

TRIBUNE

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❁ SRI LANKA AND INDIA'S NUCLEAR EXPLOSION: THE ATOMIC AGE

IN THE NATIONAL STATE ASSEMBLY on Thursday, June 6, Deputy Minister of Defence and Foreign Affairs, Mr. Lakshman Jayakoddy, answering a question on behalf of the Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike, had stated that the Government of Sri Lanka accepted the statement of the Indian Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, that the recent nuclear test conducted by India was for peaceful purposes.

This statement was in reply to a question raised by the UNP Member for Puttalam, Mr. Naina Marikar, who had said that the Government had not yet made a statement yet on the explosion of the nuclear bomb by India, and had wondered whether the explosion of the bomb would in any way affect the peace zone proposal made by

Sri Lanka. Mr. Jayakoddy had said that the Indian Government had described it as a "test" and not a "bomb" as mentioned by the Member for Puttalam. Mr. Jayakoddy had gone on to say that the Indian Prime Minister had said that it was a test for the advancement of nuclear technology and the peaceful uses of atomic energy, and that that the Government of Sri Lanka had accepted the Indian Premier's statement.

The Leader of the Opposition and UNP's chief, Mr. J. R. Jayawardene, no doubt to embarrass the Government, had asked Mr. Jayakoddy, how it was possible to reconcile the "nuclear free zone" and India's bomb blast. Mr. Jayakoddy, with rare deftness, had stated that the "nuclear free zone" was no obstacle to the peaceful use of nuclear energy, and that the Sri Lanka Government was opposed only to the use of nuclear weapons for war.

THIS STATEMENT by the Deputy Minister on behalf of the Prime Minister and the Government is a clear and unambiguous statement of the Government's attitude in regard to the atomic explosion by India. The Government of Sri Lanka has, therefore, accepted the assurances of the Indian Prime Minister on their face value. There is no doubt that it is in the best interests of Sri Lanka to accept the *bona fides* of the Indian Government on this matter, and to reverse this attitude only if the contrary was demonstrated by New Delhi by its actions and policies.

In this connection, it will be useful to recall what the Tribune of May 25 had stated: Foundation. noolaham.org | aavanaham.org

INSIDE:

- MIDDLE EAST
- CHRONICLE
- SHAMBA
- INANIA
- ROOTS OF DISRUPTION
- SAHARA DESERT
- GOBAR GAS
- INDIAN VIEW POINT

"SO FAR AS SRI LANKA is concerned, it is necessary to adopt a cold-headed and realistic approach to the fact that India is now a nuclear power. This is undoubtedly the most significant and important development in South Asia in the present era. Starting with Bangladesh in December 1971, the blasting of an atomic device on May 18, 1974, makes India the dominant power in this region, and one to be reckoned with in Asia and the world—thus ending the balance of power which Britain had sought to create when it withdrew after the second world war and which John Foster Dulles had endeavoured to stabilise and extend in the fifties. South Asia now enters a new phase in its history and nothing that countries like Pakistan can do will alter the situation. Nor is Sri Lanka in a position to change the situation in the foreseeable future either by what she says or does. Until a new era emerges in the region stemming from factors and circumstances we cannot envisage at this juncture, we have to accept the reality of a dominant India in the context of contemporary geopolitics.

"It will no doubt, be difficult for the Government of Sri Lanka to make up its mind as to what it should say immediately. Divided opinions and sentiments, especially in the higher echelons of the Establishment, are inevitable because in the British and post-British epoch an under-current of hostility to India was fostered in this country alien forces committed to the policy of *divide et impera* to maintain the balance of power as devised by the old imperial masters. Certain

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elements in India in the post-independence period have also unfortunately displayed chauvinistic trends which have contributed to the accentuation of this antagonism. Moreover interested foreign powers have recently done everything to divide the countries of South Asia as much as possible. Though India, in more recent times, has sought to remove the fears and apprehensions which have stood in the way of Indo-Sri Lanka friendship, the differences are many and deep-rooted and there is still much to be done to overcome them. Though many in Sri Lanka have been encouraged to think that this country can play a big (pseudo) power role if the other countries in South Asia, however big, were kept weak so that a balance of power would be precariously sustained by leaning on this or other of the Big Powers or Blocs in Europe, America or Asia, the time has come to abandon this confronting stance of wishful thinking.

"India now has the atom bomb. She has a brilliant galaxy of nuclear scientists and technologists who will be able to make India a major nuclear power in a few years. India has the basic raw materials required for this purpose, and the fact that the masses of her people are poorer than people in certain other countries will not prevent nuclear development from going ahead rapidly. For peace and for war, India has a new power, atomic power, which makes her a significant force in this region.

"This is a reality that we in Sri Lanka must realise and accept. Secondly, we must realise that India is not only the dominant nation in South Asia, but more than that she is also our closest neighbour with only about 25 miles of sea between us. This geographical proximity cannot be altered even by the most powerful nations which may want to create contradictions between India and her neighbours. Thirdly, it must not be forgotten that Sri Lanka has been connected with India, ethnically, culturally, linguistically and in religion from the beginning of time. In the current epoch of separate, independent and sovereign states, friendship between India and Sri Lanka assumes a new dimension, and this friendship must operate in the contemporary im-

peratives of democracy and universal franchise. Such friendship and understanding must grow even more intimate in the age of the atom in peace and in war.

"Whatever statement our Government makes at this juncture on India's achievement of nuclear status, sooner or later Sri Lanka's approach to nuclear India must be based on the hard facts we have outlined above. It will be foolish to be swayed by sentimental and emotional considerations. Pakistan may indulge in outbursts of frantic bravado, but she does not have the nuclear scientists nor the infrastructure to become an atomic power for a long long time—because the academic tradition in that region does not produce free and brilliant minds essential for work of this kind. The USA and UK may not like atomic proliferation, but there is little they can do to stop India from going ahead—and in the end these countries will accord India much more respect and consideration than they have done in the past. The fact that Canada, Australia and Japan feel sore about India's breakthrough into the atom age is no reason why Sri Lanka should feel, likewise. It is futile to preach sermons to India that she is departing from the pristine virtues of Gandhian *ahimsa*.

"It is in our national self-interest to welcome India's achievement in the nuclear field and establish a lasting friendship that will compel India to be a good and helpful neighbour assisting us to maintain our national sovereignty and our way of life. This we can easily do whilst maintaining the closest and friendliest ties with all countries in the world, even those hostile to India."

The best foreign policy for a country is what is closest to its national self-interest keeping in mind the imperatives of the current geopolitical cross-currents—also within the orbit of the country's narrow self-interest. Judged purely on this basis, in the best long-term as well as the short-term interests of Sri Lanka, also in the perspective of the narrowest of narrow selfish self-interest, this Government has done well to dopt the attitude it has taken on the Indian nuclear explosion.

It is known that there was pressure both from within the Administration and Establishment as well as from the outside to persuade the Prime Minister to denounce the Indian nuclear explosion or at least to regret that India should have done a thing like this. The Sri Lanka-Pakistan Friendship Association rushed in where angels would have feared to tread and denounced the Indian blast in the name of world peace—although this Association had been silent when China had blasted its way into the nuclear club with atmospheric tests in 1964. These are the vagaries of contemporary geopolitical power politics, and the Government of Sri Lanka must be congratulated for refusing to be drawn into it and for adopting a policy which is based on its own foreign policy imperatives.

IN THIS CONNECTION it would be interesting to place on record what the *Ceylon Daily News* editorially said about GOING NUCLEAR on May 20 and also what the *Times of Ceylon* said in its editorial on May 21 on NEW POWER FOR INDIA.

This is what the *Daily News* had stated: "India has joined the nuclear club. As a tenderfoot, true; nonetheless a member. Though the news of an N-test in India's western desert is no bolt from the blue since it has been known for many years that India, like Japan and Israel, possessed the technology and the resources to develop its own nuclear capability, world-wide public reactions will probably be marked with more than a tinge of surprise and dismay. Already in Japan, where the constitution expressly prohibits such experiments and programs, all parties have issued vigorous protests while the Canadian Foreign Minister has also voiced his government's disappointment and disapproval.

"In Delhi, Indian spokesmen have justified the decision on several grounds; in the main, that it is an underground test which does not violate any international consensus on N-tests and that it is prompted solely by India's aim to keep abreast of nuclear technology. At a more authoritative policy level, the Indian Prime Minister has capped these

statements with a categorical assurance that India's policy of using nuclear power for peaceful purposes only remains unchanged. "Despite such assurances, yesterday's report is bound to set off an old debate on the whole nuclear issue and on Indian attitudes as well. In one sense, the discussion compels a confrontation between pacifists and self-styled realists.

"For pacifists, the very idea of a nuclear test, no matter what the proclaimed motivation and the defensive pleas, is abhorrent. India will be doubly exposed to criticism from these quarters because she is a poor nation for whom a nuclear program must seem in their eyes a grotesque dissipation of scarce resources. Furthermore, there is the Gandhian heritage. Those who believe that this is or ought to be the principal inspirational impulse of modern India will refuse to see the dividing line between peaceful uses and military possibilities as anything but doubtfully thin. No such contradictions will plague the realists. They will in fact argue that the exploitation of nuclear technology is a pre-condition for Indian industrialisation and modernisation. The hard-headed will dismiss the Gandhian legacies as sentimental myths. Since both schools of opinion are widely represented in Delhi and in all influential circles in India the debate has perhaps been triggered off already.

"The fact that the Indian government has resolved for itself this debate with a decision favouring the development of an independent nuclear capability indicates however, that other, probably more substantial arguments, have outweighed considerations of international and domestic criticism and the restraining influence, if any, of Gandhian legacies. India, in effect, supports the thesis initially urged with characteristic aplomb by President de Gaulle and advanced with great vigour by the Chinese: that the voluntary exclusion of oneself from the nuclear club only means the perpetuation of a monopoly, the unchallenged dominance of the super-powers. Given such a basic attitude to the question, it is no surprise that the Indian military establishment which has proved itself, as the

Indo-Pakistan war patently demonstrated, a powerful institution in the shaping of defence policies, has successfully argued that India must have a "nuclear option." It must match China, if not in effective military capacity, at least in nuclear status.

"In the cold world of *realpolitik* where Might, alas, has the edge always on Right, nuclear status bestows on a nation a certain prestige and invites respect, however grudging or concealed from friends, neutrals and adversaries alike. So, paradoxically perhaps, the Indian masses in spite of the harshness of their condition and the turbulence of their society may well be diverted from these discontents to derive some momentary satisfaction and pride from this successful experiment. A nuclear program does symbolise what is called "apex technology" and Indian science, untrammelled by mass poverty, has made India the world's sixth nuclear power."

The editorial of *Times* stated: "The earth, sand and stones upheaved into a "most beautiful" artificially produced hill as a result of the underground explosion of a nuclear device by India on the morning of May 18, will be a visible landmark in the scientific advance of Sri Lanka's northern neighbour. India, the world's largest parliamentary democracy, has become the sixth nation to blast its way into the nuclear club and the second among Asian nations to make this entrance, next to China. The land of the Yogis and the rope trick will not need to depend on faith alone to move mountains. The labours of distinguished scientists of the calibre of the late Homi J. Bhabha and others have made possible this spectacular climax which has been given a mixed reception in world capitals.

"India's spokesmen have hastened to assure that the explosion or "implosion", as some prefer to call it, is part of a programme designed to promote peaceful scientific operations. It has been explained that India is, in any case, signatory only to the 1963 Partial Test Ban Treaty which outlawed the explosion of nuclear weapons in test in the atmosphere, in outer space or under water. It is asserted that underground test

and peaceful nuclear explosions do not come within the ambit of this prohibition.

India is also not inhibited by the Non Proliferation Treaty of 1968, as she refused to sign it on the ground that it was calculated to impose obligations only on non-member states and not on those possessing nuclear power and thus confer an advantage on the latter.

"Provided India adheres to its professed resolve to pursue only the peaceful paths of nuclear

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power and not use it as a big stick, her image as a peace-loving nation need not suffer. The fact is that China made its first nuclear test ten years ago. It is unlikely that India, even if it were desirous of doing so, could embark on the production of nuclear weapons to compete seriously with the other powers who have a very big lead over her. In view of the fact that India has favoured Sri Lanka's appeal for the Indian Ocean to be made a Zone of Peace free of nuclear pollution India will find it hard to explain any deviation from her resolve to make use of nuclear power only for peaceful purposes if ever she should be tempted to deviate from this policy."

THESE ARE the two editorial comments of any significance in the daily papers in English in Sri Lanka today. Apart from this, the TUF's General Council had congratulated the Indian Government on attaining nuclear status in the peaceful uses of atomic power, but the Sri Lanka-Pakistan Friendship Association has chosen to echo the Bhutto line that the Indian atomic blast endangered peace in the subcontinent and in South Asia. The weekly *Janavegaya* had two comments in its issues of 24/5 and 31/5 critical of India and had stated that the Indian nuclear explosion was a threat to world peace because the reactionaries still ruled the roost in India. The *Nation* has been silent on this important question, but now that the Government has made an official pronouncement on June 6, the *Nation* is likely to adopt a similar stand.

Neem Spray against Locusts

It has been found that neem kernel solution has insect repellent properties. This was tested under large scale field conditions when locust clouds invaded Delhi in July August 1962. Different crops in large areas were given a protective spray of 0.1 per cent neem seed suspension at 300 to 600 litres per hectare depending on the type and stage of the crops. No feeding was observed on these sprayed crops although locusts come and settled on these crops.

Internationally, the Indian nuclear explosion has evoked only critical comments, most of them stressing that this explosion would open the way for uncontrollable proliferation. Comment in Britain and the USA has been restrained. The only country that has welcomed the explosion as an achievement of Indian science was France, whilst the USSR had noted the event with approval mentioning that the Soviet Union and India had a joint programme to enable India to launch space satellites and the like with the help, at the early stages, of Russian booster rockets. Yugoslavia has congratulated India on her splendid achievement in the cause of the peaceful use of atomic power. Senegal in Africa has accepted India's assurance that the "test" was to further the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. China, even after a long silence, is yet to make an official pronouncement, but the rehabilitated Teng had suggested to a Japanese delegation that India's nuclear explosion had been inspired by Russia and that in any case it was of little consequence because India was bogged down in the quagmire of poverty and under-development.

Most Asian countries have so far been silent officially—except Pakistan which has denounced India for wanting to indulge in nuclear blackmail. Nepal has "regretted" the fact that India had thought it necessary to explode the device, but has accepted the assurance of the Indian Government that the blast was for peaceful purposes. Sri Lanka has accepted the Indian assurance that the test was for the development of nuclear power for peaceful purposes, Burma has so far not made any pronouncement and so also all ASEAN countries.

WITH SCIENCE, knowledge and technology marching forward, the three super-powers who had subscribed to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) cannot hope to contain nuclear know-how to the original Three. France and China had refused to subscribe to the NPT and many other major powers too including India. With India's success in exploding a nuclear device, with hardly any fallout of dangerous radioactive dust, it will not be long before another half a

dozen countries also become nuclear powers in the next decade.

The peaceful uses of nuclear power will no doubt make great progress, but nuclear weapons too will become more numerous. If Pakistan is given nuclear protection by one or more of the countries which already are military nuclear weapons, particularly by stationing strategic nuclear units on the soil of Pakistan, then India will have a legitimate excuse to embark on a policy of building and stocking nuclear-weapons.

Long before the eighties are over, at least Australia, Canada, South Africa, Israel, Brazil, and even West Germany and Japan, can easily become an inherent part of the nuclear club. This will lead to the proliferation of nuclear power not only for peaceful purposes but also for war. Mass destruction of entire populations may become a way of life in the contemporary atomic age just as gunpowder had wiped out entire civilisations in Asia, in North, central and South America and in Africa few centuries ago. Gunpowder had thereafter become ordinary and peace had been sustained under the aegis of European imperialism.

The era of imperialist hegemony based on gunpowder has now disappeared, and a new era based on atomic power is coming into its own. History has a way of repeating itself at different levels and cynics will be tempted to ask whether a new era of destruction motivated by atomic power will take place before the world settles to another era of uneasy peace under new hegemonies. Exploding populations will also be trimmed down to proportions the world could sustain on its resources and the futile and abortive exercise known as Family Planning propagated by the world's rich and have-every-thing countries for the benefit of the poor and have not nations will fade into oblivion.

The aztecs, Incas, and the Red Indians of America, and whole tribes in Africa had been wiped out by gunpowder and slavery. Powerful civilisations in Asia, which had balanced and contented popu-

nations indoctrinated on concepts foreign to us now, were undermined and destroyed by the use of gunpowder for warlike purposes.

Are we moving into a new era of destruction before a new civilisation can emerge.

These are no doubt depressing thoughts, but such thoughts are inevitable in world where man has not yet learnt to live in peace with his brother without wanting to have an unequal (and greater) share of the vast riches of the earth. It will be foolish to think that Christian charity, Muslim brotherhood, the Buddhist dhamma, Hindu ahimsa, Rationalist humanism, or even socialist ethics, can as yet contain human nature still motivated by greed and an insatiable quest for power. Law, enforced by armed state power, often sustains peace in a country for relatively long or short periods, of time, but in the new age of the atom—with insurgents, urban and rural guerrillas, commandos and what not—law and order has assumed a new dimension.

Can a new era be born in peace or must whole civilisations and nations disappear like the Aztecs and the Incas before sanity can come to the world? Can Marxism, Maoism, Democratic Socialism, Liberalism and the isms which have proliferated throughout the world bring peace and contentment to human beings in the same that the religions and philosophies of the past had done?

These are perplexing questions which the sophisticated intellectual of today evades with cynical witticisms? But for how long can we evade such issues? Running around in the cyclical brain, drain which is throwing homo sapiens into a melting pot in which concepts of nation, race and territory are disappearing faster than ever before cannot provide an escape from the realities of the atomic age.

Record

John Duncan of Australia has set a world record driving his car backwards for 210.9 kilometres. The previous record was 136 kilometres set by Pat Gilkes in Ethiopia.

Tribunania

✱ Middle East

✱ Malaysia

✱ Kachchativu

THE AGREEMENT, formally signed in Geneva between Israel and Syria on the disengagement of forces on the Golan Heights, is undoubtedly another signal triumph for the US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger. This was perhaps the toughest assignment he has had so far and he had to spend over a month shuttling between Jerusalem and Damascus before he was able to achieve the ceasefire which has taken the Middle East one further step on the road to peace.

At one time, with Palestinian commando forces and Israeli units indulging in massacres and killings, observers had despaired of any peace being secured on the Golan Heights fighting. Israel as well as Syria were meticulously exacting in their demands, but Kissinger had persisted and he did not leave the scene of his labours without getting what he wanted. President Nixon too had wanted his Secretary of State to succeed because success in the Middle East peace mission was probably one of the best ways of meeting the difficulties which had been generated by the Watergate affairs. Never before in history has any Head of State permitted his Chief Minister to stay away from home for so long, but a Middle East peace was something which President Nixon required at this stage.

President Sadat, who has backed Kissinger to the hilt after the US Secretary of State had brought peace on the Suez Front, had stated (when he heard of the ceasefire and disengagement of forces on the Golan Heights) that he did not know Kissinger "did it". President Nixon has now made a triumphal tour of Middle Eastern countries and there is no doubt that the USA has punched its way into a dominant position once

again in the region—after the eclipse it had suffered for many years. And it is ironic that a Jewish Secretary of State should have done the trick at a time when Arab feelings against the Jews was well over boiling point in anger.

AS ANTICIPATED in a despatch from a correspondent in Kuala Lumpur, published in the *Tribune* some weeks ago, Malaysia and China have concluded an agreement according full diplomatic recognition to each other. Malaysia is the first ASEAN country to do so, and Malaysian Premier Tun Abdul Razak had returned on June 3 after his five-day state visit to China to mark the event. An observer in Kuala Lumpur had commented that he had come back with "assurances from Peking that China would have nothing to do with the communist terrorists in Malaysia and also Malaysian citizens of Chinese origin."

This is what the observer had said in a despatch to the *Madras Hindu*: "Tun Abdul Razak said that Chairman Mao Tse-tung, Premier Chou En-lai and other Chinese leaders had given him 'categorical assurances' that China considered remnants of communist terrorists 'purely an internal problem to be dealt with by us as we see fit. Since China has also accepted that each country could follow any social system it likes, the struggle of the communist terrorists to force another system on us is both hopeless and futile. They are now fighting against freedom and the people', he said.

"Malaysia suffered a 12-year emergency immediately after the war from militant communists who were 90 per cent pro-Peking Chinese. The banned communist party is still occasionally active, as it proved just two days before Tun Razak left for Peking, by blowing up nearly 100 earthmoving machines, over a 40-mile stretch, engaged in building a road through jungles.

"Regarding overseas Chinese Tun Razak said China had given up the dual nationality concept with regard to Malaysian nationals of Chinese origin. China had assured him that the destiny of overseas Chinese lay only in that country and with the people they have lived with so long. 'It is now clear that there will be no future in

Malaysia for fence sitters and nationals whose loyalty is divided'. Tun Razak said the status of stateless Chinese would be discussed after an exchange of ambassadors. Malaysia has about 200,000 stateless Chinese.

"In disassociating itself from communist insurgents and overseas Chinese, even if it be only assurances, China has taken far reaching and historic steps to develop good relations with South-East Asian countries which have for long distrusted Chinese communities. South-East Asia has about 15 million overseas Chinese and the largest, four million, are in Malaysia."

But Malaysian terrorists seemed to demonstrate that they were still alive and kicking by destroying a whole unit of mechanical earth-moving and road construction equipment building a road cutting through the forests on the Malaysian-Thai border (the forests which have long been the hideouts of these terrorists), and also by shooting Malaysia's Inspector General of Police in his official car in the heart of Kuala Lumpur.

Does this mean that the terrorists have decided to launch a new insurgency in Malaysia?

NEARER HOME, a report in the *Hindu* from its New Delhi correspondent G. K. Reddy indicated that there was a new HITCH WITH SRI LANKA OVER TERRITORIAL SEA LIMIT. The report speaks for itself.

"A new hitch over the definition of the territorial sea limit between India and Sri Lanka in the Palk

Straits is holding up the settlement of the Kachativu issue. It was agreed during Mrs. Bandaranaike's recent visit to Delhi that the Kachativu dispute should be resolved soon on the basis of a fresh delimitation of the territorial waters between the Palk Straits and Adam's Bridge, which would automatically settle the issue without the historical claims of either side being gone into.

"The officials of the two countries entrusted with the determination of the new Meridian Line in these historic waters have run into difficulties over the definition of the sea limit in this region. India wants the commencing points for the 12-mile limit from either side to be their actual shore lines, not the off-shore islands in the Palk Straits. But Sri Lanka contends that its sea limit should extend 12 miles from its farthest territorial jurisdiction in these narrow straits.

"The understanding was that India would give up its claim to Kachativu if the new Meridian line ran north of the island. If the new definition of sea limit put forward by Sri Lanka is accepted it will mean the 12-mile jurisdiction extends from Kachativu and not from the Mannar Coast. India cannot agree to this strange interpretation of the sea limit, since not only Adam's Bridge but even Rameswaram is only 12 miles from Kachativu at its farthest point.

"As Kachativu is one of the many off shore islands in the Palk Straits which will lie on either side of the new Meridian Line there is need for greater clarity on the definition of the Indian

and Sri Lanka sea limits in these narrow waters for avoiding further controversies. India is anxious that the whole issue should be settled in a clear-cut fashion with no legal loopholes left for any misunderstanding later about the scope of its settlement.

"The Kachativu question should have been settled by now on the basis of the broad understanding between the two Prime Ministers during their recent talks in Delhi. But in view of the new complications, Mrs. Gandhi may write to Mrs. Bandaranaike as soon as the Sri Lanka Prime Minister is free from her political preoccupations at home for sorting out the differences. The Foreign Secretary, Mr. Kewal Singh, is likely to go to Colombo to get the official level talks moving again for finalising the Meridian Line after the two Prime Ministers settle the sea limit questions.

"The Government of India does not foresee any great difficulty in resolving this controversy, once its wider implications are properly explained by Mrs. Gandhi to Mrs. Bandaranaike. The relations between the two countries have been steadily improving over the years and the two Prime Ministers can be expected to do their best to settle all the remaining issues. The main problem is the resettlement of the people of Indian origin in the real spirit of the recent Indira-Sirimavo agreement, not the Kachativu controversy which has been magnified beyond all proportion and invested with political overtones."



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CHRONICLE

May 31 – June 7

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

FRIDAY, MAY 31: According to the *Daily News*, adequate stocks of essential food commodities for 1974 have now been ensured, except for a further 15,000 tons of sugar which might be required towards the end of the year: the Foreign and Internal Trade Ministry does not propose to import further stocks of any food commodities, besides those already negotiated: local sugar production this year is expected to exceed the target of 20,000 tons. Mr. A. R. M. Mukthar, the well-known bookmaker and gem merchant and an American Jeweller will be produced today before the Criminal Justice Commission inquiring into foreign exchange offences: the two are suspected of illegal foreign exchange transactions, gold and gem smuggling. An Indian economic delegation led by Mr. B. K. Sanyal, Secretary to the Ministry of External Affairs, arrives here on Monday, June 3 for the sixth bi-lateral economic talks between India and Sri Lanka: the nine-member delegation which will spend four days here will discuss economic and trade collaboration between the two countries. According to the *Daily News*, the Land Reform Commission has announced that all land sales after August 26, 1972 are not valid: this excludes the extents allowed as "statutory determinations" and inter family transactions. According to the *Daily Mirror*, the Tamil United Front has decided to give a public reception to the leaders of the Commonwealth countries who are expected in Sri Lanka in September to attend a Commonwealth Conference in Colombo: the reception will be held at the Veerasingham Hall Jaffna. Several world capitals greeted the announcement of a Syrian-Israeli troop disengagement and diplomats paid tribute to US Secretary of State, Dr. Henry Kissinger, for his tenacious negotiating work in bringing about the accord. The British Government has announced immediate plans for a caretaker administration in strike torn Northern Ireland involving some direct rule from the British Parliament in London.

SATURDAY, JUNE 1: According to the *Daily News*, Sri Lanka's total import bill this year—assuming that oil prices do not rise further—is estimated to be Rs. 5,413 million, more than double the cost of total imports in 1973: of this amount the cost of crude oil imports alone will be Rs. 1,020 million at present prices: the country will be called upon to finance a resource gap of "unprecedented level" amounting to Rs. 3,250 million this year, according to a detailed study of the world energy crisis and its implications by two Central Bank economists. Mr. A. R. M. Mukthar, a well-known jeweller and bookmaker was produced before the Criminal Justice Commission (Exchange Frauds) yesterday for the recording of an American Jeweller's evidence in the case what the police has

described as the "big gem and foreign currency fraud". Mr. James Kazanjian, a 75-year old jeweller from California, told the Commission that on a visit he made to Ceylon in 1962 he had arranged to buy 31 blue sapphires worth \$ 22,000 from the suspect but when the parcel arrived in Los Angeles he found that the gems had been sent from Hong Kong instead from Ceylon and a cable instructing him to remit the money to Hong Kong. According to the *Daily Mirror*, the opening of the University Campus for Jaffna had been tentatively fixed for August 18 by the Prime Minister Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, who is to pay her first official visit to the North on this date. A three-member mission from Papua New Guinea is now in Sri Lanka studying the electoral system here. President Nixon will make a official visit to the Soviet Union from June 27, the White House announced yesterday. Pakistan Government sources indicated yesterday that India's nuclear test seems certain to slow down its detente with Pakistan while not affecting Pakistan's relations with Bangladesh. President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing said yesterday that France would pursue an independent foreign policy but would seek to co-operate as equals with all countries including the United States.

SUNDAY, JUNE 2: According to the *Observer*, Sri Lanka Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike's, proposal for a World Fertilizer Fund made before the 30th sessions of the ECAFE a few months ago will be one of the key topics at the World Food Conference to be held in Rome in November: the Prime Minister's proposal is being presented as a workable and integrated plan and is now conceived as a multi-dimensional fund catering to all aspects of the fertilizer problem. Over two million exercise books now in short supply in the market will be issued early next week by the Eastern Paper Mills Corporation: school children were hard hit owing to the scarcity of exercise books for the last few months. The Criminal Justice Commission (Insurgency) which concluded recording evidence in the main insurgency trial will take up other cases connected with the insurgency from tomorrow: in the first such case 34 suspects are charged with culpable homicide. According to the *Sunday Times*, a forum discussion by students of leading Sri Lanka's schools will be taped and filmed by UNESCO to be televised throughout the world. Israel and Syrian military representatives met in Geneva yesterday to begin work on preparing a plan for the disengagement of their armies on the Golan Heights front: the meeting took place within the Israeli--Egyptian military working group. President Nixon yesterday appeared to be pressing ahead with plans for a tour of the Middle East and a Moscow summit as the US Supreme Court postponed its summer recess to consider a crucial Watergate issue. The British Government conceded yesterday there was now a chance that Irish hunger strikers might soon die of starvation in a London jail: the Home Secretary, Roy Jenkins made it clear in a statement that the Government has no intention to giving into threats from IRA guerrillas.

MONDAY, JUNE 3: The GMOA—the Association of Government doctors—decided to reject the latest offer on salaries made to the Association: they have also decided to start a "work to rule campaign" from June 5: according to the *Daily Mirror*, the Government

has decided to take stern measures on doctors who refused to treat patients admitted to the paying wards of the Colombo General Hospital: the Ministry of Health referring to the present boycott of paying wards by doctors at the Colombo General Hospital said that it is a violation of the Hippocratic Oath. Co-operation in the fields of shipping and tourism between Sri Lanka and India, the setting up of a fertilisers project and assistance in agricultural projects are among the subjects on the agenda of the fifth meeting of delegations of Sri Lanka and India on Indo-Sri Lanka Economic Co-operation: the first discussions will begin today at the Central Bank building. According to the *Daily Mirror*, the re-organisation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Sri Lanka Missions abroad has now commenced. Three persons were taken into custody by the CID in connexion with a large-scale racket in exit permit granting Immigration Department clearance for Ceylonese to leave the island. According to the *Daily News*, a complete new trade co-operation agreement is under way among developing nations including Sri Lanka involving the grant of preferential tariff treatment to the member-countries products. A seven-member FAO fisheries mission to the Bay of Bengal headed by a program leader to the Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission arrives in the island today. The Soviet Union welcomed President Nixon's visit to Moscow later this month for talks on strategic arms and other issues but said that this should not mean big-power control of world affairs. Former British Prime Minister, Edward Heath, portrayed China as a firm backer of European Unity.

TUESDAY, JUNE 4: According to the *Daily News* the Association of Government Doctors has told the Ministerial sub-committee now making an in-depth study of the mass emigration of technically qualified personnel, that the "brain drain" is caused by financial considerations and this outweigh all other factors. At the introductory speech yesterday at the opening session of the fifth meeting of the Joint Sub-Committee on Indo-Sri Lanka Economic Co-operation, Mr. Vincent Coelho, High Commissioner, for India in Sri Lanka, said that electricity was going to be a foreign exchange earner for Sri Lanka as India will be only too happy to buy any amount of surplus power from Sri Lanka. According to the *Daily Mirror*, the CID has thrown a world-wide dragnet for four Ceylonese businessmen who are wanted in connexion with investigations into the "Great Gem and Foreign Exchange Fraud". The Police have offered a reward of Rs. 30,000 to anyone who gives information leading to the arrest of any of the three persons now wanted in connexion with the April Insurgency of 1971. Two well-known hotels in Kandy-Queens Hotel and Hotel Suisse—will be taken over by the Sri Lanka's Hotel's Corporation on June 9. The first medical officer against whom charges were preferred in terms of the Bribery Act was yesterday found guilty of accepting a bribe of Rs. 25 from a patient and was sentenced to five years rigorous imprisonment and fined Rs. 2,500. A United Nations agency warned in Rome yesterday that by 1985 there may be some 34 countries with a combined population of 700 million facing malnutrition: the UN World Food Conference Organisation said that by that date, if present population and production trends continue, the world's developing nations will find themselves short of 85 million

tons of cereals a year. A military court in Saigon sentenced 9 men to death in their absence on charge of illegally hoarding sugar.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 5: According to the *Daily Mirror*, the Council of Legal Education has stumbled on a contract which has given rise to fears whether the Central Intelligence Agency of the United States has infiltrated into the activities of the Law College of Sri Lanka: when the Council met over the week-end, it discovered that a legal research project in New York had entered into a contract with the Principal of the Law College: the organisation has credited \$ 13,000 to the Council over which the Council has no control: one of the objects of the research wanted by the American organisation included research into the background of Cabinet Ministers, Supreme Court Judges, the Attorney General and activities in the villages: the Council of Legal Education includes the Chief Justice of Sri Lanka, Mr. Victor Tennekoon, the Attorney General, Mr. R. S. Wanasundera, the Secretary to the Ministry of Justice, Mr. Nihal Jayawickrama, two Supreme Court Judges, a professor of the University and an Attorney-at-Law: the Council decided to strip the Principal of Law College of his title and to send him on leave pending investigations: according to the *Daily News*, the offices of the Principal Law College, the Council of Legal Education and the Professional Lawyers' Research Project believed to be conducted by the New York organisation were sealed yesterday morning on the orders of the Council of Legal Education. Government doctors have postponed their work-to-rule campaign by one day pending a last minute bid by the Acting Minister of Health, Mrs. Siva Obeysekera, to settle the dispute. According to the *Daily News*, the two Communist Parties (Pieter Keuneman's and Dr. S. A. Wickremasinghe's) will be united and a formal announcement to this effect will be made before July 3, the day of the party's 31st anniversary. The order in the contempt Rule issued in the *Ceylon Daily News* will be delivered today by the Criminal Justice Commission (Exchange Frauds). India has already agreed to gift equipment to Sri Lanka for the establishment of the twenty eight million rupee microwave link between the two countries to improve the communication system: India's offer to help Sri Lanka to set up a urea fertiliser plant costing Rs. 800 million is being examined at the current sessions of the fifth meeting of the Joint Sub-Committee on Indo-Sri Lanka Economic Co-operation. Britain's Labour Government firmly rejected calls for the withdrawal of its 17,000 troops in Northern Ireland and warned that any quick action to do this would lead to large-scale bloodshed. Mr. Yitzhak Rabin yesterday became the Prime Minister of Israel: the Premier is 52 years old and is the youngest Premier in Israel's 26 year of existence.

THURSDAY, JUNE 6: The Criminal Justice Commission (Exchange Frauds) yesterday sentenced the Deputy Editor of the *Daily News*, Mr. F. L. de Silva, to six months simple imprisonment and a fine of Rs. 2,000 in a matter of contempt of court: in the same case Mr. L. M. C. Fernando, Acting Editor, was detained till the rising of court and fined Rs. 2,000: Mr. Sugatha-

pala Pathivitharana, Features Editor, was fined Rs. 500 and a fine of Rs. 5,000 was imposed on the Association Newspapers of Ltd., publishers of *Daily News* represented by the Secretary, Mr. S. R. A. Dharmaratne; this sentence was passed when the Commission made order on a rule served on the editor of the *Daily News*, the Associated Newspapers of Ceylon Ltd. and two members of the editorial staff: the rule issued on them was in connection with an article published in the *Daily News* of April 16 entitled "Dress Sense". Sentences will be imposed today on Mubarak Thaha, J. W. Jackson, Raja Ratnagopal and George Abeyratne by the Criminal Justice Commission (Exchange Frauds) in the second inquiry that came up before the Commission in which the four suspects have been already found guilty of violating Exchange Control and Central Bank laws involving nearly sixteen and a half million rupees. The Law Students Union yesterday held an emergency meeting and passed unanimously a resolution requesting the Registrar of the Council of Legal Education to comply with, among other matters give reasons for sending the Principal of Law College on leave or compulsory leave and furnish the Law Students' Union with facts of the case consequent to the findings of the Council of Legal Education about the American Organisation's involvement in the activities of the College. According to the *Daily Mirror*, Sri Lanka has been subjected to a further increase of 37 per cent

in general freight charges by the Ceylon-Arabian and Persian Gulf Red Sea Conference Lines. The Australian Government yesterday handed over a gift of 9370 tons of flour to Sri Lanka. According to the *Daily News*, several major concessions have been approved to the rubber industry following recommendations by the National Planning Council for assistance to the rubber industry. The UN Adhoc Committee on the Indian Ocean is meeting to consider measures to implement the UN General Assembly's declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace following India becoming a country of nuclear power. President Anwar Sadat of Egypt said in Cairo yesterday, peace in Middle East can only be restored when the last Israeli soldier withdraws from all the occupied Arab territories. Defence Minister Moshe Dayan and Foreign Minister Abba Eban, two key figures in recent Israeli history, are out in the new Cabinet formed by Premier Yitzhak Rabin.

FRID. Y, JUNE 15. Ahmed Mubarak Thaha, a leading bookmaker, was yesterday sentenced to seven years' rigorous imprisonment and fined Rs. 750,000 by the Criminal Justice Commission (Exchange Frauds): in the same case Raja Ratnagopal, the Sri Lanka born London businessman, was sentenced to two year's rigorous imprisonment and fined Rs. 664,251: the fourth accused George Abeyratne, an attorney at law was fined Rs. 20,000 and the Commission directed that he be produced in a week's time so that a suspended sentence could be imposed on him: Kingsly Jackson, the second accused now in London did not attend the inquiry from its commencement and was sentenced to five years rigorous imprisonment in absentia: yesterday's sentences were the culmination of the 17-day old trial which began on January 31: it was the second inquiry that came up before the Commission. Mr. Lakshman Jayakoddy, Deputy Minister of Defence and Foreign Affairs, answering a question in the National State Assembly on behalf of the Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, said yesterday that the Government accepted the statement of the Indian Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, that the recent nuclear test conducted by India was for peaceful purposes. The National State Assembly yesterday passed a Bill to make short shrift of "racketeer tenants" who enrich themselves by sub-letting the houses they had obtained from the National Housing Department. Mr. B. K. Sanyal, Secretary to the Economic Division of the Indian External Affairs Ministry, said yesterday that since the meeting of the two Prime Ministers there has been a new spirit of co-operation and shortly there will be an expansion of commerce and trade between the two countries. According to the *Daily Mirror*, the Government has decided to grant bigger loans to undergraduates. The Government Doctor's Union has deferred further the "work to rule" move pending further discussions with the Government. According to the *Daily News*, a new company, the Colombo Dockyard Ltd., will be set up From July 1: this company will be a wholly owned subsidiary of the Ceylon Shipping Corporation. Israel and Syria yesterday signed a program for the disengagement of their armed forces in the Golan Heights. China lashed out at the Soviet Union yesterday for what it described as maritime expansion in the Indian Ocean.

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SHAMBA

Cheated, Broke And A Dream

By Anatory Bukoba

May 16th,

Work on the Shamba has been at a standstill for some time. My worst financial troubles yet have hit me this month. Apart from a promise of help, there is no relief in sight. This time I am staying to face it out, as even my going away will not help. Go away I want to later but not just now. The money lent to start a business was not used for that purpose; instead, the man went home as I know now. He lied when he spoke to me. Even if he returned the money, it does him no credit as far as his word goes, although he used his brains and was more clever than I. It was the man who lost all he had at the station, who did this to me. As for fishing, I have not done even that; Our river has been in flood, not the best time for catching fish, anyway, so far as I know. It makes for good swimming, and I did some today. The muddy water, I find, does not discolour my white shirts, washed in it.

Wild boar have been busy on the way to the river. They have been digging up the place with their noses. I was told in England that you can trust a pig to plough a field. To avoid this they put a ring in their nose, like a bull's, if they are to be turned out.

The jungle is used as a lavatory around here. That is better than a badly kept lavatory.

We still drink the water from the river. It is allowed to settle in the *Kalla-geddi* first, the mud goes to the bottom. Our river water tastes good. We used to use a well near here, but I never liked the water, tasteless it was.

Our housewife is a very good cook. She makes salt do for the spices and chilli, as in English cooking. I am learning now to manage on two meals a day, without resorting to helping myself to something in *kaddays*, wherever the price

was right. I have to make two meals do just now. Hunger is not a constant factor; it comes and it goes from hour to hour.

My life just now is just living from day to day, mentally. If I planned too much ahead, I would not be able to manage at all, just throw in my hand, I would, if I did that, I should think. In the *Pater Noster*, we say, give us today our daily bread. I get much comfort from that. As God composed the prayer, he must have known what he was talking about. The accent is on today, not this week, this month. Elsewhere I remember we are told, for today, today's troubles are enough. Not many of us have this faith. I do not always have it.

Did I some work today. It did not take me long; just cleaning up the short path to the river, at the place most people bathe. It was overgrown in places with *nithikumba*, and the path had to be widened as the grass was encroaching from the sides. I learned the essential differences between a bad mamoty and a good one today. A good mamoty does a clean job; soil does not stick to it as a rule, and it also cuts clearly even when it is only a question of scraping the top of the soil. A good mamoty makes work easy. The one I used to-day was a bad one; much worn it was. Soil clings to it when one digs; it hardly cuts the soil at all. I would have done a better job with the path, I think if I had had a better mamoty.

Failed have I to find a companion or companions, and when I had them they were not at all satisfactory. On my part, when I first came here, I was not as strong as I am now, but I had energy; now I have no energy at all.

Somebody seemed to be tapping wood tonight, very near, we thought as if it was on the acre itself. It might have been somebody stacking wood he had felled and cut up into lengths. I at once snatched my knife and torch and went out to investigate. I walked as far as the culvert which now borders the acre, and I went beyond it. On my way back, I turned off the road as to the land itself at a place which had been cleared previously, but which is now overgrown.

Then I realised how if it was difficult for me to know where to put my foot down when I had a torch, how much more difficult it would be for others, and I realised how the new growth was a useful protection against intruders and poachers. This was one occasion when it was well not to clear, I thought. Yet, the clearing of all the new growth will have to be done.

Read I an essay on St. Augustine of Hippo by Etienne Gilson today. The two greatest minds are generally acknowledged to be Augustine and Aquinas. Gilson describes Augustine's system on which he built up his thought as psychological which I take to be something essentially individual. Thomas Aquinas, Gilson, describes as cosmological, which I take to mean that it embraces everything. I think we have entered a new stage now. I cannot give it a name, but it is the group. You have it in the kibbutz, the cell, the Cursillo Movement, and the Christain Life Community which I heard of only the other day. In a real sense, I suppose, we have always had all three, the individual, the group, and the world with us, but this is the age when we must learn to take up the middle position; for the one is too vast and the other too small of the other two. The family is the God-given institution for the propagation of peoples, but it is too small to stand on its own now, and it must find its integral place somewhere between itself and the nation, families or individuals of families combining together for set purpose. It will be the answer to the arguments put up to propagate birth controls, the problems

Credibility

A recent opinion poll in Israel has alarmed government quarters. According to the U.S. "Newsweek" magazine, it has shown that 62 per cent of those questioned have "little or no confidence" in what their government tells them. In some groups, the "scepticism quotient" is even higher than that, reaching 75 per cent among professionals and administrators, and 76 per cent of the college-trained.

of trade unions and strikes, the divisions of the rich and the poor, for that division will always remain in communist states, inflations, a deteriorating currency and money, and much else. It may even do away with the need for pornography because of the intense loveliness of mars in a cosmic world; world markets, international companies, world communications and much else. will would be philosophers please stop.

May 18th,

Never do I remember a dream these days not for years, but I can tell you the one I had last night. I was not doing the job in hand willingly; it was forking babies on to a fire with a gripe. It was a brick incinerator open at the top which was at a level with my head and it was full of babies. A gripe is a four-pronged fork, with a short handle, which an English farmer uses for heavy work what they call a fork is a long-handle two-pronged affair for hay and straw, as these have to be lifted to a height, on to the top of a rick or cart. A gripe did here as it was easy work tossing babies on to a level with one's head. I know I did not approve of the work I was doing. The method was to drive the fork, or rather the gripe, into the baby's face and then deposit him on top of the heap in the open incinerator. They were all alive. When it came to the last few and there were others working besides myself, I for the first time would not drive the fork into the baby's face, it was such a lovely face, cherubs, nor the next beside it. The work was nearly done, and that was why I desisted at this stage, I was horrified or shocked when someone just gathered up the babies and threw them on the fire just as they were. I felt I had failed the babies. Driving a gripe into their faces just would, I thought, have saved them the shock of the pain of the fire.

It is not often that I have remembered a dream for more than a day, not for years anyway, and that is why I have related this. It was an odd dream; one has such unexpected dreams sometimes, like bolts from the blue. I do not think the dream is more horrifying than what people are being asked to do today in the name of

five year plans, economics, U.N.O. and the sometimes rather odd *Catholic Messenger* editorial one gets. I have not made up the dream. I cannot go into here what I saw in a shop on this topic.

Read I some strong words today. Here it is. The world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of

the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.

Very low have I felt these last few days with regard to this farm—holding. These words, just quoted have somehow, given me some comfort, but why, I could not really say. Perhaps they just appeal to my low spirits.

**

Inania of this, that and
the other

YOUTH AWAKE

by INNA

Lord Buddha once said that most people are asleep, and that very few are wide awake. The Buddhist ethos is built on this: the enlightened are the awake to realities of life: those in darkness, bondage and ignorance (avijja) are in the realm of sleep. Didn't Pascal say somewhere: Jesus is in agony till the end of the world, and we must not keep on sleeping till that time (referring to what the apostles did when Christ was in agony. All men are in agony (a-gone means striving in the arena, in battle)

I WAS BLESSED to see such a sight among the SCM students, the Student Christian movement recently at a four-day of study on Education and the Brain-drain. They were Sinhala-speaking, Tamil and English speaking, serious in their endeavour, learned in their surmises and study of principles impassioned and yet strongly objective in their size - up of situations.

They too have suffered misunderstanding, ostracization, death-to-self in some measure, and that is why they hopefully go along. The Discussions were on Education within a socializing tendency; Bible studies were on Amos the Prophet and his utter indictment of the 'cows of Bashan boiling on their divans, hugging their cushions'—a relevant point of understanding for all time.

Paolo Freire, Paul Goodman, Ivan Illich were also mentioned in an attempt to probe the complementary forms to formal education, as informal education. Nor were tertiary education, adult education, and continuing formation left out of the picture.

I WAS THINKING to myself: somewhere, someone had said: "You

young men, you have been chosen by God to take his message, etc.. and one of the students almost knowing my thoughts handed me this:

"I am writing to you, young men, who have already overcome the Evil One..I have written to you, young men, because you are strong and God's word has made his home in you."

This is from a letter, it seems, written by Saint John when he was a ninety-year old man; his first letter, in its second chapter, where he gives the third condition for walking in the light: *detachment from the world.*

Perhaps these young men are beginning to see that GNP is not the greatest thing in the world; that spewing chemicals into a bay to make chemicals help life can also kill 158 people as happened in Minamama Bay, Japan; that foreign aid can be 8 billion from high to low and 11 billion from high to low and 11 billion from low to high (in amortisation, interest, deterioration in terms of trade, maritime transport etc.); that one country in 1973 gave 186,000,000 units of their currency for Aid, and 131,000,

000 of it was for their neighbour, nearest neighbour, so they could sell their goods and open markets and trade their heads off for filthy lucre (dirty money).

Perhaps Science-Engineering-Medical and other allied and non-allied Faculty men are beginning to see truth in the Menton statement of the 2300 scientists: that science is leading men up the garden path, if morality is not linked with the uses and abuses of scientific technology.

Our high-ups in science will then think twice about leaving the country to better prospects and join the brain-drain. They will admire the Mendel scientist who on being told that we might "even discover 40,000 particles in matter some day", said "40,000 did you say? That's about the number who die daily from starvation!"

IN INDIA

Roots of Disruption

—threat to democracy—

June 8,

After a few years of seemingly stable development the political situation in India has deteriorated. The wave of wanton violence and criminal disruption, in various states, ranging from massacre and arson to murder, has demonstrated that the right-wing parties and some of their left-wing allies are openly opting for lawlessness and violence. Through typically "fascist" methods they intend to subvert law and order, to facilitate seizure of power.

Indian right wing reactionaries have been hatching plans, for some time now, to overthrow the Congress Government lead by Mrs. Indira Gandhi in order to put an end to the radical reforms she has initiated.

EARLY THIS YEAR the plans were put into action in connection with the elections in a number of Indian states and first of all in Uttar Pradesh. It was a trial of strength, pure and simple, the more so that elections in other states were to follow.

The Presidential election is to take place next August. The President is elected by a special college of electors composed of members of the national parliament and the state legislatures. Under the constitution the President has very wide powers and the right-wing parties are clearly out to get their man to this office.

The first blow was dealt in Uttar Pradesh. The state was chosen for the reason, among others, that it is the cradle of the Congress and Prime Minister Indira Gandhi is member of parliament from that state. At the same time Uttar Pradesh is the scene of the greatest influence of the largest right-wing party, Jana Sangh, which is adept at taking advantage of popular discontent caused by the rocketing prices and food shortages. The same state has the concentration of the main strength of the semi-fascist RSS (Rashtrya Swayamsevak Sangh) which directs all activities of Jana Sangh.

At the Uttar Pradesh elections Jana Sangh and the RSS acted in alliance with other right-wing parties. This trial of strength ended however in favour of Indira Gandhi and her colleagues. The voters rejected the right wing parties, and indicated that they still had faith in the Indira Gandhi government.

Soon after this the right-wing suffered defeat in the Indian state of Orissa.

THEREAFTER INDIAN REACTIONARIES drew fresh strategic plans and began reshaping their tactics. Plans were announced to bring together several parties to create a "national alternative" to the Ruling Congress. According to the usually well informed *National Herald* (April 4, 1974) this step was sponsored by the leadership of the ultra right Swatantra party. They announced that the leaders of other parties including, the Socialists and the Organisation Congress, which had split away from the ruling party a few years ago, had responded favourably to the idea. After that, in Delhi, the plans for a "grand alliance" were mentioned again, which the right-wing had unsuccessfully tried to put together before the last parliamentary elections.

Moreover from the colleagues of Minoo Masani, a leading figure in the Swatantra Party, it became known that immediately after the Uttar Pradesh elections a secret meeting was held in Delhi between leaders of the right-wing and left-wing opposition parties. Apart from the representatives of the Organization Congress, the Socialists and Swatantra their allies from Jana Sangh and Akali Dal as well as Jayaprakash Narayan, leader of the Sarvodaya movement, also took part in the meeting. It has since been reported that in principle they all agreed to the idea of pooling efforts in order to remove the Government of Indira Gandhi.

On the suggestion of Minoo Masani the slogan "Down with Indira" was adopted as the only common denominator on which to build a broad unity of opposition. This has provided ground for a common position for all. It accommodates also those who have not parted with the idea of achieving their ends by constitutional means especially at the presidential elections where Jayaprakash Narayan is to stand as a joint candidate.

Advocates of violence have also been satisfied. Jana Sangh representatives are reported to have said that "direct action" is required, a sort of a mass disobedience campaign which would crush the Congress-controlled authorities in the field as well as the central government.

WITH AN UNDERSTANDING of the dynamics of this scheme one can easily see through the tumultuous events of recent times. The first "elections the other way around" were arranged by the right wing in the Gujarat state where their positions had always been strong. They exploited the blunders of the local administration and provoked disorders.

The leader of Sarvodaya, Jayaprakash Narayan, showed his true face when he openly called student youth to the streets. At the same time his colleagues of the Organization Congress, Morarji Desai, staged a hunger strike demanding dissolution of the state legislative assembly. The RSS thugs supported by reinforcements from Uttar Pradesh started wild orgies of violence. They were the ones who, according to eyewitnesses, set houses on fire, looted shops and beat to death anybody

Sahara Desert

who tried to resist them. The local authorities were caught unawares and were completely taken aback by these events.

The Central government wanted to restore law and order in the state and agreed to the dissolution of the legislature. The opposition however were out for "blood". After Gujarat they tried their hand in Bihar. Here too Jayaprakash Narayan was very active working through the hastily put up Students Action Committee. The demands were the same as in Gujarat—remove the Chief Minister and dissolve the legislative assembly.

At the same time right-wing forces started acting from behind the scenes in Bihar. Gangs of fascist thugs from the RSS set on fire the building of the newspaper, *Searchlight*, in Patna and the Jana Sangh leadership in Delhi promptly said it was the work of Indian communists. True, the newspaper building is no Reichstag, but the similarity with the actions of German fascists was striking.

The Bihar authorities recovered after the initial shock and took measures to restore order. The organisers of the outrage were arrested. According to Chief Minister Abdul Ghafoor they included one thug caught red-handed who had been to the USA and presently employed by the Gandhi Peace Foundation. It is no more chance that the General Secretary of the INC, Chandrajit Jadav stressed at a press conference that the disorders in Patna and other places "were planned by fascist forces" with the participation of certain "foreign agencies".

THE OVERT and the camouflaged attacks of Indian fascists aided by their foreign protectors have caused serious concern in the country. The right-wing parties did resort to violence and lawlessness in the past but now they have made it a system hoping that chaos would paralyse the government and the masses would be confused and only wish for a strong hand.

It seems that the enemies of Indian democracy act in accordance with the principle "bullet but not ballot" and are preparing physical liquidation of national leaders, and first of all of Indira Gandhi. The recent incident in the Parliament building has sounded a very alarm-

ing note when Gupta, 25, armed with two pistols tried to break into the guest gallery to kill the Prime Minister. Seized by the police he wanted to commit suicide, the more so that eyewitnesses recognized him as a member of the RSS. A group of Indian MPs in a joint statement condemned this incident stating that fascist organisations were working to plunge the country into chaos.

The Central government now seems to have learnt its lesson. After the Gujarat trouble, it is taking a firm line against the instigators of disorders. Thanks to timely measures, order was re-established in Bihar, and another disruptive threat has been averted, this time in Delhi. The People's Consciousness Movement set up by the right-wing in the capital made an attempt to provoke student disorders and called in its leaflets "to repeat Gujarat in Delhi. The leaders of the movement even tried to bring the army over to their side by calling on it in the leaflets "not to raise arms against students." The Central government took stern action to stop this disruption.

This has proved once again that preservation of the very foundation of the Indian democracy requires not only observance of conventional traditions, and the maintenance of constitutional liberties, but resolute preventive action as well. The Opposition parties are entitled to their activities but only within the framework of the law of the land. The effective refusal of the right-wing and their allies to conform to with this rule is a threat to democracy in India.

DISAPPEARING NATIONS

Sahara Desert keeps growing

THE SAHARA DESERT is expanding southwards. There is no doubt about this, it is one of the essential reasons for the present Sahelian famine. In the past six years, the Sahara has in some places advanced more than a hundred miles. A hundred miles in six years: this is a tremendous rate of advance. And human habitation must flee before the

sand. Flee or die. Both are taking place today in the Sahelian famine area.

Whole nations may disappear. This is a frightening prospect. There are experts who say that the nations directly south of the Sahara may be progressively depopulated during the coming decade. They will then become underdeveloped appendages of their southern tropical neighbours.

Why is this happening? Is the world's climate changing? If there is a real change, is it man-made, or is it a natural phenomenon? No one knows.

The desert gathers its own momentum. The disappearance of human cultivation helps the desert. The death of forests banishes rain. The change may be a natural one, but there is a chance that large-scale investment could stop it.

THE CHANGES being seen are immense, even apart from the expansion of the Sahara. The great rivers of the area, the Senegal, the Gambia and the Niger have fallen to levels which have never been seen before in human memory. Salt-water is encroaching on sweet water. There is now salt-water in the Senegal River 150 miles from the sea. In normal circumstances agricultural settlements border the rivers even where they run through desert country; but where the water is salt this becomes impossible.

Lake Chad, one of the world's great inland seas, has largely disappeared. It has been divided into four separate lakes, and communities which for decades have made their living from fishing now find themselves up to twenty miles from water.

These are momentous developments. Most of the animals are dead. Now the people who depended on the animals are dying. And when the rain comes, too often it comes in torrents, carrying all before it—and breaking up the fragile communications which have been retained through the drought years.

— Swiss Press Review

GOBAR GAS

An Innovation Sri Lanka Can Use

by O. P. Chawla

The holy cow and nuclear technology co-exist in our country. But the conditions of life here are such that we cannot do without either. Although cowdung as a source of fuel was investigated upon and established in India as early as 1939, there are today only 7,000 gobar gas plants in operation. Perhaps, the fuel crunch will force us to resurrect this forsaken innovation.

It is estimated that there are about 210,000,000 heads of cattle in India producing an annual 421.5 million tonnes of fresh dung. Over 50 per cent of this dung is now dried and burnt as fuel. The Indian Agricultural Research Institute, New Delhi, had taken up this problem for investigation as far back as 1939, to work out a system by which the two conflicting aspects of burning dung for fuel purposes and at the same time using it for manuring crops could be reconciled.

The experiments concluded in the design of a cheap and simple gas plant in which gobar, cowdung, in the first instance is fermented anaerobically to yield a combustible gas which can be used for cooking, lighting and generation of power, and in the second instance, the residue made available for use as manure without any loss of the manurial constituents.

THE OPERATION of this model, specially designed to suit our rural economy and conditions, has been extensively tested for over two decades and it warrants the adoption by our farmers. At present, there are three major institutions or agencies in the country engaged in the popularisation of this innovation. They are the Indian Agricultural Research Institute, New Delhi, the Khadi and Village Industries Commission, Bombay, and the Planning, Research and Action Institute of Lucknow.

But, according to rough estimates, only 7,000 gobar gas plants of different capacities have been established in the country so far. Most of the work is done by the Khadi Commission which operates a special scheme for providing subsidy and loans for this purpose.

The village model of the IARI, the smallest economic model of 100 cubic feet capacity, is sufficient to meet the cooking and lighting needs of a family of five or six, possessing three to four heads of cattle. As nightsoil also generates combustible gas, a farmer with only two heads of cattle can connect his latrine to the gas plant.

THE PRESENT COST of a complete installation of this type of gas plant comes to about Rs. 1,000. There is a daily production of 100 cubic feet of gas. One burner consumes about eight to 10 cubic feet of gas an hour. Comparing it with liquified petroleum gas which costs 20 paise an hour, the daily production will be equivalent to one rupee, (gobar gas has only half the calorific value of LPG.)

Now, if the farmer sells the dung as such, it may not fetch him more than 70 paise. If we compute the value of manure also, it can be seen that the cost of installation could be recovered in less than three years, and the gas plant itself is for life.

To sum up, the other advantages of the gobar gas plant are: (1) In addition to making cooking a more pleasant chore, the conversion of dung into gas yields a fuel which is more than six times as efficient. (2) The nuisance of smoke, the cause of eye and heart disease among rural folk, is eliminated. (3) There is no dung slurry for flies and mosquitos to breed in. (4) While in the conventional type of composting nearly 50 per

cent of the dung is lost, only 23 to 28 per cent is lost when it turns into manure after gassification. (5) The removal of the heat constituents make the residue actually richer than the original dung. (6) Gobar gas can also be used for running engines which use petrol, powerine, kerosene and desel. Gas needed for these purposes is about 15 cubic feet per hour of horse power engine.

—Yojana

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Pakistani Reactions

by A. A. Jafri

PAKISTANI NEWSPAPERS have over reacted expressing concern over India's explosion of a nuclear device. Almost all newspapers gave banner headlines to the news.

The *June* of Lahore, in a lengthy editorial accused India of having expansionist aims and said "this advance in technology is in keeping with these aims." The editorial goes on to say, "India is aiming at colonising the smaller neighbouring countries and both Pakistan and China have been victims of India's expansionist policies. The balance of power in the subcontinent has been disturbed and this lays open the question of Pakistan's defence." The *Jung* sought to win the support of Arab countries and said "just as India has been made an atomic power by her patrons, so too can Israel be made a super power by her patrons."

Pakistani papers seem to be getting upset by India's defence budget which they regard as a threat to Pakistan's security and integrity. The *Imroze* has urged America to help Pakistan meet its defence needs "if America is interested in maintaining peace in the subcontinent."

Pakistani newspapers have shown great concern over communal riots in India, particularly over the latest incident in Sadar Bazar in Delhi. The *Jung* of Karachi said "such riots have become a daily affair and the Pakistan Government must take note of these occurrences and put pressure on the Government of India under the Liaquat-Nehru and Nehru-Noon agreements" and hoped that Pakistan would rouse the world's conscience over the massacre of Muslims in India. The *Murriyat* of Karachi said, "such riots belie Indian claim to democracy, secularism and tolerance".

A STRANGE CLAIM made by the *Jasarat* of Karachi is "the Muslims in India are Pakistanis and Hindus in Pakistan are Indians." The paper said, "Pakistan came into

being because of the two-nation theory and so the Government of Pakistan is the guardian and protector of that theory." The paper expounded its philosophy on these terms: "Theoretically Muslims in India are Pakistanis and the Hindus in Pakistan are Bharatees. Muslims living in India could be Indian nationals but they cannot be Indians. Similarly, the Hindus in Pakistan are definitely Pakistani nationals but not Pakistanis. Muslims in India are Pakistanis in the same way as Pakistanis adopting the nationality of America, Britain or any other country."

Pakistani papers have commented on the walk-out by the Indian Charged d' Affairs from a banquet in Bhutto's honour in Peking. The *Jung* said, "there was nothing objectionable in the remarks made by China's Deputy Premier as he had not said a single word against the independence and sovereignty of India". The paper emphasised, "But Kashmir is neither a part of India nor India's internal affair". The paper said that the walk-out was proof of "India's narrow mindedness and cheapness." The *Hurriyat* said that India was always opposed to Pakistan's independence and territorial integrity and would never concede the right of self-determination to the people of Kashmir. The paper added, "under these circumstances efforts made to establish good neighbourly relations and peace in the subcontinent would suffer severe setback."

THE PAKISTANI PRESS comments reveal some uneasiness over the agreements recently concluded by the Prime Ministers of India and Bangladesh. The *Musawat* of Lahore urges that "Pakistan must establish friendly relations with Bangladesh soon for two reasons. Firstly Bangladesh is linked with Pakistan through Islam and secondly it serves the interests of Pakistan itself."

The *Mashriq* of Lahore gives another queer reason for suggesting closer contacts with Bangladesh. It said, "if lawlessness spread in Bangladesh it would give India an opportunity to launch police action and big powers would also try to intervene."

The paper wants Pakistan to prove, by co-operating with Bangladesh in all fields, that Pakistan

still consider the people of Bangladesh as brothers. Mohammed Badar Muneer, in an article in the *Imroze* of Lahore suggested, "Sheike Mujib wanted to clear up some of his internal problems before starting negotiations with Pakistan for the resumption of political and trade relations."

A CONTROVERSIAL VIEW

Whose Foot Print?

by Jepharis

Adam's Peak, Sri Pada, Samanalkanda and Sivan Adi Patham are the four popular names by which is known Sri Lanka's world-renowned Holy Mountain (and fifth highest, raising its triangular apex from the southern wall of the Central Hill Country to a height of 7362 feet above sea level), held sacred and venerated by Buddhists, Christians, Hindus and Muslims alike, and described in almost every book on Ceylon, beginning with the early travellers Marco Polo, Ibn Batuta and Fah-sein.

The full-moon poya during the dry, clear-skied months of February and March (Navam & Medin) are the favourite times for pilgrimages to Sri Pada, although there is a steady trickle of devotees at other pasalos-poyas, and throughout the year as well, though not during the monsoon seasons (SW, May-July & NE, Oct-Dec) when the rain and the blowing tends to be prohibitively severe.

There are two routes leading to Sri pada, one from Maskeliya through tea estates, via Gangulitenne, Indikatupana and Sitanguli, along the north face; and the other from Ratnapura or Kuruwita, via Carney Estate and the Peak Wilderness, along the south face.

The first route is favoured by pilgrims, as it is much easier and less tiring, the climb being just above 2000 feet; while the second route is longer, more arduous and steep, the climb being over 7000 feet from almost sea-level to the summit. Very often, pilgrims climb one way and descend the other. The CGR KV track, and the main line as far as Hatton

are used to take pilgrims to Kuruwita & Ratnapura, and Maskeliya respectively, apart from the CTB bus services and specially hired coaches which, are the more favoured mode of transport.

Saukyadana, First Aid Services. Ambalamas and feeding centres are available to pilgrims all along both routes, at regularly spaced intervals. Sitagangul on the Maskeliya route, and a point below Carney bridge, on the Ratnapura route, are popular bathing places where the pilgrim is expected to purify himself before making the ascent, just as he is expected to bathe in the Menik Ganga before worshipping at Kataragama, a popular Buddhist and Hindhu shrine in the deep south.

Another point of similarity between Sri Pada and Kataragama is that they both have their guardian deities to whom vows are made and prayers invoked by the superstitious, "Saman Deviyo" being the name of the god who is supposed to preside over the sacred peak and its environs, and protect its pilgrims.

However, what the simple, unsophisticated Buddhist pilgrim does not realise and fails to believe is that there is only ONE GOD, and FATHER ALMIGHTY, CREATOR of ALL, and SUPREME RULER of THE UNIVERSE, JHWH (JEHOWAH) GOD as he is fondly known by His special witnesses. All these lesser, petty 'gods', like Kataragama god, and Saman Deviyo, could well be fabrications of the mass consciousness, fed by legends handed down from generation to

generation, on the lines of a 'man-made' god in his own image.'

It is true that there is a "sacred atmosphere" that pervades these shrines, which seems to hold captive the imaginative mind, but this could well be induced by autosuggestion or be a by-product of crowd darshana and does not necessarily mean that a special deity presides at these places, although it could be so.

How and why did Sri Pada become a sacred peak?

Well, besides its unique positions commanding situation, and prominent appearance, visible as it is from many distant parts of the island and even far out at sea; the unusual suspended projection of its shadow over the tea-fields at Sunrise; and being the mountain to which butterflies are supposed to go to die (hence one of its names) the main reason for its sanctity is the peculiar rocky depression at its summit (now enshrined by the Saman Devale), which Buddhists believe to be the footprint of Lord Buddha (Sri Pada), Christian venerate as the pawmark of Adam (Adam's Peak) or S. Thomas, the Muslims hold to be that of Prophet Mohamed, and the Hindus believe it is a foot print of Siva.

It was (until recently a contradictory opinion was put forward) generally believed that the Buddha visited this island at least once, to settle the dispute between the Nagas and the Yakshas at Kelaniya, and possibly even twice, on the second occasion leaving his foot print as a memorial of his visit! Being Buddha, there is a theory

that he could travel according to the principal of levitation or physical transmigration, in other words like mythical Ravana, he came flying, even, in an age that knew not the aeroplane! It was thus easy for him to leave an imprint of one colossal footprint *en passe!*

In Rama's case, of course, there is a belief that he brought Sita in some sort of early flying contraption which later became extinct for a long period, until the Wright brothers re-discovered the principle of flying heavier-than-air machines at Kittyhawk 70 years ago.

The two christian interpretations are (1) that Adam, after he was exiled from the Garden of Eden (situated somewhere in Asia Minor, it is said,) made this "other eden, demi-paradise" his home, and left a souvenir of his sojournment here on the summit of Adam's Peak: hence the name, and (2) that St. Thomas, on his evangelical tour of the East in the early years of the Christian era—he was said to have preached on the shore of Gintupitiya (where S. Thomas' Church now graces an eminence) about 52 A.D.—somehow or other found his way to this summit and left his 'trademark' there! Likewise the Muslims hold that Mohammed did the same!

It can easily be deduced, when we look into this matter carefully, analytically, and with a clear mind, that all these theories about footprints are nothing but myth and legend, surmise and conjecture, idle speculation and nonsense; and that the basin-shaped hollow, now a receptacle for the coins of devotees, in merely a natural depression in the rock, though singularly and coincidentally situated at a site, as if kissed by the devas, which would give credence for such beliefs to arise, and be added to the vast store of folklore which makes Lanka so rich in the history of her traditions and culture.

* *

NO ORDINARY EARTHLING?

The clamour raised in the West around Uri Geller, who claims he can bend metal by will power and make broken watches tick by touching them, was given further stimulus the other day by the publication in London of his authorized biography, put out under the title of "Uri". Without taking any trouble to adduce proofs, his biographer Andrija Puharich says Geller is an agent for beings from outer space who have been flying around the earth for the past 800 years and are planning a mass landing in the next few years. Geller had conversation with those beings through a tape recorder, but the tapes were destroyed by them. Only Puharich and Geller may be allowed to see the beings during their visit because the latter consider the human race unacceptable. Puharich affirms that he wrote the book "Uri" on the orders of the beings. And, at their command, Geller has refused to undergo scientific tests to prove that he is no ordinary earthling.

Does India's First Nuclear Explosion Make Any Difference ?

by B. M. Kaushik

Institute of Defence Studies & Analyses.

May 25,

Last Saturday, a jubilant nation heard of a nuclear device having been tested underground that morning in the Rajasthan deserts. It was a successful experiment having caused no venting and almost no radioactive fallout in the area. It was the culmination of efforts our nuclear scientists have been putting in for the last thirty years and represented a milestone in India's nuclear programme.

Since it is common knowledge that there is hardly any difference between the technology of a test explosion of a nuclear device for peaceful purposes and that for weapons purposes, the May 18 test has produced varied reactions with Pakistan taking, as expected, an extreme view.

IN THIS CONTEXT a few questions arise: Have we embarked upon a nuclear weapons programme? How far is it convincing, as the official announcement said, that we have done it only for peaceful purposes and that we still adhere to our policy of abjuring nuclear weapons? Is it only a continuation of our nuclear policy conceived immediately after independence under the stewardship of Jawaharlal Nehru? What difference does it really make to our nuclear policy and programme?

Soon after Hiroshima, when the power of the Atom was first demonstrated, the national decision-makers in the capitals of the world were left with three possible options in this regard. First, to make the Bomb and thus challenge the U.S. monopoly as USSR, Britain and China have done. Secondly, to abjure the Bomb and adopt an unconcerned attitude about this new source of energy, which is what countries with feeble resources could do. Thirdly, to develop nuclear energy for peaceful purposes only and in spite of the ability to explode the Bomb refrain from doing so which only the middle powers could decide to pursue.

India opted for the last alternative. While it could not have thought of a nuclear weapon programme at that stage because

of the then leadership and conditions of its economy and industry, it could not have decided either to ignore the vast potentials of the atomic energy applicable to its industrial and agrarian development. However, such a policy has proved untenable in the past because it demands of the States a self-restraint from enhancing their national power which the Bomb gives them.

France, which started with the civilian programme, decided in due course to embark upon a weapon programme. But in the case of India this policy has become an article of faith because it had been upheld and nurtured by its formulator, Jawaharlal Nehru, for more than seventeen years uninterruptedly. The Nehru policy, thus, required India to abstain from manufacturing the Bomb and to make concerted efforts toward developing the nuclear energy for peaceful purposes free from any sort of international control over it.

BY AND LARGE, this policy has remained unchanged, the May 18 test notwithstanding. Nuclear energy comes from a self-sustained fission-chain reaction in the fissionable material. There are only three fissile materials which can sustain a fission-chain reaction, viz., Uranium-235, Plutonium-239 and Uranium 233. The fission-chain reaction can either be a controlled

one or an uncontrolled one. Nuclear reactors, whether experimental or bigger ones for producing electricity on a commercial scale, are based on controlled fission-chain reaction. The uncontrolled reaction, on the other hand, produces tremendous amount of energy in a fraction of a second and is called a nuclear explosion. Whether the nuclear explosion thus made is used for destructive purposes or constructive purposes is a matter of political decision.

Indian scientists had their first experience with controlled fission-chain reaction in 1956 when an experimental Reactor, Apsara, was set up at Trombay. On May 18 1974, they had their first experience with uncontrolled fission-chain reaction. The only difference is, and that important, that while in the case of the former they had been and were getting help from abroad, in the latter case they did it on their own. It has been a continuing programme. The Government of India decided in 1948, when it set up the Atomic Energy Commission to provide facilities to Indian scientists to experiment with the Atom and explore the potentialities of this new source of energy. The decision was and remains a civilian nuclear programme. And it should be borne in mind that this is certainly, though not basically, different from a nuclear weapons programme.

AS THE EXPERIENCE of the existing five nuclear-weapon power shows, a nuclear weapons programme is based on setting up facilities for producing fissile material on a large scale. All these five powers set up plants to enrich uranium, i.e. to produce uranium 235, by gaseous diffusion process even as they went in for plutonium explosions in the beginning. We have not even planned for a gaseous diffusion plant. Researches in the field of centrifuge process to enrich uranium are in a very nebulous stage.

Moreover, our known reserves of natural uranium (the mother element of U-235) are not to sustain a weapons programme. Plutonium-239 can, no doubt, be also used to sustain a weapons programme but even in this field, in spite of our efforts during the last 18 years,

we have not made much stride. We have four experimental reactors at Trombay out of which only two can produce Pu-239 and that too in small quantities. The commercial plant at Tarapur was built as a turn-key project by a US firm. It is dependent on the US supply of enriched Uranium as its feed and is under international safeguard. Similarly, the Rajasthan plant is built with Canadian aid and is under international safeguards. We cannot, thus, use Pu-239 product at these reactors. The Kalpakkam plant is much behind the schedule.

Thus, in 1974, when we had our first explosion, it is estimated that we had nearly 120 kg. of Pu-239 with us, which means enough fissile material for eight devices of the type recently tested. Even if it was a Bomb, which it was not, it does not by itself make sense from the point of view of a realistic and sustained weapons programme.

MOREOVER as has already been mentioned, we do not have enough known reserves of natural uranium which is the fertile element irradiated to produce the fissile Pu-239. The only hope of producing Pu-239 in larger quantities is based on the success of fast breeder technology because a fast breeder reactor produces more of fissile material than it consumes. But except one plant in the Soviet Union, fast breeder reactors have not yet been put to commercial use anywhere in the world. We have started building a pilot fast breeder reactor in Madras with French help. It can thus be safely asserted that a commercial fast breeder reactor cannot become operative in this country before mid-eighties.

Our researches in the field of producing U-233 from its mother element, Thorium, of which we have abundant reserves, have also not made much progress though little quantities have been obtained in research reactors at Trombay. According to the known programme of AEC, the radiation of Thorium to produce U-233 on a commercial scale is to be done in the third stage of our programme which means not before mid-eighties in any case.

Keeping these constraints in view, it would be forwardly

to allege that India has embarked upon a weapons programme. To start experimenting with uncontrolled fission-chain reaction (explosion) with very little stock of fissile material at hand makes sense only in the context of long range study of its application for constructive purposes. Thus, there is hardly any reason to doubt the bona fides of the political decision, which has been made clear time and again, that the nuclear test explosion we made recently, or even some more that we might make in the near future, is purely for constructive purposes.

As our scientists are keeping abreast with the controlled chain reaction in the form of fabricating and operating various reactors and putting that knowledge to use for production of electricity, in medicines, agriculture, food preservation, etc., they also should keep abreast with the technology of uncontrolled chain reaction whose application in mining, digging, oil exploration, etc. are proved beyond doubt, at least theoretically.

The Indian nuclear policy, therefore, remains unchanged. With this explosion India has not violated any international agreement to which it is a party. Underground tests are allowed under the 1963 Moscow Test Ban Treaty.

One of the main reasons for our having not signed the Non-Proliferation Treaty was to protest against its provision that denied our scientists the right to conduct test explosions for peaceful purposes. Such a monopoly of technology we had been pleading against right since 1948 when the U.S. proposed the Baruch Plan and the establishment of International Atomic Development Authority.

With this explosion, we have asserted our right to continue exploring nuclear energy for peaceful purposes free from all sorts of international controls. That is a continuation of our policy. The only change that this test can make should be a reappraisal of the Non-proliferation treaty the Super Powers adopted in the early sixties.

The review conference for the NPT is due next year and let us hope the negotiating powers would make certain amends keeping in view the isolated example of an advanced civilian nuclear power that has started experimenting with nuclear explosion for constructive purposes with a concomitant commitment not to make the Bomb.

—FNF

IN SRI LANKA

Here and There

— a random collection of cuttings and excerpts from the local press reflecting the state of the nation —

AUSTERITY, FOOD DRIVE AT REPUBLIC DAY CELEBRATIONS

Austerity and the food drive will be the main features at this year's Republic Day celebrations throughout the island. The President, Mr. William Gopallawa, and the Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike, will take the salute at the Galle Face Parade march past at which the accent will be on the food production war. There will be no mechanised armoured columns and other vehicles at the parade. The IGP, Mr. Stanley Senanayake, conferred with his senior officials yesterday to discuss the security arrangements for Republic Day. Mr. Senanayake while commending the police officers for the high standards of security on May Day said that law and order should be maintained at all costs on Republic Day too.

Daily Mirror, 13/5/74

TUF CONGRATULATES INDIA

Trincomalee,

The Working Committee of the Tamil United Front met at the residence of Mr. B. Neminathan, MP for Trincomalee, on Saturday evening. The meeting was presided over by Mr. M. Manickam, former Senator, and the following resolu-

ions were unanimously adopted—
1. The Working Committee of the TUF congratulates the government of the people of India on the successful nuclear test carried out recently and on becoming the sixth nuclear power in the world. This advancement has effectively ensured the maintenance of peace in the Indian Ocean.

2. Whereas the Tamil people all over rejoice at the prospect of discovery of oil on a commercial scale in the traditional homeland, they are perturbed over the failure to recruit Tamil personnel on the preliminary projects, when there is large scale unemployment in the area and it is an accepted principle that the wealth and resources of any particular area should be utilised for the advancement of that area, the Working Committee of the Tamil United Front calls upon the Government to introduce effective measures as are necessary to implement this policy.

Messrs. B. Neminathan, MP for Trincomalee, Mr. A. Thangaturai, MP for Mutur, V. Dharmalingam, MP for Uduvil, Mr. V. N. Navaratnam, MP for Chavakachcheri, Mr. X. M. Sellathambu, MP for Vavuniya, Mr. S. Rajadurai 1st MP for Batticaloa and Mr. Nadarajah, ex-Senator were also present.

Daily News, 29/5/74

FRIENDSHIP ASSOCIATION 'CONCERNED'

The following resolution was unanimously passed by the Executive Committee of the Sri Lanka-Pakistan Friendship Association on May 27, 1974, states a press release.

"Sri Lanka-Pakistan Friendship Association expresses its deep shock and concern over India's nuclear explosion and regards it as a grave threat to peace and security of neighbouring countries including Sri Lanka and a great setback to our Prime Minister's proposal for peace loving countries in general and neighbouring countries in particular.

"The association further regrets that India has thought it fit to embark on this undesirable venture when its masses are facing tremendous poverty.

"The association urges upon United Nations to take immediate notice of this new development

and press on India to put an end to her policy which is dangerous to her neighbours and disastrous to her own of making Indian ocean a peace zone. The Association feels that assurances by Indian government of its peaceful intentions cannot remove feelings of insecurity and fear the explosion has caused among all peace populations and assure the non-nuclear powers against growing nuclear threat posed by India."

—Daily News, 29/5/74

ANURA HAPPY CP UNITY IS IMMINENT

Mr. Anura Bandaranaike, chief organiser of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party youth leagues yesterday wrote to the leader of the Sri Lanka Communist Party's hard-line faction, Dr. S. A. Wickremasinghe expressing his satisfaction at the imminent re-unification of the Communist Party reported in the "Daily News" yesterday.

Mr. Bandaranaike told the CP leader: "The unity of Left parties in Sri Lanka was initiated by the late Prime Minister, Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike. Its second stage was continued by the present Prime Minister. The enthusiasm and support for this unity by the people was, clearly indicated in May 1970.

"Recently as a result of differences within the party, it so happened that the Communist Party moved away from the Government. You and your party are well aware that both I and the SLFP youth leagues have not approved of this separation. I wish to point out that the SLFP youth leagues have always declared that all the left parties must unite and work in collaboration with the Government. I was glad to learn from the newspapers today that this idea has now been realised in a satisfactory manner.

"I would like to invite your party to join with us and work with greater enthusiasm and co-operation in future."

A copy of this letter has been sent to the leader of the CP's soft-line faction, the Minister of Housing and Construction, Mr. Pieter Keuneman.

—Daily News, 6/6/74

CREDIT SQUEEZE BY COMMERCIAL BANKS

Commercial banks have introduced a credit squeeze with immediate effect following instructions from the Central Bank.

Credit will not be extended over the limit as at May 24.

According to top official sources the credit squeeze has been decided on to curb consumption expenditure which had shown an upward trend recently following price increases.

Consumption expenditure, particularly of State Corporations, was recording a significant increase and government's financial advisers had stressed the need for corrective measures to be adopted.

Official sources indicated that the credit squeeze need not necessarily be a long-term measure. The situation will be watched closely and a relaxation is likely to be effected when the trend improves.

The credit squeeze is not expected to affect the food drive and other development plans of government.

Commercial banks were due to meet last night to discuss the latest developments.

—Daily News, 29/5/74

Bamboo Tubewells in Assam

Shri Gautam Pratap Goswami, 26, of Nalbari Satra, Nalbari has successfully substituted bamboo in place of galvanised iron pipe in installing a filter point for the first time in Assam. Shri Goswami invested about Rs. 750 in installing the filter point excluding power pump and thus saved about Rs. 2,250. It is learnt that about 1,000 such bamboo filter points will be installed in Assam during the current financial year.

IS IT TRUE?

Sherlock Holmes

Snap Election?

An Exercise in Political Speculation?

IS IT NOT TRUE that the euphoria, which has now gripped governmental and United Front circles that it was once again on the top of the world has helped, to develop a complacency that there was nothing to stop the UF from continuing in power for a long time to come? That the fact the Government has been able to ensure massive imports of rice, wheat and sugar has made many think that there was nothing to stop the United Front becoming a permanent ruling force in the political landscape of Sri Lanka? That this feeling of supreme elation has no doubt also been promoted by the utterly stupid and futile policies of the Opposition parties? That the UNP, as anticipated by the *Tribune*, has landed itself in the wilderness of political disarray? That the TUF does not know which way it should turn? That the satyagraha and civil disobedience gimmicks of the UNP have misfired and have thrown the masses which still had faith in the UNP into confusion? That in this situation, the United Front had with dexterity and acumen, has launched a political counter-offensive against the UNP which has given the Government a substantial advantage over its opponents? That to clinch matters, the Prime Minister and her colleagues have embarked on a nationwide campaign of political rallies during every weekend? That there is no doubt that these political rallies have begun to draw large crowds which had been unwilling to attend UF meetings for a long time after the April 1971 insurrection? That the Food Production Campaign, however, inadequate and faltering, has also given a boost to public confidence in the Government that it was after all doing a job of work?

That the inadequacies of the last Maha crop and the shortfall in the paddy procurement have been forgotten in the massive food supplies the Government has obtained through imports? That it is a fact that the Government is assured of stocks to sustain the rations in rice, flour, and probably even sugar, until the beginning of next year? That in the meantime great hopes are being placed in the current Yala and the coming Maha?

IS IT ALSO NOT A FACT that in the midst of this euphoria there is also apathy and complacency? That there are political strategists in the UF, who are pragmatic realists, and who dread the day when the present euphoria will wear off in the continuing confrontation with the reality that the United Front has still not yet found lasting solutions to the problems of production and employment? That many of them wonder whether the radical reforms, which have been implemented, would yield adequate and purposeful results to make victory in 1977 a dead certainty? That it would take much more than two years for the Land Reforms to bring permanent results? That in this situation some strategists are tempted to think that a snap election shortly after the next Budget (making it a sunshine budget) will ensure a United Front victory that will keep the Government in power to well into 1980? That this would be a safer bet than an election, in 1977 with all manner of imponderables and risks that could arise in 1975 and 1976 and which cannot be envisaged at this stage? That whilst thinking of this kind has begun to prevail in some quarters, UF top leaders are still

plugging the line that the Government would stay in power until 1977 when the next elections are under the Constitution would be held? That UF publicists also are what all talk about a snap election earlier than 1977 stemmed from UNP canards?

BUT IS IT NOT TRUE that if the Government held a snap elections after a sunshine Budget this October it would have many many political advantages? That the present euphoria can easily be sustained until the end of the year? That ensured rations and minimum food supplies are the best guarantee of victory in any elections? That the foreign exchange crisis can be successfully contained well into 1975? That there could be a further euphoria of an oil strike in Mannar? That above all while the UF was still a solid homogenous force, (what with the two CPs uniting once again), the UNP and the Opposition were in total disarray? That the UNP was internally divided? That its policies did not evoke adequate response from the masses—even the masses which were disillusioned with the Government? That more than all this, if an election were held at the end of 1974, or very early in 1975, it would cut the ground completely from under the feet of the JR—the UNP? That the UNP's main political platform now is to demand an election in May 1975 in terms of the old Constitution which is no more? That if there was a snap election this demand would vanish into thin air without the UNP being able to score any advantage? That the UNP cannot even claim that it had "compelled" the Government to hold the elections in 1975? That it is already clear to all people that the UNP is not able to compel the Government to do anything or not do other things? That additionally, the propaganda machine of the UNP and the Opposition is in even greater disarray than the political machines of the Opposition parties? That whilst the UNP and the Opposition cannot hope to rebuild their propaganda and party machines within the next nine months, they may be able to regroup forces and organise a powerful political and propaganda machines by 1977?