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Sri Lanka's Next Budget And The Oncoming Capitalist World Economic Crisis

THE NEXT BUDGET of the Government is scheduled to be presented on November 6, that is in less than three weeks from now. Government's plans for the next budget must necessarily now be in the final and concluding stages. The Five Year Plan, proclaimed in 1972, has for a variety of reasons, domestic and international, not been adhered to in every detail. In fact, international monetary and financial upheavals, made more complicated by the oil crisis, and the uncontrollable inflation which has brought chaotic conditions into the world capitalist system (enabling the rich to get richer and the poor poorer), has compelled countries like Sri Lanka to adopt *ad hoc* policies and plans to sustain their economies and generate whatever development plans that were possible under the circumstances.

Our Government, like other governments similarly placed, has used the world capitalist crisis as an excuse and apology for many acts of commission and omission on its part. This is an understandable propaganda technique. But, there is as yet a tendency to paint everything with a rosy tint of optimism to make people feel that the future was assured if the present policies were followed. To make people forget immediate hardships we are told that land reform on the one hand and the Mahaveli project on the other would bring immense prosperity to the island within a few short years—and that if oil were found in Pesalai, or the Delft (Neduntivu), then the millennium would descend upon us overnight.

This is a beautiful dream and everybody would wish that it comes

true. But, whilst we indulge in this day-dreaming (we have been promised our own oil before the Sinhala and Tamil New Year in 1975), and whilst we carry ourselves to ecstatic worlds of wishfulfilment on such pipe dreams, it is necessary to remind ourselves that the world capitalist system, of which Sri Lanka is still very much a part, in spite of its heroic attempts to streamline and expand its public sector in its domestic and foreign trade economic operations, is heading for a crisis that can either lead to a monetary collapse or a world war pregnant with possibilities of thermo-nuclear destruction.

The fact that Sri Lanka, like all countries in the non-aligned Third World, (some of whom like us, think that though they are presently suspended between capitalism and socialism, they are nevertheless edging their way to a wonderful socialist millenia,) is still very much a part of the world capitalist system is demonstrated by the faith we now have in the World Bank and the IMF. Many leaders of this government, when they came to power in 1970, had dismissed these organisations as "agencies" of a world "imperialist conspiracy" and had little or no use for them.

But now the situation seems to be different. This government has carried out the behests of the IMF and the World Bank on a large number of matters (cutting down subsidies, cutting down imports, and reducing credit—all of which this country could not afford in a strict capitalist reckoning), and Sri Lanka is today well on the way to becoming one of the blue-eyed examples of how a develop-

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ing nation should behave in a world dominated by the World Bank and the IMF.

And to show that Sri Lanka has gone long way on the road to accepting the IMF and the World Bank as useful instruments for the world economic system, our Minister of Finance has accepted the honour of being the President for the Committee of Twenty Four set up by the IMF to find solutions to some of the problems that now baffle developed as well developing nations in the capitalist sector of the world.

The time may come when pundits in Sri Lanka may be able to formulate a new law of social development that, just as it was possible to reach socialism in this island through parliamentary democracy, it was possible to usher in international socialism through the IMF and the World Bank. If this were not the case, the confidence we place in the IMF and World Bank and the enthusiasm we have developed for the deliberations of these organisations are misplaced.

THERE IS NOT THE SLIGHTEST DOUBT that the world capitalist system is sinking deeper and deeper into the bottomless morass of a general crisis with no immediate prospect of getting out of it. Economists and politicians trying to save the capitalist world from economic ruin through reforming the monetary system and improving trading patterns continue to hope that the current stagflation would not develop into a slump as in 1930. They are afraid that if a depression

overtakes the world, apart from the hardship and misery it would bring to millions of people in the world, it would endanger the capitalist system itself.

No less a person than US Secretary of State, Dr. Henry Kissinger, had very recently said that a major depression was already upon the world. The *Newsweek*, in its issue of July 8, 1974, stated that governmental circles and financiers in the advanced capitalist countries had started "...thinking the unthinkable...the unthinkable is the global slump—the real possibility of a world slump...Some economists fear that all nations may squeeze their economies too long and too hard, causing a world-wide collapse, in demand, higher unemployment and even widespread social unrest...Almost everywhere a greater emphasis on exports ranks as a key ingredient in inflation...But there is a vast danger in these efforts to cut imports and boost exports; the possibility of a murderous trade war that in turn leads to world-wide collapse."

This kind of plain and straightforward talk has become the order of the day in the citadels of the advanced capitalist countries. The attempts by various countries "to cut imports and boost exports" in order to fight inflation and balance their budgets will, it is said, lead to a "murderous trade war between them. This will in turn lead to a global slump in the world capitalist system.

How serious the situation really is can be seen from the Report of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). In its six monthly report for the first half of 1974, for seven leading advanced capitalist countries, namely USA, Canada, Great Britain, West Germany, France, Italy and Japan, it drew attention to the following facts: that the gross national product of these seven countries fell by 1.5 percent; that the growth-rate fell from 6.5 percent to 0.5 percent when compared with last year; inflation increased to 13 percent with the prospect of increasing further; and that the huge total balance of payments deficit of 40,000 million dollars was a menacing reality.

The financial system of the capitalist countries was unsteady. The official currency exchange rate

system had been abandoned and the currencies of these countries had been allowed to float in the market giving rise to extreme instability of the monetary system. This has led to unbridled anarchy and chaos in the capitalist monetary system. The *Newsweek* of August 12, 1974, writes: "There is little doubt that the financial command posts of the western world are suffering a crisis of confidence—one that conjures up ominous visions of a return to the panic of the 1930s. And as the strains of tensions grow, the normally quiet and efficient bankers who manage world's big money are suddenly experiencing flashes of fear, jangled nerves and short tempers." It also quotes from a secret report of a major Swiss bank as saying, "The international monetary system is in a state of total chaos and practically out of control."

Already several banks in West Germany have become bankrupt. One big bank, the Herstatt, declared bankruptcy last month. Another big bank, the Frankfurter Handelsbank A.G. closed down its office on August 27. This is the fourth big bank to go bankrupt in West Germany since the end of June. In USA, the intervention of the federal reserve board has saved New York's Franklin National Bank from meeting with the same fate as that of the Herstatt. Many other big banks in all these seven countries have lost much in international currency transactions and they have narrowly escaped disaster.

ONE OF THE METHODS advanced capitalist countries have used to soften and divert recessions (and to avoid or sidetrack depressions) was by passing the burden to their colonies (when they still had colonies) and now to the newly independent third world countries which are tied to the economic apron strings of the advanced countries. But this method of saving themselves has become more and more difficult with the third world countries taking steps to safeguard their economies from piratical inroads from the advanced countries. Furthermore, the third world countries have switched part of their trade to socialist countries which owing to the controlled, regulated and planned economies are able to avoid inflation, un-

employment and crisis. Socialist countries may labour under many restrictions, but their economies are stable. A recent UN report has pointed out that whilst the capitalist world was suffering from inflation, socialist countries continued to develop steadily with stable prices.

Unable to pass the burdens to the under-developed and developing countries so completely as in the past, capitalist countries are now in the process of cutting each others' throats in a bid to survive the crisis. Economists have pointed out that such a trade war would lead to great disasters that would undermine the system itself. Of the seven countries mentioned in the OECD report, Italy is the weakest, and fears have been expressed that Italy will be the first to become the victim of the slump, giving rise to a chain reaction engulfing the whole capitalist system. In Italy the price spiral has already moved up 20 percent in the first half of 1974 and it is expected that it will increase further in the second half. Furthermore, Italy has so much foreign debt that it is croaking under the debt burden. According to the *Newsweek*, 12/8/74, this debt burden, "could lead a country like Italy to simply declare a moratorium on the payment of its massive debts—a step that would very likely send the entire financial community into a self-destructive spin."

IT IS NECESSARY TO MENTION that in 1930 the capitalist system was salvaged through novel Keynesian theories and strategies of governmental spending to keep the system going and provide employment on a relief basis. Though Keynesian economics cannot bring as much comfort today as in 1930, the economists and leaders of the capitalist countries and the Third World countries are making all efforts possible to stave off the depression. For instance, in India the experts in the Ministry of Finance seem to think that the measures they have taken to control and regulate credit and the measures the Government had taken to fight inflation would soon curb the recessionary trends and prevent the general world economic crisis from completely damaging the economy of India. The Reserve Bank of India, however, did not

seem to be as hopeful as the Ministry of Finance, but the Bank too seems to have hopes that the world depression could be kept from undermining the stability of the Indian economy.

The *Newsweek*, 30/9/74, had a special article on why 1974 was not 1929 again. This is what it said: "The world economy seemed headed for a crack-up. The boom had ended, and the currencies of the world hung together in uneasy alignment while the financial system showed strain. In the United States, industrial production and home building dipped perilously; consumer demand went slack and inventories rose. Most alarming of all, the bottom seemed to have dropped out of the stock market. The new President jawboned for stability in prices and wages, mentioned public works while clinging to a balanced budget, and laid on a series of mini-summits with representatives of business, construction, transportation, labour and farming.

"The year was 1929, the beginning of a decade of global depression. But if the parallels to 1974 are eerily striking, they are reassuringly superficial—and the contrasts between then and now far more profound. While today we have double-digit inflation coupled with world wide shortages of food, fuel and other commodities, the pre-Depression era was plagued by overproduction and deflating prices and wages. Where the mood is glumly cautious today, it was giddily speculative in the months before the stockmarket crash. Farmers are prospering today; before the 1929 crash, they were still suffering from a slump that had started early in the decade. The supply of money may seem to be tight now, but at least it is growing by two percent; it was barely growing at all before the big slump, and it was brutally contracted once the slide began.

"Finally, the economic philosophy of the government then (the US), if it existed at all, verged on the *laissez-faire*; most governments today feel they know how to prevent an old-fashioned depression. They have erected institutional safeguards against—ranging from unemployment insurance to preserve consumer purchasing power to tighter regulation of unsound business practices—and

they are determined to avoid another world-wide bust...."

It was in this setting that more than a hundred of the world's Finance Ministers met in Washington recently. In the context of the great crisis, the measures they were able to agree upon in the meeting of the IMF and the World Bank seemed to be quite small. *The Economist*, 28/9/74, under the heading **A CENTIPEDE IS NOT A SPEEDY BEAST** stated: "Recession is already here. The challenge to the world's finance ministers and top bankers as they descend on Washington for the annual meeting of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank next week should be to prevent it turning into a disastrous slump. They should be discussing by how much they want world money supply and real gross world product to expand in 1975, and by what means. They will not meet this challenge, or least their formal speeches will not propose a cure. The most that this meeting may provide is a better understanding in the corridors of each other's problems, and some new subsidiary scheme for recycling oil funds that could give the creaking international banking system a small additional safety net...."

With a touch of cynicism, *The Economist* went on to say: "A big forum—the IMF has 126 member countries—is never a decision-making one. Today more and more of the world's finance ministers meet more and more frequently in order to settle less and less.."

And this is true of the latest meeting of the World Bank and IMF which was concluded a few days ago. The meeting highlighted the confrontations which had already developed with great sharpness between the rich and poor countries on the one hand, and the rich advanced countries and the oil-producing countries (which will soon be very rich), on the other. The rich countries want the poor countries not to demand more for the primary commodities they export—in the way that the oil producers had done, but the rich countries do not seem to have any intention of keeping down the prices of the goods they manufacture and export. Whilst this conflict has been going on for years, the confrontation on the oil front is new but explosive.

The latest phase of the oil battle started when the US decided to take a "tough line" with the oil producers: President Ford and Dr. Kissinger had virtually "threatened" the oil producers that if they did not lower oil prices the US and other countries would be compelled to take stern action against them to ensure that oil was available to the world at reasonable prices. The Shah of Iran had immediately reacted very sharply against this—probably because Washington in



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ruling out military intervention as one of the methods available to it to make the oil producers to see sense had betrayed the fact that military intervention was one of the methods envisaged—and this has roused indignation among the oil producers.

Whilst this confrontation between the USA on the one hand (supported by other oil consumers in the West) and the oil producers (led by the Shah of Iran) on the other continues to escalate regarding oil prices, the world is slipping into state of chronic crisis. To the USA's demand that the oil prices should be kept within reasonable limits, (and this view is supported by Saudi Arabia and some of the Arab oil producers), the Shah of Iran (fully backed by Venezuela) has retorted that oil producers would fix reasonable ceilings if the advanced industrialised countries similarly placed ceilings on the prices of the manufactured goods they exported.

This battle goes on still on a verbal level but with disastrous consequences especially to Third World countries which have to pay inflated prices for their imports from the advanced countries on the one hand and for oil from OPEC countries on the other—in a period when the price levels of primary commodities (except some food items) exported by the developing countries are fetching less and less of devalued currencies or floating currencies.

It is in this context and setting that the next Budget of Sri Lanka has to be framed. It will not be an easy task for the Minister of Finance or the Government. The credit squeeze, the import cuts and the excessive boosting of exports of even commodities we badly need here (gingelly, cement, light industries manufactures) have all combined to make life and development extremely difficult in Sri Lanka. We are following the advice of the IMF and the World Bank on these matters—but these are methods which are being seriously questioned (and criticised) by competent economists in the capitalist world.

What will our next Budget bring?

Tribunania

- Asian Identity
- Land Reform

PRIME MINISTER SIRIMAVO BANDARANAIKE'S visit to Pakistan last month—more than her visits to the three European countries, West Germany, Romania and Yugoslavia—has indicated that the new diplomatic thrust which has emerged from our Foreign Office, on the basis of the Indian Ocean Peace Zone plan, will bring Sri Lanka into the forefront of the Asian scene in the coming period.

It was in the Sri Lanka Prime Minister's speeches in Pakistan that special emphasis was laid on the need for countries in this part of the world to project a new **Asian Identity**. This would enable Asian countries to negotiate or discuss collectively with the other regional blocs, e.g. the Arab bloc, the African bloc, the Latin American bloc and the like in the developing Third World, and also the regional groupings in the developed world. In an era of regional co-operation, an **Asian Identity** will bring a new dimension to the countries of this continent. At the moment, there is only an ASEAN Identity among a group of five nations in Southeast Asia, and the the Shah of Iran is now seeking to form another bloc for economic co-operation with nine selected countries in South and Southeast Asia. But all these groupings have a parochial flavour in the context of a true and genuine **Asian Identity**.

The concept of **Asian Identity** was first put forward by Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike in New Delhi in 1947 at the first Asian Conference convened by Jawaharlal Nehru. In some recent issues of *Tribune* (vide 21/9, 28/9, and 5/10) Spartacus in his series on the *Commonwealth and Sri Lanka* had pointed out that Mr. Bandaranaike had suggested an **Asian Identity** to be concretised in an Asian UNO. It was therefore heartening therefore to find that the Prime Minister Sirimavo Bandaranaike suggesting

in her speeches in Pakistan the projection of a new **Asian Identity** in the context of current conditions.

In the joint Sri Lanka—Pakistan communique, about which we had made some some comments in our issue of September 28, it was made clear that Sri Lanka was wedded to a policy of actively strict neutrality (Mr. Bandaranaike had termed in dynamic neutrality), but that it was also deeply concerned about promoting an **Asian Identity**. In our earlier comments we had mentioned that "the communique was a masterpiece in drafting" and we had reprinted the text in full. Since that time we have taken the trouble to examine some of the other joint communiques to which Pakistan was a party and also a number of recent statements on international affairs issued by the Foreign Office in Islamabad and we find that the Sri Lanka-Pakistan joint communique stands out in singular glory for its non-aligned idiom and logic.

This is what we then said about the communique: "There is no doubt that this joint communique is a delicately worded document which sets out the true position without, as we said, treading on anybody's toes, least of all India with whom Sri Lanka has excellent relations at the moment. There is also no doubt that Prime Minister Bhutto is anxious to create a new image of Pakistan as a country in the Third World in the mainstream of countries which are fighting for independence, democracy and justice. It has not been easy for *Tribune* to forget CENTO, SEATO and the CIA which had dominated the Pakistan scene for nearly twenty years. But now the language of the joint Pakistan-Sri Lanka communique (for the first time as we are aware) is the language and idiom of the non-aligned Third world in regard to colonialism and imperialism and the like..."

Statements from Islamabad, after this communique, do not seem to have the full non-aligned flavour of the Pakistan-Sri Lanka joint statement, and it therefore seems fair to infer that the team of officials who had accompanied the Sri Lanka Prime Minister had a great deal to do with the drafting and wording of this document. Foreign diplomatic observers in this coun-

try have commented that that new wind sweeping through our Foreign Office, after the appointment of an official from the small but influential SLFP coterie of politicalised intellectuals to a high post, has brought a new dimension to the work and image of our FO.

If Prime Minister Sirimavo Bandaranaike is really intent in promoting the concept of **Asian Identity**, it would be necessary for her to extend the scope of the diplomatic thrust to other Asian countries like Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, Burma, Thailand, the Philippines, Vietnam (north and south), Japan and the two Koreas. The USSR and China are also two major Asian countries (the former is also European)—just as the countries of the Persian Gulf and West Asia are also part of the continent. Asia is also a continent of many races, many religious and many cultures—unlike the Latin American countries of the South American continent.

Nevertheless, in spite of the heterogeneity, there can something called an **Asian Identity** based at least on territorial and geographical togetherness which compels the need for economic (and therefore political) co-operation. And therefore it is only fit and proper that concept of an **Asian Identity** should have been resurrected from the heritage of SWRDism by the SLFP to make it a reality in the era of detente and the Indian Ocean Peace Plan.

It is believed that the Prime Minister will visit the Soviet Union in the middle of November—unless the Budget or the Kalawewa by-election makes a further postponement necessary. And if she is keen about promoting the idea of an **Asian Identity** she would be well advised to undertake an **Asian Journey** to a number of countries she has not been to so far. With all her commitments at home, it will not be easy for her to make journeys, but if the concept of an **Asian Identity** can make some headway before the **Non-Aligned Summit** in 1976, it will redound to her credit.

There are a great many stirring developments in our Foreign Office and we shall refer to them as opportunity and occasion arise

in the developing realities of our times.

ALL OVER THE WORLD there is a new upsurge demanding land reform and even land nationalisation. Sometime before Wilson recommended the dissolution of the British Parliament, the Labour Party had announced the plans for the nationalisation of building land. The only thing about it that surprised many people was that it had not been done earlier. And now that Labour has won the General Elections, these plans for the nationalisation of building land assumes a new significance.

It is not clear what part this pledge to nationalise building land played in the latest British Elections but it is well to remember that whilst the nationalisation of industry, shipbuilding, banking or package tours is discussed in a cold-blooded manner, the public ownership of land raises extreme emotions. In Britain, according to an article by Dingle Foot in the *Times*, controversies about the nationalisation of land went back for nearly one hundred years.

"It began in 1779 when the American writer, Henry George, wrote *Progress and Poverty*. According to him land was the source of all wealth. He argued for the 'single tax' to be levied on land values and to replace all other forms of taxation. This led to a political ferment which found its climax 30 years later when, in his *Peoples Budget*, Lloyd George introduced taxes on land values. Today they do not seem very startling. There was to be a development tax of one half-penny in the pound on the added value realized by the sales of land where this new value was solely due to the effort and expenditure of the community, a 20 per cent tax on increment value and a reversion duty of two shillings in the pound on the enhanced value of property when it was reverted at the end of a lease."

It is interesting to see how the question of land reform began in the era of modern parliamentary governments with adult franchise. It was the American political theorist, Henry George, who had set the ball rolling. In England, it had become a serious issue in the last quarter of the 19th century,

but it was in the years after the first World War that it became a major bone of contention in British politics.

It is also interesting to note that the term *People's Budget* was used by David Lloyd George in the twenties to sell some mildly radical reforms. But, what Lloyd George had proposed was then considered "revolutionary" and had raised a major storm. During this period the late S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike was in England in the University and there is no doubt that he would have been caught up in the political controversies of the day. It was no wonder then that when he returned to Ceylon he took one of the first opportunities in the State Council to proclaim that land reform was essential to human progress at this juncture of its history.

It was just over forty years after Bandaranaike had first mooted Land Reform in Ceylon that the present land reform was implemented in Sri Lanka. In Britain and other countries it had been suggested mainly for economic considerations, and the political implications with the socio-cultural repercussions were of secondary importance.

In Sri Lanka, political considerations was the primary consideration for Land Reform. The injustice which had been perpetrated by the Wastelands Ordinance of the 1830s had in the view of ruling

Danger in Overheating edible oil

An Australian food scientist has warned that continuous over-heating of oil in which snack foods are fried increases the cancer-producing properties of the foods. Dr. W. Draper, Senior lecturer in Chemistry at Queensland Institute of Technology said there was a substance in oil with cancer-producing tendencies, called Benzo-Alpha-Pyrene. When frying oil was kept at high temperatures for a number of hours, the level of toxicity is increased. To avoid this over-heating he recommended changing the oil every few hours or cooling it frequently. He warned people against eating food fried in black, smoky oil.

circles robbed the Kandyan of Kandyan land; and the new Land Reform was intended to restore the land back to the Kandyan. In other areas too, the main consideration was to liquidate the land-owning system which had come into being during the reign of the colonial rulers. All this the Land Reform Law of 1972 has succeeded in accomplishing.

To go back to what took place in Britain in the 1920s: "But those modest proposals produced a political storm. They were probably the main cause for the House of Lords rejecting the Budget—thus leading to a major constitutional crisis. This was, in part, due to the way in which Lloyd George presented the issue to the nation. At Govan, just before introducing the Budget, he offered some examples of what land ownership meant in Liverpool. He informed his audience that three noble landlords, Sefton, Salisbury and Derby, among them drew £ 345,000 per annum from ground rents in the city while contributing nil to the public expenditure. And then there was the famous Limehouse speech when he described the parasitic land-owners living on the unearned increase in land values.

'Who created these increments? Who made that golden swamp? Was it the landlord? Was it his energy? His brains?..It is rather hard that an old workman should have to find his way to the gates of the tomb bleeding and footstole, through the brambles and thorns of poverty. We cut a new path for him, an easier one, a pleasanter one, through fields of waving corn....'

The land reform controversies in Britain had drawn the redoubtable Winston Churchill into the campaign. Dingle Foot has interesting flashbacks to some of the highlights of the campaign.

"This became the major theme of radical propaganda. At public meetings, Winston Churchill led the singing of the 'Land Song' to the tune of 'Marching through Georgia.' Here is the opening verse:

Sound a blast for freedom boys
and send it far and wide.
March along to victory for
God is o'er our side.
While the voice of nature
thunders o'er the rising tide

God made the land for the
People".

The chorus was as follows:
The land, the land, twas God
who gave the land
The land, the land, the
ground on which we stand
Why should we be beggars
with the ballot in our hand?
God gave the land to the people".
One other verse will suffice:

"Hark, the sound is swelling from
the East and from the West,
Why should we beg work and
let the landlords take the best?
Make them pay their taxes for
the land; we'll risk the rest
On the land that's free for
the people."

But the land tax proposals did not find favour with the electorate in Britain at that time which was yet too conservative for any radical land reform. It must be also remembered that Britain was in that period getting rich profits from her Empire: and the British people were not inclined to disturb the status quo about land.

But, the situation today is different.

To go back to Dingle Foot's recounting of the way in which the question of land reform has evolved in Great Britain up to date: "In fact, the land taxes brought in little revenue and were abandoned in the days of the coalition. But after his loss of office in 1922, Lloyd George resumed his interest in the land and landlordism. On September 17, 1925, he addressed a great open air meeting in Devonshire. It was held at Killerton Park, which for 300 years had been the home of the Acland family.

"Sir Francis Acland presided and the audience numbered 17,000. Lloyd George addressed them in the rain. He proposed in effect the public ownership of all agricultural land. The state, which alone could provide the necessary capital, would become the universal landlord. There would be no freehold only 'cultivating tenure'.

"Farmers would remain secure and could bequeath their interests, provided that they kept their land in good heart. But the unemployed in the towns and cities would return to a revitalized agriculture. Lloyd George proclaimed:

'On every account the best exchange for the workless is an exchange of the green doors of the Labour Bureau for the green fields of Britain.'

"These proposals were embodied in the 'Green Book'. It was followed by the 'Brown Book' which provided for the wider public ownership of urban land."

"It is interesting to reflect what the results would have been on our national economy if these proposals had been adopted during the twenties.

"A campaign was launched by an organization called 'The Land and the National League', maintained from the Lloyd George fund. Speakers in specially chartered vans toured the English villages. But they failed to carry general conviction. Even the Liberal Party was divided. Sir Alfred Mond resigned from the party and joined the Conservatives. A special conference at the Kingsway Hall, summoned by Lord Oxford, was constrained to adopt a compromise proposals. The state was to have the first option on all land coming onto the market."

All this is no doubt old history, but relevant history at that. Though much of this has been forgotten except by students of history, Foot brings up the present: "This was generally forgotten. But the issues of land valuers, land valua-

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tion, and land ownership continued to vex succeeding Governments. The Labour Government set up the Land Commission to acquire land for the community and to recover a part of the development value realized in land transactions. One of the first acts of the Conservatives was to abolish both Commission and the Betterment Levy. Now the battle has resumed. The ghosts of the two Georges—Henry and David Lloyd—are watching. We should sing the Land Song again."

It is yet uncertain whether the new Labour Government in Britain will be able to implement

its proposals to nationalise all building land. The Land Commission, Labour had set up earlier, had been abolished by the Conservative Government led by Edward Heath. The present Labour proposal is limited in scope and is likely to rouse less emotional opposition. And times, too, have changed.

But in Sri Lanka, the United Front government has carried through one of the greatest possible changes in land ownership and land tenure within a period of two years in the most bloodless manner. Fifty years ago, with the British Raj

still reigning supreme in this island nobody would have dreamt that a thing like this was possible. The prevailing view was that what the British had ordained would prevail for a thousand years. Forty years ago, the suggestion about land reform fell on deaf ears. Thirty years ago it was dismissed as the wild call of revolutionary Marxists out to destroy civilisation. Twenty years ago it was still Marxist day-dreaming. Ten years ago, people wondered how it could be done without loss of production.

And now.....

CHRONICLE

SEPTEMBER 21 – SEPTEMBER 25

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

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 21: According to the *Daily News*, the World Bank yesterday announced the granting of a credit amounting to 15 million US dollars to Sri Lanka for financing the import of raw materials, components and spare parts required in the industrial sector, and for the import of spare parts for the agricultural and other selected sectors: the credit will be in the form of a soft loan through the World Bank's affiliate, the International Development Association (IDA). The Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, in a message to the nation on the first anniversary of the Production War has said that the greatest satisfaction she has had on the success of the production war was the wonderful sense of patriotism and sense of urgency generated in the people. The Prime Minister in a speech made at a dinner held in her honour by Mr. Bijedic, Prime Minister of Yugoslavia said that both Sri Lanka and Yugoslavia are deeply committed to the policy of non-alignment and the need for consultation and concerted action by the non-aligned nations is greater today than ever before. According to the *Daily News*, the Minister of Foreign and Internal Trade, Mr. T. B. Illangaratne, will shortly announce the foreign companies that will be exempted from incorporating themselves as rupee companies under the Companies (Special Provisions) Law: the deadline for all other companies to incorporate themselves is now December 31, 1974. Evidence in the Rs. 1 million gem smuggling case was concluded before the Criminal Justice Commission (Foreign Exchange Offences) yesterday and October 1 was fixed for addresses by counsel. A suspended sentence of two years rigorous imprisonment was passed on 13 suspects who pleaded guilty for attacks on police station in certain parts of the island before the C.J.C. inquiries into the April insurgency. As a further step in the run-up to the October 10 general election the Britain, Parliament was yesterday dissolved by the Queen. Deposed

President of Cyprus has announced that he will be returning to the island next month: Archbishop Makarios in an interview with *Le Monde* said that though he did not have formal evidence about the CIA's involvement in the July 15 coup, he was sure that the CIA knew perfectly well of what was being hatched.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 22: According to the *Sunday Times*, the Prime Minister Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike intends to start a direct dialogue with the Tamils during her first ever official visit to the Jaffna peninsula on October 5 and 6: the Premier will reiterate the attitude of goodwill of the United Front Government and the Sinhalese in general towards the Tamils and extend the hand of friendship to them and so create a cordial atmosphere for the removal of any genuine grievances, by discussion, and thereby lay the foundation for a united Sri Lanka: the Premier will formally declare open the Jaffna Campus of the University of Sri Lanka at Tirunelveli on October 6: she will also meet the farmers of the peninsula to study first hand the problems facing them. According to the *Sunday Observer*, the Minister of Public Administration, Local Government, Home Affairs and Justice, Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike, with Kuwait's Finance and Oil Minister Mr. Abdel Rahman Al Atiqi, on possible Kuwait investment in Sri Lanka's development program: on his second visit to Kuwait in two months, Mr. Bandaranaike met officials of the Kuwait Foreign Investment Company. Several incidents of bribery were reported yesterday where a police constable, a government clerk and a member of the public were taken into custody. According to the *Sunday Times*, a project to manufacture white sugar out of palmyrah sweet toddy was launched by the People's Economic Foundation: the Foundation intends setting up a factory which will produce 50 to 70 tons of white sugar during the tapping season: the cost of production is expected to be around Rs. 3 per pound of white sugar. The Ja-ela police arrested a man selling dog flesh as mutton and beef: the suspect is alleged to have been selling flesh of slaughtered dogs in the Dehiwela, Narahenpita, Ja-Ela and Gampaha areas. The head of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) was quoted as saying in a newspaper interview that the world oil price would be raised by 12 per cent next December. Soviet and American space specialists concluded four week series

of meetings in Moscow for next year's joint Soviet-American space flight.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 23: Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, begins her return journey after the tour of four countries—Pakistan, West Germany, Rumania and Yugoslavia: she break journey at Athens and Karachchi and is scheduled to arrive at the Bandaranaike International Airport at noon tomorrow. According to the *Daily Mirror*, all students who receive the minimum passes at the recent G.C.E. Advanced Level examination will be admitted to the various higher education courses: according to the *Daily News*, the new selection rules for admission to the University which become operative in 1977 allow the admission of only ten percent of all private candidates to the university's campuses: students will be allowed a maximum of three attempts at the NCGE examination which will be specifically for school-going students and not private candidates: an age limit of 17 has been set for this examination: the first will be held in December next year. The leading of evidence by the state and defence in the gem smuggling case before the Criminal Justice Commission (Exchange Frauds) was concluded on Friday: addresses by counsel will begin on October 1. Several Muslim religious bodies and other organisations have appealed to the Food Commissioner to issue good quality rice during the Ramazan—the month of fasting for Muslims. Two headless Buddha statues of at least 1000 years old were found in Mylapore in Tamil Nadu last Friday. Nine persons including two smuggling king-pins, were arrested and detained in Bombay under the Maintenance of Internal Security Act within hours after it was amended by a Presidential Ordinance. The Kashmir leader Sheikh Abdullah indicated in New Delhi that no settlement was in sight for his early return to power in the State on the basis of a return to the pre-1953 position. Richard Nixon, the former US President is expected to enter hospital tomorrow for an indefinite period of tests and treatment for phlebitis: the ex-President who earlier refused to enter hospital is now doing so on the advice of his doctors and family. Nearly 9,000 people are feared dead and more than 60,000 have been left homeless in floods caused by hurricane in Tegucigalpa, according to official estimate: the authorities fear that the death toll may be even over 200,000 though this was unlikely.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 24: The Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, returns this afternoon at the Bandaranaike International Airport after a 20-day goodwill tour of four countries. According to the *Daily News*, paddy production is expected to reach an all-time high this year: present estimates put the production figure at around 80 million bushels. Speaking at a meeting in Galle the Deputy Minister of Education, Mr. B. Y. Tudawe, said that socialism should be taught in schools and a text book embodying the history of socialism in Sri Lanka should be published. Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike, Minister of Public Administration, Local Government and Justice, returned to the island yesterday after a tour of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Iran for talks on economic aid to Sri Lanka. The Delimitation Commission has extended the deadline for making representations to it from October 1 to October 31. According to the *Daily News* the setting up of a Commonwealth Development Bank or Finance Corporation is one of the many matters that will be discussed at

this week's meeting of the Commonwealth Finance Ministers at Ottawa: Dr. N. M. Perera, Minister of Finance, will lead the Sri Lanka delegation at the Conference. Far reaching changes in the Bribery Act in the form of an amending Bill were issued last night as a supplement to the gazette of September 13, under the authority of the Minister of Justice: under a new clause there is provision for the search of any place, building, house or premises and the taking into custody of any book, document or anything deemed necessary for investigation on a search warrant issued by a magistrate. Experiments mixing soya bean powder with Lakspray have proved successful according to tests carried out by scientists of the Department of Agriculture: a team of scientists of the Department are now in Canada to negotiate a loan of 8,000,000 dollars to purchase plant to carry out this project. Air Ceylon's Trident aircraft which has undergone a complete overhaul will begin operational flying from Thursday. Democratic Senator Edward Kennedy has announced that he will not be a candidate for the American Presidency in 1976. China and Philippines are likely to establish diplomatic connections soon. Saudi Arabia's Minister of Oil, Sheik Yamani, has announced that his country will oppose any attempts to increase world oil prices.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 25: The Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, who arrived yesterday after a 20-day visit from abroad said that her mission was a complete success and individual joint economic committees would be set up with Pakistan, Yugoslavia and Rumania on the same lines as Sri Lanka's arrangements with India: She also said that the bonds of friendship between Sri Lanka and the four countries she visited had been further strengthened: there is better understanding now with those countries and she could hope for assistance and co-operation from those countries for the economic development of Sri Lanka. SLFP Branch Unions and unions of the United Front will hold a mass meeting at the Town Hall today to commemorate the 15th anniversary of the death of Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike: the procession will start from the National State Assembly at 1.30 p.m. According to the *Daily Mirror*, a handbomb was thrown last night into the premises of the Jaffna Campus of the University of Sri Lanka at Tirunelveli: according to the Police, the nameboard of the Campus was slightly damaged. According to the *Daily News*, there will no change in the price of sugar on the ration from October 1: the ration will be reduced to 3/4 lbs per book and price will be 54 cts: at present 1 lb is made available on ration at 72 cts. According to the *Daily Mirror*, there is a sharp increase in Indo-Sri Lanka smuggling traffic: smuggling between the two countries had reached such proportions and become so lucrative that "smuggling co-operatives" have been established. Complaint was filed in the Chief Magistrates Court yesterday against a Director of the Bank of Ceylon under the Bribery Act charging him with making a false declaration of his assets. The Deputy Inspector General of Police (Colombo), Mr. Rudra Rajasingham, yesterday ordered special dusk to dawn Police patrols in the City to combat gangs of midnight murderers: this follows a spate of midnight robberies and murders in the city during the past few weeks.

INTERNATIONAL-AFFAIRS

BY ARIEL

- Labour Wins
- Murder Of Prats

IN GREAT BRITAIN, the Labour Party won an overall majority over all other parties, but it was slender majority of only three. The Conservatives and Liberals lost ground and will have fewer members in Parliament, but the Scottish and Welsh Nationalists have increased their representation. The Liberals polled an increased percentage of the votes but had fewer seats—and Jeremy Thorpe has stated that the system of electoral representation needed revision.

Pollsters and others had predicted a much bigger majority for Labour mainly because of the solid support the Trade Unions Congress had decided to extend to it, but the actual outcome did not give Labour the anticipated minilandslide. But Prime Minister, Harold Wilson, has stated that his Government had a "viable and working majority" to effect necessary socialist measures to pull Britain out of the mess she was in. The present Labour Government has been returned on a programme much more to the left than any Labour government in the past. It is also committed to re-negotiate with the Common Market some of the terms of Britain's entry to the E.C.M.

At the time of writing, Wilson has announced some of the measures he contemplates taking almost immediately, but it is yet too early to say what impact they will have on the economy which is in the grip of one of the worst inflationary spirals Britain has known. The task before the Wilson government will not be easy, but at least he can be confident that he will have the benefit of industrial peace at least for a time—and this is something which no Conservative or a Conservative-Liberal Coalition could have had at this stage.

What takes place in Britain has an important bearing for Sri Lanka, because the UK has been this

country's leading trading partner for over a century and it still is—although the paramountcy of the British position has been reduced a great deal. Although Britain's economy will have important repercussions on our own, there are many who are anxious to know how the Wilson Government will deal with problems like the upgrading of the Diego Garcia Base in the Indian Ocean. The Tories had undoubtedly given the green signal to the USA to go ahead with expanding the facilities on the Diego Garcia Islands, and some change had been expected when the Wilson government had come to power in March. But, being a minority government, it has evidently moved very cautiously on matters like Diego Garcia. It will be interesting to see how the new Wilson Government will set about dealing with sensitive problems in foreign affairs like Diego Garcia.

THE PINOCHET JUNTA OF COLONELS in Chile has come in for a great deal of attention in recent months. The brutal and barbarous manner in which it had dealt with its political opponents and liquidated many thousands of them has shocked the world. Important international organisations, including the IPU (International Parliamentary Union), have passed resolutions that political freedom should be restored in Chile. Matters became even more complicated when there was a leak in the USA that the CIA had spent \$ 8 millions (or more) to "destabilise" the Allende government, and on top of this President Ford proclaimed the doctrine that the USA indulged in this kind of subversion because other governments too dabbled in such dirty tricks. Ford had also emphasised that what was done was in "the interests of the countries involved".

Even Kissinger's image has suffered because he was the chairman of the White House Committee of 40 which had overlooked CIA activities in other countries. Inside the USA itself, there was a major uproar, with strident voices in the Senate and the Congress that there should be greater control over CIA activities in foreign countries. Several books have appeared in recent weeks setting out the history of CIA activities in

different parts of the world. Knowledgeable observers feel that the hot air about the CIA will blow over and that the CIA would be allowed to continue its activities as of old—with greater attention being paid to prevent leaks.

In the meantime, the persecution of opponents by the Pinochet Junta seems to have overflown national boundaries. On Monday, August 30, General Carlos Prats, commander of the Chilean Army in Allende's day, and his wife were murdered early that morning in Buenos Aires by a bomb placed under their Fiat car. This murder was attributed to the Argentine Anti-Communist Alliance (AAA) which had been formed about a year ago and which has in the past two months indulged in an orgy of killing. It has so far claimed responsibility for 17 brutal murders in addition to the disappearance of six exiles from Uruguay and Chile who had sought asylum in the Argentine.

The AAA seems to act with impunity. "It appears on the scene in unmarked cars (like the special branch of the Argentine police) and securing entry to the victims' homes by showing police credentials. In a number of instances they have 'arrested' people whose bodies have been later found in deserted neighbourhoods, usually riddled with machine gun bullets. All their admitted murders have been savage. And their communiques, sent to the newspapers after each killing, are crude. 'Another bolshe done away with, another bad Argentine... three down and three to come' is a typical example. Their victims include a leftwing peronist congressman, two lawyers and two labour leaders associated with the left. But most of the people they have murdered have been young leftwing peronists and there seems to have been at least two instances of mistaken identity..." (vide *The Economist*, 5/10/74)

It was suggested that the AAA had come into being as a backlash to leftwing terrorism during the Peron period (and just before it). "And whilst the leftwing guerillas have been more selective in their targets, and their death lists secret, they have plenty of blood on their hands. The marxist-leninist People's Revolutionary Army (ERP) is in

the process of carrying out its threat to murder 16 army officers in its retaliation for the 16 guerillas whom they say were summarily executed when the ERP attacked an army garrison in August. Two officers have been killed so far and another four wounded. Altogether, nearly 350 people have been killed for political reasons since peronism was restored in Argentine less than 18 months ago. And the violence escalates daily. The president, Senora Peron, has been calling in vain for an end to the slaughter. The army has declared an all-out war on the ERP, pledging itself to wipe out the whole (Maoist) group. The government has rammed through even tougher anti-subversion laws than those adopted by Peron in January. The fear is that these laws will be used to silence dissent rather than to end the violence. And, it is noted, quietly and somewhat fearfully, that the Government has not condemned the Argentine Anti-Communism Alliance in the same terms as the People's Revolutionary Army" (vide *The Economist*, 5/10/74).

The situation in the Argentine was such that it was easy, as suggested by observers, for the Pinochet junta to secure the assassination of General Carlos Prats who had sought political asylum in Argentine. And observers, as in all other matters of this kind today, see the hand of the CIA in the murder of Prats. And it is said that Pinochet and his rightwing patrons had good reason to eliminate Prats because there were murmurs of new a leftwing-led armed insurrection in Chile against the Pinochet regime. Furthermore, inside the Chilean Army too there was a growing movement led by a group, the *Constitutionalists*, who had circulated their manifesto secretly in the armed services, particularly the Navy. In one of the circulars secretly going the rounds, it was stressed, according to reports, that many armed forces men now recalled the words of Prats that the Army should safeguard the Constitution and not enter into conspiracies to stage a coup d'etat. It was felt that Prats might become the symbol of a movement in the Army and Navy to struggle against the Junta. This is why it is believed that the Prats murder was engineered by the Pinochet Junta.

Juntas do not seem to last very long these days. The Salazar and Caetano regime had survived in Portugal for nearly 40 odd years, whilst the Franco regime is still power in Spain. In Portugal a revolution has brought a new ferment which has liberated its colonies. And, a leftwing regime is virtually in power in Lisbon. How long this will be allowed to go on (NATO cannot afford to have its flank weakened in this way) is a matter of doubt. However, NATO knows that a rightwing junta is not the answer to the problem. The rightwing experiment in Greece had led to disastrous consequences undermining NATO in one of its most vital points.

Whether the mounting opinion throughout the world against the Pinochet junta will have any impact on Chilean politics is yet to be seen. And the Junta does not seem to have solved any of the basic problems it had wanted to set right. And the brutal terror it has let loose has not given even the "peace and tranquility" the middle classes in Chile had wanted.

CHINA-3

AFTER MAO

by L. H. W.

Hongkong.

WHILST the fight against Soviet "revisionism" is the cardinal factor of China's policy, both for domestic purposes as well international policies, the government of the People's Republic of China has to contend with many problems on the economic sector. Admittedly, this anti-Soviet, anti-Russian stance is essential to defeat forces still supporting to the much-criticised policies of Lin Piao. In foreign affairs, the anti-Soviet stand is used not only to win support among the rich and developed countries like the USA, UK, France and West Germany, but it is also useful weapon to "destabilise" Soviet influence and prestige among Third world countries.

Peking's world outlook is based on the theory of the two super-power conspiracy to dominate the world by exploiting the lesser powers and more especially the

poorer powers. The main fire is directed at the Soviet Union as the arch-villain whilst the USA is berated only for succumbing to Soviet wiles. How far this policy and outlook will carry China is yet to be seen, but the continuing and persistent anti-Soviet campaign, especially inside China, makes many wonder whether there is still some deep-rooted below-the-surface support for the USSR in China itself as a fellow communist country.

The Tenth Party Congress laid the imprimatur of approval on this policy of relentless opposition to Moscow and its "revisionism", but since that time Confucius too has been added to the list of the nation's enemies. There are observers here who seem to think that large sections of the Chinese people will soon get tired of the constant outpourings against Confucius and even Soviet revisionism, but other observers are inclined to think that this propaganda against Confucius and Soviet Russia will leave an indelible mark on the thinking of the Chinese people for many decades to come.

This does not mean that there are no oppositional elements inside China. The revival of the wall posters sometime ago was no doubt intended to channel the feelings of unrest and discontent even among loyalists into noisy escapism. But, if one reads between the lines in some of the Chinese publications, especially the newspapers published in the provinces, it would appear that the Government has to contend with strong opposition elements. What are described in these papers as "subversion" and "sabotage" may be nothing more than the exercise of legitimate democratic rights of protest in other countries, but in the idiom of communist China hard words are used to describe whatever is not approved by the hierarchy.

It is also a fact that in spite of significant advances, China is today faced with serious economic problems. They are no doubt different from what obtains in capitalist or developing third world countries, but they are nevertheless serious matters. Economists of repute have noted that the over-emphasis placed on the war industry in China has caused imbalances in other sec-

to's of industry. Furthermore, the compelling need to boost exports has driven the Government to sell its rice abroad (either for hard currency or for barter of essential commodities like rubber); and imported grains are distributed to the people. By the July of this year, China had already ten million tons of grains which is double the level of the level of the annual purchases of the commodity in 1960.

AT THE MOMENT, the most significant aspect of China is its renewed attempt to reach out to the rest of the world. In 1971/72, it had the first upsurge which brought it to the UN and had established a detente with the USA. Then followed a period of activity on a much lower key where increased attention was paid to fighting the ghost of Confucius and Lin Piao on the domestic front. Now once again, even with the redoubtable Chou in and out of his sick bed, the Brains Trust in the Chinese Foreign Office—rated by many to be the collective leadership in the next line of succession (Teng Hsiao-Ping, Li Hsien-Nien, Chen Hsi-Lien and Chang Chun-Chiao)—have begun to display a major outward thrust.

Already diplomatic relations have been established with Malaysia. Very soon relations will be established with the Philippines. With two of the ASEAN powers establishing relations with China, the position of Indonesia, Singapore and Thailand gets weaker in their anti-Peking stance. Thailand will probably be the first to come to terms with China and it is only a matter of time before Indonesia and Singapore also follow suit. With this, China would have established relations with all countries in Southeast Asia—and the only countries in Asia with which it has not established relations will be Cambodia, South Vietnam and South Korea. Taiwan, of course, is a special case.

It must be noted that China's detente with the USA primarily strengthens China's front against Soviet Russia. It is the foundation stone of Peking's current foreign policy. Unlike the USSR, the USA has no boundary or territorial disputes with China, and the only bone of contention between them, Taiwan, will be resolved by the

passage of time. For China to get an opening into Southeast Asian countries, it needed a detente with the USA, because it was necessary to break down the barriers which had been created by the presence of the large overseas Chinese populations in all south-eastern countries.

China has therefore been anxious to establish a special relationship with the USA vis a vis its confrontation with the Soviet Union. But the USA however has persisted in its policy of detente with the USSR and this comes into conflict with Peking's foreign policy calculations. This, more than anything else, is the basic motive, for the strong Chinese denunciations of the "two superpower conspiracy". It is for this reason also that Peking paid greater attention to Edward Heath (who had followed a vigorous anti-Soviet policy) than to Wilson and the Labour Party. This is also why China wants NATO as a powerful weapon against the Warsaw Pact.

Critical observers had also noted that at the Tenth Party Congress, China's attitude to the anti-imperialist struggle was put on a new dimensional level. It was no longer the old straight forward fight against imperialism. This qualitative change in regard to the approach to anti-imperialism was seen when Peking recognised the Pinochet junta whereas all Third World countries, which China wooed assiduously, condemned the overthrow of the Allende government and the tyranny established by the military junta with the active assistance of the CIA.

TO SUM UP, one cannot do better than quote an extract from the editorial in the *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 4/10/74, in its special Twentyfifth Anniversary Number: "...And even when a dynamic stability has been achieved and China can return to the original priority of economic progress, another central contradiction emerges—that between Mao's vision of the new socialist man (willing to sacrifice his own narrow interests to those of the State and of the future generations) and the uncomfortable fact that human nature is greedy—that men work harder for material incentives or on their private plots.

"The story of the last 25 years in China has thus been one of continuous high drama, zig-zagging between periods devoted to different priorities or to the solution of one of the contradictory factors. The early convulsion of land reform gave way to a period of solid reconstruction, followed by the intellectual ferment of the Hundred Flowers, and then the massive attempt to cut economic corners in the Great Leap Forward. The bitter years that followed (exacerbated by the break with Moscow) in turn led to the economic successes of the mid-1960s, progress bought by tolerating revisionist material incentives. The cost was duly paid during the great purge of the Cultural Revolution. The subsequent achievements of the early 1970s revealed the new contradictions, resulting in the campaign to expunge the influences of Lin Piao and Confucius.

"Mao Tse-tung has subjected China to great strains in realising his vision. Economic progress has been sacrificed to the pursuit of political rectitude ('Better Red Than Expert'). During the Great Leap Forward, cadres, workers and peasants donated their enthusiasm but fell short of the vision. During the Cultural Revolution, the encouragement given to the divisive forces ('It is right to rebel') brought China to the verge of anarchy. Even the anti-Lin, anti-Confucius campaign looked at one time as if the theme ('Dare to swim against the Tide') would undo many post-Cultural Revolution achievements. Mao has also been compelled to dispense with the services of many

QUOTABLE QUOTES

The moral of the Rice Subsidy in our country is:—

"You can feed some people free all the time; you can feed all the people free for some time but you cannot feed all the people free all the time".—Mr. Appapillai Navaratnam, Regional Manager, (Northern Region), Bank of Ceylon, Jaffna at the meeting that followed the opening of the Manipay Branch of the Bank of Ceylon, on 3rd September, 1974 by Mr. Bernard Soysa M.P., Colombo South.

PAKISTAN

DEAD AS DODO

—the declining “generalist” cult and the emerging modern professional manager—

BY NAZIM

of his closest comrade in arms who have either failed to share his vision or have attempted to turn the dynamic situations he has created to their own advantage. It says much for the inherent stability of the People's Republic that it has withstood the loss of many able leaders, including a defence minister, a head of state and an heir apparent with less trauma than the US suffered when Nixon fell.

“Even Mao could not have pursued his experiments without the loyal services of Chou En-lai, the one man the Chairman could trust to clean up a situation without using it to further his own ambition. Chou, the Leninist apparatus, has exactly complemented the populist Chairman, sharing his vision and specialising in its implementation. The first 25 years of the People's Republic belong to them both. But Mao's age and the Premier's illness have raised questions about China's leadership over the rest of the century. Those who fear that a collective leadership will not be powerful enough to contain the contradictory elements within Chinese society tend to forget that, given a stable framework, the Chinese people naturally incline towards the ‘golden Mean’. Although they will inherit the volumes of Mao Tse-tung's Thought, they will no longer have the Chairman's catalytic physical presence, the mind capable of conceiving huge campaigns to solve social or political problems, the personality capable of whipping up enthusiasm for a state of permanent revolution. Mao's vision of a society of unselfish socialists may be an impossible dream. His greatest bequest to China may prove to be not his vision but the strength of a stable society, tempered by the furnaces he has lit within.”

Such is the China of today as viewed by the *Far Eastern Economic Review*. This is an inward view examining the scene within the country. But what about the outward-looking view where China emerges as the greatest colossus on earth with a population of over 800 million people with the evangelical fervour of proselytisers wanting to infuse Maoist thought (and deed) into the thinking (and actions) of all peoples and countries in the world.

(concluded)

GENERALISSIMO ?

This article, published in the *Pakistan Times*, under the heading “*Generalism Is Dead As Dodo*” attracted the following interesting comment from a reader in the “Letter to the Editor” column:

“Sir, I protest against the article *Generalism is dead as dodo* by “Nazim” (Sept. 17). Generalism may be dead in the rest of the world but in Pakistan, thank God! it is very much alive. Otherwise, how do you explain why finance men are not appointed finance secretaries; educationists are not appointed education secretaries; economists and planners are not made development commissioners, chairman of planning boards, secretaries and deputy chairman of planning commissions; architects, engineers and town planners are not made secretaries or chairmen of improvement trusts. PWD secretaries, members and heads of technical corporations like WAPDA, RTB, etc. —to pick out, at random, less than 10 per cent of top management positions in the country? The criterion in Pakistan wisely is: the greater a man's ignorance about a particular area of administration, the more fitted he is to head that area of administration. “Look at my service tag, not at my job.” This is the first principle of public administration in Pakistan. Forget about the 21st century. They will all return to the 19th century and Pakistan will have the unique distinction of being already there to welcome back the prodigals.

Ghost of Thomas Babington Macaulay.

Pakistan's Civil Service structure is based on British values of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. These values which are dated over 100 years continue to govern the bureaucracy in Pakistan today, even after 23 years of Independence. Its basic philosophy is a closed ‘elitist’, class, career system dominated by “generalist” cadres.

Britain first introduced this system in India, and later in other colonial countries in Asia and Africa. These British administrative values which were applied to the Home country also have been under heavy attack particularly since the development of administrative and modern management sciences and techniques. Britain, under urgent pressure to modernize in the face of growing American and European (via ECM) economic and social growth, has just made a complete break with the old system (Fulton Committee Report, 1968).

PAKISTAN is in the throes of a similar transformation, and it will help clarify and simplify the basic issues if we first try to clearly and scientifically understand the basic philosophy of the “Generalist” principle which lies at the root of the British colonial career system we have inherited.

All other evils of the system flow from this original sin. Keynes

once pointed out how social events frequently run behind social thought in a rather perverse way, by saying in a well known passage:—

“The ideas of economists and political philosophers, both when they are right and when they are wrong, are more powerful than is commonly understood... Practical men who believe themselves to be quite exempt from any intellec-

tual influences are usually slaves of some defunct economist. Mad men in authority...who hear voices in the air, are distilling their frenzy from some academic scribbler of a few years back."

In this case in our personnel (and even educational) pattern we have been the slaves of an academic scribbler of over hundred years ago, named Thomas Babington Macaulay, who was all wrong. Writing in a Report (Nov. 1854) of the Committee he headed on the Indian Civil Service, he stated the basic philosophy of the "Generalist" principle as follows:

"We believe that men who have been engaged upto one or two and twenty in studies which have no immediate connection with the business of any profession, and of which the effect is merely to open, to invigorate and to enrich the mind, will generally be found in the business of every profession, superior to men who have, at 18 or 19 devoted themselves to the special studies of their calling."

Consequently the Fulton Committee's major attack was on the "Generalist" principle, and this was number one on the six point list of short-comings of the British Civil Service:

"First, the Service is still essentially based on the philosophy of the amateur (or "generalist" or "all-rounder)". This is most evident in the Administrative Class which holds the dominant position in the Service. *The ideal administrator is still too often seen as the gifted layman who, moving frequently from job to job within the service, can take a practical view of any problem, irrespective of its subject-matter, in the light of his knowledge and experience of the government machine.* Today as the report of our Management Consultancy Group illustrates, this concept has most damaging consequences. It cannot make for efficient despatch of public business when key men rarely stay in one job longer than two or three years before being moved to some other post, often in a very different area of government activity. A similar cult of the generalist is found in that part of the Executive Class that works in support of the Administrative Class and also even in some of the

specialist classes. The cult is obsolete at all levels and in all parts of the services."

THE MANAGEMENT CONSULTANCY GROUP'S findings and recommendations have been summarised in a separate note added in the Appendix. Suffice it to say that all the major defects of the Service and the Administrative Class in particular, were found to be centred round the out-moded "generalist" principle: its lack of continuity in the job; its relative isolation; its lack of knowledge of the subject-matter administered; its lack of management skills and experience, and its largely irrelevant educational background—all these combined to cause consequences disastrous to administrative efficiency and goal achievement.

The Group's investigations also revealed that there was no evidence to suggest that specialists are unsuited to the role of policy-makers in their own specialist field. Indeed it found that accountants are very heavily involved in policy formulation in industry, and engineers are also prominent in the policy areas of larger companies. There was also no evidence to suggest that specialists cannot quickly assimilate the necessary knowledge of the working of the government machine.

It is, therefore, not surprising that the Fulton Committee's principal recommendations specially sought to do away with the "generalist" principle and all its attendant evils. Its chief recommendation was to abolish all Service Classes and replace them by a single unified grading structure from top to bottom determined by job evaluation. In this connection the Committee said:

"One basic guiding principle should in our view govern the future development of the Civil Service. It applies to any organization, and is simple to the point of banality, but the root of much of our criticism is that it has not been observed. *The Principle is look at the Job first.*"

Two other important recommendations related in fact to the implementation of the first proposal; the creation of a new Civil Service Department freed from the Treasury which was made responsible for all recruitment, career

development etc. and the setting up of a new Civil Service College to train civil servants in specific disciplines, both technical and managerial, in accordance with the requirements of the new integrated Service. These first three basic recommendations were promptly and almost immediately accepted by the British Government, and the Civil Service Department and the Civil Service College were established without delay.

MEANWHILE considerable literature seeking to explode the "generalist myth" had been developed in over the last several years in the USA as well as in Britain.

Max Nicholson has said: "The British are great myth-addicts, and their leaders therefore tend to be master myth-makers, who saddle them with a load of half-truths, destined to outlive their occasion and usefulness. These myths are in their way facts but the main fact about them is that they are myths...we need to be observant and discriminating about their continuous tendency to throw dust in our eyes, and to cling on after they have deserved to be discarded. (Vide *The System: The Misgovernment of Britain*, London, 1967).

Nicholson was critical of the "masquerade about the all-round administrator who is not really expected to know what he is administering." He condemned this as the "peculiar oxbridge mystique" which leaves all those cold who are not heavily doped in advance, and described the Administrative Class "the last and most obsessive stronghold of amateurism...not merely a misfit, but a multiple misfit." It is an entirely obsolete idea, he asserted, that the manning of the higher ranks of the public service should or can be based on the recruitment of raw graduates who take no higher degree or serious professional training.

Nicholson's approach to reform was: first, to "abolish the Administrative Class." He argued that this would bring much benefit, and would cause little inconvenience... "except for the rather narrow clique for which it has long served as a protected source of jobs." He gives a supporting quote from Professor W. J. M. Mackenzie: "One could obliterate the Administrative Class overnight, and able

men could be found within a month to keep our top administration going (we could not similarly make good the disappearance of the Executives)".

An American writer, Robert Presthus, following research on the subject, stated: "Like many students, I was taught by my masters that the 'generalist' rationale was part of revealed truth. All of us should have known better, for in a world of increasing scientific and technical complexity, it has compelling inadequacies." Most of these inadequacies were found to centre round three themes: the charge of technical innocence and the fear of experts, aggravated in turn by the policy of job rotation; hostility or at best a casual attitude towards research, and finally the charge that excessive centralization results in an excessively powerful and insulated 'elite' which stifles change and reform through Treasury control of recruitment and its monolithic indifference in the face of specialist needs. The generalist lacks professional commitment to a job, sees his prospects in his own "service" or "cadre" or "class", totally detached for the purposes of the organization in which he may be working at a particular time, as well as from attachment or interest in the subject field concerned. Presthus' research fully confirmed these charges.

Another writer Thomas Balogh stated: "No one would be mad enough to advocate the periodic interchange of dentists and doctors, solicitors and barristers, engineers and musicians." Balogh maintained that the persistence of amateurism reflects its nice suitability to Victorian conditions when the Night watchman State's major duty was easing the arrival of the capitalist revolution. With only a negative role to play the bureaucracy got along well without experts.

Brian Chapman, another critic noted: "In British ministries all too often one comes across an unseemly struggle between 'technical experts' and 'general administrators'; the experts being those with some recognized professional qualification, the 'generalists' being members of the Administrative Class. The argument that experts should not be allowed to formulate policy is used to ensure

the predominance of the view of the Administrative Class." The assumption that the 'generalist' advises his political boss is also a myth apart from the outcome likely to be a disaster if the advice was always accepted. As Balogh said "a two-tier dilettantism" may occur, since both these categories of men—the 'generalist' and the political master—are equally untutored in modern economics and social and political science, resulting in the poorest advice on public policy. Such asserted Balogh was the economic advice received by both the Labour and the Conservative Ministers after World War II, and the effects, have been visible in Britain's slow economic growth since 1945, and her humiliation in the ECM negotiations.

THERE IS considerable material based on studies in Pakistan to support the modern view that the 'generalist' administrator at every level of management is out of place in Pakistan today. One need only refer to reports by Egger (1953), Gladioux (1955), FFYP (1956), Beckett (1957), Cornelius (1962), and at least two latest Study Group Reports in 1969 (The Central Government's Working Group to study the Fulton Report; Report on the Toning Up of the Provincial Administration in West Pakistan) and a major Seminar on Systems Approach O & M and Personnel Administration organized by NIPA, Lahore in September, 1969.

The CSP Association (The Service association of the members of the Civil Service of Pakistan numbering 500 odd who have inherited the inadequacies of the ICS legacy and the British Administrative Class) however still sticks to the "generalist" principle, and in its latest Memorandum (December 1969) submitted to the Services Reorganization Committee headed by the ex-Chief Justice Cornelius, has quoted some foreign writers in support of its contention. These are very general statements, briefly, taken out from their context, expressing individual views.

However, the following statement in the Memorandum is not at all correct: "Even in the USA where specialisation is almost a fetish, the thinking today is predominantly in favour of having a top

layer of generalists between the political boss and the technical head of department." The correct position may be briefly stated as follows: In the 1950's some interest developed in the creation of a senior Civil Service, in the USA and some proposals were being offered for some sort of a group or pool of "generalists" in the Federal Service, to enable greater mobility of top managerial talent from one federal agency to another; and some comparisons were also made with the British Administratively Class. This was almost 15 years ago. It was the second Hoover Commission (1955) which recommended a senior Civil Service. The US legislatures were however firmly set against anything which tended to look like moving towards the establishment of an exclusive 'elite' cadre; so was public opinion and the large mass of career officials. It is now a matter of history that the recommendations of the 2nd Hoover Commission were never accepted.

In a modernizing or modern society the nineteenth century "generalist" is passing or has passed away, giving place to the professional manager. The top manager of today must have started his earlier career in a specialism, and his educational background on entry must have relevance to the job of his assignment. He must continue to acquire specific and related experience and training in his specialism as he goes along and moves up in his career. As he reaches the top he must have had opportunities of gaining a wider range of experience in the politics of administration, in the environment of Government operations, in planning and implementing change, in budgetary and financial strategies, and such areas which relate to high policy formulation and advice. Management, executive or administrative skills are now

HINDSIGHT

Famous Hollywood star Cary Grant, who recently turned seventy, was overheard telling his friends: "I have had four wives and one daughter in my life. I would have been happier with four daughters and one wife."

een as being composed of three basic components: *technical, human and conceptual*: the higher up the ranks a man moves, the more the first area i.e. subject-matter knowledge, becomes subordinated to the other two. This is the "vital shift" towards top scientific and professional management, that is taking place in dynamic Administration today.

The "generalist" of Lord Macaulay, dated 1854, is dead as the dodo. Pakistan can ill afford to stick to a myth which has long since been exploded. The adoption of a unified grading structure of public service based on professionalism, specialism, job-description, subject-matter relevance, and job evaluation, will go a long way in helping Pakistan to achieve its management goals in the 20th century (albeit 23 years late!) and prepare for the 21st century which is only 30 years round the Corner.

BUILDING A VILLAGE HOUSE—5

A Matter For Identity

By Herbert Keuneman

IN MY AMBITIOUS ROLE of Architect, I was ready now to get seriously to work. And if the adoption of such a role was overweening...well, I was my own client! Also, after all, my house-planning was as much a therapeutic activity as an artistic one and the more I could undertake of it—whether as architect or as engineer, contractor, or actual workman—the better.

Besides, I had at least three of the Seven Lamps of (contemporary) Architecture already brightly burning. I possessed the nucleus of a plan in knowing precisely what accommodation I wanted and what proportion its parts should bear to the whole; I possessed jealously my prejudice in favour of an 'upstairs' house; partly to save roofing (save the mark!) and partly for the increased security, as well as the vastly improved outlook, from 'high command'; and finally I possessed by this time a very definite idea of my budget, which was intimidatingly small but (by the canons—inadequate, as I was to learn—of straight calculation and pure logic) not prohibitively so. There are professional architects

at large in the Island who, if their buildings and their bills are to speak for them, go to work with not much greater know-what and not all that superior know-how! I CONCEIVED as my immediate problem the need (so I thought) to visualize my plan in three dimensions. In this I was going, did I but know it, the orthodox way of the *sophisticated* architect. But I wanted a *village* house, an unsophisticated one, and I came to the conclusion that if I could discover some sort of architectural idiom habitual to the untutored *baas* though unnatural in me I could learn to so express myself as to produce the effect of simple rurality I sought.

This was *reductio ad absurdum* with a vengeance. The trick does not work in any other art form, it results only in insincerity: how could it work in a form in which so many arts are combined? But it was a long time—too late to benefit from it—before this realization came, and longer still before I found what I think is the real difference between a true village house and an architect-designed urban one. It was not until I had the opportunity to study the methods, and as it were the philosophy, of distinctively rural building that its secret became explicit.

Fundamentally, it is that the village house—or temple, or what have you—is 'organic' in a sense beyond Frank Lloyd Wright ever considered. Or, maybe, he considered it and deliberately discarded it as inapplicable to a more industrialized society.

THE TRUE VILLAGE HOUSE is not only inherent in its environment but it grows, literally and naturally and unpretentiously and simply and even naively, from the first brick (or scoop of mud) and the first piece of timber its builder lays by for it to the latest extension he may add on. Like a tree grows. Consequently, as an architectural prevision it never exists in three dimensions. The village builder works (I believe) only from a plan—if that—or, at most, from a plan and a series of elevations, each subsistent in itself, and not (as an Architect would see them) as diagrams of a three-dimensional whole.

It is interesting in this context to recall that even the very strict

proportions traditionally laid down for the building of a Buddha image—and these of course are for an actual sculptural creation: *in the round*—state height and breadth; not thickness.

Am I making too much of this? I do not think so. At any rate, the *Mahavamsa* story of the building of the Ruvanvali Saya seems to me interesting to re-read in this light. Dutu Gamunu's first concern you will notice as you do so, was with *material* for the great structure; his second the most effectual utilization of that *materiel*: 'there will be no grass or any such thing on our cetiya', he reflected with gratification (warrior and King though he was, he was still the shrewd 'country' builder). Though once committed, he devoted all he could to the adornment of his creation, its actual appearance as a finished thing came only third in his list of priorities. And he had already chosen his 'architect' on the strength of the second!

BUT NOW FOLLOWS a passage singular in the *Mahavamsa* for its acknowledgement of the artistic afflatus! Inspired by Visvakarma, divine patron of Arts and Crafts, no less, the master-builder—for all his eminence not even now judged worthy of a name—dramatically dashes a handful of water into a brimming bowl and produces... was it the first *model* of a Sinhala building, a concept in 3-D? Why else such enthusiasm? The development of the hemispherical bubble-shape from the circular ground-plan of all previous stupas, though artistically a fine step upward from the paddy-heap shape that would be as natural as an overgrowth of grass or any such thing for an un-bound pile of mud or adobe, was surely not in itself sufficient to cause such admiration? I think perhaps it was the holophrastic vision of the infinitely symmetrical solid (now conveyed beyond the so-much-more-easily-comprehended silhouette) that caught everybody's imagination. And perhaps the play of light on the bubble's shining surface may have suggested at the same time and with comparable impact the magnificence of a similar surface—masonry-faced, and washed with dazzling lime—over the weed-inviting rugosities of the earlier stupas. Here, then, was indeed an Architect at work, instead of a

village *baas*. And they have not even told us who he was!

Be this rather high-falutin reasoning as it may, there is no doubt the village builder—in earlier days often the house-owner himself—is no architect: he thinks in the flat and builds *ad hoc*. His work may not have dignity; but very often it has charm. It is saved by the honesty of his materials, the singleness of his purpose, and his intuitive unaffected approach. Where he departs from tradition (which with him is conservative rather than imitative) he does so neither self-consciously nor extravagantly: if he wants some particularized facet of beauty and can visualize it and can afford it he puts it in. If the total result, also, is beautiful it is beautiful as a nautilus shell is: a 'machine for living' developed by an organism that knows nothing of machines.

All that previous paragraph I should, however, have written in the past tense. Hardly any villager today, save the very poorest—and there are today few very poor outside the towns—builds his own house: he abdicates his place as builder to the *baas*, the promoter of the *bangalava*!

The village *baas* is an even greater obstacle to good taste and good building than his urban counterpart, the *soi-disant* 'independent' building-contractor. Neither mannered Architect nor 'rude mechanical', each is at that perilous halfway point where he must fall between two stools. But the village *baas* is less *au fait*, less knowledgeable, less cognizant; just as inanely servile to what is merely prestigious and fashionable, as breathlessly led away by newfangle and leading his all-too-suggestible unsophisticated but appetitive client with him; and much more prone (because he understands less about latest methods and materials) to rely, sometimes disastrously, on never-questioned rules-of-thumb that sufficed an age of uncritical techniques and amenable constituents: earth, rough timber, and thatch.

THIS IS WHY the village *bangalava* is even uglier and more jerry-built than any Bambalawatta villa. I didn't want one of those.

But I didn't (after the first few rhapsodical spasms had subsided) want a cabin made of clay and

wattles, either. Because of the exigencies of the kind of living I had grown into. Just as the villager no longer wants one, because of the exigencies of the kind of living he is growing out of.

So, as Architect *manque* I pressed on with my design for a house that should, at least, not offend the rural landscape though it must not prove discommodious to an un-rural inhabitant.

It was not, however, any such would-be-sophisticated approach that produced the design which eventually emerged, and which—not only in my own estimation but in that of not-incompetent judges who have seen the result, still incomplete and unavoidably diminished though it be—seems a reasonably successful one. On the contrary. I seem to have succeeded only insofar as I failed in my pretensions; having designed what has turned out an identifiably 'village house but no piece of architecture however modest; any merit springing from accidental reversions to the village tradition!

I am (I think...I hope...) innately ingenuous enough to be, like the *old-time* villager, satisfied with simple materials treated in the old-time village way; neither dragooning them into unnatural employment nor hiding them, out of false shame. (I owe a considerable debt, also, to sheer indigence; for no more salutary discipline restrains a reckless creativity than

a frugal exchequer!). But probably the most relevant reversion was that, through sheer ineptitude, for all my ambition to think as an architect, in masses and planes and perspectives, I found myself thinking as the village builder thinks; in terms of elevations. Though I did perhaps manage rather more than customarily to relate my elevations to my ground-plan.

There is one other factor in traditional village building—not an architectural factor; nevertheless an extremely vital one—to have taken account of which, had I been aware of it, would have saved much heartache and which saves the villager much money; the *village house is so 'organic' it must grow as it were from seed!* No substantial village house is ever built from foundation to roof-tree in a single burst: building one is a long, leisurely, contemplative process—when the farmer has a couple of hundred rupees that he does not need for hiring a tractor or buying fertilizer or celebrating the New Year he buys a few thousand bricks or a stack of timber or hires a *baas* (if the *baas*, too, is free from seed-time or harvest) to build a doorframe or two or raise a wall a few courses—and to build any other wise is to ask trouble.

To attempt, as I did, to build and pay straight through is Government-contract Style; and invites as much cozenage by everybody involved.

THE MYSTERY OF LEMURIA—4

LAND OF ELAM

By A. Kondratov

QUITE LIKELY the features of similarity between proto-Indian and Mesopotamian culture can be explained by the fact that both, the creators of the earliest Indian civilisations and the first settlers in the valley of the Tigris and the Euphrates, had been related peoples who spoke Dravidian languages, or, maybe, even one and the same people.

It is also possible that the Dravidian languages served as a common basis for the Ubaidians and the proto-Indians.

Khuzistan is the name given at present to the region in Iran, to the east of the river Tigris. In old days it used to be called *Elam*. As far back as 5,000 years a civilisation flourished there with cities that were small independent states, with a unique culture and a written language of their own. Scholars find many features typical both

of the *Elamites* and the inhabitants of Mesopotamia, and even more common features with the proto-Indian culture.

The *Elamites* spoke and wrote a language whose affinity with any other language spoken on the earth has not been established so far. Linguists have made attempts to prove that there existed a relation-

ship between the *Elamite* language and *Turanian* languages (the Uralian, Altaic, Turkic and Mongolian languages), and they have an affinity with numerous Caucasian languages or with the extinct languages of Asia Minor (Hurrite, Kassite and other languages).

These attempts however have proved to be infructuous. "The only hypothesis supported by certain facts is that of Elamo-Dravidian affinity," writes I. M. Dyakonov, a prominent Soviet historian and linguist, in his book *The Languages of Ancient Asia Minor*.

He gives examples showing the closeness of the *Elamite* language with the *Dravidian* languages. The root "Ketu" means "to be destroyed" in the *Dravidian* languages; in *Elamite* "ketu" means "to destroy". "Nan" means "day" in *Elamite*; in the *Dravidian* languages it means "morning," "dawn," "day".

WORDS can, of course, be borrowed by one language from another. Besides that, chance coincidences in pronunciation and meaning may also occur sometimes (in English and Kabardinian the numeral "2" is pronounced as "tu," though these two languages are not in the least related to each other). The most important thing, however, is that between the *Elamite* language and the *Dravidian* one there is much in common in their grammar, and grammar cannot be borrowed.

This underlines either an old affinity or long contacts between the speakers of these languages. Both the phonetics and morphology of the *Elamite* language show its similarity with the *Dravidian* languages, while the pronouns are so much alike, that, as Dyakonov puts it, "they coincide completely."

The facts that speak in favour of a kinship between the *Elamite* and the *Dravidian* languages enabled Dyakonov to advance a hypothesis that "tribes related in language to the *Elamites* and *Dravidians* had spread all over Iran, or at least in its southern part, in the 4th-3rd millennia B.C., or maybe even later. Moreover, traces of *Dravidian* toponymy (not dating however to any definite period) have been probably discovered in the Arabian peninsula, while traces of the *Dravidoid*

(South Indian) race have been observed in some districts of south Iran."

Afterwards dark-skinned *Dravidians*, or peoples related to them in language and race, were either forced out of Iran, or became completely assimilated among later settlers. Herodotus, however, who lived in the 5th century B.C. still referred to the inhabitants of Baluchistan, a land situated between India and *Elam*, as "Asian Ethiopians," i.e. "Asian Negroes", and this might mean that dark-skinned people used to inhabit the area between Iran and India some two and a half thousand years ago.

It is quite probable that the *Elamite* and "Ubaidian" languages separated themselves very early from the common *Dravidian* linguistic basis, and this explains the similar and differing features observed in these languages. Another hypothesis is also possible—that the *Dravidian* languages, as well as the language of the *Ubaidians*, the predecessors of the *Sumerians*, and the *Elamite* language trace their origin back to some earlier common parent language.

Most of the *Elamite* texts are written in cuneiform which *Elam's* inhabitants had borrowed in the middle of the 3rd millennium B.C. from their western neighbours—the *Akkadians* and *Sumerians*. Up till then there had existed in *Elam* a pictorial, written language, known as "proto-*Elamite*."

THE PROTO-ELAMITE WRITING has not been deciphered so far. But in appearance the texts and characters of this written language greatly resemble the earliest writing of the inhabitants of Mesopotamia, i.e., the proto-*Sumerian* written language. These texts were also written on clay "tablets," the characters were of a pictorial-linear shape too, nad, like proto-*Sumerian* texts, were probably economic or registration notes.

The third "proto-writing"—the characters of the inscriptions found in such ancient Indian cities as Mohenjo-daro and Harappa, also reveal a similarity with the proto-*Sumerian* and proto *Elamite* characters. The earliest Mesopotamian texts, as the recent investigations by A. A. Vaiman, a Soviet scholar, have convincingly proved, are written in the *Sumerian* lan-

guage (though, if the reader remembers, not the *Sumerians*, but the *Ubaidians*, who spoke a language related to *Dravidian*, had been the first inhabitants of the valley of the Tigris and the Euphrates).

The language of the proto-*Elamite* texts, which is probably the oldest form of the *Elamite* language, differs from that of the proto-*Sumerian* inscriptions. The proto-*Indian* texts conceal a *Dravidian* and not a *Sumerian* or *Elamite* language; therefore the proto-*Sumerian* written language cannot serve as a key to unlock the meaning of the undeciphered written languages in India and *Elam*. The proto-*Sumerian* written language has not been deciphered completely since scholars are able to read only 250 out of the 800 various characters of this language.

Yet, the similarity between the three "proto-written languages" enables one to believe that they have a common source (later even the cuneiform invented by the *Sumerians* was used for writing in the *Akkadian*, *Elamite*, *Urartu*, *Hittite* and other languages that had nothing in common with the *Sumerian* language). Among the characters of the proto-*Sumerian*, proto-*Elamite* and proto-*Indian* written languages one can find a certain amount of similarity.

SCHOLARS engaged in linguistic study and toponymists studying geographical names use the term "substratum" in relation to earlier languages and geographical names. On the basis of an analogy with them we can also speak of the "substratum", a certain initial system of pictorial characters that preceded the appearance of proto-*Sumerian*, proto-*Elamite* and proto-*Indian* written languages.

And as the proto-*Sumerian* texts are the oldest, and as the *Ubaidians*, the predecessors of the *Sumerians*, had been the earliest inhabitants of Mesopotamia, one may use the word "Ubaidian" when speaking of the earliest system of writing (to be more exact it had not been a written language in the full sense of the word, but rather hieroglyph, a language of pictures, that preceded the archaic forms of writing). This system had existed in Mesopotamia before the *Sumerians* came there, accepted it and created their own proto-*Sumerian* written language

(the same way as they had accepted and developed other achievements of the Ubaidians in material and spiritual culture.)

The same situation probably applied to India and Elam. The similarity of the proto-Indian, proto-Elamite and proto-Sumerian written languages is again explained here on a "Dravidian basis", for the language of the Ubaidians could have been related to the Dravidian languages, the same as

that of the Elamites and the creators of the proto-Indian civilisation.

It is also quite possible that in the remotest antiquity there existed a written linguistic Dravidian basis. The Ubaidians, proto-Indians and Elamites are branches of this written basis, while the Ubaidian, Elamite and proto-Indian languages are branches of the earliest Dravidian parent language.

(To be Continued)

SILVER JUBILEE

People's Republic Of China

By JEPHARIS

The Silver Jubilee of the People's Republic of China fell on October 1st and was locally commemorated in an appropriate manner at the new Chinese Embassy adjoining Dame Sibyl's watchtower in Turret Road, and at the BMICH—both wonderful tributes to the good relations existing between China and Sri Lanka, the ingenuity of modern Chinese architecture, and the skill and speed of Chinese workmanship.

Of course, in Peking, the national capital, there was the usual rally and massed parade of the Armed Forces in Red Square, with octogenarian Chairman Mao taking the salute.

During the 25 years which have elapsed since the Chiang-Kai-Chek clique, who had fought so devotedly on the side of the Allies during World War II, were swept off the Chinese mainland, after a long struggle with the Communist dating back to the twenties, which began after a period of decadence had set in with the death of Sun Yat-Sen, and before that the end of the ancient Manchu Dynasty in 1911 (incidentally Madame Chiang-Kai-Shek is a daughter of Sun-Yat-Sen, the Father of the modern Chinese Republic), and included Mao's famous "long march" of '35; set up their nationalist government in exile on the island of Formosa (renamed Taiwan); the Chinese Government and the people too have gone on from strength to strength, both quantitatively and qualitatively.

QUANTITATIVELY, because the population, which in 1949 stood at about 650 million, has now grown to over 800 million, and is expected to reach 900 million by the end of the decade and well over 1 billion by the end of the century. The romantic old-world seaport of SHANGHAI, situated at the mouth of the Yangtze-Kiang, a former national capital

along with NANKING, HANKOW and CANTON, is now the largest city in the world with over ten million souls (GREATER SHANGHAI containing as many as 15 million), followed by Tokyo, New York and London, who each in reverse order once held this honoured position.

China is the most populous and one of the most crowded nations on earth, containing between one-fourth and one-fifth of the world's entire population, and seconded only by our great neighbouring sub-continent, India, with whom it has had many a traditional feud over their common border issue, such as the question of suzerainty over Tibet, Nepal, Sikkim (which was recently annexed by India) and Bhutan, sometimes escalating into open conflict, the most recent glaring instances being the Chinese expansionist drive of '58 and infiltration into India in '62: which compelled the Dalai-Lama (the god-king of Tibet, who claims to be the re-incarnation of the Buddha) to seek asylum in Calcutta.

She has also had frequent border skirmishes with the Russians along the outer-Mongolian frontier, and now the latest threat to world peace is not so much between

Russia and America, or even China and America, as between China and Russia.

Her contiguous suzerainty extends over Tibet on the South, Mongolia and Outer-Mongolia on the West, and Manchuria on the North. She also holds the disputed islands of Quemoy and Matsu in the Strait of Formosa (scenes of heavy shelling and bombing raids between the Communists and the Nationalists) and a few other offshore islands situated in the China seas.

Manchuria she wrested from the Japanese in 1895 as one of the spoils of the TREATY OF SHIMONOSAKI, ending the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-5.

By the mere strength and show of numbers, the Chinese are the most powerful race on earth, and even in the armaments race, they recently joined the "nuclear club" of USA, USSR, Britain, France and Australia, with India following suit in quick succession. Germany, though not herself a member of this club, has nevertheless supplied it with much of its scientific and technical know-how and personnel.

ONE WOULD SAY they have progressed QUALITATIVELY, because the Chinese, being in the main a peacefully disposed and an industrious agricultural people (although they have fought a "cold war" with the capitalist power-bloc for years) have "turned their spears into plowshares" and concentrated their attentions on and devoted their energies to developing their land and their industries to the maximum possible limit, so that surprisingly enough, in an age where widespread poverty, frustration due to unemployment, global inflation, economic depression, and food shortages are internationally endemic; there is NO INFLATION IN CHINA, or problems of starvation, deprivation and serious unemployment either, according to recent news reports, in spite of its teeming millions and the problems they would have normally caused under an inefficient administration. Whether this is Communist propaganda or not, we cannot say, but anyhow there seems to be no doubt that the facts speak volumes for the success of the Communist system of administration as being the most

suitable form of government at least for large nations, and certainly in the case of China, with its teeming population.

THE COMMUNIST POLITICAL and social structure prevailing in China, not just in theory but also in practice, has ensured that everyone has enough, and no one too much: that by an equitable distribution of material wealth "there is enough for everyone's NEED, though not for everyone's GREED" as the MRA people would describe it.

All land is owned by the State, and each Chinese peasant is a paid worker of the State, looked after by the State, and responsible to the State. After giving the lion's share of the yield to the State—whether it be wheat in the cold north, corn in the temperate centre, or rice in the sub-tropical south, or any other crop—he is entitled to retain an adequate quota for his own domestic consumption. In this way, there is a huge surplus available for export. Unlike in many other countries, the State gives the simple peasant every encouragement to develop the land over which he is steward, by providing the seed, the fertiliser, the equipment and the expertise. It is easy to see why there is no famine in China, in spite of its gigantic population, and not even a serious food crisis. Things are done sensibly on a vast scale in that vast country, whereas with a little bureaucratic bungling there could so easily be chaos.

ALTHOUGH THERE IS NO ORGANISED RELIGION, and indeed the freedom of worship, or more correctly, of gathering together for worship, is suppressed: in their VERY WAY OF LIFE the Chinese would appear to more sincerely portray the Gospel of the Living Saviour than the apparent caricature of Christianity which so often passes for "religion" in western countries. As far as reports which filter through the "bamboo curtain" are reliable, the Church in China is "underground" and suffers persecution from the State, and even Confucius, their traditional sage, has been recently branded as a "reactionary", along with Vice-President Lin Piao, leader of the anti-Mao cult, who was reported killed in a plane crash (probably sabotaged) over Sinkiang in September 1971.

During the entire quarter of a century since the People's Republic of China came into existence, Mao-Tse-Tung (who is a LIVING GOD to the vast majority of Chinese) has been its President, and Chou-En-Lai its Prime Minister, a famous pair like B and K (Bulgarian and Kruschchev) of the Soviet Union in the late fifties.

It was considered to be a blot on the good name of the United Nations, and a disgrace to the entire Free world, that the American Nation did not recognise the People's Republic of China for the first 21 years of its existence, and indeed, failing the implementation of a "two-China" policy, manipulated that the seat in the U.N.O. which should have represented a quarter of the world's population be given to the U.S. dominated Taiwanese.

This defect was remedied in October 1970, when to coincide with the silver-jubilee of the UNO (born October 24, 1945) and the coming-of-age of the Chinese Republic (born October 1, 1949), China was at long last admitted to the United Nations by a majority vote of its members.

She is now therefore in the happy though long-delayed position of being able to make her valued presence and contribution felt in the deliberations of an organisation dedicated to trying to achieve a lasting peace in our generation.

TOBACCO

MANY USES—poultice, for wounds, insecticide, soil nutrient

ATTENTION has been directed to tobacco as a remedial agent, through the efforts of the late Gen. T. L. Clingham of North Carolina who for many years represented that State in the US Congress. Gen Clingham believed there is no remedy so effective for relieving wounds, bruises, sprains, etc., as tobacco applied externally, in the form of a poultice. He cured a severe sprain of the ankle by poulticing it with wet tobacco leaves and keeping them moist.

A severe gunshot wound of the leg was cured by wrapping the limb in leaf tobacco covered with wet cloths. An injury to his eye was also cured by a wet tobacco poultice. He reported physicians using a tobacco poultice since then, and cited many instances of its successful application for sore eyes, sore throats, erysipelas (some very bad cases,) scalds, bunions, corns, bites, boils, tumours, swelling of various kinds, colds and similar troubles. When the wet tobacco is applied, said Gen. Clingham, the first effect is stimulating. In 20 or 30 minutes, however, the sedative effect is perceived.

Leaf tobacco should be used for the poultice. The darker leaves are stronger and better than the light yellow leaves. Leaves of plants cut last year are better than those freshly cut as tobacco seems to gather strength with age. A bunch of these leaves, thrown into a bowl of cold water, will become moist and soft, so that the large stem in the centre may be taken out. Hot water will answer the purpose sooner than cold, but either will do. When this is done, not less than two thicknesses of the leaf should be placed directly on the part to be relieved. As however, the heat of the skin tends to dry the tobacco in a few minutes a wet bandage must be laid over it. About four thicknesses of common white cotton cloth will be sufficient, but this should be well soaked in water before it is put on, then a bandage of the same cloth may be tied over it and water from time to time would be applied by pressing a wet rag on it, so as to keep the tobacco moist.

Tobacco is also a valuable insecticide for use against vermin or domestic animals and in the greenhouse as well as for other pests. It may be used in the form of a decoction in smoke or dry.

Tobacco stems are an excellent top-dressing for young grass. They conserve moisture and add fertility to the soil. Applied to wheat fields in autumn, in any form—leaves, stalks or stems—tobacco exerts the most beneficial influence both on the character of the growth and the quality of the berry. In a pulverised condition it makes one of the best applications for seed beds.

—Tobacco Export.

IS IT TRUE?

Sherlock Holmes

OUR FOREIGN SERVICE AND A NEW IDENTITY

IS IT NOT TRUE that one of the best things that this Government has sought to do is inject new blood into our Foreign Service? That with the stirrings of a new and dynamic resurgence in our FO, consequent upon the appointment of a politically-orientated ambassador to a top job in the administrative hierarchy, a great deal of controversial effervescence has drawn attention to the work of this key department? That there are some who think that all this new broom business will leave our FO in shambles which all the Kings men can never hope to put together? That there are others, however who think differently: that without this kind of new broom spring-cleaning the institution was fast becoming a moribund institution? That in some quarters this shake-up was said to be motivated by anti-Tamil and anti-Catholic considerations? That it is easy to attribute motivation to any churning up? That it is difficult, as yet, to detect any such anti-Tamil and anti-Catholic prejudices (though are certainly other prejudices and allergic inhibitions at work) as alleged by some people? That it would be a good, nevertheless, if there are positive moves to show that the springing-cleaning was not anti-Tamil and anti-Catholic? That unless something like this is done, the racial and religious minorities in this country, who already have the feeling that they are second class citizens will develop a phobia which will do the country no good? That there are enough Tamils and Catholics in Sri Lanka today with minds and vision to enable them to cope with problems of international consequence with progressive vigour and radical objectivity? That it is not enough for the Prime Minister and other Ministers to pay visits to Jaffna or Catholic strongholds but it is also

necessary to demonstrate that a Tamil or a Catholic has as much a chance of getting a fair deal in the Foreign Office or anywhere else as a good Sinhala Buddhist? That the system of standardisation has created a persecution complex among the Tamils and unless this complex is removed the current two-nation trend is bound to grow?

That in this connection it is a happy augury that the Government has decided to appoint university dons (and no doubt other competent persons) to positions in the Foreign Service? That this is one way of injecting new blood into the service? That in the first instance, these posts can be on special contracts for specified periods? That they can be renewed if so desired? That this system prevails in other countries? That one of the first of such appointments inspires confidence? That a university don Viswa Warnapala has been appointed as Counsellor to the Embassy in Moscow? That those who know Warnapala's record and history will note that he is one of the first fruits of the new socio-cultural revolution in this country? That his father was a robust proletarian, a lorry driver, an operator of motor driven vehicles? That his mother was a peasant who has continued to be a peasant? That on the crest of the system of scholarships, which had become available after 1956, Warnapala, educated in the Sinhala medium, had bulldozed his way through the University of Sri Lanka and thereafter two universities abroad (one in the USA and the other in the UK)? That he is a supreme example of a student who "scholarshipped" (if that word can be used) his way through these universities to win many degrees and a coveted doctorate? That he has been a

regular writer on current developments in Sri Lanka to such prestigious journals like the *Asian Survey*? That though he had begun his education completely in his mother tongue, he has developed a great facility to express himself in the international medium of English? That as a matter of personal interest Warnapala has married a Tamil? That though this may not mean much it is a indication, as some think, of the shape of things to come? That unity in great diversity is a dialectical possibility? That it is to be hoped that Warnapala makes the grade? That some dons, no doubt, do not make good diplomats? That other dons (like Kissinger) make super diplomats?

That Tribune which has in recent years critically (very) evaluated some of the political writings of Warnapala will watch his career with interest? That in the mean time, the Government should choose a few other young people, competent educated and versatile, from other professions and callings to serve short or long periods in our Foreign Service? That this kind of new blood will do a great deal to unloosen the rigidities and inflexibilities of the hard core of the career diplomats chosen by different governments in Sri Lanka since Independence? That some of our diplomats are no doubt excellent officials doing their stint conscientiously? That many of them have served their country well? That in spite of all this, our FO has grown up as a colourless unit without an individuality or identity? That there are severe limitations about the manner in which a small country can function in a world of super-powers, big powers, rich powers and the like? That nevertheless a tiny speck on the global vista like Sri Lanka can create a diplomatic image of significance if the Government and its FO officials function as they do? That after Premier Sirimavo Bandaranaike's role in bringing the question of the Indian Ocean Peace Zone to the forefront not only among the non-aligned Third World but also in the rest of the world, our FO can easily create a dynamic image of a Sri Lanka? Identity? That this would be only the first step towards creating an Asian Identity by invoking the Asian consciousness of the big as well as small nations on this continent?