

# TRIBUNE

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## SUGAR CRISIS: FREE TAPPING OF PALM TREES ESSENTIAL

THE UNITED FRONT Government has been compelled to bring further restrictions in regard to the sale and distribution of sugar. Last week it was announced that the monthly quota of one pound per ration book at 72 cents per lb was cut down to three-quarter pound. Off-ration sugar at Rs. 5 per lb has been completely cut and there are hints that tourist hotels and other eating houses will be supplied sugar at Rs. 7.50 per lb.

Official propaganda stated that as the price of sugar in the world markets had increased in a phenomenal manner, the Government had no alternative but to restrict the sale and distribution of sugar in this way. It is imperative also that future

imports must be drastically restricted—if imports are possible with the current shortage of world sugar supplies. And the Government has necessarily to stretch existing stocks to go the furthest.

News has been pouring in from all parts of the world that sugar prices had been soaring during the past few weeks. The scramble for available supplies had been sharp and acute. There is no knowing when this upward spiral will be halted. In India, the open market price has already shot up by over 30 percent in the last fortnight and it was threatening to go up higher—and India is one of the biggest exporters of sugar—which is one of its biggest foreign exchange earners.

### INSIDE:

- INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS  
—Sikkim
- CHRONICLE  
—August 25 —September 4
- WORLD PEACE COUNCIL  
—Anniversary
- INDIA'S PRESIDENTIAL POLL  
—An Analysis
- BOOK REVIEWS  
—History
- IS IT TRUE?  
—Future of UNP

Every sugar producing country naturally wants to take the fullest advantage of the boom in the international markets. The London price, which was around £355 per tonne in the beginning of September, has now touched an all-time peak of £370. In every sugar producing country has arisen a difficult dilemma as to how much sugar should be exported; because there was always a dispute about the home market's minimum requirements. The question of boosting production in the next season, which now engages the attention of all sugar producing countries, will not affect prices and supplies for a long time to come—cane sugar is harvested after 14 months of planting, but beet sugar probably does not take as long.

### From Next Week

#### BUILDING A VILLAGE HOUSE

*Tribune* will from the next issue publish a series on *Building a Village House* by Herbert Keuneman. He is one of the few writers of encyclopaedic versatility still left in the island. Herbert Keuneman is not only a writer of merit, but he is also so many in one that it is difficult to bring him within the compass of ordinary description—a teacher, a humanist, a student interested in history, culture, civilisation, architecture, drama, photography, music, books, in fact everything. But it is not merely the interest he shows in the matters, but the fact that he knows so much about so many things is what makes him one of the most interesting writers we have. His *magnum opus*, *The Village That Was*, long delayed in publication, we are assured by the publishers will soon be out. Meanwhile, he has begun this series for *Tribune*. The following is an introductory note (not a blurb) he has sent us about the series: "THIS IS THE STORY of the building, in a village in the southern Vanni, of a house which its author hoped should neither clash with the norms of local architectural tradition nor sacrifice too many amenities from the customs of more urbanised living. But the metatheses imposed on the prospective dweller in such a house in such an environment call for no less adaptation. So,

THIS IS ALSO THE STORY of village men and events and attitudes, and of the still too slowly closing gap between the two poles of Sri Lanka's people."

Our nearest neighbour, India, is now in the throes of serious crisis. The Government wants to export the maximum possible in order to earn hard currency, but the local demand especially with the oncoming festive season, is also great, especially because of the restricted releases in the past few months. With government's export imperatives and mills and traders tucking away stocks in view of the rising prices, there is a sugar scarcity in India—although it is a land of sugar surplus.

In India, more than in Sri Lanka, the prices of many commodities have risen and are still rising because of scarcities and also maldistribution. In India everything of an essential nature can be got—but at a price. But in Sri Lanka, there are many items which cannot be got—except at skyhigh prices which are fixed by the smugglers who operate with impunity in the midst of the police

and customs officers entrusted with the job of ending smuggling.

It is predicted that off-ration sugar in Sri Lanka will soon be around Rs. 10 a lb, but it can go up to Rs. 15 a lb within a few weeks.

WHILST THE PROBLEM in sugar producing countries like India is to determine how much should be reserved for local consumption in order to enter into highly profitable export commitments, the sugar situation in non-producing countries is very difficult. Take Great Britain which is now admittedly affected by a sugar shortage. *The Economist*, 31/8/74, had stated: "The Great British Sugar Scare is getting out of hand. Neither manufacturers nor retailers are helping the situation much. Mr. John Sainsbury's talk about rationing has been particularly damaging coming, as it did, from the head of one of the country's biggest grocery chains. The fresh round of panic buying will swallow up the increase in supplies that should have been coming through to the shops.

"Imports of sugar cane and refined sugar were down by nearly 13 per cent by June to about 868,000 tons, mainly because of the buy now well-publicised sharp drop in shipments from Caribbean producers. But in July the Government announced that extra quantities were being brought from the EEC. Total imports for July jumped to nearly 218,000 tons, compared with 148,000 tons in June and 187,000 tons in July last year. This was enough to lift imports for the first seven months of the year to almost 1.1m tons, which, along with 100,000 tons released by the Government from the strategic reserve, put supplies marginally ahead of last year.

"July's higher imports have yet to reach the shops. The manufacturers are still sticking to their allocations to retailers even though some apparently have difficulty in finding sufficient space in which to store their sugar. A number of wholesalers in south-west England were very angry last week because they still had difficulty in getting supplies while the local Tate and Lyle distribution depot was said to be overflowing. Maintaining unofficial rationing simply makes a slight shortage seem much worse than it is."

Shortage of an essential commodity like sugar has a chain reaction effect on a number of similar commodities. There is bound to be some impact on prices of tea and coffee, and in other countries on things like bread and butter.

In Britain, the situation was getting really difficult :

"Now it looks though tea and butter will soon be getting scarce. Some tea packers are putting their customers on allocation, with some wholesalers, getting as little as a quarter of their normal supplies. This year's tea crop was poor, but nothing like as bad as suggested by a 75 per cent cut in supplies to the trade. Most wholesalers think the sharpness of the cut indicates that a hefty price increase is on the way.

"The butter situation is more serious. Production in most countries is well down on last year, with British production down by more than 40 per cent and getting worse. This week the Milk Marketing Board had no butter to sell to Adam's Foods, one of the country's biggest blenders and packers, and this followed an earlier cut from 40 tons to 10 tons a week. Fortunately for Adams it has just signed with a French outfit to pack and market butter from Brittany, but that will make up only a small part of the drop in home production.

"Consumption of butter in Britain is still rising because of consumer and manufacturing subsidies and the high price of margarine. Milk drinking is also on the up, so that with farmers cutting back on milk production in an attempt to force the Government to pay them more, the surplus available for butter making is dropping fast. Fortunately, there are upwards of 270,000 tons of butter in EEC intervention stores, and although this is a hillock rather than a butter mountain, Britain is buying steadily from it....."

THE TRAGEDY ABOUT SRI LANKA is that it is a country which not only should be self-sufficient in sugar, but which could also easily export sugar — if the cultivation of sugar cane had been done in a way that would have ensured success. Sugar cultivation in Sri Lanka has been bungled. And it is still in a mess. The recommendations of experts and officials which were

stupid and incorrect were accepted and implemented whilst the suggestions of experts who knew better were rejected. This briefly and concisely sums up why sugar cultivation has not reached expectations. In a series of articles in coming weeks, *Tribune* hopes to examine the *Tragedy of Sugar Cultivation in Sri Lanka*.

Cane sugar cultivation cannot produce results for at least 14 months. The increases planned for 1974 and 1975, as far we know, cannot bring Sri Lanka anywhere near self-sufficiency in the near future. Part of our cane production is being used for the manufacture of alcohol for the state liquor industry.

The permits now being issued for people to tap sweet toddy is still too restrictive to bring about a major breakthrough in the production of jaggery. The tree tax system has been abolished in the North to enable the LSSP-promoted co-operative toddy taverns to earn monopoly profits. The entire system of tapping of palm trees—coconut, palmyrah and kitul—has been strait-jacketed to maximise the government's revenue from liquor. In the colonial days the restrictions had begun because the foreign rulers wanted to popularise imported brands of "superior" liquor. But, later, the restrictions had become perpetuated because of religious revivalists who saw in the free use of liquor a symbol alien domination.

The quickest way of meeting the sugar shortage is to permit the free tapping of palm trees, (with little or no red tape and bureaucratic control because that will minimise bribery and corruption), in order to enable all and sundry to make jaggery and even semi-refined sugar. A few abuses may creep in because the unscrupulous will be tempted to make fermented toddy, but it must be borne in mind that for a long time to come there is more to be made in jaggery than in

#### TOO COMFORTABLE

Paris Metro officials have decided to replace the benches for waiting passengers by individual chairs. The aim is to prevent the homeless from sleeping on the benches, particularly on rainy days.

toddy. The Government does not want to allow free tapping because it has to protect the money it makes from toddy renters—even if the renters are co-ops it should make no difference.

If the Government is willing to forgo some of the profits from toddy rents—and the amount involved is not great—then the harsh impact of the current sugar shortage can be cushioned. It will also give a major fillip to the jaggery industry and allow the time essential for the cultivation of sugar cane to come to scratch.

For the sugar cane cultivation to expand, the mistakes made in Gal Oya and Kantalai must be avoided. Small holdings from 2 acres to 10 acres must be encouraged in areas where small crushing and refining plants can be put up for 100 to 200 acres of such small holdings. Bigger units from 10 to 50 acres must be promoted among farmers who can afford the necessary capital to open up cane plantations. And if the government is inclined to permit private capital and enterprise, under control and licence, to develop cane cultivation, then the breakthrough can be faster.

## INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

BY ARIEL

### \* SIKKIM

THOUGH SIKKIM IS IN THE FOREFRONT of news today in this part of the world, the truth is that cold war between China and India (which in 1962 had burst out into a hot war) in regard to the three Himalayan States—Nepal, Bhutan and Sikkim—has flared up once again in a big way. These states lie to the south of the crest and the watershed of the great Himalayan range and it has always been India's contention that these states are part of the Indian subcontinent.

It was on this footing of the Himalayan crest being the watershed boundary that Nehru had without any protest acceded to China's suzerainty over Tibet, although

India could have claimed to have a massive cultural, religious and political following in Tibet. This was in 1954 and India had confidently expected China to regard the territory south of the Himalayas as coming within the suzerainty of the countries in the Indian subcontinent. India had steadfastly stood up in support of China's suzerainty over Tibet even though the Dalai Lama had sought asylum in India. This India had done in spite of pressure from countries like the USA that India had acted stupidly in permitting China to establish its suzerainty over Tibet.

But before the turn of the fifties, India had discovered that Chinese ambitions extended south of the great Himalayan range. Even without India knowing it China had built the Aksair Chin road from Tibet to the Gilgit region which was part of Kashmir occupied by Pakistan. China had also penetrated from Tibet into the three Himalayan kingdoms of Nepal, Sikkim and Bhutan. It was clear that China had wanted to make these states and the entire region south of the Himalayas an independent territory aligned to itself so that it could be a buffer for its protection or to use it as a stepping stone for further extending of its power to the South in India.

China took high ground that it wanted this belt of independent states because it believed in the political and territorial integrity of small kingdoms. But China's loudly proclaimed intentions of high intent and noble aspirations were not believed by India which saw in this penetration to the south of the Himalayas a massive Chinese attempt to extend its hegemony (and later its suzerainty) into an area which was important to India's defence. The Himalayas was a natural boundary, but a Big power entrenched south of this natural boundary was a danger to India's strategic security.

India started with protests in 1960-61 and later followed it up with condemnation of China's action. This tension came to a climax with the hot war in which the Chinese showed their military superiority by penetrating deep into Indian territory. After establishing China's military superiority in the Himalayan Range region immediately bordering on its southern flank, the Chinese armies had with-

drawn to undisputed territory. An uneasy ceasefire across an uneasy line has existed on this front for over 12 years.

But in this period, China has made many successful political and economic inroads into the three Himalayan kingdoms. It has built a road from Lhasa in Tibet to Kathmandu in Nepal. It has extended economic assistance to these three countries and also given them massive gifts. Nepal has been the chief beneficiary because Nepal was an "independent"



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kingdom with UN representation, but Bhutan and Sikkim were "protectorates" of India, and China could not have separate diplomatic representation in the two smaller states.

In the heyday of Lin Piao and the Cultural Revolution he had master-minded for Mao, naxalite minded Maoist youth in the three kingdoms had wanted to overthrow the feudal rulers so that revolutionary governments could be established which would be aligned to Peking. The rulers had therefore tilted towards India for protection to fight the naxalite revolutionary youth. But, with the going of Lin Piao and the coming of the new era of Chou predominance, Peking changed its diplomatic techniques. Now, Peking supported the claims of the feudal rulers as against the rising tide of mass opinion for democratisation and parliamentary rule on the basis of the rule of law. India no doubt encouraged the growth of organisations which pressed for democratic parliamentary institutions and systems.

At the time of intense naxalite and revolutionary youth subversion against the feudal rulers, India had assisted the rulers to survive and at the same time took measures to ensure that these three kingdoms were persuaded or even pressurised into coming within the orbit of India's hegemony in the South Asia region. With China exploding her first atomic bomb in 1964, the three kingdoms had thought it wise to keep in line with Peking, but without offending India.

But with Bangladesh, and now after the May 18, 1974, explosion of India's first atom bomb, New Delhi has naturally taken a firmer and stronger position to assert its influence over the states south of the Himalayas. There is no doubt that India feels strongly that this region south of the Himalayas was vital to its security. In discussing the Sikkim interlude, *Newsweek* stated quite clearly that an 80-mile advance down the narrow passes on the Tibetan border would cut Sikkim, Bhutan, a part of west Bengal and the whole of Assam from the rest of India. This is what India fears and that is why New Delhi has taken steps to safeguard its natural boundaries. China makes loud protestations of its peaceful intentions and its adherence to the Panchaseela, but unfortunately

India (and many other countries) do not seem to take these Chinese declarations as seriously as Peking would like them to be taken.

When the naxalite revolutionary groups had been wanting to liquidate the feudal rulers, they had mooted the feasibility of establishing a federation of the three states of Nepal, Bhutan and Sikkim—with the ruler of the Nepal as the head of the set up. If a federation of this kind were set up as a "sovereign independent country", then the protectorate status of Sikkim and Bhutan would disappear, and if this federation was "friendly" to Peking, then India would always be at the mercy of China so far as its northern flank was concerned.

As far as India is concerned, it cannot afford to have an independent federation along the entire northern boundary which could be used by other countries to pressurise India in various ways. India has therefore now set about taking steps to liquidate the idea of a three-kingdom federation mooted by revolutionary pro-Peking and pro-Maoist naxalite groups. India has now found one way of removing Sikkim completely from the arena of being an "independent kingdom" and has made Sikkim an associate member state of the Indian Federation. This has aroused much fury and indignation in China.

The outbursts of Chinese indignation have found echoes among certain circles in Bhutan and Nepal and also inside Sikkim itself. But there is very little, Chinese indignation, or anybody else's indignation can do, in this situation. It is only a matter of time before India brings Bhutan and Nepal into some kind of a flexible associate status—because India needs to safeguard its northern flank and is now strong enough to ensure it. New Delhi is now well on the way towards resolving the Kashmir problem by coming to terms with Sheik Abdullah and the other groups aligned to the Plebiscite Front.

Though the Maoist-inclined CPM has been critical of the Government for "annexing" Sikkim into an associate status (because CPM leaders said that such action would make the normalisation of Indo-Chinese relations more difficult, the other Opposition parties have generally agreed with the ruling Congress

that the Government's action in taking over Sikkim as an "associate state" was wise and prudent in the context of the realities of the day. Only a few stray papers, including one largely-circulating daily in India, have been critical of India's action (because of the damage that would be done to her image abroad), but the fact is that the massive bulk of Indian opinion was completely behind the action of the Indira Gandhi government.

Unless the Chinese decide to go to war in support of the feudal rulers of Sikkim, Bhutan and Nepal under high altruistic aims, the Indian juggernaut will bring these three states (which in recent years had developed anti-Indian intransigence owing to politicking by several foreign states especially the USA and China), within the hegemonistic orbit of the Indian Union. It must be remembered that the word *hegemony* has been made a "dirty word" in the contemporary vocabulary of Peking's revolutionary utterances, but there is no doubt that hegemony has been most important motivating factor in modern historical eras.

In the accepted manner of modern politics, the Indian action in Sikkim is made out to be as the result of a "request" from the people of Sikkim. There is no doubt that the new Sikkim parliament was elected in a free election and it has the right to make this "request", but when all this verbiage is taken out it is clear that India wants Sikkim, just as it wants Nepal and Bhutan, to be brought within its hegemony for the strategic security of its northern boundary. The fact that these three states had become the playing ground of countries hostile to India, in the period of India's relative weakness has no doubt made New Delhi to end this insecurity at a time when India is strong enough to put an end to this kind of intrigue.

New Delhi does not speak in such plain terms. No state or government ever does. The excuses are made in diplomatic language and in terminology where every little state or territory likes to claim to be "independent and sovereign". Everybody knows that such "independence" is more illusory than otherwise but the fiction is maintained for good form.

CHINA HAS GONE TO TOWN on the Sikkim drama. The *Peoples Daily* of September 3, according to *Hsinhua* from Peking, had stated: "The Indian government adopted a so-called draft law on August 29, openly wanting to annex Sikkim. This flagrant act of colonialist expansion is just the same as that of the old-line colonialists. The grave incident has shocked and infuriated all justice-upholding countries and people. The Chinese people strongly denounce this despicable act of the Indian government. India has plotted for a long time to annex Sikkim. Shortly after India's independence, the Indian government sent troops to occupy Sikkim and turn it into an Indian "protectorate" by force, exercising strict control over it, in the internal affairs, diplomatic, political and economic fields. But this is not enough. Last June, it imposed an Indian dictated "constitution" on Sikkim which not only deprives Sikkim of its right of independence and self-determination, but also puts Sikkim into its "political institutions". Disregarding the resentment and resistance of the Sikkimese Chogyal (king) and paying no need to the strong opposition of the Sikkimese people, India is now trying in a hurry to "legalize" its annexation of Sikkim. In this way, Sikkim will become a "associate State" of India and be completely reduced to an Indian colony.

"Because of its guilty conscience the Indian government has to fabricate pretexts, saying that it is under Sikkim's 'request' that India has imposed the merger upon Sikkim. This is most ridiculous and absurd. Everybody knows that Indians or Indian agents are controlling Sikkim's national Assembly and wielding administrative powers. Therefore, the so-called Sikkim's 'request' for joining India is nothing but a monologue produced and performed by the Indian government. This clumsy trick is crystal clear even to the Indians. The *Hindustan Times* says, 'no country or people voluntarily chose self-effacement,' and 'the Indian government is not going to be able to persuade the world that Sikkim's annexation to India represents the will of the Sikkimese people'. An Indian personage points out that this is 'annexation 300 per cent'. It is absolutely impossible for the Indian government to blind fold the world public and

escape condemnation while carrying out colonialist expansion.

"India's expansionist and aggressive ambition is by no means limited to annexation of this tiny Himalayan kingdom. Regarding itself as a sub-superpower, it dreams of lording it over in south Asia. Nehru and his daughter have always acted in this way, and Indira Gandhi has gone farther. Three years ago the Indian government under the support of Soviet revisionist social-imperialism dismembered Pakistan by force. Recently it blasted a nuclear device to make nuclear blackmail and nuclear menace in the South Asia region. At the same time it plans to set up a so-called South Asian countries group with itself as the overlord in an attempt to put other nations into its sphere of influence. While India was annexing Sikkim, some Indian newspapers even frenziedly insisted that the Indian constitution be amended in such way as to enable neighbouring countries to be 'represented' in the Indian parliament. This fully shows that what is done to Sikkim by India today will be done by other countries tomorrow".

China has not minced its words.

One read the full text of the editorial to find out what action China proposed to take against Indian expansion and to restore Chogyal power in Sikkim. But China has no plan of action except to predict that "history" will punish such transgressors as India. This is a new version of the old Karmic theory of retribution. This is what the editorial said: "Really, the Indian expansionists and their protector, the Soviet revisionist renegade clique, are blind men and fools. By keeping their eyes shut and going against the historical current, they collaborate with each other in annexing the weak and small, and are pleased with their own ruses. However, *retrogression eventually produces the reverse of what its promoters intend. There is no exception to this rule either in modern or in ancient times, in China or elsewhere.* India's aggression and expansion against its neighbours can only be lifting a rock only to drop it on one's own feet and will certainly be sternly, punished by history."

After the Indian Parliament adopted the Sikkim Bill, on September 4-5 the *Peoples Daily* on September

8, under the heading INDIA IS BESIDE ITSELF WITH GLEE—BUT TOO SOON, stated: "Speaking at the Indian parliament on September 4, S. Singh, Indian External Affairs Minister, did his utmost to justify India's colonialist act of annexing Sikkim. He went so far as to describe India's annexation of Sikkim as sacrosanct and could not be unilaterally altered by either side. This is indeed a most truculent statement. If earlier the Indian government had been elusory on the question of annexation of Sikkim, its External Minister has now completely thrown away New Delhi's fig-leaf. What he said boils down to the fact that India may annex Sikkim, but the Sikkimese people have no right to resist it. It is a clear-cut case of the strong bullying the weak and the big annexing the small. Yet this was called 'sacrosanct' Such downright gangster logic fully reveals the Indian expansionist shamelessness.

"Small may this Himalayan state be, and small her population, yet Sikkim like, all other countries in the world, has the right to be independent and be the master of her own destiny. The Indian government's behaviour towards Sikkim is exactly an act to deprive the Sikkimese people of this 'sacrosanct' right. Unscrupulous as it is, yet India asserted that this 'could not be unilaterally altered by either side.' Does it mean that before a mere 'Bill' concocted by the Indian government and imposed on Sikkim, the Sikkimese people have to submit to New Delhi and be its slaves forever? Where on earth can one find such justification?

#### Poor Mona Lisa

The "International Herald Tribune" reports that there was enormous interest shown in Japan in the exhibition of the Mona Lisa, which had opened in Tokyo in April. Capitalizing on this interest, enterprising businessmen have turned La Gioconda into a vehicle of advertising. One telephone company is offering the voice of Mona Lisa as interpreted by a computer. There is also a new Tokyo strip show called "The Coquettish Smile of Mona Lisa."

"It is an irresistible trend of history today that countries want independence, nations want liberation, and the people want revolution. The old order of colonialism is crumbling. But it is at this very time that the Indian government took over the old colonialists' tricks and flagrantly embarked on annexing Sikkim and reducing it into an 'Associate State'. The Indian expansionists are not only annexing a small country, but also trampling upon the 'sacrosanct' principle that all countries, big or small have the right to independence, a principle firmly upheld and safeguarded by the people of the third World countries. Thus before the people of the Third World countries and the whole world, the Indian government has proved to be false to its alleged 'support for national liberation movements' and 'anti-imperialism and anti-colonialism'; it has thus revealed its unbridled ambitions to become a sub-super-power!"

Having condemned and abused India roundly, the *Peoples Daily* amplifies on the kind of punishment that was likely to overtake India. "Blinded by inordinate ambition, the expansionists in New Delhi believe that all would be smooth sailing after the annexation of Sikkim. But they laugh too soon. In the world, no one can enslave a nation without punishment. Small may Sikkim be, the ardent will and aspiration of the Sikkimese people for national independence cannot be suppressed. They will never submit to Indian colonial rule; on the contrary, they will rise resolutely in struggle. Their just struggle enjoys the sympathy and support of their neighbours and the people all over the world. The annexation of Sikkim by India also runs counter to the interests of the Indian people and is bound to arouse their strong opposition. The expansionist policy pursued by the Indian government over the past years has brought misery to the people and difficulties to itself at home and abroad. It can be said with certainty that the more the Indian government embarks on expansion, the more will be its isolation, and the more will it suffer. The Indian expansionists may go wild with joy, but their dream of colonialist expansion is doomed to be shattered.

The punishment visualised is:  
(a) underground guerilla activity

against the new "associate status" regime and for this "just struggle" there would be "sympathy and support of their neighbours and the people all over the world...."

(b) there will be strong indignation in India against this annexation of Sikkim "and is bound to arouse their strong opposition"; (c) this expansionist policy will bring India misery and poverty and the more India's expansionism grows, "the more will be its isolation, and the more will it suffer."

Such is Peking's logic. It is certainly not prepared to go to war, against India on behalf of Sikkim. But it will help Sikkimese guerillas. The rest will be Karmic punishment based on retribution.

The world will hear a great deal about Sikkim from Peking for a few weeks, but in the harsh cynical world of realities, Sikkim will not be a major issue this time. The world accepts India's right to have a secure northern boundary, and the countries which had intrigued in Sikkim to create an anti-Indian confrontation will be tormented by nightmares that it was what they had done which had brought this sudden turn of history in the affairs of Sikkim.



## SHAMBA

# Rural Voter For United Front

by

ANATORY BUKOBA

August 28,

Back here, I went first to a friend's. A ten-year old girl was in sole charge of the house; the rest were out. She asked me in; I sat on the bed, one of two, and she talked to me till her seven-year old brother returned with a girl friend, his sister's age. The three kept me entertained till the older members of the family got back. They had gone far afield, to the paddy field, and to a rivulet to bathe. The house was isolated; there was a small room at one end; the rest of the house was open, consisting of a single large room. Some of

their most valuable belongings were in this.

Then it was the river for me, my old bathing place, by a way I do not use. The sound of a man clearing, at work with a *katta* or slasher, came from an end of the *Shamba*. As I found out later, it was my colleague working on our new neighbour's land; he had hired himself out. Back on the *Shamba*, the housewife looked surprised to see me coming from the opposite direction to which I do. This was her first intimation that I was back.

This is a short visit to the *shamba*, or my total stay away would have been too long. Someone said it seems to have rained everywhere but here. My friend's paddy crop has died off. All his neighbours get the irrigation water but not he. In other respects he seems well off. My colleague, on the other hand, suffers from non-payment of dues, put down to the absence of the man who hired him, and that sort of thing. I rather think it is the son who hired him, and his father who has the dough.

Absence makes the heart grow fonder, they say, and I seem to be greeted happily wherever I go. With poya near, some people bathed by moonlight; they have always done this to cram in a little more work.

How would I run a coconut estate? Bound up as it is with E.P.F. forms and banks, it might almost make one despair, but I think there is a way. Some years ago, I thought of the word co-operate to describe my way of how I thought things should be done.

I do not think it is far from what I have been trying to do here. It is literally just a new way of doing things together.

There are four kittens, not a day old, at the head of my bed. They remind me of their presence now and again, but on the whole they are quiet. I was very sleepy before I began these notes, but I seem to have got over that. There is a fresh wind, and my open oil lamp is sheltered by a low wall. On my way here by bus, at one of our major stops, the tea break, I found I had got a mango sapling, given me by a lad in a *kadday*. He wanted no payment. This sapling I have

given to the house which is feeding me today. My mind is very tired now, and I wonder if I shall last out.

Let me hope that with the next *shamba* article, I shall no longer have to treat the reader to trivialities. One of the two, who said he would join me, will not do so by the looks of it, but the other is here. It is at his house that I write this. All are asleep.

August 29,

Looked I round the *shamba*; all seemed in order, but I quite forget to look at the passion fruit. I counted some seventeen wood-apple trees on my new neighbour's land; these were buried, as it were, in a thick jungle all this while, all these years. They have all been left standing and the land cleared around them. The effect looks nice.

Asked I a man how he would vote, or something to that effect, should an election come round. He said United Front, and as he spoke sensibly, and is, I would think the average man up and down the length and breadth of this island, I shall try to give here the reasons he gave me. This country, or rather its people, is at last, he said, on its way to self-respect. I shall have to paraphrase what he said. Cheap food, and by implication, cheap travel, landed this country in a mess. People have to work now, with a special eye on growing food or they will starve. All this the United National Party will undo with its avowed promises of cheap food and cheap travel at any cost, as it were. This is what their leader is always quoted as saying, and he has not troubled to deny it. We do not want this spoon-feeding, my informant said, and nobody wants it either. With all this I cannot but heartily agree.

Yet, inspite of all this, and unhappy as I would be about the UNP, if you were to ask me how I would vote right at this moment, I would be inclined to say, UNP. Now, Why? It is just, I think, that one associates the UNP with the freedom of the individual, or, shall I say, just, Freedom in a way that I can never associate a socialist party, and, I think the record of the united front seems to bear this out so far as its legislative programme is concerned. All this seems to point to the need for a third party, and a good rallying point for this, I should say, would be no Population Control,

since both the government and the opposition are determined to have it inspite of all the moral objections.

Here is a verse, whatever you make of it:

*My mother's face looked nice and smooth,  
Her head now resting on her arm;  
I laid my cheek again t her cheek,  
A thing I had not done for years,*

## Inania of this, that and the other RATNA, MY GEM

By INNA

IF I AM BUTCHER and I give you beef just by slicing it off the hanging load, it's not mine, the glory of having produced beef; a similar lunge and slice would give venison (except that both are in short supply!).

I once read that the philosophical implications of this were clear: the more I give to the efficient cause, the less to the material cause and vice versa: which means, the greater the stuff provided, the lesser the skill needed in the causal means. This kind of reasoning did not come into production and the means of production as regards gems and pearls, in Marxian thought.

A man may slave for ten years in the wet and humid atmosphere of gem-mining and not find a thing at all except round pebbles for his trouble. Another might work a day and obtain a gem of fifty-thousand yen. That's when.... The finding may be his, but the gem's glory is the creator's, originally.

And so I read on: "The curious fact about the gem-pits of Ceylon is that there is never an *illam* of one type of gem. There is always an assorted collection. Spinel, Corundums (sapphire and ruby) star stones, Cat's Eyes and many others, are all found in one pit. It seems as though the hand of the creator had cast assorted handfuls into little pockets in the earth for immortals to discover".

This Tourist Board brochure on *Gems of Ceylon*, from which this extract is taken, grows lyrical about the gem and its superb place in the glory of Sri Lanka's diadem. What glory does the worker get in all this?

Ratnapura is the city of gems, well-known the world over, but she is as sleepy and underdeveloped a town as she ever was in the 30's, and 60's. What tangible proof is there of that countryside getting any, leave alone many, of the benefits of its gemming industry, lying so close to its rice agriculture. How many tourists are lured into this place with its Gem museum and gem-cutters and gem-finders who do not find much more than that.

Than what?

Oh, a good many of them still have their mud-huts and mud-walls with no gems encrusted on them. There is a certain 'tribe' of course, ("of course, of course") of which we could say:

*"find but a stone and start a house;  
the sky's the limit, have no grouse"*

My lyrical brochure of the TB goes on: "*Gems, gemming and jewellery in Ceylon are parts of a fascinating and lucrative business, both for buyer as well as seller....in this internationally famous country, famous for its GEMS*".

Now, that's a gem of a statement, scintillating as it is with its many facets of 'jewellery', 'lucrative', 'internationally famous'. As someone told me: if all them gems we sold so far brought in its right proportion of money to the state coffers in due time, we would not be running around with a begging bowl and lowering our dignity".

Luckily, when the horse, or enough horses had been stolen, the Gem Corporation came to close the door. Thank our lucky gems that even such a thing is there, with no sluice gates, we hope. Gems provide heavy profits which can be shared, as they do on the *illama*.

Will our country get its rightful share in all this?

Since the Gem Corp is made of men who are above board, the possibility of the country's obtaining its assets is not remote at all. They will even see to it that state capitalism is avoided on the march to socialism. They will vow themselves to see that not only Ratnapura but other towns and villages as well, will obtain benefits of our gems by way of proper development.

★ \*

## CHRONICLE

## August 25—September 4

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

**SUNDAY, AUGUST 25:** The Land Reform Commission completes the physical take-over of 550,000 acres of land declared as "excess" by 5,700 persons tomorrow, meeting the statutory deadline set by the Land Reform Act enacted by Parliament in August 1972: these "excess" lands (above the fifty acre ceiling set by the Act) were vested in the Commission since the enactment of the land reform legislation, but the previous owners were made the statutory lessees pending actual take-over of lands by the Commission. According to the *Sunday Observer*, the State Gem Corporation will break new ground in November, when it exports jewellery: the Government has decided to pay 25 per cent in Convertible Rupees Account on all such exports. According to the *Sunday Times*, the Walter Wimalachandra Commission, appointed by the Government to probe the affairs of the University of Ceylon, has made the following disclosures in its Report: a lecturer going on study leave to Rochester (United Kingdom) for research on ritual at the Temple of the Tooth, Kandy; bhikkhus joining the University to become 'career monks' rather than to improve their knowledge and become better bhikkhus; irregularities in the use of a loan taken to buy a car by the officer in charge of the Internal Audit and absence of facilities for welfare of students: the Commission has recommended the establishment of a Board of Higher Education with corporate status. The Sri Lanka Freedom Party will celebrate its 23rd anniversary on September 2 at the New Town Hall: there will be a rally on this day at which the Prime Minister will preside. According to the *Sunday Observer* a "teaching hospital", the best of its kind in south East Asia, will be set up in Sri Lanka with Hungarian aid shortly: it will cost Rs. 56 million and will be sited at Peradeniya opposite the Botanical Gardens: once the hospital comes into operation, not only will local doctors have the opportunity of having specialised training at home, but doctors from other countries will also come to Sri Lanka for their post-graduate studies. While accepting the credentials of the new Sri Lanka High Commissioner to Malaysia, Dr. K. L. V. Alagiyawanna, Malaysia's Yang Dipertuan Agong (King) said that his Government supported to efforts by Sri Lanka in promoting a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean.

**MONDAY, AUGUST 26:** The Prime Minister, Mrs Sirima Bandaranaike, returned to the island after a four day visit to the Republic of Maldives: on her arrival she said that the visit was a very useful one. Phase one of the Government's land reform policy reaches completion today: the second phase—the planned settlement, land development and diversification begins tomorrow. According to the *Daily News*, the Education Ministry's reform of Teacher Training

Colleges has been postponed till the beginning of 1977: the postponement will enable the completion of training for all lecturers now in the colleges before the reforms are implemented: the reforms were scheduled earlier to take effect in January 1975. Nearly 700 island-wide prosecutions have been launched against errant employers by the Department of Labour under the respective labour enactments during the first six months of the year. According to the *Daily News*, both Houses of the Tamil Nadu Legislature adopted a resolution requesting the Centre to take steps to get the agreement with Sri Lanka suitably amended so as to retain India's sovereignty over Kachchativu: the resolution urged the Centre to give 'due consideration to the sentiments of the people of Tamil Nadu'. The Ministry of Health has announced that the outbreak of polio in the last three months is not being regarded as an epidemic, nor is it unusual during this period of the year. The annual conference of Judges begins at the Bandaranaike Memorial International Conference Hall on Thursday and ends on Saturday: all Judges in the island will participate in this conference. According to the *Daily Mirror*, the Inspector General of Police will make a strong appeal for U.N. aid when he attends a World Conference on Narcotics in Bangkok early next month: the IGP will ask for sophisticated equipment to fight drug addiction in Sri Lanka and also to prevent Colombo being used as a base for international trafficking in opium and marijuana. The Sri Lanka Freedom Party will celebrate its 23rd anniversary on September 2 at the New Town Hall. A plot to overthrow the Afghan Government has been smashed and its leader sentenced to death by a military tribunal. An interim Government to guide the Portuguese territory of Mozambique to independence will be announced in the next few days. Malaysia's ruling National Front swept back to power with a massive victory, which observers said reflected the electorate's strong approval of Prime Minister Tun Abdul Razak's concept of multi-racial government. Pope Paul expressed the hope that material and scientific progress in India would contribute to peace and not war. Greece has formally told Britain that under the present circumstances it is not ready for further five-sided Cyprus peace talks in Geneva.

**TUESDAY, AUGUST 27:** According to the *Daily Mirror* arrangements are now being made for the highest Court of Appeal to work in the official language in keeping with the provisions of the Constitution. According to the *Daily News*, a working committee to take immediate action on the Walter Wimalachandra Commission Report on the universities will be appointed shortly: the Minister of Education, Dr. Badi-ud-din Mahmud, said he would, if necessary, amend the present University Act to bring the necessary changes to eradicate the several shortcomings and deficiencies pinpointed in the report: the Minister said that he was shocked at the disclosures made in the report regarding the university and the level to which it had deteriorated and as Minister he was bound to ensure that facilities provided by the Government to the university were fully utilised and not misused by any individual or group of people. According to the *Daily News*, paddy purchases in July 1974 under the guaranteed price scheme were 944,586 bushels: this was 20.8% more than the corresponding month of last year. The Minister of Finance, Dr. N. M. Perera, announced that



the Excise Department will be closed down soon and vast changes will be introduced in the excise policy. According to the *Daily Mirror*, conditional sales of price-controlled goods will be strictly prohibited: this follows complaints from consumers that many traders sold scarce items on condition that consumers bought another item from the same shop. According to the *Daily Mirror*, literature relating to what is believed to be a new insurgent organisation in printed and manuscript forms were recovered recently by the Anuradhapura police. According to the *Daily News*, the participation of school-children in public functions that have no bearing on education has been banned by the Ministry of Education. The Indian External Affairs Minister, Mr. Swaran Singh, told Parliament that India had accepted Pakistan's latest suggestion that the next round of Indo-Pakistani talks for the restoration of communications and travel facilities between the two countries should start on September 12 to commence the implementation of the second stage of the Simla agreement. The Ethiopian army announced that Emperor Haile Selassie's Jubilee Palace had been nationalised.

**WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 28:** According to the *Daily News*, the Minister of Justice, Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike, will gazette the Declaration of Assets Bill this week: all members of the National State Assembly, judges, state officers appointed by the President, heads of departments and staff officers, chairmen and directors of corporations and staff officers and elected members of local authorities and staff officers will be required under this law to declare their assets and liabilities within three months of the law coming into force: they will also have to make declarations with regard to their spouse and each of their children: the Attorney General, the Director of Public Prosecutions, the Bribery Commissioner, the Commissioner of Inland Revenue and the Controller of Exchange will have the right to call for anybody's declaration at anytime for any purpose. According to the *Daily Mirror*, the Government Clerical Service Union is perturbed over the delay in setting up the proposed Credit Councils: the GCSU has already urged the Prime Minister to ensure the immediate implementation of the new credit scheme "without pushing" its members into direct trade union action. The Prime Minister yesterday appealed to the Political Authorities to accelerate the pace towards self-sufficiency with the experience gained so far in the food production campaign. According to the *Daily Mirror*, the Auditor-General has passed heavy strictures on the working of the Ceylon Transport Board in his report for 1970-71. Industries and Scientific Affairs Minister, Mr. T. B. Subasinghe, has appointed a committee to investigate the degree of indebtedness among staff of the 31 state corporations and boards under his ministry. A traditional dance troupe sponsored by the Department of Cultural Affairs leaves on a four-week tour of Pakistan and the Soviet Union on September 1. Portugal and African nationalists of Guinea-Bissau signed an agreement in Algiers ending 11 years of fighting in the African territory and preparing for the withdrawal by Portugal from its oldest colony in Africa. The United States gave a rebuff to the Soviet Union's call for an international conference on the Cyprus issue, saying that the creation of yet another forum to solve the dispute would not be useful.

**THURSDAY, AUGUST 29:** Justice Minister, Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike and the judiciary will review the working of the Administration of Justice Law which has been in force for the past eight months at the conference of judges which opens at the Bandaranaike Memorial International Conference Hall today: how effective the Circuit Courts are, the system of personal bail; the system of serving summons through the post, payment of fines to banks and the disposal of court records and the New Civil Procedure Code which is expected to be gazetted shortly are among the topics listed for discussion. According to the *Daily Mirror*, Sri Lanka's proposal for the declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace will be one of the major topics of discussion at the forthcoming sessions of the Twentieth Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference commencing at the BMICH on September 6. The nine judge bench of the Supreme Court presided over by Mr. Justice Jaya Pathirana in regard to the acquisition of certain lands will deliver judgement on September 3. According to the *Daily News*, the Prime Minister, Mrs Sirima Bandaranaike, will address a joint session of the Pakistan Parliament during a five-day visit to Pakistan beginning on September 4. A new Pakistan-Sri Lanka Trade and Industry Committee was inaugurated in Karachi this week under the auspices of the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry to promote trade between the two countries. According to a Central Bank report on farm loans, ninety seven percent of loans granted up to March this year has not been paid. According to the *Daily News*, the Prime Minister will preside at the handing over of nearly 1000 acres of lands belonging to her in Attanagalla to the Land Reforms Commission on Saturday: this land has been officially taken over by the Commission. According to the *Daily Mirror*, Sri Lanka's export earnings from the three major coconut products recorded a new high during the first five months of 1974. France yesterday lifted the embargo on arms sales to Middle East nations. The USSR yesterday announced an abrupt ending to its two-day-bld space flight and said the two cosmonauts were returning to earth. United Nations Secretary General Kurt Waldheim gave a pledge that he would press on with his efforts to resolve the major differences between Greece and Turkey over Cyprus.

**FRIDAY, AUGUST 30:** The Chairman of the Ceylon Petroleum Corporation has announced that the results derived from the first test oil well at Pesalai had even exceeded the expectations of the experts: according to the Chairman, no second stratigraphic test well as earlier planned will now be necessary in the Mannar area, and the next step in the search for oil—a land reflection seismic survey to locate the second well in the most promising location—is scheduled to begin in October: this well will not be a test well, but an exploratory production well. The Prime Minister will leave for her Pakistan and European tour on September 4 and return on September 24: she will visit West Germany, Yugoslavia and Rumania. Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike, Minister of Justice, addressing the Judges Conference at the BMICH yesterday said that the judicial work of judges would not be interfered with and under no circumstances this would be violated by the Government. According to the *Daily Mirror*, Mr. P. H. William de Silva, former Ambassador in

Canada is tipped for appointment as Chairman of the Press Council, Sri Lanka. Dr. N. M. Perera, Minister of Finance, addressing a mass meeting in the Yatinuwara electorate said self sufficiency in rice is assured by next year. According to the *Daily Mirror*, the Industries Ministry has decided on a Rs. 4.2 million expansion program for the State Flour Milling Corporation in Mutwal: the expansion will be effected in collaboration with the USSR. Justice Minister Felix Dias Bandaranaike speaking at a public meeting in Domppe said that if the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, promises not to violate the civil law, the UNP will be allowed to hold meetings: he also said that elections would be held only in 1977 and not before that though the Opposition believes that elections will be held in the near future. The Customs yesterday imposed a fine of Rs. 300,000 on a person suspected to be one of the ring leaders in a recent smuggling attempt: A French national leaving Sri Lanka yesterday was detected by the Customs having \$76,000 in his possession. President Ford said he favours going ahead with U.S. expansion of a naval base on the Indian Ocean island of Diego Garcia. Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto of Pakistan offered to sign a no-war, no-interference pact with Afghanistan.

**SATURDAY, AUGUST 31:** According to the *Daily News*, two major lending institutions, the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank, are interested in helping Sri Lanka's small industrialists: World Bank authorities have already had discussions with the Industrial Development Board and negotiations are going on between the I.D.B. and the Asian Development Bank on financial and technical assistance. Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike, Minister of Justice, yesterday commended to judges a request of the Minister of Foreign and Internal Trade, Mr. T. B. Ifangaratne, that courts in Sri Lanka should view seriously offences in the nature of frauds in co-operatives and the mortgaging of rice ration books: Mr. Bandaranaike made these observations at the commencement of the fourth sessions yesterday afternoon of the judges conference being held at the B.M.I.C.H. Lord Shepherd, leader of the U.K. delegation of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference, which opens in Sri Lanka of September 6 arrives today. The Ministry of Public Administration has made an order that employees in private sector institutions which are nationalised will not be penalised for failure to gain proficiency in Sinhala. According to the *Daily Mirror*, far-reaching changes in the entire higher school examination system will take place with the replacement of the GCE(AL) Examination with the HNCE (Higher National Certificate of Education): the pilot examination for the National Certificate of General Education which was due to commence on September 2 has now been postponed. According to a press release issued by the Sri Lanka Foreign Correspondents' Association, "with the appointment of the high-level Keuneman committee the Government has indicated a serious desire to close a so-called 'communication gap' between the administration and the mass media": the Association welcomed this initiative by the Government. President Ford of America is planning to hold personal meetings with West European leaders as soon as possible: the White House statement regarding this did not say when or where the meeting would be held. A new political grouping created from the merger of seven

opposition parties was launched yesterday in India to offer what was described as "the national alternative" to the Congress of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.

**SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 1:** The Prime Minister speaking at a meeting in Nitambuwa yesterday held in connexion with the distribution of land owned by her said that she followed the policies enunciated by her late husband Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike and thereby take the nation towards socialism: according to the *Sunday Observer*, there was a festive mood at the Attanagalla electorate with people in their thousands flocking into celebrate the formal handing over of land belonging to the Prime Minister. At a meeting of the executive committee of the United National Party held at "Sri Kotha" yesterday, the Party leader, Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, made a statement in which he said that the UNP had no intention whatsoever of seeking to overthrow the Government by violent means. According to the *Sunday Times*, the Wimalachandra Commission appointed to probe the affairs of the university has made some shocking disclosures: the authorities are unable to answer the disappearance of goods worth Rs. 3 million imported by the University. The Department of Inland Revenue has launched a massive operation to ferret out the extent of huge trading profits made on convertible rupee accounts and made them tax according to law: according to the *Sunday Observer*, investigations made by the Department reveal that the demand for convertible rupees have pushed their value up by 175 per cent of cost and very large profits have been made by using these funds for the import of a variety of goods ranging from motor cars to cheap items. A three-man Indian delegation to the twentieth Commonwealth Conference arrived at the Katunayake airport yesterday. The all-time high of Rs 105 was paid for a pound of special tea from Deniyaya in the last week's tea auctions held in Colombo. President Ford, pointing to China's giant economic strides, told Americans that increased productivity was the only way to improve wages without inflation: Mr Ford said that China, which he visited in 1972, was making fast progress, growing at the rate of two New York cities a year. New Zealand Prime Minister Norman Kirk died in Wellington yesterday at the age of 52.

**MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 2:** The consensus at the concluding sessions of the Judges conference on Saturday was that the whole scheme of Emergency Regulations under which persons are remanded and cannot be released on bail by magistrates without the consent of either the Attorney General or the Secretary to the Ministry of Justice needs revision: Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike, Minister of Justice, who presided at the conference agreed that the whole scheme should be reconsidered and suggested that some method should be devised to ensure the automatic consideration of the cases of suspects detained under the emergency regulations instead of their having to wait for applications being made on their behalf for the purpose. According to the *Daily News* the University has decided to pick all its new entrant students on a district quota system from next January. According to the *Daily Mirror*, for the first time the State Plantations Corporation will purchase five estates outright from the Land Reform Commission: the total cost of the five estates is Rs. 7,882,500 and the ceremonial purchase will take place

today. According to an Interpol circular for data on prostitution of an international level, narcotics and counterfeiting of currency which was circularised to police stations throughout the island, Colombo has become a centre for international prostitution: according to the *Daily Mirror*, international prostitution in Sri Lanka and prostitute traffic from Sri Lanka are likely to be discussed at the forthcoming sessions of the 109-member International Criminal Police Organisation (Interpol). Seven oil-rich countries have agreed to lend money to the international Monetary Fund: already the IMF have completed borrowing agreements with the seven lenders. According to a draft of a Constitutional Amendment Bill circulated among members of Indian Parliament, the Himalayan kingdom of Sikkim will have "associate" status in the Indian Federation. President Gerald Ford's Press Secretary said the President would stand by his statement at a news conference on Wednesday in which he said the Soviet Union had three naval operating bases in Indian Ocean. A train accident in Yugoslavia said to be one of the world's worst train disasters is believed to have killed atleast 170 people.

**TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 3:** According to the *Daily News*, the country's industrial policy and industrial planning will be reviewed by a new committee, headed by the Minister of Industries and Scientific Affairs, Mr. T. B. Subasinghe: the committee which is expected to have its first meeting next week, will review all aspects connected with industry both in the public and private sectors—and study them in relation to the program stated in the Government's Five Year Plan. The Prime Minister, Mrs Sirima Bandaranaike, addressing the 23rd annual conference of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party held yesterday said that she would implement the Bandaranaike policies or quit politics: anti marxist slogans were shouted during the procession which preceded the meeting of the SLFP. According to the *Observer*, six-hundred-and-ten new Co-operative branches throughout the island have been opened since June this year. The Criminal Justice Commission inquiring into the April Insurgency main case reserved its order at the conclusion of the trial yesterday: the trial against 41 suspects commenced on November 10, 1972: it went on for 280 days. According to the *Daily Mirror*, officers of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs will work round-the-clock during the tour of the Prime Minister from September 4th to 20th to give prompt attention to any special work in connection with the tour. Justice Minister, Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike addressing the delegates to the 20th session of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference at the BMICH yesterday said that Sri Lanka is committed to a Parliamentary form of Government: since independence the country has changed five Governments by peaceful means and this prove in no uncertain terms that our people have strong democratic traditions. The Council of Legal Education at a meeting yesterday accepted the resignation of the Principal of the Law College: earlier the Council had accepted the report of a committee appointed by it to report on a legal research project. Saudi Arabia—until now a supporter of lower oil prices—had agreed with Algeria not to make any price cuts and with this agreement hopes of cheaper oil faded. Pakistan Premier Ali Bhutto may visit Turkey and Greece on a Cyprus Peace Mission according to the Premier's People's Party newspaper.

**WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 4:** The nine-judge Bench of the Supreme Court by a majority decision of 5 to 4 held yesterday that the interim injunctions issued by the High Courts and District Courts in certain land acquisition matters against the Minister of Agriculture and Land were valid: the Court also held that the notices issued subsequently on the plaintiffs—petitioners must be discharged and the records sent back to the respective courts for inquiry or trial: on the question of jurisdiction the nine-judge Bench was unanimous in its verdict that the Court was properly constituted and that the Court had the jurisdiction to hear and determine all the applications: the nine judges each wrote a separate judgement. At a press conference held yesterday, the Secretary to the Ministry of Justice, Mr. Nihal Jayawickrama, said that the Government will tomorrow introduce in the National State Assembly an amendment to the Interpretation Ordinance entitled the Interpretation (Amendment) Law which will state clearly and without any doubt that no Court shall upon any ground whatsoever grant an injunction against the State: Mr. Jayawickrama said that the Cabinet has already approved the amendment Bill because the Supreme Court, had held by a majority judgment of 5 to 4, that despite the provisions of Section 24(1) of the Interpretation Amendment Act of 1972 that High Courts and District Courts had the Power to grant injunctions against a Minister. The Constitutional Court which met last afternoon has held that the amendment to the Interpretation Ordinance entitled the Interpretation (Amendment) Law was not inconsistent with the Constitution: according to the *Daily Mirror*, the decision of the Court will be conveyed to the Speaker of the National State Assembly today. Justice Minister, Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike, said in the Assembly yesterday that the Government would be moving the amendment to the Interpretation Ordinance so as to "make the intentions of Parliament clear". The restrictions imposed on the holding of meetings by the United National Party have been lifted from this month: the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, making a special statement in the NSA yesterday said that the UNP would not incite the people to violence, nor it believed in overthrowing a duly-elected Government by the use of violence. The Prime Minister Mrs Sirima Bandaranaike, leaves early this morning on her goodwill mission to Pakistan, West Germany, Rumania and Yugoslavia: the Premier will return on the 24th. According to the *Daily News*, the intergration of the curative and preventive health services is among one of the major proposals of the Ministry of Health in its revised development plans: the revised plans also call for legislation to make immunisation against certain diseases compulsory, the reorganisation of national milk feeding scheme and its extension to the estate areas, the establishment of cancer units at Kandy and other outstations and the appointment of pathologists and radiologists to all base hospitals. Several Government MPs yesterday called for the withdrawal of the concession given at present to the Supreme Court to function in English and for the rapid implementation of the Government's language policy. A summit meeting of 17 East and Central African states pledged not to establish diplomatic relations with Portugal until Lisbon has finished its process of decolonisation. Several thousand demonstrators, chanting "Hang the Emperor" and "the Emperor is a thief" ran through the Ethiopian capital.

## WORLD PEACE COUNCIL

## Silver Jubilee Celebrations

BY T. DURAISINGAM, J.P., U.M.

Attorney-At-Law

Member, World Peace Council

**Mr. T. Duraisingam, who attended the World Peace Council 25th Anniversary Presidential Committee Meeting held at Paris, gave the following report, on his return, to members of the Sri Lanka Peace Council.**

The Silver Jubilee celebrations of the World Peace Council and the Presidential Committee meeting of the WPC were held on 27th-30th May 1974 at Paris, the city which witnessed the birth of the World Peace Council 25 years ago, in April 1949. At this meeting I represented Presidential Committee member T. B. Subasinghe and the Sri Lanka Peace Council.

The 25th anniversary celebrations and the Presidential Committee meeting, which were held during the same days, differed in every respect from the founding Congress. The contrast was best summed up by WPC Secretary General Romesh Chandra in his opening speech. "The world in which we live today", he said, "is very much different from when our Movement was first founded. Not only are we not forced to celebrate the 25th anniversary in two different cities as the founders of our Movement were forced to do in launching the World Peace Movement, but the impact of our efforts and voices is much greater today. The World Peace Movement is like a tree planted to provide protection and shade. It is today bearing fruit. In the past we had to defend peace, but today we have to build the peace we have won. Today we have achieved detente which was unthinkable in the past when peace was a dirty word, and we must make it irreversible."

Mr. Chandra was alluding in his reference to being forced to meet in two cities, to the unfortunate incident in 1949, when the architects of the cold war prevented some delegates to the first Congress from entering France, and consequently forced them to hold a parallel Congress in Prague, Czechoslovakia.

THE BROADLY REPRESENTATIVE CHARACTER of the world peace movement could be seen by observing the wide range of participants in the anniversary celebrations. Present at the meeting were government ministers, MPs, leaders of political parties and liberation

movements, university professors and representatives from all walks of life who belong to socialist, social democratic, Christian democratic, communist, liberal radical, centre and nationalist parties. They came from 70 different countries and 15 international inter- and non-governmental organisations, a fact which testifies to the unprecedented and unparalleled growth and strength of the World Peace Movement.

Representatives of the UN Special Committees on Decolonisation and Apartheid as well as personal representatives of UNESCO's Director General and UNCTAD's Secretary General greeted the meeting, which also received messages of congratulation from 39 heads of state and government, and hundreds of other messages from ministers, peace movements and mass organisations.

Among the heads of states and governments who sent messages of greeting were Leonid Brezhnev, Sirimavo Bandaranaike, Indira Gandhi, Archbishop Makarios, Sheik Mujibur Rahuman, Ahmed Sekou Ture, Prince Norodom Sihanouk, Horst Sinderman, Ahmed Hassan Al-Bakr, Prince Souphanouvong, Pham Van Dong and Hafez Al-Assad.

During the four-day meeting of the Presidential Committee, part of the time was devoted to the jubilee celebrations and part of the time to the regular work of the Committee. On the first three days the celebrations and meetings were held at the French Senate which was put at the disposal of the participants by the French authorities. On the last day a reception was given in honour of the partici-

pants by the French National Peace Movement at their headquarters.

CELEBRATING the occasion a meeting was held on May 27 at which a number of eminent personalities including the personal representative of UNESCO's Director General and that of UNCTAD's Secretary General spoke. Among the speakers were also Mrs. Salvador Allende, Mrs. Eileen Bernal (widow of Professor J. D. Bernal), Vasco Cabral (Guinea-Bissau's Commissioner of Economy) Kalervo Siikala (Finland), Khaled Mohie El Din (Egypt) and academician E. Fyodorov (USSR).

On May 28 a mass meeting was held at the Salle Pleyel. It was in this very hall that twenty five years ago the World Peace Council was born. Present at this meeting were such personalities as Hungary's Gyla Kallai (Chairman of the Peoples' Patriotic Front), Belgium's Isabelle Blume, Soviet writer Konstantine Simonov, Cuban poet Nicolas Guillen, France's Jean Laffitte (the first Secretary General of the WPC) and Bulgarian academician Georgi Nadjakov, all of whom were present at the Movement's birth. In the chair was former French Minister Pierre Cot, and speakers included Ambassador Salim Ahmed Salim, Chairman of the UN Special Committee on Decolonisation, Iraqi Minister Aziz Sherif, Soviet writer K. Simonov and Finnish Minister Ulf Sundqvist.

## Foreign Subscriptions Rates

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## TRIBUNE

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I was personally happy and grateful to the peace movement for giving me the opportunity to participate at this historic meeting, accommodated at the tribune where twenty five years ago the founders of the movement announced the establishment of the World Peace Council.

THE WORK of the Presidential Committee meeting was carried on in plenary sessions, and three commissions:

1. the first, drafting a declaration on the 25th anniversary.
2. the second working on the problem of raw materials and development.
3. the third on the problem of European security and cooperation.

The plenary meeting adopted fourteen documents which dealt with the three main items on its agenda, and the most urgent developments since the Sofia session of the WPC, held in February 1974. These documents dealt on the following subjects, namely, A declaration on the 25th anniversary of the World Peace Movement, on Tasks of the Peace Forces with regard to Raw Materials and Development, on Relations with UNESCO, on Saving the lives of Chilean Political Leaders, on European Security and Cooperation, on Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia, on the Middle East, on Solidarity with the Peoples of Iraq, Democratic Yemen and the Arab Gulf, on South Africa, Zimbabwe and Namibia, on the Portuguese Colonies, on Asian Security, on Threats to Peace in South America, on Korea, and on Disarmament.

One of the subjects on which important discussions took place was that on Asian Security. The resolution on Asian Security was moved by me in the plenary meeting and was accepted unanimously.

THE RESOLUTION stated that the Presidential Committee noted with deep satisfaction the positive developments in Asia. In the Middle East the effectiveness of united Arab resistance against imperialist designs, the setting up of the Government of National Unity in Laos, the further successes of the Vietnamese people in their struggle for national salvation, the development on the road to mutual co-operation and durable peace in the South Asia sub-continent, "all these developments confirm the conviction that increasing co-opera-

tion and mutually beneficial relations among Asian countries open up the path for further advance in their struggle for self-reliance and independent development, free from all imperialist interference."

"In this situation," the resolution further stated that "the interests of the Asian countries can best be safeguarded by advancing the process of a system of mutual security for the whole continent."

On May 29th a special meeting of the participants from the littoral states around the Indian Ocean was held to discuss the problem of war bases in the Indian Ocean. Members from about fourteen countries, including those from South Africa, Madagascar, Pakistan, India, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh attended this meeting. Discussions were centred around the decision taken in February 1974 at the Sofia sessions of the WPC, to hold an international conference in August this year, about the elimination of war bases in the Indian Ocean and for the declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace. After some discussion about the venue of the conference, it was decided that it should be held at New Delhi.

THE PRESIDENTIAL COMMITTEE issued a declaration on the 25th Anniversary of the World Peace Movement.

The declaration stated that "25 years after the formation of the World Peace Movement we state with satisfaction that we live in a new period of detente which is characterised by the fact that the cold war no longer dominates international relations. The peace forces grow ever stronger, scoring new victories for national independence, democracy, justice and social progress—new victories over the forces of imperialism, colonialism and aggression, domination and exploitation. Despite the efforts of imperialism and reaction, the balance has shifted decisively in favour of the forces of peace and progress.

"This change in the political climate has been brought about, above all, by the heroic struggles and actions of the peoples of the world, and the positive initiatives, policies and programmes of governments, genuinely dedicated to the cause of peace.

"During the last 25 years, the World Peace Council and the inter-

national, regional and national organisations and movements represented in it, have contributed greatly towards bringing the force of public opinion to bear in solidarity with struggles and actions and in support of all these initiatives, policies and programmes.

"The World Peace Council extends its hand of cooperation to all public organisations and movements, all political parties, all social, cultural and religious bodies, to the United Nations and all its specialised agencies, to the Organisation of African Unity, to the Conference of Non-Aligned Countries, to all inter-governmental organisations, to all governments which stand for peace. Our cooperation and common action are essential for the achievement of our noble aims.

"We appeal to all the peace forces in the World: Let us work together to use the power of our united action which has won the victories of today, for the still greater victories required in the future for the defence and the building of peace."

The four day meeting of the Presidential Committee ended with great enthusiasm among the participants. They pledged that on going back to their respective countries they will work still more ardently for the great cause of World Peace.

#### FISCHER IN HIS ELEMENT

Peter Marshall, lawyer of world chess champion Bobby Fischer, has asked to be relieved of defending him in a \$3.2 million damage suit filed by a television company which charges that the champion had reneged on an agreement for filming his match with Boris Spassky in Iceland in 1972. Marshall says Fischer is "unresponsive, uncooperative and inaccessible" and has asked a court to terminate his contract and order his client to pay him legal fees amounting to \$2,976. Incidentally, Fischer demanded an excessive sum for participation in the world chess Olympiad in Nice. The demand was turned down and he refused to pay.

## INDIA'S PRESIDENTIAL POLL

# Indira Still Supreme

THE results of the Presidential poll do not always provide a correct indication of the state of the nation, and even Sri Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed with his impressive victory would not claim it to be a true reflection of the present alignment of political forces in the country. If the Right formed the main contingent behind the defeated candidate, Sri Tridib Chaudhury, its not-so-hidden columns could be found in good number behind the victorious Congress nominee, just as the divided Left found itself scattered among those who voted, opposed or abstained in the polling.

AT THE SAME TIME the election of the new President is not without its significance. The contrast between the wafer-thin majority by which Sri V. V. Giri had won the battle for the Rashtrapati Bhavan five years ago and the sweeping success of Sri Fakhruddin Ahmed this time, sharply brings out the accretion of strength that came to Smt Indira Gandhi from 1969 to 1972, since the electoral college for the Presidential poll was finally constituted in the General Election of 1972.

The implication is clear: even now Smt Indira Gandhi can call up a huge support in Parliament and the State legislatures if she chose to get something done. Even the new President will acknowledge that it was Smt Gandhi's decision to put him up that decided the issue of his victory.

With all the grumblings, subterranean discontent and the rising curve of in-fights that beset the Congress today all over the country, Smt Gandhi's whip has the force of a mandate for the Congressman. Sri S. N. Mishra's persistent clamour for the declaration of Sri Ahmed's assets might have attracted embarrassing publicity for him, but this could not make a dent into the solid phalanx of the Congress legislators.

What the Syndicate leaders with their elaborate control over the

party machine could not command in 1969, Smt Gandhi can still mobilise for the realisation of a specific objective, if she made up her own mind to get it.

*In other words, there is as yet no sign of a crack in the Congress under Smt Gandhi, and hence little possibility of a "conscience" revolt, as some sections of the Opposition fondly hoped for, when they jointly put up their candidate to challenge the Congress nominee.*

If this shows the strength of Smt Gandhi's own position vis-a-vis the party that she leads, it underlines with equal effect the responsibility that she has to own for the terrible drift that one sees all round in the India of 1974. The prevailing discontent born of the economic hardships faced by the common man, has no doubt sliced down the popularity of the Congress, with the result that the near-miracle electoral victories of 1971-72 could not be repeated in March 1974; and there is every reason to believe that the Congress standing in the masses has registered further erosion in the last five months.

*But this does by no means suggest that Smt Indira Gandhi is hampered by lack of mass support in any move which she may initiate with determination. Compared to 1969, her position before the Indian people today demands of her resolute action in furtherance of the electoral pledges that she has repeatedly made in the last five years, and which found further endorsement in the Tenpoint programme she enunciated at Bangalore six weeks ago. The decline in the Congress popularity in the last two years has been largely due to the very fact that the promises made at the time of the elections have not been kept.*

AND IT IS THIS grievous neglect of the solemn pledges before the electorate which has given a convenient handle to the Right to attack her; for, the reactionaries have no scruple in exploiting mass discontent for their own political ends, even if the discontent itself is the endproduct of the Congress inability to overcome the resistance of the very same forces of vested interest which the reactionaries themselves protect. Sri Jayaprakash Narayan has been cashing in on mass discontent despite the fact that this mass discontent is directly the result

of the Congress Government's failure to curb the very same vested interests which stand behind JP and his campaign for the so-called "party-less democracy".

If the signal success of the Congress in the presidential poll—scoring twelve per cent more votes than the Congress strength warrants—is a triumph for Smt Gandhi's determined bid to send Sri Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed to the Rashtrapati Bhavan, it also reinforces the common man's growing belief that Smt Gandhi has not been taking steps to fight the vested interests even when she is armed with such enormous mass support.

The Prime Minister has to realise once again that the massive support that she commands today in Parliament and the legislatures, has been given unto her not for a bout of complacency but for a more arduous battle against the dark forces that thrive by fleecing the masses. The overwhelming electoral support was given to her not for resting on the oars but to wield it as a powerful weapon for fighting the vested interests.

What is the reality today? There is all-round drift—hopeless inaction intermixed with amazing incompetence. From food procurement and distribution to oil exploration and management, from black-money operations to foreign policy postures, one is left with the indelible impression that Smt Indira Gandhi is today presiding over a set-up in which the crooks seem to flourish and the cranks expostulate.

Mass sanction is not a decoration piece but an imperative for mass action. It is not a permanent talisman for recurring electoral victories but a spur for further struggle ahead. Such a weapon gets rusty if it is not used for the purpose it is forged.

The massive majority that the Congress commands today is not meant for occasional display at the time of the elections like the chariot of the deity in Puri's Jagannath Temple being taken round the city once a year, but is to be regarded as a sacred trust to bring about social changes—a trust which, if left unfulfilled, may invite fearful consequences.

It is this awareness of the important implications of the victory in the Presidential poll that should mott-

vate the Congress leaders, from Smt Gandhi downwards, in the difficult days ahead. They have no reason to take this victory as a sanction for the prevailing drift that seems to have paralysed the Government. Rather, it is a reminder, a grim reminder, of the promise to be kept with the people of India.

And since the Congress as a political organisation has chosen to remain a one-pillar edifice, Smt Indira Gandhi herself has to read the real meaning of the Presidential poll results: there is no more room for dithering if the Raj over which she presides is to prosper and grow strong, and not to be turned into a petrified forest, as a grim reminder to the generations to come what overtakes a national leadership if it fails to honour the pledges that it makes to the millions.

The demos in India can be unsparringly ruthless if a leadership does not measure up to its expectations.

—Nikil Chakravathy

## Mechanical Compost Plants

Madras

THE FIRST mechanical compost plant with a capacity to process 120 tonnes of garbage a day will be established shortly at Ahmedabad. Under a Centrally-sponsored Rs. 9 crore programme for increasing production of organic manure, particularly rural and urban compost, 45 such mechanical compost plants would be set up in cities with a population of three lakhs or more. A subsidy of 33 per cent of the capital cost had been provided for Agro-industries Corporations and Municipal Corporations setting up the plants according to Dr. S. R. Barooah, Fertilizer Commissioner, Union Ministry of Agriculture.

Dr. Barooah also announced at a press conference here that the Ministry of Works and Housing had also provided Rs. 10 crores for urban compost programme. He said 15 million tonnes of compost of good quality could be prepared from the available urban wastes. He said the current production in the 3,200 urban centres was just 4.45 million tonnes. Under this programme it was proposed to produce 7.5 million ton-

nes of compost a year equivalent to 0.112 million tonnes of nitrogen, 0.075 million tonnes of phosphoric acid and 0.112 million tonnes of potash.

It was also proposed to implement 300 sewage utilisation schemes bringing nearly 8,000 hectares under sewage irrigation. The potential in this field had not been exploited much Dr. Barooah said. In Tamil Nadu for example 52 million gallons were available, but only six million gallons were utilised. The best use of sewage had so far been made only in Delhi according to him.

A COMPREHENSIVE project for setting up one lakh gobar gas plants in the country during the Fifth Plan was another measure to augment production of organic manure. About 25,000 plants were to be set up in 1974-75. The attractive feature of this scheme was the subsidy of 25 per cent extended to the first 25,000 plants to be installed.

The rural compost programme aimed at raising production of farm yard manure and village compost was described by Dr. Barooah as a people's programme requiring extensive propaganda and intensive mobilisation of resources.

A massive campaign to promote weed control as a means to save fertilizer (from being exploited by weeds) had also been taken up and about two million hectares under high yielding varieties would be covered during 1974-75 said Dr. Barooah. About 2,000 tonnes of weedicides (technical material) necessary for this programme would be manufactured in the country. This would cost about Rs. 6 crores saving 60,000 tonnes of nutrients costing Rs. 12 crores in foreign exchange. The weedicid industry had promised to mobilise their resources to produce this quantity. The industry was being given all encouragement. Foreign exchange would be provided to it as the industry would have to step up production so that at least 20 per cent of the area under HYV could be rid of weeds through chemical manual and cultural methods, during the Fifth Plan period.

Dr. Barooah said that there would be no problem for the Centre in fulfilling its commitment

on fertilizer allotment for the kharif season as agreed upon during the recent Cochin conference. It was however too early to assess the position for the rabi season he said.

—Hindu

## LETTER

### ON REAL INCOMES

Sir,

Without bringing down the cost of living the income of the people cannot be raised. A fall in the cost of living itself implies a rise in real incomes and that is what has not been understood by our politicians due to ignorance and our economic experts for expediency and convenience.

It has been correctly remarked that Ceylon is a country where people try to eat the fruit before it is planted or bears a yield. It has been happening for a considerable time. Without ascertaining the profits and yield dividends have been declared indiscriminately to secure political patronage from the people but to the credit of the wisdom of the people it must be said they have always rejected the profligate and the unworthy.

The price of rice in Ceylon should not exceed the world market rate under stable conditions and for a developing country like Ceylon prices should always be less than the world market price so as to gain competitive advantage. We cannot develop our industries by producing shirts at Rs. 40 or tyres at Rs. 200/. Such prices scare the producers themselves leave alone the consumer abroad.

Ceylon is the good country that became bad. Independence in 1948 with instant parliamentary democracy and an incorruptible bureaucracy, agricultural development through irrigation schemes, electricity from waterpower and an industrial revolution in 1963 which came like a bolt from the blues were goodness in abundance. They were dissipated, spoilt and laid waste. The losses from mismanagement count up in billions. Far from asking for aid Ceylon could have been aiding others now, if not for persistent bungling.

A. E. GUNAWARDENA

44, Dharmapala Mawata,  
Colombo 7.  
27.8.74

## BOOK REVIEWS

## Valuable Historical Periodical

**THE INDIAN HISTORICAL REVIEW**, Biannual Journal of Indian Council of Historical Research. Vol. I. No. I, March 1974, Vikas Publishing House, New Delhi, pp 201, Annual Rs. 50, Single Copy Rs. 30.

THE PUBLICATION of the first volume of the *Indian Historical Review* under the editorship of eminent historian is an event of considerable significance to the scholars, students and particularly the researchers interested in the subject.

It is a valuable addition to the other historical periodicals like *Indian Economic and Social History Review*, *Bengal Past and Present*, etc. Most of the articles in the issue represent sincere and commendable attempts to write on important but usually neglected fields of Indian history. Most of them, are based on original research by their authors and written in vivid and readable style.

Indian historiography still clings to the colonial demarcation of Indian history into ancient, medieval and modern. The ancient period converging with the coming of the Turks and the Modern Indian history starting with the appearance of the East India Company. Interestingly enough, not only has the Indian History Congress accepted this periodisation, but no one so far has even challenged this rather arbitrary divisions.

R. S. Sharma, however, in his article "Problems of Transition from Ancient to Medieval in Indian history", rightly challenges the imperialist demarcations. With the coming of the Turks, no doubt, certain important changes took place in the social, economic and political organisations of India but, according to Sharma, "most features such as feudal state organisation, reversion to closed economy, proliferation of castes, regional identity in art, script and language, *puja*, *bhakti* and *tantra*, which develop in medieval times and continue later, can be traced back to the sixth and seventh

centuries" (p 9). Hence, the establishment of the Turkish rule in no way marks the transition of ancient India to medieval, since the features of medieval India was already there in the ancient period.

For the imperialist historians, ancient India corresponded with Hindu rule, medieval with the Muslim and modern with the British rule (never Christian rule). But this scheme of dividing Indian history must be changed otherwise, as Sharma rightly points out, "Turkey, Egypt, Iraq, Iran, Pakistan, Indonesia, etc. will have to be placed in the medieval period and Hindu Nepal in the ancient period". (p1)

Devangana Desai's paper on "Art under Feudalism in India (c AD 500-1300)", is a valuable contribution to our understanding of the nature of art under feudalism. In her paper, she explains that "the function of art in feudal society was to impress and dazzle the audience or the onlooker and to proclaim the glory, might and riches of poulent patrons" (p 17). Because of this, art under feudalism failed to convey higher qualities, feelings and values.

B. N. S. Yadav's paper "Immobility and Subjection of Indian Peasantry in Early Medieval Complex" discusses the condition and position of the peasantry before the coming of the Turks in India. He carefully traces the restrictions and impositions that hindered peasant mobility in that period, and concludes that during the Sultanate period, with "the change in the character and composition of the ruling aristocracy...wider circulation of coins coinciding with the regular practice of payment to the peasants in cash... large-scale trade between the town and the country" tended to loosen those restrictions on the peasantry (p 27). Hence, one finds peasant mobility during the Turkish period.

MORE OR LESS the same is the conclusion of S. C. Misra in "Social Mobility in Pre-Mughal India". According to him, the rise of the Sultanate led to a spurt in urbanisation which, in turn, initiated greater mobility. Large-scale migrations and movements, no doubt, engendered a great deal of mobility, both spatial and vertical. But, interestingly, enough, in this period there was lack of mobility in a crucial sector

of the society, that is, the economic sector.

Because of this, the process failed to weaken the existing structural organisation. Diversification or transformation of economy along with technological change, necessitates large-scale mobility. But when the former remains static, it produces a situation inauspicious for major social upheavals to emerge and challenge the society. Therefore, S. C. Misra sees the "dormant economy" as the chief reason behind this tragedy.

The paper on "Emergence of Brahmanas as Landed Intermediaries in Karnataka (c AD 1000-1300)" by sister M. Liceria, A.C., is an able study on the distribution of landed-property in Karnataka. The rulers in this period used to assign large landed estates mostly to the Brahmanas from outside since it helped in the perpetuation of their rule.

The practice not only helped the Brahmanas to emerge as landholders in Karnataka but, on the other, meant unequal distribution and greater exploitation of the peasants and artisans who had "little or no share in the ownership of land" (p 35). This plicy, according to the author, created feudal conditions undermining the system of peasant proprietorship.

MARATHA NATIONALIST historians from M. G. Ranade down to

## OUTTHINKING THE THIEVES

A special office opened in West Germany gives professional advice on how to protect one's home, garden and car from burglars and thieves, and get away from evening hold-ups. The legal advice vans cruising in city streets from early July are outfitted with sophisticated warning systems and television units and display bullet-proof shields, and money satchels with special gadgets that cause hooter to shriek or smoke bomb to explode should they fall into strange hands. They also disseminate books and pamphlets on self-defence. The criminal police have put out an "outwit the thief" car sticker, which we reprint from the West German "Neue Ruhr-Zeitung."



G. S. Sardesai have failed to be objective in their treatment of Maratha history. They often bypassed the true nature of the Maratha political structure in order to emphasise the Hindu and Maratha overtones for their nationalist propaganda. This was a great drawback not only on M. G. Ranade or G. S. Sardesai but, in fact, of the entire Indian nationalist historiography. Scholarship, no doubt, has suffered in the process.

However, in his article "Feudal Content of Maharashtra *Dharma*". P. V. Ranade makes an attempt to trace the socio-economic roots of the Maratha political ideology and concludes that "*Maharashtra dharma* was a psychological tonic" used by the *watandars* to "rouse the toiling Maratha peasants...against the Mughal rulers" (p 50). It was used as a weapon to mobilise the masses which later took the form of "legalised plunder". This is what the author regards as the true nature of Maharashtra *dharma*, the social content of which was nothing but "feudal exactions—a point often neglected by the nationalist Maratha historiography". (p 50).

"Some Aspects of Indian Village Society in Northern India during the 18th Century" by Satish Chandra, analyses the position of the different classes of cultivators who formed the over-whelming majority in the medieval Indian villages. The paper deals mostly with the two main classes of cultivators—the *khud-kasht* and the *pahi-kasht*. The sources consulted by the author show that of the two categories, the *pahis* were absent from many villages and were generally less numerous than the *khud-kasht*. (p 58)

The relationship between the two depended on many factors, especially on the total land available for cultivation in a village, and "as long as there was plenty of land available, the *pahi* cultivator could bargain and become the proprietor (*Malik*) of land he cultivated. Once pressure on land increased, the position of the *pahi* worsened, and he quickly sank to the position of a tenant-at-will". (p 60)

Since land was in abundance during the medieval period, it was difficult to distinguish between the two categories of cultivators which, in turn, imparted great flexibility to the feudal system in India. According to the author, it also "provided an escape...from the oppressions

of the caste system" since the lower castes often migrated to form new villages or brought waste lands under cultivation.

Contrary to the general trend, Satish Chandra emphasises that the concept of medieval Indian society "being based on some kind of natural economy" is misleading. The growth of towns, "the development of a national market...the growing involvement of India in the international market and the consequent growth of commodity production and the increasing penetration of money economy into village life are some of the features of the 17th century India". (p 61)

MEDIEVAL ASSAMESE society revealed certain distinctive features which indicated the continued influence of tribalism on it. Amalendu Guha, in "Tribalism to Feudalism in Assam: 1600-1750", shows how the Assamese society in spite of being segment of the larger Indian society, was devoid of "the multi-caste village community, based on *jajmani* relations", or, in other words the salient features of the larger society. Urbanisation was minimal. Specialisation by castes was limited, hence minimised the division of labour. And this absence, according to the author, indicates the influence of tribalism on Assamese society.

R. P. Srivastava's "Some Aspects of the History of Arts in Punjab Sikh States" traces the rise and development of the works of fine arts under the aegis of the Sikh chiefs of Punjab, and concludes that the Sikh rulers showed "religious tolerance for other people's faith and zealously patronised fine arts". (p 80)

The note on "Methods and Problems of the Study of Feudalism in Early Medieval India" by R. S. Sharma discusses some important problems concerning the pre-colonial phase of Indian history. Aniruddha Ray has introduced a rare French document on the invasion of India by Nadir Shah to analyse the French attitude towards the socio-political condition then prevailing in India.

The reviews of nearly forty-eight books occupying half of the Biannual, will be of immense help to the scholars and the researchers. One would eagerly look forward to the subsequent issues for more of such illuminating historical essays.

—Arundhati Mukhopadhyay

## J.R.'s Selected Speeches

J. R. JAYAWARDENE: SELECTED SPEECHES (1944-73) H. W. Cave & Co. Ltd. Rs. 9-50

THIS LITTLE BOOK of a hundred pages is a fine collection of the speeches made by J. R. Jayewardene during the last thirty years.

During this time, Mr. Jayewardene filled many roles and played very important parts in the political life of the country. He first entered the supreme legislature in 1943 as a young radical of the Ceylon National Congress. With this election to the first Parliament of Ceylon, he became Minister of Finance, and also Minister of Agriculture for a short time in the second. With the re-election of the UNP to power in 1965, he became Leader of the House in addition to his posts of Minister of State and Parliamentary Secretary for Defence and External Affairs. Even while Dudley Senanayake was alive he became Leader of the Opposition after 1970. Finally, with Senanayake's death, he became leader of the UNP too in which capacity he has been such in the news in recent times.

Mr. Jayewardene is, of course, one of the best public speakers in Sri Lanka today. Whether in the legislature or on public platforms, he holds his audiences spellbound with his lucid style of delivery and felicity of expression. H. A. J. Hullugalle says in his Introduction to the book: "The lofty content of his themes, the elegance of language, the smooth flow of ideas, the logical sequence of the argument and the meticulous care with which he prepares his speeches, give them a special place in the annals of our public life."

There are 23 speeches in all in this book. They include ones delivered on such historic occasions as the Commonwealth Foreign Ministers Conference in Colombo (which gave birth to the Colombo Plan) and the San Francisco Conference on the Peace Treaty with Japan. Other speeches deal with such varied topics as the problems of foreign policy and parliamentary democracy

in Sri Lanka, science, economic development, Buddhism and culture. One must read his tributes on the deaths of such men as Gandhi and Kennedy, D. B. Jayatilaka, D. S. and Dudley Senanayake to enjoy the sheer brilliance of his prose.

MANY STUDENTS of politics would have read most of these speeches before. But Caves must be congratulated for bringing them all under one cover and choosing for this book Mr. Jayewardene's most important and best. Incidentally, of the 23 speeches published here, only 4 happen to be ones delivered in our supreme legislature. The others were mostly delivered at various International Conferences or local organisations.

Mr. Jayewardene's speeches help the reader to get an idea of the development of his ideas as well as those of the UNP over the last 30 years. Concepts like peaceful co-existence and non-alignment are taken so much for granted nowadays that present-day youth, in particular, do not know how things were like not so very long ago. The situation is rendered more confused by Mr. Jayewardene himself and his party voicing support for these concepts on which the present Government's foreign policies are based. Mr. Jayewardene's old speeches help to rectify this position.

Thus, his speech at San Francisco will help readers to understand that what the UNP pursued in the foreign policy field was to merely act as a satellite state of the USA. He himself said in another speech on another occasion (not published in this book) that as long as the UNP was in power it will follow the foreign policies of the USA!

In the course of his speech in 1954 to the local branch of the International Law Association Mr. Jayewardene said: "Ceylon's foreign policy has grown out of the idealism which a small nation like ours can afford to preach and practise. But there has never been absent also the realism which arises from our geographical and strategic position in the Indian Ocean.... A realistic appreciation of our position in South-East Asia has made us enter into a military alliance with the United Kingdom and to permit ships and aircraft carrying troops of the Western Powers to refuel in Ceylon on their way to the battle-fronts of Korea and Indo-China."

HE ADDS that "he (D. S. Senanayake) refused to accede to the request of the Opposition to deny harbour facilities to an American flotilla on its way to the Korea war" on the ground that "the UNO was opposing aggression by International Communism." All this was a far cry from the non-alignment to which the UNP pays lip-service today.

Or read this extract from that same speech: "Ceylon has followed the principles laid down by the late Mr. D. S. Senanayake in her attitude to Communist countries. He several times expressed the view that even at his advanced age he was in politics to protect Ceylon from Communism, that he believed in rebirth and felt that he would be born over and over again to help in the fight against Communism. His attitude to International Communism was governed by the knowledge that he felt that International Communism did not seek peace, but sought to bring about troubles in other countries. This, he thought, tended to war. He openly stated that he did not approve of these methods. He identified International Communism with the policy of the Soviet Union. He said: 'Enslavement of the world is what we believe to be their attitude.... We will never be with Russia until she gives up her policy.' He did not believe in the 'Russian method of penetrating into other countries and disturbing the good relations that exist in those countries and trying by force of insidious methods to bring trouble to those countries'. Ceylon has followed these ideals since then."

TROUBLE IN ANY COUNTRY according to the gospel of Messrs. D. S. Senanayake and J. R. Jayewardene, therefore, is due to "International Communism" which they equate with the policy of the Soviet Union. As for having nothing to do with Russia "until she gives up her policy" (nothing less!), this was only an echo of the same demand put forward at that time by the leading architects of the cold war Winston Churchill and Harry Truman, Ernest Bevin and John Foster Dulles. This was the policy that was to make Ceylon the laughing stock of fellow-Asians at Bandung in 1955. It was this policy that, *inter alia*, sealed the fate of the UNP in 1956.

Addressing the Ceylon Association for the Advancement of Science in 1966, Mr. Jayewardene said: "Our Cabinet, the executive government, is chosen from the Legislature and throughout its life is dependent on its maintaining a majority therein. We have followed the British constitution in this respect. In some countries, the Executive is chosen directly by the people and is not dependent on the Legislature during the period of its existence, for a specified number of years.... Such an executive is a strong executive, seated in power for a fixed number of years, not subject to the whims and fancies of an elected legislature; not afraid to take correct but unpopular decisions because of censure from its parliamentary party. This seems to me a very necessary requirement in a developing country faced with grave problems such as we are faced with today."

ONE WONDERS whether Mr. Jayewardene is of the same opinion still today. Or this: "Again, the full period of life of an elected parliament in our country is 5 years. After a general election, for one year a new government celebrates its victory and is settling down; the last two years before the general election are devoted to how to win the election that is to come; the period during which new measures can be adopted and im-

### SOUTH AFRICA

In view of Portugal's likely withdrawal from Angola and Mozambique and fearing the spread of the liberation movement southward, the racist government of South Africa is now employing both stick and carrot, combining, in other words, punitive operations against the indigenous population with a drive to woo the Africans. Only recently an eleven-page circular was distributed among the personnel of the South African, exclusively white, army on how to behave towards Africans. They were told to wean themselves from the habit of calling Bantu tribesmen "monkeys" or "baboons" and to call the Africans by their names—provided they knew them.

plemented hardly exceeds two years. In England at one time the period was 7 years. This period of 5 years also needs consideration."

In a lecture on "The Opposition in a Developing Nation" at the YMCA in 1971 Mr. Jayewardene has said: "Opposition that is destructive, excessive and irresponsible will be dangerous to democracy in the present context of Ceylon politics.... Let us therefore consider as men of mature years and intellectual accomplishments, not seeking to ride our hobby horses on which we have ridden for many years and from which it is not easy to dismount, but let us see whether those hobby horses are the relevant ones today.... Can we afford to play the political game with the same kind of nonchalance which parliamentarians in the more developed countries are in the habit of doing.. Economic development is an absolute necessity for the survival and the growth of democracy and that cannot be achieved without a good deal of decisive government action."

Mr. Hullugalle has asked in his Introduction: "What risk does he (Mr. Jayewardene) run in publishing speeches delivered over a period of thirty years? Will not the slip show sometimes beneath the white sarong? I do not think he need bother about small inconsistencies and contradictions."

Whether J. R. Jayewardene's contradictions and inconsistencies are small or big one's is best left for the reader's to decide. Anyway, Cave's must be congratulated again for bringing out a valuable book that will prove extremely useful to all students of current political affairs.

—Basil Perera

NEW METHOD

# To Remove Bad Odour of Parboiled Rice

THE BAD ODOUR of parboiled rice can be eliminated using a cheap method developed by the Paddy Processing Research Centre (PPRC) in Thanjavur Tamil Nadu.

According to the scientists of the centre, rice picks up the foul odour while the paddy is soaked in water

for two or three days. They have found that the addition of sodium chromate to the water "completely eliminates the odour."

The amount of sodium chromate needed is about five grams for every 10 kg. of paddy soaked, according to the scientists. The use of this chemical in par-boiling has been experimented widely in a number of rice mills in Tamil Nadu, Pondicherry and Andhra Pradesh.

An evaluation committee from the Union Food Ministry recently visited a rice mill in Kuttalam where sodium chromate parboiling was demonstrated. The committee members observed that "there was no smell in the chromate-treated soaked paddy."

Spraying salt solution on mature ears of paddy in the field has been recommended by the PPRC to help in the early ripening of the grains, so that they can be harvested "immediately two days after the salt spray."

According to the PPRC scientists, even a downpour after spray had not prevented the early ripening of the paddy.

Salt spray also reduced the moisture in the grains, thereby making them less susceptible to fungus attack during storage, it was claimed.

PEOPLE OVER 40

## EXERCISE ONLY . . . . .

By DIANA LERNER

EXERCISE IS NOT for everyone, says cardiac specialist Dr. Arthur Bernstein, of the Beth Israel Medical Centre.

In fact, he advises persons over 40, "whenever you get the urge to exercise lie down until the urge passes—unless you are in perfect health and have tested proof of the amount of exertion your heart can tolerate."

A Cardiac Rehabilitation Centre named for Dr. Bernstein was dedicated recently at the Kupat Holim Hamehad (Mercazit) in Haifa as a gift by the Bnai Zion Foundation of the U.S., of which Dr. Bernstein is a member. The Bnai Zion Foundation supports a chain of medical clinics throughout the country.

THE CENTRE, predicts Dr. Bernstein, will play a major role

in treatment and prevention of heart attacks. It will provide not only coronary patients but many others who avail themselves of its stress testing equipment with tailor-made prescriptions as precise as medicine for the type of activity that is suitable for them.

This is an additional stress testing facility in Israel and will be available for more outpatients in the Haifa region. The electric treadmill, electric monitoring devices and oxygen uptake studies are designed to measure the functional capacity of the heart to exercise. Used together with the electro-cardiogram (ECG), which shows what damage has already taken place, this facility can help predict the capacity of the heart to meet its work load.

Clinical Professor of Medicine at the New Jersey College of Medicine, Associate Professor of Cardiology at the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine and cardiac consultant at several New Jersey hospitals, Dr. Bernstein has done extensive research studies in cardiology. He advises persons who feel pressure in the middle of the chest to avail themselves of the stress testing.

THE WORST THING you can do to your heart, says Dr. Bernstein, is to have a heavy meal and follow it with a violent argument or vigorous physical exertion, either of which activities as well as extreme heat and cold increases the work of the heart by 50 per cent. Playing golf, he says, may seem a mild form of exercise but may actually be more harmful than tennis, if the psychological stress leads to strong irritation.

Here are some cardinal rules laid down by heart specialists: Keep your weight as close to normal as possible; eat low-saturated fats; limit intake of carbohydrates; limit smoking—all types, cigars and pipes as well as cigarettes; avoid getting upset; have a medical examination at least twice a year.

**FOR NEWS  
BEHIND THE NEWS**

read

**TRIBUNE**

regularly

# IS IT TRUE?

## Sherlock Holmes

❁ BTT on Gems and Jewellery

❁ Future of U.N.P.

IS IT NOT A FACT that the *Tribune* references to CRA capitalism has evoked a great deal of response from many quarters? That one reader has pointed out that the Business Turnover Tax (BTT) was recently amended whereby the BTT on the manufacture and sale of jewellery, gems and gold has been reduced from 15 percent to 5 percent? That this has been done while the BTT on a number of other items which go to make the cost-of-living index has been increased? That even the price of bread has been increased from 76 cents to 98 cents a pound? That though an effort has been made to justify the increase in the price of bread on the ground that the world market price of wheat and wheat flour has moved up, no attempt was made to explain fully why this further concession was made to jewellers and gem merchants? That the only reason adduced by some economic pundits was that this to offer of inducements was only intended to encourage the exporters of non-traditional goods like gems and manufactured jewellery? That this is the only another way of making the rich richer (and, therefore, the poor poorer)? That, apart from export, only the new rich and the CRA capitalists (having money in the black) who are in a position to buy gems and jewels in the domestic market? That it is strange why the BTT on luxuries should be reduced whilst the BTT on essential and utility goods required by ordinary poor people has been increased in many cases? That if export has to be encouraged it would be better to offer rebates on actual exports rather than lower the BTT? That street corner gossip today is that whilst the price of jewellery has been reduced the price of food-stuffs has gone up? That the UNP is naturally making the best propaganda use of this concession to the CRA capitalists?

IS IT NOT A FACT that the UNP is making a special effort to rebuild the party on a new footing? That it is said that a number of younger people who have so far not been in the forefront of UNP politics had come forward to build a new party? That various committees and sub-committees have been formed to formulate new policies which will give the UNP a new life in the contemporary period? That these young people are not enamoured of free rice and cheap travel and other subsidies to attract voters? That they realise that the age of promises which cannot be kept are over? That it was the UNP which had begun the era of subsidies and free rice, free education and free health services? That this, more than anything else, had brought economic disaster to the country? That the SLFP, LSSP and the CP, and even other parties had tailed behind UNP in proclaiming the virtues of subsidies and free rice? That every party had tried to outdo the other in the matter of granting such subsidised handouts to voters? That there are many old stagers and diehards in the UNP who still think that they can win over voters with these "gifts" which are tantamount to mass bribery?

IS IT ALSO NOT A FACT that the United Front, after a great deal of hesitation and with a great deal of trepidation, had begun cutting down on subsidies and the free element in the prices of essential commodities? That now the UF had even begun develop the courage to knock free rice out altogether? That it has already been cut down by half? That is something which the UNP had never dared to do although its best economists had wanted the party to do away with free rice and subsidised food? That even when the UF took the bold and courageous step of ending the era of subsidised food and free

rice by stages, the UNP talked heroically about the restoring the free rice to the full quota and restoring all subsidies? That this showed that the UNP still was in the grip of the old hangover brought about by being intoxicated by free rice and subsidised food? That it soon became apparent that common people were willing to accept the removal of the free rice and subsidised food? That the UF government was still maintaining the half quota of free rice because urban populations might be very adversely affected by its removal as the off-ration price of rice was still high? That once paddy production increased and the off-ration price of rice dropped, the Government would be able to remove the free rice gimmick altogether? That it is possible that in a short time the Government will confine the free rice ration only to urban and non-rice producing areas where the price of off-ration rice was still unnecessarily high?

IS IT NOT A FACT TOO that thinking and responsible persons in this country and outside have been impressed by this Government because it has taken steps to end the disastrous era of subsidies and free rice? That such people are looking forward to the day when the myths of free education and free medicine are also removed? That this Government will earn even greater respect and admiration if it did away with everything free completely? That this columnist has recently been in the rural countryside and it is clear that ordinary people are honest and genuine when they say they do not want free rice or anything else free? That they have realised that real economic development cannot take place if the economy was burdened with millstones round its neck in the form of subsidies and free rice? That writer Anatory Bukoba, who writes the *Shamba* in the *Tribune*, is yet an ardent believer in the UNP, but he states (in his contribution this week) that the ordinary villager is for the United Front because they do not believe in the unreal promises made by the UNP of free rice and cheap travel? That bragging by the UNP that it would restore free rice and subsidised food will not be believed by people who know that our economic resources cannot provide such generous handouts? That the UNP should draw the correct lessons from the realities in our countryside if it wants to survive as a Party.