

TRIBUNE

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Delimitation Commission

BY A SPECIAL GAZETTE NOTIFICATION of Friday August 9, the President, under powers vested in him by section 77 of the Constitution, appointed a new Delimitation Commission consisting of Mr. K. M. N. Tittawela as Chairman, Mr. M. Sivanathan and Mr. S. H. M. Z. Faroque with Mr. E. F. Dias Abeysinghe as Secretary to the Commission. Mr. Tittawela is a judge of the Supreme Court and had a distinguished career in the Attorney General's Department during which period he had also been seconded for work in different Ministries. Mr. Sivanathan was a member of the CCS (now the CAS) and is on leave prior to retirement: the last post he held being Secretary to the Ministry of Industries and Scienti-

fic Affairs (he is also the Chairman of the State Graphite Corporation). Mr. S. H. M. Z. Faroque is an attorney-at-law and he is said to have been the Registrar General for a period. He is reported to be a Master of Laws of the Columbia University. Mr. Abeysinghe is the Commissioner of Elections and had functioned as Secretary to the last Delimitation Commission which had been headed by former Supreme Court Judge Walter Thalagodpitaya. Under the Constitution, the Delimitation Commission must consist of three persons whom the President is satisfied "are not actively engaged in politics".

Within the options available, the President's choice will inspire confidence in the public. Except for

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Mr. Faroque, who is a kind of dark horse even so far as knowledgeable circles are concerned, the other two members of the Commission have a record of public service which merits respect. Mr. Tittawela will make an excellent Chairman and all those who seek to make representations before the Commission can be assured of a very good and patient hearing. He can be counted upon to take a balanced view even in a maelstrom of complex claims. Mr. Sivanathan can be depended on to bring a cautious, restrained and objective approach to all questions, even of the most controversial nature. It is not likely that Mr. Faroque—who has no doubt been appointed because a Muslim was considered essential for such Delimitation a Commission—a premise which *Tribune* does not accept,) cannot over-ride the two more experienced members of the Commission. For all we know Mr. Faroque may turn out to be an excellent and acceptable member of the Commission, but because he is an unknown factor there are fears and apprehensions that he may be carried away by sectional and sectarian claims of particular Muslim groups.

It is unfortunate that in Sri Lanka the belief is still held that a person of a particular community or group should sit on each Commission if the Commission is to reach correct decisions. There cannot be anything more dangerous than succumbing to such logic because it will ultimately lead to fissiparous vivisection and political separatism. If Sri Lanka is to emerge as a united nation, in spite of the heterogeneity of its multi-racial, multi-linguistic, multi-religious and multi-caste population

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it is imperative that such Commissions should consist of persons who will be able to rise above racial, religious, linguistic and caste considerations in the national interests. We have the fullest confidence that the Tittawela Delimitation Commission will not be swayed by partisan or sectarian interests.

But, we are aware that there is heart-burning among a large segment of the population that Low-country Sinhala interests have been overlooked in the composition of the Commission, particularly, because the Low-country Sinhala areas are burdened with problems far more complex and difficult than those faced by Muslims in the areas where the Muslims are found in sizable numbers. This line of thinking that only a Low-country Sinhalese can deal with the problems of the Low-country stems from the idea that any Commission of this nature must reflect the racial composition of the country. And if this line of argument is pushed further, each major caste will want representation in the composition of every Delimitation Commission.

THE DUTIES OF THE DELIMITATION COMMISSION have been defined in section 78 of the Constitution, and for the record, we set out the provisions in full.

(1) Every Delimitation Commission established under section 77 shall divide each province of Sri Lanka into a number of electoral districts ascertained as provided in subsection (2) of this section and shall assign names thereto.

(2) The total number of persons who, according to the last preceding general census, were for the time being resident in the province shall be ascertained to the nearest 75,000. In respect of each 75,000 of this number the Delimitation Commission shall allot one electoral district to the Province and shall add a further number of electoral districts (based on the number of square miles in the province at the rate of one additional electoral district for each 1,000 square miles of area calculated to the nearest 1,000) as follows:

Western Province	1
Central Province	2
Southern Province	2
Northern Province	4
Eastern Province	4
North-Western Province	3
North-Central Province	4

Province of Uva	3
Province of Sabaragamuwa	2

(3) Subject to the provisions of subsections (4) and (5) of this section, each electoral district of a province shall have as nearly as may be an equal number of citizens of Sri Lanka.

Provided that in dividing a province into electoral districts, every Delimitation Commission shall have regard to the transport facilities of the province, its physical features and the community or diversity of interest of its inhabitants.

(4) Where it appears to the Delimitation Commission that there is in any area of a province a substantial concentration of citizens of Sri Lanka united by a community of interest, whether racial, religious or otherwise but differing in one or more of these respects from the majority of the inhabitants of that area, the Commission may make such division of the province into electoral districts as may be necessary to render possible the representation of that interest. In making such division the Commission shall have due regard to the desirability of reducing to the minimum the disproportion in the number of citizens of Sri Lanka resident in the several electoral districts of the Province.

(5) Notwithstanding anything in subsection (1) or subsection (4) of this section, the Delimitation Commission shall have power to create in any province one or more electoral districts returning two or more members, if the racial composition of the citizens of Sri Lanka, in that province is such as to make it desirable to render possible the representation of any substantial concentration of citizens of Sri Lanka in that province who are united by a community of racial interest different from that of the majority of the citizens of Sri Lanka in that province.

Provided that in any such case the number of electoral districts for that Province as ascertained in accordance with the provisions of subsection (2) of this section shall be reduced so that the total number of members to be returned for the province shall not exceed the total number of electoral districts so ascertained.

An ordinary layman often finds the jargon in our Constitution somewhat baffling, but what all this amounts to is that in spite of the general principles laid down, the Delimitation Commission

had ample discretionary latitude to extend the necessary weightage to special interests.

In a Parliamentary system based on the British model, where a simple majority decides the issue in each electorate, the demarcation of electorates is the dominant factor, unlike in a system where the electoral results are based on proportional representation and on preference votes. That is why in the constitutions which have obtained in this island ever since adult franchise in 1931, regular delimitations have been made imperative. In a electoral system such as ours, unless due weightage is given to special interests and special areas, the resulting anomalies and imbalances will be great. Right from the beginning such weightage has been given.

There is no need to trace in this note the course and trend of the logic followed by the different Delimitation Commissions since 1931 or even from 1946, but it would be pertinent to mention that the weightage given at different times to particular interests have fashioned the development of political life in this country. But the movement of history cannot be contained by the weightage given by a Delimitation Commission. The first delimitation was, consciously or unconsciously, such that the Sinhala Buddhist of the Goigama caste had weightage in his favour in the Sinhalese areas and the high caste Velala had everything in his favour in the Tamil areas. In urban and semi-urban areas, especially on the west coast, the demarcation tended to favour the Left—although this was probably never intended. The 1946/47 election took place on such a delimitation, and the 1952 elections also showed that the weightage yielded the intended results. But a great many things before the 1956 elections, with a new generation of voters bred on the free education scheme and Sinhala Only. The Bandaranaike ballot box revolution of 1956 burst through the seams of the earlier demarcation of seats with its visible and invisible weightages.

THEREAFTER THE NEW DELIMITATIONS were based on a new logic where the castes and groups which had earlier been at a disadvantage were in a position to assert themselves. This was mainly so in the Sin-

halese areas. In the Tamil areas, especially in the Jaffna peninsula, the demarcation was such that 35 to 40 percent of the population who were known as the "depressed classes" were not in a position to obtain separate representation. This was because the electorates were so demarcated that these depressed class people were cut up in such a way that they were ineffective minorities in all electorates and were only able to exercise pressure where the contest was three-cornered. The depressed class belts in Jaffna can easily be demarcated in such away as to create two or even three depressed class electorates. In the same way, in the coastal belt on the west coast, if the electorates were demarcated with shorter sea front but extended deep into the countryside landwards, the resulting position would be very different. In the past, extra special weightage was given to the Kandyan areas even after the disenfranchisement of the persons of Indian origin, and this weightage was given at the expense of the peasantry in other areas particularly in Low-country Sinhalese areas.

Political parties, groups, organisations and individuals will naturally seek to make representations to the Delimitation Commission to extend weightage, both visible and invisible, to interests considered important. It will be interesting to see the weightage the Commission finally decides as being relevant at this particular juncture of our history. Already, the *Observer* in the Lake House group of papers has indirectly pleaded for weightage to the rural areas where there is resurgent food production activity. There is much to be said in favour of such weightage because nearly 70 % of the population of the island is rural and there is no doubt that the rural masses have suffered by the weightage the urban areas and the Kandyan hill country areas have received through different means. But the plea for such weightage for rural areas will be stoutly resisted by Left and other urban based parties. It will be asserted that such weightage will tend to favour the SLFP at the expense of the LSSP, CP and even the UNP.

But it is well to remember that what is important is not the fortunes of particular parties but the impera-

tives of groups and communities which must be drawn into the business of government. Agriculture is the mainstay of this island, and industry can only be incidental: and the most successful and profitable industries can be only agro-industries based on our agriculture. In principle, therefore, if any weightage is to be given, as it must, the rural food producing areas in the Sinhalese, Tamil and Muslims areas must receive adequate weightage. The immediate and future salvation of this country depends entirely on the food we produce and unless the producers of food are drawn more closely than before into the political arena, progress, will be retarded in the context of contemporary realities.

This is a matter on which the widest spectrum of opinion must be encouraged and *Tribune* will welcome views, opinions and comments from its readers on the principles which, in their view, should guide the newly appointed Delimitation Commission.

Tribunania

- ✻ Land Reform
- ✻ PM and 'Slogans'

WE NOW LIVE IN EXTRAORDINARY TIMES in Sri Lanka. The Land Reform Law, in so far as the take-over of excess land is concerned, has been implemented within the stipulated period of two years from August 26, 1972. Over 550,000 acres of tea, rubber and coconut lands, together with paddy lands and also jungle and undeveloped lands, have been vested in the Land Reform Commission. This column will endeavour to examine the breakdown figures of the different kinds of land taken over and analyse the implications of this semi-surgical operation in our system of land tenure.

This exercise in land reform, it has been proclaimed, was carried out in order to secure the better utilisation of the land in order to achieve greater productivity, but this declaration is at the moment

nothing more than a smokescreen to cover the inordinate desire to achieve certain short-term political objectives: namely, to undermine the economic base of the vested interests and individuals, who were antagonistic to the United Front, to satisfy partially at least the land hunger of the landless who are now on the UF band-waggon, and finally to set up co-operative and public sector farms in order to provide employment



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for youth who were drifting to insurrectionary and pseudo-anarchist ideologies. Although the proclaimed objective was economic, the method and manner in which Land Reform was carried out was political.

Minister Hector Kobbekaduwa, has reason to be proud that this exercise was carried out so quickly and so peacefully. It is true that there were no violent repercussions. The take-over has been effected. This everybody will accept, but what they cannot accept is that the exercise was carried out in equity in accordance with the Land Reform Law. The Minister has gone on record to assert that he has dealt with "fairly" all appeals that had come up to him. He has also refuted the charge that officials who were in charge of Operation Take-over acted within the law and with all reasonable humanity and decency. This *Tribune* cannot accept. Many hundreds of thousands of people in this country, who are personally aware firsthand of how the minor minions of Land Reform conducted themselves, will not accept the Minister's assurance. Even after making allowances for exaggerations, there is no doubt that the take-over in many places were carried out with venom and vindictive inhumanity, and in many instances with ruthless barbarity. The Minister has chosen to accept the words of the officials and other minions who were put in charge of the work and he refuses to accept what other people say. His officials have been veritable Jekyll and Hydes—one thing to the victims and another to the Minister above them.

It is pointless belabouring this point but it must be mentioned that if the take-over of excess land had been done with humane consideration, then the scars left on society will be less gangrenous than now. But it is not this aspect of Land Reform which is likely to be its Achilles Heel. The Minister has now announced that the Land Reform Commission will now proceed to see how the land vested in it will be utilised. *Tribune* has pointed that this method of land reform was really putting the cart before the horse. In the forthcoming effort to bring the horse before the cart, a great deal of time

will elapse during which time the cart, which has already begun to deteriorate owing to non-use and misuse, will tend to break up altogether. Unless the LRC is very alert and makes superhuman efforts, there is every possibility that the cart as well as the horse might suffer such damage as would make it necessary to get new replacements. And this will defeat the very purpose of the Land Reform Law of 1972.

And the manner in which the take-over of surplus land has been carried out and the manner in which the options for land utilisation are now exercised will, in all probability, not even achieve the desired political objectives. The dispossessed vested interests have now become the unclue of the growing band of acceptable CRA (Convertible Rupee Account) capitalists, and by 1977 they will play a more vicious role in the political scene than the old landlords ever did. CRA capitalism, based on gemming and other non-traditional exports, is fast replacing the old comprador landlord capitalism, and CRA tycoons will undoubtedly prove a dangerous boomerang to the elite which brought them into existence. Furthermore, the land reform as done now (and even if the ceiling is brought down to 25 acres or 15 acres) will not and cannot satisfy the land hunger of the landless. With the amount of land available and the number of landless in the country, there is not enough to go round. And the more fragmentation there is, the more will production and productivity suffer. And if the record of state farms and co-operative farms continue to be what they have been so far there is very little room for optimism.

What history will record about the Kobbekaduwa Land Reform is yet to be seen, but he is today basking in the glory of political partisanship. History has little or no use for ephemeral politicking.

There is no doubt that Minister Kobbekaduwa has done a great job of work compared to what other Ministers of this Government have done, and if what we say is tinged with critical undertones it is because we have always had and still have genuine apprehensions that though excess land has been

taken over there is no guarantee that they will be properly utilised in order to ensure greater production and productivity. The old edifice of land ownership has been broken, but what of the future? We have destroyed the bigger landlords, but we have made CRA capitalists from the more vicious of these surplus-land landlords, Whither Sri Lanka?

WE LIVE IN AN AGE OF SLOGANS. Slogans are used by those in power to direct the masses to specific action. Slogans are also used by political parties and mass organisations to bring pressure upon governmental leaders. These are among the few uses to which slogans are put to use. There are hundreds of other ways in which slogans are used—from selling tooth paste to popularising contraceptive gadgetry. We are here now only concerned with political slogans which political organisations and trade unions use to mobilise opinion and pressurise allegedly reluctant or slow-moving leaders.

One of the slogans, most vociferously shouted, in stentorian Sinhala idiom, at the LSSP youth Rally on August 11 and 12 and at the UF Rally at Minneriya on August 17, had called upon the Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike, "to go straight like Castro and forward like NM." At the Minneriya Rally, the PM had lashed out at these sloganists. The *Lankadipa* of August 20 had reported this in this way:

It is a matter to be ashamed of when our party men shout slogans like "we ask the Prime Minister to be straight like Castro and go forward like N. M. I will not stand straight on borrowed policies when we have clear cut policies given to us by the late Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike,"

"There is no necessity for me to tread the paths of this man or that man. We have a clear cut path for us to walk. And that is the path that the late Mr. Bandaranaike showed us. If I cannot walk straight on that road I will go home. That is what I would do.

"We are walking on the road shown to us by the late Mr. Bandaranaike. He showed us that we must go forward in keeping with

the wishes and thoughts of the people of this country. We should act accordingly.

"There is no necessity for us to walk on other people's roads. I am not in any way prepared to walk on somebody else's path. I heard some people say: "We ask the Prime Minister to be straight like Castro and go forward like N. M."

"The United Front government was formed not to implement the policies of others, but to implement the policies of Mr. Bandaranaike. On the occasion we obtained power on the basis of implementing Bandaranaike policies.

"We must stand erect on our own independant policies and not on other peoples policies. If we have clear cut policies why should we borrow policies.

"I will not walk on that road and this road. There is no need for me to do so. We have a definite path, and that is the road shown by Mr. Bandaranaike.

"We will not work according to what this or that man tells us. We will administer the country according to the Bandaranaike policies. Progressive legislation was brought forward not because some one told us to do so but according to the Bandaranaike policies.

"The leaders of the United Front signed the UF Manifesto Common Programme with a view to implementing Bandaranaike policies."

Knowledgeable observers had noted that this portion of the PM's speech had been blacked out in all the Lake House papers—Dinamina, Daily News, Thinakaran, and the daily Observer (the Sunday Observer, 25/8 made amends by publishing a translation of her speech). It was even more noteworthy that the SLBC which always reports the PM at length had carefully edited the speech to black out this portion.

There is no doubt something strange and funny in the system of news reporting, which has developed in the post-Dawasa-shut-down period, that enables interested parties to black out even significant parts of a Prime Minister's speech at an important rally. If

our memory serves us right, not even in the heyday of Lake House supremacy and big capitalist press monopoly, did anyone dare to black out significant parts of a Prime Minister's speech.

Word-of-mouth news had spread the gist of what the PM had said at Minneriya, and this had gone right round town. The Lankadipa report was talked about and there was much comment about the "edited" and "censored" version that had come over the SLBC. This is what had probably prompted the Sunday Observer to publish a translation of the speech. We reproduce below that part of the speech which deals with slogans.

There were slogans today denouncing free rice. Some shouted: We can do without free rice. These augur well. If we do away with free rice, we can save Rs. 760 million. Free rice is given at such a huge cost. We are not doing away with the free rice because it will cause hardship to the people.

"The cost of this rice is colossal. That money can be devoted to industries and the creation of more jobs.

"If the farmers produce more we can step this drain. Rice imports can be stopped. We can have a higher GPS.

I have been told this at every rally, but not so vehemently before. You have any amount of rice to eat, but the urban population finds it difficult.

"The Polonnaruwa district has responded well. Other areas, specially urban areas, have to be supplied with rice from producing areas. If you produce more and give us more rice, then we will be able to stop free rice. We have to think about this matter later.

"We also heard other slogans. We have heard these often. We tell the PM be firm like Castro' 'Be firm like Lenin' or Be firm like' N. M.?' I have kept silent so far.

"I would like to mention, that we held the reins in two governments-1960 to 1965 and 1970 onwards. I have acted firmly I have acted boldly.

"If I had not acted boldly from 1960 onwards the position in the country would be far different from what it is today. No one need tell

me to stand firm. We have stood up boldly against all odds when the occasion demanded it.

"If we took refuge in ships, you would not be alive today You know the coup of 1962. There was an armed conspiracy against the State—by the Armed Services and the Police. If we had hidden in ships then and acted cowardly, you might perhaps not be among the living today.

"We are following the path shown us by the late Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike, not on anyone else's footsteps. We don't need, doctrines imported from elsewhere. Those doctrines may suit them. Our late leader evolved a doctrine based on conditions and mass aspirations prevalent here. We follow that only.

"That policy of our late leader is based in our culture, our religion and our aspirations. We take that road. We don't need any other road. I say boldly. We are here not to follow any other path, but that clearly laid down by our late leader.

"If we are on a wrong path, we will tell the people and go home. And if we did not take a firm stand on the correct path, a good many would not be in the positions they hold today. I must emphasise this.

"I am sorry to find that some of our supporters mouth slogans like parrots just because somebody prompts them to do so. Some of those who had asked us to act boldly are not alive today.

The PM remarks speak for themselves.

It was a direct blast at the SLF-Fers who shouted such vamasamajaya-inspired slogans and an indirect hint to the LSSP not to tread where angels would fear to go.

It would be foolish to read too much into all this, but certain observers are tempted to think that these are signals of an impending storm within the United Front.

Is this a prelude to a major infighting squabble about the ratio of seats as between the three UF partners for the next general elections or does it portend a more serious in the much-vaunted unity of the United Front?

INTERNATIONAL-AFFAIRS

BY ARIEL

✻ CYPRUS
✻ SIKKIM

THE TRAGEDY OF CYPRUS

is symptomatic of the increasing disrespect for international law and order. President Makarios had for nearly 14 years maintained an uneasy peace in the independent sovereign Republic whose integrity and Constitution had been jointly guaranteed by Britain, Greece and Turkey. But right through this period, the rabid sections of the Greek Cypriots had wanted enosis with Greece whilst the Turkish Cypriot minority had wanted Turkey to extend direct protection to save them from Greek fanaticism.

Makarios had endeavoured to sustain the 1960 *status quo* but he was finding it more and more difficult to do so. He had not been able to solve the economic problems facing the people and he did not permit a democratic opposition to function in the island. He was an autocrat to his finger tips and he had a way of winning enormous and overwhelming majorities in every election. His loudly proclaimed adherence to non-alignment won him many friends in the Third World and the Socialist Bloc, but with the passing of every year his image on the domestic front had begun to tarnish.

For some months Makarios had been complaining that the Greek Junta was aiding and abetting enosis fanatics in Cyprus to prepare for a coup, but before Makarios could alert his friends in the non-aligned world the Greek National Guard took power and Makarios was able to escape only by the sheerest chance and by the grace of the British Navy. The Junta in Athens had desperately wanted a foreign adventure in order to bolster its domestic image and the only one within its reach was enosis with Cyprus. Greece had counted upon tacit US support (even Kissinger did not like Makarios' non-alignment) for its *fait accompli*, but the Junta did not anticipate that Turkey would do what it did, because Athens felt that the Turks

would not go counter to NATO and US wishes.

But the Turks did, and they mounted an invasion and it was only after they had occupied a sizable chunk of territory that the UN Security Council's call for a ceasefire was heeded. In the meantime the Junta abdicated power, and a civilian government under Karamanlis took power. This was no doubt the US State Department's last-ditch attempt to save Greece for NATO and the West. Though the new Karamanlis government recognised Makarios as the President of Greece, just as Britain had done, US and Turkey were inclined to create a new Cyprus with some kind of federal units to ensure autonomy for the Turkish minority.

When the conference in Geneva began to stall because Greece and the interim Cypriot government would not accept the Turkish demand with alacrity, the Turks walked out and started their second military offensive and within a matter of days occupied a third of Cyprus in the north and east which Turkey felt should be the Turkish part of the island. Now after this *second fait accompli*, Turkey was once again willing to talk business.

IN THE MEANTIME Greece was disappointed by the attitude of the US and NATO powers in permitting a fellow NATO member to treat Greece so shabbily—especially after the Junta had been replaced by a civilian government which was prepared to make amends for what the Junta had done. So, on August 14, almost one month after the Cyprus coup, Greece, withdrew its armed forces from the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and the communique which announced the Greek decision stated:

"As a result of the NATO's incapacity to prevent Turkey from provoking a conflict between two allies, the Greek Prime Minister Mr. Constantine Karamanlis, has ordered the Greek forces to withdraw from the NATO alliance. Greece will remain only as a member of the Alliance's political section."

Greek Foreign Minister, Mr. George Mavros said: "The NATO does not exist any longer, because it was not in a position to prevent

a conflict between two of its members. The Greek action was similar to that taken by the late President Charles de Gaulle's French Government

This action by the Greek government had stunned the western world, but there was nothing anyone of them could do about it. NATO could not go to war against Turkey. The Washington correspondent of the Madras *Hindu* summed up the dilemma which confronted the US and other NATO powers thus:

"...The Greek decision to pull its forces out of NATO not only weakens the southern flank of the Alliance dominated by the U. S. but the U. S. Sixth Fleet which depends a great deal on U. S. bases in Greece and which the U. S. regards as a major military aid in containing crises in the more important West Asian region. The latest flare-up over Cyprus has also engendered a uniform loss of U. S. influence in the three capitals involved—Athens, Ankara and Nicosia. All of them now feel that the U. S. is to blame for the genesis and growth of the crisis, first by doing too little too late and then by doing the wrong thing at the wrong time.

"By its overt support to the Greek military junta which ruled for the last seven years, the U. S. had alienated the democratic elements in Greece. By turning a blind eye to the junta inspired coup in Cyprus last month it incurred the wrath of both the Greek Cypriot Government in Nicosia and the Turkish Government. But when things sorted themselves out, and representative governments were restored in Athens and Nicosia, the U. S. laid itself open to charges of tilting the other way, this time to wards Turkey, first by tolerating the latter's attempts to expand its beachhead in Cyprus, even while a ceasefire was supposed to be in force, and then later by subscribing to Ankara's demand for a fuller degree of autonomy for the Turkish community in Cyprus.

"And now at the eleventh hour U. S. policy has taken another turn with Washington deploring Ankara's use of military force to bring about a Turkish style enosis—this will obviously lead to anti-American sentiment this time in Turkey. Diplomatic observers are

Surprised that the U. S. would engage in such a series of inept manoeuvres—one American commentator has observed that this is certainly not Kissinger's finest hour."

"For the moment the U. S. is hoping that Greece is not serious about quitting NATO. It is also relying on its threat of arms aid suspension to both Greece and Turkey to dissuade the two from going to war with each other—but it is realised that such threats have not worked in other contexts, especially when emotions are running high. Meanwhile what is really preventing a war between Greece and Turkey seems to be the former's grim realisation that it stands little chance against a Turkey which is militarily three times stronger. But it is asked, can the new democratic government bear this humiliation with out weakening itself at home?"

This action by Greece opened the door for the Soviet Union to step into the scene. When the Greek Junta had promoted the coup, the USSR did not mind Turkey entering upon a limited intervention to check the Greek Colonels. But when Turkey over-stepped its mark and wanted a permanent foothold in Cyprus, the Soviet Union tilted heavily the other way and insisted that the *status quo* must be restored. With Turkey and Greece permanently quartered in Cyprus, it would become a NATO base, and what the Soviet Union wanted was a non-aligned Cyprus which would be friendly to it.

THE SOVIET UNION, therefore, on August 22 called for an international conference on Cyprus under UN auspices in which it proposed that Cyprus, Greece, Turkey and all member states of the UN Security Council should take part. The Soviet statement stated that Security Council members could "jointly or in parallel provide appropriate guarantees for the independence, sovereignty and the territorial integrity of Cyprus." Greece was the first to accept this proposal and Turkey followed suit after a little hesitation and delay. The UN Secretary General Waldheim, who also supported the Soviet proposal, had gone to Nicosia for talks.

The Economist, 17/8, had some acidic comments to make under the

title *Smash and Grab*. "The Turks have had their way in Cyprus. They do not know the full consequences, but neither have they much reason yet to fear them. For everyone else concerned there is only failure to report. President Ford has had his first rug pulled from under him, and it makes it no better than the other people standing on it have fallen even harder...."

After reviewing the events from the July 15 coup which had overthrown Makarios, *The Economist* had some interesting comments on the episode: "...The wholly desirable by-product of that sequence of events was the return of Greece to civilian government. It had been model sort of diplomacy that picks up the bits of some body else's broken plate. But it needed to be rounded off with a new constitutional arrangement for Cyprus better than a carving-knife job, and that is where things went wrong. Somebody thought that, the Turks would be more reasonable, more willing, to go on spinning words, more Anglo-American than they turned out to be. The experience may not encourage President Ford, and Mr. Kissinger, to delegate such negotiation to another country's foreign minister again. But the chief lesson of this week's events is that when a country thinks its army can pull a quick smash-and-grab it is liable to leave the diplomats, and their fine adjustments, standing on the sidelines....."

The final comments made by *The Economist* merit attention: "...The advantage that modern technology gives to an army with the local superiority of power—with the bigger tank force, with air cover, with wheels to cover the miles—means that it can finish the business before the lumbering machinery of international dissuasion even starts to go into action. That gives the generals who command such power great influence with politicians who can see the advantage to themselves of the accomplished fact. The existence of unclear weapons may have made big wars more unlikely. But there is plenty of scope in today's world for the quick, small war; and there are plenty of places where politicians in a hurry and generals with a gleam in their eyes will want to use the technique. It is the era

of the smash-and-grab raid, and people who do not want to be grabbed will have to take their precautions."

This is a sad commentary on the state of the world.

A Soviet APN commentator, Dmitry Ardamatsky, sees in this situation a hopeful and positive role for Soviet diplomacy. This is what he said:

"Indeed, this is a situation when a realistic solution to the Cyprus crisis can be achieved only by a representative forum of states mirroring the political image of the modern world. The development of events made it increasingly clear that the Cyprus crisis, if it should deepen, was fraught not only with losing Cyprus its sovereignty and independence and turning it into a NATO stronghold, but also with dangerously aggravating the situation throughout the Eastern Mediterranean. Finally, it was running counter to the process of easing international tension and for that reason concerns the vital interests of all peoples. It has become quite obvious that the need now is for far more resolute and really constructive measures to normalise the situation in Cyprus and around it. The question is ripe, says the Soviet Union, for convening, with this aim in view, an international conference within the framework of the United Nations with the participation of Cyprus, Greece, Turkey and all member-countries of the Security Council. The Soviet Union also considers it possible to draw other countries into participation in the conference, specifically from among the non-aligned countries...."

"Is is just at such a representative conference that it will be possible to work out, jointly and with the immediate participation of representatives from the Republic of Cyprus, decisions that would effectively ensure the existence of Cyprus as an independent, sovereign and territorially integral state and would accord with the interests of the Greek and Turkish Cypriots. The aim of the Soviet Government's proposal in calling such a conference is obvious—to break the closed circle of the states belonging to the military—political grouping, within which and only in the inter-

ests of which they are trying to settle the Cyprus crisis, to take up the examination of the Cyprus problem at a representative forum of states which would offer effective guarantees for the independence and integrity of Cyprus....

"The proposals contained in the Soviet Government's statement are directed towards liquidating the dangerous seat of military tension in the East Mediterranean area. The events on Cyprus are demanding responsible and positive action by all states that treasure the interests of peace and security. The Soviet Union, for its part, as the new statement of its government says, will further vigorously act in this direction...."

THE UNITED STATES however is certainly not happy about the initiative on Cyprus passing into the hands of Moscow. A PTC Reuter report from Washington dated August 26 set out the latest US attitude to the international conference on Cyprus. Britain's attitude is still not fully known, nor that of the other members of the UN Security Council, France and China. Such a conference will undoubtedly denigrate the importance of NATO still further and the US and its allies will naturally view everything from this angle just as much as the Soviet Union would like to do everything possible to weaken and divide NATO. The Washington report said:

"The United States today gave a qualified rebuff to the Soviet Union's call for an international conference on the Cyprus issue. saying the creation of yet another forum to solve the dispute would not be useful. State Department spokesman Robert Anderson said, however, the United States might view the Soviet proposal favourably if it proved acceptable to the main parties in the dispute—the Greek and Turkish representatives of Cyprus and the three guarantors of the island's independence, Britain, Greece and Turkey.

"Asked for the US view of the Soviet proposal Mr. Anderson said: Our preliminary assessment is that the creation of still another forum would not be useful. Nonetheless we are willing to consider any proposal for moving forward the negotiating process which would be acceptable to all parties. This

preliminary assessment could change but as if now this is our position.

"The United States apparently believes Turkey will continue to oppose the Soviet idea, which would involve Moscow in the Cyprus dispute for the first time.

The United States still supports the British initiative to bring the disputing parties together again. This effort appeared however to have collapsed because of Greece's refusal to negotiate while Turkish troops remain on Cyprus."

It is not merely the NATO countries which would like to safeguard NATO's position but China has also consistently supported a strong NATO as a deterrent to growing Soviet power. A recent UPI report from Washington set out the impressions of Senator Jackson who had been on a visit to China. "China favours a strong North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) as a deterrent to Soviet expansion and opposes withdrawal of American military forces from Europe according to Senator Henry M. Jackson (Democrat). In a special report about his recent visit to the Chinese People's Republic, released here, the Senator said the Chinese were concerned about, growing Soviet influence in South Asia and the Persian Gulf, particularly Kremlin pressure on Iran and Pakistan. The Chinese expressed special concern over what to them, seems a limited American understanding of the persistent threat to Pakistan's territorial integrity," Mr. Jackson said. The report, submitted to the Senate Armed Services Committee, also called for closer relations between Washington and Peking and removal of all remaining trade barriers.

CHINA has been consistent and unequivocal in its support for NATO and its total opposition to everything Soviet and to those whom China regards as Moscow's satellites and allies like India.

There had been some indications that Sino-Indian relations might become normalised sometime ago, but these have faded after the latest developments in Sikkim. In June/July, this year, there was a crisis in Sikkim and the outcome was that the newly revived and

resuscitated Sikkim Congress had brought the tiny Himalayan kingdom firmly into the orbit of India. This has understandably exasperated China. Several times in July and August, Peking had come out with sharp denunciations of Indian "expansionist ambitions." From Peking's point of view Indian "intervention" in Sikkim is just another Indian manoeuvre in the strategically sensitive Himalayan regions, the backdoor to China, to strengthen the Grand Design which New Delhi is alleged to be collaborating with Moscow to encircle China. China is also alarmed by the infiltration of armed Khampa exiles into Tibet from bases in Nepal, but it was about Sikkim that Peking has recently waxed indignant. The *People's Daily* of July 3 had under the heading "Intolerable Bullying" stated that "India had intensified its suppression of Sikkim's demand for national independence, in an attempt to deprive the Chogyal of Sikkim of his powers and realise its ambition to fully control and annex Sikkim...." The article concluded with the warning that the 'Indian expansionists will have to pay for their rabid evil doings'. These comments were similar to China's comments on Indian intervention in Bangladesh—that India had picked up a rock that would drop on its feet."

Many find it difficult to understand China's attitude to India. It was considered significant that Peking gave tacit approval to the Indian nuclear test and did not support its usual ally Pakistan in its vituperations against India, and what was even more Peking did not give an enthusiastic reception to Islamabad's request for a "nuclear umbrella" — the customary blanket assurances of support side-stepped this issue. At the same time Chinese propaganda both in Peking and in other countries launched a sharp anti-Indian campaign in connection with the events in the small Himalayan Kingdom of Sikkim.

In April 1973, when in Sikkim's capital Gangtok disorders broke out and at the Sikkim's ruler, Chogyal, request India sent her troops, the Chinese reaction was very violent and uncompromisingly anti-Indian. In the mountainous kingdom, isolated from the

outer world, a new political system, coming up to take place of an absolute feudal monarchy, had arisen with great difficulty. Only recently His Highness Palden Thondup Namgyal—the twelfth consecrated Chogyal of Sikkim—was an absolute and sole master of Sikkim and of his subjects, who now are approximately 200,000. His power rested upon old customs and traditions as well as Buddhist monasteries and the lamas.

In roader scale the Chogyal and his court relied upon the Bhotia-Lepcha community of Tibetan origin which makes up only 25 per cent of the Kingdom is population, but from ancient times had occupied a privileged position. The leaders of this community have the best lands and occupy key positions in the state machinery.

AN OVERWHELMING MAJORITY of Sikkim's population today 75 per cent—are Nepalese. It is among them that were created political organizations which, being in opposition to the Chogyal, demanded to establish democratic institutions and to limit the ruler's power in the Kingdom. Under the growing pressure of the opposition the Chogyal and his court had tried to manoeuvre; they stipulated concessions which undermined their position in advance. For instance, having agreed to create an elective legislative body, the King's court insisted that every voter of the Bhotia-Lepcha community must have seven votes, and a Nepalese voter only one. By this way all privileges of the Bhotia-Lepcha could have been preserved.

The opposition, however, realising its growing force, rejected all the conditions put forward by the ruler and in April 1973 attempted to achieve its goals by direct mass actions. Under the 1950 Indo-Sikkim treaty India was responsible for Sikkim's defence, external relations, communications and foreign trade of Sikkim. Practically Sikkim is an Indian protectorate, that is why during the riots in Gangtok the Chogyal asked India for help. In response to his appeal Indian troops were brought into Gangtok and the situation was stabilized. After that, the Indian Government, the Chogyal and the leading political parties of Sikkim signed an agree-

ment on democratisation of public life and political structure of the Sikkim Kingdom.

In accordance with the agreement the one person-one vote elections to the Sikkim State Council took place early in 1974. The opposition National Congress of Sikkim won 31 places out of 32. Leaning upon the overwhelming majority the party made the legislative body adopt the draft constitution which considerably limited the power of the ruler and the influence of other feudal institutions. The executive power was given to the Council of Ministers and the Indian administrator, and legislative power was vested in the Natioanal Assembly.

Objectively India rendered substantial assistance to the forces considered progressive and democratic in Sikkim, and contributed to the liberation of the mountainous kingdom from its medieval legacies. Nevertheless Peking criticised India using strong idiom, blaming her for the attempt to annex Sikkim. Being worried about Sikkim's independence, the Chinese practically took side of feudal elements and defenders of the already outdated regime. It is significant that this was supported by sections of the British press.

HOW FAR China will carry this campaign against India is not clear. Will China make Sikkim one of its issues against India in the forthcoming UN General Assembly session?

In the meantime, news reports indicate that China was anxious to normalise relations with Bangladesh and India. An agency report from Dacca dated August 25 had stated: China has indicated a keen desire to normalise its relations with India and Bangladesh. At the same time, it wants Pakistan and Bangladesh to continue to strive for normal relations. The day is not far when china will have good relations with all the countries of the sub-continent, the Chinese Vice-Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Mr. Ho Yan is reported to have told the Bangladesh Commerce Minister, Mr. Khondkar Mushtaque Ahmed.

"The meeting between the two took place last month in a West Asian capital. It was reliably learnt here to-day. It was the first

major contact between the two countries since the birth of Bangladesh. Informed circles naturally give considerable importance to this development. A noteworthy development since the meeting has been that after a barrage of propoganda through the Pakistani and Bangladesh mass media that preceded and trailed Mr. Bhutto's abortive Dacca visit, Pakistan has got round to offering substantial aid to help the Bangladesh Government meet the flood and epidemic crisis. The aid is considered substantial since the economic stuation of Pakistan is none too good.

"At the meeting, it was agreed that the two Governments were moving 'in the right direction towards normalising their relations.' Mr. Ho Yan was reported to have accepted that Bangladesh was striving to promote good relations with other countries in the sub-continent by refusing tension and working for peace in the region.

"The Chinese leader was reported to have cautioned Mr. Ahmed against the imperialist forces' active in the sub-continent and trying to 'divide and rule,' a strategy that was being employed in the developing world all over Asia, Africa and Latin America. Hence, he stressed that all outstanding problems between the countries in the sub-continent should be solved peacefully through mutual consultations without outside interference."

Where will all this lead to? Will there be a relaxation in the persistent geopolitical attacks by Peking against New Delhi? Or will the cold war intensify?

Audiovisual Gravestones

Donald Wells of Pampano Beach (Florida, U.S.A.) has invented and hopes to market a talking tombstone. It will also show movies of the dead. According to the "International Herald Tribune," Wells is negotiating with companies in Jackson (Michigan) and Pompano Beach for manufacturing his "audiovisual" gravestone. "People will buy it," he declared "because they want to relate to people who have passed on."

CHRONICLE

August 11—August 16

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

SUNDAY, AUGUST 11: According to the *Sunday Times*, vice squad men are hot on the trail of a gang operating a call-girl racket in Colombo and the suburbs: with the influx of foreigners into the country the call-girl racket was yielding big dividends: police sources have told the *Times* that even school girls are being drawn into the racket. The Leader of the Lanka Sama Samaja Party, Dr. N. M. Perera, will inaugurate the LSSP Youth Rally at the Sugathadasa Stadium today. According to the *Sunday Observer* about five to six lakhs of candidates are likely to sit both the GCE (OL) Examination and the new NCGE Examination which may be held simultaneously at the end of next year. According to the *Sunday Observer*, the President of Royal College of Physicians, London, Prof. Sir Cyril Clarke, is due in Sri Lanka shortly on a ten day visit during which he will discuss post graduate medical education with the Council of the Ceylon College of Physicians. According to the *Sunday Times* the Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike has told the massive UF rally held yesterday at Polgahawela, that the UF Government brought in legislation to limit the ownership of land not to wreak vengeance on anyone but to serve as an impetus to the greater production of foodstuffs. According to the *Sunday Observer*, for the first time from next Maha cultivation season it will be the farmer who will decide on the acreage under cultivation and give production targets: according to statistics collected by the Agricultural Extension Officers, the farmers have indicated that they will bring 1,400,000 acres under paddy during the 1974-75 Maha an increase of 10,000 acres over the previous season. Next month Washington is due to see yet another trial dealing with Watergate and related scandals: this case will be the most important if only because of the once powerful figures involved: on September 9, six former Nixon and re-election campaign aides go on trial on charges connected with the Watergate cover-up.

MONDAY, AUGUST 12: The Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, addressing the 11th United Front rally at Polgahawela said that the land reform policies of the Government were on the same lines as those envisaged by the late Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike in 1956: according to the *Daily News* and the *Daily Mirror* unprecedented crowds turned up at the rally. By a gazette notice issued on Friday night a Delimitation Commission had been set up by the President, Mr. William Gopallawa: the members of the Commissioner are Messrs K. M. N. Tittawella (Chairman), M. Sivanathan and S. H. M. Z. Farouque: Mr. E. F. Dias Abeyasinghe will be Secretary to the Commission. According to the *Daily News*, the Maldivian Prime Minister, Mr. Ahmed Zaki has invited the Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike to visit his country

as soon as possible: the Maldivian Premier has extended the invitation to the Sri Lanka's Premier just before his departure on Friday. The Minister of Posts and Telecommunications, Mr. Chelliah Kumarasuriar, paid a visit to the Jaffna Campus of the University of Sri Lanka on Saturday. Dr. N. M. Perera, Minister of Finance and the President of the Lanka Sama Samaja Party in his address to the 12th Conference of the Federation of Sama Samaja Party Youth Leagues said Sama Samajists are hard realists and the killing of a few people does not change capitalism: commenting on the April 1971 insurgency Dr. Perera said that they came very near to the repetition of history in other countries. Customs at the Bandaranaike International Airport detected a passenger attempting to take out Rs. 63,000 worth of foreign currency notes concealed in three packets of tea. Mr. Pieter Keunenes, Minister of Housing and Construction, left for Moscow yesterday. A philanthropist from Kayts Mr. Pedropillai Phillips has offered Rs. 100,000 to the University of Sri Lanka to grant five scholarships to outstanding GCE A Level students who enter the university. According to the *Daily Mirror*, the Ceylon Transport Board has ordered 2,000 ticket printing machines from France. President Gerald Ford of USA on his first full day in office on Saturday asked members of the Cabinet to remain at their posts. Parts of Assam in north eastern India are in the grip of near famine conditions due to repeated floods over the past few weeks.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 13: According to the *Daily News*, the Prime Minister has summoned some of the key Ministers involved in development for a meeting today to discuss the outcome of Justice Minister Felix Dias Bandaranaike's special economic mission to two oil-rich states: Mr. Bandaranaike led this economic mission to Iran and Kuwait as a special representative of the Prime Minister. According to the *Daily Mirror* Interpol has cabled the Narcotics Bureau in Colombo that a well-known ring of Mafia dope smugglers plan to use Colombo as their main base of operations in the East-West smuggling racket. According to the *Daily Mirror*, arrangements are now being made to hold the conference of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party Youth Leagues before the end of the year. According to the *Daily News*, the world fuel crisis will adversely affect Sri Lanka's tourism earnings: the earnings are expected to drop by Rs. 7 million this year: for the same reason there will be a shortfall of 28,000 tourists arrivals. According to the *Daily News*, the Minister of Finance, Dr. N. M. Perera, will today inaugurate the Sri Lanka Inland Revenue Service Minute which was recently approved by the Cabinet. According to the *Daily Mirror* over 300,000 six-year olds will seek admission to grade one classes next year: parents have been requested by the Department of Education to send in their applications before August 31. According to the *Daily Mirror* under the Indo-Sri Lanka Economic Co-operation Programme four experts arrived yesterday at Katunayake to assist Sri Lanka to commence a sheep, cattle and buffalo project in the coconut growing areas. The Government of India has gifted a large number of sheep, cattle and buffaloes selected from the best stock in India for this project in addition to the equipment and other requirements for the National Livestock Board to establish these projects. The house where Mrs. Pat Nixon, wife of the former

President of USA lived as a child was set on fire deliberately on Sunday. Massive floods in Northern India and Bangladesh were estimated to have taken a toll of at least 2,500 lives and aid and rescue teams were reported facing formidable odds in getting through to stricken areas. Portugal will ask the United Nations to recognise immediately Guinea-Bissau and admit to the world organisation.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 14: The Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, will leave on an official visit to the Maldavian Republic on August 22: she will return on August 25: after her return she will visit Pakistan, West Germany, Rumania and Yugoslavia where she will meet heads of state with whom she will discuss international political issues and have bilateral talks on economic matters of mutual concern. According to the *Daily News*, a major reshuffle of the clerical and similar grades of the Government service—the combined service—effective from January 1 next year is now being drawn up by the Ministry of Public Administration, Local Government and Home Affairs. According to the *Daily Mirror*, the Department of Inland Revenue proposes to publicise in villages and towns the names of all persons in that area who pay income tax, business turn over tax etc; so that the people could spot taxable persons who were evading payment of taxes and inform the Department: this is the one of the steps the Department will take to rope into the tax net several thousands of persons who, the Department believes, are evading payment of taxes, the Minister of Finance Dr. N. M. Perera disclosed this yesterday when he addressed a press conference to explain the salient features of the restructuring on the Department of Inland Revenue based in Sri Lanka Inland Revenue Service Minute which was recently accepted by the Cabinet. Exit permits will hereafter be issued within twenty-four hours: Mr. Lakshaman Jayakody, Deputy Minister of Defence and Foreign Affairs, disclosed this at yesterday's Press Briefing. Up to the end of July 177,140 persons have been repatriated under the Sirima-Shastri Pact while 72,653 persons were granted Sri Lanka citizenship. According to the *Daily News*, over four million identity cards have already been despatched. According to the *Daily Mirror*, bicycle production in Sri Lanka will be doubled next year: the Ministry of Industries will increase the exchange allocations in respect of the import of raw materials necessary for the manufacture of bicycles. President Ford of the United States promised a strong U.S. defence, continued detente and friendship overseas, a tough battle against inflation at home and no more Watergates. Twenty-four Arab and Islamic States signed a charter in Jeddah fixing their contributions to a projected Islamic Bank with a capital equivalent to 375 million sterling.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 15: According to the *Daily News* a plan on educational reforms by the Ministry of Education states that while employment among educated youth remains a most serious national problem, statistics indicate that this problem is bound to worsen each year until such time as the educational reforms begun in 1972 take full effect. The Foreign Office has commenced preparations for the forthcoming summit of non-aligned nations due to be held in 1976 at the Bandaranaike Memorial International Conference Hall Colombo. According to the *Daily Mirror* a complete overhaul of the existing laws governing copyright, trademarks and patents so as to suit the country's new

status of an independent republic has been recommended by a five-member committee appointed to inquire into this question. The Narcotic Bureau has cabled Interpol to ensure that detectives covered all shipments of medicinal herbs such as "gotukola" and tea from Sri Lanka: this follows the Bureau's undercover men reporting that large shipments of opium smuggled into the island from India and locally grown Marijuana were being smuggled to Europe and Australia. An Indian Film Festival organised by the High Commission of India, with the co-operation of the Government of Sri Lanka, will commence at the Regal Cinema today. Mr. M.I.M. Nalim Hadjar the well-known gem merchant from Beruwela, yesterday donated to the Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, foreign exchange equivalent to Rs. one-and-a-half million to help the Government in its development activities: this donation is from the merchant's earnings from the export of gems. The war resumed in Cyprus yesterday after the break-down of the Geneva peace talks, with Turkish planes bombing and strafing Greek Cypriot areas and heavy ground fighting erupting in the northern half of the island. The American Congress yesterday challenged President Ford on defence and foreign aid-but moved quickly to defend him fight inflation. New Zealand has recognized the Republic of Guinea-Bissau.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 16: According to the *Daily News* a Soviet petroleum expert who has been closely associated with Sri Lanka's oil exploration is due here on Sunday to locate the site for the second test well: Professor A Kalinin, the Soviet expert will also study the results of the samples taken from the first test well in which distinct traces of crude oil were discovered. According to the *Daily Mirror*, the Ministry of Industries and Scientific Affairs has released a foreign exchange allocation of Rs. 50 million for the import of raw materials for various industries: these allocations are for industries like textiles, iron and steel, cosmetics, leather, plastic, glass, petroleum products, paper etc. According to the *Daily News*, it has been decided to increase cadre of Government doctors to enable co-operatives to recruit government doctors on secondment: according to the *Daily News*, the Government of Kuwait has announced the transfer of 21 million US dollars to Sri Lanka as the first instalment of economic assistance to this country: the transfer of this sum of money is the first result of the negotiations which an economic mission from Sri Lanka headed Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike, Minister of Public Administration, Local Government, Home Affairs and Justice, had with the Government of Kuwait. Mr. H. N. G. Fernando, Chairman of the Criminal Justice Commission, inquiring into the April insurgency yesterday morning informed the Deputy Director of Public Prosecutions that it was not necessary for him to make any more oral submissions in the case: that decision, the Chairman said was unanimous. According to the *Daily Mirror*, legislation will soon be introduced to set up a Tea Board which will be in overall charge of the production, manufacture and marketing of tea and publicity. According to the *Daily News*, the Joint Council of Trade Union Organisation (JCTUO) is seeking official recognition for the defence squads it has decided to set up in all workers establishments to combat corruption, sabotage and anti Government activities.

SHAMBA

Marking Time

by

ANATORY BUKOBA

August 10

A fine *baila*, followed by another *baila* preceded this, and I stopped on the road to listen to it before entering the *Shamba*. The music comes from the church. There was a very important person there today, and other important people, and people from abroad. I am glad these last were here. They saw Ceylon at her best; the gaiety of the people, care-free, disciplined, and free.

People from abroad have told me before of the cheerfulness that they find here. We may not have a monopoly of cheerful people, but we have received a good name in this matter. I learnt something of the Ceylon charm this time away; it is in the smile, I think; it has taken me all my life to learn this. The *Cursillo* movement has written somewhere something about not being afraid to return a person's smile; that is a Spanish movement.

When I was away this time, I once missed the last bus. Had I been prepared to sleep in what I thought were insecure places, open to thieves, I would have had no difficulty. So I hung around a round-about and just waited for something to turn up. It did; it was a man who told me I could sleep in a room he had rented from the post office, and I had a jolly good night's rest. Another time, there was no last bus. There was one at midnight, a four hour wait. So I went off to where I felt sure I would be allowed to sleep. I was up at 4.30 a. m., and I was lucky to catch a bus soon after dawn, and then a connecting bus, and I got here only a few minutes late for a function, for the beginning of it.

There was a little rain this evening, or rather tonight, but it made no difference to the house, which leaks. Twice we were driven in at another function going on, an open-air one. The procession took place in a drizzle, but no one got wet. There is another *baila* as I write this. This holiday atmosphere will last two days more.

One day this week I just made it to a jungle place before night fell. In the last stage of the journey there was a difficult river to cross. Although there had been no rain, the rain upcountry had flooded the low-country land around the river at this place badly. Encumbered as I was, I could not swim the river. A tree had fallen across it. It did not reach the other side. The gap had been bridged with the trunk of another tree. The middle of the river was the tricky part; a slender branch slightly arched, and much higher than what was at either end of it, to step along this was for me like trying to step across a chasm in the Alps, as one of John Master's books relates; I think that is the author's name. You either funk the obstacle or you did not. I was sure it could not be done. My two companions were quite sure it could, that they could hold me without my falling off, or them, for they had nothing whatever to hold on to. It was a balancing trick over a tricky drop into tricky water, which was moving swiftly. Anyway, I crossed the river twice safely by this way. Once there, there was a cadjan house attractively built, small, and rather cluttered up. Every body slept on the rock, and so did I. There were several little cooking fires on that rock, each fire place cooking a meal for two or three.

The outer circle of wood-apple trees are all without wood-apple, and only those in the centre of the circle still have the fruit, so it looks as if the outer circle of trees have been picked, and us robbed, unless my colleague got the better of the thieves as I would like to call them.

I have just woken up from a deep sleep to find that I had written rest house keeper for whatever word I had intended to use for thieves so tired was I. I am sure rest-house keepers were never thieves, so what I wrote before I fell asleep was a measure of my tiredness, I have no idea how long I have been asleep, but all the *bailas* and the rest of the music stopped.

It was my good fortune today to help a lad down some steps. He had had a foot shot off by a trip-gun set to shoot wild pig, and only a few months ago. Not long after, he said, a boy had been killed by the same sort of trap-gun going off; only a few months before all this a person I know well had been wounded in the same way. I am really too tired to go on

writing, and I find I am writing nonsense.

The thought has come to me the morning after I wrote this, that the reader must be mystified as to what sort of place it was, and what sort of people, where men camped round small fires on a rock. It is part of the government food drive; land allotted, but cleared on the initiative of allottees, the assistance to come later, the rock was the site of an old temple, and the cadjan construction a *pansala*; the men were the allottees, their relations, all friends. August 11.

The day being what it is, has been one for visiting friends. On my return to the village from my second outing, I walked slap into a neighbour selling wood-apple to the *mudalali* of a new vegetable *kadday* that has come up. I had thought that this was a spent trade, in that all the wood-apple that was for sale had had their trees despoiled. So I was pleasantly surprised in one way and both delighted and annoyed in another that I had caught a thief red-handed as it were. However, I could not be sure whose wood-apple it really was, so I had a closer look at the trees when I got home, and I found that my descriptions of the situation yesterday was too facile. You could not, I found, just divide up the trees into outer circles and inner circle. There was a tree with still a lot of wood apple in what I described as the outer-circle, and the trees in the inner circle were almost denuded of their wood-apple. It had been profitable morning as I had learnt much.

This is the vigil for our culminating day of the week of festivities, as it were, tomorrow. It is also an important day in its own right, the whole village turned out, and some people from far afield, too, besides the regulars who are on their way to another place, and for whose benefit, year after year, we have been having a feast. That day is tomorrow.

There is a non-stop *baila* going on across the river, all voices and drums, a steady rhythm; all made, it sounds from here our people most certainly know their songs, and the verses seem interminable, like epics, or shortened versions of them.

The high prices this village has charged travellers has had its repercussions at last. Most of the pil-

grims bring their own food now, so I learnt yesterday, and so there is very little trade for the *kadday* that go up for the feast. As far as I could see, most people who patronize them are local people, who are inured to paying these high prices.

My colleague repaired the roof of the house today with the *cadjans* that were already there. We bought some rope for the task, coir rope. The job is not yet done because of failing light.

As for the work of the *Shamba*, and the rebuilding of the house that will have to be done, I hope to have a companion when I am back here next, a local lad. That will give me the necessary incentive to work.

August 12

Last night, I slept right after dinner, and twice when I awoke I could not rouse myself to get up. It was only on the third occasion that I succeeded. Then I wrote my notes for the day, and when this and the other tasks were done, and I had got into bed, as the expression goes, it rained. The family evacuated their room, and I turned back my mat. It was the finger of God, I think, working through me, and through a friend who had visited us only that day, that had stirred my colleague to repair our roof that evening. He had worked at it until the failing light ruled farther word out for the day, not that before this I have not finished roofing by light. In England on summer we had once finished bringing in the hay and stacking it in the barn by the light from my motor-cycle headlight. This inspired work from my colleague that evening had certainly saved us from a drenching that night. As the reader has been told, the ridge of our roof has been open to the skies for weeks when the rain stopped, the family were able to move back into their room, and I to open up my mat, and we went off to sleep. I woke up in the morning feeling too tired to get up.

For once I was caught on the wrong side of the river when the service at the church was about to begin, except on those few occasions when I have had to miss the service altogether. And to have gone round by the new bridge would have made me very late indeed, I decided to ford the river by the shortest, popular way, for the first time since I came here. The rock were slippery, the current strong. A good Samaritan

turned up at the right time to help me over a difficult stretch of the crossing when I was more than half way over; the rocks were particularly slippery there. The water lapped my shorts in a deep section of the first half of the crossing. I was in my Sunday best, for the region, my clean shorts and shirt. Right in the middle, the current was going so fast in what looked to be the obvious way over. I felt dizzy, and I had to make a small detour upstream to cross by a more shallow way. Anyhow I got over safely, and not more than a few minutes late the service if that.

There was such a cloud-burst today twenty three miles away. I feared for the family and the house, as is usual with these deluges, the storm did not last long, and as I noticed later there would have been more than enough daylight left for the family to rectify any damage the storm did, unless it was the house that had fallen down on them.

August 18,

Two o'clock or three, in the morning was the hour I arrived and I slept out rather than disturb the family. Cheerful looks greeted me when I came here, but there had been no work for the head of the family, I was told. The place is looking not bad at all, thanks to the very dry weather, which has thinned the vegetation out. It is a holiday today. My companion, the one who said he would join me in the work, is still not free of his engagements, and so I am going to attend to some other matters until he is. One of my neighbours has felled a tree on the border of this acre, a *colon* tree, for furniture, or rather, doors and windows for his house. He asked another neighbour of mine to do it. I just have to accept the *fait accompli*, but yet see that it does not happen again.

My new neighbour has asked me if he can clear this acre. I have told him to finish his own, and that then we shall see. I could either clear it myself and give it to him for cultivation, or give it to him to both clear and cultivate.

All the countryside close by looks cleared. It has been burnt as well, and I must say the effect is good.

My reading today was about the Hebrew Jeremiah lowered into a miry well as he was regarded as lowering the morale of the people. An Ethiopian and three others drew

him out, before he starved to death. They had approached the king, who had only a little while before allowed this other lot to have their way with Jeremiah and nearly do him to death. An allied reading speaks of Christ enduring the cross and despising shame for the sake of a greater good, a greater joy awaiting him. Yet another reading records Christ saying that he was awaiting impatiently, as it were, his sufferings. It was as if he wanted to get them over. Yet we know that when the time came, he could hardly bear the thought of what he was to undergo.

Someone remarked yesterday that I seemed to be able to write something about nothing I took it as a compliment. I hope that I shall soon be able to write something about something. Perhaps, after this particular *Shamba* and with the next one. I am just going off for a bath, which is a ritual in the countryside. Properly done it should take not less than an hour.

Reading A. G. Street's *Farmers Glory* have I. Nearly half way through am I, and what I have read has been about farming in his youth in England, and his experience of it in Canada. In England in those days, in the south, there was no lack of people on a farm; carters, milkers, shepherds, labourers, grooms, gardeners, and crowds of people in most of these categories. I can remember two old farm yards in the north of England, which had old houses or cottages for farm men which were no longer used as such for so many men no longer required. These farms were now being run with so many families less.

By contrast in Canada, as large or even larger acreages were being run with just one or two men. The owners, powerful and rich, lived in shanties, and worked all day and cooked their own food. They helped each other out at peak periods like harvesting and threshing corn and wheat. For half the year they were frozen up. One thing they seemed to have had were telephones.

Farm implements, as Street points out, are not used for a long period in any year. Binders, turners, ploughs and the various harrows, cultivators, ridgers, mowers, and stitichers, as the ridger is usually known, all have their time, and after they have been used, they are put away for the rest of the year. Farmers

cannot share them, for all farms use them at the same time.

Street's own father used to get up at 9 a.m., but he was a successful farmer; he made money. The various workmen knew their jobs, and they could not be rode roughshod over. They would rather leave than do something that was not wise, and they often did. A farm was like a real team pulling together.

Breaking horses was a job that had to be done from time to time. One young horse just would not be broken in. They had to give up, when up walked Street's father and ordered, or rather called, them back again. So back they went. This time the young horse just did not stand stock still, about he took a few steps backwards and sat on a nail which usually protruded from the kind of instrument he had to draw. So he was up and off in a flash together with the trained horse that was harnessed to him. They kept him moving until he was in a lather of sweat, and after that, they had no more trouble with him. Street's father took all the credit for what the men thought was only an accident, but that was a part of his luck. He had it, and even his mistakes were turned to good account.

This book I borrowed from a friend in Kalmunai and my luck in getting it, speaks volumes for a little loafing, when there is something to loaf about. The good times of farming have changed, and I have to read on to find out why.

LETTERS

* Delimitation

* Justice

Sir,

One of the resolutions passed at a recent meeting of the Government Service Union's branch in the Ministry of Plantation and Industries (*Mirror* 19.8.72) was to take over the *Davasa Group* of newspapers and utilise it for printing school text books. This Draconian, unsympathetic, inhuman suggestion, which stems from this Union may not even be considered by the Prime Minister in view of her many utterances made at rallies that her government is democratic.

Though there is rivalry between different trade unions surely there can be even a modicum of nostalgic feelings for their down-trodden brethren. The fundamental duty of a trade union is to look after the welfare of its members but not to dictate to the government to take undemocratic and revengeful action against other unions or citizens. Survival is man's first priority and we should not condemn fellowmen for pursuing it.

Have the members of the trade union referred to above devoid of human sympathy for the 800 employees of the *Davasa Group* of newspapers who have lost their jobs, their suffering wives and children. Look at this case, homo sapiens, from an altruistic point of view.

To ban the only independent newspaper is a flagrant violation of human rights. Gladstone the great statesman warned that "national injustice is the surest road to national down-fall." Let our "Democratic" government take a lesson from the Watergate scandal which was exposed blatantly by a free and unfettered press. That the UNP sealed a newspaper group may be true, but two wrongs do not make a right.

If the majority of the people are behind the UF government how come that it is afraid to allow the UNP to hold meetings and rallies, and lift the ban on the *Davasa Group* to publish news. If this paper publishes lies the remedy is in the hands of the government.

The editor of the *Times of Ceylon* in his Editorial (19.8.74) referred to what the Prime Minister purported to have said re Haj Naleem's "gift" of 1½ million rupees to her government "It is true that Sri Lanka is a free, sovereign and independent country....." How about the pad-locked lips of the UNP supporters and the sealing of the only independent news paper which fearlessly uncovered the truth like the U. S. A. press. This attitude of the government will reflect badly at the next elections. So let saner counsel prevail.

Fiat Justicia

Kurunegala.
20.8.74

Sir,

Came Independence. The then ruling political party, apparently flushed with power, and in its haste to ensure that its supremacy shall endure as long as he Sun and the Moon, instead of negotiating and arriving at a settlement to the mutual satisfaction of both sides as Premier Sirimavo Bandaranaike has now done, and throwing discretion to the winds, enacted a law rendering the voters of Indian origin in the hill country stateless and disenfranchising them although under the Constitution they have had the right to vote at general elections during the last quarter century.

The repercussions on the preponderant majority of the indigenous population resident outside the hill country in Sri Lanka has been grievous.

Whereas in the hill country, by faulty delimitation of electorates or by violating the Constitution, five to ten thousand voters became entitled to an elected representative, the number of voters re-required to entitle those outside the hill country to a representative in Parliament has been five to ten times that number which again becomes a violation of the Constitution.

It is human to err but to make amends is divine.

Which political party will guarantee reparation to the voters resident outside the hill country, in particular the peasantry?

They too are human and have undergone greater vicissitudes in the past than their counterparts in the hill country and are entitled to the benefits and amenities provided to the latter and which they have enjoyed by the blank cheque given to them during the last twenty seven years.

In 1955, I had occasion to visit Kannankudah—an island in the vast Batticaloa lagoon. Not only do the people there live in dire poverty but they also live under primitive conditions. Access to it is by being ferried across in a long canoe in which are huddled 30-50 persons like natives in darkest Africa negotiating their rivers.

Solar Pumps

Beneath the shadow the massive rock at Kirinde, redolent of Dutugemunu's childhood, a small colony of Malays have for 150 years, under primitive conditions, eked out a precarious existence where for 600 years earlier, the sambhur, the wild boar, the jackal and the bear roamed undisputed. These are only two of thousands of such instances along the coast and coastal hinterland and the dry zones.

"Let these forgotten peasantry hope in the Lord; for with the Lord there is mercy, and with Him is plentiful redemption. And he shall redeem them from all iniquities"—Psalm

Mt. Lavinia
15. 8. 74

R. W. W.



SUN IN THE SERVICE OF MAN

Solar pumps in arid areas

By A. G. Fullerton

TODAY, millions of villagers and herdsmen in the Sahel region of Africa live under the threat of drought-induced famines. But some day the blazing sun itself may power irrigation schemes in the lands stretching across Africa just below the Sahara.

Much research remains to be done to determine whether it is economically feasible to harness solar energy to this task. But experiments with solar pumps are underway in four countries: Mauritania, Senegal, Upper Volta and Niger. The solar pump converts the heat energy of the sun directly into mechanical energy to draw water from desert wells.

One such pump is being run by the Niger Office of Solar Energy—ONERSOL—at Bossey—Bangou, ten kilometres (six miles) across a dusty plain from the capital, Niamey.

Dr. Abdou Moumouni, director of CONERSOL and one, of the region's leading authorities on solar energy, is enthusiastic about the possibilities of such pumps for ex-

ploiting the Sahel's water resources. Eventually, he predicts, this could bring about a doubling of the average per capita income in the region. Isolated pumps in areas crossed by nomads could be used to water up to 1,000 head of cattle at a time, substantially reducing livestock losses during the long dry season in the Sahel. And solar pumps would seem to be an economical way of irrigating low lying land not too far from lakes or rivers.

But first, two problems have to be solved: how to improve the mechanical efficiency of the pump, and how to reduce the relatively high initial cost of the machinery. Basically, the solar pump consists of four main elements: (1) An assembly of flat radiation collectors oriented toward the sun, (2) A compression chamber and expansion engine, (3) A hydropump operated by the engine, and (4) A tank for storing the water and a distribution system.

The radiation collectors are flat, black metal trays covered with glass and backed by metal tubes. Water circulating in the tubes is heated by the sun's rays to between 70 and 80 degrees C. In turn, it is used to heat liquid gas which expands and builds up pressure operating the engine and driving the pump. The gas then passes through a condenser where it is cooled and decompressed by the water which has been pumped from the well, and the cycle is ready to begin again.

The capacity of solar pumps is measured by the amount of water they can pump per hour for each square metre of radiation collecting surface. The ONERSOL pump scores 1.40 cubic metres of water for each square metre of surface. The pump in Dakar (Senegal), run by the Institute of Meteorological Physics, has an efficiency factor of 1.70, probably because it is newer than the ONERSOL pump. In Upper Volta, the Ouagadougou pump, which uses ordinary commercial butane as its gas, rates 1.30. No one is sure whether this is due to more intense solar radiation in Mauritania or to possibly greater efficiency of a new collector system known as *canaletas solaires* or solar gutters.

The major obstacle to more widespread use of solar pumps at present is their high initial cost. Pumps and engines are manufactured in France and must be imported into Africa. And there is as yet no mass production. When this comes about, a substantial reduction in costs can be anticipated, and ONERSOL is devoting part of its research to standardization a simplification of the parts with a few to mass production.

Despite its relatively high initial cost, the solar pump is still less expensive than solar cells which convert sunlight directly into electrical energy. It is easier to maintain than solar furnaces or similar devices which use complex reflector systems to concentrate large amounts of radiation on a small surface. And, unlike solar furnaces which require almost cloudless skies to operate properly the, solar pump can take advantage of diffuse radiation even under rather hazy conditions.

NEXT WEEK

- The need for English
- Crisis in India
- South Asia atom free zone

Swallows live-rats to cure Asthma

Taipei, July 8.

A 69-year-old man in Southern Taiwan has swallowed six newly born live rats to cure his asthma, press reports said to day.

Newspapers here said Mr. Chung Tsai-Yu of Taiwan Country first wrapped the rats in vegetable leaves and washed them down his throat with water.

"Now I can swallow six or seven live rats in a row without wrapping them up or drinking water," he was quoted as saying.

The reports said both Mr. Chung and his son enjoyed swallowing live rats as treatment for their asthma, but neither of them knew the origin of this unique remedy.

WHAT IS A SOCIALIST?

Socialism in a Parliamentary Democracy

BY PAUL JOHNSON

The first and essential characteristic of a socialist is a belief in democracy. If a would-be socialist fails this test he will fail every other, and for a reason which is central to the whole meaning and purpose of socialism.

A socialist must reject the conservative or Burkeian view that man is fundamentally an irrational creature, whose management requires quasi-religious elements of tradition, prejudice and tribal wisdom which cannot emerge from the mere operation of the ballot box.

Equally, he must reject the mechanical view of human nature held by the Marxists, who maintain that changes in the economic structure of society will produce patterns of human behaviour which are wholly moral and absolutely rational.

THE FIRST VIEW repudiates reason as the prime dynamic of progress; the second divorces it from the way in which men and women actually behave. A socialist does not believe in original sin; neither does he believe that man is capable of an infinite series of improvements, that the collective self-interest is also, in the long run, the self-interest of individuals; and that the best judge of this self interest is masses of individuals acting collectively.

The purpose of socialism is to allow all to develop their potentialities, physical, intellectual and moral; and this purpose can only be achieved through the exercise of political free will. **To assert that a socialist is primarily a democrat may seem obvious, and incontrovertible.**

In fact, it is systematically challenged by many who call themselves socialists. On the one hand there are the myriad sects of the New Left and Far Left which have arisen from the ruins of traditional 19th-century theories, and deck themselves out with anarchism, the cult of violence, Trotskyism, eclectic fragments of Engels, Marx, Lenin and Mao, Ho and Che, Sorel and Marcuse, weird "insights" from modern psychological theory and counter-theory, from debased historicism and the debris of discredited religions.

They range from disillusioned CP bureaucrats to the racist fanatics of Black Power. But what

they all have in common is an arrogant disbelief in ordinary people as the agents of progress. All believe change must be imposed. Each has its unique key to the absolute. None allots a role to the public—except as docile, or if needs be conscript, followers of the elite. These sects cannot attain their objects except by violence or where, in developing countries, they give ephemeral expression to nationalist emotions. They aim to achieve power by conspiracy, and maintain it by despotism.

There is a second group of elitists, strongly entrenched in the hierarchies of the social democrat parties. They do not believe in democracy either, but they claim—and are accorded—intellectual respectability by their studied devotion to parliamentary forms.

THESE MEN do not trust the people; indeed they fear direct contact with the masses, from whom they are safely removed by birth, education, income or status. They see themselves as the appointed middlemen of the political process: elected, indeed, by the suffrage of the many, but endowed, by their superior intellects and experience, with the right to interpret the popular will as they see fit.

"I really think", one of them said to me recently, "that people expect us to take decisions for

them. After all, they are unsure, and we know."

Our age is one peculiarly suited to allow the social democrat elitist to flourish. The parliamentary system, created in Britain and copied, with variations, in most of Western Europe, provides the trappings of democracy while denying much of its substance.

Super-imposed on capitalist economies, it has many built-in devices to exclude those committed to radical change. Equalising the electoral swings, it donates power to 'moderates' of the centre, whose political ambitions are limited to adjusting the status quo. If they are 'socialists', it allows them to flaunt a spurious internationalism by pointing to their links with similar-minded elites in other countries.

And, the EEC, with its limitations of popular sovereignty, its net work of legal defences against radicalism, its canalisation of all change and decisions through committees of bureaucrats and parliamentarians, is the perfect forum in which the elites can consolidate and perpetuate their power. Indeed, it was designed by them for this very purpose.

And the illusion that it functions in the popular interest, and with popular approval, is skillfully fostered by the elites of the press and TV, who share with their parliamentary friends an unshakable conviction in their own judgement, a distrust of ordinary people, a vague belief in liberal freedom, a modest—very modest—desire to remove marginal injustices, and a comfortable acquiescence in the existing property system. We all know who those people are: They claim to be socialists and democrats; but they no more believe in the sovereignty of the masses than the wild determinists of the Far Left.

UNFORTUNATELY, there is a third and much larger group, whose socialist credentials are genuine, but whose effectiveness is undermined by their pessimism. They lack the arrogance of the elites of Left and Right, but they lack, too, a certain necessary pride and confidence in their cause. They rightly believe that socialism must mean major changes in the way society is organised, effort rewarded, and property owned.

Again rightly, they want to bring about such changes by popular consent. Where they lack faith is in doubting whether that consent can be secured. They do not trust themselves to win the argument. They fear the public can always be stampeded by the hulla-baloo-raisers of the property classes.

Thus, they regard radicalism is a formula for disaster at the polls. Such attitudes have made the Labour movement in this country impotent. They emasculate the programmes it prepares in opposition. They paralyse it in office, when its hands are actually on the lovers of power. They limit its role to keeping the seat warm for the inevitable conservative reaction.

Now if there is some justification for this pessimism—if, indeed, experience shows the public can be stampeded—where does the fault lie? The truth is, mass electorates are still under-educated, both in quantity and still more in quality. No one who does much door-to-door canvassing can have any doubt on this score, and it is strikingly reflected in our popular press and television. Here is the great failure of modern socialism, the key to all its failures.

For if, as I believe, the socialist solution is to pursue a gradual policy of enlightenment, seeking a point at which the collective instinct will approximate to the decisions of a just and reasonable individual, then education lies at the very heart of its method.

Education unleashes the potential energy of all; it also inculcates the need for self-imposed restraints and so makes possible fundamental change by consent. No tyrannical society has ever been able to relax its control of education, no laissez-faire society to make it freely and universally available.

The business of socialism is the education of peoples. The printing press, the school, the university, the library, the laboratory—these are the tools with which socialists clear the public mind of the irrational fears spread by the entrenched classes, and prepare it for socialist arguments on the distribution and use of property.

THERE IS NOTHING NEW about the formula. What should surprise us is that those entrusted with

advancing socialist aims pay so little attention to it. During the last government, education was given the lowest priority of all. No significant advance was made; no glaring anomaly or abuse or injustice eradicated. It is a sombre fact that, during the half-century in which Labour has formed one of the two major parties, won six elections and run four administrations, private and privileged education has survived and flourished in Britain. It is as deeply entrenched as ever.

Today, we run a three-tier system—educational slums for the workers, grammar schools for the middle class, public schools for the rich. The only change is that all three, in one way or another, are now subsidised by the taxpayer. The possessing classes have not relinquished their private key to better opportunities: they merely get all of us to pay for it. Nor is this an accident. It springs from the unwillingness of successive generations of Labour leaders to place education in the centre of their programme. If Labour faces the charge that it is not a socialist party, then its education policy—or lack of it—must stand at the head of the indictment.

A good rough test of a socialist intellectual is so ask him two questions: 'Do you send your children to fee-paying schools? Do you hold shares in a capitalist company? A socialist should be able to answer 'No' in both tests (I have yet to meet a Labour Marketeer, or Jenkinsite, who can survive either).

Is it priggish to subject people to such an examination of their political consciences? Certainly not. What modern socialist parties lack is precisely such a sense of definition, springing from clear moral distinctions between right and wrong. It would be unrealistic to expect all socialists to be sea-green incorruptibles. But it is the mark of a socialist, surely to seek to order his private affairs in strict accordance with his public principles, and no socialist should be deterred by charges of puritanism from insisting on the highest standards of probity.

The last point, it seems to me is of intense relevance today, when capitalist ethics and attitudes have penetrated deep into the socialist movements, in Britain no less

than western Europe. The last Labour government made uneasy and often desperate efforts to curry favour with the City and big business establishments and even to seek the help of their supposedly 'liberal' fringes—needless to say, to no avail. And, in the wreck of its fortunes, ex-ministers stumbled over each other to grab (often vainly) at lucrative directorships. Such a spectacle is all the more distasteful at a time when the huge and hideous injustice of the property system is daily flaunted before millions who own nothing, and who have not the remotest prospect even of buying their own house.

During the last two years, the real estate lottery has made nonsense of the comfortable belief that we could coast to socialism on the progressive tides of the mixed economy.

ON THE CONTRARY we are drifting ever deeper into inequality. Foreign Secretary Home, a millionaire whose wealth effortlessly grows with the surge of inflation, dares to accuse workers striking for little more than £ 20 a week of being 'greedy'. Who rebukes him? A Dorset peer stands to receive £ 27 million for a few hundred acres of development land. What does any one propose to do about it? Confronted with the evil society in which we live, destructive not only of the most elementary concepts of social justice, but of the very land we inhabit and the air we breathe, a socialist must reaffirm his fundamental belief that wealth is morally vested in the community as a whole—and seek to convert a moral right into a legal fact.

If education is the instrument by which socialists will ultimately win the democratic argument, they must never for one moment forget what the argument is about: the creation of a new civilisation, where all share the fruits of our natural birthright and human ingenuity.

Mixed economy men, capitalist-tanners, trades unionists without a thought beyond their next pay claim, middle-class liberals anxious to tidy up the ragged edges of the market system—all these may have a role to play in the Labour Movement. But the name of socialist is not for them.

IN THE U.S.S.R.

UNDERWATER OIL

BY E. SVIRIDOV

Sri Lanka will soon conclude contracts, possibly with a Canadian firm for off-shore or underwater oil resources in the North of the Island—on the East as well as the West. This article sets out the position on the coastline in the U.S.S.R. —Editor

Recent years have seen increasing utilization of the vast mineral resources of the continental shelf—the off-shore sea-bed covered by relatively shallow waters. Some 100 countries are now exploring it, mostly for oil and gas, while 40 states have already started or are about to start production drilling. In 1972 the shelf accounted for 18 per cent of all the oil produced in the world, and by the close of the century it is expected to supply half the world's oil needs.

The shelf also yields \$ 500,000,000 worth of solid minerals a year—though this is so far no more than two per cent of the world total.

PROGRESS in science and technology has made it possible to shift operations to ever greater depths. Exploratory drilling has increased in depth from 30 metres in 1954 to 500-550 metres at the present time, and production drilling from 21 metres in 1947 to 114 metres in 1972. It is predicted that experimental drilling by commercial operations will be possible in the 80's at a depth of 600-1,000 metres under water.

The 1958 Geneva Convention on the Continental Shelf, to which 50 states have acceded, provides the legal basis on which countries are entitled to develop sea-bottom resources. It secures the coastal states' sovereign rights to explore and develop the shelf, defines the principles for establishing limits of national jurisdiction, and regulates other questions pertaining to the utilization of the shelf area. The Convention has proved to be a reliable basis for promoting international co-operation in this sphere.

The Geneva Convention, unfortunately, does not give a clear-cut definition of the outer limits of the continental shelf. (The outer boundary of the shelf is set at a depth of 200 metres or beyond that as far as out it is technically possible to develop the sea-bottom resources.) However, as exploitation of mineral resources under deeper waters becomes technologically possible, the need arises for a more precise definition of the outer boundary of the shelf and an agreed international legal

regime for the use of the ocean floor beyond the continental shelf.

To deal with these and other related problems, the 22nd General Assembly established in 1967 an *ad hoc* committee originally composed of members of 35 states and later extended to 90. Besides in accordance with the decision of the 25th General Assembly, these questions will be examined at the 3rd U.N. Conference on the law of the sea.

The growing role of the shelf is underscored by the fact that it has now come to figure in the national legislation of more than 80 countries, or three-fourths of the maritime countries which are U.N. members. Moreover, the G.D.R. Constitution of 1968 contains a clause proclaiming the natural resources of the continental shelf public property.

Some 35 inter-state agreements have been concluded in an effort to secure the sovereign rights of states over the shelf and define the limits of national jurisdiction. The process began back in 1942 in Latin America's Gulf of Paria and after the war spread to Europe, Asia, Africa and North America.

THE SOVIET UNION, which has the longest coastline in the world, attaches much importance to the problem. It took an active part in the drafting of the Geneva Convention and was one of the first to ratify it. However, it considers that the term "the outer limit of the shelf" requires elucidation.

In August 1973, at the 6th (Geneva) session of the U.N. committee on preparations for the conference on the law of the sea, the Soviet delegation submitted its draft which envisages the right of a coastal state to establish its jurisdiction over an area limited by the 500-metre isobathe (line of equal depths), or, if it runs close to the shore, over an area 100 nautical miles in width. The Soviet proposals take due account of the interests of continental and coastal states, of the states which have the shelf and those which have not, as well as of the world community as a whole.

The Soviet Union has also adopted a number of relevant laws. The first of these was the Decree of the Supreme Soviet Presidium "On the Continental Shelf of the U.S.S.R." of February 6, 1968. It proclaims the shelf's natural resources to be the property of the state and outlines the procedure for carrying out work on the shelf. Under this decree, foreign nationals are allowed to conduct work on the shelf only after a relevant agreement has been signed between the U.S.S.R. and the country concerned or after a permit has been issued by a competent Soviet government body.

The decree was concretized in a number of regulations, such as "On the procedure for carrying out work on the continental shelf of the U.S.S.R. and the protection of its natural resources" issued by the Council of Ministers on July 18, 1969, and in the decision of the Supreme Soviet Presidium of August 13, 1969, on the enforcement of the above-mentioned decree.

UNDER SOCIALISM, rational planned utilization of marine mineral resources serves to speed up economic development and raise welfare standards. Our country has accumulated considerable experience in extracting minerals, mainly oil, from the shelf zone. The Caspian sea-bed deposits have been operated since 1925 and now account for 60 per cent of the oil produced by Azerbaijan. In recent years Soviet geologists have been also prospecting for ores and have started experimental dredging in the shallow waters of the Baltic and elsewhere.

The 24th CPSU Congress set new tasks in this field. Its Directives envisage that "prospecting and exploration shall be started in the littoral shelf zones of the seas and oceans to locate promising off-shore oil and gas deposits. The study of off-shore alluvial deposits of gold, tin and other ore minerals shall be extended." Geophysical exploration in the shelf zone is thus becoming one of the main lines of geological research.

This work is accompanied in the U.S.S.R. by a comprehensive series of measures to prevent pollution of the marine environment and secure the conservation and reproduction of the marine flora and fauna. For this purpose two specialized bodies have been set up—an inter-departmental scientific and technological council dealing with problems of environmental protection and rational utilization of natural resources, and an inter-departmental commission to supervise geophysical survey.

The boundaries of the Soviet shelf zone are described in the Decree "On the Continental Shelf of the U.S.S.R." However, before it was adopted the Soviet Union concluded agreements with Finland (1965 and 1967) which define the limits of each country's jurisdiction in the shelf zone and superjacent waters in the Gulf of Finland and the shelf zone in the northeastern Baltic. These documents provide a precedent for bilateral agreements between states of different socio-economic systems based on the principles of the 1958 Geneva Convention.

In 1969 the Soviet Union and Poland signed an agreement on the limitation of the shelf zones in the Gdansk Bay and the southeastern Baltic.

THE DECLARATION on the use of the Baltic shelf signed in Moscow on October 23, 1968, by the U.S.S.R., the G.D.R and Poland is expressive of the ideas of good-neighbourship, mutual trust and respect. Consistently pursuing a peaceable foreign policy and guided by the desire to remove any possible cause of friction in this region, the three countries were the first to adopt a principle governing the use of the Baltic continental shelf exclusively for peaceful purposes.

The declaration says, among other things, that prospecting, develop-

ment or any other rights to any part of the Baltic shall not be granted to non-Baltic countries, their nationals or firms—a stipulation which also serves to enhance the security of the area and eliminate the possibility of any undesirable complications. It provides for consultations between signatories and is open for accession by any Baltic country.

The Soviet Union's international co-operation in the uses of the shelf is not confined to these problems. Under appropriate agreements, Japan is allowed to engage in crab-fishing in some areas of the Soviet Far East, and plans are afoot for the joint tapping of the oil and gas deposits in the Sakhalin shelf. There is also the Soviet-American programme of investigations in the Bering Sea, which includes surveying for oil.

Especially close co-operation particularly in exploration, exists between the Soviet Union and other countries of the socialist community. Soviet specialists helped to compile the first geological map of Cuba and to carry out a seismic survey of her entire shelf, which was found to be promising as regards oil. By agreement with Poland, the Soviet research ship Vladimir Obruchev has surveyed her off-shore areas and established that they are rich in oil and gas.

Our country also supplies fraternal countries with the necessary equipment. In 1967 the Baku engineering workers built Bulgaria a steel platform to be used for seabed drilling near Varna.

The Council of Mutual Economic Assistance has established a co-ordinating centre for the study of the high seas at the U.S.S.R. Institute of Marine Geology and Geophysics in Riga. On February 23, 1972, heads of geological departments of Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, the G.D.R., Hungary, Poland and the U.S.S.R signed an agreement providing for the expansion of co-operation in this field. This marks another step in the realization of one of the aspects of the Comprehensive Programme of socialist economic integration adopted by the 25th CMEA session in 1971.

True to its internationalist policy, the Soviet Union co-operates with the developing countries, rendering them economic and technical assistance for exploring their continental shelf. India, whom our country helps in oil prospecting, might be cited as an example. In accordance with a Soviet-Guinean agreement recently signed in Conakry, a centre for joint research, chiefly in oceanography, is to be established there.

Co-operation in the utilization of the shelf between the Soviet Union and the different states concerned testify to the consistent implementation of the Peace Programme adopted at the last CPSU Congress, as well as to our country's desire to participate together with other interested states in the study of the World Ocean.

RECORDS

The "Guinness Book of World Records," which is published annually in the United States, is very popular with curious people. What is more, it prompts thousands of Americans to think up and establish original records. In May, 200 young Californians assembled in Los Angeles for a weeklong addball Olympics for the express purpose of boating 75 of the records listed in the annual. Eleven of them were successful. Allan Littman, for instance, consumed, or rather gobbled, a pound of grapes with seeds in 52 seconds, crushing the old record by 13 seconds. Kevin Farrell and Corey Fletcher each stood on one leg for seven and a half hours, 60 minutes longer than anyone had ever done before. Bruce Stewart and Robert Argust slapped each other for 31 hours and Scott Case managed to smoke 110 cigarettes simultaneously for 30 seconds "without endangering his health."

IS IT TRUE?

Sherlock Holmes

* THE MALDIVES

IS IT NOT TRUE that there is tremendous jubilation in governmental circles that Sri Lanka has opened a new phase of its diplomatic activity with a mighty flourish in the way relations have been up-graded and streamlined with the Republic of the Maldives? That there is no doubt that a great deal has been achieved? That a great deal of lost ground has been covered? That after the Ali Manickoo incident Sri Lanka's relations with the Maldives had hit the bottom? That in fact the Ali Manickoo incident was only the culmination of many years of sad neglect and unimaginatively boorish behaviour on the part of Sri Lanka towards the Maldives? That it was when the Maldivian hierarchy had drifted towards India and other neighbouring countries (not Pakistan) that circles in Colombo had begun to sit up? That it was only after *Tribune* had pointed out that our Foreign Office and our Bureaucrats had behaved stupidly towards the Maldivians and hurt their sensitivity (and sensibility) that something was done? *That there is no doubt that a new beginning has been made? That Prime Minister Sirimavo Bandaranaike has scored a personal triumph of a high order in the way the visit of the Maldivian PM was handled and also in the way the return visit was paid? That it is yet to be seen how this initial breakthrough will be utilised by our bureaucrats and others in charge of the follow-through?*

That *Tribune* is not, however, very optimistic about what is to follow because of certain fundamental preliminary miscalculations many responsible persons seem to have in regard to the internal affairs of the Maldives? That the entire effort has been to woo and bolster Maldivian PM, Ahmed Zaki, as the most important force in the Maldives? That there also seems to be an idea in many quarters that if Zaki were now not the strongest force, Sri Lanka

should assist him to become the strongest? That these circles in Colombo do not seem to realise that this will be tantamount to interference in the internal affairs of the Maldives? That whispers have already reached *Tribune* that there are apprehensions among political circles in Male that Sri Lanka was seeking to build up Zaki as "its man" in the Republic? That inadequate attention was paid to the President Nasir who is still the supreme political force in the archipelago in conjunction with Ali Manickoo and the Finance Minister Sattar (who had been on an Official visit to Colombo before Zaki)? That though Ali Manickoo is not in the Government he is a greater force than many of the Ministers put together? That Ahmed Zaki is a new force brought in by the older and more powerful elite because the Zakis are part of the ruling families and Ahmed had shown capacity to mobilise certain vested interests? That Ahmed Zaki also married into the powerful elite when he married the sister of the Finance Minister's wife?

That however well placed Zaki may be he is not yet in a position either to dislodge the President or Ali Manickoo? That the June 12-15 abortive attempt by the former Minister of Agriculture Farook Ismail to dislodge the President-Manickoo-Sattar triumvirate had turned out to be a hopeless joke and a failure? That some of the stalwarts of this attempted political coup are now said to be cooling their heels in the small islands which serve as prisons? That among those so banished were some close relations of Ahmed Zaki including, it is said, (this is to be confirmed), a brother of Zaki? That those who know the situation inside the Maldives (and see the realities without blinkers) assert that the President's group is supreme and that its position cannot be challenged in the foreseeable future? That the British on Gan are also stron-

gly with the President's group. That this group has also developed close ties with India? That this group also has close business ties with powerful financial circles in Singapore?

That Zaki can still exist only with the support of this powerful clique surrounding the President? That it is only with the leave and licence of the Nasir-Manickoo-Sattar group that Zaki flourishes? *That Sri Lanka's attempt to make Zaki the most important force in the Maldives may be even the undoing of Zaki? That Sri Lanka will do well to tread warily and pay due heed to the power set up in the Maldives? That though Zaki is a go-getter he is not yet the voice of Maldivian vested interests? That though Zaki had his schooling in Sri Lanka he has sent his sons (aged 20 and 18) to study in Australia and the Soviet Union? That Maldivian students who had come to study in Sri Lanka before now go to India or Singapore for studies because what they want more than anything else is the English-language medium and that this is the one thing which Sri Lanka cannot offer just now?*

IT IS ALSO NOT A FACT that though the P M's visit to the Maldives was managed with aplomb and finesse, public and press relations were weak and poor? That it was surprising why the P M's entourage did not include press representatives from all news papers, (dailies, weeklies, and other periodicals)? That it would have been in Sri Lanka's interests to have included in the entourage the corps of foreign correspondents functioning in Colombo? That, as it was, the reporting from the Maldives was poor and consisted of only government handouts? That joint communiques are only part of the news? That people are sceptical about news about the spontaneity of welcome and the like when it emanates from government sources? That even if there were critical remarks about certain things, in a democratic society like Sri Lanka's it is best that a wide spectrum of journalists should be enabled to make such visits? That it is only in this way that the world at large can know the truth about the realities of the visit? That even from Sri Lanka no journalist of any calibre seems to have been afforded opportunities of making the trip? That photographers were amateurish and infantile? That there were no in-depth studies of the actualities in the Maldives at the time of the Sri Lanka P M's visit?

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