

TRIBUNE

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The World Without Nixon

IT HAPPENED WITH A SUDDENNESS THAT WAS UNEXPECTED. Everybody was led into the belief that Nixon would make a last ditch stand right to the end of an impeachment trial. But, after his virtual confession that he was aware of the Watergate cover-up almost from its very inception, that he had lied and misled even his own lawyers on this matter, it was clear that even his staunchest Republican supporters had turned against him. This belated confession of involvement was the last card Nixon had tried to save himself—he had no doubt hoped that this confession would bring sympathy. But, there is not the slightest doubt that if he had made a statement similar to the one he

made now two years earlier when the Watergate scandal was still in embryo, Richard Milhous Nixon will still be President and would have continued to be President until 1977.

Unfortunately, Nixon had endeavoured to pretend to be Mr Clean, perhaps in an initial bid to save his aides, and this had led him into a series of prevarications and tergiversations, as each new discovery made the matter seem more and more heinous, and this finally led to his downfall. Nixon's own involvement in the affair was not such as merited an impeachment, but it was his persistent attempt to cover up his own involvement in what has gone down to history as the Watergate

Cover-up which deprived him of that minima of political support and power essential for him to carry on as President.

If there is one thing that stands out boldly in the dark and unwholesome shadows of the Nixon affair is that the American system—whatever its defects, whatever its Tammany Hall politics and whatever the corrupting influence of big money—it is that the System has proved strong and mature enough to permit due legal process functioning in the full glare of total publicity to expose scandal and bring even the mightiest in the land, guilty of misdemeanours (which in other lands would not even be considered crimes), to justice and punishment. Many of Nixon's aides have been sentenced to gaol for the crime of perjury, especially political perjury. In most countries in the world today, political perjury is regarded as part of a way of life in the art of government. Nixon, it must be remembered, was ultimately forced to resign because what he first thought would be only *white lies* turned out to be, in the complex chain reaction of the Watergate exposure, *black lies* of the highest magnitude. In contemporary history there is no parallel to the saga that a story written by two unknown newspaper reporters, about some burglars caught in the Watergate Building, should blow up into a major political scandal which compelled the Head of the strongest and mightiest nation the world has so far known to resign under threat of impeachment.

Apart from this, it is also significant that Nixon should have been

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NON-TRADITIONAL EXPORT

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compelled to quit shortly after his greatest achievement in the field of American foreign affairs. More than his detente with China and Russia, more than his transforming the cold war confrontations into a developing state of co-existence based on negotiation and compromise, it was the success he achieved in the Middle East that will rank as his greatest contribution to American diplomacy in this century. From the middle of the fifties, from the times Dulles cancelled the promised aid to build the Aswan Dam, and from the time the conflict around Suez had begun to build up, the USA has been losing ground in the Middle East and the Arab world. And after the 1967 Israeli-Arab war, US prestige and influence in the Middle East had begun to plummet down. The USSR had become powerful and important in the region. But, Nixon and Kissinger were able to reverse this process during the last one year in a way that left Russia no alternative but to accept the Nixon-Kissinger, *fait accompli* without a murmur. Nixon has restored the US position in the Middle East and the Arab world and this will undoubtedly rank as his biggest single achievement in furthering US national interests. What he did in Vietnam and Asia for US was important, but it is nothing when compared to what Nixon accomplished in West Asia.

IT IS DIFFICULT TO CONTEMPLATE ON THE "IFs" OF HISTORY, but much will be written about Nixon now and in the immediate future. It will be sometime before one can review all what is written about the Nixon episode, but immediately it is interesting to refer to the editorial reactions of leading papers in the USA on this question.

The following is the text of a New York Times editorial on August 9 on the transfer of Presidential power:

"Out of the despair of Watergate has come an inspiring new demonstration of the uniqueness and strength of the American Democracy. A mammoth task of self-cleansing has been carried out under principles and procedures established by the founding fathers almost two centuries ago. The checks and balances of a tripartite system, strained by the abuses of an aberrant Chief Executive, have proven adequate to restore faith

in the integrity and responsibility of that system. When Gerald Ford takes the Oath of office today, the circumstances under which the vast authority of the Presidency passes into his trust will go far toward setting straight the distorted image of itself America has given to its people and the world in the successive tragedies of Vietnam and Watergate.

"No drop of blood has been spilled, no troops called out, no suspension of civil liberties ordered, to effect this transfer of power in what remains the most powerful nation on Earth. On the contrary, the instrument of change has been a reaffirmation of the rule of law and orderly procedure, of the democratic processes that had been put in peril by the scornful actions of President Nixon and his associates.

"The judiciary played its essential role at all levels. The illusion that any President could stand above the law or that the White House could become a sanctuary for lawbreakers was firmly dispelled. Congress, too long negligent in the exercise of its heavy responsibilities in every field from warmaking to the economy, provided impressive evidence of both its will and capacity to face up to national needs once it undertook the solemn duty of impeachment.

"The proceeding before the House Judiciary Committee made it plain that men of good will in both parties could look dispassionately for the truth and agree on making the broad public interest paramount. Partisan feelings and personal animosities were at a minimum. That record bodes well for relations between the Congress and the incoming President. Equally important for the restoration of good government, it encourages hope that House and Senate alike will remain vigilant against future default on Capitol Hill of the kind that had fostered and undue drift of power to the Executive branch.

"Watergate, reflective of the worst in American politics, has also provided both reminder and demonstration of the best. It can mark the start toward a new era of national decency and social responsibility."

The following are excerpts from U.S. editorials on the

resignation of President Nixon:
Washington Star-News,

"Resignation was the right choice not simply because it saves much needless wear and tear on the national nervous system. That system has proved itself tough and resilient, and it could have borne anything necessary. What Nixon's decision does save, however, is time—time to turn without more delay to our pressing problems at home and abroad. It breaks us out of a paralysis which, like that burden of depression we have been carrying, was more serious than we dared recognize. The release, in truth, comes not moment too soon."

Baltimore Sun:

"There will be time afterwards to examine the worth of Mr. Nixon's actual accomplishments, particularly in foreign affairs, but even there he diminished those accomplishments through misuse, distorting them out of proportion in the interests of his own continuance in a position of dominance. And in those interests he went so far in the direction of absolute power that for this alone he had ceased to deserve the office to which he had been elected.

"He now speaks rather of the interests of the country. It is true that those interests are best served by his departure. Of the means available to him he has chosen resignation, over the constitutional processes he said only on Monday he was determined to see through. But in this extremity, the greatest by far of all his crises, he could not face that kind of music, and so he is going, to the nation's immense relief. Our difficult and special system of government, threatened briefly by Richard Nixon, continues."

Washington Post,

"Cataslysmic as it is, this denouement and the events which led to it, can in no way be said to comprise the whole story of the Nixon Presidency. There are many positive achievements to be noted and analyzed and there were also many substantive failures that have little to do with the particular failures that brought Mr. Nixon down. But there will be plenty of time to seek to balance the books on the Nixon Adminis-

tration and to assess the terms and manner of his leaving office. For the moment our thoughts, like those of most others, turn to the challenge now facing Gerald Ford and the transfer not just of authority but also of public attention to him.

"In an important and wholly legitimate way, Mr. Ford is entitled to take as his mandate the continuation of that part of Mr. Nixon's policy and program which has not been discredited by the events and disclosures which led to Mr. Nixon's departure from office. That there has been an overwhelming public judgement against Richard Nixon is indisputable, even without the formal test of impeachment and Senate trial. His party leaders in Congress told him as much two days ago. But it will be important in the weeks and months ahead not to confuse Mr. Nixon's repudiation with a repudiation of the electoral will he could have fulfilled had he been as faithful to the rule of law as he professed himself to be. Gerald Ford, of course, is free to be his own man and to make of his Presidency what he will. But we would suggest that abruptly as he comes to the office, he also comes to it with a valuable legacy; at no time in the country's history has the standard of acceptable conduct of the Presidency been so clearly defined or so widely subscribed to. This standard will now be Mr. Ford's to uphold and enforce. In this particular duty he will have unparalleled and unprecedented public support.

Los Angeles Times:

"So, in the 19th month of the second term of the 37th Presidency, Richard Nixon leaves the White House. He was elected in a triumph exceeded in only one other election in the history of the nation. He departs in disgrace, the victim of a thirst for power that was his strength and his frailty. It was a power he used with effectiveness and imagination in many areas, including development of the new relationships for the United States with China and the Soviet Union. But it was a power that corrupted him, leading him to abuse his authority to the point of obstructing justice, encouraging him to justify any means for the end of maintaining himself in office. The sadness of the nation is with a man

and with events. But it cannot be mistaken for despair. On the contrary, we sense through the tragedy a confidence in the nation. We think its institutions have proved themselves both in the exposure of wrong—doing at the highest place of Government and in the effective pursuit of justice by the constitutional processes.

"Mr. Ford's new beginning comes with a hopefulness built on that confidence, and we are convinced that it will bring a fresh vitality to the political and social fabric of the nation and to its economic structure as well."

Chicago Tribune:

"It would be foolish at this point to predict what history will say of the Nixon Administration years hence. Time tends to edit and often revise the passionate judgements made in the vortex of a political storm....

"Many of the Nixon Administration's tenets deserve to be proved correct, however inconsistent or unsuccessful it may have been in pursuing them. The economic truisms which it voiced; the trend toward decentralization of government; the steps to improve world communication (despite the disastrous failure of communication between the White House and the country)—these are all sensible and right. If they are thrown out along with Watergate, and if the country turns back toward big Government and bigger spending and to moral permissiveness at home and trade restrictions abroad, then Watergate will have proved far more disastrous than anything now imaginable."

Tribunania

THE MALDIVES

THE MALDIVES are now very much in the news in Sri Lanka. And this is no doubt desirable. For a long time, bureaucrats and politicians in this island had not realised that the Maldives now had a place under the sun as a sovereign and independent Republic and also that it could no longer be dismissed as a conglomeration of lonely atolls in the Indian Ocean which

existed only to supply Ceylon the delicacy known as the Maldivian fish.

The Maldives is now an important place. Although its population is estimated to be just under 120,000, the Maldivians have established a shipping service which is one of the biggest and finest in Asia. The archipelago consists of over 1900 islands and of these only 200 are inhabited. The Maldives also have vast opportunities



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for developing tourist industry for people who seek the sun, clean beaches and clear blue water for skin diving (and for viewing multi-coloured corals). Already the tourist industry has made vast strides. In 1972, only 400 tourists had gone to the Maldives; in 1973, the number was 5600; and in 1974 the figure is estimated to top 12,000.

It is definite that the present population cannot carry the tourist development forward without assistance in personnel and techniques from other countries. Sri Lanka is the closest neighbour and its traditional ally—and this country is well able to provide the kind of skills and expertise the Maldives require at present to run their tourist industry as well as the other projects they have in mind. It will be some years before Maldivians themselves can obtain the necessary education and technical training to discharge these functions. Belatedly, but not too late, Sri Lanka has awoken to the fact that there is much this country can do for the Maldives and which would bring mutual benefits to both countries. Experts have already estimated that in providing personnel and other service functions, Sri Lanka can earn an annual profit of over Rs. 5 million. In addition, this country is already the largest supplier of meat, eggs, milk and vegetables to the Maldives, and this and other food stuffs (if we can produce them) can be exported to the Maldives in larger and larger quantities every year.

BUT MORE SIGNIFICANT than the mere economic aspects of our relations with the Maldives is its strategic location in the geopolitics of the Indian Ocean in its global position in Asia and the world. The British already have a base and staging post in the Gan Islands and the lease is due to continue until 1986. It is not likely that the Maldives will want to end this agreement prematurely, but whether Britain will want changes in keeping with its changing east-of-Suez policy is yet to be seen. All big powers interested in the Indian Ocean will not seek to disturb the present *status quo* in the Maldives, but any new moves by other Big Powers to secure bases or military advantages in the Archipelago will create many

difficult problems. India, Indonesia, Iran, France, the USA, China and Pakistan are deeply concerned in the role that the Maldives might play in the current situation.

In this context, the determination of the government of the Republic of the Maldives to support the Indian Ocean Peace Zone is not only commendable but also praiseworthy. The Maldivian Prime Minister in the Joint Communique issued in New Delhi after his state visit to India and in the Joint Communique issued in Colombo after his recent visit here subscribed to the principle of non-alignment and support the concept of the Indian Ocean Peace Zone with enthusiasm. Sri Lanka which has enthusiastically been taking the initiative in wanting the UN and the Big Powers to accept the idea of Indian Ocean being a peace Zone area can make this the basis of the new and contemporary ties with the Maldives.

With perspectives such as these, the Sri Lanka government did extremely well to provide a truly remarkable red carpet welcome to the visiting Maldivian Prime Minister. *Tribune* cannot think of any other occasion in the contemporary period when the government was able to put up so effective a show as on the occasion of the State Visit of the Maldivian Prime Minister. In fact, visiting Prime Ministers of much larger and more important countries have not received even a fraction of the attention which had been paid to the Maldivian PM. It is to be hoped that the welcome to be accorded to visiting dignitaries in the future will have the organisation of the reception to the Maldivian PM as an example for emulation. *Tribune* has never been enamoured of organised receptions (just as much as it thinks that conducted tours of delegations and missions in different countries are the biggest menace of the current epoch), there is no doubt that modern diplomacy and protocol demands that such tamashas should be put on in order to achieve even limited objectives. It is difficult to say what is spontaneous and what is induced, but in the diplomatic game one shuts a blind eye to these niceties.

IT IS EVEN MORE HEARTENING that the Prime Minister of Sri

Lanka had decided to pay a three-day state visit to the Maldives next week. The speed and alacrity with which the Maldivian invitation was accepted and suitable dates found for the visit even before our PM's grand tour in September is clear indication that our government wants to make amends for its sad default in recent years in regard to its relations with the Maldives. There is no doubt that much good can accrue to both countries as a result of this visit when a large number of economic issues will be discussed. Sri Lanka is a small country, but it is large enough to be of assistance to the Maldives.

It is well to remember that there are important elements in Sri Lanka whose attitudes are far from wholesome or healthy where the Maldives are concerned. The Ali Manickoo episode would never have occurred if these elements were not in positions where they could inflict their will. Continuous harassment by our Customs and our Police of Maldivian seamen and visitors—often on the most unjustified grounds—will compel the sensitive people from a small country to shun the ports of Sri Lanka.

Elsewhere in this issue, we have reprinted a chapter from one of the very few books on the Maldives, viz. *Maldivian Linguistic Studies* by Professor William Geiger. This will give a brief idea of the long connections between Sri Lanka and the Maldives. Ancient history is one thing, and modern history is another. The past is either not known or forgotten, and what is important is the present. And it is in the present that Sri Lanka's relations with the Maldives must be developed without taking anything for granted.

Easy Money

The F.R.G. government recently decided to subsidize to the extent of 10 per cent the building of any tanker that would sail under the West German flag. Immediately after the publication of the decision, the West German branch of the U.S. ESSO oil corporation changed the name of the 250,000 ton super-tanker Esso Bilbao to Esso Bonn. This simple operation nets ESSO 9 million marks.

THE FALL OF NIXON

by

James T. Rutnam

Early in 1969 when Nixon began his Presidential career that ended so tragically last week we had occasion to write in the *Tribune* as follows: "Blessed as he is with the riches of heaven and earth, arbiter of War and Peace, custodian of countless human lives, Richard Milhous Nixon starts his Presidential career with the option of destroying himself or of winning everlasting fame and universal gratitude."

True, we had then envisaged a catastrophe not as it had turned out. We had feared that Nixon would engulf the world in an atomic war and himself perish in the holocaust.

Thank goodness we have been spared that fate. Indeed Nixon's only claim now for sympathy is that in Foreign Affairs he had made a *volte-face* and shown an anxiety to come to terms with that dreaded and life-long bugbear of his, Communism. It is forgotten that the Democratic Party in the United States (and more so George McGovern) had for long wanted to do exactly this, and it was Nixon who barred the way.

WHEN NIXON defeated Hubert Humphrey in 1968 he was returned by a minority in the United States so far as votes went. This curious phenomenon is one of the freaks of the American electoral system. And of the minority that supported Nixon not all were as pro-Nixon as they were anti-Johnson. On an analysis it would be found that the pro-Nixons were substantially the Mid-Western farmers and the Southern Whites.

Nixon's promise that he would end the War, a War which had driven Johnson to abdicate, was however not fulfilled during this term. Forty thousand American lives had to be sacrificed, a hundred thousand maimed, and countless Vietnamese civilians and soldiers killed before Peace (or a sort of Peace) was restored with no pretence of Victory for either side.

It was the longest war in American history waged with the most modern weapons at the disposal of the American invaders against the forces of a small Asian nation. It may not be pleasant to admit it. It may be galling to our taste. But facts are facts. The War finally turned out as a Victory of David against Goliath.

BUT THE DAMAGE this War had done to the confident and easy-going American way of life was incalculable. Indeed it had its repercussions throughout the world. The world was suddenly

divided into two camps. Rebellious youth which protested against conscription to fight in unwanted and unpopular wars in distant lands was in one camp. It attracted intellectuals and humanists of all ages, and this combination was pitted against the other camp that represented vested interests and the Establishment, which glorified so-called Law and Order and justified repression.

Spiro Agnew was the high priest of this despotism and he rejoiced in trading the sonorous phrases and the alliterative abuse of ghost-writers such as Patrick Buchanan who it must be admitted was a true believer of this gospel. This miserable man had unashamedly laid bare his abject philosophy before the Ervin Commission when he was summoned before it.

Nixon appeared for a second term, again with a promise to end the War and bring "our boys home before Christmas" when he confronted McGovern in 1972. This time Nixon received a popular vote of 61% against McGovern's 38%. McGovern was the first to protest during the election that there was something rotten in the President's camp.

But nobody took serious notice of it. McGovern's rout was due to several causes, the most important of these being the strong differences in his own Democratic Party, the opposition or the indifference of the Democratic Establish-

ment, and the open opposition of the Southern White Democratic and organised labour under George Meany.

McGOVERN'S DEFEAT was also due to the legerdemain of Nixon who promised instant Peace in Vietnam, and the tactics of that strange and shadowy organisation known as Creep, the Committee for the Re-Election of the President under the leadership of the prestigious John Mitchell, with which were associated other groups such as 'Democrats for Nixon' led by John Conally, the Southern millionaire, now facing a charge for bribery. These organisations, so foreign to the American tradition, carried the seeds of their own doom in their charters.

The sordid tale of the Imperial Presidency which began at high noon on Capital Hill in Washington on that fateful Monday 20 January 1969 amidst the pomp and pageantry of a great nation and ended unsung and unrehearsed at ten in the morning of 9 August 1974, when the President handed in his letter of resignation to Kissinger at the White House is gradually unfolding itself. Not everything is known as yet. But democracy has triumphed thanks to the high-souled men in all walks of life in the Republican and Democratic Parties, in the Judiciary and the Press.

THE CLOSE STUDY of the events of these years will expose, we much regret to say, the craft and cunning of Nixon, the arch-malefactor who had entrenched himself in a seemingly impregnable position, defying all and sundry, having plausible answers to every new development and resorting to every weapon that desperate men employ, all in the name of an imagined invulnerability of the Presidency.

We in Sri Lanka live so many thousands of miles away from Washington, but we were privileged through the courtesy of the Voice of America to listen to the historic moments that rapidly flitted across the scene. One is drawn to recollect at this time the anxious hours that ended the reign of Edward the VIII in England in 1934. Nothing in his life became him like the leaving it.

LETTER

On the contrary Nixon's last speech as President was that of a quarry finally brought to bay after a gruelling chase, and although he says he is no quitter, he did quit that day.

Why did Nixon resign?

He certainly did a good turn to his Party by resigning. But did he really resign in the national interest? Or was it in his own personal interest? Was it to save his pension and other emoluments which will have to be forfeited if he was convicted and removed by the Senate?

But he says because "I no longer have a stronger political base in Congress." This raises an interesting constitutional question in the relation between Congress and President. If a majority in Congress does not agree with a President, must a President resign? He was really side-tracking the issue.

Nixon had not admitted his guilt. The only concession he had made was to say that some of his "judgements" were wrong. Was that enough?

THE PEOPLE OF AMERICA would like to know the true facts. Did Erlichman, Haldeman, Buchanan and Rose Mary Woods corrupt Nixon or was it vice versa? Where do the good and affluent Billy Graham and the devoted Rabbi come in? In view of these circumstances one would prefer to be in the company of the Republican Senator from Massachusetts Edward W. Brooke who had asked for a "full disclosure of Nixon's personal involvement in Watergate and related matters before any step is taken to grant Nixon immunity from prosecution."

The historic resignation of Nixon has certainly opened a new era for the United States of America. Everyone now breathes a sigh of relief. And the Republicans who were, towards the end, the most adamant in calling for Nixon to resign are ready to plunge into the November elections with a feeling that they have left Watergate behind. We wish them well.



Dear Sir,

In the column of "International Affairs" of *Tribune* of August 10, 1974, there are some comments about China's attitude on the question of Cyprus. I am sending you excerpts from the statement made by Chinese Representative Chuang Yen at the meeting of the United Nations Security Council on July 19, 1974, and hoping that this can be published in your esteemed journal to see if this "surprising attitude" of China would be a "shock to many".

Chuan Yen said: "Cyprus is a third world country in the middle east and mediterranean region. The Chinese government and people are concerned about the present situation in Cyprus."

"The people of Cyprus have a glorious revolutionary tradition of fighting against imperialism. They waged a prolonged heroic struggle to win national independence, safeguard state sovereignty and territorial integrity and oppose colonialism and imperialism, and finally independence was achieved. In this struggle, Archbishop Makarios played an outstanding role, which we highly admire. After independence, under the leadership of President Makarios, Cyprus has pursued a policy of non-alignment, resolutely opposed imperialism and colonialism and made useful contributions towards supporting the just struggle of the third world countries and people."

Chuan Yen stressed: "The Chinese government has always held that the independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of Cyprus should be respected by all countries. We are firmly opposed to aggression and subversion by any outside force against a sovereign state. The question of Cyprus should be settled by the people of Cyprus themselves. At present, it is of particular importance to maintain vigilance against the superpowers' taking advantage of the situation in Cyprus to meddle and fish in troubled waters. The Chinese government and people support the third world countries and peoples as well as the people of the rest of the world in their solidarity with the just struggle of the people of Cyprus."

Peng Ti-chiang
Representative,
Hsinhua News Agency,
(People's Republic of China)

22, Bullers' Lane,
Colombo 7.
August 12, 1974.

CHRONICLE

August 1—August 6

A DIARY OF EVENTS IN SRI LANKA AND THE WORLD
COMPILED FROM ENGLISH-LANGUAGE DAILIES
PUBLISHED IN COLOMBO.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 1: The price of a measure of rice issued on the ration will be reduced by 30 cents from the present price of Rs. 2.50 a measure: the price of flour will be increased to Rs. 1.10 per pound which is 40 cents more than the present price: the price of a pound of bread will cost 98 cents in the Colombo Municipality area and one or two cents more in the outstations inclusive of the cost of transport: all these price changes will be effective from August 5. Nearly 5000 families have been rendered homeless in the low-lying areas of Colombo as a result of the rains in upcountry that have caused a minor flood of the Kelani river: about 25000 persons are affected by this. According to the *Daily News*, owners of surplus flats who were unable to sell them in time to their tenants owing to delays in registering condominium plans or for other reasons beyond their control will be given an extension of time in order to make such sales: this will be made possible by an amendment to the Ceiling on Housing Property Law: the Bill to effect the change will be introduced in the National State Assembly by the Minister of Housing and Construction, Mr. Pieter Keuneman, has been published in the government Gazette. According to the *Daily Mirror*, all the low-rent housing schemes envisaged in the Five-Year Plan have been completed one year ahead of schedule.

Dr. K. L. V. Alagiyawanna has been appointed Sri Lanka's Ambassador to Malaysia. A visiting surgeon attached to the Kalutara hospital has been found guilty in a bribery case and sentenced to five years rigorous imprisonment and fined Rs. 2000 by a District Judge in Colombo yesterday: another Government doctor was remanded by the same judge for allegedly accepting a gratification of Rs. 200 to issue a medical certificate. Greek and Turkey joined Britain in calling for strict enforcement of the Cyprus ceasefire and gradual steps towards political peace between the island's Greek and Turkish communities. Ugandan President Idi Amin said that he wanted all his countrymen to be millionaires when he abolished a special tax on business. Prime Minister Ian Smith's Party was swept back to power in Rhodesia with a landslide general election victory. President Nixon was yesterday confronted with three articles of impeachment over Watergate and virtual certainty of a Senate trial: the House of Representatives Judiciary Committee wound up its first impeachment debate Tuesday night: it recommended that Mr. Nixon be impeached for obstructing justice in covering up the 1972 Watergate break-in, abusing Presidential powers and for rejecting congress-

sional subpoenas for Watergate related tapes: President Nixon's former top adviser John Ehrlichman was sentenced to between 20 months and five years jail yesterday for his role in the break-in of the office of psychiatrist of Pentagon papers defendant Daniel Ellsberg: President Nixon once described Ehrlichman as "one of the finest civil servants I have ever known." India's External Affairs Minister Swaran Singh said that India was sincerely interested in normalising relations with Pakistan and charged that Pakistan was impeding the process because of domestic needs.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 2:

According to the *Daily News*, the Ministers of Justice and Labour will shortly discuss the possibility of writing into the Industrial Dispute Act a new provision that will guarantee a minimum gratuity for employees leaving service. An agreement providing commodity assistance to Sri Lanka to the value of Rs. 14.8 million was signed yesterday between the Governments of Canada and Sri Lanka: the loan will be used for the purchase of newsprint and nylon tyre cord: in the current year Canada will provide Rs. 2.7 million and Rs. 4 million for the nylon tyre cord and newsprint respectively. According to the *Daily News* Government's decision to give plantation labour a guaranteed monthly income came up for discussion by several estate trade unions including the Ceylon Workers' Congress and the Democratic Workers' Congress. Mr. Jaya Pathirana a judge of the Supreme Court yesterday ordered that Mr. A. R. M. Mukthar, his brother Mr. A. R. M. Zarook and two sons Messrs. Thowfeek Mukthar and Fahmy Mukthar who are under detention since May this year in connection with investigations into alleged violations of Exchange Control laws be further remanded for another two months. The United National Party Group in the Colombo Municipal Council decided yesterday to expel Mr. Fowzie, Mayor of Colombo, if he failed to explain to the party leader, Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, why he (Mr. Fowzie) had declined to vote on a resolution which sought to condemn certain police actions. Defence counsel Mr. Bala Tampoe was yesterday debarred from addressing the Criminal Justice Commission inquiring into the April insurgency: this was a sequel to his "contemptuous conduct" towards the members of the commission. According to the *Daily Mirror* glaring defects in the preparation of students in Science subjects for the C.G.E. Advanced Level examination have been reported to the Commissioner of Examinations, by controlling Chief Examiners.

Sri Lanka's Minister for Justice and Home Affairs, Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike arrived in Kuwait yesterday as the head of a three member delegation on an official visit. According to the *Lanka Dipa*, Prime Minister Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike yesterday made a special appeal to youths of the country to devote more time on cultivation to enable this country to become self-sufficient in food. The Premier had made this appeal at a meeting in Mahalegoda in the Nittambuwa electorate. According to the *Dinamina*, the Minister of Housing and Construction,

Mr. Pieter Keuneman, has taken steps to expedite the work of the Boards appointed to go into housing disputed between the tenant and landlord. According to the Dinamina, the C.T.B. hopes to add 500 new buses to the present fleet, from the beginning of next year. Mr. Charles Amarasekera, former Food Commissioner and Senior Assistant Secretary to the Ministry of Foreign and Internal Trade, has been appointed as the Secretary to the Ministry of Health Services. According to the *Virakesari*, the Hindu Youth Council has opened a fund to collect finances to families of those who lost their lives in the recent earth slips in the Nuwara Eliya districts. According to the *Eelamani*, the recent earthslips in the upcountry and continuing rains in the hills have brought the tea industry to a standstill: the Badulla Nawalapitiya rail track is damaged in 52 places and it will take a few more weeks to resume rail service in this route. Congress was yesterday determined to press on with impeachment hearings against President Nixon despite White House moves to side step an embarrassing debate in the House of Representatives and seek a quick trial in the Senate. Cyprus yesterday began recovering from two weeks of bitter fighting that brought Greece and Turkey to the threshold of a Mediterranean war between Nato allies: shops, banks and pavement cafes opened for the first time since fighting began, as tension eased following Tuesday night's Geneva agreement between Turkey, Greece and Britain calling for a strict ceasefire. Premier Chou en Lai appeared for the first time at an Army Day reception in Peking on Wednesday: for the first time since suffering a heart attack two months ago.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 3: The Minister of Agriculture and Lands, has under the State Agricultural Corporation Act set up nine estate management boards, each with an initial capital of Rs. 10,000. Up to the end of July the Land Reform Commission has taken possession of a total of 510,479 acres of excess land: a balance of only 43,266 acres remains to be taken over. The foreign exchange shortage is having its impact on industrial production in the public sector: according to the Central Bank, in the first five months of this year, there has been a drop in monthly production in corporations like the Milk Board, the Oils and Fats Corporation, Flour Milling Corporation, Eastern Paper Mills Corporation, Tyre Corporation and Plywood Corporation. The Fifth Congress of the Asian Pacific Academy of Ophthalmology (APAO) to be held at the BMICH will be declared open by the Prime Minister on next Monday evening. The Colombo Municipal Council's U.N.P. Group met on August 1 and has called on the U.N.P.'s working committee to take disciplinary action against the Mayor of Colombo Mr. A. H. M. Fowzie for violating the group's decision to condemn the Town Hall incident on May 22. Dr. Saul Rose of New College Oxford, a lecturer on Foreign Affairs, when he spoke on the India Sub-Continent at a meeting of the Ceylon Institute on World Affairs, had stated that India was building herself up as a major determining factor in Asia as well as in the global balance of power. The Kandy Esala Perahera, will reach its climax tonight when the Maha Perahera winds through the longest route. The Foreign Minister of Bangladesh has appealed to United Nations Secretary General for international help for some 19,000 square miles of

the country damaged by floods: nearly two million people are affected by the floods. A White House spokesman said yesterday that President Nixon would not resign and was totally confident he would win an all-out battle in Congress to clear his name and survive. The World Bank which finances development projects in underdeveloped nations, yesterday raised its lending rate to 8 per cent from 7.5 per cent.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 4: According to the *Sunday Observer*, the concept of Political Authorities as a novel method of activating the administrative arm of executive power in the country has attracted the attention of governments, administrators and political scientists who are watching closely the lessons to be drawn from this exercise in the development process of a country: Sri Lanka's experience in bringing Political Authority to play a major catalytic role is described as novel deviation from the traditional norms of bureaucratic action, which often lacks the dedicated sense of commitment to affairs of a government. According to the *Observer*, the Maha crop is expected to be in the region of 62 million bushels of paddy—3.2 million more than the target. According to the *Sunday Times*, Zambia wants to "import" Sri Lanka technicians and know-how to set up a factory to produce carbon paper and type writer ribbons. Mr. M. H. Ismail, Speaker of Sri Lanka's third Parliament of 1956, died yesterday at the age of 73: he was also an ex M.P. for Puttalam. Residents of Trincomalee district are reported to have warmly welcomed Mr. Maithripala Senanayake in Trincomalee yesterday to participate in a number of development projects built to provide swift communication and open up more land for food production. The master of a South Korean fishing trawler, who was allegedly locked up in his cabin by his crew following a mutiny on board, was rescued by the local police when the vessel reached Colombo: according to the police, the mutiny occurred when the ship was 1,500 miles off Sri Lanka. The Ceylon Transport Board will ply special buses for office employees to enable them to travel in time to the respective work places: this is expected to ease the congestion the morning: the Board has also decided to import specially constructed buses for the purpose and these buses will have a capacity to carry 125 passengers. A team of Soviet experts are due in the island to carry out experiments in the hope of striking oil in the shores of Sri Lanka: it is hoped that oil may be found not only in the shores of Mannar but in other areas too. The Prime Minister of Maldives Islands, Mr. Ahmed Zaki, will arrive in the island tomorrow on a four-day official visit. Many people of Jaffna are said to be perturbed about the government move to take over Jaffna College for the Campus of the University to be established in the North. The Prime Minister in declaring an exhibition of Buddhist arts organised by the Pakistani Embassy in Colombo, said that exhibition such as this would serve to strengthen the cordial relationships between Sri Lanka and Pakistan. Nearly a million people were affected by floods in India. Mr. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, Prime Minister of Pakistan, has welcomed the idea that India is willing to resume good relations with Pakistan: Mr. Bhutto said this in reply to the suggestion made by the Indian Foreign Minister, Mr. Swaran Singh, that India intend to establish good contact with Pakistan. The American House of Representa-

tives will commence debate on the Watergate affair charges, against President Nixon, on August 19.

MONDAY, AUGUST 5: The Government is reported to be consider fixing a minimum monthly wage of every employee at Rs. 300: the Minister of Finance, Dr. N. M. Perera, disclosed that he intended fixing the minimum wage at this level and would soon take steps to bring the attention of the Government to bear on the matter. Mr. Maithripala Senanayake said in Trincomalee yesterday that when the Mahaveli Diversion Project was completed, about 1,034,000 acres of land would be brought under cultivation. An alleged shortage of rice worth 9 lakhs of rupees has been detected at the Government food store, Murunken, in the Mannar district and a storekeeper has been remanded by the Mannar Magistrate in this connexion. A seven-member team of representatives from some of Japan's largest ship building companies arrived in the island yesterday to undertake feasibility study for establishing facilities for docking and repairing 'super' tankers and other large vessels in Sri Lanka. The number of cases of cholera detected since the inception of the epidemic nine months ago stands at 2072: out of this one hundred and ninety died. Four former Mayors of Jaffna, have in a letter to the Minister of Education, protested against the proposal of the Government to take over certain educational institutions in Jaffna to house the Jaffna Campus of the University of Sri Lanka. It is reported that the price of several varieties of gems sharply dropped during the past few weeks. Mr. Maithripala Senanayake, has revealed in Trincomalee that a Campus of the University of Sri Lanka would be soon set up in Trincomalee too. Three more test oil wells will be dug in Pesalai at a cost of 30 million rupees: the oil found in Pesalai is said to be of very good quality. The White House had apparently given up hope of President Nixon avoiding trial by Senate: an abrupt reversal in the official White House stance was followed yesterday by a *Washington Post* survey indicating a strong possibility of Mr. Nixon being found guilty if the trial does go ahead. Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto of Pakistan welcomed a statement by Indian Foreign Minister, Sardar Swaran Singh, expressing India's willingness to resume a dialogue with Pakistan.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 6: The Minister of Industries is said to be seriously considering the establishment of a state match factory: this follows numerous complaints received by the Ministry about the serious shortage of matches in the market, their poor quality and the black market prices that consumer are called upon to pay. The Mayor of Colombo, Mr. A. H. M. Fowzie, yesterday resigned from the United National Party: the U.N.P. had already sacked the Mayor from the Party. The Criminal Justice Commission inquiring into the April insurgency has said that it might consider acquitting three suspects unless the prosecution proves the case against them. The Prime Minister of Maldives, Mr. Ahmed Zaki, had his first round of official talks with the Prime Minister; the talks were said to have centred on matters of mutual interest to the two countries. Sri Lanka is among 28 countries whose economy has been so badly affected by the increase in oil payment that she qualifies for emergency relief operation. Two Indian experts on handmade paper industry, are now in Sri Lanka to help establish a straw-board paper industry: the experts have estimated that Sri Lanka will save over Rs. 10 million in foreign exchange by the manufacture of straw board with straw that is now consigned to flames. Counsel appearing before the nine-judge bench of the Supreme Court presided over by Mr. Justice Jaya Pathirana in regard to the acquisition of certain lands handed over their written submission yesterday: the nine-judge bench of the Supreme Court is inquiring into injunctions issued by Courts in Kandy, Badulla and Ratnapura against acquisition orders issued by the Minister of Agricultural and Lands. Bangladesh's Prime Minister, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, flew over the flooded area of the country where hundreds of people have drowned and hundreds of thousands are homeless after the worst floods in memory: nearly 8000 people are stranded on islets surrounded by rising flood waters. President Nixon yesterday called upon top aides to a sudden conference at his mountain retreat at camp David and the action immediately sparked off speculation he may be planning a dramatic new move in the impeachment crisis.

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SHAMBA

Day to Day Problems

by Anatory Bukoba

July 28,

Each week of the drought, or rather, the Dry Season, makes the vegetation thinner, just as if it had been thinned out or cleared; and a week can make quite a difference to the place, if you have been away that long. So it was when I got back today, none of my hopes about other people coming here have materialized yet. Today it was a group of young electricians who want to come. I suggested they come here first and look over the place. If they can get hold of an electric dynamo, they might, I said, make use of the flow of the river water to recharge it. I may be using all the wrong words, but I certainly saw something of the sort done with a trickle of a stream in England, and the house I lived in had its own source of electricity, private. The young lads seem determined to come to do some straight-forward farming, with or without the electricity. I have told them plainly that they must come prepared to support themselves from home sources for about three months, until they can support themselves by their own efforts here. I told them that they must come here and expect to find nothing, as did the first man who settled in Australia and America, and who will do so, I suppose, on the moon. One lad insisted that there must be an immediate prospect of paddy cultivation. He is right. It was what I was hoping to do here, when I first came and my first chosen companions turned up.

There are people in this country who are quite certain of two things: that there are people starving and that there are people unemployed. I just cannot see it. This idea that there are people starving is, I think, something quite subjective rather like the nightmares that the men of FAO have, to judge from their propaganda. That there are people without jobs, that is, without work, is also a mistake. There

are people who would like monthly calculated pay, white-collared jobs, holidays with pay, et cetera, but they are all working, even if it is only for their own fathers.

The head of the family has been busy. He has remade my *massa* bed and strengthened the small *massa* table. I am waiting to see how comfortable the bed will be tonight. The plank that was a kind of ledge to be stepped over into the room, has gone across the end of my bed to form a sort of table. A cross-piece of wood has been put on top of, instead of under, the long poles, that form the bed. I cannot see the bed being comfortable. The wind has just sprung up. Several people in the village are said to be down with malaria. I have seen them myself.

The housewife says there have been no more raids on the wood-apple trees. The young lads who have been bringing the buffaloes told me very quietly that they will stop when I start planting again. Meanwhile, there is cow-dung around, which is a nice sight. I used to collect the stuff when I first came here, just using my hand to lift it up, my left one for the right is supposed to be used for eating.

The most important item of news I have not mentioned yet. Our seven year old has gone away with one of her grandmothers. We shall all miss her, perhaps I most of all. I shall miss all the shopping she did for her mother, and in many other ways; but most of all her presence I shall miss.

Just to fill up my day's stint, I shall just ask you to read the twenty sixth chapter of *Leviticus*. Here is some of what it says. "I will give you your rains in their season, and the land shall yield its increase. You shall eat your bread to the full. None shall make you afraid. I will make you fruitful and multiply you. I have made you walk erect. But you will not hearken to me. If you spurn my statutes, I will do this to you; I will appoint over you sudden terror, consumption and fever. You shall sow your seed in vain. I will set my face against you."

I resume; all this, I think, calls for more trust in divine providence.

July 29,

A better idea of the acre was a thing I had today. There seem to be two gullies on the side of the acre nearest our approach road, a tarred one. The gully I have been more conscious of is more like a dried-up pond; there is no outlet. The other gully I really discovered today, for it has been well hidden on the side of the land that we cleared ourselves. I saw it for the first time on the other side, a week ago. It is this that will form a small series of tiny paddy fields, and the water can flow out towards the river. This gully is not shaded by trees, except for one *pallu* tree. We could easily cut this down if it gives too much shade. This piece of land, where the gully is, is what I want to clear next when next I am back on the *Shamba*. Now that the wood apple is much less, I have less fear now of clearing the acre again.

Clearing will never have been such an easy task as it is now, for the sparse vegetation makes it look much easier. I pulled up a little weed by hand, and I fetched in some of the cow-dung that the buffaloes, on their way through the *Shamba* have left about the place. Weeding by hand, as I have never been tired of saying, is a task that gives me much satisfaction each time I do it. I am quite looking forward to coming back to the *Shamba* next time, even if I have no companions.

On my way through one of our two major towns today, I met another lad who said he would like to join me. He comes of a race of people who have been particularly associated with the area where my *shamba* is, the kaffirs. He told me that they were all concentrated here before, and that that they are now scattered, to Trincomalee, to Colombo, to Puttalam and to Anuradhapura. My new friend looks more African than most Africans I have seen. He took me home and I met his family. He may get a job this week, and if it does not materialize, he will come, his family said. That makes two lots of people lined up, as they say. So I am not without hopes.

Our two year old does not seem to miss her older sister. She is too young to do so, her mother

says. The word she actually uses is, too young to understand. The youngest now holds the centre of the stage. Today she was clad in a pair of shorts, the first time I have seen her in them. She seemed to like them, for she throws everything else off. She looked well in them, too. Usually she goes around wearing nothing, and she was happiest in that state. If my colleague stays more at home, they will cope with the shopping, or else the house is going to be left unattended, I do not like the thought of that, my colleague, when he is at home, can be busy about the house, but not the household chores which his wife does; but he will not attend to the land.

If we go on the *shamba*, as I hope we do, we are going to have to build a lavatory for the public's use, and not just our own; for we can cope with our own problem as we are now, but we are going to find it difficult to cope with the bigger problem of others. The lavatory will have to be very carefully sited so that we do not contaminate our well when we dig one. These notes are being written in Colombo, and there are walloping big mosquitoes around me as I write. Fortunately they do not seem to bite, or not much. They are probably waiting for the lights to go out to start really biting.

If anybody wants to buy mats, I advise them to go to Talawila at the time of the July feast. There seemed to be a whole street of them and the prices of the mats were, I thought, very fair. Talawila is a remarkable place, so it is well worth a visit anyway. There are more amenities at the time of the feast.

There was a lad I met today who was introduced to me. He had come in the expectation of joining a certain group of people clearing a chena. He was disappointed about the amenities and was leaving. Of course as in nearly always the case, he had no money to go. I advised him to return to his friends on the chena. He would not. Washing facilities was one problem he mentioned. I told him how I used to have a complete bath out of half a bucket of water. It was in India, when I was a soldier. He was a lad who wanted all things easy; probably electricity laid on, too.

THE NEW EXAMINATION SCHEME - 4

Implementation and Implications

This is the concluding part of the memorandum submitted by the All-Ceylon Educational Federation to the Minister of Education.

At the University level, the Government intends to have an Open University Scheme to enable unemployed adults to enter the University as external students. This futuristic new idea reflects an admirable socialist attitude since it ensures equal opportunity to every adult whose ambitions of higher education had been previously unfulfilled due to myriad circumstances beyond his or her control.

But though this plan is to be effected at the University level to assist academic drop-outs in acquiring higher educational qualifications, these same bureaucrats of the department of Education are hell-bent on barring these drop-outs who are valiantly trying to stage a come back to their studies on a lower level at the G.C.E. in a resumption of their interrupted education. This is a contradictory situation. The actions of the Department of Education, meteing out as it does, accomodation and understanding to one group of people, and gratuitous cruelty to the other defies logical explanation.

IN ADDITION to all the defects of the new scheme that we have already elaborated on, there is the matter of the loss of revenue for the Government which will be one of the weightier side effects of the N.C.G.E. Examination Scheme. Presently, there are over 200,000 students sitting for the G.C.E. Examination privately, each willingly paying a sum of Rs. 35/- and the shutting out of private candidates will deprive the already impoverished Department coffers of approximately Rs. 7 million annually.

In the past this money has been used to help defray the cost of holding such examinations. According to the Commissioner of Examinations, the cost of holding the G.C.E. Examination is estimated at Rs. 8 million. The 2 lakhs of private candidates paying up nearly Rs. 6 million and then it costs the Department only the balance 2 million to conduct the examination. With one stroke of the pen, the bureaucrats debar the private candidates from sitting the examination thus depriving the Department of a ready revenue of Rs. 6 million while at the same time mercilessly thwarting the efforts of those who wish to continue their interrupted educational career.

It becomes increasingly apparent that the champions of the sweeping new 'reforms' have neglected to

study even the financial implications of the proposed N.C.G.E. scheme objectively.

The predictable delay of getting the Textbooks for the new scheme written, printed, and distributed by 1st January 1975.

There is reasonable ground for doubts that texts for Grades 9, 10, 11 and 12 will ever be available in time for the introduction of the N.C.G.E. Examination, and the glaring fact that the textbooks for Grade 8 have still not been made available even though the new curriculum for this grade has been in operation for nearly four months of this year. As a result of this (lack of text books) both the students and their teachers have been cast into a pathetic plight, the student not knowing what to study, and the teacher not knowing what to teach their charges.

A repetition of this lamentable omission is a near certainty (in the higher grade) if the new scheme is implemented. The Government would require a monolithic quantity of printing material to provide text books for the new scheme, and being in the dire economic straits that we are, this country simply cannot afford to spend millions of rupees in valuable foreign exchange in order to furnish

supplies of paper to printers just as bureaucratic dictate.

THE DEPARTMENT has attempted to blunt the sharp critical attacks levelled at its own bureaucratic sloth by the pathetically clumsy expedient of announcing a "crash programme" to ensure that the new text books will be ready for the arrival of the N.C.G.E. scheme, but if its past performance is any indicator (as it usually is) of its organisational capabilities, then the new programme will almost certainly fail to measure up to its rather dashing title. Recent press statements released by the Department of Education on this matter indicate that the bureaucrats have not grasped the magnitude of the task they have rashly set themselves.

The Crash Programme entails the preparation and printing of—

- (a) All the new text books in the different subjects required by the (as yet unspecified) syllabus of the N.C.G.E. Examination by 1975.
- (b) All the new text books in the different subjects which will be required by the students at the Grade 10 level in 1976 and
- (c) All the new books in the different subjects for the H.N.C.E. Examination in 1977.

With time, money, and the national supply of paper running desperately short, will the Crash Programme live up to its name and ensure that these books would be ready in time for the examination or will the Department's child-like faith in itself cause the N.C.G.E. scheme together with our long-suffering system of education to crash to the ground with a resounding thud?

The Republic of Sri Lanka has too much at stake to allow an elite coterie of well-meaning bureaucrats to sacrifice our crumbling educational structure on the altar of their vanity. It has been well said that the road to Hell is paved with Good Intentions: It is plain that the bureaucrats sincerely believe that they can complete this monumental task but we know from bitter experiences that this is just one more of their pipe-dreams.

In addition to that, the new scheme makes irrelevant all the books, schemes and supplementary readers prepared so painfully and

at so great a cost for the present G.C.E. syllabus and what a criminal wastage of labour and material there will be as millions of copies of assorted G.C.E. texts in three languages presently in circulation will have to be discarded at the stroke of a pen.

On the other hand, we will not need any new books at all if the G.C.E. scheme is allowed to continue owing to the common economical practice of handing down once used books from batch to batch for a nominal price through the second-hand book dealers or more directly in the homes across the length and breadth of the country where books pass from the hands of the elder brothers or sisters to the younger children in the family.

With a mandatory 5 day week in operation and the consequent crippling effects this has had on our economic structure, with a relentless pressure of work on the already harnessed Government Press (which is so belaguered that it has been unable to print even the Government Gazette in time) with a major fuel crisis triggering off sudden searing rises in the prices of paper the possibility of the Government having the new textbooks ready in time for examination seems remote indeed.

As the cost of paper has gone up by 90% what a colossal amount will have to be spent on printing new text books for Grades 9, 10 and 11 and all this, for an experiment which in all probability is going to be a massive failure.

Yet these vital considerations have been coolly ignored by a tight coterie of bureaucrats who desire change at any price.

Specialization, over-specialization and over-Generalization

The planners of the new scheme aspire to effectively check the trend towards educational over-specialization, particularly in the realm of scientific knowledge. This is commendable in itself since over specialization is undeniably harmful, tending to alienate people in separate fields of knowledge. However, it is our contention that the bureaucrats in the Department of Education have tragically misunderstood the entire concept of specialization (and its undesirable

by-product over-specialization) in their reformative zeal, and without programming the addition of supplementary knowledge to counter the alleged ignorance of areas of knowledge deemed essential, they have wrongly substituted a sweeping educational plan to effect over generalization in its stead.

We respectfully maintain that the N.C.G.E. Examination Scheme is counterproductive and socially naive, in that in its well-meaning effort to modify an educational system which produces scholars who know only Science or only Arts, the bureaucrats have instead rather ingenuously devised a new system which will turn out Graduates who know neither Arts or Science.

As a remedial measure, this could only lead to disaster. Admittedly, there is a deficiency in the present G.C.E. system which tends to teach Arts students only Arts and Science students purely Science to the illogical exclusion of all else, but the proposed cure originating from the Department of Education has been pronounced on the unfortunate basis of an erratic diagnosis. Specialization in Science or Arts at the G.C.E. level is necessary to ground students in one or the other fields of learning thus enabling them to branch out into the area of their choice, possessing as they are the elementary knowledge requirements to enter either Medical College or Law College or else aspire to a degree in Economics etc.

THE BUREAUCRATS in their unbridled eagerness to stem the educational drift towards over specialization, have unwittingly carried out their collective endeavours to the other extreme by substituting an over-generalized system of education in its stead, and one of the most objectionable features of the N.C.G.E. Examination Scheme is that it unreasonably attempts to teach everybody everything regardless of an individual's natural aptitudes.

If the scheme envisions that every student must be taught the elementary science (as it was taught in the past), it would be lauded as a progressive move but this is plainly not to be, since in actual practise, what is now taught in Grades 6, 7 and 8 are only isolated, unrelated chunks of knowledge taken at random (out of the former

syllabus for Grade 6, 7 and 8 and the syllabus for the G.C.E./O.L. Examination at Grade 9 and 10 levels respectively), thus burdening the young students (in Grades 6, 7 and 8) with a very confusing fragmentary and over-generalized knowledge of science.

How to prevent over-specialization: a sensible way out. General Science for Arts students and General Arts for Science students.

General Science was earlier taught in a common syllabus in Grades 6, 7 and 8, and produced laudable results in evoking a lively interest in Science (in the minds of young students) and enabling the talented students to opt for the study of science subjects at the Senior Secondary Level. We therefore strongly recommend the creation of its logical counterpart, namely General Arts, to ensure the desired equitable distribution of knowledge whilst also maintaining the all-important delicate balance needed to sustain the scholastic integrity of the two respective fields.

This is not a contradiction in terms: We maintain that it is possible to create a judiciously controlled blend of Science and Arts without harmfully infringing on the thematic content of either field of knowledge. Presently, the Science students have only seven (7) subjects to offer for the examination, and General Arts would make the ideal 8th subject. Conversely, General Science would be the ideal 8th subject for Arts/Commerce/Home Science students. Only in this way may we ensure that all Science students have even some knowledge of Arts subjects and the Arts students will not be totally ignorant of Science Subjects. As at present General Science should be taught to all students on a common syllabus in Grades 6, 7 and 8.

Similarly, General Arts should be taught to all students under a common syllabus in Grades 6, 7 and 8. In Grades 9 and 10 science students must study the three science subjects plus General Arts. Thus the science student while remaining firmly steeped in his chosen specialized field, would have the opportunity of studying General Arts for (5) five years (i.e. in Grades 6, 7 and 8 under a common

syllabus, and in Grade 9 and 10 under a special G.C.E. syllabus for General Arts meant for Science students). And the Arts student, while retaining his grasp on knowledge in his own chosen field, would have the opportunity of studying General Science for five (5) years (i.e. in Grades 6, 7 and 8 under a common syllabus, and in Grades 9 and 10 under a special G.C.E. syllabus for General Science intended for Arts students).

The two-year G.C.E. General Science syllabus should include the basic principle of Physics, Chemistry, Biology or Health Science, and the two-year G.C.E. General Arts syllabus should contain sections on Literature, (Poetry, Drama and Fiction) Civics and Government.

This new subject (General Science) could be made either an optional or a compulsory subjects for all Government Examinations upto the University Degree Level as is already the accepted practice in some leading foreign universities where Science Students must major in Science Subject of his choice with an Arts subject as a mandatory educational supplement and conversely, an Arts Student may major in an Arts subject of his choosing while also (compulsorily) studying a supplementary science subject. The Republic of Sri Lanka must adopt this sophisticated attitude and rule it mandatory for all Science students to study General Arts and insist that all Arts graduates study General Science.

ARTS GRADUATES AT A DISADVANTAGE.

The greater majority of employers mete out preferential treatment to Science Graduates, putting Arts Graduates at a distinct disadvantage, and such progressive modification in our system of educational for the benefit of the long-suffering Arts Graduates, would serve admirably to alleviate their miserable conditions where employment is concerned by automatically broadening the (as yet chronically limited) range of avenues of employment presently available to them.

Such a progressive educational innovation would generate a greater confidence in the minds of prospective employers regarding the administrative qualities of future

Arts Graduates and would prove to be an invaluable asset to Arts Graduates seeking employment or promotion to higher grades in 'technical' departments or corporations where a candidate with a knowledge of science is preferred. In the present situation, the hapless Arts Graduate is want only discriminated against for his deplorable lack of scientific knowledge and this onerous situation could be speedily rectified if the Department of Education makes the study of General Science compulsory for all Arts Degrees.

However, we must emphasize that neither General Science nor General Arts must be casually introduced into our system of education prior to the detailed public illumination of the various points in favour of this project in an intensely analytical national debate. The syllabus of General Science and General Arts must be meticulously compiled (for every Grade from Grade 6 right up to the University Degree Level) by a broad intelligent panel of competent professional teachers, educationists, and University and Technical College Lecturers.

We respectfully submit that this is the only sensible system by which we may hope to bridge successfully the yawning ideological gap which exists between the two separate fields of learning.

The N.C.G.E. Scheme, if implemented, will only create a set of students who know neither Arts nor Science for the planners of the N.C.G.E. in their attempt to prevent over-specialization have taken themselves to the other extreme-over generalization which is as harmful as over-specialization

Shoplifting Statistics

Investigations into shoplifting, which went on in Britain for two years, reveal that the losses sustained by commercial firms in this period amounted to £ 200 million. The ones to suffer worst are the garment shops, book stores and newsstands. It has been calculated that the loss caused by thefts of periodicals comes to 6 per cent of the newsstands' turnover.

BACKGROUND

THE MALDIVES

— some facts

by
Professor William Geiger

The Maldives are a large group of many islands which extend in the Indian Ocean from 7°6' North latitude to 0°42' South latitude, and from 72°33' to 73°44' East longitude. Together with the Lakkadives and the Chagos Islands they belong to a submarine mountain chain, on the summits of which the coral polyps have built their reefs.

The islands are grouped into "Atolls"—the Maldivian word, as is well known, has passed as a termination into geographical science—and these Atolls, as a rule, are surrounded by a barrier reef, which protects them from storms and waves. In the Northern Atolls, however, reefs are washed away.

The form of the individual islands is circular or oval. They are only of very small extent, the length and breadth seldom exceeding an English mile. The soil of the islands consists of sand; and in most islands there is thick jungle, from which the crowns of the coconut palms lift their heads proudly in all directions.

The principal island is called Male. It belongs to (a double) Atoll (North and South) of the same name, and from it the whole Archipelago has probably received its appellation. On Male is the residence of the Sultan. The number of its inhabitants is from 2,000 to 3,000.

The climate of the Maldives does not seem unpleasant, for the excessive heat is tempered by sea breezes; but it is extremely unhealthy. Foreigners are usually attacked, within a short time, by several abdominal disorders, which, if the individual does not at once leave the Islands, seem in most cases to run a swift and fatal course.

As regards the inhabitants of the Maldives, it is impossible to determine their total number. Bell (in 1883) estimated them to be at least 30,000: in former times there were doubtless many more. The gradual decline in number of the population seems, however, to have recently come to a standstill, or even to have been succeeded by an increase.

The fact can scarcely be disputed that, at a period of time still unknown to us, the Maldives were colonized from Ceylon, or, as also may be possible, were colonized

at the same time as Ceylon, by Aryan immigrants who came over from the Continent of India.

The first view seems the more probable to me, owing to reasons which appear on a study of the character of the Maldivian language. This in fact, shows a number of features which are characteristic of the Sinhalese, but seem to have originated on Ceylon soil itself. In course of time the Aryan stock of the Maldivian population would be much mixed with Dravidian and Arab blood; so that the physical type of the Maldivians can no longer be considered a unit.

The fact there is no trace of Buddhism on the Islands must not surprise too much: Islam has totally ousted this religion.

The colour of the skin of the males is usually a dark copper: some of the women are decidedly pretty.

As regards the character of the Maldivians, I give some statements from the Report of the two Englishmen, Lieutenants Young and Christopher of the Indian Navy, who, in the course of a Survey of the Maldivian Archipelago in the years 1834-1836, spent several months at Male:—

"They are a quiet, peaceable race, hospitable and kind to stran-

gers, though suspicious and distrustful of them. Unacquainted, indeed, with the practice of the higher virtues, but equally unfamiliar with vice in its darker forms, with desires and wants circumscribed and limited, and the means of satisfying them attainable without much labour, they have little incitement to increased exertion for the purpose of augmenting their productions, and hence, in all probability, the little attention paid to the improvement of their resources, and the absence of all care regarding the amelioration of their condition. The apathy and indifference evinced by them on these subjects seem, however, to result in a great measure from feelings of contentment, though a purious kind.

The religion of the Maldivians is Muhammadan. According to Gray they embraced this religion about the year 1200. Native tradition indicates Yusuf Shams-ud-din, from Tabriz, in Persia, as the apostle of Islam in the Maldives. He died in Male, and his grave their is held in great honour.

But although Islam is the official religion, the old animistic nature-worship, the belief in demons and spirits, in exorcism and magic, plays the most important part in the life of the people.

"The belief in the existence of spirits and supernatural beings, who interfere, sometimes visibly, in human affairs for purposes of evil, as also in extraordinary phenomena supposed to afford intimation of pending calamity, is universal among the Islanders.

"They believe also in auspiciousness, or otherwise, of certain days for particular transactions, no undertaking of any importance to individuals, or to the public, being entered upon without the priest being consulted to determine that point. During recitations in Arabic of passages from the Koran, which is a common practice, incense is kept burning, and when this takes place on board a boat, the crew are always careful to fumigate the rudder-head and tiller before the fire is extinguished. Many individuals on the Island gain their livelihood by writing charms, which are supposed to possess much virtue, not only as a preventive against, but also cure in most diseases. In order

Background

to produce a curative effect the ink of freshly-written charm is washed off in water and drunk as a medicine."

So far as is known to me, the ancient historical writings of the Sinhalese gave no information about a colonization of the Maldives by the people; neither do they mention any sovereignty which they at times exercised over the Islands.

The first allusion to the Maldives is found in Ptolemy (the Second Century A.D.), who places a group of 1,378 little islands to the West of Tabrobane (Ceylon). There can scarcely be a doubt that by these Lakkadives and the Maldives are meant. After Ptolemy, and with reference to him, Pappus of Alexandria speaks of 1,370 small islands which are near Taprobane, and dependent on it.

In the Sixth Century, Cosmas Indicopleustes, who got his information from Sopater, mentions a large number of islets in the neighbourhood of Ceylon where fresh water and coconuts are to be found throughout. His statement is indeed striking; for on almost all the islands known at the present time there is fresh water, and the richness of the Maldives in coconut palms is a well-known fact.

The first visitor to the Maldivian Islands to whom we are indebted for a more accurate description is the famous Arabian traveller of the Fourteenth Century, Ibn Batuta. He remained eight months on Male, and gives us a tolerably detailed account of the condition of the Islands, of their conversion to Islam, of their government, and of their trade with India, China and Yemen.

In the Sixteenth Century the Portuguese made many attempts to bring the Maldives under their dominion. Finally, their independence was acknowledged in Treaty; in which however, the Portuguese reserved to themselves the exclusive right of trade with them.

Almost thirty-five years later, on July 2, 1602, a French ship, with a band of adventures on board, was driven ashore among the Atolls. The Crew were taken prisoners: some died in consequence, others succeeded in escaping; only four remained, among them Francois Pyrrard Laval.

Pyrrard stayed five years in the Maldives. By his wise and tactful conduct he gained the favour of the Sultan, so that he had a tolerable amount of liberty, and could carry on trade. Finally, when the Maldivian kingdom was plunged into the confusion of war, he regained his freedom.

In 1607 the "King of Bengal" undertook an expedition to the Maldives. His fleet attacked Male suddenly, without encountering serious resistance, and returned with rich booty. On the Bengal ships Pyrrard and his three companions left the Maldives.

Four years later, after many other adventures, Pyrrard once more safely trod the soil of his native land.

Pyrrard's work, *Voyage aux Indes Orientales*, which is very scarce appeared for the first time in the year 1611, the second edition in 1615-1616, the third in 1619. It contains the most complete description of the Maldivian Islands which has hitherto appeared, and still serves as a valuable source of information.

The Dutch followed the Portuguese in the Government of the East Indian world; and were followed by the English at the close of the Eighteenth Century. After the latter took possession of Ceylon, the sovereignty which the Dutch had wielded over the Maldives passed automatically, to their successors.

In the years 1834-1836 a Survey of Maldivian Archipelago was undertaken by Captain Moorsby, at the instance of the Bombay Government, since such a survey was urgently necessary in the interests of Marine Commerce.

On this occasion Lieutenants Young and Christopher spent at the Maldives, and almost exclusively on Male Island, two to three months—from June 4 until August 17 and September 9, 1834, respectively. They suffered severely from fever, but were able during their stay to make a series of important observations on the country and people, government and commerce, manners, customs, and language, which they subsequently collected into a memoir.

This is full, and (until 1883 was) the most recent knowledge of the

Maldivian Islands available. It must be considered, so far as it goes, credible and reliable, but is, at the present time scarcely up to date.

An Extract from Section One—Introduction—from Professor William Geiger's book "Maldivian Linguistic Studies".

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IN G.D.R.

How The Young Are Trained For Agriculture

by Wilfried Tieding

In the GDR, too, students of agriculture mostly come from the towns. That they, however, do not study practice in the lecture halls alone is provided for from the very first days of their training. Co-operatives of several thousands hectares of arable land with a more and more industrialized production have completely changed the type of agricultural students.

The days when the knowledge acquired from father sufficed in the village and the "students" remained in the city, are long past. Today at least one graduate of a college or technical school is working among twenty persons engaged in agriculture. And the requirements will become greater rather than smaller.

STUDENTS LEARN HOW TO MANAGE. It is no longer a sensation in the villages around Halle to meet students of the plant production section of Halle university. Alliance with practice is the principle of training from the very first day of study.

Jens Hoberuck, student in the fourth academic year, has just completed his eight months of managerial practice in the agricultural production co-operative of Trossin. He worked there in various functions in accordance with a fixed plan—from group leader complex team leader to head of an entire department.

The farm staff and the college teacher who supervised his work during this time confirmed to him that he had fulfilled his tasks well. In Trossin he solved, among others, a research problem on the optimum use of organic fertilizer in crop production. His work brings annual gains of 14,000 marks to this enterprise alone, not counting the increase in yields. But in other ways, too, the student Hoberuck held his own in the village.

As member of the youth organization of the GDR (FDJ) he helped

the FDJ group of the co-operative farm to arrange interesting discussion evenings. Together with the boys and girls of the village he caused the young co-operative farmers to assume full responsibility for the spring cultivation.

Like Jens Hoberuck all students complete their practical period in management at the end of the third year of study. College teachers affirm that out of 250 at the most ten do not fulfil their tasks. The students doing practical work are not assistants of the manager, but work independently under the supervision of experienced practical workers.

Everyone has a research problem to solve which is the foundation for his later diploma thesis; for the final theses at the Halle university department are basically oriented on practice. Students doing their practical period in management receive a grant of 300 marks plus 80 per cent of the net wage of the manager or head in whose place they work.

The purely technical task is only one aspect in this practical period. Invaluable for the future managers is above all the experience gained in the guidance of people.

is the education in the work team in general.

LINKED WITH PRACTICE FROM THE VERY FIRST DAY. Of the 1,000 students who are being trained for four years to be future managers in plant production co-operation departments (several co-operatives or state farms which jointly cultivate the fields), in agro-chemical centres or in seed nurseries, quite more than a quarter is to be found in the farms in Halles' vicinity.

Only a few days after enrolment each of the new seminar groups concludes a sponsorship agreement with an agricultural enterprise. The student's second home for three years is on the farm. Outside study time they help when every hand is needed in the countryside, they take part in meetings of the co-operative and join the farmers on festive occasions. Together with the village youth they organize discos, club talks and sports competitions. The "sponsors" from the university do not want simply to observe life in the village but to be in the midst of it and to see the co-operative grow.

—Panorama DDR

IMPORTED DISEASE ATTACKS BEES

New Delhi, July 7.

Honey bees in certain parts of India are reported to be dying in numbers because of diseases caused by germs and parasites unknowingly introduced into India from the United States.

In Maharashtra, honey bees have been struck by a foul brood disease caused by bacillus larvi and in the Punjab an endemic of acaraine disease, produced by "mites" is exterminating bees.

Agricultural scientists here said they are worried that these diseases might spread to other States affecting production of honey, a good foreign exchange earner.

Until a few years ago Indian honey bees, *apis indica*, were a health lot. They were free from any of these diseases which were prevalent only among bees of European and American variety called *apis mellifera*.

But Indian bees produced only about four kilograms of honey per hive per year (in contrast to the 150 kg of western bees) a reason that prompted many scientists and private bee-keepers in Punjab and Maharashtra to import the extremely productive *apis mellifera* from the U.S.

The import continued for years and, along with the *mellifera* came 'mites' and germs which were never in India before. As a result, a reputed entomologist said, bee-keepers now have disease control problems added to the poor yield of Indian bees.

Another insect, that had recently jumped quarantines is the 'cudling moth' that is reported to be eating all the walnuts in Kashmir. This insect had never been recorded in India and no one knows how it came to Kashmir.

An Era Of New Openings In Foreign Policy

By Alexander M. Sullivan

Washington, Aug. 9.

As he assumes the Presidency, Gerald Ford finds himself the heir to a rich legacy of foreign policy achievements—the work of Richard Nixon and his brilliant Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger, who said he will remain and supervise the conduct of U.S. foreign policy under the new head of State.

In the years of his Presidency, Richard Nixon changed the rules of international politics. He sped the transition from a postwar period of Big Power confrontation and cold war to an era in which negotiation and accommodation would become the foundation of the stable international order he labored to create.

Mr. Nixon acted on the conviction that in a nuclear age the traditional conduct of diplomacy—the steady accumulation of unilateral advantages in quest of decisive political gain—must be replaced by the concept of mutual restraint, especially between the Superpowers. He sought to bring about in the International Community a state of mind which recognized that the old ways are too dangerous when every superpower confrontation courts nuclear catastrophe. Basing his Foreign Policy on what he perceived to be the absolute necessity of easing east-west tensions, and of enhancing ties with traditional allies, Mr. Nixon's years in the White House saw:

Agreement with the Soviet Union on the non-provocative conduct of relations between the Superpowers themselves and with third nations—in effect, the formal end of the cold war.

The first positive curb on a nuclear weapons system, the anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) System, and continuing negotiations aimed at eventual reduction of the number of offensive nuclear weapons.

Regularizing of meetings at the Summit between leaders of nations who control arsenals capable of incinerating civilization, and the development of a degree of positive co-operation between Washington and Moscow in the political, scientific, environmental, medical and space fields.

The first steps toward normalization of relations between Washing-

ton and The People's Republic of China.

The emergence of the United States, as a trusted mediator, alone equipped to provide the Middle East with its most promising hope for permanent peace in decades.

Reaffirmation of the goals and objectives of the Atlantic Community and revitalization of the Alliance.

The placing of American diplomacy, through the Nixon Doctrine on a thoroughly realistic basis.

An end to U.S. participating in the Vietnam war, and the establishing of mechanisms to bring peace to that area.

Richard Nixon had risen to national prominence during the depths of the cold war, gaining an international reputation as a militant anti-communist. But as he took office on January 20, 1969, he noted, "The face of the world (HAD) changed more rapidly and more dramatically than ever before in the World's history."

New centers of power were emerging in Europe and Asia, areas once devastated by war but now vibrant and prosperous. New Nations had come on the scene; 58 had joined the world community since 1945. A communist bloc once perceived as aggressively monolithic had displayed its own factionalism and quarrels.

If the world had changed, Mr. Nixon had too: the time had come, he said, "To reassess (American)

responsibilities." For as he took office, it seemed possible building on the gains of the nuclear non-proliferation treaty, to make the world a little safer from nuclear catastrophe. The Cuban missile crisis had apparently produced in both Washington and Moscow a realization of the dangers inherent in nuclear confrontation.

The climate however did not lend itself to easy optimism. The Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia offended American sensibilities. The war in Southeast Asia dragged on, and the Middle East rang with war or its threat. Berlin remained a partly-healed reminder of central Europe's vulnerability. Many, in fact, urged, Mr. Nixon to accept what he has termed "A cold peace" as a replacement for cold war—that is, to settle for a lengthy period whose ultimate success would be measured by the lack of a nuclear holocaust.

The President chose instead to reach for a new set of international relationships that would hopefully free the world of the fear of war and channel man's resources into a peaceful competition against ancient sources—famine, poverty and disease.

He regarded a reduction of tension between the United States and the USSR as essential and made that "the foremost requirement of American foreign policy." Thus this complex man reached more agreements with the Soviet Union, engaged its leaders in more intimate and far-reaching conversations, and involved the two countries in more areas of co-operation than had all of his predecessors combined.

And the United States moved from a stance of antagonism toward The People's Republic of China to provide the mechanisms for a normalization of relations with the most populous nation on earth. With the Nixon Doctrine, he recognized the limits of U.S. power; he revealed the news stance at Guam in 1969. The United States would honour all its treaty commitments, but no longer would be sole guarantor of other nations' security interests, except in the threat of nuclear war. Washington would continue to help, with material and supplies, selected nations willing

to help themselves against insurrection supported by outside forces.

At the same time, the Administration appreciated the reach of American power. One of the fundamental tenets of its diplomacy was to maintain that power, at least partially because Mr. Nixon was convinced that accommodation with the Communist world could be achieved only if potential adversaries respected America's ability—and willingness—to deploy credible forces.

Before he made his first visit to the Soviet Union, in 1972, he had made Vietnam a test of America's will, matching every escalation of Soviet and Chinese help to North Vietnam with a U.S. counter, culminating in the mining of North Vietnamese harbors.

He frequently spoke of his determination to end U.S. participation in the Vietnamese war in a fashion that would make the credibility of U.S. power clear to all. Yet he recognized Vietnam as the most agonizing war in U.S. history and while demonstrating American steadfastness to an ally, he also moved to extricate U.S. armed forces. American ground troops in South Vietnam were gradually reduced beginning in June 1969, while continuing to use U.S. air power as a counter in the rounds of diplomacy which eventually produced the 1973 Paris accords. Those complicated agreements, still to be fully implemented, place in the hands of the Vietnamese themselves the means of determining their own destiny, free of outside interference.

Then, in his first trip to Moscow, Mr. Nixon made plain the breadth of the canvas he proposed to fill. He told the Soviet people the absence of war was not enough—there must be a new international order in which no nation lives in fear of aggression. Mutual restraint, he said, was the only viable answer—restraint within a system of relationships which took adequate note of each nation's security needs and aspirations. He urged a pre-disposition toward reconciliation of differences, toward accommodation of interests.

The statement of principles which emerged from the First Moscow Conference reflects that approach, pledging the Superpowers to avoid military confrontation and

to exercise restraint in those areas of the world where their interests converge.

While the 1973 Middle East war and the attendant military alerts called by both Washington and Moscow made it plain agreements do not enforce themselves, the accommodation worked out showed the value of what Mr. Nixon termed "patience, hard work and perseverance" in translating broad understandings "into concrete results." In the Middle East, Mr. Nixon walked one of the most difficult tight ropes of his Presidency. In 1970 and again in 1974, the two Superpowers came close to physical intervention in the area. Insisting that the United States would be "even-handed" in the Middle East, the U.S. Government sought to provide Israel with sufficient arms and war material to balance Soviet supplies to Arab states—although not as much as Israel wanted. At the same time, it consistently held out the hand of friendship to Arab nations.

Simultaneously, the President sought to persuade the Soviet Union—as in Vietnam that there was no gain for either side in an endless and escalating arms race. In the aftermath of the 1973 war, Mr. Nixon sent secretary of state Kissinger on a marathon round of diplomacy seeking to capitalize on the new war-produced awareness, on both sides, of their limitations. Out of that diplomacy has come the disengagement of forces along Israel's Syrian and Egyptian fronts; together with the most promising steps toward a permanent settlement since Israel was founded. The United States also was able to resume diplomatic relations with Egypt and Syria, cut off in 1968, and to enter co-operative agreements with both countries. Mr. Nixon's middle East trip in May and June 1974 ratified those steps while fostering stronger ties with Jordan and Saudi Arabia, without loosening traditional links with Israel.

Even as Mr. Nixon worked to ease relations with Moscow, he began the long process of normalizing ties with Peking. On the basis of the President's visit in 1972, the two countries agreed neither would use force or the threat of force against the other. Programs of cultural and scientific exchanges

began. Liaison offices with the prestige, if not the rank of ambassadorial missions, were opened in each capital.

Knowing that in his initiatives toward the Communist world he must keep the trust and backing of America's traditional allies, the President engaged in a series of consultations with European and Japanese leaders unmatched since the world war two period.

One result was the signing in Brussels in June 1974 of a new statement of principles reaffirming the ties of history, culture and security binding together the Atlantic community.

BUCHAREST CONFERENCE-I

World Population Problems

— Intergovernmental Forum —
by
Edgar H. De Lesseps

Following is the first of a three-part series on the forthcoming World Population Conference, August 19-30, at Bucharest, Romania. This article focuses on the background of the Conference, its general scope and what it hopes to achieve.

THE GROWTH of the world's population is proceeding on a scale and at a speed unprecedented in human history. For the first thousands of years population growth was negligible. For hundreds of years up to the 20th century it was small. For the past two decades it has been the highest yet.

The clock ticks on.

Where are we headed? what should be done?

Searching for an answer, representatives of about 150 world Governments will convene their first Global Population Conference August 19-30 at Bucharest, Romania. They will talk about population policies and issues. Separate views are bound to emerge. Hopefully, at the end of their two-week meeting, they will adopt a World Population Plan of Action (W.P.P.A.)

The plan would establish principles and policies and goals aimed at improving the quality of life

everywhere and helping nations to deal effectively with population matters. At the international level it could respond to the needs of individual nations by increasing international activity in research, the exchange of information and assistance.

THIS FALL the Plan of action will be submitted to the United Nations General Assembly for approval. In 1975 the participatory nations will begin implementation of its provisions and make any further internal proposals. The success of the Plan will largely depend on actions taken by national governments. Under the aegis of the United Nations, the Bucharest World Population Conference is expected to have the widest representation of any un-sponsored meeting held to date. It is also expected to be the prominent landmark of World Population Year (W.P.Y.) designated by an earlier UN resolution. Since 1946, when the United Nations established its Population Commission, the world organization has been aware of the increasing rates of world population growth and of the serious implications for both industrial and developing nations.

U.N. Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim has characterized world population growth as a "Global Emergency."

"It is my hope," Mr. Waldheim says, "that the World Population Year and Conference will rank in the history of the United Nations among the greatest events of the seventies and that they will bring the day when the world can say that the demographic problems facing us are understood, and actions to solve them are underway."

(Demography is science dealing with population distribution, density and statistics).

President, Nixon, in a July 9 proclamation designating 1974 as World Population Year in the United States, characterized the observance as "an historic opportunity for all nations to study their own and world patterns of population growth and distribution.

The United States has no interest," Mr. Nixon said, "in imposing solutions upon other countries, but it does seek to help in a way which maintains our traditional respect for human freedom and dignity." All nations, the President said, should be concerned "with the human and physical

ways in which mankind can discover new paths to partnership and progress." The world delegates at Bucharest will talk about population trends and future prospects. They will talk about population and social development, population and the environment, population and the family. These are the substantive agenda items. The human rights issue is expected to pervade all discussions at the Conference. The U.N. International Conference on Human Rights, held at Teheran in 1968, declared that "couples have a basic human right to decide freely and responsibly on the number and spacing of their children and the right to adequate education and information in this respect." This principle was reaffirmed in the declaration on Social Progress and Development, which the General Assembly adopted in 1969.

ALL COUNTRIES face population problems. However, it is the developing countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America that most urgently seek answers. Two thirds of the World's population lives in these countries; five-sixths of the expected population increase will occur there.

World population now is about 3.9 billion. This population as of whole is growing about two percent a year. Philander Claxton, Special Assistant to Secretary of State Kissinger for Population matters, says:

"The developed countries are growing at less than one percent a year. The developing countries are growing at about 2.5 percent: most of the Asian countries at about that level, some of Latin America, but many countries are at the three percent level or higher. If present fertility should continue, the world population in only 100 years would be something like 53 to 55 billion people. It obviously can't happen and won't happen."

Rapid population growth, demographic experts point out, can impair attempts to improve conditions in many developing countries, countries which have a limited capacity to absorb more people and to continue development. *The Population Boom*, as some authorities call it, is largely due to advances in Public Health and Medicine, which reduce the proportion of early deaths among the two-thirds

of humanity living in developing countries. This mortality reduction means not only that people are living longer but that children have a far better chance of surviving to parenthood.

In its 1974 Status Report, the U.S. Population Council, an organization engaged in scientific population study, makes it evident that not one but many problems are involved; interwoven are causes and effects, means and ends. Some of them, if not all, will probably become sounding boards for floor discussion at the Bucharest Conference.

For example, the economic gap dividing rich and poor nations is closely paralleled by the gap in fertility rates and population increase. The higher fertility and sharpest population growth is in the poorer countries.

MOREOVER, it is generally accepted that motivation for limiting family size often seems to be related to economic and social improvement in the society and in a specific family situation. Some parents are aware that they no longer need to produce a dozen children in order to see five grow up. In this case, the reduction of family size and a more controlled growth rate would be spurred by technological, economic and social development.

Population matters are also significant in advanced countries, such as an increase in aging dependents, difficulties arising from intensified urbanization, shortages of raw materials, environmental population.

On the other hand, all over the world millions of people seeking life are leaving the farms and moving into the cities. But find them overcrowded, with inadequate housing. Currently, about 40 percent of mankind lives in urban areas. In developed countries, about 64 per cent live in urban areas. In developing countries about 28 percent, or 660 million people, are in urban areas, more than double the 1950 total.

However, it should be noted that in developing countries the figure varies more widely than in developed countries from close to zero in some African states to nearly 100 percent in Hong Kong and Singapore, both essentially city-states.

(To be Continued)

IS IT TRUE?

Sherlock Holmes

* PM'S TRIP * MALDIVES * LSSP

IS IT TRUE that the PM's visit to the Soviet Union will not come off on her forthcoming trip abroad in September 1974? That the dates of her visits to Pakistan, West Germany, Romania and Yugoslavia have been fixed and announced? That all progressive circles in Sri Lanka had looked forward to the PM's visit to the Soviet Union this year? That available information indicates that the PM was anxious to combine a stay of week or even ten days in the USSR as the grand finale of her trip? That it is not certain why the trip has not materialised? That whispers in political corridors suggest that the dates suggested by Colombo did not suit Moscow? That it is said that the Sri Lanka PM has only few opportunities of leaving the island? That she is burdened with five portfolios and she is still the centre of the political spectrum in this island? That it is also said that the very fact that she was anxious to include a visit to the USSR in her itinerary was indicative of the importance she attached to a visit to the Soviet Union? That with the Russians doing the oil drilling in Mannar she was doubly conscious of the need for close and intimate ties with the USSR? That there is widespread disappointment in political circles that Moscow was not able to make some adjustments in order to accommodate the visit of the PM on dates suitable to her? That suggestions made in reactionary circles that the Moscow was not anxious to have the visit after she went to West Germany are discounted? That these cold war diehards want people to believe Moscow would want her to make a separate visit to the Soviet Union without making it a package which included visits to other countries?

IS IT NOT A FACT that the PM's forthcoming visit to the Maldives

is indicative of the new awareness the Government of Sri Lanka has shown in regard to the existence of the Republic of Maldives? That the invitation extended by the visiting Maldivian PM has been accepted with justifiable alacrity? That this demonstrates a new spirit which seems to activate our Foreign Office in our relations with the Maldives? That readers will recall that it was *Tribune* which had first spotlighted the shoddy treatment which had been meted out by our bureaucrats to the Maldives and the Maldivians in the not-so-distant past? That this boorish conduct had enabled countries like India to steal a march over Sri Lanka in the Archipelago? That traditionally the Maldives have always been closely linked to Sri Lanka? That it was extremely foolish to have conducted our foreign affairs in a way that had brought estrangement between the two countries? That the blame for this can be laid squarely on diehard bureaucrats who were responsible for the conduct of our affairs? That the Prime Minister must be congratulated for reversing this unfortunate trend? That the fact that she has somehow found time to squeeze a visit to the Maldives during this month just before her grand foreign tour, shows that a new era has dawned in Sri Lanka's relations with the Maldives? That Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike will the first foreign Head of State to visit the sovereign Republic of Maldives? That though the Maldivian Prime Minister had been invited to India on state visit much earlier than Sri Lanka had ever thought of inviting him, the Indian PM is scheduled to go to the Maldives only in November? That with all this diplomatic activity the Maldives assumes a new importance and significance in the Indian Ocean Zone?

IS IT NOT A FACT that the LSSP Youth Rally last weekend was an altogether impressive show? That the organisation of the conference and rally made many eyebrows to be lifted in wonder and surprise? That cynics and critics sought to minimise the significance of the LSSP Youth Conference by suggesting that since the LSSP controlled the CTB, they had transported the multitude to Colombo? That though there may be an element of truth in this innuendo, it is very far from the whole picture? That there is no doubt that LSSP has gained in prestige, stature and strength in the last four years as a constituent member of the United Front Government? That there has been a great accretion of strength to the LSSP in the Administration and the Administrative Services? That the LSSP, in conjunction with the other left partner in the UF, the CP, controls the GCSU and other government service trade unions? That in addition to Transport, the LSSP controls the Ministries of Finance and Plantation Industries? That, in urban areas, and among white collar as well as blue collar workers, the LSSP is a major force? That in the rural areas, the LSSP is yet to effect a major breakthrough of an independent nature? That the SLFP is still the most important factor in the UF coalition in the rural areas? That in the plantation sector there is a state of flux with takeovers, the repatriation of Indians and the like? That the traditional trade unions have lost their grip on the traditional plantation workers? That it is yet to be seen how the people who will now utilise the lands will react to trade unions? That in the State-Plantations-managed-estates it is natural that there should be an initial tilt to the LSSP unions? That whilst the development in various sectors is uneven, there is not the slightest doubt that the LSSP today is a much bigger political force to contend with than it was in 1970? That the future of this party must be watched with care and respect? That the speech made by Dr. N. M. Perera at the LSSP Youth Conference merits very serious study and consideration?

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