belle to keep house for him. He certainly had an EYE for beauty. Unfortunately—his newly acquired young bride also had an EYE—for a much younger and stronger man, the village blacksmith. The devoted husband, blissfully ignorant of this fact, had bestowed on the lass whatever he could emotionally by way of ardent, passionate love. "LOVE", as the famous writer Jerrold put it "is like MEASLES—all the WORSE when it comes late in life."

doors moved on rubber-shod castors mortised into the bottom of each shutter and running in aluminium channels embedded in the cement floor; while at the top the leg of an aluminium 'T' fixed beneath the soffit (concreted into the lintel) guided them, fitting into a grooved fillet of satinwood (to resist wear and reduce swelling in wet weather) inset in the uppermost edge. From within, the shutters could be dismounted from their castors for maintenance; but from outside they were secure... up to an arbitrary point (they were wooden frames holding large panels of louvred glass, and of course there was nothing to prevent the glass being broken!)

Away from the *gammandiya*, Dinga's peace of mind is certainly going to call for more 'security' than that; so the glass, attractive and many-ways practical though it was, must go. Also, to hope to discover—in these days—rubber-shod castors of the necessary type and quality, and aluminium sections, at a compassable outlay, would be wishful thinking. And finally, since the shutters obviously cannot slide between the floor and the curved soffit of an arch, the doors must be considerably modified.

I have decided on shutters of plyboard: 17-ply. Hideously expensive, Rs. 5.20 per sq. ft. as against Rs. 3.60 four years ago; but, at least, a 7'x4' board I can just use 'as is' and obviate carpentry. I shall have to use 3/4" mild steel sections—pray God the Steel Factory makes 3/4" Ts, or even Ls, which will do if I use two (one on the shutter top and one as guide) with the uprights overlapping. The upper guide will have to run on the inside face of the room wall, fixed under a wooden strip held by expanding bolts—thank goodness I have some; they must be

Deepest Freeze

Australian cold stores are packed with meat as a result of the declining demand in the world markets. And so Parliament recently discussed plans to keep meat stocks in Antarctica. William Morrison, Minister for Science and External Territories, said there were several places on the coast of the icebound continent that were very suitable for this purpose.

unobtainable too—and not concreted in place as in the under-the-soffit fixture, and that will be not as strong but it will look strong and that helps! The castors will have to be replaced by mild steel skids moving in grooves in the floor, and I shall face the bottom of the grooves with *palu*, the hardest and least absorbent wood I can get, in small segments so that they may be lifted out for replacement or maintenance once the skid has passed them. I know a skid will work, for I have tried one under load even on softish wood both damp and dry. Besides I already possess the makings; again thank goodness! for 2"x1/4" mild steel flats will not now come cheap.

The main door—the other leads into the house—will be in two hinged leaves, the one folding back on the actually sliding half, so that when Dinga is disinclined to exert herself even at all she can use it like a conventional door; and it will have a night latch affording ingress whereas the sliders will have to be shut from within and bolted. I already have a night latch.

No, the doors will not give me any difficult beyond paying for them! Likewise the windows onto the corridor, for they will be regular rectangles with lintels over. But the shutters for the pair of half-walled arches opening on the garden are another question. My present plan (subject to revision) is to have them like those in an old-fashioned railway carriage: sliding up and down. Even so, they will require some ingenuity (but I have a plan!) to allow them when closed to rest on top of the half-wall; or the rain—granted that rain will ever come—will pour into the room. Yet I think, I think, I have that problem licked. Only one problem defeated me: how to pay for all this?

And 'all this' isn't all. I want to complete the new apartment by turning my old 'Futility Area' (remember it? the bit of open verandah onto which the main door of the apartment gives) into a little sitting area en suite.

How I look forward to finishing—and especially beginning! I fear—the job. But with materiel and cash both in short supply and the former by far outstripping the latter in the silly race, when will that be? Only the Great Bells of Bow (and they're gone, aren't they?) seem to have the answer.

Whenever the old man was away on business trips to distant places, the trysting hours of the young lovers were spent most delectably in long and lingering love-making. Wagging tongues were busy working 'overtime'. As Steele put it "Fire and Sword are but slow engines of destruction in comparison with the babbler." If I may be permitted to mix my metaphors, their *affaire de coeur* became the talk of the town in the village. The old carpenter, gentleman that he was, had the propriety to behave as if nothing had happened. He had certainly the good manners and breeding NOT to act on suspicion or the malicious promptings of Gossip. As for the young lovers, they seemed to take advantage of the old man's dignified indifference. They appeared to adhere to the hedonistic dicta of William Shakespeare's "O, Mistress Mine.":—

"What is Love? 'tis not hereafter;
Present mirth hath present laughter;
What's to come is still UNSURE:
In DELAY there lies no plenty,
Then come kiss me, sweet and twenty,
Youth's stuff will NOT endure."

ONE NIGHT, when old man reached home, he found an unusual 'quiet' in the place. A humble bottle lamp provided some illumination. His wife and her paramour were locked ecstatically in physical union—oblivious to any disturbance by any intruder. Such is the irremediable insanity of LUST.

Whipping out a long 'kris' knife he aimed it at the amorous 'Lothario' hoping it would sink into his torso right between the two shoulder blades. The younger man, whose reflexes were not retarded, was quick to react.

He disengaged himself, with surprising alacrity dodged the blow and slithered to a side. The lethal weapon plunged deep into the soft flesh of the young woman's breast.

A desperate, helpless quiver, a muffled "Budhu Ammo" and life went out of her within a few minutes. The assailant quickly picked up a strong rope, cast a parting glance at the dumb, cold remains of what was once very much a Tropical Venus, and hurriedly slipped out into the night heading for the jungle. He had only one idea in his mind.

Instead of shading his eyes from the looks of contempt, the igno-

miny of ridicule by the entire village and the scathing scandal of a Public Trial, he had decided to get away from it all. With the help of the "Choolu light", he slipped out of the cart track and got on to a beaten track.

(To be Continued)

KAZI—43

In A Coconut Estate

By Anatory Bukhoba

An outing in a single sculler, my body aching, and I was inclined to attribute one to the other. When lached, even to my fingertips, it was time to do something about it. I was all right, and the next attack came two days later, and a headache, I lay in bed, the medicine finished, hoping I would be all right, a baptism at four o'clock. I was; the gate was under water, I crawled through barbed wire and waded along the road. A bus came, and then there were two connections. No buses plied the regular way, and I took quite a different route and arrived with half an hour to spare. I was not the only one who had had faith in Providence that day. Then a bus at eight, but my faith was not up to the mark. I thought I would not chance my having to retrace my steps two hours later to where I got off the bus. The time 11 p.m., all abed, but sure enough they let me in. When I hit my destination next morning I found that they would have received me the previous night, a sure lesson that there is a Providence, who arranges all things. All you need is faith, which is not the same thing as tempting providence, for this last is a challenge and not a filial trust. I suppose that even a book would not be able to cover the subject and so I had better stop before I start writing nonsense, while trying to pile brevity on brevity.

Home again, and trouble there was, of the past, but with repercussions we had still to experience. Then there was a calf. She had been discovered in the morning, a sure sign in the circumstances that no one had bothered to check to see if she had been born during the night. She might have lain out all night in the rain, her mother tied up, unable to get to her, for

she was in a *maduwa*. Now mother and daughter scarcely knew each other. A newly-born calf has to be licked by its mother to get rid of the wetness it has at birth. The calf seemed to know where the udder lay, but she could not find the teats anyway, but the time I left the estate again, she looked well fed and bonny. The staff said that her debility and helplessness had been due to her being born paramaturely a day early. Yet she was a month late, which meant we could not know her father. Her mother must have been served again, and we were not told; or else no one knew, which is unlikely, for the bulls are tied up.

Our new stud bull, a fledgling, would not eat. As we had already lost his successor, we were not pleased. We have long since given up using veterinary surgeons. I do not know why it is, but their answer always seems to be an injection which expedites death. So we call the *vedamarthaya*. He prescribes a string of herbs, both roots and leaves nearly all which can be found on the estate, and I suppose on any estate. Nearly all the staff know exactly where these herbs can be found, so there is no treasure hunt. As the *vedamarthya* reels off his list, an answer comes, yes, wh have that, or, no, we have not. The list of herbs has to be taken down, and the list is carefully kept, to be consulted when the same illness occurs again. If there is any doubt, the *vedamarthya* is called. This time we were able to avoid calling him in the middle of the night, and a man was despatched first thing in the morning. He was out, but he did come. His fee was Rs. 10/- and I gave him his bus fare. The bull was well when I left. While he was there, he also looked at two of the calves, one of whom had a skittery stomach. It takes time to collect all the herbs. A man has to be sent away for these the estate has not. When all the herbs are laid out, before they are boiled, they look as if they would make a witches brew, the bark of this, the leaves of that, a fruit roots, and unidentifiable objects. Brewing takes time. We were late that night, so I sent the head cattleman off to have his bath and dinner. Later I saw his fire going hear the cattle-shed, and I sent the acting superintendent off to display some interest, or I should have had to go. I had been feelin

far too ill to want to risk it. What I had turned out to be malaria later, when the malaria medicine I took worked, for I have not had another attack. When the gate was under water, the milk churns had to be carried through barbed wire, and sent off by another route.

The chillies do not seem to be doing well. We planted them in built-up beds, or they would have fared worse. To offset a possible disappointing crop, we have interplanted the rows with bush bean which are already doing better, eight pounds of it. The cowpea is in pod, some of it ready for collecting, but the weather is too wet. We are having more rains than we want here, and in the part of the Wannu I visit regularly there is not enough water to ensure a paddy crop next year, yet rain is falling regularly there. Perhaps there is too much leeway, poor rain over the last few years, to be made up. The only paddy this part of the Wannu will get this year is that which has been fed directly by rainfall. The soya bean is coming on. Some of our paddy fields will have to be sown again; it was under water too long. There is only a small extent of *kumburu*, but we also have some highland paddy sown. This seems to be doing well.

What with illness, I decided the estate garden just had to be done. Over the last four years it has come to be like a jungle. It is good for morale to have a good garden, and the staff like it, too. I also thought the back verandah needed a spring clean, so I called in one of the outside staff to help. I gave him a free hand, and he was soon scrubbing tables and the floor of the verandah. I thought our new rabbits had to be got out of the house. There was no difficulty finding two men to make a hutch when I left the estate. It was as usual five hours later than I had intended to go.

While I write this I can hear the sound of a mini tractor, which is ploughing some land that was sown with paddy, but which subsequently was under water several days and several times. The land, made into small fields, has been flooded with water pumped from a well, and the mini tractor has no difficulty travelling in the water and churning the soil into mud. Then the water is let out,

and slight channels are made in the mud to carry away or collect surplus water which may fall when it rains, and the rest of the mud is smoothed out. A man has just come to take away the paddy to sow. I have noticed that the men are happy, doing paddy cultivation, and they do it on their own. I just went along before I started writing this, just to show more interest but it was so fascinating I would not have minded staying on. To complete my happiness, I might have even helped in the work, but I wonder how this would have gone down what does in the Wannu might not go down well here. I was called away to attend to some teak. Though in a different way, I suppose the treatment of teak is like the treatment of diamonds. You try to sell as little as you can of each, diamonds because you will either glut the market and cheapen diamonds, teak in the case you exhaust your supply, but I have noticed that when a teak tree is felled, a profusion of young teak springs up in its place, and today I found the reason why. It is because of the seed that gets dislodged when the tree falls. Teak trees bear seed by the thousand, and a tree in seed is a beautiful sight. The seed and the flower form the umbrella on the tree, like a canopy.



FROM INDIA

The Soviet Party Congress And The Third World

By K. P. S. Menon

THE 25th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union starts today, February 24. This seems a suitable occasion for looking back and seeing what impact such Congresses have had on the Third World.

The 1st Congress of the Communist Party was held in the years of my birth, 1898. At that time the term, "Third World", had not come into vogue. There was but one world, the world of capitalism. Side by side with capitalism flourished imperialism, which V. I. Lenin called "the highest stage of capitalism". The highest product of capitalism was the British Empire

on which, it used to be said, the sun never set, for the empire was so far flung that in a twenty-four-hour-day, the sun would be always shining in one part of the empire or the other. The Communist Party Congress, held in 1898, contained a germ which was to prove fatal to all kinds of political domination and economic exploitation.

By 1917, the germ had matured sufficiently for it to bring down the fabulous fabric of the Tsarist Empire. The architects of the Great October Revolution, however, were not content with a purely Russian Revolution. The sixth Congress of the Russian Communist Party, held in 1917, gave a call for world revolution.

The year 1917 thus saw the birth of a new world, rivalling capitalism, namely, the world of socialism. By a striking coincidence, that year also saw the appearance in India of a man who was destined to be one of the principal progenitors of the Third World, namely, Mahatma Gandhi. In the years of his long self-imposed exile in South Africa, he had been fashioning, in his own way, the weapons for combating racism and imperialism. At a great meeting in the Dynamo Stadium during Jawaharlal Nehru's historic visit to the Soviet Union in 1955, he commented on the significance of the simultaneous, albeit fortuitous, appearance of V. I. Lenin in Russia and of Mahatma Gandhi in India.

THIRTY YEARS had to pass before the Third World began to emerge. During these years, the potential leaders of the potential Third World were watching with interest the developments in the world of socialism. They observed how in 1919, at the 8th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, a programme for the creation of a socialist society was adopted; how, in 1925, the 14th Congress adopted a policy of rapid industrialisation, so as to remove the age-old backwardness of Russia, and, even more, of Central Asia; and how the 15th Congress, held in 1927, proclaimed a policy for the collectivisation of agriculture. The plough was replaced by the tractor, and a nation of largely illiterate *Mudzhiks* was transformed into a modern, literate, industrialised society with a high degree of culture.

This was not done a minute too soon, because fascism which was out to destroy socialism as well as democracy was gathering strength in Europe. "We have ten years," said Stalin prophetically in 1932, "to catch up with them. Either we do so or they destroy us."

"They did not destroy "us". On the contrary they were destroyed by the combined forces of democracy and socialism in an epic struggle in which the Soviet Union took the leading part and made the greatest sacrifices. At the San Francisco Conference of 1945, the hope of building a new world, free from the scourge and scarce of war was written into the charter of the United Nations. How high these hopes ran, I can testify, for I was one of the participants at that conference.

Alas, these hopes have not been fulfilled. Hardly was the Second World War over, when the cold war descended on the world, turning into a hot war in such peripheries as Korea and Indo-China. We had hoped that the Indian sub-continent, at any rate, would remain immune from the cold war. This was one of the main purposes for which the policy of non-alignment was devised by Jawaharlal Nehru. But John Foster Dulles, the most determined among the post-war cold warriors, inveigled Pakistan with the offer of vast quantities of arms and money, into such instruments of the cold war as CENTO and SEATO, which he, in his pactomania, had sedulously devised.

The world was now faced with an unprecedentedly grave danger. Man had invented a weapon which might result in the destruction of civilisation, if not the human race itself. The Soviet Union was the first great power to have fully appreciated the dangers of the situation. In 1956, at the 20th Congress, the Communist Party took courage in both hands and, modifying the maxim of Karl Marx that war is inevitable, declared that there is no fatal inevitability about war. The Congress also clearly reiterated Lenin's policy of peaceful coexistence.

THE INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS during the next two decades showed the paramount need for coexistence. The only alternative to coexistence is co-extinction in a nuclear holocaust.

At the 24th Congress of the CPSU, the doctrine of coexistence was again reaffirmed, and the Soviet Union launched a comprehensive Peace Programme with the following objectives:—

1. to bring about a political settlement in Indo-China and to eschew the use of force in the solution of problems;

2. to ensure the inviolability of the post-war European frontiers, to bring about detente and peace in Europe, to convene an all-European conference of security and cooperation, and to annual or dismantle all military organisations in Europe;

3. to ban nuclear and other dangerous weapons, to promote nuclear free zones, and to press for nuclear disarmament on the part of the five nuclear powers;

4. to stop the arms race, to dismantle foreign military bases, to reduce the strength of the armed forces and military expenditure, and to call a world disarmament conference.

5. to root out colonialism, racism and apartheid;

6. to promote co-operation in every sphere of life.

At the 25th Congress the CPSU will doubtless take note of the extent to which these objectives have been fulfilled or frustrated. It will also take note of the fact that there has been a resurgence of fascism, of which Chile is the most flagrant, but by no means the only, example. While attending the San Francisco Conference in 1945, I little dreamt that in another 30 years, the need would arise for holding an International Anti-Fascist Conference such as the one which was held in Patna in December last and was attended by some 6,000 delegates and the representatives to some 60 countries. Nor did I suspect that fascist elements in India, in collusion with neo-imperialist elements abroad, would seek to overthrow, by hook or crook, a government which is rooted in the affections of the masses and enjoys an overwhelming majority in Parliament.

The 25th Congress will launch the 10th Soviet five-year plan. It has set its targets high. The annual income is to increase by 24 to 28 per

THE RETURN OF MALARIA

A decade ago, scientists in most parts of the world thought they had got malaria licked. It was one of the great success stories the World Health Organisation had been able to tell the world about and it was to have been added to the list of mankind's plagues which had been relegated to history by the progress of modern science. But the experts were wrong. Today, malaria is spreading; and one of the great problems in a period of world recession is to mobilise the finances to fight it. During 1975, 20 million people in southern Asia will have died from this disease, and if strong measures are not taken the number will increase again next year. There is no longer talk of eradicating the disease but only of containing it. The present goal of the Indian Minister of Health, Mr. Karan Singh, is to bring down the malaria proportion in his country to 500 cases per million by 1984—which will still add up to 300,000 cases. This does not exactly mean progress. Between 1947 and 1965, the Indian Health Ministry brought the number of cases down from 75 million to 125,000, less than half the 1984 target.

The trouble seems to be that supplies of DDT, the miracle anti-malaria weapon of the 1950s and 60s, have run out, and there is little chance of obtaining the powerful insecticide again in such quantities in the near future. A decade ago, it was thought that it was enough to spray the malaria-infested area once, and then the problem would be solved for good. It was here that the experts went wrong. The spraying programmes came to end, scarce equipment was dispersed, and the financial resources devoted to malaria were put to other uses. And when it turned out that the experts were wrong, there was the usual delay before the bureaucrats registered the mistake. It is only today, several years after the virulent resurgence of malaria, that state authorities have gone down to the task of bringing out new anti-malaria programmes for the late 70s and 80s.

—SPR.

cent; the per capita income by 20 to 22 per cent; and the industrial output by 25 to 39 per cent. To take only a few commodities, the production of oil is to increase to 620-640 million tons, of steel to 160-170 million tons, of coal to 790-810 million tons and of grain to 215-220 million tons.

Soviet economic assistance has been of immense benefit to the peoples of the Third World. The emphasis is on agriculture and light industry in the less developed countries and on heavy industry and technology in the more developed countries.

INDO-SOVIET CO-OPERATION, which began with the historic agreement of the Feb. 2, 1955 for the construction of what Jawaharlal Nehru called "that modern temple", the Bhilai steel plant, has been growing majestically and was crystallised in the Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation, which was signed in the gimmet hour of independent India's history, in 1971. It received a further spurt as a result of Mr. Brezhnev's visit to India in 1973. No less than 80 major projects are being constructed or designed with Soviet assistance, and the total financial credit given by the Soviet Union comes to Rs. 1022 crores. Today Soviet-aided projects account for 20 per cent of our power, 30 per cent of our steel, 30 per cent of oil refining, 60 per cent of oil extraction and 80 per cent of heavy machinery. It is very largely due to the Soviet Union's assistance that India has emerged as one of the ten top industrialised nations in the world.

The USSR has also rendered appreciable assistance in the sphere of agriculture. Two fully mechanised farms have been set up at Suratgarh and Jatsar and five seed farms have been established so as to form the nucleus of our programme for the improvement of seed.

The volume of Indo-Soviet trade has shown a phenomenal rise during the last two decades. In 1952 my first year in Moscow, the value of the out-turn came to little more than Rs. 1 crore; by 1961, my last year in Moscow, it had touched Rs. 100 crores. On the eve of Mr. Brezhnev's visit to India in 1973 it stood at Rs. 430 crores. It was then envisaged that the trade should be increased by 1.5 to 2 times before the end of the decade.

There is every hope that this target will be reached. The estimated out-turn of trade for 1975 is valued at Rs. 700 to 750 crores.

In framing the tenth five-year plan, the Soviet authorities have kept a solicitous eye on the requirements of the Third World. The 25th Congress, at which this plan will come up for approval, will therefore be of great interest to the countries of the Third World, and to India in particular. Of equal interest will be the measure to be devised or confirmed at the 25th Congress for combating the menace of fascism which, in collusion with neo-imperialism, has raised its head in parts of Asia, Africa and Latin America.

—*Indian Express*, New Delhi, 24/2/76

V. T. DICKMAN, Snr—1

"Those Were The Days..."

by R. C. Thavarajah

Retd. Supdt. of Police

I am sorry. The title is not mine.

They belonged to the late MR. VERNON T. DICKMAN, Retired Senior Superintendent of Police, Grade I. He had written these words neatly in his own clear handwriting which I had the good fortune of seeing today.

The sheet of paper, now faded to a shade of light brown, has the following opening paragraph "It seems a long cry to the 1st of March, 1908, the day I was called up for an interview by Mr. C. C. LONGDEN, then, I.G.P., in the Police Hqrs. at Maradana. I was at Messrs. BOIS BROS at the time as a Junior Clerk but was fortunate to have caught the eye of SIR STANLEY BOIS, Head of the Firm and Chairman of the Y.M.C.A. then at Regent's Court, where I spent most of leisure time in the Gymnasium training in Athletics and swimming."

The proud possessor of this document at present is his son who is now Superintendent of Police, Grade I and, strangely enough, training the Police Teams in ruggar, boxing, athletics, swimming, cricket and other branches of sport.

It is a pity that the memoirs of the illustrious Police Officer who made a substantial and lasting contribution to the Police Force was not completed. I am certain that it would have provided excellent reading—in fact, it would have been of tremendous instructional value to the young officers of today.

Mr. V. T. DICKMAN, Senior, commenced his career in the Police Department as a Clerk, like others of his Class, Messrs. D. Altendorf, who later retired as Deputy Inspector-General of Police and MAKALANDA ALBERT DE SILVA, Senior Superintendent of Police, Grade I so popularly and most justifiably referred to as "HONEST ALBERT". I am sure some of my friends will try very hard to suppress their amusement in what they would define as a futile effort on my part to be numbered with the Great when I say that I, too, started my career in the Police Department as a Clerk in the General Service having passed the London Matriculation Examination in 1941.

Some are rather shy of their small beginnings. I would only recommend that they take the trouble to learn the meaning of the term "CLERK" which the *Oxford Concise Dictionary* defines as "Clergyman (Arch); legal and sometime appended to signature to show status of writer; lay officer of Parish Church with various duties; SCHOLAR (Arch); Officer-in-Charge of records, etc. Secretary, man of business, etc.,"

The term "CLERGY" is defined as "The clerical order, all persons ordained for religious service; (Hist) membership of, learning proper to, etc. I would also request their 'noble' selves to consider some forms of the nomenclature used in Legal and Constitutional administration such as Clerk of the Assizes, Clerk of The House of Representatives, National State Assembly, young doctors, "CLERKING" for Senior and experienced Surgeons and Physicians. I am only wasting my time.

Having excelled himself in cricket, wrestling, boxing and swimming, V. T. Dickman, Snr had the unrivalled distinction of captaining the Ceylon Police Cricket Team and being invited to represent the European-Ceylonese Cricket Team for five years. He was selected to represent Ceylon (now

Sri Lanka) in the matches All Ceylon vs. England and Australia on three occasions.

As Superintendent in charge of the Police Training School, he was responsible for personally training a large number of Police Officers who later qualified in Swimming and Life Saving. He won the Open One Mile and 100 yards Swimming championship of Ceylon in 1908. He impressed on all officers under his command that in a country such as ours surrounded by the sea on all sides and with many rivers into it, a Police officer who could not swim and save a life is as lubber on the ship's crew, or a scare-crow in uniform.

(To be Continued)

LETTERS

✱ Priests' Clothes
✱ Mahaweli
✱ No Confidence

Sir,

In the *Tribune* of 21st February 1976 I find a diatribe by "Esses" against priests who do not sport what has come to be called "priestly garb." In the face of this kind of reaction today it is a strange irony of history that when the first attempt at a distinctive garb for priests was made in the 5th century by some priests in ancient Gaul, they were actually upbraided by the Pope of their time. I reproduce the footnote to page 57 of "Power and Poverty in the Church" by Yves Congar, O.P.

"In 428, Pope Celestine I upbraided Honoratus, abbot of Lerins, who had been appointed bishop of Arles, for introducing a special dress, namely, the tunic and belt. This was the monastic habit and an innovation. Hitherto, priests' dress was exactly the same as that of other men. Even in the celebration of the liturgy they merely wore clean clothes. Celestine wrote to the bishops of the Narbonne province, 'We should be distinguished from others, not by our dress but by our knowledge, by our conversation, not by our manner of life'. (Epist. 4. 1, 2-P.L. 50. 431). See L. Christiain

'Essai sur les origines du costume ecclésiastique', in Miscellanea Guil. de Ferphanion (Or. Christ. Per., XIII, 1947), pp. 69-80; H. Norris, Church Vestments, their origin and Development. London, 1949; Cletus della lacono, De habitu ecclésiastico, Diss. historic critica, Rome, 1953."

I have lived for four years now in everyman's clothes for both ideological as well as practical reasons. My identity is not hidden either by intention or actuality. My neighbours who overwhelmingly do not share my religious faith and who have not even seen me in cassock call me 'sw.mi' without difficulty. If it matters to be in typically good company, I might mention that I meet 'the high-souled Inna' frequently and I find him to be a priest in everyman's clothes.

As a priest I do not bother whether I am respected or not. What I expect from my fellow men is fairness as from one man to another, fairness in understanding and judgement, not a blanket opinion or judgement that enfolds me irrationally. Each priest is a man in his own right, with his own knowledge and judgement. I am grateful to the persons of all religions who have accepted me not for my clothes but for my plain worth as a man.

That a cowl or habit does not make a monk is an ancient adage. A distinctive priestly costume is not essential or intrinsic to Christianity. Christ did not belong to the priestly class among the Jews. I believe His priesthood was precisely in His incarnation in the general human condition. It could be that some people look for a vicarious holiness in statue or picture or priestly garb.

Fr. Reginald Perera

"Tree Tops",
Karandagolla, Randeniya S.P.O.
via Wellawaya.
1.3.76

Sir,

After all, to whatever political hue we may belong, should we be fair and truthful whenever we speak from platforms, through the SLBC or the press. Truth is a fundamental virtue of all mankind.

Reading the *Tribune* of 14, February 1976 I find the article "Mahaweli Ganga" by R. Kehawita a collection of indisputable facts which will go unchallenged.

The government should at least make a reference to the initiative taken by the Hon. K. Balasingham at the beginning of this century and later by D. S. Senanayake in 1932, followed by Dudley Senanayake and C. P. de Silva.

Dead men tell no tales, yet there are a few men alive to focus attention on facts. These great patriots, honest to a fault are dead and no more but have left their foot-prints on the sands of time.

No doubt it was the present government that carried the postponed Mahaweli project almost to a finish but the originators need not be forgotten—please give the devil his due. Such a frank and sacred admission would enhance the image of the government in power we are supporting.

"The evil that men do lives
after them
the good is often interred with
their bones."

George L. De Silva

Kurunegala.
25.2.76

Sir,

The *Daily News* does not seem to appreciate the purpose of a no-confidence motion vide its editorial of 27th Feb, 76. Their contention is that such a move has a chance of achieving its purpose, if the balance of power in the Parliament is delicately poised. Here, they say, it enjoys an overwhelming majority and such moves would be like trying to shoot a pachyderm with a pop gun. We do not need an Erskine May to decide on the psychology or logic of this argument, in regard to democratic rights. I do not agree that a democratic government, in any country, with an overwhelming majority can do what they like and ask the Opposition if any, to go to blazes. Whatever is said and done in Parliament, will form part of the history of a country. In the instant case, the Leader of the Opposition and the whole country would have been well aware of the ultimate outcome of the Motion. Would that have been a justifiable reason for him to keep mum? And if he did so, would he not be denying the confidence of the people who voted him in?

Richard Wickremeratne

Telijjawila.
28.2.76

Confidentially

Our University

IS IT NOT A FACT that the University of Sri Lanka with its many campuses continues to live in a state of semi-animated suspension? That ever since the University of Ceylon Act, No. 1 of 1972, had come into force, the University has been administered under the peculiar status of a "transitional period" envisaged under the Act in terms of section 85 (h)? That the University continues to be administered as a "transitional" institution even now? That on January 26, 1976, the Minister of Education, Mr. Badiudin Mahmud, through a special Gazette notification extended the said "transitional period" which is specified in the aforesaid section 85 (h) for a further period of one year from 15th February, 1976? That with this further extension of the bureaucratic jackboot over the University, the university community will continue (in the words of a university don in a confidential note to *Tribune*) to "endure and suffer the indignities and repressive irresponsibility of the galaxy of pinheads and nincompoops masquerading as academic and administrative satraps and potentiaries of the Grand Vizier of Malay Street for a fifth year"? That the note had continued "as you know His transitional period in the Act of 1972 was to last only two years, but the taste of academic power where the Ministers and his minions in the Ministry and Senate House at Ward Place have ruled roughshod over academics has apparently gone to their heads"? That the note also stressed that "the Amending Bill (stultified in the NSA by the campaign of the University Teachers Association and also some political wiseheads) had merely enshrined these temporary expeditious as governing principles in the future. That the Government Press Strike (what an inglorious affair for the—Minister of Information) has further stymied the attempt to ram the Bill through the House? That the failure to rush the Bill through the NSA and place it on the Statute Book (already overburdened with a great deal of legislation that which have already become anachronisms) has brought about a further extension of the "transitional period"?

That it is well known that the "transitional period" was only a convenient device for developing, in still more obnoxious directions, the degree of control and authority over intellectual freedom by stupid bureaucrats? That it is a tragedy that there is no informed public opinion about a real University should be like? That we are today witnessing what is likely to be the last stand for the surviving remnants of academic freedom and intellectual independence? That in the last decade beginning with Iriyagolle (UNP), the State had escalated its attempts to control the Universities and to muzzle their true roles for political reasons? That the present collection of pressure groups forming an uneasy government, with its collective backs to the wall, in the face of the booming growth of the rightwing and their own snipers on the extreme left undergrowth, are determined to quell all and every flicker of dissent and free speech and writing in the academic arena? That the Amending Bill was only to ensure that dissent and dissidence of every kind would be stamped out? That what is needed and required by the academic community is a viable and sensibly designed system of university government where built-in checks and balances are available both to safeguard and maintain Government control through their being the paymasters as well as ensure that the academic community is committed to certain intellectual goals? That all concepts and formulae in the context of the Sri Lankan situation to produce this necessary fulcrum of administration have been provided by many repeatedly? That many genuine socialists who believed in academic freedom and who have been in the thick of the defence as well as the attack in all University controversies during the last two decades or so now find themselves (together with other seekers after truth) caught in the middle of the cross-fire of the confused politics in this country? That if the Amending Bill ever becomes law it would mean the installation of arbitrary Ministerial power at the very apex and heart of the functioning of the University?

That if this bureaucratic grip was finally established by law it will compel the last few remaining true academics in our University to join the trail of the exile because the provisions in the Amending

Bill are a death sentence and a notice of compulsory resignations. That a large percentage of our true academics have already sought asylum in universities in other countries where they were free to breathe? That with the Amending Bill, no sense of commitment, however deep-seated and long lived, can stomach a university dictatorship such as visualised in the Amending Bill? That it must be admitted that the appointment of Dr. P. P. G. L. Siriwardene as the Vice-Chancellor had brought a ray of much-needed hope into the University? That the removal of the previous Vice-Chancellor was hailed as a day of rejoicing in University circles? That for over two years the previous Vice-Chancellor had ruled the roost with neither distinction nor honour? That it was known that he had no experience of academic life—never having been a member of any University in Sri Lanka? That he was regarded in academic circles as a parachuter who had infiltrated the University through a technological institute who had become a campus overnight? That he was the ultra-buddhist L. H. Mettananda's brother and that the hangover of the old potentate's narrow religious views and limited goals were considered a passport to power by some who should have known better? That even before this Vice-Chancellor has increased the middle, the University of Ceylon Act, No. 1 of 1972 had started the university enterprise on a downhill path? That higher education was conceived by many planners as some kind of finishing school for machine-minders and tractor-operators? That the Humanities and the Social Sciences were trampled underfoot while Oriental Languages and Culture have been reduced to surviving amidst the cobwebs of their former glory? That those who joined the brain drain can afford to be cynical but to those academics who have chosen to stay on it was nothing short of a tragedy? That this was a case where the baby was thrown out with the bathwater? That the University is today, unlike in the past, unable to attract the best talent as the climate is so uncertain and oppressive? That with the new Amending Bill the brain drain will escalate while the intake of new talent will be confined to the mediocre and the accommodating stooge?



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