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* Hazards of Rail Travel

MUCH HAS BEEN WRITTEN in newspapers recently about the hazards rail travellers face when they are on our trains. Short distance commuters do not have as much to complain about as long distance passengers, but the former have to put up with these inconveniences every day of the working week whilst the latter suffer greater difficulties but at infrequent intervals. Apart from the difficulties caused by delays, lack of cleanliness, the arrogant behaviour of railway men at all levels (particularly at the lower end of the ladder), the absence of all lighting in the carriages and a whole host of other easily available irritations, travellers on the long dis-

tance trains have recently been subject to accidents and mishaps where the loss of life and limb have become an ever present hazard.

In a press conference reported in the *Daily News* of June 22, the General Manager of the Ceylon Government Railways (CGR), Mr. V. T. Navaratne, made some revealing disclosures. The CDN report read as follows: "Train accidents were due mainly to human hazards, wornout tracks and defective bogeys, the General Manager Railways Mr. V. T. Navaratne said yesterday. The 'human hazards' Mr. Navaratne hinted: drunken drivers, indifferent station masters and may include even porters.

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Special investigations made by the GMR who gets daily reports on the services on important lines, have revealed that some engine drivers use a device to keep the 'dead man's pedal' going in trains and then bundle up in sleep.

"Most of the accidents had been caused by drivers ignoring signals to halt. The department is now examining the feasibility of using an automatic device—suggested by one of its engineers—to stop on tracks, trains which speed through halt signals. Mr. Navaratne said almost every wagon that was got down between 1960 and 1965 was defective; that consignment consisted of about 600 bogeys. Only 400 were rectified by the department and derailments were caused by the defective wagons.

"The GMR said that to prevent this sort of accident and increase the goods traffic of the department (the CGR is now flooded with goods traffic which it cannot cope with) there has to be a re-laying of sleepers. Expensive engines imported are not worked to capacity because of weak tracks and the speed limits imposed. The Planning Ministry which is now studying this problem has decided to make concrete sleepers."

The *Daily News* report also set out the ways in which the GMR hoped to cope with intransigent engine drivers. "The General Manager of Railways Mr. V. T. Navaratne yesterday warned that stern disciplinary action would be taken against CGR employees found guilty of causing accidents. Already 29 engine drivers had been interdicted following accidents inquiries and they would be pro-

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duced before the courts. The first such case comes up before the Maho courts today. **Mr. Navaratne said that severe action against CGR men was being taken for the first time under the present regime. Inquiring officers of the CGR were now being deployed to carry out urgent investigations he said.**"

The GMR also spoke about plans to improve the image of the CGR with the travelling public. His plans seem excellent on paper, and in what he said at the Press Conference. But if these *Public Relations* activities—no doubt straight out of a textbook—have already been put into effect for some months, we are afraid that they have yet had no impact on the travelling public except perhaps on those who have been selected specially—to use a hackneyed *Public Relations* term—to "feed back" to the bosses how things were going, and it is known that the "feed back" boys (and girls) know just they should say to please the PR Department.

"The CGR which will soon have a board to administer it with wide powers to take financial decisions and run the service purely as a commercial venture has already opened a public relations division at Maradana, the GMR said yesterday. Mr. Navaratne told the press that the new unit will maintain a closer relationship with the travelling public and re-organise commuter organisations possibly with a system where such bodies could be registered. Today the CGR had no immediate reckoning which organisation had authority. The department had to rely on past records.

"The new unit which would soon have representatives drawn from various electorates recommended by MPs to assist it, could help in curbing vandalism, ticketless travel and corruption in the railway, the GMR said. Mr. Navaratne had already sent out a circular to his staff to give priority to this division and feed it with news that should be brought before the travelling public.

"The unit which began to function from February this year had had many suggestions from commuters—mainly about revision of train time tables—most of which had been implemented. Mr. Navaratne

said the division had cut down the reel-tape correspondence system and employed inquiring officers to make on-the-spot investigations as and when complaints were made in regard to late arrivals of trains."

The *Ceylon Observer* had a much smaller report of the same press conference, but among the "sins" of engine drivers were also mentioned "ignoring signals, driving fast and not following the rules.."

The GMR's press conference was indeed an admission of the total failure of an Administration to ensure that the work force carried out their duties and functions in the manner expected of them or in a manner consistent with the safety of the travelling public.

ON THE RECORD as disclosed by the GMR, it is the administration which must be taken to task before engine drivers and the like are dealt with "sternness". What excuse has the GMR for not having, after several accidents, made sure that engine drivers will not drive the engines whilst being drunk? What reason can he offer why the Administration was not able to make these drivers obey the signals?

There is no doubt that it is the Administration of the Railway that must be indicted in the first instance. Engine drivers will continue to be drunk on duty if nothing had been about intoxicated drivers the first time they were detected in a state in ebriety. Railwaymen will continue to break the rules if nothing had been done by the Administration when railway workers first ignored the rules. Any government which means business must first hold the top management and administration guilty, or incompetent, or inefficient if the work of the organisation is not carried out properly and efficiently. More so, in the case of a department which is responsible for the convenience and safety of many millions of passengers who use the Railways.

For some reason, the Government continues to have confidence in an Administration which has let matters get from bad to worse in the Railways. Many closely associated with the *Tribune* have been regular travellers on the CGR—both on the short and long runs—and they have reported that during the last three or four years, discipline and administrative

effectiveness have deteriorated in a marked manner. The administrators, in private, plead that they cannot maintain discipline because any action on their part to enforce discipline led to interference by Members of Parliament, or Ministers, or powerful Trade Union Centres, pleading that the worker in question be excused. When administrators were mindful of their own responsibilities and insisted on discipline a howl was set up by the workers and their local trade unions (reaching up to the top trade-union-federation brass) that the administrator concerned was a "reactionary" and that he was out to harass, penalise and victimise the workers. More often than not, the administrator in question, was either removed or he removed himself, and the workers guilty of indiscipline were hailed as heroes who had ousted another "reactionary" dragon from a seat of power.

It is an unfortunate fact that in the Railway, "workers participation" has so far meant the removal of stern administrators on the ground they were "reactionary bureaucrats." These persons having been removed, the freedom of the wild ass has come to stay in the CGR. Anyone who is not blinded by political myopia, who now regularly uses the CGR and is able to keep his ears and eyes open, will realise that unless trade unionism is given a new orientation in the CGR, matters will become even worse—in spite of Mr. Navaratne's heroic words about "stern action" at the press conference. Mr. Navaratne should be aware that he is not labelled and branded as a reactionary bureaucrat on a wall newspaper in the platform of every major, station in the CGR: that he was a dirty so-and-so who should be removed from his post for seeking to harass and victimise workers through "stern action."

IT MAY BE THAT AFTER THREE TO FOUR YEARS of this kind workers participation which has run riot some VIP in Government has decided the GMR should be asked to take stern action against recalcitrant and guilty railway workers. *Tribune* would wish the GMR well if this was the case, but we cannot be blamed for viewing the matter with cynical pessimism. The rot has perhaps gone

too far the mild remedial action which the GMR has indicated be would at the press conference. The Public Relations unit can, of course, throw a smokescreen, but it can do no more.

What we have said is not to condemn trade unions. We know the value of trade unions and workers participation in management. We know that workers must manage their own affairs through an Administration which is empowered to discharge its functions in an efficient manner. But, in spite of what the apologists for the trade unions and the workers in the CGR have to say today, the most radically progressive person who is willing to view the matter objectively (without being sidetracked by rhetoric about UNP reactionaries and the like) will discover that discipline in the CGR is today non-existent. The station master has to do the work of a porter or linesman, whilst the porter does pooja to a local VIP on the platform as if he were the station master, and the linesman is more often than not is at the boutique behind the station taking a tot of kassippu when the train is on line. The booking clerk is never about the place until the train has come round the bend. This picture may seem a caricature, but it is a reality in many outstation railway towns—and it is in some of these places that the most dangerous accidents have taken place. When cornered the guilty worker will plead that he had been driven to kassippu because of the reactionary harassment meted out to him by the station master. And, so it goes.

But all this does not mean that the CGR does not have a substantial stratum of dedicated men who believe that they have a duty by the public and go out of their way to help people who use the CGR. *Tribune* is aware of the fact that the vast majority who work in the CGR belong to this category, but a small and vociferous coterie of the noisy militants, who parade as ac-

tivists, make things difficult for everybody. Two men can undermine the discipline in a work force of a hundred and ten men can throw out of gear a work force of several thousands. Anti-discipline is infectious and it has corroding effect which brings demoralisation in its wake. The bulk of the sane and sober workers are unable to assert themselves because the smart alecs are already well-entrenched with the political VIPs who can order the administrators about.

THE QUESTION AT ISSUE is how the rot in the CGR can be remedied. Already one trade union has issued a statement to the press that the tracks on the railway were in a weak and sorry state because the administration had failed to get the necessary spares and sleepers (alas! the Government has no foreign exchange), but the more important reason given is the inadequacy of the work force on this section.

We do not know whether it is good trade unionism to reduce working norms so that workers have a large doze of leisure time during working time, and thereby not only increase overtime earnings, but also jobs for their friends. The CGR will continue to lose public money, in spite of vastly increased fares and charges, if work norms are further reduced and overtime charges are increased, and ultimately the work force is enlarged. The mileage on the CGR has not increased and there is no need for an increased labour force for any section of the maintenance work—it may be a different story in the handling of passengers or freight. When one sees the grass has that grown on the tracks while workers, who are expected to keep them down, spend time playing cards, or are tending to their home gardens (under the impetus of the grow more food campaign), and one cannot be sympathetic to demands of trade unions who want more people to do the work fewer people had done only a few years ago.

The trade unions in the CGR, as elsewhere, have to develop the spirit of self-criticism if they hope to contribute to any improvement in the running of the CGR. In

addition, trade unions must now develop that maturity which will not make them shout "reactionary! reactionary!" each time some one tenders an opinion why something was wrong.

The Government has a duty by the public, which now pays heavy fares and rates, to run and maintain the CGR as an efficient unit. Merely turning the CGR into a Corporation will not improve matters as long the basic evils of indiscipline and inadequate work



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norms undermine proper administration. The GMR holding press conferences, in which he seeks to take pro-government newspapers into his confidence, will not help to end the indiscipline that has made the CGR a veritable inferno for the traveller. Neither Lake House nor the Times can build a better image of the CGR. It will only be a Public Relations myth.

Until and unless the trade unions are willing to view the question of management and administration with a due sense of responsibility and the necessary restraints, the CGR cannot hope to get out of the mess it is now. And passengers who travel will do so at their risk. Since there is no other way of getting about, the hazards of travel on the CGR have become part of the way of life in Sri Lanka in this era.

Tribunania

United Front Rallies

MASSIVE. There is no doubt that the rallies organised by the UF in recent weeks have evoked a mighty response in four big rural cum urban centres in the island. The first of the rallies was at Kurunegala and it was undoubtedly a big and impressive show. It must be remembered that the UF had never been able even in the heyday of electioneering in 1970 to stage a really big rally in the town of Kurunegala. Whilst they were able to rally the rest of the countryside around, Kurunegala town had remained a pocket of UNP conservatism. But, this time, from all reports which have reached the *Tribune*, there was no doubt that the young and the middle-aged in the town responded to the call of the UF.

In Kandy, too, there was an unexpectedly large turnout although some UF enthusiasts had attempted to use bureaucratic power to compel estate superintendents to send workers and others to the rallies under some kind of compulsion. In the days of Iriya-

golle of unhappy UNP fame, his minions in the Department of Education had insisted on quotas from schools to swell the numbers at UNP rallies. But making all the allowances for such shanghaied groups from the estates, the Kandy Rally of the UF was as impressive as the Kurunegala one. Kalutara was a repetition of the other two, and Chilaw in many ways had stolen the show in many ways.

Questions have been asked in political circles as to how the UF, whose popularity was in the doldrums only a few weeks ago, was able to register such a marked advance in such a short time. UF enthusiasts are convinced that Land Reform coupled with other progressive and radical measures had turned the tide. This is no doubt partly true, but a short while ago even these reforms which have not yet brought any real material benefits to the people were not able to bring the people out to rallies and demonstrations.

Was it the fact that the Government was able to import all the food required for the ration the real reason for the fortune of the UF being transformed in this remarkable fashion? This again may be part of the reason, but the kind of youthful crowds flocking to these Rallies shouting ultra revolutionary slogans, could not have been roused by the mere certainty that the rations were assured until the end of the year.

What then had brought about this significant change?

It is yet too early to say what the contributing factors were in bringing about this change. The futility of the barren policies of the UNP was undoubtedly the backdrop for the current developments especially when the slogan that the UNP was conspiring to bring a fascist coup into being had been made the chief cry of the UF.

Even if the reasons for the change cannot be set out in clear terms, the reports reaching *Tribune* indicate that the young and active, who had supported the UF in the pre-May 1970 period and more especially in the pre-April 1971 under the impetus of the JVP, had now suddenly decided to flex their muscles by bringing new life to the UF rallies.

The crowds which had flocked to these meetings had refused to be inveigled by the UF after the JVP had been proscribed. But, now with the JVP still proscribed, the youthful sympathisers and the activists of the JVP, who had been quiet for three years (many of them in detention camps) seem to have decided to come out in strength to swell UF rallies.

Does this mean that they have no more use for the JVP and have decided to travel under the flag of the UF?

Or are they still under the influence of the underground JVP and have now decided to show their strength in public under the cover and protection of the UF?

Or is that the Janavegaya has made an opening to the Left and this has made the young JVP sympathisers or ex-sympathisers pouring into the camp of the UF?

Or is it the work of the SLFP Youth League led by Anura Bandaranaike that had done the trick?

Or have the LSSP and the CP begun to attract the rural youth and the insurgent-minded elements which had been misled into the April 1971 insurrection by the JVP?

Many other questions of this nature can be asked, but it is yet too early to attempt to formulate any answers. It is also not clear whether there are new stirrings in which the JVP itself will seek a new legal existence within the frame work and leadership of the UF at least until it can stand again on its own.

We live in Sri Lanka in stirring times. Events and developments, such as these, which keep erupting ever so often, above makes life worth living in this island.

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INTERNATIONAL-AFFAIRS

BY ARIEL

✻ PAKISTAN

✻ CAMBODIA

BHUTTO'S PAKISTAN does not seem to be having its own way even with the Islamic States. When the Islamic Summit took place in Lahore in February, Bhutto had not been able to squeeze through an anti-India resolution on Kashmir. (In fact the only country which supports Pakistan's demand for Kashmir is China). More recently, at the Islamic Foreign Ministers' Conference in Kuala Lumpur, Pakistan's Foreign Minister Aziz Ahmed was not able to persuade the Conference to adopt a resolution expressing alarm about India's atomic explosion. In fact, Aziz Ahmed was indignant that many Islamic countries did not even want to make any reference to the explosion (even "to note" that such an explosion had taken place), but with a hue and cry about India having got enough plutonium to make 17 bombs, the Conference indulged in pious wishful thinking about the peaceful uses of atomic power.

Pakistan's inability to make its diplomacy of *hate-India* evoke favourable responses anywhere except in one country is because the rest of the world finds it difficult to accord to Islamabad the parity in geopolitical power with New Delhi. But more than its international image, which cannot be blown to oversize even with the doubtful support of the Islamic Conference or the Partisan support from China, the internal situation of Pakistan has become subject to severe strains. Apart from the demand for autonomy from the Pakhtoons and the Baluchis, the recent outbreak of rioting against the minority sect known as the Ahmadis has taken internal dissension within Pakistan to a new high.

At the end of May, mosques, shops and homes, according to independent foreign news sources, "were burning in all four provinces of Pakistan in the worst ever out-

burst of civil violence since the birth of Bangladesh." This is how *The Economist*, 15/6/74, described the beginning of the flare-up: "The spark that set the fireball rolling was a sectarian clash on May 29th between two groups of students in a small Punjabi town over the perennial passion-rouser: who is a Moslem? But by the end of the week the religious issue had been subsumed in politics, with opposition parties and trade unionists weighing in on the side of orthodox Moslems to call for government action against the target of the riots, the Ahmadiyya sect.

"The demands of the combined opposition that the Ahmadis, as members of the allegedly heretical sect are called, should be declared non-Moslems and banned from high office have been raised before; in fact, they are identical with the demands of a similar anti-Ahmadi campaign 21 years ago which resulted in Pakistan's first imposition of martial law and the fall of the chief minister of Punjab province swiftly followed by that of the prime minister of Pakistan. It is the spectre of a revival of a 1953-style debacle which has led Pakistanis from Mr. Bhutto down to take the present uprising so, seriously."

But who are these Ahmadis?

Many people today, outside Pakistan, may not realise the significance of the problem of the Ahmadis. It is a permanent under-current of Pakistani politics, but since 1953 there was no major flare-up on a countrywide scale against the ahmadis.

It is interesting to trace briefly the history and background of the Ahmadis and their position in the Islamic State of Pakistan.

"The Ahmadis are rejected by Moslems throughout the world largely because they refuse to accept the central Moslem doctrine that Mohammed was the last prophet and insist that another prophet appeared in the form of the local Indian preacher, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, who founded their sect in 1889. But these religious antipathies are compounded in Pakistan by social rivalries. As a small (under 2m), tightly-knit community of hard-working, well-educated, and generally incorruptible individuals, the Ahmadis have prospered in

both business and public life. They include the recently retired president of the International Court of Justice, Sir Zafrullah Khan, who as foreign minister was the focus of the 1953 riots; the present chief of Pakistan's naval staff, two out of four corps commanders, about two-dozen members of the provincial assembly in Punjab where they are strongest, several members of the national assembly, a director of the World Bank and a remarkable number of senior civil servants.

"One reason for their concentration in high positions, apart from their talent, is that as a vulnerable minority they have tended to support the government of the day. They are known to have poured money and manpower into Mr. Bhutto's election campaign in 1970 and, when he came to power in December, 1971, he duly rewarded them with top jobs, especially in the armed forces, in the expectation that they would reciprocate with undeviating loyalty to himself."

THIS BRIEFLY sums up the position of the Ahmadis in the politics of Pakistan right up to the time Bhutto. But, why this sudden onslaught against the Ahmadis?

Two reasons are attributed for this sudden volte face in Pakistani politics.

"They did (supported Bhutto)—until several months ago, when an Ahmadi was fired as chief of staff of the air force. This is said to have turned the Ahmadis against Mr. Bhutto and is now cited by conspiratorial-minded Pakistanis as one of the motivations the prime minister may have had for inciting the riots himself. Another such incentive may have been provided by Pakistan's oil-rich Moslem brothers: King Faisal of Saudi Arabia is said to have urged Mr. Bhutto at the Islamic summit in Lahore last February to deal with the Ahmadis and even to have made Arab aid contingent on a "solution" of the Ahmadi problem. A follow-up Moslem meeting at Jeddah in March pronounced the Ahmadis non-Moslem, with the Pakistani delegation reluctantly acceding. Pakistan's religious parties have been stepping up anti-Ahmadi propaganda ever since."

All this led to the present rioting which began towards the end

of May and had continued into June. Mr. Bhutto's role has been enigmatic. In one of his soul-stirring speeches, made on June 3, he had called for national unity and had rejected the demand to label the Ahmadis a non-Moslem minority. He had appointed a court of inquiry to investigate the clashes and imposed a total news blackout to prevent the communal infection from spreading, but this led to an avalanche of rumours about atrocities and also his involvement in the anti-Ahmedi persecution.

It is unlikely that Bhutto would want to play with this kind of fire in order to bring the Ahmadis to toe the line, but the fact that Bhutto has become suspect is only an indication of the credibility gap that has sprung up around him stemming from the belief that used systematic violence as part of his political strategy and he also manipulated all kinds of socio-religious divisions to sustain himself in power.

Harsh police action against striking workers, teachers and students in recent months, plus the arrests of journalists and political leaders in Lahore had helped to rally all these groups behind the Opposition parties to bring about the biggest joint anti-government protest since Bhutto came to power. The protest movement not only called for anti-Ahmedi legislation but also demanded an end to police brutality the release of political prisoners and the invalidation of June 2nd by-election in Hyderabad which it is claimed was "typically and blatantly rigged." In fact, "The evidence of large-scale fraud on behalf of Mr. Bhutto's People's party was, in fact, so compelling that the Sind chief minister joined a delegation taking the matter to Mr. Bhutto himself. This was the first time that a protest against election rigging had been carried to this level. But since virtually every by-election which has been held in the past two years has been surrounded by similar charges—at least two sitting members are alleged to have been murdered to clear the way for increasing the ruling party's representation in provincial assemblies—Mr Bhutto will be reluctant to set a precedent by reversing the Hyderabad results.

Observers feel that the present protest movement is not either

powerful enough in depth or widespread enough throughout the country to topple Bhutto. He is still firmly in his seat and it is not likely that what has been described as Bhutto's one-man democracy in Pakistan would be knocked out in the immediate future. But, all this has made things more difficult for Bhutto.

With such kinds of problems inside Pakistan, it is no wonder that Bhutto has raised a hue and cry about the Indian atomic explosion and has revived the cry for an Islamic assimilation of Kashmir as part of Pakistan.

FROM PAKISTAN TO CAMBODIA may seem a far cry, but this is another country where everything is still curiously unsettled. Cambodia lies very much under the shadow of China, and not even the Mao-Nixon detente has helped to bring peace to this country or the rehabilitation (restoration) of Prince Sihanouk—even as a titular head of a revolutionary government of the Khmers.

An interview with Sihanouk by Russell Spurr published in the *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 17/6/74, provides an insight into the state of affairs in that country. "Prince Norodom Sihanouk", says Spurr in the interview, "was not in quite the same ebullient mood I remembered from last spring. He had then returned from his two months' visit to Cambodia to meet his Khmer Rouge field commanders and tour part of the territory they control. Now, with another year of exile behind him and another year of civil war ravaging his country, the Prince was in a more sober frame of mind. He admitted quite frankly that the 1973 dry season offensive had proved a disappointment. The Khmer Rouge failed in its main objective: the capture of Phnom Penh. The Americans had helped the Lon Nol regime transform the capital into a 'big fortress' garrisoned by heavily armed elite troops. 'They were good soldiers, the best,' the Prince told me. 'We had to give up our attempts to take Phnom Penh and change our strategy.'

The switch to secondary targets such as the smaller towns only ended in a further stalemate with the communist forces holding the countryside whilst Lon Nol's

troops held the towns. With the onset of rains all operations had been suspended—until next November when Cambodia will begin the fifth year of war.

Sihanouk seems to have had many disappointments. Spurr has recorded some of them in cautious language and one must read between the lines to get the significance of Sihanouk's words. "Norodom Sihanouk regretted that many countries, including some close firends, could not understand why his troops fought on. He spent a lot of time explaining that although Kissinger diplomacy had created world wide euphoria, particularly in the Middle East, it was quite wrong to expect a peace settlement in Cambodia as long as the US insisted on supporting Lon Nol. It was no use drawing parallels with the situation on Laos or South Vietnam: their case was quite different.

"Sihanouk felt that the outcome in both countries could actually be a warning to Cambodia. The Paris agreement gave South Vietnam half peace, half war. The Luang Prabang accord left Laos under two different governments. In both cases, the Americans retained their political foothold. The Khmer Rouge would never support such a compromise."

SIHANOUK'S VIEWS ON THE LAOS SETTLEMENT, from other reports, consistent with Spurr's interview do not seem to be in accord with what common people in Cambodia seem to want. Understandably, they want peace. They want an end to the fighting. They ask why the same that was done in Vietnam or in Laos, even with the imperfections inherent in such agreements, cannot be done in Cambodia. They see little sense in the fighting.

But with Sihanouk unwilling even to begin talks or negotiations with Lon Nol, the war goes on in Cambodia. In Vietnam and Laos, political talks began and continued in spite of the opposition of the diehard ultras not only in these countries but also in other places which play a crucially significant role in the Indo-Chinese regime. But in the case of Cambodia there seems to be curious roadblock to peace.

Not so very long ago, Khieu Samphan, Deputy Premier of the

Royal Government of National Unity of Cambodia, had officially visited Peking and even after this visit he had not developed any desire to have a detente with Lon Nol so that the fighting in Cambodia could be brought to an end. On the other hand Khieu Sampha seems to have fallen for the dictum: revolutionary peoples never believe in any kind of 'stable peace' or 'peace for one generation': that revolution and war were inevitable as long as imperialism existed: that the whole world will go on living among such strong shake-ups". This is what Chou En-lai is reported to have told Khieu Samphan. Whether the ordinary people of Cambodia will derive any benefit from such rigid doctrinaire attitudes is hard to say. But if the Sihanouks and the Khieu Samphans persist in such attitudes, peace will not come to Cambodia. The *London Times*, 5/4/74, suggested that Peking was taking a tough line because China felt that the Americans were acting treacherously in continuing their support to Lon Nol's regime and were thus hampering a solution to the problem not only in Cambodia but also in the whole of the Indo-Chinese peninsula.

Peace can come to Cambodia, as it has come in Vietnam and Laos, only on the basis of compromises. The Sihanouk government has stated categorically that it was opposed to any negotiations with the regime in Phnom Penh. With this obdurate attitude, peace seems to be a distant dream in Cambodia. Sihanouk's forces have failed to take Phnom Penh, and there does not seem to be any likelihood that they can do this even in the 1974 offensive.

It is no doubt true that the Americans had no business to induce, as they did, Lon Nol to stage the coup in 1970. This action has brought untold hardships to Cambodia and the Khmer People. At that time, Washington, wanted the Lon Nol regime in Cambodia to secure the flank and rear to the US fighting machine in Vietnam. But now the situation has changed. Those who fought the Americans and their satellites in Vietnam and Laos have sat around a negotiating table with their erstwhile enemies to arrive at a peace settlement.

Lon Nol is no longer what he was. He is, apart from everything

else, a sick man. There have been suggestions that peace talks should be started with Lon Nol leaving the country for health reasons. But Sihanouk and his colleagues have been adamant: no peace talks with the Phnom Penh regime.

It is far too late in the day of the current Kissinger era, ushered in by Mao and Chou on the one hand and Brezhnev on the other, for an revolutionary to say that he does not want to negotiate with the imperialist minded reactionary Americans.

Sihanouk's interview in the *Far Eastern Economic Review* with Russell Spurr only confirms this analysis that peace was not likely for a long time in Cambodia. Spurr had evidently asked him whether the recent visit to Peking by Khieu Samphan was not likely to undermine his own status. "He remained the Head of State," Sihanouk had told Spurr," recognised as such by the Khmer Rouge and by various governments around the world. He had to retain this post to maintain the legitimacy of his government and out of loyalty to those who fought for his cause. Khieu Samphan went touring because he could no longer 'remain a ghost': that he had to be presented to the outside world. It was important to remember that the name of Sihanouk was in itself a guarantee to the Third World that Cambodia would stay neutralist and non-aligned. The Americans were circulating stories that China was preparing to replace him with Khieu Samphan. It was all part of the US propaganda plan. In fact, the situation remained unchanged. Norodom Sihanouk was the unifying factor in a divided country but he had no wish ever again to take an active part in the administration."

Spurr would naturally have asked Sihanouk about the possibilities of bringing peace on the basis of a military determination. This is what Spurr says about this part of the interview. "In the circumstances, it was difficult to see how the military deadlock could be broken. The Americans continued to pour in arms, their advisers intervened ever more actively in the fighting and, the Prince alleged, US fighter-bombers from Thailand were constantly intervening in the

fighting. The bombers had played a significant part in the battles for Kampot and close to Sihanoukville. The Khmer Rouge, for their part, were desperately short of ammunition, though China had greatly increased its arms supplies since the beginning of this year. The trouble was getting it down the Ho Chi Minh Trail. The North Vietnamese were extremely helpful but they were short of trucks and "had other problems of their own"; most guerilla units were equipped with captured American arms. There was no shortage of manpower but there were still not enough weapons to go round.

The interview concluded with a statement that Sihanouk planned to make visit to Cambodia later this year. A lot depended he said on his mother's health and whether he can leave for even the minimum time required for a brief tour. He looked forward to a new and telling guerilla offensive next November—but a long struggle still lay ahead.

With Sihanouk, Khieu Samphan and Peking determined to continue fighting in Cambodia until the Americans abandoned Lon Nol and the Phnom Penh, there does not seem to be any immediate prospect of peace in Cambodia. And, the Americans probably see no reason why they should abandon Lon Nol without Sihanouk Khieu Samphan and Khmer Rouge show any willingness to sit around a negotiating table. Washington, no doubt, felt that if Hanoi, viet Cong, and communists in Laos were willing to negotiate with the Americans, there was no reason why Sihanouk and the revolutionary Khmer Rouge should not start talking with the imperialist Americans.

Streak Wear

The streaking fad in the Western countries has lived up spring sales there. In the United States, for instance, there is a bigger demand for sports footwear, and special bags in which streakers can keep their clothes while streaking have been put on sale. For those who are shy special masks are being made.

CHRONICLE

June 23 - 27

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

SUNDAY, JUNE 23: Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike, Minister of Public Administration, Local Government and Home Affairs and Minister of Justice, who represented the Prime Minister at yesterday's meeting of the United Front held at Kalutara, said he would challenge Mr. J. R. Jayawardene to openly state what policy the UNP would adopt with regard to progressive legislation enacted by the United Front such as the ceiling on land and the ceiling on houses: "in case the UNP came into power would Mr. Jayawardene abolish them? Why was it that Mr. Jayawardene had been silent on that up to now?" asked Mr. Bandaranaike. According to the *Observer* massive crowds were present for yesterday's UF meeting. According to the *Observer* the Fisheries Corporation earned US \$ 275,000 and £ 24,000 last year by the export of lobsters, lobster tails, prawns, and other varieties of fish: this year earning have amounted to US \$ 350,000 and £ 26,000. According to the *Observer* a Civil engineering unit for the Colombo Campus of the University of Sri Lanka is being planned now. According to an AFP report in the *Observer*, the Soviet Union has indicated for the first time her willingness to grant credit to industrial firms in America that buy goods from Russia. Prime Minister Harold Wilson met his Cabinet in a sharpened political atmosphere that could bring a new general election in Britain within a few months or weeks: the Cabinet Ministers assessed the minority Labour Government's weak position in Parliament following its major legislative defeat last week since the party resumed power in March. Members of Congress investigating the possible impeachment of President Nixon scrutinised the President's income tax affairs looking for any signs of fraud. Nine countries have set an Arab Parliamentary Union with its headquarters in Damascus: Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan, Sudan, Kuwait, Tunisia, Bahrain, Mauritania and Syria took part in establishing the Union.

MONDAY, JUNE 24: Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike, Minister of Public Administration, Local Government, Home Affairs and Justice, speaking at the United Front rally in Chilaw yesterday, said that election would be held in 1977 only if people demanded it: a message from the Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, was read out at the rally by Mr. Anura Bandaranaike: in her message, Mrs. Bandaranaike had stated that as she was indisposed, she was sending her son, Anura, as her personal representative. Government doctors and specialists have accepted the new salary scales put forward by the Government: in view of this the doctors decided to officially call off the boycott of paying wards which they launched on May 1. According to the *Daily News*, a scheme to provide a system of National Service for new entrants to the university

beginning next January will be submitted to the Education Ministry for approval shortly: under the proposed scheme the period of National Service will range between six months to one year: a national Cadet Corps for undergraduates of the University of Sri Lanka will be commissioned next January. According to the *Daily Mirror*, the Audit Department branch of the Government Clerical Service Union has made a scathing attack on the Audit Department for what it termed "shelving or soft peddling" matters about corrupt bureaucrats arising out of Audit findings: in its annual report the Audit Department Branch of the Union has observed that they wish to reiterate their position in cautioning the Government that the corrupt top bureaucrats are the strong arm of the capitalist class and warn the Government to remedy this position very early by taking action against them. According to the *Daily News* one of the key decisions taken at the seventh meeting of Ministers of the Intergovernmental Group of Twenty developing countries on international monetary affairs held this month at Washington was that the oil facility should be started by the International Monetary Fund before the end of July 1974: the fund already has 3000 million US dollars to start the facility. President Anwar Sadat has asked President Nixon for a firm US attitude on Israeli raids against Lebanon. President Sadat has said that he would ask the United States for more than 2,000 million dollars in compensation for the loss from the Sinai oil fields captured by Israeli in 1967. According to the Bangladesh Government owned BRL news agency, Prime Minister Sheikh Mujibur Rahman is to make a drastic reshuffle in his Cabinet and a number of corrupt officials and political workers could face a firing squad.

TUESDAY, JUNE 25: Dr. N. M. Perera, Minister of Finance said that Sri Lanka will get aid to the tune of 30 million dollars from the monies donated by oil producing countries to the International Monetary Fund to help developing nations tide over the crisis caused by oil price hikes: this aid will be received by the end of July: the Minister disclosed this at a Press conference held at his Ministry yesterday at which he outlined the main topics of discussion at the meeting of the "Group of 20" of the IMF consisting of Ministers of developing countries held in Washington on June 12 and 13. Dr. Colvin R. de Silva, Minister of Plantation Industries, who returned to the island after attending a FAO-sponsored meeting in Rome said that a global export quota of 659,000 metric tons of tea for 1974-75 was fixed at the meeting which tea exporting and importing countries participated: he said that of this amount Sri Lanka has been allocated 210,000 metric tons, which makes her the largest exporter of tea in the world. Mr. P. B. G. Kalugalla, Minister of Shipping and Tourism, who returned to the island from China said that the People's Republic of China has agreed to carry 50 per cent of the country's rice imports in Chinese vessels on a cost and freight basis China has also agreed to use Chinese vessels to carry 50 per cent of the country's rubber exports to China also on the same basis. The *Daily Mirror* carried a correction today of its report of Mr. Bandaranaike's speech at the UF rally in Chilaw: referring to Mr. Bandaranaike's speech about holding elections in 1977 it had been inadvertently reported that elections would be held in 1977 only if the people demanded: the Minister has

stated that the Government was not afraid to hold elections. According to the *Daily News*, Sri Lanka-Soviet negotiations on the next stage of the steel project has come to a deadlock as the two sides could not agree on the prices. Israeli Defence Minister, Shimon Pares, warned that Israel would continue to strike at Palestinian guerilla training bases. Indian officials refused to comment on reports that India may try out a hydrogen-based thermo nuclear explosive device.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 26: According to the *Daily Mirror* the Acting Minister of Education, Mr. B. T. Tudawe, has announced that another Campus of the University of Ceylon will be opened shortly in the South: this Campus is expected to be sited at Koggala near Galle. According to the *Daily News*, employees of Government Departments which are to be converted to corporations will be offered "Abolition of Office" terms of retirement, if they do not opt to continue in employment after the change. According to the *Daily Mirror*, the capital aid agreement signed in Bonn last month between Sri Lanka and Federal Republic of Germany, was without strings attached: the amount of the loan is DM 60 million and that Sri Lanka could use the credit for purchase in any country. According to the *Daily Mirror*, West Germany has beaten all countries in Sri Lanka's tourism this year with a record influx of 5,229 tourists for the first three months of the year. According to the *Daily News*, all 126 teachers whose appointments were cancelled for political reasons by the previous Government have been reinstated with compensation. According to the *Daily Mirror*, the existence of factions and groups within the Sri Lanka Freedom Party came under heavy fire at the Party's Working Committee meeting held yesterday: the meeting was presided over by Mr. Maichripala Senanayake, Minister of Irrigation, Power and Highways, in the absence of the party leader, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, who is indisposed. President Nixon flew to Brussels from Washington on the first leg of his visit to Moscow for his third summit meeting with Soviet leaders. China's South East province of Kiangsi, according to a *Reuter* report, has emerged as a major centre of factional strife, with reports of killings and sabotage appearing in wall posters displayed in the streets of Peking: one poster claimed over 200 people, including old men and children, had been killed in Juichin County by followers of the late Defence Minister Lin Piao though it was not clear whether this was a single incident or a series of killings.

THURSDAY, JUNE 27: According to the *Daily News*, the Land Reform Commission has to date taken over 523,869 acres of land vested in it under the Land Reform Law: more land remain to be taken over and the deadline of July 15 for the take over of all lands would be kept. The contract for the stage 2 of the steel factory will be signed today between the Government of Sri Lanka and a two-member Russian delegation which has been in the island over a fortnight negotiating the project: according to the *Daily News*, the deadlock between the visiting delegates and Sri Lanka officials on the cost of the projects has been resolved and that a substantial reduction has been effected. According to the *Daily Mirror*, Sri Lanka did not receive any benefit from the international commodity boom but instead

suffered heavy losses: the losses were in the form of high prices paid for the import of basic essential consumer items: this year Sri Lanka had to pocket out as much as Rs. 2,000 million in foreign exchange for the import of three major consumer items only—rice, flour and sugar. According to the *Daily Mirror*, the acting Assistant Administrator Bureau for Asia of the Agency for International Development (AID) of America had made a strong case for Sri Lanka in testifying before the American House Sub-Committee of Foreign Operations for the grant of 8 million dollars loan in 1975. According to the *Daily News*, over seven million yards of Chinese poplin, meant for distribution on the ration, have been lying unsold at co-operatives and at Salu Sala since February for lack of demand from the public. According to the *Daily News*, the Minister of Agriculture and Lands, Mr. Hector Kobbekaduwa, has completed the distribution of land owned by him at Ratnapura and Matala which comes under the Land Reform Act: the lands are said to be distributed to the landless farmers in the area. According to the *Daily Mirror*, officials of eight plantation unions have appealed to six international organisations for dry rations for estate workers. French Prime Minister, Jacques Chirac, sharply rebuked Britain for protesting against a French Nuclear test at the same time as it was carrying out its own atomic blast. Wall posters continued to appear in Peking and Peking's Deputy Mayor has come under attack: this is the first time a member of the city leadership has been criticised by name.

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Inania of this, that and
the other

Freedom of Speech is Not Dead

by INNA

INNOCENT though it may seem, the Letters column of a paper makes no small contribution to freedom of speech; to being the watchdog of the nation. In an array of letters of Poson day, June 4th, this year, the *Daily News* carried some pointed remarks. It is a whiff of fresh air, a sure sign of truth and objectivity. They and we are keen on keeping perfect what we already have: Quotes from the letters:

pass regulations prohibiting sale of bread at boutiques for they sell at 1 Rupee a pound; check weight (12 ozs!) prohibit bun-making (40 cts)—mutwal resident.

some graduates who graduated a year ago in the new maths, are still unemployed, How come?—(ar)

Negombo line of the CGR is in a chaotic condition: longer intervals and behind schedule: train-travel is a nightmare. What we ask for is quick and efficient service, not air-conditioning and cushioning (D.A.R.)

Our nation can save an enormous amount of foreign exchange by imparting and eating whole wheat in the form of porridge instead of eating de-natured bleached white bread (stomach-ulcer producing) (N de S.)

Bus conductors are shy to return bus-fare change! (EMV)

IF THE GOVERNMENT has an Ombudsman in every sector, and every department, a man above board, a man who is sympathetic towards the Government, to his people and towards the work in hand, at the same time, a person absolutely impartial, and catalytic in its highest sense, then we would get somewhere in socializing this country.

Granted these letters were put on page five in a lower sector, it must still be said that they were

published, which is a credit to the CDN, despite paper (and other) pressure. Poson day reminds us how the Buddhist good News was given to Sri Lanka by Mahinda the arhant. It was an excellent dry for such auto-critique of a nation by the nation's people, not for evil intent, but to better the situation of a long-suffering people. FOOD is life. I may pass a tie-pin on to my friend. I may give him a bunch of ox-eye daisies for lack of money, but I don't give him life, but if I ever so much as pass on (as table) a handful of rice, or bread, I am giving him life. Hoarders are on the road to death because they are leading people to death by hoarding. They withdraw and restrict and hold back LIFE. "Those who take the sword shall perish by the sword" says some Bible text. And so we did not wince when in the same CDN's opening page we read:

"Nine sentenced to death for hoarding sugar in Saigon. 115 were charged with hoarding sugar. 15 were private business people..." (CDN, June 4th).

Somebody said recently at a gathering of Youth: the world's problem is Production. No sir! It is mal-distribution of food. It is the price-ring and the tariff and the protection and the hoarding and mal-practices that have brought death to many and malnutrition to many more.

CDN! you have done a fine job of work on Poson day, that thrice-blessed day on which Lord Buddha sent us the good News of *etena saccena suvatthi hotu* (by that word, may there be liberation (salvation))

Freedom of speech and Truth go together. We shall know the truth and the truth shall make us free, says the holy book again, somewhere. Truth is deathless. So said Lord Buddha: *Saccam mata vaca* (in the *Sutta Nipata*)

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SHAMBA

What Has Got Me Down

by Anatory Bukoba

June 11,

To an empty house it was I returned tonight, but it looked lived in. On reflection, the first conclusion I came to, that the family was here, but that my new companion had pulled out, may be wrong, for it could be the other way round. This time I feel it will be either the real beginning, or else the end of the *Shamba*. A lad arrived with me tonight, and I have some reason to think that if he does not go right, no one else will. He is, as it were, from my village, or one of the many that I lay claim to, and this particular one with some good reason.

There is another point; this lad asked to come here, or rather, with me. The understanding is that he must try to be self-supporting in the shortest possible time, and I am not really concerned how he does it; it may be straightforward agriculture, or business or a combination of both. If he had a calling like carpentry, it could even be that. I feel that if he is to get the maximum advantage of a situation like this, he is going to need companions soon, either following the same calling or another. There was a real gust of wind just now. I have some citronella oil for mosquitoes.

June 12,

Been back, have I, not twenty-four hours, and it seems like an age. No English class, and so free was I early; but I felt so tired, I lay down to rest, slept, and then the place came to life. The conversation is still going on. It all started when my colleague walked in. Now, no meal here seems to satisfy me; I am soon hungry. So it was tonight. My colleague brought pineapple and papaw, both excellent, the pineapple was with salt; now I know why my father always has salt with his, for it makes such difference, my hunger is satisfied now.

My mat is on the floor of the front room, what used to be the porch. It is to a side, and so leaves

a corridor from the door to the rest of the house I should rather have said doorway, for there is no door. Lying on this mat and looking back into the rest of the house, I took in a wonderful scene. At the back of my head is the *massa* bed in the main part of the house. This I could not see properly, but there was somebody sitting on it, his legs dangling on one side. Beyond this was the back room, and another person standing in the doorway of that. There was a faint light in that room. What stood central to my view was the *massa* table and on this a lamp, to the right was the housewife, sitting, presiding over the preparation of our desert. To the right, of her was the kitchen *massa* table over the fireplace. How can I describe it all? Without any people at all, I dare say the scene would have been striking; with people, it looked cosy, animated, a cave, a cave lived in; more than a cave; let us say a farmhouse in the Auvergne, in the Alps or the Pyrennes. Outside, I dare say our house looks a hovel; inside, it is spacious.

Until this evening, the house did look a hovel. Now, it looks one only in size. The front wall was a sight, the *cadjans* askew, hardly one not awry. When I took them off and some of the side ones too, there was only about one *cadjan* that looked fit to use again. Taking them off, I had no clear idea what I was going to do; in fact, I began to regret what I was doing for, at least, the *cadjans* had served as a wall. Having got them all off, the ones that were a disgrace, I put them all on again.

Taking them off, I had taken off, disentangled, a various assortment of sticks. Some of these I used again, the majority I did not. I had untied a great amount of stirring or rope. There was enough to put the *cadjans* on again, and as much again saved. I used all the *cadjans* again except a few small pieces that would have served no purpose. The walls are on again in their entirety, and tidy they are. The house no longer looks a hovel in its appearance, although it may give that impression in size. Inside it is spacious or so I think.

We did not tear into our work today. I have had occasion to say that an English *navy* always surveys

his work and spits on his hands before commending any task. We did not exactly do that, but I did take my friend around and introduced him to some of his surroundings outside the *shamba*, such as the post office, and my church, and we met some of my friends here in these parts. I dug up some of the *nithi kumba*, until the mammoth handle worked loose. When my friend fixed it, I suddenly turned to the house, to what I have already described.

June 13,

St. Anthony is a popular saint honoured by many non-catholics and it is his day today. Someone walked through the *Shamba* twice. An Anglican, he lost his keys, he was not sure that he had brought them. Anthony is pre-reformation, a safe person for an Anglican. I told him of the feast and he went away consoled, sure he would find the keys, I hope the saint helps me fill up these pages.

We started clearing, in the corner by the entrance to the *Shamba*. The mammoth worked loose from the shaft several times, and my friend fixed it each time. We dug up the thorns, used the *Vici katha*, and I also used my knife. Two knives were used. There was a lot of wood to be cut up.

The thorny bits went into one heap, the rest into a pile of wood for the fire. All the stones I threw out into a heap. There was enough rubbish to make into a really big blaze this evening. The wind helped and all was consumed by the fire.

My friends seems to have come here with wounds that have not healed. It was not long before he was out of action, and now he is going home. He says he will come back with friends.

Grown quite old have I this last year. I was recovering from a major illness when I started, but I had energy, but now I have none. Some of the blame might possibly be put on food, it costs so much now. Bread was to be had then; there is none now to speak of. A greater cause of my aging may be just frustration, not only friends, but the fact that even if I have more money, it does not go so far. By friends I mean friends with me on this *Shamba*. I used to be able

to buy cadjans; I do not think I could do that now... Sugar we do not see, nor milk now.

Philosophizing is something to fall back on when I have nothing else to say. Let me try some verse.

This isle is going well for some, but others think it's bad,

While politics, that bane of all, is lifted to immortal heights,

And those in power are happy there, and others are kept out.

For us the problem's of a different sort;

There's some go happily along, Their life hedged in with wealth,

And others having naught but life, and full of good intentions,

Keep falling short of their ideal, their life a blazing rot.

What else can we say to stick and bide by truth?

The way, the truth and life is Christ

Whose humanity is a guarantee that we come down to earth,

No disembodied spirits are we to float in a heavenly aery.

Our will's our own, our guide is God, And we must share this world with others,

That we can't get to heaven alone is the hardest lesson we have to learn.

No age is better than the one that precedes it,

Not one wit worse.

It seems a long poem, but it cannot be helped. I have to break the hard news here that I shall be going away tomorrow, and it hardest for myself to have to say it. Someone's 80th birthday has come along, and I have been given a chance to honour it. So my friend and I leave together, leaving the family alone, but this time not without its head.

The woodapple is coming on fast. There were two people hunting for rannowara leaves for medicine. We have eaten it as a vegetable. We still drink river water.

Good it is writing this and listening to the others talk. We used to get a certain amount of excitement reading newspapers, it is perhaps this that we lack; excitement. Enough of this ramble.

POINT OF VIEW

THE COUNTRY'S NEED

by Jephthias

If the recent trend in population growth is maintained, we would have about 20 million souls by 1980, nearly 30 million by 1990, and over 40 million by the year 2000 A.D. Apart from the growing problems of pollution, poverty, sickness, lack of living space, housing and employment which would of necessity accompany the population explosion, we must first of all ask ourselves from where are we going to find the food to feed all these extra mouths?

ONE HEARS alarming reports nowadays, that whilst Sri Lanka is saddled with the burden of one of the highest birth-rates in the world, and a population of some 14 million that is expected to treble itself by 2000 A.D.: our imports of rice are expected to fall far short of the adequate quota needed to feed its growing numbers. This is because those countries which have served as a vital trade lifeline of our island's rice needs in the recent past, e.g. Burma, Thailand, Pakistan, India, China, Indo-China, Indonesia and the Philippines; are themselves faced with the problem of a rapidly expanding population: and needing more and more for their internal consumption, find that they have less and less of an available surplus to spare for export to other countries as time goes by.

The problem has been aggravated by our food production programme, aimed at self-sufficiency in rice by 1975-80, falling way behind schedule, owing in part to vagaries in the local weather-cycle (caused by indiscriminate deforestation and other factors, leading to alternate droughts and floods—last year's 'Yala' crop, for instance, being a failure owing to the prevailing drought), and sharing in the upheaval to the international weather-cycle caused by persistent nuclear tests, etc. and in part by the Government's stupidity in disbanding the Land Army (merely because it carried the stigma of the UNP,) and its preoccupation with such (lesser?) matters as parliamentary and legal reforms, the freedom of the press, eradicating pavement hawkers and bringing the Che Guevarists to trial: to the detrimental neglect of what should be its most important priority, viz. the agricultural development of the country, and also the

progress of animal husbandry which should go hand-in-hand with it.

There is no greater service that any able-bodied youth could do either for his country or for himself at this present juncture, than "to go back to the land" with loin-cloth round waist and mammy in hand, in order to develop it, and increase food-production, rather than indulge in this mad influx into the big cities and towns, even from remote rural areas, in search of Government Service, employment in the Mercantile Sector, or other fashionable 'white-collar' jobs. What we really need, on an island-wide scale, are more and not less land-armies, shramadana services, collective farm and community projects. We also need trained agricultural instructors in each town and village. This is a far more important priority than industrial development, which ought to be relegated to second place.

Our local politicians, instead of trying to shout their heads off at "mass-meetings" while blaming the previous Government for the current ills of the nation, or running the other man down in order to gain their own political ends; would be of much more constructive use to the nation if they would set a practical example of national development, remembering that "action speak louder than words". If each one of us, in our home garden plots, or whatever limited space is available to us, in either greater or lesser degree, can grow our own vegetables, we would be giving a lead to, and making our humble contribution to, the overall food production aim of the nation.

During the war, what saved us from famine, or at least a serious food shortage, was the GROW-

MORE-FOOD - CAMPAIGN of the Caldecott - Layton administration. So what we need today, is not a Land Reform Commission to take over privately-owned property, and then being unable to decide how best to administer the lands thus alienated; but active Governmental encouragement for people to develop their own land, instead of harassing and hindering the poor farmer, as they are doing at present. For it is a proven axiom that people will take a far greater personal interest in their own land than anyone else would; far less the impersonal machinery of a disinterested State administration.

With an universal food-shortage, even if not quite of faminal proportions one would hope and pray, in the immediate offing, we would all do well to remember the scriptural saying: "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord thy God," and can also take heart from fast fulfilling biblical prophecy: "When you see these things begin to come to pass, then lift up your heads high, and look, up for your redemption draweth nigh."



Algerian Workers in the G.D.R.

The G.D.R. and Algeria have signed an agreement on co-operation in providing jobs for Algerian workers at industrial enterprises in the G.D.R. This is the first interstate agreement of this type between a socialist and a developing country. The first group of Algerian workers is to arrive in July. The Algerian workers will be given training at the G.D.R. enterprises and will be accorded all the rights enjoyed by G.D.R. citizens as regards working conditions, wages and social security. They will be provided with housing and recreation facilities, and will be able to send their earnings to their families at home. The Algerian Press Service comments that the agreement will help to train the skilled workers Algeria needs and to meet the labour power requirements of the G.D.R.

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

INNA AND HIS INANIA

by E. Seemanpillai

Inna has nothing against Italy. I too have nothing against her. Famed of yore as the homeland of Imperial Rome, she still spawns unexhaustedly her appointed quota of great men and true enriching at once humanity and humanism even after the travails she must have undergone when she emptied herself—as comrade George seems to suggest—outpouring all her intellectual energies in the rearing of that intellectual colossus later known as Thomas of Aquinas.

But I have something against *Inna* and his occasional inanities. Vistarini may have been Italian and Benedictine, and Chardin, French and Jesuit. In the field however of evangelical endeavour to which the priest is primarily committed, the missionary Vistarini has run a greater race than his palaeontologist counterpart who built his edifice of noos and nebulosities on what later was debunked as the Peking fraud.

BOUQUETS, journalists are known to offer, to such as they would desire to honour or to placate. It is also not uncommon that they should hurl brickbats on such as have antecedently received from them fulsome praise: such is the whirligig of fortune. Few, however, exceedingly few, are those among them who would not truckle to Mammon in the ascendant but fight him tooth and nail until he is shackled once more to his den. Such indeed appears to be the stubborn stand of *Rock*, such also the challenging salvos of *Fatima International* each prepared to spare neither limb nor life in the gallant strife now entering its critical stage for the survival of those values we have long cherished and would fain hand down to posterity untarnished. Thus motivated do not appear to be a host of other publications once ephemerally great in their espousal of soul-stirring causes but now spinelessly prepared to make to themselves friends of the Mammon of Inquiry and be accommodated in shifting tabernacles rather than face bitter obloquy and be branded narrow and mediaeval, reactionary, repressionist, antediluvian.

That neither *Rock* nor *Fatima International* should be so downright in dissent, so intransigent in combat is what *Inna* and his comrades would desire: dissent they would hold should be couched in the language of euphemism there being no unkind utterance, no manifestation of indignation. The Prophetic office however is under

no such constraint, is fettered by no such restrictions. Christ himself, the meekest of the meek, did not flinch from flinging into the face of his adversaries the stinging indictment now ringing through the ages: Ye brood of vipers, whited sepulchres, hypocrites.

Counselling Christian courtesy, Christian moderation is not enough: such counsels must needs be translated into palpable action. To be classified as stooges, stooges of imperialism whether of British, African or Portuguese origin, is the one fate common to all dissidents when all other golden words are spent. Language such as this is far from temperate, certainly not charitable, and certain-not in accord with those norms laid down for other journalists who continue to be the hapless recipients of many such other attributions from the vocabulary of self-styled, self-proclaimed progressives.

If *Chardin*, *Inna*, *George* and other clansmen of theirs have made more people turn towards Christ, there certainly is cause for rejoicing: but if *Chardin* preaches a gospel other than what has been delivered to us from apostolic times, the Church of God can have no truck with *Chardin* or his post-humorous school of progressivist votaries nor can the people of God extend to them the right hand of full fellowship and communion.

TO SPEAK of spirituality is to speak of something which God

alone who knoweth the hearts of all, can objectively fathom. If however the claim is made that *Le Milieu Divin* is a book destined to make a Christian more Christian in the modern world, it must indeed be a tall claim there being only one such instrument unique in its operation viz Grace. To George, Inna and their retinue a la chardin was given *Le Milieu Divin*. Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ.

Far too many we deplore are the exponents of *Teilhardism* in the which are many things hard to be understood, conclusions, corollaries undreamt of by Chardin himself, which the unlearned and unstable wrest drawing many other as well into the whirlpool of perdition.

Cockily has Inna proclaimed that ignorance is the mask of arrogance: it has not occurred to him that arrogance itself vice versa can be the mask of ignorance. Ignorance I would add of the ways of God before whom all human wisdom is as dung paling into insignificance before the folly of the Cross to which has been nailed protoparental prevarication as also all the other transgressions of sad humanity.

Inna would have the opening to the left much wider flung even as Rock and Fatima International would have it strait and narrow as in the centuries before Vatican II. But neither extreme Left which is the goal of liberals, nor extreme Right in which it is safest to tread working out one's salvation in fear and trembling, is where the Truth resides. Virtue too I would add is neither there nor here.

IN ITS MARCH however towards eternity and the everlasting mansions, the Pilgrim Church veers neither left nor right but gathering the stragglers moves surefootedly along divinely assured of its destiny and peamanency, leading the entire flock away from the shadows and semblances of earthly strife into the glimmering beacons afar "where the eternal are."

Much has Rock to its credit, the credit also of the Christian peoples of Ceylon. Baring irregularities at the Regional Seminary where there has since been a reorientation with greater promise for the future, it has at the same time ex-

posed much that is crude and unwholesome in local liturgical experimentation. Equally unsparring in its indictment of deviants from long-established and much revered priestly attire and of aberrants from the legitimate word of God, it has valiantly upheld the fundamentalist concept of the Petrine Office and unwearingly campaigned for restoration of the time-honoured reverence now much eroded due to the Sacrament of the Altar. It has perhaps humanly erred in the overstressing of certain aspects of Church discipline and in its pardonable addiction to the grandeur of Tridentine worship and to the "ocean-roll of rhythm" receding now for ever from our temples. Some prophetic role it has to fill so it seems, and we should be thankful it's doing it tolerably well despite the mountains of opposition it constantly builds up in its

attempts to present a fairer and more authentic image of the church of God in the modern world.

Let the extremes therefore, Left and right sound their warning trumpets and move into the fray accoutred in all the panoply of their warring factions even as Jesuit and Dominican tore into each other in classic and vociferous debate not many centuries ago. Even so let Inna, George and clansmen and staidier Rock and Fatima International clash in battle plying sword and bill in unrelenting struggle until the night is gone and, all earthly passions spent, those distant faces smile in that ethereal dawn where sitteth the Lamb who redeemed us all.

Chenkaladi,
23rd June 1974.

SECOND WORLD WAR HERO

ZHUKOV

by Basil Perera

"Everything has its end, and wisdom tells us to accept this calmly, I had my joys and my griefs and losses. I had everything. Looking back, a man of my age inevitably catalogues everything; what was important and what was not worthwhile. For me, the main thing has always been serving my motherland, my people. With a clear conscience I can say that I have done my duty. Has my life been lived well? I think, yes, it has been. My greatest joys coincided with the joys of the motherland. The worries of the motherland, its losses and griefs troubled me more than my personal losses and griefs. I have lived my life knowing that I am being of service to the people, and this is the main thing for any life."

So said Georgi Konstantinovich Zhukov to a correspondent while he was writing his memoirs in the evening of his crowded life. And it is a self appraisal that all those who have followed the brilliant career of this military genius will endorse without hesitation.

Zhukov was one the greatest military leaders of the century, nay, one of the greatest military leaders of all times. In the sternest hours that Soviet Russia faced following the Hitlerite attack in 1941, the country produced many famous military leaders. Zhukov was unquestionably the ablest of them all. Historians and military specialists of the most diverse views have examined and will in the future examine in detail all the particulars of his exploits in the greatest battles fought in the course of World War II. Whatever they may disagree on, there will be none to dispute the outstanding role of Marshal Zhukov in the battles fought on Soviet soil, the skill and talents he displayed in every one of them. And popular memory in his own country will preserve his name in the category of such famous military leaders of the past as Suvorov and Kutuzov.

Georgi Zhukov was born of peasant stock in a village close to Moscow in 1896. It was not in a palatial mansion, but in a humble muzhik's hut that he first saw the light of day. His talent was rooted deeply in the midst of the people. The Marshal himself was always proud of that. The Soviet people too took pride in that source and subsequent career of his well-lived life.

He started life as an apprentice furrier. Drafted into the Tsarist

army in 1915, he served as a cavalryman in the Novgorod Dragoons. After the October Revolution and civil war which followed, Zhukov joined the Red Army and gave battle to the interventionist troops. He joined the Bolshevik Party in 1919. He visited Spain at the time of the civil war in the 1930's, and distinguished himself in the war that Soviet Russia fought with Japan in Mongolia in 1939.

In January 1941, Zhukov was appointed Chief of the General Staff. His talent as an army leader particularly strikingly manifested itself during the Soviet-Nazi war. As representative of the general headquarters and first Deputy Supreme Commander, he coordinated actions of the front and played a prominent role in many battles. His name is particularly associated with the defence of Moscow in 1941, the battle of Stalingrad in 1943, the lifting of the 900-day siege of Leningrad in 1944, and the victorious march to Berlin in 1945.

Zhukov was the first professional Soviet soldier to become a member of the party's politbureau. He was also for a short time Soviet Minister of Defence. He attended the Big Four 'summit' meeting in Geneva in 1955 where he met his old friend, Dwight Eisenhower with whom he had kept up a lively correspondence ever since the end of the war.

Of all the days he had lived, Zhukov has said that he remembers best the autumn of 1941 when he defended Moscow and the May days of 1945 when the Red Army stormed Berlin. Lately, he has been wielding his pen refuting the statements of Western commentators who try to ascribe Hitler's failure to capture Moscow not to the heroism of the Soviet soldiers and the skill of their leaders but to bad weather and the Russian winter. ("General Winter" was the term Hitler himself used).

Zhukov has written: "It was not the weather, but the people—the Soviet people! Those were unforgettable days, when the exploits of the Soviet people were inspired by their united will to defend their motherland and by their supreme patriotism. All of them realised that they were responsible for the country's future, for the course of the war and history; they were prepared to lay down

their lives for the ideals that inspired our people and to destroy those who wanted to trample those ideals underfoot. Those of us who had been entrusted by the Party with the command of the forces defending Moscow, knew that the Soviet people would not surrender the capital and that the defeat of the enemy would begin at its walls. That was why, at the height of the defensive battle, I was in a position to reply with confidence to a question put by Joseph Stalin about the fate of the capital, and say that we would not surrender Moscow."

In 1970, on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the victory over Nazi Germany, Zhukov paid this tribute to youth. "I feel that young people have made the main sacrifice in the war. How many excellent lads we have lost! How many mothers have not seen their sons back from the war! From a command post I saw many times young soldiers rising for an attack. It is a terrible minute: to rise to one's full height when the air is pierced by death-dealing metal. And they did rise. Many of them had just learned the taste of life. Nineteen or twenty is the best age in an ordinary human life. Everything is ahead of you. And for them very often it was only a German pillbox belching machine gun fire."

Old soldiers, they say, never die. They just fade away. Zhukov has faded away leaving behind him fragrant memories for all those to whom he was a hero of rare calibre.

LETTER

Gobar Gas Plant

The small article on Gobar gas plant by Mr. D. P. Chawla appearing in your issue of 15.6.74, is really interesting, appears worthwhile and should be very useful and profitable to small scale farmers, like me, in Sri Lanka.

I feel that you will be doing a great service to our country if you could kindly get in touch with the three major institutions or agencies in India mentioned in this article, which are engaged

in the popularisation of this innovation and obtain for them detailed plans of the plant with specifications, quantities of work and the estimated cost of the different items of work to be done and also clear instructions as to how it is constructed and worked to meet cooking, lighting and also to be used for running small engines of water pumps etc. which use petrol, kerosene or diesel, and to make them available to interested farmers like me.

The cost of a complete installation of this type of gas plant appears to be not much and within the means of small scale farmers. If its practicability is assured and the design is suited to our rural economy and conditions, I think it is worth adoption by our farmers.

I will be very pleased to hear from you the action you are taking in this matter or whether I should contact direct with them and get this information.

K. Sivasubramaniam

Sivalogapathy Farm,
4th Mile post Mannar Road,
Vavuniya.

17.6.74

Mutiny in a Monastery

The monks of the Esphygmenon Monastery on Mount Athos in Greece have caused a sensation by staging a mutiny. When the local governor went there to find out what was happening, he saw a black flag with the words "Orthodoxy or Death" waving from the belfry. The mutineers let the governor in and then told him that they would keep him as hostage and burn themselves alive if their demands were not met. The mutiny was staged to defend the Prior from the Patriarch of Constantinople. The latter favours the Gregorian calendar, while the sect predominating in the monastery adhere to the old Julian calendar. The Patriarch finally decided to dismit the recalcitrant Prior. The mutineers, it is true, soon released the governor, but the conflict continues.

FOR THE SMALL FARMER

Cowdung Gas Plant For Fuel And Manure

by J. N. Verma

In the present situation of acute shortage of both fertiliser and fuel, cowdung gas plants have a key role to play in providing necessary substitutes for fuel, both for cooking and pumps, and also rich manure for our farms. So far about 7,000 gas plants have been installed all over the country and they are working fairly successfully.

In our country, about ten crore tonnes of firewood is burnt for fuel each year, resulting in denuding the countryside of its trees. It is a pity that cowdung is used as fuel in villages and small towns in India from time immemorial. The burning on the dung directly has made our villages poorer as it has impoverished their land.

India possesses tremendous cattle wealth. The number of cattle in the country as per 1961 census is well over 22 crores and 90 lakhs. The amount of fresh cattle dung available from these animals is estimated at over 120 crore tonnes per year.

Of this, about 40 crore tonnes of dung is converted into cakes for use as fuel. If this could be converted into manure, it can increase food production in the country by about one crore tonnes. The Planning Commission has, on the recommendation of Khadi and Village Industries Commission, decided to establish 20,000 gas plants in 2,000 blocks.

The Indian Council of Agricultural Research has adopted a three-pronged approach towards the improvement of nutrient supply to crop plants for food, feed and fodder production. The working group appointed by the ICAR, which discussed the above approach recently, has concluded that unless arrangements are made for the production of cheap fuel in our villages, organic matter will continue to be used as fuel.

AN IMPORTANT SOURCE of organic matter is farmyard manure. The study group also discussed and studied the popularisation of cowdung gas plants.

It felt that a coordinated programme of research needs to be initiated for intensifying work in the area of fermentation chemistry with particular reference to iden-

tification and use of catalysts in improving gas release and gas production during winter months, when there is practically no fermentation.

The coordination programme of research should also cover engineering aspects for improving burners, cylinders, drums, corrosion-resistant paints, etc. A design engineering group needs to be involved in the programme in order to help in developing low-cost models of cowdung gas plants.

Suitable manufacturers need to be identified for fabricating low cowdung gas plants on a large scale suited to different ecological conditions. Arrangements also need to be made for supply of credit for the installation of these plants.

IN ADDITION to the training programme at a few institutions the training of rural woman in the use of gas cooking devices needs to be taken up in areas where such plants are being introduced. While taking up the popularisation of cowdung gas plants on a large-scale it is very important to make arrangements for promoting the community gas plants in each area.

A scheme to finance construction of cowdung gas plants in rural households has been launched by the Syndicate Bank in collaboration with the Khadi and Village Industries Commission.

The Bank would encourage setting up of cowdung gas plants by providing loans to the farmers for

this purpose. It also proposes to locate the unemployed engineers, who are interested in taking up supervision of such work after undergoing suitable training with the Khadi and Village Industries Commission.

THE COMMISSION will render free technical assistance and supervise the erection of gas plants by the farmers or persons, who avail of the loans from the Bank. The Bank will also grant a subsidy of Rs. 300 per plant.

The Credit Planning Cell of the Reserve Bank of India, the Agricultural Finance Corporation and its member banks will soon undertake the studies on the present working of cowdung gas plants and suggest steps to improve their fabrication, installation, and maintenance. It will also suggest ways to strengthen the educational and

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extension work needed in this regard.

Establishment of cowdung gas plants is highly suited to the financing pattern of scheduled banks, whose available funds are essentially of revolving nature. Nearly 6,000 cowdung gas plants can be financed in the immediate future by the scheduled banks, provided certain support services are made available.

The advantages of these gas plants are manifold. They will be able to save the nutrients in the sewage and cowdung, which can be fed into the hungry farmlands.

The cowdung gas plants help agriculture, besides producing gas. As all the organic matters along with the cowdung undergo a process of decay in anaerobic condition, there is no breeding of flies, mosquitoes, etc. This goes a long way in keeping the environment clean. The smokeless fuel produced renders cooking much easier with reduced expenses.

TOPICAL

India's Fast Breeder Reactor Programme

by S. K. Ghosh

Institute of Defence Studies and Analyses

INDIA IS COMMITTED to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and the May 18 underground explosion is an effort towards that end. But, whereas the peaceful nuclear explosion technology is still in an experimental stage, even in advanced countries like the USA and the USSR, generation of electricity is one of the first and foremost fields where nuclear force has been successfully and commercially used. And herein comes the fast breeder reactor—the wonder nuclear reactor of the coming years.

Years ago it was thought that a time would come when somebody would throw a lump of uranium into a machine, stand back and watch it light the entire city from

then on. This fantasy is slowly but steadily advancing towards reality, carried forward by the work in what is called the "fast breeder nuclear reactor technology." In other words, it is a nuclear reactor that creates more fuel than it uses while at the same time generating electricity.

The fast reactor is so called because the neutrons given off by the fissioning nuclei retain much more energy than the neutrons in "thermal" reactor. In thermal reactors, such as Britain's advanced gas cooled reactors or the American light water reactors, the neutrons give up most of their energy in the reactor's moderator material. In the fast reactor there is no moderator, and the neutron energies are in the region of 20 KeV to 10 MeV rather than the 100 eV or so of neutrons in a thermal reactor. Fast reactors are also known as breeder reactors because fast neutrons can convert fertile, but the non-fissile, uranium-238, which makes up more than 99% of natural uranium deposits, into fissile plutonium that can be used as reactor fuel. Thus the fast breeder can be designed to generate more fuel than it "burns up", by changing what is now useless waste into fissile material. Most breeder reactors are sodium-cooled; molten sodium is used to remove heat from the reactor's core.

THE MASTERY and application of the fast breeder technology is particularly important for India. While India's existing reserves of uranium could last only 20 years, there are vast deposits of thorium in the country which could be utilised as basic fuel in fast reactors "producing nuclear power for the next 2000 years," as Dr. Ramana, Director of the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC), once put it. Thorium by itself is not fissionable, but uranium-233 can be produced in an atomic reactor from thorium. U-233 is fissionable and can be used as reactor fuel to produce electricity; it can also be used for making nuclear weapons. The fast breeder test reactor now under construction at Kalpakkam, will use thorium to produce U-233. The BARC has also set up a pilot plant to make U-233 from thorium.

The U-233 thorium technology is important for India, for she

has three-fourths of the world's thorium reserves, amounting to over one million tonnes.

There has been some scepticism, specially in US circles, on the basing of nuclear power on thorium. Refuting an American scientist's contention that it would take a hundred years to develop thorium as a form of fuel, Dr. Homi Sethna, Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, asserted that "there is hardly anything that we can't do with thorium". Tests on how the versatile thorium would behave in a reactor and how economical it would be as fuel for nuclear power production have already been carried out at the BARC. The AEC has also received favourable reports from its German collaborators on tests they conducted with samples sent from India. However, according to Dr. Sethna, India will have to get a thorough grounding in the fast breeder reactor technology before she could make commercial use of thorium.

THERE ARE also some critics—again mostly in the USA—of the fast breeder reactor system itself. The incipient breeder programme in the USA has been challenged by the environmentalists who question the safety of this new generation of nuclear power plants. However, a study of the fast reactor, recently released power-plants. However, a study of the fast reactor, recently released by the USAEC, has concluded that power stations planned around this type of reactor will be safe and their adverse effect on the environment minimal. The report also concludes that investment in the fast reactor will be economically advantageous.

Of the seven fast reactor programmes already launched in the world—the USSR, USA, France, Britain, West Germany, Japan and India—the Soviet Union's is by far the most developed. The 350-mw Shevchenko fast-neutron reactor on the shores of the Caspian Sea, commissioned in June 1973, is the world's biggest and till recently the only commercial fast breeder plant. The construction of America's \$ 700 million, first full-scale liquid metal fast breeder reactor at Oak Ridge, Tennessee, commenced last year. The French,

with whom India is collaborating in her fast reactor programme, have made considerable progress in their own programme. Besides three research fast neutron reactors—the *Rapsodie*, *Harmonie* and *Masurca*—the country's first large-size fast breeder power station—the 250 mw *Phenix* on the bank of the Rhone river, was commissioned last year. The £ 45 million, 250-mw British prototype fast reactor (PFR) at Dounreay in Scotland became critical in March 1974. The programme in West Germany and Japan are still at incipient stages.

India's fast breeder reactor programme started with the establishment of the Reactor Research Centre (RRC) at Kalpakkam, near Madras. Construction of the centre commenced in 1970 soon after Dr. Sarabhai's proposals for a ten-year nuclear development programme was released in May of that year. The proposals included: (a) the completion of fast breeder test reactor and experience with technology of plutonium enriched fuel, its fabrication and reprocessing, sodium coolant technology and experience with thorium-bred U-233 fuel; and (b) design and construction of a large 500-mw prototype fast breeder test reactor.

The RRC, consisting of the 40-mw Fast Breeder Test Reactor (FBTR) and various laboratories, is being set up for the development of fast breeder reactor technology "as the second phase of nuclear power programme of the Department of Atomic Energy." While the FBTR will provide experience in the design, construction and operation of the sodium-cooled fast reactor, the objectives of the laboratories would be the development of an efficient fuel cycle, sodium technology and development of materials. The various project facilities in the RRC, costing about Rs. 92 crores, were expected to be completed by 1976. The time schedule has since been extended to 1977-78. The slippage, according to the AEC, has been mainly in the setting up of the FBTR itself, as a result of the delay in the finalisation of agreements for transfer of knowhow for fabrication of major components for the test reactor and in the finalisation of the French credit for import of materials.

AS MENTIONED earlier, India has secured the technical collaboration of France in her fast reactor programme. The CEN (Commissariat A L'Energie Atomique), the French Atomic Energy Commission

and a private firm, the Stein Industries (part of the big CGE group), are involved in this collaboration. Stein Industries will contribute to the building of the 40-mw sodium-cooled experimental fast breeder reactor—presumably a replica of the *Rapsodie*—the first French fast breeder research reactor at Cadarache—at the RRC, which is intended as part of the project for a series of similar units on a large scale. The CEN would help in the training of Indian engineers and technicians in their fast breeder research reactors, which are mainly concentrated at the Cadarache Nuclear Research Centre in southern France. About five French engineers are currently working at Kalpakkam, while a few Indian engineers and technicians are receiving training in the construction and operation of sodium-cooled fast neutron reactors in France. (Some Indian engineers and technicians have already returned on completion of their training).

India has also sought from the USSR information on sodium technology and safety and control techniques—subsidiary technology in the construction of fast breeder reactors.

It is expected that during 1974-75 the construction of the reactor

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building of the FBTR would be "substantially" complete. All the special materials required to be imported from France would have arrived while the fabrication of components like reactor vessel, intermediate heat exchanger, steam generator, control rod drive mechanism etc., commence in India. The construction of the Radio-metalurgy Laboratory, the Materials Science and Materials Development Laboratories would also be in progress. In short, the AEC expects to keep to its revised time schedule of 1977-78 for the completion of the RRC facilities, except for the Reprocessing plant which is required only in 1981. Meanwhile, the BARC, in May 1972, commissioned a Zero energy fast reactor, named *Purnima*, for carrying research in fast reactor physics.

But the RRC and the FBTR are only the first, and experimental, phase of India's fast reactor programme. The ultimate aim is to set up commercially viable large fast reactors to take over a major proportion of the country's power generation. The design and construction of a large 500-mw prototype fast breeder test reactor (like the *Phenix* of France or the PFR of Britain) contained in Sarabhai's proposals, should the next logical step.

—F.N.F.

Devil-Belief

New York's Centre for Policy Research has come to the conclusion that an increasing proportion of Americans are certain of the existence of the devil. Its two surveys, made in 1964 and 1974 and involving 3,546 persons, show that the number of believers in the devil has increased from 37 to 48 per cent and that of those believing in God has declined. Most of the devil-believers say living conditions are deteriorating and the future is bleak. Dr. Clyde Nunn, the Centre's senior research associate, attributes the change in people's thinking to a mood of "uncertainty and stress, when things seem to be falling apart and resources seem limited for coping with it."

SIMPLE FOOD PROCESSING

Utilisation of Rice Products

By S. Channakeshavaiah

Managing Director, The Ryots Agricultural Produce Co-operative Marketing Society Limited, Mandya, (Mysore State)

Rice products are variable in character and also fairly localised. Three principal rice products in India are parched rice, parched paddy and beaten rice. Beaten rice occupies a more important position from the marketing point of view than either of the other two kinds.

PARCHED RICE, is usually made from parboiled rice. Generally, the method adopted for parching is to pour rice over sand in an open iron pan or earthen vessel kept over a fire and stir it rapidly with a long metal ladle. As the rice begins to crackle and swell, the contents of the pan are transferred to a sieve and the sand separated. The insufficiently expanded kernels are separated by winnowing and then ground into flour by the hand chakki.

Parched paddy is prepared by first drying the paddy in the sun for ten or twelve hours. In the evening dried paddy is filled into large earthen jars. Hot water is then poured into the jars and after two or three minutes water is emptied out. These jars are now inverted and kept in the same position throughout the night. In the morning, moist paddy is taken out and exposed to sun for a short period. While it is moist it is kneaded and, at the end of the operation, parching is carried on exactly the same process described in the previous paragraph.

FOR THE PREPARATION of beaten rice, paddy is steeped in water for two or three days to soften the kernel. Then it is boiled for a few minutes. When the water gets cooled, it is drained off. The paddy is kept over a strong fire in shallow earthen vessels or iron pans until the husk bursts open. The grains are pounded by means of a wooden pestle. This flattens the rice kernels and removes the husk. The rice kernels are separated by winnowing in the usual way in a tray.

Other important by-products are paddy husk and rice bran. A considerable proportion of paddy husk is utilised as fuel for cooking purposes and for firing the boilers in the ricemills. The ash derived out of the boilers is used for manurial

purposes. A certain quantity is consumed in admixture with the rice bran by cattle, donkeys and ponies.

Some quantity is used in the villages for mixing with mud as a 'binder'. In areas of heavy production, paddy husk is dumped into manure pits for compost making. The husk is used in the activated, carbon process of gur manufacture particularly in such areas where the gur making industry and rice cultivation co-exist. Rice husk is also used in the preparation or manufacture of synthetic resins and in fibre board and card boards. The ashes of burnt paddy husk is utilised in the manufacture of bricks.

RICE BRAN has a good value for milch animals and is being used as animal feed throughout the country. Rice bran oil is used in the manufacture of soap.

Rice germ contains 16 to 18 per cent protein and about 30 per cent oil. During the polishing of rice, the rice germ gets detached from the grain and gets mixed with the bran. The isolated germs are used in dietary formulations for nutritive and convalescent foods.

Broken rice, is obtained in the milling of raw rice. If paddy contains more percentage of moisture we get more broken in the milling of paddy. Improperly dried or overdried parboiled paddy also gives broken grains. Broken rice fetches low price in the market. From the nutritive point of view, it is as good as whole rice. Several types of processed, ready-to-serve foods from rice are in vogue in India. Rice flakes, flattened rice, parched rice, pop rice, instant rice, canned rice, etc., are prepared from rice or paddy which need very little extra cooking or can be eaten raw. These processed food command a ready market.

IS IT TRUE?

Sherlock Holmes

❁ Elections in 1977? Tudawe? Felix Dias? SLFP In Fighting?

IS IT NOT STRANGE that the *Times* group of newspapers should have, at least on two occasions, attributed statements to top flight UF politicians that "elections would be held in 1977 only if the people wanted it"? That the *Times of Ceylon* in reporting a speech made by Deputy Minister B. Y. Tudawe, had reported that he had said that the elections would be held in 1977 only if the people had wanted it? That this report on the front page of the *Times* had been a subject of comment and discussion in politically knowledgeable circles? That whilst many had asserted that it was a wrong translation of what had been said in Sinhala, others wondered whether it was kite flying to see whether the elections could be put back further than 1977? That coupled with talks about a snap election, there were also talks about a referendum seeking public opinion regarding the feasibility of postponing the elections to 1979, that is seven years after the new Constitution was inaugurated? That whilst constitutionists pointed out that there was no provision in the Constitution for a referendum, others argued that it would not be difficult for the Government to amend the Constitution to make a referendum legally valid? That alarmists even saw in this statement of Tudawe a sinister plan to introduce one party UF rule by refusing to hold election "unless the people wanted it"? That this would be one way, it was suggested, of introducing the dictatorship of the proletariat? That many who refused to see anything sinister in the Tudawe speech confidently expected a correction from Tudawe? That none had been forthcoming? That apologists for Tudawe said that he would not have paid much attention to it because he did not take much notice of what was said in English language papers?

WAS IT THEN NOT STRANGE that the *Daily Mirror* on June 24 should attribute a similar statement to Minister Felix R. Dias Bandaranaike? That it was reported that at the UF Rally at Chilaw on June 23, FRDB had stated that the elections would be held in 1977 "only if the people had wanted it"? That, fortunately before speculations and political hair-splitting about this statement got under, Minister Felix Dias Bandaranaike had issued a correction (or contradiction) in the *Daily Mirror*? That this was done promptly in the issue of June 25th? That what FRDB claimed he had said was something totally different? That the government, was under no obligation to hold an elections until 1977: that the government, however, was not afraid to go to election at any time—if the people wanted it? That this seems to be the gist of the correction? And this, no doubt, is what Minister Felix Dias Bandaranaike had stated? That this is also probably what Deputy Minister Tudawe had said? That it is inconceivable that two persons of Ministerial rank (Tudawe was Acting Minister when he is alleged to made that statement) should make such statements—that elections, would be held in 1977 only if the people had wanted it? That observers rightly point out that even if there was a sinister plot to introduce one-party rule through the backdoor of a referendum, it was not likely that leaders of Ministerial rank would make a public proclamation about this cloak-and-dagger operation? That it was also pointed out that if Minister believed in the efficacy of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the one-slate yes-or-no election system, Minister Felix Dias Bandaranaike would not have subscribed to it? That it was good thing that Minister Felix Dias Bandaranaike has nailed down this dangerous

statement for the mischievous error it contained? That this kind of slanted news reporting can do a great deal of damage?

IS IT NOT A FACT there is a strange new stirring within the SLFP That at Working Committee meeting of the SLFP on June 25 interesting developments are reported to have taken place? That the *Daily Mirror* of June 26 had carried a front page top news lead under the headline SLFP WORKING COMMITTEE HITS OUT AT GROUPS WITHIN PARTY? That the report stated that "the existence of factions and groups within the SLFP had come under heavy fire"? That the report had pointed out that Minister Malthripala Senanayake had presided at the meeting in the absence of the Prime Minister Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike, who was indisposed? That several members had stated that "the SLFP was committed only to Bandaranaike policies and that the membership should not fall victims to alien political dogmas and theories" That after a discussion which had lasted over three hours a resolution, moved by the Minister of Social Services, Mr. T. B. Tennekoon, was adopted which recommended the following suggestions for the serious consideration of the party high command? That the SLFP should refuse to "recognise any group or organisation which while claiming allegiance to or identity with the Party continues to function as a separate political or organisational entity"? That all such groups should be called upon "to dissolve themselves and work as members of the SLFP"? That the *Sinhale* shall be the official organ of the SLFP and that it alone should reflect and represent the views of the Party? That Mr. Anura Bandaranaike should supervise and be in charge of the day-to-day affairs of the *Sinhale*? That this is fairly full extract from the *Daily Mirror* report? That it does not need much political acumen or insight to know that the blast was against the *Janavegaya*? That this indicates that the problems within the SLFP have reached a new dimension all level?