

TRIBUNE

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Shake-up in the Foreign Office

STIRRING EVENTS have begun to enliven our Foreign Office. Everything that is reported to have happened so far has no doubt been long overdue. The coming of this shake-up was seen in the shadows that had been cast after Mr. Tissa Wijeyeratne had spent a month in Colombo in March this year studying the inner working of our Foreign Office, and after it was announced that he would take up duties as Additional Secretary in the Foreign Office in order to bring about some reforms to make the place function in a way that would make it acceptable to the new aspirations of the people and also make it a viable institution in the world of today.

Over the years there has been a great deal of criticism in the press and elsewhere about the manner in which our Foreign Office conducted business and also about how several of our career and even politically-appointed diplomats had conducted themselves. Much of the criticism was valid and had they been heeded, and the necessary changes introduced, our Foreign Office—known earlier as the Department of External Affairs in keeping with the junior status of a Commonwealth country—would not have become the laughing stock it has become.

Vested interests in the Foreign Office were so powerful that it

was the critic, whether a newspaper or a person, who had to retreat hurt when a confrontation took place. One of the best political appointees we ever had as Ambassador, Mr. Wilmot Perera, who went as Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike's envoy to China after diplomatic relations were first established, had found that the bureaucracy in the Foreign Office did not permit a proper functioning of the Embassy in Peking. Mr. Wilmot Perera could not bring about the necessary reforms—what he did not realise was that the malady was far more deep-seated than he imagined—and he had retired hurt.

Newspapers, like the *Tribune*, which had ventured to point out basic errors in the working of the Foreign Office, were penalised by being taken off the list of newspapers sent to our Missions abroad. *Tribune* has in the last twenty years suffered total banning, partial banning and other similar discriminatory action at the hands of our Foreign Office bureaucracy, and also been exposed to the personal animosity from a number of bureaucrats who felt that they were the system itself and that any criticism of the system was a personal affront. However, it must be said that there were and still are a large number of career diplomats and political appointees who regard *Tribune* as essential reading and have learnt, in spite of the darts and arrows we have occasionally flung at men and matters, that national interests alone motivated whatever appeared in our columns.

There may have been occasions when the things we said may have

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been well off the mark or may have appeared unnecessarily "personal" but such aberrations arose mainly because of the total lack of rapport between the Foreign Office and the Press as a whole. In the first phase after Independence, in the days of the Senanayake and Kotelawala, the Foreign Office had rapport only with the so-called Political Correspondent of Lake House, (J. L. Fernando of the *Three Prime Ministers* fame), and all other commentators and journalists who refused to toe the JLF line were regarded as pariahs by the brahmins of the Foreign Office. This kind of relationship has continued between the Foreign Office and the Press over the years, and the current favourite or favourites of the Foreign Office in the Press, enjoyed rapport whilst the others, even the most knowledgeable on foreign affairs, were kept outside the pale lest they prick some bubble on which the vested interests in the place rested.

THERE IS NO DOUBT that the reforms, which now seem to be sweeping the Foreign Office, have been initiated and implemented by Mr. Tissa Wijeyeratne who assumed duties on June 6. He was a political appointee who has served this country for over three years in Paris. But Mr. Wijeyeratne, it must be said, grew up in the bosom of the foreign missions this country has maintained ever since this country was permitted to establish diplomatic and trade missions in Britain and in the Commonwealth countries even in the period of the pre-dawn of Sri Lanka's real Independence. Mr. Tissa Wijeyeratne therefore has had an inside working knowledge of our Foreign Service, first as a member of the household of one of the earlier politically appointed diplomats, Mr. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne, and later as a head of mission himself. But there is no doubt that it was his three to four year spell in Paris that has given Mr. Tissa Wijeyeratne the real insight into the current state of our Foreign Office.

To his credit, it must be said that Mr. Tissa Wijeyeratne has been able to get much further in the job of cleaning up the Augean stables in our Foreign Office than men like Mr. Wilmot Perera who had quit office because they had wanted to help the Government to reform

the Foreign Office. Mr. Wijeyeratne is doing the job from the inside and whether he will be thrown out or made to quit before he succeeds in doing what he has set out to do is yet to be seen. The tasks he has set himself, judging from the press reports of what he is planning to do, are formidable, and he will make many enemies both inside and outside the bastion of our Foreign Office. *Tribune* does not wholly agree with all he is reported to have said or with all the remedial measures he has proposed, but *Tribune* has undiluted admiration for him because he wants to eliminate the anachronistic relics of vested interests in Foreign Office and also because he has so far succeeded in getting things done where more formidable personages have signally failed in the past.

The daily press have so far highlighted a number of matters which have come up for review in the Foreign Office under the impact of Mr. Wijeyeratne's spring-cleaning. It was a happy augury that he chose to discuss some of the problems with trade unions which impinged on the work in the Foreign Office. A report in the *Ceylon Observer* of June 19 merits attention. It said:

"A Foreign Service representative of the progressive aspirations of the broad masses of this country is the aim of the changes that are now being planned. The reforms envisaged are expected to draw inspiration from a broader and nationalistic base in keeping with the people's victories of 1956 and 1970. Fluency in English alone will not be an advantage to those seeking entry into the Foreign Service. Emphasis will be on attitudes and national oriented outlook.

"Recruitment to Sri Lanka's Foreign Service will be on a more broad-based system. The aspirations of the people's victories of 1956 and 1970 will be reflected in full when selections are made to the Foreign Service. The views of trade unions are being considered so as to give the Foreign Service a nationalistic look. The GCSU was the first trade union to submit their views to the new Additional Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs, Mr. Tissa Wijeyeratne. Candidates who have their roots in

the country and the rural elite will get their chance to represent the country abroad. Fluency in foreign languages will be an asset. However, fluency in English alone won't be an advantage.

"Mr. Wijeyeratne told the GCSU delegates that it was necessary to reorganise the Foreign Ministry in keeping with the aspirations of the people and the changes that had taken place in the country in 1956 and 1970, and he wished to have the view and the co-operation of the trade unions in bringing about these changes. The GCSU delegation led by its president, Mr. P. A. Wanasinghe, said that it was the first time ever that the Foreign Ministry had consulted trade unions. It was essential to drastically change the "Brahminical" character of the Foreign Service in keeping with the socio-economic and political transformation that is now taking place in Sri Lanka.

"Recruitment to the Foreign Service should be broad-based. Graduates who were not competent in English hadn't a chance to enter the service. The Ceylon Administrative Service and the Foreign Service should be amalgamated. They said if that took place, then officers who served abroad should on their return, be appointed to serve in the Provinces. The GCSU also suggested that trade unions be consulted over recruitment, examinations, and the amending of the Foreign Service minute. For that purpose the JCTUO should be consulted and a permanent committee should be formed with trade union representatives to advise the Foreign Ministry on reform from time to time."

IN WANTING to implement these ideas Mr. Wijeyeratne had indicated that national self-interest was the motivating forces behind the reforms, but to achieve this a major revolution was necessary in several sectors of our public life. But whether the necessary co-operation from all inter-connected sectors would be forthcoming was still doubtful.

Mr. Wijeyeratne also hit the nail on two other matters which have been agitating knowledgeable circles in this country: the abuse of duty free privileges and the manner in which a few blue-eyed over-

seas bureaucrats were able to retain the better stations (among the 30 odd missions this country has maintained) among themselves for long periods of time to exclusion of even the less favoured ones in the Foreign Service. There are instances where in a service career of 24 years, 20 duty-free years have been spent abroad in the best of stations. These are incidental benefits reaped by a few owing to the fact that they know how to manipulate the system. It is the system which must be changed. An Observer report of June 21 threw light on this:

"The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is taking measures to keep a close check on liquor, cigarettes, and other goods purchased duty free by the staff of Sri Lanka's Diplomatic and Trade Missions abroad. The Ministry has sent a circular to the country's 30 Missions abroad asking them to provide specific information regarding the quota of liquor and cigarettes allowed by the host Government; the allocation given by the Head of the Mission to each of the diplomatic and non-diplomatic staff; and the arrangements made by each Mission to ensure that bills are settled promptly.

"Missions have been asked to provide this information monthly from 1st July, 1974. The Foreign Ministry has also instructed Sri Lanka Missions to furnish particulars of purchases of duty-free liquor and cigarettes by each of the diplomatic and other staff against the quota allowed to them during each calendar month, beginning July 1974. Particulars have also been called for regarding applications made by officers for the purchase of other duty-free items.

"Meanwhile preliminary work on the non aligned summit fixed for 1976 in Sri Lanka is afoot. 26 senior officers who are now attached to the Foreign Ministry are brought back to Colombo with effect from next week. A few are also transferred out."

There is no doubt that all the hens have come home to roost, but in this game some have to be sent out from time to time, and it will be a test of Mr. Wijeyeratne's administrative and political skill to be able to effect some real reforms in the matter of the postings to our different missions abroad. It may be that he has limited options and

he may have no say in the political appointees who are chosen from time to time to fill our top posts. A number of new names have been mentioned, and whilst some would inspire confidence among the public others have already evoked whispered comments that the old order still continueth.

Mr. Tissza Wijeyeratne is still a new broom. He will no doubt like to sweep clean. The country has known many new brooms in the twenty five years of its Independence. It would be wrong to strike a pessimistic note about new brooms so early in the Wijeyeratne's attempts to reform the Foreign Office. He certainly has evangelical fervour. For the moment he seems to have the necessary power to disturb the dust that has accumulated in the dark and dismal corners of our Foreign Office, but will he last long enough to clean out the cobwebs and the spiders spinning out the webs?

What he has achieved so far is good enough, and it will be in the nation's interests if he is able to bring a new look into our Foreign Office, even if it be for a short time at least. Once a chain reaction is set in motion, then a revolution becomes inevitable. What this revolution will bring its wake is anybody's guess. It is only to be hoped that what will emerge will be better than what disappears. Often it is the other way around, but what must disappear in Sri Lanka's Foreign Office is so bad that nothing worse could take its place.

Tribunania

On Press Freedom On 'Foreign' Correspondents

THERE IS A HUE AND CRY in some quarters that the freedom of the press has been curtailed by the Governmental legislation which has made the Lake House group of newspapers very much dependent on the Government itself. It is also pointed that the Press Council is in a position to exercise overt and covert restraints on the freedom of the press particularly

in matters where governmental policies are concerned. Finally, it has been also made out that the shutting down of the Sun-Dawasa group, temporarily no doubt, has completely undermined press freedom.

Tribune holds no brief for the Government. Tribune has been critical of many policies and action of the Government right from 1970, just as it has been critical of other governments in the past, whatever their political vintage, if in the national interests Tribune



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had felt that it was necessary to be critical. *Tribune* has extended support to the Government in all matters where it felt that correct policies were being followed and implemented.

But with all these restraints about which there is so much grumbling in some quarters, *Tribune* has not taken the position that the state of press freedom in Sri Lanka today is any worse than what it was in any of the years after Independence. In the period of supreme UNP domination from 1946 to 1956 (and even before that, during the days of escalating Senanayake power from 1931), the state of press freedom in this island was something which many cannot visualise today. Two newspaper groups dominated the scene, *Lake House* and the *Times*. There was no third newspaper group because the *Virakesari* was only a weak echo from Sea Street. These two newspaper groups were dominated by owners who wanted particular policies to be implemented and these policies reflected the diehard anti-communist cold war politics of the Dulles-MacCarthyian era. The two newspaper groups slanted news, twisted news, managed news and blacked out news to suit the policies they sought to support. Character assassination was the favourite technique of silencing critics. There are ways of circumventing, through innuendo and insinuation, the laws of libel to assassinate character in the gossip columns of a newspaper. This feature has diminished or has even disappeared nowadays. In addition to all this, massively heavy advertising subsidies (that is what they were) from private sector commercial undertakings and the local off-shoots of the multinationals made all these papers rich and powerful. It was not possible to challenge them on the journalist plane. But even in this set up, the small and weak papers of Left and Opposition parties were subject to direct, indirect and vicious persecution by the Special Branch of the CID, especially in the days of Sir John Kotelawela.

THE SITUATION TODAY is very different. The private interests which dominated the press have disappeared. Governmental intervention directly in the ownership of the *Lake House* and in the running of the *Sun-Dawasa* group have

brought about a new situation. The UNP, at different times in the past, had shut down Opposition papers, and although those papers did not have the massive "mass" facade of the *Dawasa*, they had even great political "pull". Furthermore, the government today controls the bulk of the advertising. We therefore today have a situation where the Government has a controlling interest in the biggest newspaper group and in disbursing remunerative advertising. This is no doubt a different situation from what it was before 1970.

But if one examines the situation objectively and without personal inhibitions, it is clear that the quantum of press freedom today is no more or no less than what it was say twenty years ago in 1954. There was no newsprint shortage then, but the newsprint shortage today is a worldwide problem. At that time those who controlled the press and other mass media felt that they had the "masses" in the palms of their hands. The huge crowds which had then flocked to rallies and meetings of Dudley Senanayake to save the "temples from the flames of Marxism" and the crowds which gathered at meetings thankful for the land which had been distributed under the different colonisation schemes were said to be a guarantee of the validity of the work done by the Press. It was felt that the UNP would be permanently in power, at least for 25 years. But 1956 had come in spite of the Press. And so also 1970. The impotence of the Press was seen in all this.

Today, there are optimists who feel that the United Front will be in power for ever and ever. The Press is now subservient to the UF—just as the Press had once been subservient to the UNP bigwigs in the past. Today crowds flock to the UF banner and UF rallies—and crowds are induced to attend meetings today in the same way the UNP had brought the crowds to its Rallies. There are other differences between then and now, but the essentials are the same. What guarantee is there is that the voters will do what the Government and Press expect them to do?

This is a question which will raise a hornet's nest. Pundits will argue why 1974 is qualitatively

and quantitatively different from 1954, but pundits have not always been found to be correct.

But we have strayed from the question that had provoked this discussion: whether there was freedom of the press in Sri Lanka? There is no doubt that there is as much freedom today as at any comparable time during the last twentyfive years. In fact, in some matters, there seems to be greater freedom today than under the hegemony of private owners. No editor of a paper would then have dared to publicly espouse views which were contrary to government policy which the owners of the paper had accepted as their own. And even if editors expressed some contrary views in private they would never been allowed to give expression to them in the columns of the papers they edited.

Today the situation seems to be different.

In *Lake House* papers, we find the expression of opinions which are different from government policy. Take the question of the atomic explosion which took place in India very recently. In the *Thinakaran*, for instance, columns are churned out which are contrary to government policy in regard to its traditional and current friendship with India. This is no doubt as it should be. But in the days of Wijewardene this would not have been tolerated. All columnists had to toe the line if what they write was to be printed in the Wijewardene press. In this sense there is even greater freedom of the press than before in *Lake House*.

This is not an isolated phenomenon. In the *Daily News*, the Editor is able to publish his talk to the Rotary Club on the Indian atomic blast and what he said, though pregnant with insight, information and sophisticated evaluation, was not on all fours with what Deputy Minister, Lakshman Jayakoddy set out in the National State Assembly as the considered views of the Government on this question. Many other instances can be cited where opinions contrary or different from government policies and attitudes have found expression in the columns of *Lake House* papers.

This is a trend which must be encouraged and articles from inde-

pendent commentators whose views are different from the official line on important matters should also be published in the Lake House papers. This is not to mean that political opponents should be accommodated in the columns of the newspapers, but there are a whole range of writers who reflect different trends not in complete opposition to basic government policies whose contributions will be of value.

APART FROM THIS, unlike in times of real Emergency as during the period of April 1971 insurrection, there is today, as far as we know, no censorship in regard to the despatches sent out by foreign correspondents. This is another welcome feature of the present situation. And it must be remembered that most of the "foreign" correspondents in question are Sri Lankans employed in local newspapers. In the glorious days of the UNP, neither the Wijewardenas nor the owners of the Times would have permitted any of its employees from sending despatches which ran counter to official line about government policies and actions. And there are known instances when the UNP Government of the day had brought pressure on newspaper owners to penalise journalists who sent out despatches which did not please the powers-that-be.

Today, the situation is different. Journalists who work on the government sponsored Lake House send despatches which will never be published by any local papers. From time to time, we read stinging comments about the state of Sri Lanka in the prestigious Hong-kong weekly *Far Eastern Economic Review* by a writer who adopts a different stance when writes for Lake House papers. More recently we had the spectacle of the local, correspondent of *Indian Express* (14/6/74) sending out a despatch of a tendentious nature in regard to a growing rift inside the SLFP Establishment. One way no doubt, of securing the dissemination of news which will not be printed in present day Lake House is to send out the stuff abroad. The freedom and latitude allowed to the journalists who act as "foreign correspondents" is something to be welcomed.

We have just received a copy of the *Sunday Times*,

(9/6/74) published in London. It is one of the best known week-end papers in the English speaking world and it had a scorching piece entitled *CEYLON HEADS FOR CLAMP DOWN AS ITS TROUBLES GROW*. One does not know who was the Special Correspondent who wrote this piece, but the fact that this has appeared over three weeks ago without any governmental repercussions speaks well for the tolerance extended in this country to "foreign" correspondents.

The first part of the article was an over-simplification of the facts to make white appear as black—a series of half truths strung together to create an image which was different from the reality. "THE FUTURE of Sri Lanka's already eroded parliamentary democracy is now uncertain, with Prime Minister Sirimavo Bandaranaike clearly toying with the idea of full authoritarian rule and bringing in drastic measures to head off economic disaster. The government has stepped up its warnings that capitalists are scheming to overthrow the socialist State and replace it with a Fascist order. This is a reference to the opposition United National Party (UNP), whose leadership has been traditionally identified with the well-to-do. The government, which was swept into power in May 1970 as a coalition of Mrs. Bandaranaike's Freedom Party, the socialist Lanka Sama Samaja Party and the Moscow-oriented Communist Party, imposed a state of emergency in April because of the deepening economic crisis centring on food shortages. It also accused the UNP of plotting civil disorders. Mrs. Bandaranaike has repeatedly rejected demands by UNP Leader Junius Jayawardene that parliament be allowed to debate the emergency orders. Press censorship is being enforced, and censors have begun to delete unfavourable reporting from cables filed by local journalists to newspapers abroad...."

What is significant is the suggestion that the Prime Minister was "toying" with the idea of authoritarian rule in order to bring in "drastic measures to head off economic disaster." The PM, it will be recalled, has insisted that she was not deviating from parliamentary rule and that the elections would be held as provided

in the Constitution by 1977. Unless the contrary is shown one has to accept the assurances of the Prime Minister and nothing has taken place so far to show that there would be any attempt to discard parliamentary democracy. This is clearly a mischievous statement. And, the article alleges that there was press censorship "where censors have begun to delete unfavourable reporting from cables filed by local journalists to news papers abroad." We have not heard of any censors operating at the moment.

The despatch then goes on to spotlight attention on the favourite theme of the UNP, the *Janavegaya*. This is what the *Sunday Times* article said: "...A nine-month-old split on the Communist party has been patched up, thus closing the coalition ranks firmly behind Mrs. Bandaranaike—on the surface at least. But what may ultimately force the Prime Minister's hand is not the parliamentary opposition or coalition quarrels, but dissent within her close circle of advisers, known as the 'palace guard.' Foremost among them is her son-in-law, Kumar Rupasinghe, who controls the newspaper *Janavegaya*. Junius Jayawardene has said that the *Janavegaya* group and the members of the Prime Minister's family in it constitute the real government of this country. They form an inner cabinet with the Prime Minister in the background, in which most ministers are only figureheads. Interestingly, the *Janavegaya* in the past few days has been critical of the government—a reversal of its usual stance. The most controversial policy involve food supplies. Although the United Front won by a landslide in the 1970 election, largely by promising to boost the weekly rice handout, it has been forced to cut and very the amount...."

There is nothing especially strange or secret about the information about *Janavegaya*, because all UNP publications refer to this day in and day out. It has been mentioned in the National State Assembly time and again and the *Indian Express* despatch referred to it from another angle.

The rest of the article in the *Sunday Times* is a summarised rehash

of what had appeared in *The Economist* and to which reference was made in the *Tribune* recently.

IN THE DAYS of Sir John and other UNP stalwarts the Special Branch would have been put on the job of tracking down the Special Correspondent of the *Sunday Times*. If he were a local, woe betide him, and if he were a foreigner it would be the last time he would be allowed to set foot in the island. So many people were thrown out in the days of Sir John for lesser misdemeanours than writing a piece like this, that one must be thankful for the greater mercies which are bestowed on the journalistic fraternity today by the Administration.

And has anybody even bothered to find out who this Special Correspondent of the *Sunday Times* is? Did any special investigator fly out from London to this island in the beginning of June? And, after such a visit, was it only this half-digested piece garnished with ill-sorted half-truths, no-truths and plain untruths that he was able to produce? And, if he was a local, why this jaundiced view?

We have our own quarrels with the Government and the Administration, but it cannot be said that people are not allowed to have their say—no doubt within the law. The UNP has official papers in the three languages and also a non-official daily called *Dinapatha* which is widely read. Whilst the smaller weeklies and bi-weeklies are not journalistically very attractive, the *Dinapatha* is a scintillating daily sheet of great journalistic competence which gives the news on which the Opposition thinks it can rely on to mount a new campaign against the Government.

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BY ARIEL

✻ IMF PLAN ✻ CHINA
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THOUGH IT IS CLAIMED that some some kind of a package has been worked out by the Committee of Twenty to bring some kind of order to the disordered monetary system of the world of capitalism it is not clear what the interim agreement will bring the world. The USA and the FRG, it was said, had withdrawn their objections to the SDRs thereby making a solution possible, but it now transpires that what they had agreed to was only to "consider" relaxing their objections under certain given conditions. Nevertheless, something, has been achieved and some steps forward have been taken, but whether this will lead to a number of other steps back within a short time is something hard to say.

When one looks at the matter with detachment, it is clear that the outcome is indecisive, and the USA and West Germany have only agreed to "reconsider" their position to SDR's and give a final answer next February. This is regarded as disappointing by many countries because the meeting has only postponed by this "compromise" the showdown until next year. Most delegations had wanted the package the Committee had worked on for two years to be accepted fully and finally, but nobody wanted to force the issue with two important countries not in agreement. The link proposal based on the SDRs will work only if the USA and West Germany were fully in the scheme. The technical feasibility of the link has now been established and what was needed was a political decision and what has heartened many countries is that the USA and West Germany have, for the first time, shown a certain degree of flexibility. Without an agreement on the SDRs link, developing countries will not agree to any amendment to the articles of the IMF

which are necessary to implement the interim reform package.

The package agreed upon as an interim measure was based on the following: the SDRs whose value was formerly tied to gold will now be based on the average value of "basket" of 16 currencies in proportion to their importance in world finance: the US dollar will occupy 33 per cent of the basket with the German mark, the British pound, the Japanese yen, the French franc, the Italian lira and other currencies representing proportionately lesser values. Starting in July, a new oil facility in the IMF will lend money borrowed from the oil producing countries, to the relatively more prosperous countries which have been hit by the oil crisis. "An 'extended' loan facility, which is yet to be set up, will lend money to developing countries facing "fundamental economic difficulties" not related to the oil crisis alone, — the amounts so lent will be larger than normal and for periods longer than the present IMF loans." Another decision taken by the committee also ran counter to the wishes of the developing countries, and this related to raising the rate of interest on SDRs from 1.5 per cent at present to five per cent.

WHILST THE IMF has taken the first faltering steps in the matter of resolving the monetary crisis there was an unexpected *furor* in the Far East with France exploding an atomic device in the atmosphere in the region of Murora Atoll in the Pacific and with China also exploding a similar device in the Lop Nor region in Sinkiang. France declared that it would be last of its atmospheric tests whilst China said that the test was for defence and that she would continue to develop her military nuclear capability until the super-powers decided to give up nuclear deterrence and destroy all stockpiles of nuclear weapons. China also reiterated that she would never be the first to use nuclear weapons. New Zealand, Australia and Japan reacted angrily over the French test in the Pacific, but their protests about the Chinese test was on a much lower key.

With President Nixon offering nuclear reactors to Egypt and Israel for "peaceful purposes," there is a hint that atomic proli-

feration may assume a new dimension in the coming decade. There are also whispers that Britain had used the US Nevada underground test site to experiment with a new head for a Polaris missile.

Understandably the United States has been silent about all the recent tests: in India, China and the Pacific (French). The USA has always shown an understanding sympathy for the efforts made by China to acquire nuclear capability—because of the threat China believed she faced from the Soviet Union. The USA was also confident that it would be a long time before China could pose any threat to the USA and that China had territorial disputes with the USSR and India to resolve before she would be inclined to look beyond the Pacific.

THE RELATIONS between the USA and China continue to puzzle many observers. The United States has emerged as China's third largest trading partner (after Japan and Hong Kong), and the Sino-US two-way trade is expected to top \$ 1.5 billions this year, exceeding the exchange of goods, and commodities between the US and the Soviet Union.

These estimates provided by the US Commerce Department have led China experts to conclude that the United States for one is not the key issue in the policy debates and power struggles reported to be going on in Peking. The Secretary of State, Dr. Henry Kissinger, appeared to underline this when he told a reception attended by the chief Chinese liaison official in Washington that Sino-American relations were "firmly on course" despite reports of ups and downs.

What these "ups and downs" referred to by Kissinger are difficult to say, but apart from trade the *detente* does not seem to have developed in the way many had expected Sino-US friendship to grow. When Nixon went to Peking in February 1971 it was hoped that it would usher in an era where the USA and China would be able to settle all differences they had in within a short time in Asia. The USA wanted a honourable retreat from Vietnam with China helping America to bring about peace

between Hanoi and Thieu's Saigon. With the USA virtually dropping the "two China's" policy, it was believed that this could be achieved. But this has not happened and the situation in South Vietnam continues to be uncertain with continuous fighting between Thieu's forces and the Viet Cong.

With the *detente* with the USA, China had expected to improve its relations with southeast Asian countries, but for nearly three years after Nixon's visit China had not been able to establish diplomatic relations with the ASEAN countries. It was only last month that Peking was able to sign an agreement with Malaysia and it is likely that other ASEAN countries would follow Malaysia's example sooner or later. China perhaps had expected the USA to persuade the ASEAN countries to come to terms with China much earlier; but there are limits to Washington's options on this matter.

China is naturally disappointed that the USA has not withdrawn its forces completely from Asia. There is no doubt that the US Navy has withdrawn from the China coast, but considerable American forces are still found in Thailand, Japan, South Korea and Taiwan. This fact is often referred to in the Chinese press and Peking is still bitter about the support extended to the Lon Nol regime in Cambodia.

Peking commentaries still emphasise that US monopolies and multinational companies still draw huge profits from Asian countries by utilising the cheap raw materials available there. The US has improved its image in Asia after the *detente* with China and the image of the "ugly American" is a thing of the past, whilst the Chinese have not yet been able to allay the fears and apprehensions of Asian countries that Peking was supporting underground guerilla and "national liberation movements" in many of these countries.

There has also been a decline in the number of exchange visits by delegations between the two countries and the Laison Offices in the two capitals have been untenanted by the respective Heads for long periods of time. There is not the slightest doubt that US-China

friendship can grow only if the USA changes its policy completely in regard to Taiwan. But beyond diplomatic shadow-boxing, the USA has shown no intentions of abandoning Taiwan—for the moment at any rate—and this will prevent the fullest development in US-China relationship. Normalisation of relations between the two countries by establishing full diplomatic accord is still a distant reality.

But in the meantime, trade continues to grow. Though China is quite sensitive about running up a trade deficit with any country it has allowed the US to enjoy a 10 to one advantage over it—whereas Chinese imports from the US will exceed \$ one billion by the year end, its exports to the US are not expected to exceed \$ 100 millions.

China like the Soviet Union was to be the beneficiary of the most favoured nation treatment but, the Nixon administration's efforts to obtain such status for it has run into serious roadblocks in Congress. China's exports to the US are therefore confined to such unsophisticated trade items as hog bristles, raw silk and cotton fabrics, art objects and some quantities of tin. What China would like to sell to the US are manufactured and semi-manufactured goods, but this must await the grant of equal trading status by the US Congress.

Seventy per cent of China's imports from the US (for which it pays with dollars earned elsewhere) continue to be wheat, corn, soyabean and cotton. This too has puzzled observers because China seems to be continuing to import these agricultural products long after its pressing need for them, in the face of internal shortages, which are understood to have passed. One guess is that China is stockpiling these items, for possible future emergencies, including a trial of strength with the Soviet Union. Another theory is that China is using the US to produce certain agricultural products, in order to free its own farm lands to produce more rice for export to third nations.

Other raw materials that China now imports from the US are iron and steel scrap (which in an earlier era the US would have considered strategic material). US

know-how and materials to build a complex of fertilizer plants—not long ago China also signed a contract with the Boeing Aircraft company for the supply of ten 707 airliners.

It must be remembered that it is only when the USA withdraws completely from Taiwan that Peking will accept that Washington has abandoned its hegemonistic super-power claims on Asia, particularly in East and Southeast Asia. Whilst the USA has abandoned the "two Chinas" policy by making Taiwan a de facto "another country" which had once been part of China, Peking is still on the "two power" theory of world hegemony, the USA can establish its bona fides only by handing over Taiwan to China and also by accepting China's primacy in all Asian matters.

MEANWHILE, India is ensuring her supplies of crude oil through bilateral agreements which involve some kind of barter on a sophisticated level. A report from New Delhi on June 17 state that: The United Arab Emirate (UAE), which produces about two million barrels of crude a day, has offered to build an oil refinery in India and supply crude for this refinery as well as for use in the exist-

ing refineries on soft terms of credit. The offer was made at the one hour meeting the visiting Vice-President of the UAE, Sheikh Rashid Bin Saeed al-Maktoum, had with the Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, to-day.

India, on its part, will help the UAE in building a steel plant and a joint venture fertilizer plant in Dubai, one of the constituent parts of the UAE. Mr. Mohamed Mahdi al Tajir, Economic Adviser to the Vice-President, told pressmen after their meeting with the Prime Minister that they would offer facilities for India to make use of the free zone to be established in Dubai.

The free zone in Dubai is the biggest in the whole of West Asia and has berthing facilities for 45 big ships. It is understood that India will set up factories in this free zone for assembling certain sophisticated engineering products and then either transport them back to India or sell them in third countries. Mr. Al Tajir said that it was up to India to determine the quantity of crude oil it should have from the UAE. "We have undertaken to meet India's requirements." The crude to be supplied could be used in any refinery, he said.

Studies would be undertaken in the coming weeks towards implementing such projects as are found feasible by both sides. Sheikh Rashid Bin Saeed al Maktoum, who is the first distinguished, ruler of a Gulf State to visit India, also had discussions with Mrs. Gandhi on political and economic matters with a view to strengthening the relations between the two countries. The UAE on its part, would also like to import foodgrains among other things from India. The details of these are to be worked out yet.

Earlier during the meeting between the UAE Vice-President and the Petroleum and Chemicals Minister, Mr. D. K. Barooah, the UAE accepted India's proposal to enter into long-term arrangements for the supply of crude, oil for the Haldia refinery on soft terms.

Mr. Barooah, suggested to the UAE Vice-President that some of his officers should stay behind and visit the Haldia refinery to make proper assessment of the proposal. The proposal for UAE contract for the supply of crude oil to the Haldia refinery had originally been discussed during the visit to India in February this year, of the UAE Foreign Minister.

CHRONICLE

June 15 - 22

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

SATURDAY, JUNE 15: According to views expressed by the World Bank, published in the *Daily News*, the Land Reform measures, Housing Ceiling, Compulsory Savings Scheme linked to a fixed upper limit on personal incomes and the progressive taxes on income and wealth have made a considerable impact in spreading wider the benefits of development in Sri Lanka: the views add that Sri Lanka has successfully avoided the miseries of extreme poverty through policies which give wide access to medical services and education and by seeking to spread the benefits of public and commercial services into the rural areas. According to the *Daily Mirror* the Supreme Court, has called for the records of several cases in the Kandy and Badulla districts where applications for injunction against

the acquisition of lands by the Minister of Lands and Agriculture, Mr. Hector Kobbekaduwa, have been made: the Court comprising three judges adjourned sittings. The Registrar of Ceylon Medical Council, Dr. Milroy Paul, has told the *Daily Mirror* that both medical faculties of the University of Sri Lanka are well run and do not warrant the withdrawal of recognition of its MBBS degree by the British Medical Council: the paper quoting a senior official of the Senate House of the University says that the non-recognition of the MBBS degree by the British Medical Council will help prevent the brain-drain of medical personnel. According to the *Daily News*, the Communist Party soft and hardline factions have virtually completed working out common policy approaches as the final steps to the reunification of the Party. A former director of the Ayurvedic Corporation has sued the printers, publishers, and the Editor of the newspaper *Janavegaya* for damages in Rs. 100,000. According to the *Daily Mirror*, the Government of Sweden has made a special united grant of 10 million Swedish Kroners to Sri Lanka in addition to the development assistance already made available: with this additional grant, Swedish assistance to Sri Lanka for the year 1974/75 will amount to 28 million Swedish Kroners. The "Committee of 20" of the IMF meeting in Washington agreed on a 12-point package to reform the International Monetary System: Sri Lanka was represented by Dr. N. M. Perera, Minister

of Finance. A seven-man military group took over power in North Yemen: a request by the deposed civilian Government of Prime Minister, Hassan Makki to continue its functions, at least temporarily, was rejected.

SUNDAY, JUNE 16: According to the *Sunday Observer*, bread distribution will no longer be confined to bakeries: in the first week of July about 50 to 60 new additional bread distribution points will be opened by Co-operatives, to reduce the prevailing congestion, at most bakeries in the cities. According to the *Sunday Times*, foreign companies which are incorporated in Sri Lanka before September 1, 1974, will be exempted from the 50-acre land ceiling and the land reform law: with the implementation of the new Companies Law all business undertakings belonging to foreigners will be incorporated in Sri Lanka, and thus be subject to the laws of the land. According to the *Observer* a Colombo-based report in the *Indian Express* of June 14th says that Mr. Anura Bandaranaike has invited Mrs. Indira Gandhi's two sons to Sri Lanka on a semi-official visit: the report in the Indian paper is said to be entitled "Sirimavo Son's bid to cement Indo-Lanka ties". Mr. Abdul Sattar, Minister of Finance, of the Republic Maldives will arrive in Sri Lanka today. According to *Times*, from next month the Ceylon Transport Board has decided to increase the fines to be imposed on ticketless travellers from Rs. 5 to Rs. 20 plus, double the fare of the journey. The Government newspaper of Syria, *Al-Thawra*, welcomed the visit of President Nixon, calling it a sign of understanding for the Arab cause and an effort towards bringing a just peace to the area. US Secretary of the Treasury, Mr. William Simon, told reporters that the United States has agreed to reconsider its long-standing opposition to the use of SDRs—the International Monetary Fund's Special Drawing Rights—as a form of aid to developing nations. The Nobel Prize winning American scientist Dr. Norman Borlaug, has issued a warning that tens of millions of people could die in a famine if serious droughts recur in sub-Saharan Africa or elsewhere.

MONDAY, JUNE 17: According to the *Daily News* the Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike, was likely to pay an official visit to the USSR in mid-September: it was likely that on this trip the Prime Minister will also visit Yugoslavia, West Germany and Pakistan. The *Daily News* also reported that the Jaffna campus would be opened in August: the campus will be located on 600 acres of land: the present premises of Parameshwara College would be used for a start. The Maldivian Finance Minister, Mr. Sattar, was in Colombo on a four-day official visit. According to the *Daily Mirror*, the Special Branch of the CID has been called in to help the Cinnamon Gardens Police investigate an alleged plot to assassinate two Cabinet Ministers: a witness described as a member of the Sri Lanka Air Force Volunteer Reserve has told the Police that he had seen a man carrying a rifle near the residence of the Minister of Agriculture and Lands, Mr. Hector Kobbekaduwa: later Police investigators found a bottle of acid and other lethal weapons beside the boundary wall of the residence of the Minister of Foreign and Internal Trade, Mr. T. B. Ilangaratne, who is Mr. Kobbekaduwa's neighbour: security has been tightened around the two Ministers. The Criminal Justice Commission

(Foreign Exchange Offences) today imposed a suspended term of two years rigorous imprisonment on the Colombo attorney George Abeyratne who was the fourth accused in the Mubarak Thaha case. The Indian Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, said on Saturday that India was ready to agree to a ban on all atomic tests if other countries agreed to do it. Syria and the US yesterday resumed full diplomatic relations after a seven-year break. According to the *New York Times* President Nixon, Secretary of State, Dr. Henry Kissinger and White House Chief of Staff General Alexander Haig have been subpoenaed as defence witnesses in the coming "Plumbers" trial. President Nixon arrived in Israel yesterday from Damascus on the fourth leg of his Middle East tour.

TUESDAY, JUNE 18: According to the *Daily News* in a report to the UN Committee on Science and Technology for Development, Secretary General Kurt Waldheim has named Sri Lanka as one of the 12 developing nations as being a victim of the "brain drain". According to the *Daily News* the new Civil Procedure Code which will effect drastic changes to the existing civil laws is scheduled to be presented in the National State Assembly in the first week of July. According to the *Daily News* during the ten years from 1960-61 to 1970-71 the incidence of grave crime in Sri Lanka rose by nearly 111 percent. The Maldivian Finance Minister, Mr. Abdul Sattar, had talks yesterday about the finalisation of an air agreement between Sri Lanka and the Maldivian Republic. The *Daily Mirror* reported that an international centre for the training of Narcotics Agents will be set up in Colombo with the Colombo Plan Bureau: Mr. Pio Barro, an expert in this field, will be in charge of the training, and detectives from India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and other countries in South and Southeast Asia will be given an intensive training. In a note from the General Medical Council (Britain) to the Vice Chancellor of the University of Sri Lanka, the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine and the Secretary of the Ceylon Medical Council it has been stated that medical graduates of the University of Sri Lanka will continue to be eligible for "temporary registration", renewable indefinitely: temporary registration, covered employment as a medical practitioner in hospitals and other institutions in the United Kingdom which are approved by the Council for the purposes of temporary registration: Professor Milroy Paul Registrar of the Ceylon Medical Council said that the new regulation would in effect mean that Ceylonese clinicians who have been awarded the MBBS (Ceylon) after 1972 would not be entitled to practise medicine or surgery in Britain until after they had obtained post graduate qualifications: the new move is expected to effectively plug the brain drain of doctors from Sri Lanka to Britain. A bomb exploded in Britain's House of Commons yesterday injuring at least six people in the first attempt to blow up Parliament since the celebrated Guy Fawkes attempt 370 years ago: the explosion tore through a building adjoining the actual Commons Chamber. Six minutes before the blast a man who identified himself as a member belonging to the Irish Republican Army telephoned a warning to a news agency about the bomb. In a joint statement issued at the end of President Nixon's visit to Israel President Nixon has told that future American military

and Economic aid to Israel will be on a long term basis. According to reports from several world capitals China and France had exploded atomic devices in the atmosphere yesterday.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 19: The Press Association of Ceylon has appealed to the President, Mr. William Gopallawa, to exercise his prerogative in respect of the jail sentence imposed on Mr. Fredrick Lionel David de Silva, Deputy Editor of the *Daily News*, by the Criminal Justice Commission. According to the *Daily News*, the Ministry of Industries is now considering the economics of importing logs to produce the country's entire needs in tea chests: it is felt that this would not only reduce the drain in foreign exchange but also would keep the main factory working to near capacity. According to the *Daily Mirror*, the Department of Inland Revenue has raked in a record sum of Rs. 3 million as fines and additional taxes from tax-evading textile tycoons and butchers. Mr. Anura Bandaranaike, President of the SLFP Youth League, addressing a mass rally at the Jaffna Town Hall said that the SLFP leaders in the North who had been branded by the Federal Party leaders as "traitors" have done more for the Tamils within the last few months than all that the Federalists who called themselves "the saviours of the Tamil speaking people" had done since Independence. According to the *Daily Mirror*, the donation after death of a person's heart, kidney or any part of the body will be made legally permissible: the Government has approved in principle the donation of such human tissues for therapeutic and research purposes to help advance medical treatment. The Eastern Paper Mills Corporation has released nearly a million exercise books for the use of school children. According to the *Daily News* broad lines of agreement on a revision of the agreement for the avoidance of double taxation have been reached between a Sri Lanka delegation led by the Commissioner of Inland Revenue and the West German Government. In a joint communique issued shortly before the end of President Nixon's 22-hour state visit to Jordan, President Nixon has said that the US would play a strong role in maintaining Jordan's military strength: the communique said President Nixon and King Hussein agreed to set up a joint Jordanian-US commission at high level to oversee and review on a regular basis the various areas of co-operation between the two countries.

THURSDAY, JUNE 20: According to a survey conducted by experts of the Ministry of Education and published in the *Daily Mirror*, approximately 50 per cent of all students drop out of schools by the time they reach Grade 5—at the age of 11 to 12 years: the experts in their reports have described this as one of the most serious national problems. According to the *Daily News*, negotiations are now on with the Soviet Union to set up stage 2 of the steel factory that will produce the country's entire requirements of steel and save about Rs. 400,000 in foreign exchange now spent on imports each year: a Soviet delegation which is now in Colombo to discuss the final details, met the Minister of Industries, Mr. T. B. Subasinghe, last week. According to a press release issued by the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry will receive representations from the public on the amendments suggested to areas of jurisdiction of courts in certain districts: the districts

are Colombo, Jaffna, Badulla, Kandy, Kegalle, Avissawella, Anuradhapura, Batticaloa, Kalutara and Matara. In a report on housing census conducted by the Department of Census and Statistics, it is revealed that Sri Lanka's 13 million population lives in 2.3 million houses of which only one-third are permanent: one-third of all housing units in Sri Lanka have no Exporting toilet facilities of any sort. The organisation of Petroleum Countries (OPEC) officially announced its decision to maintain crude oil prices unchanged at present levels during the three month period starting on July 1: the standstill was announced after nearly three days of discussions in Ecuador among oil Ministers of the 13 members of the OPEC which group Arab and other oil producing countries. In the wake of President Nixon's Middle East tour, the Israeli Government resumed air raids against suspected Arab Guerilla positions in Southern Lebanon: Egypt's Foreign Minister, Ismail Fahmi, has warned that Egypt will not stand by with arms folded in the face of Israeli attacks against Lebanon. Dewi Sukarno, widow of the ex-president of Indonesia, is bringing a libel action against the publishers of a book about British call girl Norma Levy.

FRIDAY, JUNE 21: According to the *Daily News*, the Government this week decided to increase the salaries of doctors of all grades, following a new report submitted by Mr. Pieter Keuneman, Chairman of the Planning Council's sectoral committee on social overheads, housing, mass media, and transport: the increase ranging from Rs. 30 to Rs. 140 per month will be effective from July 1. The Acting Chief Justice has made order that a Bench of nine judges of the Supreme Court should hear the applications of land acquisition matters in which injunctions have been issued against the Minister of Agriculture and Lands: Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike, Minister of Public Administration, Local Government, Home Affairs and Justice, replying to question in the National State Assembly raised by several Government back-benchers who protested against injunctions being issued by certain District Court judges restraining the acquisition of lands said that the supremacy of the National state Assembly would always be preserved: the Minister yesterday tabled in the National State Assembly the agreement entered into between the Principal of the Ceylon Law College and the International Legal Centre in New York to carry out a legal research programme in Sri Lanka: the Minister said that according to the agreement, although approval of the Sri Lanka Government had to be obtained the principal of the Law College had not obtained such permission. According to the *Daily Mirror* during the first five months of this year the Inland Revenue Department had paid out Rs. 50,000 as rewards to informants who helped to rope in tax evaders. A massive shake-up for Sri Lanka's missions abroad has been effected by the Government in order to revamp the country's Foreign Service: a number of senior carrier diplomats serving in Sri Lanka's Embassies abroad have been transferred back to Colombo. According to the *Daily News* the import of motor and cycles motor scooters below the value of Rs. 1000 will now be allowed as gifts from friends and relations abroad who earn foreign exchange. Pakistani Prime Minister, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, said yesterday that a professional assassin had been hired in Afghanistan to kill him

during the Islamic summit in Lahore last February. West Germany vetoed a Common Market Contribution of 500 million dollars to a United Nations fund to help the poorest developing countries meet mounting oil costs: the reason for the veto, according to a Government spokesman, is because the source of the financial means has not been clarified. President Nixon held a series of meetings with Congressional leaders, Cabinet and the National Security Council in which his forthcoming Moscow visit figured prominently.

SATURDAY, JUNE 22: According to the *Daily News* a World Bank team is now in Sri Lanka for discussions in regard to the country's requirements in commodity assistance: the bank for the first time had agreed to give program (commodity) aid to Sri Lanka and for the present the credit promised is 15 million US dollars: the Bank has also agreed to disburse a further 10 million US dollars worth of program aid during the year. According to the *Daily Mirror* the Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, who is also the Minister of Planning and Economic Affairs has initiated a series of reviews to evaluate the progress of the decentralised Capital Budget and thus ensure the speedy removal of bottlenecks and obstacles in the implementation programme. According to the *Daily Mirror*, doctors and specialists in Government service may shortly be permitted to

work in co-operative hospitals either full-time or attend to patients on payment of a fee: a proposal to this effect put forward by the Minister of Foreign and Internal Trade, Mr. T. B. Ilangaratne, is now being actively considered by the Government. Another 3142 acres of land in the Ratnapura district were vested with the Land Reform Commission last week: this brings the total number of acres vested in the LRC to 67,000 acres in this district alone. The Government Medical Officer's Association, (GMOA) will meet today to discuss the revision of salaries of medical officers decided on by the Government and the negotiations so far held. The Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, will preside at two United Front rallies to be held in Kalutara today and at Chilaw tomorrow. An assistant appraiser attached to the Customs was yesterday sentenced to six months rigorous imprisonment and fined Rs. 400 on charges of bribery. Israel yesterday stepped up its revenge air attacks against Palestinian guerilla bases in Lebanon for the third day running, hitting five separate targets: the raids were in reprisal for Arab Guerilla attacks inside Israel: at least 27 people are believed to be killed and 105 wounded in yesterday's attack. Charles Colson, once among President Nixon's inner circle of advisers was sentenced to one to three years in prison: he was also fined 5,000 dollars for obstructing justice in the trial of Dr. Daniel Ellsberg.

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SHAMBA

The Return of the Prodigal

by Anatory Bukoba

June 1,

We replaced the cadjans of the kitchen roof; the old ones were sort of black in colour; and they were discharging their soot in a wind. I was told that the roof no longer held water either. So we started to remove the old cadjans by cutting the string with a knife; the string was too soot-begrimed to save and use again. The roof oft betrayed the dangerous angle of one of the main pillars in the house. There was only one pillar or post that was really keeping the house up, so I was glad to have a chance to replace this other post. It was now I remembered I had not yet borrowed the crow-bar of a friend of mine, and off I want to fetch it. When I got back I replaced the past, put another post in, where the other post ought to have been, that was, under the beam of the *Yatta-lea*, it was holding up. I left the old post in, as it formed one support, or leg, of the *massa* table in the kitchen. The tops of the two posts are nearly touching; they are buried nearly two feet apart. Fortunately we had a suitable post handy, and so there was no delay on that score, that is having to go to look for one, fell it and fetch it back. The structure, that was to hold the new roof or cadjans, had to be redone in places.

The present kitchen, the oldest readers of *shamba* will remember, if they have good memories, was already an extension of the old house; nor was it extended in one piece; it was really two successive extensions. For a start I removed the old wall of the kitchen; the cadjans were mostly skeletons of what they were. The kitchen has a sloping roof, and I had to get the angle right. The other edge of the present roof had really been built too high. Various posts were sticking up into the roof at the edges; no wonder the rain could not run off the roof and

poured into that part of the house. So the framework had to be completely restructured but not altogether replaced.

Once I got the height or the angle right, the *paralas* or minor beams had to be arranged. When all was ready, the new cadjans had to go on. When they were nearly so the whole lot had to come off again; the housewife discovered that we had put them on the wrong side up. The leaves of the cadjans, where they are attached to the main stalk, have a concave side; this has to go on uppermost. I had put the convex side on top. I am a bit hazy at the moment what is concave and what is convex. I am pre-suming that the concave is hollowed side, and the convex the outer. If I am right, then it is the concave which has to go uppermost. The housewife said she had only noticed my mistake when she began to question herself why the roof looked so untidy on the inside of the house. Each cadjan had been tied to the *paralas* in about four places, and where they overlapped they had also been tied together, I think. All this had to be united so that we could use the pieces of rope again.

The leaf of the coconut tree is split down the middle and each half is woven into a cadjan; the two halves count as one cadjan, for on a roof, they always go on in pairs. It is not so with the walls.

Well, the cadjans went on again, right side up this time. Pandemonium seemed to reign, but not really. There was great competition among the two children to see who could be the first to hand us the string. They never ceased chattering. With the roof on the walls had to be done. I think I can truthfully say, more or less, that we finished the job with not a cadjan or a piece of string left over. I returned the *alawangu* or crow-bar to the owner. Both children slept. The youngest when she got up, looked a pretty sight the lovely sight of a child who has a really dirty face. They were taken off for a bath. My first whole meal, after breakfast, was dinner.

June 2,

This is the day known as Pentecost or Whitsun. It would have been about two o'clock

got to bed last night, or rather, this morning. Writing these notes kept me up. But I had to sleep first, or I could never have tackled the writing; I may have slept an hour or two. Before that there was an English lesson, now given on the *Shamba*. My old pupils have not started coming here yet; a new lot comes, and we had to see how the new surroundings would go down. At first we sat in the new house, on cadjans. Then I used the new mat. Now the new house is no longer, and we use the old house. We sit on the mat in what used to be the porch, now covered in. The housewife gives us tea, which we take it in turns to drink from my own chatty-mug, if I may call it that. We have a piece of jaggery each to take with the tea. I drink last of all. The pot or mug is not washed or rinsed out between each person using it, true this is sports style, where all have a sip from the silver cup, but here we drink it by the cup, no sips between persons.

A companion has joined me. I introduced him to the *Shamba* and left him there with the housewife, and left on a *safari*.

June 5,

A change it was to return to *Shamba* after some days always to return at night as is my wont, and to find people here. Their voices sort of heralded them before the house and its lights hove into view. The family was here and my new companion, and also my Colleague, who, I must say, looks fat and well after a long absence.

Poson, it was, that took me away. There was a never-ending stream of people, many abreast, going up the hill at Mihintale even at night. I met all my friends almost an army of them a diffused army because, in many cases, I was their common link. It was the same in Anuradhapura.

Here are a few thoughts on education; there must be a faith, a calling beyond sensible objects, to grip the mind. Then there must be a formation in virtue for good habits. Next, knowledge, which is what education has been confused with. Then, self-denial; this is where we come to the formation

of character, which is what education ought to be about. There there was, steady-fastness. Then godliness; we are now reaching out into higher realms. Now comes brotherly affection; this is something more sublime. "Last of all love, which is not to be confused with affection. Infuse all these eight into a person, and you will have a remarkably good man or woman. The idea came to me from the second letter of Peter, and the terms used are those of the Revised Standard Version.

June 6,

It was nice to have someone else doing a little work on the *shamba* this morning. He worked with the mamoty in a sort of basin where there are wood-apple trees, below the road on the way to the turn-off to the house. He was preparing a place for the sorghum, some of the grass had to go, but he left large patches of it as we have the room, room for the sorghum. Most of the weed was, I should think, *podu singho maran*, and I helped by pulling some if it out, in some places, by hand.

Papaw was out breakfast, with a few string-hoppers preceding it; it left me very hungry. Yet, in another way, the house seemed to be overflowing with food.

Took I a risk, and I handed back the support of the family to my colleague, whose job it is anyway. To emphasize the point, I thought I had better get clean away, which I have done, for a few days. My other companion I left to fend for himself, should he so wish, but with some financial support from me.

Yesterday there was *dansala* at our *pansala*. As usual; it was very good; clean and tasty; and as much as you wanted. So far as I know, you all ate it there.

At our big town on one side of us, I found tea without milk being sold at -/25 cents a cup; and I thought; if this *kadday* can do it and make a profit, why cannot the others? It was a good cup of tea, too.

Inania of this, that and the other

BOOM: FOOD

by INNA

"Inania" means emptiness!

We hope plates won't be empty by 1985. Or is it an inanity to speak of it. Couldn't be, because a paper spoke of it on June 4th this year: Cereal shortage poses malnutrition threat: "34 countries with a combined population of 700 million are facing malnutrition."

I wonder if the reader is aware that Tourists love to share our problems and live like us for even a short while. One crowded hour of 'glorious' life is worth an age without a name. Our hotels are going up: over 7000 rooms now. Ukrainia-style, the Inter and the Alham, and the what have you are going up and have gone up. By 1985 the trade will be a roaring business, spinning foreign exchange like billy-ho.

But no food in those places by 1985! Two new hotels have been added on June 9th to the list from Kandy: Hotel Suisse and Hotel Queens, but bleak are the prospects for 1985 when the cereal-story comes about: "If there was a repetition of a crop failure as in 1972, developing countries' needs might soar above 100 million tons. Man's staple food is cereals. World demand for this is expected to rise from 1,200 million tons to 1,700 million tons between 1970 and 1985."

The net result is a conclusion in the same paper (CDN, 1974, June 4th):

"If present population and production trends continue, the world's developing nations will find themselves short of 85 million tons of cereal a year"

NOW see another scene: I have no dream: It's an approved world-chart from the IRFED (Dev. -et Civilisation, Paris 1970):

I Swiss eats on an average, as much as 22 Indians or 40 Somalis;

I Frenchman eats as much as 19 Indians or 35 Somalis;

I Belgian eats as much as 17 Indians or 32 Somalis.

Rene Dumont's figures in *Utopia or Death* reveal: "One American eats as much as 20 Indians or 40 Bengalis! America with 6% of the world's population is wasting 43 percent of the world's resources." Reuter's report in CDN quoted says: "World demand for cereal".

Who is inside this world-demand in a fat bulky way? If some would tighten their belts in developed countries, with their christianity and self-sacrifice and all that, there will be no need to have a gird your loins programme and a chastity-belt scheme for us way out East.

In the Holy Book, it is said some where it seems:

"He has filled the hungry with good things and the rich he hath sent empty away"

This state of affairs was to come through Christianity, we are told, but has christianity succumbed to man's inhumanity to man? Has the tall -building, the bank -balance, the silk drapery, the red cushion, the travesty of humility for humbug gone to its head like heady wine?

Isn't it once again a question of Sign of the Cross as a mere gesture) rather than signs of the times? Or a question of "praising the Lord and passing the ammunition"?

INDO-IRANIAN

Iran's New World Perspective

by K. Subramanyam

New Delhi,

THE RECENT VISIT of the Indian Prime Minister to Iran and the series of economic and technical co-operation agreements concluded on the occasion must have come as a pleasant surprise to many of those who had been feeling uneasy about some of Iran's pronouncements during 1972 and 1973 on the affairs of the subcontinental and its declared intentions of maintaining closer defence co-operation between that country and Pakistan. Many tended to link up the impressive Iranian arms build up with such defence co-operation arrangements and speculated about the possibility of some of these arms finding their way to Pakistan.

From the middle of 1973, however, since the Indian Foreign Minister visited Iran there have been increased exchanges of visits at ministerial levels. The Shahanshah of Iran made very sympathetic references to India in connection with the oil crisis. Agreements were concluded to enable India to continue to purchase oil from Iran, and pay for it over a period of time at concessional terms. Then came the visit of Indira Gandhi to Iran when the Shahanshah declared that he had never had more satisfactory discussions with any head of government.

In this country there is a time lag in understanding the change in the Iranian world perspective and the consequent shift in their policy towards India. Our image of Iran is still what we formed in 1971 and 1972 when we felt that the Iranian armaments programme might have secondary impact on Indo-Pakistan military balance and that Iran would support Pakistan without any reservation in the event of the latter's confrontation with India. Some in India also felt that Iran was presumably attempting

to play the role of a policeman in the Gulf are as part of an overall grand American strategy.

Here both India and Iran have been prisoners of history.

In India we felt that Iran as a member of CENTO alliance and with very close ties with the United States, was playing a role assigned to it in this region by the U.S. The Iranians apparently felt that with the signing of Indo-Soviet Treaty, Soviet-Iraqi treaty and increasing Soviet naval presence in the Indian Ocean, they were getting encircled. In Iran there is now realisation that their view of the world outlined above was incorrect.

This writer, who was in Teheran recently, noticed that the Iranians now see that the Soviet naval presence in the Indian Ocean has nothing to do with Iran and that the Indo-Soviet Treaty too was not directed against Iran or any other country. There is even a perception that Soviet-Iraqi Treaty may be the result of Iranian success in isolating Iraq diplomatically. Iran recognises now that the Soviets have considerable stake in a stable and prosperous Iran. The Soviet aid investment in Iran is comparable with their's in India.

The Iran-Soviet border is free from tension and has very little forces deployed on either side.

THROUGHOUT the fifties and sixties, Iran was concerned with its own problems of stability and was mostly pre-occupied with its alliance partners, Turkey and Pakistan. At that stage, within the alliance these two countries loomed larger and more significant than Iran.

All this has changed since 1973. Now Iran is one of the wealthy nations of the world, thanks to the increased oil revenues and Iran is industrialising itself at a pace which may make the German and Japanese miracles look common place. The Iranians are re-evaluating their world view in the light of their new found prosperity, self-confidence and ambition. With their oil revenue they are attempting to industrialise themselves, at a breathtaking pace, and at the same time build themselves a defence capability which would ensure their security as they proceed with their industrialisation.

They realise, perhaps more than the Arabs, that if Iran is to be secure and industrialise in conditions of stability they must develop in their own neighbours a strong stake in Iranian prosperity. Hence their current plans for investments in India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Arab countries

CHORAL MUSIC

A Special Programme of CHORAL AND INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

will be rendered by the
Choir and Students' Orchestra of the Paynter's Home,
(Nuwara Eliya)

at the Church of St. Andrew, (Scots' Kirk),
Kollupitiya.

ON SUNDAY THE 30th JUNE AT 7 p.m.

At the Organ will be the
Rev. Lucien Fernando
and the programme will be under the direction of
Miss Averill Greet

and the laying of pipeline via Soviet Union and Turkey. A composite strategy which would include a strong defence capability, rapid industrialisation and investment in other countries around, they now believe, would be a better one than reliance solely on the Americans. They also feel confident that they are in a position to play a much larger role in Asia.

GIVEN THIS PERSPECTIVE Pakistan no longer looms large in their world view. In the larger Asian canvas India takes its place as a major neighbour with which Iran has to have cordial relations if it were to play an influential role in Asia. They have got over their misperception, partly inculcated in them by Western propaganda, that India was out to destroy Pakistan or subvert it. To a considerable extent the credit for clearing this misperception goes to Sardar Swaran Singh whom the Shahanshah is reported to hold in considerable esteem.

The events of 1973 demonstrated that there was no question of Iran playing the role of policeman in the region. If there is intervention in any one Arab country, however small it may be, there is likely to be much wider repercussion all around, which will make the intervention a doubtful proposition from the point of view of cost of effectiveness. Now there is greater realisation in Iran that if there are changes in the regimes of the Arab States, it would be better to attempt to find a modus vivendi with those regimes than to try to get them replaced by regimes considered to have a greater bias in one's own favour.

In all these aspects the Iranians have tended to develop their world view independently and to a considerable extent uninfluenced by the dominant American views and prescriptions for this part of the world. In the United States many point out that it was not the Arabs but the Shahanshah who put up the oil prices. Iran is going ahead with its industrialisation with considerable European and Soviet aid participation and transfer of technology.

Though Iran is arming itself with U.S. weaponry it is recognised that Iran-US relationship has undergone certain fundamental changes and that the Iranian policy tends

to be increasingly nonaligned. Iran continues to be a member of CENTO but does not feel threatened by USSR nor does it place much reliance in Turkey, Pakistan or Britain as alliance partners. It finds it self in a position to be able to develop military self-reliance for all practical purposes.

It is an irony of history that it is the Shahanshah who is leading the confrontation of oil producing countries against the industrialised world. However much the Shahanshah and the Iranians may rationalise it, many Americans realise that the Shahanshah's actions have hurt their interests as much as they used to think the Soviet actions have destabilised the global situation.

Dr. Kissinger's lament that the US finds it easier to deal with its adversaries than with its friends will apply equally to Iran. Even today, while the Arabs are for lowering the price of crude the Shahanshah is for stopping up the price still further. The Americans now see that unlike Israel which is militarily powerful but entirely dependent on USA for its resources, including military hardware, Iran is in a position to arm itself independent of US. The overall Iranian strategy in the region may have motivations independent of US policy goals.

Iran is not likely to have lost sight of the current US policy of 'Taiwanising' Israel and befriending the Arabs. In Iranian the perception current US policy in West Asia of emphasises the need to strengthen their own defence potential without having to rely on the United States and develop countervailing relationships with countries like India and the Soviet Union. Iran may be much closer to nonalignment than either the Iranians themselves or others realise just at present. The change of Iranian policy towards India must be viewed in this context.

Some sections in this country still continue to look at Iranian policy as an extension of US policy in this region. They tend to ignore the massive Soviet assistance to Iran for its industrialisation and the historic significance of putting up oil prices.

Such an attitude overlooks the inexorable tendency on the part of all ruling elites of the world to assert their independence. Given its potential resources, the current oil wealth, its population, area and pride in its national heritage, the Iranian ruling elite is second to none in nurturing their own national identity and furthering their own national interests.

It will be a great mistake to look at Iran of today through the prism of fifties and early sixties. The positive results flowing out of Mrs. Gandhi's visit to Iran prove that the Governments of Iran and India are extremely sensitive to the changes in the strategic environment in this part of Asia and have embarked upon a course mutually beneficially to them.

—NFN

Only In South Africa

Although Sandra Laing is only eighteen, she is well known in South Africa where, to quote the "International Herald Tribune", "she has been a pawn on this country's apartheid chess board for more than eight years." Her parents are white and she too was considered white until the age of ten. Her appearance, however, persuaded the authorities that her blood was not pure and so they reclassified her as Coloured. The principal of the school for whites, which she attended directed her parents to remove her. Only after a discussion in Parliament did the Department of the Interior again reclassify her as white. A few years later Sandra met an African called Petrus Zwane and they decided to get married. But since the South African laws forbid mixed marriages, they ran away to Swaziland. There they were arrested and handed over to the South African police. Having spent several months in jail, Sandra now dreams of becoming Coloured again, especially since the Johannesburg magistrate has warned her that because she is white at the moment, she cannot live with an African even, though he is the father of her children.

FROM NEW DELHI

WILL NUCLEAR STATUS FORCE SELF-SUFFICIENCY

by K. Rangaswamy

June 8,

The initial outcry abroad against India's nuclear test is steadily giving way to a more balanced assessment. India is happy that none of the other members of the nuclear club has condemned the test. While the Soviet Union and France have welcomed the development the United States, Britain and China have taken note of it without making any adverse comment.

The five permanent members of the Security Council, who are also nuclear powers, obviously realise that one nuclear explosion does not make a country a nuclear power in the military sense and that it is a long way off from the first explosion to the development of nuclear weapons with a delivery system. Secondly, they must have noted that India has not violated either the Partial Test Ban Treaty to which India is a signatory or any other bilateral agreement with countries like Canada in regard to the use of the fissile material. Thirdly, India's test must spur the nuclear powers and also non-nuclear countries to evolve a security system which would enable the destruction of the existing stockpile of nuclear weapons.

One can understand Japan's criticism of the Indian test, having been the victim of a nuclear attack. While Canada's opposition was anticipated the sharpness of the reaction came somewhat as a surprise. It is well known that both Canada and Sweden possess nuclear capability and they are angry presumably because India stole a march over them while they have imposed a ban on themselves from going nuclear by signing the Non-Proliferation Treaty which India did not sign.

PAKISTAN'S REACTION to the test is along expected lines. Prime Minister Bhutto has declared that "after the explosion there can be no question of a no-war pact with India". But one can say that at no time India entertained the hope that Pakistan would agree to a no-war pact. The Indian test is another excuse which has come in handily for Pakistan to continue its policy of confrontation with India. The world is aware that whatever has been achieved in the subcontinent since the end of 1971 war has been entirely on the initiative of India.

Neither during the last two years nor during the previous quarter of a century has Pakistan ever shown any gesture of friendship towards India and not one

of Pakistan's leaders has ever expressed a wish that the relations with India should be normalised and improved. Bhutto has now reiterated that he would not give up the Kashmir issue and he is certainly welcome to cling to it. But even while fulminating against the Indian test Bhutto has chosen to say that "Pakistan is ready to proceed on the lines chalked out at the Simla Conference for the normalisation of relations on the basis of equality, national sovereignty and non interference in each other's internal affairs." Is this a genuine wish or just meant for external consumption, for this is exactly what India also wants and nothing more?

Bhutto has refused to accept India's assurance that the test was entirely for peaceful purposes and that India would not produce nuclear weapons. For him if China conducts a test it will shower milk and honey on Pakistan. But if India carried out a test it would shower bombs on Pakistan. At his press conference in Lahore, Bhutto said, "I hope that all countries who have agreed to assist Pakistan in its nuclear programme for peaceful purposes will not retract. If they do so, it will be an unfriendly act."

Bhutto went on to say, "Pakistan wants to use nuclear power for its economic development and

for the prosperity of its people and not for the purpose of war." In other words, Bhutto wants the world to accept his assurance that Pakistan wants nuclear knowhow only for peaceful purposes. But he would not like the world to accept India's declaration that the test was in pursuit of peaceful objectives. These statements and threats come from Bhutto who, more than anyone else, is responsible for Pakistan launching four attacks against India in the last 25 years as revealed by Bhutto himself. India must of course proceed on the assumption that the normalisation of relations with Pakistan is a distant dream.

WHY THEN did India explode the nuclear device at this time? The London Times suggested that "the main purposes of the Indian experiment is to rally political support for an ailing government and to divert attention from the problems it has failed to solve." As far as one can sense the atmosphere in India, while there is certainly satisfaction over India's progress in the field of science and technology, it has not diverted the people's attention from the immediate economic problems facing the country such as the railway strike, rising prices and scarcity of essential commodities. In fact there are many here who think that the timing of the explosion was not sound from a political point of view. If the test took place at a time when the economic situation was less gloomy than at present, public enthusiasm would undoubtedly have been far greater and the government's prestige too would have gone up. But now, within a couple of days after the test, public attention is again concentrated on the economic problems facing the country.

This is also brought out by the resolution adopted by the Working Committee of the ruling Congress Party last week. The Committee passed a resolution of over 2000 words dealing with the economic situation and outlining the steps that the government should take to tackle it urgently. There was another resolution, about 800 words, on the international situation, particularly dealing with the problems of the subcontinent and in this, only one paragraphs, the

last one, of about 300 words, referred to the nuclear test. From this it could be assumed that the Committee itself felt that the present was not the time to dwell on the glory of the nuclear test. The test, therefore, has no internal political significance. It may be reasonable to suggest that the scientists working on the project organised the test as soon as they were ready regardless of whether it would bring political gain to the ruling party or not. The political clearance for the test was given two years ago.

The test has produced international reaction which must be watched. The United States has said that it is reviewing the implications of the test and also its aid programme to India. (Since the 1971 Indo-Pakistan war India has not received any aid from the U.S. The US has now provided \$ 75 million in its budget as aid to India. But the offer of this aid has not yet been made). Canada has already announced that it would suspend all aid except food to India. There is a report that the countries of the Aid India Consortium would take a tough line against India when they meet in Paris in June. After all, the so called aid is only loan which is repayable. If countries offered economic assistance, obviously they must have found the Indian investment climate agreeable. One hopes that practical wisdom and not emotion would influence the judgement of friendly countries.

A comment in the New York Times must be particularly taken note of by India's leaders. This newspaper, while regretting that "such great talent of resources has been squandered on the vanity of power while 600 million Indian slip deeper into poverty", added pungently, "the sixth member of the nuclear club may be passing the beggar bowl before the year is out because Indian science and technology so far have failed to solve the country's fundamental problems of food and population." This is indeed a challenge to the Indian leaders.

Food and population are certainly two problems which the Government of India has failed to tackle adequately. Even when there is abundant food in the country the government is unable to evolve a satisfactory system of procure-

ment and distribution. The administrative machinery, the traders, and the politicians, all afflicted by corruption and inefficiency, are responsible for the muddle on the food front as they are unwilling to place the country above self. If the country could rise as one man in the face of an external aggression, can it not rise in the face of a major challenge to its dignity and self-respect?

As has been repeatedly pointed out in these columns 70 million tonnes of goodgrains would suffice to feed 560 million people for one year at the rate of 16 ounces per

person including the latest born baby. But the country has produced, more than 70 million tonnes even during the worst drought years, and distributed it appropriately if official statistics are to be believed. Why then should it be possible to lay hands on what it produced instead of seeking the easy option of going about with a begging bowl? The Prime Minister has shown firmness in dealing with the railway strike. Would the State Governments fail to procure the required quantity if she gave a quit warning that the defaulting Chief Ministers ran the risk of being replaced?

GOOD IN MODERATION

OPIUM IN SRI LANKA

by Nimal Sarathchandra

Hon. Mr. John Ferguson C. M. G. writing in a article to the *Ceylon National Review* in January, 1907 says "When I examined the history of opium in the island, how it was used among the Sinhalese, strongly condemned by Buddhist teachings, had been unknown under their native Kings and in the time of the Dutch or Portuguese or indeed up to the middle of the last century. I was astonished at the progress of imports and of the consumption of the drug ever since 1850-1860 A. D. I found there was no mention of the use of opium by the Sinhalese in any of the old books on Ceylon. The poppy has never been grown for opium nor the people accustomed to the drug before 1850-1860 A.D."

Though there was not a single opium shop in Ceylon, licences were issued and shops were opened for its sale for the first time in 1860 by the Ceylon Government at that time.

FLUCKIER AND HANBURG in the valuable article on opium in the *Pharmaco-graphica* 2nd edition 1879 page 42, states that "though opium was not known to Greeks as early as the first century of our era, the current name of the drug being from (Greek Opion) having been introduced into Europe, probably from Egypt through Asia Minor. It was first brought to India by the Arabs and that the cultivation of the poppy and the manufacture of opium in India are of comparatively recent date."

The same view is endorsed by the Portuguese Botanist Conde de Ficalho in his monumental edition of the *COLOQUIOUS* of Garne de Orta Vol. II page 176-179.

Giovanni da Empoli, an Italian employed in the Portuguese ser-

vices in India in 1511 speaks of arfum for so they call (Opio tibaco) which they eat to cool themselves.

Alfonso de Albuquerque wrote to King D. Manuel on 1st December 1613 from Cannor that—

- (1) at the beginning of the 16th century the practice of opium eating was very general in India,
- (2) that most of the opium consumed was imported from Egypt and not produced in India itself"

Dr. H. H. Bhagvat Singh Jee M.D. in the *Short history of Aryan Medical Science* states that "the spread of opium in India is synchronous with the advent of the Mohamedans who adopted it as a suitable substitute for fermented liquors which their religion discountenanced. Sharn-gdhra and Vagbata refer to the medical use of this article which they call Ahi-Phena or snake foam believing it to be inspissated saiva of snakes. It is used in diarrhoea, chronic dysentery, for allaying pain and producing sleep. The

European doctors seem to have learnt the therapeutic use of opium from Indian practitioners."

OPIMUM may have been introduced to Sri Lanka by the Arabs who had commercial dealings even before the arrival of Portuguese in 1505. The poppy plant (*papaver Somniferum*) was known in China as far back as the 9th century A.D.

The opium is produced of a exudation obtained by sacrificing the poppy capsules, before the petals of the flower are off. The dark brown elastic opium is consumed in smoking or it is mixed with other aromatic substances—and used as a "legium". The peculiar quality of this drug—in that it creates a senseless feeling and make the addict forget the ills and troubles of life and his environment, he is compelled to have it regularly in spite of all the restrictions placed before him.

As much as "Naja"—produced from snake venom is used by Homeopathic practitioners in the cure of certain diseases, opium which has similar poisoning symptoms is used by western and ayurvedic practitioners in the treatment of chronic dysentery, diarrhoea etc. It is employed as a simple drug or used as a mixture with several other drugs. Opium is

also used as an aphrodisiac in combination with ingredients as Nutmeg Pepper, Ginger etc. Native ayurvedic physicians knew the value of this drug and used it extensively, even today it is used in various medical preparations and for this purpose they are given as annual quota of opium which had to be obtained from the Civil Medical Stores.

In the *Yogaratanakara*, a treatise on ayurvedic medicine written during the Kurunegala period, opium is mentioned as a specific for dysentery. In the "Parangi Hatana", a poem based on the Sinhala Portuguese war, it is mentioned that Portuguese soldiers indulged in ganja and opium.

In an old inscription found in 1953 in Komariya, situated in the Gal Oya valley, the use of opium is recommended. This inscription is believed as coming down from the medical attention who worked in the medicinal store of King Udaya I.

Opium has its uses and abuses. Instead of the drug being solely used in the alleviation of suffering of patients, it is employed by thousands of drug addicts to the detriment of their own physical and mental health.

THE SUB-CONTINENT

Pakistan and the Indian Nuclear Test

by

O. N. MEHROTA

Pakistan has called off talks with India on the restoration of travel, communications and trade and thus gone back on its commitment to the Simla Agreement of July 1972. The Indian nuclear test of May 18 has been given as a reason. Although Pakistan has been trying its best to exploit the blast of a peaceful nuclear device by India to prejudice international opinion against this country and to secure for itself nuclear guarantees from the nuclear weapons powers, there are clear indications that even before the Indian test Pakistan had been on one excuse or another consistently postponed the restoration of normalcy in the sub-continent. The references made to Kashmir at a Banquet during Mr. Bhutto's visit to Peking clearly indicated that he had already resiled from the bilateral approach which was an essential ingredient of the Simla Agreement.

Pakistan first raised the issue of India's test before the five-member Central Treaty Organisation (CENTO). On May 21, Mr. Aziz Ahmed, Pakistan's Minister of State for Defence and Foreign Affairs, said in Washington that

he regarded India's nuclear blast as a "sinister revelation". He made strenuous efforts to enlist the support of other members of the CENTO to condemn India over its recent experimental test. However, the desired results were

not forthcoming. None of them referred to India by name, much less made any condemnatory remarks except making renewed calls for nuclear non proliferation. The final communiqué only said: "The Indian nuclear test of May 8 had introduced a new factor with world and regional implications which will require further study."

Next, the question was raised when Pakistan's Ambassador to the United Nations, Mr. Iqbal Akhund, expressed his country's grave concern to the UN Secretary General, Dr. Kurt Waldheim on May 22. On the following day, Mr. Aziz Ahmed also met the Secretary-General. They have also discussed the issue with the five permanent members of the Security Council. Pakistan has perhaps been planning to ask the Council to take up the issue formally but it has not received positive response so far.

Pakistani Foreign Secretary, Mr. Agha Shahi flew to Geneva to state his country's case against India at the 25-nation Disarmament Conference. He said on May 23 that India's fateful step in carrying out an underground nuclear test has precipitated a grave situation for Pakistan and not for Pakistan alone. To him, the Indian nuclear test has opened the road to more nuclear powers, especially Israel and South Africa. It is believed that the Disarmament Conference has decided to discuss the impact of India's nuclear explosion in its next meeting to be held in July this year.

IN THE MEANTIME, Mr. Aziz Ahmed met President Nixon and discussed the consequences of India's test explosion. Besides, he has visited Canada, Britain and France. To supplement Pakistani efforts in the West, Mr. Agha Shahi is to proceed to Peking shortly.

As if the Pakistani propaganda machine has lost its case, Mr. Bhutto hurriedly planned to visit Moscow. However, the Soviet Union has curtly asked him to postpone his visit by a few months. The Soviet Union is not only pre-occupied with the forthcoming Nixon visit, but is also in no mood to discuss the issue of India's test before it is discussed by the two Super Powers, at their summit. Neither the Soviet Union nor the

United States has yet officially commented on the Indian test.

In substance, Pakistan seems to be determined to explain the situation and through its propaganda machinery it wants to expose what it calls "ulterior nuclear designs of India". Recently Mr. Bhutto has claimed that he could get back all POWs from India because of his propaganda weapon. And now perhaps the same tool is being employed to secure nuclear-guarantees from the nuclear weapon Powers against India and to isolate it in international forums.

Prime Minister Bhutto said in a Press Conference in Lahore on May 19 that Pakistan "will never surrender to any nuclear blackmail by India and will move in all fields to meet the threat posed by the explosion of a nuclear device by it." He added "In concrete terms, we will not compromise the right of self-determination of the people of Jammu and Kashmir. Nor will we accept India's hegemony or domination over the Sub-continent."

At the same time, he said that at Simla he had rejected the idea of a no-war pact with India. Now that India had started brandishing its nuclear sword, the question of concluding such a pact would amount to capitulation.

The Indian test may prove a boon in disguise for Mr. Bhutto, who is presently facing all sorts of problems in all of Pakistan's four provinces. He is expected to use the bogey of an Indian Bomb to help himself in diverting the people's attention from domestic problems in Pakistan. The ghost of a nuclear India would be raised to maintain unity internally. He said "I want to tell my countrymen that faced with this development they need to close their ranks, refuse to be unduly disturbed and have full confidence in the efforts of their Government to ward off any danger to Pakistan." That this has paid him dividends, is evident, for instance, by the recent patching up of differences between himself and his erstwhile rival in the Pakistan People's Party, Mr. Ghulam Mustafa Khar, the former Chief Minister of Punjab.

Though, Mrs. Gandhi has assured Mr. Bhutto that India's first peaceful explosion did not constitute any threat to the security of Pakistan,

it has been played up beyond limit. From Pakistan's point of view, India has developed the essence of a new and unprecedented offensive capability which it has hitherto been lacking and to use it to solve its problems with Pakistan.

ALTHOUGH EVERYBODY knows, including the Western experts, that India's usable stockpile of Plutonium-239 is about 100 kg. only, yet Pakistani press has a different story to tell. Writing an article in the *Morning News*, on May 22, Tariq Mohmud has estimated: The Trombay reactor of 40 mw has now been operating for ten years and the Tarynt reactor of 380 MW has been in operation for four years plus. During this period these two reactors have between them produced 287 kg. plutonium at the very least, which is sufficient for about 36 atomic-bombs of Hiroshima Nagasaki size, i.e., of 20 kiloton yield. This is her present stockpile of plutonium. When her three reactors of total 800 MW capacity come into operation, she will have an additional potential of 128 kg. plutonium per year, i.e., of 16 atomic bombs of 20 kiloton yield per year. "

At present Pakistan's main diplomatic offensive against India is to persuade the aid givers of India to stop aid forthwith. Pakistan was very happy when Canada announced that it had stopped all aid and facilities to India, save agriculture and food. At present Pakistan has one nuclear reactor in collaboration with Canada in Karachi. Moreover, it does not have a chemical separation plant, which is essential for producing plutonium. It does not have capacity to produce U-235 or U-233. In substance, it does not possess fissionable material, which is essential for detonating nuclear device. Therefore, Pakistan cannot explode a nuclear device in the near future.

Recently, in an interview with the Christian Science Monitor Mr. Bhutto has said that Pakistan cannot afford to go nuclear. But he said: 'Instead Pakistan will seek more guarantees against nuclear blackmail from the United States, Russia, China, Britain, France and the United Nations.' But Pakistan's Atomic Energy Commission Chairman Mr. Munir Ahmed Khan hinted in

Islamabad on May 21 that Pakistan might be compelled to follow India's example of exploding a nuclear device. It is to be noted in this context that Pakistan has not yet ratified the Moscow Test Ban Treaty of 1963. It has also not signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) because India had not done so.

THERE IS a strong lobby in Pakistan which wants to sign a defence pact with China as a counter to the military threat posed by nuclear India. Pakistani industrialists have offered to help the Government develop a nuclear capability. There is also a demand that the Pakistani Defence Minister should resign and that the defence preparedness should be re-oriented in the context of Indian nuclear threat. As a matter of fact, the Pakistani people have been totally brainwashed by the official machinery to believe that India is already a nuclear-weapons' power, which it really is not. The Pakistanis believe that Indian Su-7 and the HF-24 Marut fighter bombers can be used to deliver nuclear weapons. That India has made satisfactory advancement in the field of rocket technology and electronics has further added to the Pakistani apprehensions.

Pakistani propaganda now is against what is described as nuclear blackmail by India. It is for India to counter this propaganda. In this respect, the Indian offer to Pakistan of co-operation in the peaceful exploitation of nuclear energy is a move in the right direction.

(Foreign News & Features)



Noah and Computer

Asked to describe Noah's Ark, the Electronic brain of a Los Angeles computer centre gave the following answer: Built in 2449 B.C., building material—whitewood, tarred inside and outside, length—300 ells, height—30 ells, three-decker, designed as cattle ship, owners—Noah and Sons. When last heard of was stranded on Mount Ararat.

IS IT TRUE?

Sherlock Holmes

* Compost Making and Publicity

IS IT NOT TRUE that government was really keen about inducing a major effort to make the National Compost Making Drive a success? That a national directive had pointed out that "the extensive use of organic fertilisers was dictated by the serious circumstance of spiralling prices, but also the need for sound agronomic practices in this regard?" That a simple comparison of the nutrient content with organic fertilisers is invalid because it is a scientifically established fact that there is a higher intake of nutrients from organic fertilisers in the presence of organic matter—especially in well drained land? That there are also other significant economic benefits from the use of organic fertilisers as compost?

That the directive also pointed out the importance of correct methods of compost making could not be over-emphasised? That badly prepared compost could carry pernicious weed seeds causing their spread? That well prepared compost required only small quantities of cattle dung? That the best nutrient uptake could be realised only with good compost? That to achieve this objective of good compost being produced, Government had made arrangements to hold refresher courses and demonstrations for the benefit of village level extension workers? That it has been proposed to establish at least 5-10 demonstration compost pits heaps by each village cultivation officer? That there should be demonstration points at all agricultural stations in prominent places? That demonstration points should also be established in school gardens, premises of kachcheries, DRO/AGO offices, Agricultural Extension Centres and at the new Productivity Centres? That there should be radio and press publicity about compost making? That the country, especially the rural areas should be flooded with leaflets

and posters? That additionally there should demonstration plots of paddy and highland crops which use compost alone? That there should be close co-operation between the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Education on this matter? That it was also necessary to show that large-scale compost making with garbage could be undertaken by local government bodies at all levels and also by private individuals? That some of these could easily be formulated as commercial projects?

IS IT NOT TRUE that though this scheme to promote compost making as a national effort was put forward two or three months ago there does not seem to be a sense of urgency among those concerned to start compost making without delay? That there is a great deal of lipservice about compost making but very little has been done in the actual task of making compost? That this is not to say that more compost is not being made now than a few months ago? That what is complained about is that even the minimum which could be done through governmental action has not been done? That officials have no doubt gone round offering subsidies to individual small farmers to dig pits to make compost? That in most cases the money has spent without the pits being dug? That in our view it is wrong to subsidise a thing which only involved human labour? That if a farmer was made sufficiently aware of the importance of the local, personal and national need to make more compost, he will utilise his personal labour-power to make pits without cash subsidies? That cash subsidies to induce farmers and even landlords to start compost pits is a wrong way to approach the problem? That this only continues the deplorable practice of corrupting everybody with

free handouts? That this only continues the pernicious system whereby by people expect everything free?

IS IT NOT A FACT that the publicity campaign to induce people to start compost making at every level has never really got off the ground? That initially there were a few articles in the Press? That there were a few talks over the Radio? That a leaflets were printed and distributed? That after this, our politico bureaucrats of today have sat back to wait for the compost to tumble upon the nation in millions of tons? That these gentlemen are now waiting for the cows to come home—without realising that there are not enough cows to come home or anywhere else? That a few demonstration plots are also at hand to show Ministers and other VIPs that a great deal had been done for the money voted? That statistics are ready to show how much subsidy has been distributed for digging compost pits?

That whilst there is a tendency to indulge in self-congratulation that there are more compost pits today than six months ago, there is general apathy about the whole problem of fertiliser shortage and the urgency to make our own compost to have enough fertilisers to make our agriculture viable? That people in authority must realise that the Radio—the SLBC—has lost credibility and that most people only take the pop and film music seriously? That propaganda in the daily press is even more valueless because nobody reads anything in the Press very carefully except perhaps something about sex, rape or murder? That in the absence of newsprint, when the columns of the daily papers are crowded at with advertisements, government departments resort to expensive "supplements" to put their message across? That these supplements are a waste of time and money? That only those who write the articles in the supplements read them for self-gratification? That their immediate henchmen also read them so that they do not lose their credibility with their patrons? That it was time that Government made a fair assessment of the value of the communication media the continue to utilise? That government has to adopt realistic publicity methods to induce people to do even these things which are nationally beneficial?