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## KANKESANTURAI

— political perspectives —

THE KANKESANTURAI, BY-ELECTION, which will take place on February 6, will provide many surprises. There is an easy assumption that the by-election will be an easy walk-over for the veteran FP (TUF) leader, and though as matters stood last weekend (18/19 January) the TUF leader was likely to romp home with a comfortable, majority, the really substantial vote the CP (UF) candidate will poll will come as a rude shock and sur-

prise to many not only in the North but also throughout the island.

**Whether anything is likely to happen which would tilt the balance, even more, one way or the other, between last weekend and the polling day is difficult to say at the time of writing, but there is no doubt that the KKS by-election will open new perspectives on the political horizon of this country.**

### KENNETH KAUNDA

Owing to the exigencies of cost and newsprint resulting in the limited number of pages in each issue, *Tribune* has not been able for a long time to devote space which African affairs merit in our pages. It seemed a strange coincidence that one of our readers from Lusaka in Zambia should write to us and send us cuttings about the recent talks in Lusaka which is likely to lead to a new situation in Rhodesia. This is what he wrote in his letter: "...Lusaka has become an important centre for the negotiations between the Black and the Whites for the liberations of Southern Africa. President Kaunda is playing a leading statesmanlike role in the negotiations. We have had the opportunity of seeing through the medium of the television most of the leaders and hear a number of their speeches. For the first time we saw Smith in the TV making the important announcement of the breakthrough. I buy the South African newspaper *Sunday Tribune*. It contained more information than the Zambian papers about the backstage developments and I sending you some of these cuttings..." It will be recalled that shortly after recent isolation of South Africa in the UN, Prime Minister Vorster had indicated that within six months there would major changes in the region. And Mr. Vorster has indeed set in motion events which are likely to have far-reaching changes. Our correspondent, a Sri Lankan living and working in Lusaka, had commented: "...I know people in Asia are not interested in developments in Africa. But those of us here consider ourselves very fortunate to be in the heart of the struggle for the independence and freedom of the Blacks in Guinea Bissau, Angola, Mozambique, Rhodesia and South Africa..." Elsewhere in this issue we have published some of these press cuttings together with notes by our columnist *Ariel* on the recent developments in Southern Africa. And, with Mr. Kenneth Kaunda's forthcoming visit to Colombo from January 27 to 29, this is an appropriate occasion for publishing our comments and the press cuttings.

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When the May 27, 1970 General Election took place, there were 37,804 registered voters on the KKS electoral list of whom 30,663 had voted. This time, the total on the voters list is around 41,000 voters, and being a by-election the percentage of those voting might be slightly higher than at the time of the General Election. Observers on the scene expect the poll to be between to be anything from 35,000 to 37,000 votes, and that the winning candidate must therefore poll anything over 17,500 votes.

The Kankesanturai electorate, according to the 1971 Census, has a total population of 70,062, with 34,169 males and 35,893 females. There were 30,809 persons under 18 years of age, and 39,253 over 18. The ethnic breakdown was as follows: Low Country Sinhalese 605; Kandy Sinhalese 1269; Ceylon Tamils 67,149; Indian Tamils 728; Ceylon Moors 224; Indian Moors 12; Burghers 33; Malays 35; and Others 7. The breakdown religion-wise was: Buddhists 680; Hindus 57,796; Muslims 546; Roman Catholics 10,491; Other Christians 532; and Others 17. There is no caste breakdown in the Census, but militants in the area claim that there are nearly 8000 "depressed class" voters, Hindus and Catholics. (It is not politic to call them "depressed class" any longer, because in many ways they have become a new privileged class, and they are now organised in Maha Sabas. What the total number of this group really is hard to say, but the number 8000 as being the number of voters is probably not far off the mark.)

In the General Election of 1970, there were four candidates and the polling was as follows: S. J. V. Chelvanayakam (FP) 13,520; V. Ponnampalam (CP) 8,164; C. Suntharalingam (Eelam) 5,788; and T. Thirunavukkarasu (Ind) 3,051. This time there are three candidates: S. J. V. Chelvanayakam (FP), V. Ponnampalam (CP), and M. Ambalavaner (Ind.) It will be a straight fight between the FP and the CP candidates, as the Independent candidate, sponsoring a crackpot programme of India-North Ceylon merger (which could be extended throughout the island on consensus) is not likely to make any kind of impression on the voting.

V. PONNAMPALAM—VP as he is popularly known—has become a major force in the area. He has been a teacher at a leading school for over 25 years and many generations of his students have become leftists and CPites in this time. VP had become a communist in Madras where he had graduated in the immediate post-war years. He is a powerful public speaker with an attractive style in Tamil oratory. After the death of P. Kandiah in 1958, VP had become the main stalwart of the communist movement in the North. He has remained a steadfast CPite ever since he entered politics. The 8000 odd votes he had polled in 1970 was an impressive one considering that he was contesting the FP leader on his home ground.

All observers who have recently visited Jaffna say that the Communist Party (Moscow Wing)—of all the three UF partners—has the greatest rapport among the ordinary people in the peninsula, and that this rapport is greatest in the KKS electorate, no doubt because of the personality of VP. The Peking Wing is now too weak in the North—in spite of recent attempts to revive it to the glory of the old Shan days—to indulge in any effective sniping at VP.

It is significant that for the first time in Jaffna politics, the FP has not resorted to its customary character assassination of its rivals by claiming that all political rivals were "renegades, traitors, betrayers," (of the Tamils). FP propaganda this time is apologetic and defensive and has conceded that VP is a "worthy" candidate—but that in the cause of the Tamil Language,

Tamil Self-Respect (as a political entity in the island), and the future of the Tamil Nation, it was necessary to vote for the TUF leader (who, it is claimed, has "sacrificed" a great deal for the Tamils). This FP defensiveness is a tribute to VP himself as a man—much more than even to the party he represents.

There is very little love lost among the Tamils for the United Front, and more especially for the SLFP—and this is solely due to the abrasive personalities, the unpopular activities and the blatant bumptiousness (including the corruption of some) of all presently strutting in the peninsula as SLFP stalwarts. VP, within the limited orbit of CP influence, has been able to help young people to get jobs in the public sector and he has also been able to obtain many benefits for the co-operative movement. And there is universal recognition of the fact that VP has been able to indulge in this game of patronage politics without ever seeking to get any personal benefit or advantage for himself. He is perhaps the only one of the leading UF political figures in the Peninsula who is regarded by one and all as incorruptible. Even FP speakers have made this admission about VP from public platforms—this is a defensive technique adopted by the FP to persuade VP admirers to vote for the aging FP leader on a "sympathy card" as well as on the customary emotional sloganising of the FP.

THE MOST PESSIMISTIC among VP's supporters state that he would poll at least 12,000 to 13,000 votes whilst the ardent enthusiasts in the VP camp say that he will poll a minimum of 17,500 bringing him very close to victory, if not victory itself. FP adherents reluctantly concede that VP will poll no less than 12,000 votes, thus getting very close to what SJV had polled in 1970. FP supporters say that the votes which had gone to Suntharalingam and Thirunavukkarasu in 1970 would in the main go to SJV this time. The FP hopes to poll about 15,000 to 17,000 votes (if VP's will drop to about 10,000), and win the election with a "comfortable" two to three thousand majority.

Such are the arithmetical political perspectives which have arisen so far in the KKS by-election. What February 6 will bring is yet hard to say, but there is no doubt that the FP has been thrown on its defensive in regard to its emotional politics. The FP has never had any concrete economic programme and this negative attitude is coming home to the FP with the younger generations among the Tamils being attracted by the left-wing policies of the United Front. With the patronage politics the UF has played in the North, the emotional appeal of the FP slogans has begun to wear thin—but not quite yet. There is no doubt that the UF is the first government which has spread so much of the patronage political cream in the Jaffna peninsula and this has begun to bear fruit in the form of support for the CP candidate—mainly because he has not obtained any bribe or the like for favours he has obtained—unlike many of the other dispensers of UF patronage in that region.

There is no doubt that the Government, the UF and the CP itself has as yet no answer for the emotional political appeal of the FP. Economic benefits and jobs in the public sector cannot remedy all the problems of the Tamils especially where there are legitimate grievances about many matters. The failure of the UF to provide constitutional guarantees in the Constitution itself is a grievance which no amount of UF assurances can overcome. Furthermore, the discrimination against Tamil youth in regard to admissions to the institutions of higher education through the dubious device of "standardisation" is real, and even the CP has no answer for it except that something will be done to remedy matters. Finally, the UF has not been able to help the Tamils to overcome the sentiment that they are only second class citizens trampled down under the majority rule of an aggressive Sinhala cum Buddhist nationalism.

Without overcoming these emotional and sentimental grievances which afflict the Tamil people in the North, it is not likely that the UF will

make much headway in the North, but if VP streaks his way to a narrow victory on February 6, (as CPite P. Kandiah had done in Point Pedro in 1956) it will be a victory of a personal nature (as Kandiah's had been). Observers close to VP believe that he would get about 3000 to 4000 votes on the party ticket, that he would get anything from 4000 to 6000 votes from the Maha Saba and the rest of the votes would come from his patronage politics and his personal admirers because of his incorruptibility. On what this "personal" vote would amount will depend the total polled by VP.

IT IS NOT LIKELY that the Government can, before February 6, provide the CP candidate with the necessary guarantees to convince the Tamils that their emotional grievances about language, discrimination and the like will be remedied soon. Without this major hurdle being overcome, it is not likely, that the UF can score over the TUF in the North, (but if VP does win in KKS this time it will be a flash-in-the-pan as Kandiah's had been in 1956).

Kankasanturai will make many people think anew—people who have lived on easy assumptions for many many years. The negative political policies of the FP, without any positive economic programme, will not take them very far in the future. And the UF (and CP) politicians will realise that neither positive economic policies nor patronage dispensed by the government can win majority consensus among the people without resolving their legitimate emotional grievances and sentiments. Man does not live on bread alone—although bread will go a long way to win votes.

#### Records

A new record in cigar smoking was recently set by 19-year-old Ken Higham in a contest arranged by a group of students of Winnipeg University (Canada). He puffed at 28 cigars at the same time, exactly twice as many as the previous record-holder.

## INTERNATIONAL-AFFAIRS BY ARIEL

### SOUTHERN AFRICA

ALTHOUGH THIS COLUMN is now chiefly devoted to questions coming within an Asian focus, (and this is mainly because of the shortage of space in the *Tribune* stemming from difficulties of cost and newsprint), the recent developments in Southern Africa constitute a major landmark in that continent which impinge in a significant manner on the politics of the Indian Ocean. South Africa and Rhodesia were the last outposts of white-supremacy and apartheid, and nothing that the leading western countries and the UN have done or said all these years had any effect on these two countries—but this year, the Afroasian cum Latin American bloc in the UN had brought home the isolation of South Africa in a manner which had compelled Mr. Vorster, (his country had been temporarily saved by the veto powers of the UK, USA and France), to declare (at the beginning of last November) that within six months the world would see significant changes in his part of the world. With the changes in Portugal and the consequent changes in Mozambique and Angola, there was little Mr. Vorster and Mr. Smith could do to stem the swelling tide of the black African power.

Within a month of this Vorster declaration surprises had come in Southern Africa with surprising rapidity. The first step taken by Mr. Vorster to prove his *bonafides* was to withdraw South Africa's guarantee to safeguard Mr. Ian Smith's white Rhodesia. This led to dramatic events resulting in the temporary "freeing" of the black Rhodesian leaders from gaol to attend a series of meetings in neighbouring Zambia between these leaders and representatives of Rhodesia regarding a programme in which (black) majority rule would be established in Rhodesia within a reasonable period of time.

Admittedly, it was Mr. Vorster's initiatives that had "pressurised" Rhodesia to begin a dialogue in

Lusaka, but there is still much more to be done about achieving a real breakthrough in the tangled question of black and white relations in this part of the world. It is also clear that a growing majority of South Africans have begun to hunger for a solution of the black-white confrontation and Mr. Vorster had no doubt to recognise this sentiment when he opened his diplomatic onslaught among the neighbouring black countries. "....Yet the hazards of this kind of



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diplomacy are only too evident. Black African states remain, as ever, chary of South African motives and intentions, and acutely susceptible to political embarrassment. Any progress towards a detente which is represented in the white south as a triumph for Mr. Vorster is all too easily seen elsewhere as a sell-out to apartheid and white power. Already, Mr. Kaunda, who gave such a warm welcome to Mr. Vorster's first public overture, is sounding a caution about not wanting peace at any cost... (vide *The Economist*, 7/12/74).

In Rhodesia itself, these developments were regarded as the "beginning of the end"—of white supremacy. *The Economist*, 7/12/74, in an editorial entitled REALPOLITIK IN AFRICA felt that South Africa had powerful reasons for wanting a better relationship with the countries that share the continent it sits on; they both call what they are after 'detente'; and they are both deeply reluctant to change the way they run their own countries in order to get on better terms with their neighbours. Mr. Vorster, it seems may now be prepared to make some major changes in his foreign policy in order to get a new relationship with black Africa. Mr. Vorster, if they would let him, could provide much of the capital and technology the black states to his north badly need. It would be dangerous to assume that peace in Africa is just over the horizon. But it is clear that something has made both Mr. Vorster, and a lot of black Africans, re-examine their attitudes to each other. That something was the change of regime in Portugal in April, and all that has flowed from it in Portugal's African territories. Mozambique is now controlled by Frelimo nationalists: the government in Angola could be in African hands before long. The impact on Mr. Vorster is clear. South West Africa, and South Africa itself, may soon have long frontiers with countries committed to supporting nationalist movements in both places. South Africa's undertaking to help Mr. Smith's government in Rhodesia looks increasingly implausible. Mr. Vorster, if he plays his cards wrong, faces a long guerilla war. Mr. Vorster needs peace on his frontiers. He needs labour and hydroelectric power from Mozam-

bique. He needs African markets for South African manufactured goods, just as those markets need those goods. And, above all, he needs time to work out how he can meet the demands of a hostile world that South Africa should change its internal policies when the majority of white South Africans want no change at all. To get all this he has to give something in return. He may already have agreed to pay the price—to leave Mr. Smith's regime in Rhodesia to swim or sink and to let the people of South West Africa determine their own future.

"But the black Africans may also have changed their approach. The Lusaka manifesto of 1969, signed by 14 east and central African countries and later adopted by the Organisation of African Unity, demanded acceptance of the principle of racial equality as a necessary condition of peace with South Africa. It added that, when the principle was accepted, there was room both for compromise on the timing of the change and for arrangements to make the transition a smooth one. What may now have happened is that the main black African countries may be willing to settle for changes in South Africa's policy on Rhodesia and South West Africa, and leave their hopes of change inside South Africa until later.

"President Kaunda is a realist too, and his first priority is Rhodesia. He has sound economic reasons for wanting a stable Rhodesia; since the border was closed last year, it has cost landlocked Zambia a lot of extra money to keep its goods flowing to and from the east and west African ports. He could benefit from a detente with South Africa. To say this is not to suggest that Mr. Kaunda has given up his hope of eventual majority rule in Rhodesia and South Africa. But his immediate aim may be to help to get constitutional talks under way about Rhodesia. If the talks in Lusaka could lead to a ceasefire agreement on the understanding that Mr. Smith would discuss a realistic constitutional settlement, that would be a major step forward...."

ALTHOUGH THE LUSAKA TALKS did not go as well as many had hoped they would, there was no

doubt that great beginning had been made in ending the deadlock in Rhodesia. Mr. Ian Smith was compelled to make concessions which he would not have dreamt of making six months ago, but after the changes in Portugal and the agonising re-appraisal which has overtaken the South African Government mainly after the happenings in the UN, there was little Mr. Smith could do to keep the flag of white rule flag flying. The best he could do was to stall for time. And he had an extremely difficult time in convincing his White supporters in Rhodesia that the time had come for the big change.

This is how *The Economist* of December 14, 1974, had summed up the situation: "So something came out of Lusaka after all. Until Mr. Ian Smith went on the air on Wednesday evening to tell his fellow Rhodesians that he had reached an agreement with the nationalist movements, it had appeared that last week's secretly arranged meetings in the Zambian capital had ended in a fiasco. His emissaries had flown back to Salisbury with the message that the black Rhodesians were demanding immediately majority rule as a precondition for stopping the guerilla war and joining in a constitutional conference. The South African prime minister, Mr. Vorster, who had been deeply involved in

### Have a Smoke?

The greatest harm caused by smoking, it is said, is the accumulation of too much carbonic acid in the blood. This impairs the eyesight and brain activity. Moreover, a large dose of carbonic acid may even cause death. But, writes, "Newsweek" magazine, the air in U.S. cities is so polluted that there is more carbonic acid in the blood of half the non-smokers than the permissible dose of 1.5 per cent. It should moreover be borne in mind that the non-smokers's organism has not developed a defence mechanism and is therefore less immune to danger than that of smokers. The ones in the worst fix are taxi drivers: the carbonic acid content of their blood is in some cases as high as 5.8 per cent.

getting the black and white Rhodesians together, implied that an agreement had been nearly reached in preliminary negotiations and blamed the breakdown on outside forces: Mr. Smith put the blame on President Nyerere of Tanzania; some Rhodesian government circles said that the militants of one of the nationalist movements, Zanu, had sabotaged the agreement. Mr. Smith seemed satisfied enough. He could tell Mr. Vorster that he had done his best by paroling the nationalist leaders whom he had kept in detention for the last 10 years so that they could go to Lusaka, and by sending two of his senior officials there to talk to them and to the presidents of Zambia, Tanzania and Botswana, who sponsored the meetings. It was not his fault that the talks had broken down: it was the blacks who had made "unacceptable" demands. Life, Mr. Smith seemed to be saying, would now go on as before for white Rhodesians. He had managed to get himself off a very uncomfortable hook.

"If Mr. Smith ever really believed this, his dream world did not last long. On Sunday Mr. Vorster had ended his broadcast by saying that South Africa would continue its efforts to bring the parties together again around the conference table, adding that: 'The alternative is too ghastly to contemplate.'" This was the storm warning. The telephone lines between Pretoria and Salisbury probably carried some pretty harsh words at the beginning of the week, with Mr. Vorster reminding Mr. Smith in unambiguous terms that he was now on his own.

"In announcing the breakdown of the talks last Saturday, Mr. Smith admitted he had made two preconditions for beginning constitutional talks with the black Rhodesians. He had demanded, not unreasonably, an end to the guerilla operations, but to this he added his well-worn phrase about 'no lowering of standards'. If his representatives in Lusaka were honest they would have had to explain to the inquiring black Rhodesians that this euphemism really meant a restricted franchise based on income, which would preclude majority rule for the foreseeable future. It was hardly surprising that the blacks countered this

stock demand with their own long-standing bid for immediate majority rule.

"The agreement which Mr. Smith announced on Wednesday night says that there will be no preconditions to the constitutional conference; but the two sides will start the new negotiations from widely divergent points: It would be highly optimistic to expect a quick conclusion. For one thing, the black Rhodesians will need time to put into effect one of the most important results of last weekend's meeting in Lusaka—the agreement that the three usually bickering nationalist movements banned in Rhodesia, Zapu, Zanu and the small Frolizi, should unite under the umbrella of the one legal black movement, the African National Council. They gave themselves four months to amalgamate and appoint new leadership. This is a necessary step towards a constitutional agreement between blacks and whites which will have a chance of sticking. Mr. Smith's attempt's such as they were, to hold talks only with the ANC leader, Bishop Muzorewa, were an unrealistic exercise. The bishop could not speak for the jailed nationalist leaders, nor for the men in exile who control guerilla operations."

What Mr. Smith and colleagues had agreed to do was something "revolutionary" in the context of recent Rhodesian politics. The Smith Government had never contemplated releasing the detained black leaders anytime in the near future. Not only has this been done but the white leaders have started a dialogue around a negotiating table. The process of negotiations has just begun and the birth pangs cause pain and difficulties.

The *Economist* of December 28, 1974, satisfied that the Rhodesian detente had got off to a good start, drew attention to the problems which confronted Mr. Vorster in South West Africa and South Africa itself. The paper discussed the "solution" which Mr. Vorster seems to have in mind and the difficulties which enveloped such a plan, but the important thing was that something had been started all.

"...And, with the Rhodesian initiative already under way, his next theatre of action must be South West Africa. His starting point

there is the policy of separate development. The existing blueprint envisages the formation of 11 independent tribal bantustans like those in South Africa itself, with the main body of South West Africa reserved for its 100,000 whites. But the bantustan system is anathema to African nationalists; and the UN and its secretary-general, Mr. Waldheim, have made it plain to the South African government that the scheme is unacceptable. So now the government may be thinking about a federation. Mr. Vorster has already announced a constitutional conference at which all racial groups will be represented. But in a clear bid to retain some of the bantustan concept and at the same time to keep the African nationalists at arm's length, he has stipulated that representation will not be on a party basis; each ethnic group must decide for itself how it wants to be represented. This could throw the power of decision back into conservative tribal hands. Much as the UN and the African states are bound to dislike this, Mr. Vorster presumably hopes in the end to produce an independence formula tempting enough to make them accept it. The alternative would be to press on towards the kind of confrontation in southern Africa which President Kaunda, for one, clearly wants to avoid...."

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ONE IMPORTANT FACTOR in Rhodesia, South Africa and the whole of Southern Africa was (and is still is) Britain. These territories, except what the Portuguese had held until very recently in that area, were part of the British Empire and Dominions, and many feel that Britain still has an important role to play in resolving the problems of government and constitutional rights in Rhodesia and South Africa, but it is clear that the White leaders of both these countries resent (very much) any interference, intervention or even conciliation by Britain. *The Economist* of January 11, 1975, summed up the position in a terse and succinct manner.

Commenting, on the visit the British Foreign Secretary Callaghan had paid several capitals in Southern Africa, the paper stated that it had been made clear to him that both Rhodesia and South Africa would like to solve the problems of white-black relations on a bilateral basis among the parties and peoples in the region itself.

"When reporters finally caught up with the Foreign Secretary on his brisk African tour, Mr. James Callaghan told them that even Mr. Henry Kissinger would be hard put to it to surpass his achievements in visiting five countries in two days. And it became clear, in Mr. Callaghan's talks on the Rhodesian problem with the presidents of Zambia, Botswana, Malawi, Tanzania and Kenya, that a large body of black African opinion wants him to behave like Mr. Kissinger in other ways too. He should, the arguments goes, take the initiative to call—and chair—a constitutional conference on Rhodesia.

"One of Mr. Callaghan's problems is that the South African prime minister, Mr. Vorster, whom Mr. Callaghan saw last Saturday on an allegedly sudden and unscheduled visit to Port Elizabeth, made it clear that in his opinion the less Mr. Callaghan and the British Government take part in the developing Rhodesian situation the better it will be. Mr. Vorster's argument is that Britain, like South Africa, should stay on the sidelines and let Mr. Smith's Rhodesian regime and the Rhodesian nationalist leaders agree between themselves. He may be right. Then, and only then, would it be the

turn of the British Government to give legal sanction to the settlement."

Mr. Callaghan had wanted to talk to the black leaders of Rhodesia, who had been released and had taken part in the Lusaka talks, but the Ian Smith government would not let them travel to any place outside Salisbury to meet Mr. Callaghan. It was the contention of the Rhodesian government that this was matter for the blacks and whites in the region to resolve—and that less Britain intervened in the matter, it would be better for all concerned.

"Mr. Smith has again shown that he is not prepared to jump at anyone's bidding. Mr. Callaghan wanted to meet the ANC leaders from Salisbury and the Zambian government sent a plane to bring back to Lusaka a delegation of six, including three men who had been detainees until last month. It returned empty: Mr. Smith refused the former detainees permission to leave. There are several reasons for this, the foremost being his wish to show that they are not to be regarded as free men, able to travel at will to foreign capitals or the United Nations. (Mr. Nkomo and Mr. Sithole are also apparently forbidden to address any public meetings in Salisbury). Mr. Smith may also have feared that the ANC leaders might have been persuaded by the British, and the militant nationalist leaders based in Lusaka, to toughen their stance. And had the Rhodesian prime minister let the delegation go he would certainly have been accused by his own white critics of being manipulated by the British.

"The Rhodesian government's view, like the South African one, is that Britain has no part to play in the conference at all except to step in at the end of the last act to legalise any settlement reached. It wants the conference to be held in Rhodesia at the end of this month, perhaps at Victoria Falls if the ANC objects to Salisbury, and it is thought that Mr. Smith wants the tribal chiefs and their followers who were in favour of the 1971 settlement terms to be there as well as the ANC representatives.

"The African National Council seems to be divided about the tim-

ing and place of the conference. The moderates, including the secretary-general, Mr. Gordon Chavunduka, are apparently prepared to have the conference this month in Rhodesia, and for it to be chaired by an independent Rhodesian, maybe the former chief justice, Sir Robert Tredgold. The more militant members, particularly Mr. Sithole and Mr. Mugabe, want the conference to be delayed until the ANC has elected new leaders at its congress in March. They insist on an outside chairman, and a site outside the country (President Kenyatta has offered Nairobi as a possibility). On Sunday the 38 members of ANC's executive committee will be discussing the issue and it will be seen then which faction is the stronger."

We have traced the recent development in Southern Africa from the columns of *The Economist* because it is most exhaustively informed about the situation in that region. *The Newsweek* and the *Time* take a more distant view of the whole matter—and often it is far too cursory and superficial emphasising the more dramatic (or melodramatic) aspects of these developments.

Elsewhere in this issue are published reports from a paper in that region spotlighting the Lusaka talks and its background. With Kenneth Kaunda in Sri Lanka on a State Visit next week, attention will no doubt be focussed on the affairs of Southern Africa, and more particularly about Zambia, where a large number of Ceylonese have found employment in recent years.

### The Doomed 2 Per Cent

A baby born in any one of the fifty biggest U.S. cities this year is more likely to be murdered than was an American G. I. in World War II. According to the British *Guardian* this is the conclusion arrived at by Dr. Arnold Barnett of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. His survey shows that 2 per cent of the babies born in large cities, where crime incidence is fast increasing, will have "cause of death—murder" written on their death certificates.

## CHRONICLE—SRI LANKA

## DECEMBER 17—29

A DIARY OF EVENTS IN SRI LANKA COMPILED FROM ENGLISH-LANGUAGE PUBLISHED IN COLOMBO.

**TUESDAY, DECEMBER 17:** According to the *Daily News*, the Government has decided to adopt strong measures to counter effectively transactions taking place in London with regard to foreign owned tea and rubber lands in the country. This was revealed in the National State Assembly yesterday by the Minister of Plantation Industry, Dr. Colvin R. de Silva: he further said that the Government had decided that no such transactions can take place abroad without reference to and approval of the Minister of Plantation Industry: the Government had also decided to empower the Minister to buy up or take over in the national interest any such foreign owned estates which are changing hands. Students representatives from all six campuses are scheduled to meet the Vice-Chancellor Mr. L. H. Sumanadasa tomorrow morning to discuss the situation arising from the student protest at the Colombo and Vidyalankara Campuses: meanwhile according to the *Daily News*, the keys of the Vidyalankara campus at Dalugama are once again in the hands of a group of undergraduates: the keys were snatched by this group while they were being taken from Vidyalankara Campus at Peliyagoda to its office at Dalugama. According to the *Daily Mirror*, the Joint Committee of Trade Union Organisations consisting of LSSP, SLFP and CP trade unions had planned to hold a mammoth trade union rally on December 31 to press for the implementation of the 28 demands it had put forward to the Government. Speaking at the 39th anniversary celebrations of the LSSP at Nawalapitiya, the Minister of Finance and the President of the LSSP according to the *Daily Mirror* has said that if for any reason the LSSP was forced to march alone to achieve socialism in this country they would not hesitate to do so. Education Minister, Mr. Badiuddin Mahmud yesterday had discussions with Kuwait Government leaders over the strengthening ties between the two countries.

**WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 18:** According to the *Daily Mirror*, the Prime Minister is reported to have told a SLFP trade union meeting in Colombo yesterday that the SLFP was prepared to work for the unity of the United Front or if it was war the SLFP was prepared for that: the bonds of unity cannot be forged by indulging in throat-cutting and patience should not be taken as a sign of weakness: at the same meeting the Minister of Foreign and Internal Trade, Mr. T. B. Illangaratne, said that although they had differences within the United Front they should be cautious not to allow reaction to raise its ugly head again: their policy should be to carry forward the victory which had been won. According to the *Daily News*, a spokesman for the University of Sri Lanka has told that the University by itself will not be able to provide protesting students of Colombo and Vidyalankara campuses a clear-cut answer to their demands for employment. The Lnaka Sama Samaja Party, one of the oldest political parties in the country celebrates its 39th anniversary today. A spokesman for the Ministry of Shipping and Tourism has told the *Daily*

*News*, that the demurrage Bill, running into many million rupees a few years ago has been reduced to nil. According to the *Daily Mirror*, the People's Republic of China has agreed to finance and assist Sri Lanka implement the gigantic Gin Ganga development project which is expected to usher in a new era of prosperity to the people of the South: the Chinese gesture follows negotiations conducted by the Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, with the Chinese authorities seeking assistance for the project. The Ceylon National Chamber of Industries in a letter to the Minister of Transport has requested him to release the lorries taken over from firms before irreparable damage is caused to them.

**THURSDAY, DECEMBER 19:** The five member Criminal Justice Commission (Insurgency) appointed in 1972 to inquire into the abortive insurrection of April 1971 will hand over its findings to the President, Mr. William Gopallawa today: the verdict in the main case of the April insurrection of 1971 is to be delivered tomorrow. According to the *Daily News*, foreign plantation companies and two other categories of foreign business interests operating in this country have been granted exemption from incorporation in Sri Lanka for six months only from January 1, 1975. Students of the Peradeniya Campus yesterday began a boycott of lectures in support of the protests already launched by the student councils of Colombo and Vidyalankara campuses: the Students Council of the Colombo and Vidyalankara Campuses had meanwhile decided to continue the boycott until its demands are granted. The Hatton Magistrate under whose purview the DC 8 air crash area falls, yesterday returned a verdict of 'air crash due to navigational error', at his inquiry into the tragedy at Maskeliya. Dr. N. M. Perera, Minister of Finance, speaking at the 39th anniversary of the LSSP held yesterday said that the LSSP was grateful to the late Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike for his nationalisation policy: the party was also grateful to the SLFP Government of 1956 for furthering the policy of nationalisation: he also said that this did not mean that the policy of nationalisation should stop at a stage when the country was on its march to socialism. According to the *Daily Mirror*, the Inspector General of Police, Mr. Stanley Senanayake, has decided to establish a special Homicide Squad in the city of Colombo from January 1, 1975.

**FRIDAY, DECEMBER 20:** Rohana Wijeweera, the leader of the Jathika Vimukthi Peramuna, was sentenced this morning to rigorous imprisonment for life by the Criminal Justice Commission (Insurgency): four of the 36 suspects produced were found not guilty of the charges against them and the Commission accordingly acquitted them: they are D. A. Gunesekera, J.P.P. Dhanapala, Mahinda Wijesekera and D. P. Wimalagune: Susil Siriwardene, S. D. Bandaranaike, and T. D. Silva were given suspended sentences of two years rigorous imprisonment each: the other suspects were given sentences varying from 3 to 12 years of rigorous imprisonment: the suspects sang the revolutionary song of the JVP when they arrived at the courts this morning. According to the *Daily News*, the Transport Ministry yesterday announced that according to the tape recording of the conversation between the ill-fated DC 8's pilot and the Control Tower at Katunayake, it was reasonable to presume that the crash at Maskeliya was caused by a navigational error: this follows a play back of the tape recording to the conversation between the

air craft and Colombo Approach Control for the first time after the disaster. Dr. S. A. Wickramasinghe, Secretary of the Communist Party and MP for Akuressa, speaking on the votes of the Ministry of Health at the National State Assembly yesterday said that the exodus of doctors from Sri Lanka was because of frustration and not merely in quest of better salaries abroad and in many cases this frustration stemmed from the under utilisation or non-utilisation of talent.

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 21:** According to the *Daily News*, the Mayor of Colombo, Mr. A. H. M. Fowzie, presenting the Municipal Council Budget yesterday announced new sources of revenue: every lorry entering to city would be required to pay a tax of Rs. 3 a day at the point of entry into the city; another source of revenue was to levy a tax of Rs 1 per month from persons who come to the city for employment. The Third Reading of the fifth United Front Government Budget was passed in the National State Assembly last night: it was passed on a voice vote with the Opposition not calling for a division. According to the *Daily Mirror*, letters were exchanged yesterday between the Secretary Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs and the High Commissioner for Australia in Sri Lanka in connection with the 30,000 tons of wheat flour which was promised to this country when the Australian Prime Minister visited the island last week. The United National Party holds its annual sessions today at the Sugathadasa Stadium: it will be presided by Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, President of the Party. According to the *Times*, a Bill to establish a Sri Lanka Tea Board has been gazetted the objects of the Board are to promote by such measures as it thinks fit, the development of the tea industry. The inaugural meeting of the Board of Directors of the Asian Clearing Union, in which Sri Lanka is a participant, was held in Bangkok under the auspices of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific on December 9 and 10 and Mr. H. E. Tennekoon, Governor of the Central Bank of Ceylon, was elected the Union's first chairman.

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 22:** A press communique issued by the Prime Minister's office yesterday states that the Government has been compelled to take a very serious view of recent actions and declarations by persons enjoying political influence: these actions and declarations have been calculated to incite both the public and State officers to act in defiance of the laws of thisland and to violate its Constitution: the communique further states that it will be an offence for any person to deny, challenge or question the validity of the Constitution, except in the National State Assembly or proceedings in a court of law: training persons to march in groups or formations or to form themselves into military or para-military groups and training in armed or unarmed combat is also prohibited: the services and Police are exempted. According to the *Sunday Observer*, a consignment of sugar valued at 300,000 marks will shortly be in Sri Lanka as a gift from the Federal Republic of Germany: the sugar is being sent from the West German unit of the World Freedom from Hunger Campaign. Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, Leader of the Opposition, was unanimously elected President of the United National Party at the annual sessions of the Party held yesterday at the Sugathadasa Stadium. According to the *Sunday Observer*, the new declaration of electorates in the country will be on the

basis of one seat for 90,000 of the population, according to an amendment to section 78 of the Constitution of Sri Lanka which the Government proposes to introduce next month: a National State Assembly of 168 elected members will be the outcome of this amendment.

**MONDAY, DECEMBER 23:** According to the *Daily News*, the Board of Governors of the University today meets undergraduate representatives of the Inter-University Student Federation in an effort to resolve the two-week deadlock at the Colombo and Vidyalan-kara campuses between students and the university. According to the *Daily Mirror*, the annual sessions of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party is to be held on December 28 and 29 at the Rahula Maha Vidyala, Matara, presided over by the Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike: the annual sessions of this year is expected to be a decisive one in the context of the present political situation. According to the *Daily Mirror*, private sector entrepreneurs have appealed to the World Bank mission currently in the island to double the quantum of aid to Sri Lanka for 1975: a twenty member delegation from the private sector led by the Chairman of the National Chamber of Industries met the World Bank team headed by Mr. Allen Collieu and explained that since the world market prizes of almost all the raw materials have risen to unprecedented levels, the allocation for raw materials should be double 1974s and total aid for Sri Lanka should be twice this year's. According to the *Daily News*, a press release issued by the Joint Committee of Medical, Scientific and Engineering Trade Unions and Associations state that the recommendations of the Sub-Committee on brain drain should not be delayed and allowed to suffer by bureaucratic bungling. The Prime Minister has told a meeting in a provincial town that a new law to enable the allottees in settlements who can pay the annual rent in a lump sum to become the outright owners of these allotments will be presented in the National State Assembly soon.

**TUESDAY, DECEMBER 24:** The students strike at the three campuses of the University of Sri Lanka, which resulted in the closure of two campuses, was settled yesterday: however lectures will start only on January 2. According to the *Daily News*, there are definite signs of an increase in trade between Sri Lanka and Egypt: this follows the recent visit to Colombo of Mr. Mahmud Sabbour, Chairman of the Egyptian Import and Export Corporation who had talks with several Sri Lanka Ministers and high ranking government officials: Egypt is very likely to buy more tea from Sri Lanka next year. Fifty more feet of steel tape from the Flight Data Recorder (Black Box) of the ill-fated DC 8 which crashed at Laxapana on December 4 were recovered yesterday. According to the *Daily Mirror*, Price Control Officers have now launched another operation to rid co-operatives of malpractices by carrying out random checks of stocks in hand of all co-op stores. According to the *Daily Mirror* some local industrialists are perturbed over the question regarding Capital Structure of Private Sector Manufacturing Industries in Sri Lanka being addressed to only a few industrialists: these industrialists have told the Ministry of Industries and Scientific Affairs that the object of the letter sent by the Ministry was to collect information about the Capital Structure of Private Sector Manufacturing Industries in the country. A surgeon attached to the General Hospital Colombo was yesterday



sentenced to two years rigorous imprisonment and fined Rs. 10,000 on a charge of bribery. The well-known Colombo lawyer Mr. G. E. Chitty, Q.C. died yesterday.

**WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 25:** According to the *Daily News*, the National Planning Council's sectoral committee on industries is currently considering the possibility of further reducing the price of cotton textiles—fabric and poplin—and bringing them under price control while removing the price control on synthetic textiles: according to a proposal before the committee the price of cotton textiles should be further reduced to Rs. 5 per yard while any losses incurred as a result should be caught by increasing the price of synthetics. According to the *Daily Mirror*, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, Prime Minister, addressing a public meeting yesterday has said that it would be possible to obtain oil in this country before the end of next year. Sri Lanka Freedom Party's annual sessions will be inaugurated by the Prime Minister at Matara on Saturday. Heads of Christian denominations in their Christmas message appealed to the public to help the needy: Christmas and Hadji festival will be celebrated in the country today in a much austere way than the previous years. Mr. Nalim Hadjar, Mr. Naufer Jabir and Mr. J. M. M. Raji who were taken into custody last month in connection with investigations arising from matters which transpired at the Criminal Justice Commission (Exchange Frauds) have been released on the directions of the Ministry of Justice. According to the *Daily Mirror*, the average cost-of-living index for the first ten months of 1974 was 12.6 per cent higher than the average index for the first ten months of 1973. According to the *Daily News*, only 57 recruits will be selected out of the 48,000 who recently applied jobs for as police constables.

**THURSDAY, DECEMBER 26:** Owinr to the Christmas holiday, the *Daily News* and the *Daily Mirror* were not published today: only the evening *Times* and the evening *Observer* were published. According to the *Observer*, next year will be a boom period for Sri Lanka's coconut industry: this is according to a forecast by the United States Department of Agriculture. According to the *Times*, from January 1 all policemen from the Inspector General to constable will wear the same basic uniform: khaki shorts and slouch hat will be out and constables will wear slacks, tunic and a peak cap. The broken tapes of the Black Box found at the crash site of the DC 8 were air freighted to the Director, Bureau of Aviation Safety, Washington, during the weekend, and according to the *Observer* these tapes were sent for laboratory testing. According to the *Observer*, the water levels at Labugama and Kalatuwawa have dropped to precariously low levels, and unless consumption is reduced a water cut may have to be imposed from early next year: the Mayor of Colombo, Mr. A. H. M. Fowzie, this morning appealed to rate payers in Colombo to stop washing cars, watering gardens etc with chlorinated water supplied by the Municipal Council. According to the *Observer*, Bank of Ceylon earned Rs. 66.7 million as gross profit in 1973: this is 10.5 million higher than the previous year. According to the *Times* it has been told at the International Tea Symposium held in London by the representatives of the International Corporation of Free Trade Unions and the international Federation of Plantation, Agricultural

and Allied Workers that conditions on tea estates in Sri Lanka and India are appalling.

**FRIDAY, DECEMBER 27:** According to the *Daily News* one of the first matters to be taken up by the National State Assembly in the New Year will be an amendment to the Constitution: this will be the first such amendment to the Republic Constitution promulgated in 1972: the amendment will raise the present number of 75,000 persons as the population basis of delimitation of electorate to 90,000: the amendment will be to article 78 (2) of Chapter XI of the Constitution of Sri Lanka: there are thirteen Bills outstanding on the Assembly's agenda but the Government will give this item top priority. According to the *Daily News*, the Minister of Justice, Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike, has taken action on questions raised by both government and opposition MPs during the discussion of the Justice Ministry votes: he refers to this in a lengthy minute to the Secretary to the Ministry of Justice: the main question refers to circumstances in which persons are held in custody for long periods either without inquiries being conducted at all or with investigations moving very slowly without the persons being told why they are being held in custody or upon what charges: the Minister has described this "as an unhappy situation" and asked for effective steps to remedy this. According to the *Daily Mirror*, a resolution to the effect that the Government should launch a crash program during the next two and a half years to solve the social, economic and cultural problems of the people as a result of the high cost of living, unemployment shortages of food, clothing etc, created by the global economic crisis, will take pride of place among those to be moved at the 32nd annual sessions of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party which begins tomorrow at the Rahula Maha Vidyalyaya, Matara.

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 28:** According to the *Daily News*, around 3,500 freshers have been picked the University for next year: the selection were made from 15,446 candidates who were considered eligible for admission to the University on the results of the GCE-A Level examination held in April this year: the Colombo District had the highest number of eligible candidates; Jaffna, Kandy and Galle being placed second third and fourth respectively. According to the *Daily News*, the Finance Ministry has prepared a special report to the Government on the effect of the recent budget proposals on business and industry, especially the tourist trade. According to the *Daily Mirror*, Sri Lanka's external assets topped the Rs. 1,100 million mark during September 1974—the highest level recorded during the past 17 years. According to the *Daily Mirror*, the Delimitation Commission has decided to defer consideration of the proposals already submitted to it: this is because it has been informed by the Government that it has been decided to vary the existing population basis in the allocation of electorates to each province. According to the *Daily Mirror*, the Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, is expected to make a crucial speech at the 23rd annual sessions of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party which opens at Matara today. Dr. N. M. Perera, Minister of Finance speaking at a LSSP meeting in Jaffna yesterday has told that the events that took place in Chile must not be allowed to take place in Sri Lanka and to prevent CIA and imperialist intrusions the backbone of the capitalist

class who are their agents should be broken. According to the *Daily Mirror*, the locomotive strength of the CGR will be increased by nearly 40 new engines and 70 wagons early next year.

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 29:** According to the *Observer*, addressing the 23rd annual sessions of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party at Matara yesterday, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, President of the Party, made it clear to her supporters and the people that she was not prepared to pursue "a policy of bull in china shop." The Prime Minister further said that a mere book bound orthodoxy will lead only to catastrophe: the Premier has further said that Sri Lanka will follow the socialist democratic path of Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike and there is no single path to achieve the socialist aspirations of the people, or to establish a socialist democratic society: the Soviet Union adopted one path, the People's Republic of China another, Cuba took yet another road and Sri Lanka will follow the path of Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike. According to the *Times* one hundred and sixty six cases of fraud involving a sum of Rs. 852,408 were reported by public corporations in the city of Colombo so far for this year: according to Fraud Squad sources this was a remarkably high figure in view of the high security measures the corporations are apparently taking to safeguard their materials. According to the *Times*, the strike of employees affiliated to the LSSP-Controlled unions in the Milk Board continues. According to the *Times*, the Colombo Municipal Council can afford to give each child in the city just one book under its scheme for the free distribution of school books: the Charity Commissioner recently reported to the Finance Committee that the sum of Rs. 153,000 provided in the 1975 estimates was sufficient to purchase only 30,000 books to be given to an equal number of children. According to the *Observer*, Sri Lanka was elected as one of the 36 members of the World Food Control at the United Nations General Assembly last week.

## CHRONICLE—THE WORLD

# DECEMBER 17—29

A DIARY OF WORLD EVENTS

**TUESDAY, DECEMBER 17:** President Ford and President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing had constructive discussions on energy and other issues at their Caribbean summit on Sunday: but a news blackout—imposed mainly by the French side—kept the world in the dark on any progress made. Pope Paul yesterday made a passionate appeal for unity and reconciliation in a divided Catholic church: in a strongly-worded document, he warned of the danger of dissent in the Church and asserted his supreme authority and that of the hierarchy of bishops in matters of doctrine. The Chairman of the Ruling Provisional Military Government of Ethiopia, Brigadier General Teferi Bente, said that the deposed Emperor, Haile Selassie, will probably go to trial soon for his alleged crimes against the Ethiopian people. Thousands of starving children facing death in the Bangladesh famine will receive aid from a special emergency flying squad from the London based 'Save the Children Fund.'

**WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 18:** The United Nations General Assembly has passed a series of resolutions demanding sanctions against South Africa for its apartheid policies. Chinese Vice President Teng Hsiao-ping has denounced Soviet-US detente as a cover-up for preparations by both councils for aggression and a massive arms build-up. The Ford-Giscard summit at Port de France in Martinique has ended with a decision to hold a meeting in March next year on the vexed problems of oil supply and prices. Pakistan Premier Ali Bhutto has decided that force alone is not the solution to Pakistan's problems with Baluchistan. Trade transactions between India and Bangladesh will in future be in freely convertible currencies instead of rupee as at present: this is one of the important features of the protocols to the existing trade agreement, finalised after a two-day meeting at the ministerial-level between the two countries.

**THURSDAY, DECEMBER 19:** The results of the Ford-Giscard summit at Martinique have been hailed by the press both in France and the United States. Chairman Mao has given personal backing to a drive to resolve political differences between the Communist Party and China's armed forces. US Congressional leaders have agreed on a comprehensive foreign aid Bill which extends the deadlock for cutting off US military aid to Turkey until February 5. Turkish-Cypriot refugees threw stones and shouted insults at President Makarios as he drove to their camp. The official leader of Rhodesia's 5.5 million Africans declaring that the people were tired of being second class citizens, said majority rule was the only basis upon which they would begin constitutional talks with Premier Ian Smith. Mr. Heath's chances of remaining at the head of Britain's Opposition Party appeared weakened when proposed new rules for electing the party leader were announced.

**FRIDAY, DECEMBER 20:** Prince Charles heir to the British Throne is due to visit India in February next year. The White House has dismissed reports of possible US military intervention in the Middle East to protect its oil supplies as pure fantasy. The USSR followed up its calls for the development of world peace and detente by announcing a small cut in its direct military expenditure for 1975—the second reduction in two consecutive years. The Indo-European Economic Community Joint Commission ended its two-day session in New Delhi on an optimistic note on the future of trade relations between India and the Community. India and Bhutan have reached general agreement to conduct their foreign policies in close co-ordination as in the past: they have also decided on frequent contacts between the representatives of the two countries for diversifying economic co-operation.

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 21:** President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing of France expressed satisfaction with his talks with President Ford in Martinique in which he said there was no winner and no loser: the President said at a Cabinet meeting that he had agreed with the United States President to settle energy policy differences and to set a target date of next March for preparations for a world energy conference. Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto said last night Pakistan would develop nuclear capability if it could not get enough arms for conventional deterrents: he said Pakistan would prefer to have conventional weapons

as a deterrent. The Indian Government has asked the Central Bureau of Investigations to conduct an inquiry into the loss of the original letter written by Mahatma Gandhi to Jawaharlal Nehru in October 1935: the letter sent for an exhibition in Canada was not brought back to India.

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 22:** The United States House of Representatives and the Senate gave their approval yesterday to a major international Trade Bill that grants Communist countries trade concessions if they permit free emigration. The International Court of Justice yesterday voted nine to six to dismiss complaints by Australia and New Zealand against French nuclear tests in the atmosphere in the South Pacific because France had said it had stopped this form of testing. More than a quarter of a million men on both sides have been killed, wounded or reported missing in less than two years since the Vietnam war was supposed to have stopped with an agreed ceasefire, according to figures issued by the Saigon Command. The entire Opposition of the Indian Parliament except the Communist Party walked out as a protest to Government's refusal to concede their demand for a Parliamentary probe into the licence scandal.

**MONDAY, DECEMBER 23:** A new high-energy chocolate milk being developed in Sweden may save the lives of millions of hungry children, according to researchers. Portuguese Foreign Minister Mario Soares will visit India from December 23 to 31; during his stay the Foreign Minister is expected to sign a treaty to formalise Portugal's agreement to recognise the full sovereignty of India over former Portuguese territories in India. Prime Minister Ali Bhutto has warned that Pakistan will not establish DPL relations with India at the expense of compromising self-determination for disputed Kashmir. Ethiopia is to go socialist with a one-party system direct government control of the economy and collective farms.

**TUESDAY, DECEMBER 24:** Yasser Arafat, leader of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation, has warned that a fifth Middle East war is imminent. West German Chancellor Schmidt told in Bonn that the United States and the Soviet Union could operate to avert a new world oil crisis in another Middle East crisis. After the visit of the Bhutan King to India it has been announced in New Delhi that Bhutan and India will maintain close co-ordination of their foreign policies in line with their 1949 treaty. French Prime Minister, Jacques Chirac, said in Teheran that he had ironed out differences between France and Iran over France's decision to revalue its gold reserves.

**WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 25:** President Ford had ordered Dr. Henry Kissinger to obtain a report from the CIA on its domestic spying activities. Indian Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, is to visit Maldivé Islands next February. The United States has increased its shareholding in the Asian Development Bank by 36 million dollars. One hundred and seventy five persons are reported to have died in North India where the temperature has been below zero at nights. Israeli troops, alerted by a series of Arab guerilla attacks, kept watch over Bethlehem as Christian pilgrims, gathered to celebrated Christmas. Pope Paul yesterday called for a settlement of the Jerusalem issue that would make the Holy City a symbol of peace for all the peoples of the Middle East.

**THURSDAY, DECEMBER 26:** The United States pledged 2,000 million dollars to aid poor countries hit by the world economic crisis, but said it would be distributed through American channels and not through a United Nations emergency fund. United Nations Secretary General, Kurt Waldheim, according to a spokesman, does not believe that at this moment there will be any military confrontation between the Israelis and the Arabs. The *New York Times* said yesterday that a major figure in the domestic spying activities of the Central Intelligence Agency had resigned. President Valéry Giscard D'Estaing of France hailed the results achieved by his Prime Minister Jacques Chirac in Iran where he won major industrial contracts for France.

**FRIDAY, DECEMBER 27:** John Stonehouse, British MP and a former Minister is to be charged in Australia for entering that country with a forged passport. A 125 MPH cyclone hit the Northern Australian port known as Darwin on Christmas Day killing at least fifty people and rendering several thousands homeless. Under a pact signed in Tokyo yesterday Australia is to supply Japan with raw sugar over a period of five years. President Ford has again summoned his advisers to discuss the economic situation in the United States. Britain has granted India an interest free debt relief loan totalling Rs. 17.75 crores under an agreement signed in New Delhi. The reduction of Thai rice export premium rates announced in Bangkok has increased the active overseas demand for Thai rice.

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 28:** Yugoslav Foreign Minister Milos Minic said in Belgrade yesterday that the co-ordination bureau of the non-aligned movement will meet in Cuba soon to prepare a Ministerial conference of all non-aligned countries next year. Israeli Premier Rabin said yesterday that Israel would not make any further concessions without a chance of an advance towards peace: Foreign Minister Allon meanwhile, appealed for quiet diplomacy in the Middle East which he said might bring about peace within a few years. Lt. Gen. Gamassi, Egypt's Chief of Staff, has been appointed as the new War Minister. Allegations that the Government was using pressure on advertisers to withdraw advertisements in the South Korean leading daily *Donga Ilbo* were denied by the Government.

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 29:** Gold soared to a new record price of 195.50 dollars an ounce on the London market yesterday in a flurry of year-end buying by dealers: bullion dealers said buying had been caused by hopes of increased demand for the metal in the New Year, when its public ownership becomes legal in the United States. In Cairo, seventeen people were arrested on charges of incitement against President Anwar Sadat's regime: it is said that they were arrested last Sunday after they gathered at Port Said's government theatre, tore down play bills and stuck up hostile pamphlets instead. The Watergate cover up trial of the scandal that brought down former US President Richard Nixon has reached the last lap: the judge yesterday was preparing his address to the jury which next week should deliver its verdict on five former White House members and Nixon Re-Election Committee aides charged with involvement in the Watergate scandal.

## SOUTHERN AFRICA

Truce.... Not  
Peace Yet

by Alan Paton

Pretoria,

IT IS NATURAL that many of the people of Southern Africa should rejoice in Mr. Smith's announcement of a ceasefire, an amnesty, and a constitutional conference. One of our leading dailies announces PEACE AT LAST. It should rather have announced that a truce had been arranged. Peace is an absolute. Rare individuals and rare families attain it. Countries are lucky if they achieve a relative peace. The poor old world has never had it. Absolute peace is not only unattainable, it is not a thing in itself. It cannot be talked about as though it existed in itself. There are certain prerequisites to peace.

In a family they are primarily love and affection. In a human society the primary prerequisite is justice. If there is no justice there can be no peace. Therefore, while we may rejoice that there is a truce, it is not because it brings peace but because it gives time here in South Africa to create a more just order of society. And that is going to be as hard a task as ever confronted a ruling class in all history.

I WROTE that many people would rejoice in Mr. Smith's announcement. There are two groups that will not, the extreme Right and the radical Left. The extreme Right is opposed to fundamental change, now or at any other time. The radical Left wants fundamental change, not tomorrow, but now.

The extreme Right deserves only condemnation. It is White, yet if it had the power it would destroy the White people of Southern Africa. It is Christian, but has no understanding of the teaching of the gospel. The radical Left is morally right; the only time for justice is now. But it is pragmatically wrong in supposing that one can have it now. The real political task is to *strive now* for the just re-ordering of society. This is the task that confronts the rulers of our own country. The radical

Left is also highly sceptical about the possibility of a just re-ordering of our society, and I don't blame it.

Do the haves ever agree to have less so that the have-nots can have more? The cynic replies, *only when they feel the guns in their backs*. I myself continue to cherish the hope that our rulers have intelligence enough not to wait till they feel the guns in their backs. Yet, although I cherish the hope, I am troubled by doubt. My doubt is not whether our Prime Minister is practically able to bring about fundamental change. My doubt is whether he is psychologically able. For if he is not the destruction of Afrikanerdom—and of much else—seems inevitable.

THE PRIME MINISTER more or less promised significant change within six months, though he—regrettably—allowed himself to be irritated beyond endurance by a pertinacious but polite BBC interviewer who wanted to know exactly what that meant. What kind of change could be significant? Must it not be a change in the fundamental assumption of Afrikaner Nationalism, that the races should be kept apart in every conceivable place and on every conceivable occasion? Is that not really the fundamental assumption of Afrikaner Nationalism?

Is it not fundamental that no White man should ever take orders from a Black man? And how can one reward Black intelligence and Black skill while that is so? Are the Nationalists psychologically able to repeal or amend the Immorality Act and the Mixed Marriages Act? That will mean amending the Group Areas Act and the Population Registration Act, both of which were thought in 1950 to be fundamental to the grand design.

Is a Nationalist Government psychologically able to make it legal for a White man and a Black woman, or harder still, a Black man and a White woman, to have a sexual relationship? To put it in a nutshell, can a Nationalist, or anyone else for that matter, make a significant change in a fundamental law? Can he change what he regards as his traditional and somehow sacred way of life?

Or will he be condemned to make those trivial changes which have made us a laughing stock?

Can you for example remove the colour-bar in our international teams and continue to maintain it in all others?

MR. VORSTER cannot give us justice tomorrow. If you have been determinedly building an edifice for 26 years, according to a master plan, you cannot radically reconstruct it in six months.

But you can begin. And you can be seen to begin.

Last year, Mrs. Mapumulo of Nyuswa paid R 59.50 for books and school fees and bus fares for her grand-daughter Eunice. If Eunice had been my grand-daughter I would have had to pay nothing. Let Mr. Vorster, for one thing, announce that African education will be free from January 1, 1975. Let him, for another, raise all statutory minimum wages to what researchers think to be a decent living wage. Let him provide for the registration of African trade unions. Let him revise the scandalous pensions paid to all African, Indian and Coloured pensioners. Let him revise the whole machinery of banning, detaining and silencing and sentencing of political opponents. And let him through his Minister of Justice, as an earnest of his intentions, pardon and release from prison Mr. Bram Fischer, gravely ill in Pretoria. That can be done NOW.

THEN ONE might revise one's doubts of his ability, and the ability of his party to make significant changes in the heavy burden of laws that they have laid on the backs of their countrymen. For without such changes all ceasefire are meaningless.

—Sunday Tribunes  
15/12/74

## Catching

Dorothy Peterson, who has been with the police in Reno (Nevada, U.S.A.) for ten years, has been time and again commended for her work. Her job is to catch drunken drivers. Recently, however, she was suspended for five days for reporting for duty in a state of intoxication.

## REPORT FROM RHODESIA

# THE DIALOGUE BEGINS

by John Edlin

Salisbury, December 12, THE RHODESIAN African nationalist leaders are free men, they have agreed to stop the debilitating guerrilla war in the north-east, and the Government of Ian Smith is willing to talk to them. These are sensational developments in themselves.

But while the first cautious steps towards political accord between Rhodesia's restless 5.8 million Blacks and the 270,000 privileged Whites have been made in an atmosphere of delicate diplomacy involving several Black African states as well as South Africa and Rhodesia, a yawning chasm has yet to be bridged between the parties.

The significance of the whirl of intense secret diplomatic activity in Southern and Central African capitals over the past few weeks is that Friday's historic conference came off at all. Significant because Ian Smith had stubbornly insisted all along that he would not negotiate with "terrorists." Significant, too, because the Black nationalist leaders had repeated time and again that any talks would be on the basis of immediate majority rule—and nothing short of that. But through what observers here and in Lusaka are lauding as the brilliant refereeing of Zambia's President Kenneth Kaunda as well as the moderating voice of the African National Council's outspoken but politically pragmatic Bishop Abel Muzorewa, loose guidelines for contact between the nationalists and Mr. Smith's Government were laid down.

Getting to the starting tape is one thing. Beyond it, the course is certain to be long, arduous and often hazardous. The rules are ill-defined, the hurdles many, the stakes high. And there will be winners and losers.

Tentative steps almost ended in a false start. While the protagonists—the African National Council that has swallowed up each of the three banned militant movements on the one hand, and the Rhodesian Government on the other—agreed not to impose preconditions for initial talks to estab-

lish a basis for a constitutional conference, the Black leaders on their return to Salisbury from Lusaka had other ideas.

Mr. Smith freed the nationalist detainees, including the main leaders, after announcing he had "received assurances to the effect that terrorist activities... will cease immediately."

Yet on their arrival the leaders added an unexpected proviso. "All freedom fighters will be instructed, as soon as a date for negotiations has been fixed, to suspend fighting," said a statement read out to newsmen.

It was signed by the bishop and by the former presidents of the Zimbabwe African National Union, the Rev. Ndabaningi Sithole, the Zimbabwe African People's Union, Mr. Joshua Nkomo, and the Zimbabwe Liberation Front, Mr. James Chikerema.

But the bishop, reflecting a hopeful sign for future flexibility, did admit later that this statement had been drafted before Mr. Smith's announcement and that it was no longer valid.

Yet cunningly inserted into their statement agreeing "without preconditions" to "enter into immediate and meaningful negotiations" was a rider. It said these negotiations would be "with the leaders of the Rhodesian Front and with the British Government in Britain."

Earlier in the day Rhodesian Front chairman Des Frost made it clear at a Press conference that Rhodesia would be the venue for any settlement talks and that Mr. Smith himself would be chairman. Which, some observers note wryly, are preconditions in themselves. At this stage it is impossible to say specifically what demands or counterdemands to fix ground rules for a constitutional conference will be made. As an ANC official said: "Things have moved so fast that we have not had much time to think about detail."

But hard bargaining can be expected at the preliminary round of talks between the nationalist leaders led by Bishop Muzorewa and the Government, led perhaps by the Secretary to the Cabinet, Mr. Jack Gaylord, who went to the Lusaka talks. The nationalists are first bound to insist on a neutral venue and an independent

chairman. The Government is certain to oppose bitterly such proposals.

Moreover, the most clairvoyant of political commentators here are not hazarding any guesses as to what ground rules will be laid down—assuming agreement is reached. The issues are simple enough. Basically the intransigent Africans in Lusaka dropped their demand for immediate Black majority rule in favour of a fixed timetable towards one man one vote. The Whites—pinning their demands on the insistence that there be no lowering of standards—may agree at a push to progressive moves towards parity in the 66-seat Parliament, now dominated by 50 White MPs. But they are not likely to go further than that.

It will need an extraordinary feat of engineering to bridge the yawning gap between the Blacks and the Whites. And observers say it is impossible to predict in terms of weeks, months or years when the necessary blueprint might emerge from the forthcoming first round of talks.

But without the bridge, the gap will grow ever wider. And that chasm will remain the primary obstacle in South Africa's own bridge building efforts with Black Africa.

## REPORT FROM ZAMBIA

# BIRTH PANGS Of Ceasefire and Negotiations

by Derek Taylor

Lusaka, December 14,

COURIERS are threading their way through the Rhodesian bush today telling the terror gangs to lay down their arms and withdraw into the Zambian and Mozambique base camps. At the same time, Rhodesian Air Force planes are showering the guerillas with pamphlets telling them that the shooting war is over.

But President Kaunda's blunt warning that the truce will end if the "peace" talks between Ian Smith's Government and Rhodesia's Black nationalist leaders break

## THE ZAMBIAN LEADER

## Kaunda the persuader —man who saved the Lusaka talks

IN MANY WAYS he put his political neck on a block by sponsoring unprecedented talks in Lusaka between Black heads of state and a Government most of independent Africa had for nine years despised and denounced. But President Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia never once lost his head in the diplomatic juggling that ended in the agreement announced by Prime Minister Ian Smith to herald the beginning of vital contact between the Black nationalist of Rhodesia and the White dominated Government. Even after the apparent collapse of the meeting of two Rhodesian envoys, a South African observer and the Presidents of Botswana and Tanzania as well as himself, President Kaunda moved swiftly and quietly behind the scenes to rekindle hopes for an early settlement.

The breakthrough came with the announcement on Saturday that each of the rival banned nationalist movement had agreed to gather under the banner of the more moderate and legitimate African National Council. It was strengthened by a midweek message from the Zambians to the Salisbury Government that the nationalists had dropped their initial demands for immediate majority rule as a precondition to a constitutional conference, and that they had agreed—provided their political prisoners were freed to lay down their arms and halt all hostilities. But even before the historic meeting—Cabinet Secretary Jack Gaylord and Attorney General Tony Smith for the Rhodesians, Pretoria's Foreign Affairs Secretary Brand Fourie—the Black nationalist leaders were initially unable to reach agreement in what form talks with Salisbury should take, if any.

At the first session last week with the mediators—Presidents Kaunda, Nyerere of Tanzania and Khama of Botswana—the nationalist movements could not reconcile

down has brought tension back to boiling point in the farming districts and tribal lands where gangs have been operating. The couriers are going out to the estimated 350 to 400 rebels following this week's promise to halt hostilities that have cost the lives of over 500 guerillas, 14 White civilians, more than 140 villagers and 40 Rhodesian troops and 12 South African policemen.

But it is clear that the Rhodesian security forces have not relaxed their guard on the border, not even the farmers themselves.

Mr. Smith warned Rhodesians to remain alert on Wednesday when he made the historic announcement of a ceasefire and the release of detained African leaders.

He said it may take some time for a ceasefire to be fully effective, and people in the affected areas should continue to take precautions. The Government may offer an amnesty to guerillas who decide to surrender themselves and their weapons, although no one will comment officially. But sources suggest that an amnesty is more than likely although a distinction will have to be drawn between guerillas and common criminals.

White Rhodesians, few of whom have not been affected by the conflict, are bound to be outraged by any suggestion that the men responsible for the deaths of European farmers, troops and police should be permitted to lay down their arms as free men. However, it is certain that the nationalist leaders would simply refuse to negotiate unless guarantees were made for their guerillas.

President Kaunda's war warning came at a United National Independence Party conference. He said Rhodesia was a test case to see if peaceful change was possible in Southern Africa, but he added: "We would rather talk than fight, but it has been made clear if meaningful change is not possible, armed struggle will be inevitable." And in Salisbury, Bishop Abel Muzorewa, President of Rhodesia's African National Council (ANC), said there was no indication either in Salisbury or at last week's talks in Lusaka that the Rhodesian Government was prepared to alter its policy of White-minority rule.

Bishop Muzorewa is official spokesman for Rhodesia's 5.5 million Africans following the merger of the former banned nationalist movements, Zanu and Zapu, under the banner of the ANC in Lusaka last week. As the Black nationalists returned to Salisbury, at their backs were the unblinking interests of two major figures left behind in Lusaka and that sector of the OAU which regards the present progress of the detente with deep suspicions of a "sell-out."

As the Zambian Air Force DC 6 B prepared to take off to Salisbury one of the four Black leaders suddenly reappeared and slowly returned down the steps. James Chipere, leader of a movement that broke away from Zapu, had been reminded that a death sentence for sabotage awaited him in Salisbury. And Herbert Chitepo, the organiser of Zanu's guerrilla campaign in 10-year prison sentence passed on him in his absence by the Rhodesian High Court, was also left behind; stony-faced, on the tarmac.

The newly-reconciled Black nationalists will be taking to the Rhodesian conference table a new priority of strategy—the retention of White confidence and its infrastructure while bargaining for majority rule at a speed which will not divide their Black supporters.

While the security clamp-down on details of the Lusaka's talks continues, sources here agree on five bargaining points.

The principle of no recognition for Rhodesia before majority rule is now as irrelevant as the British role for which it was evolved. The Black Rhodesians will go for a transitional government with parity of numbers for Black Members of Parliament and immediate Cabinet membership. A constitution that will provide elections for majority rule—with entrenched protections for the White minority—in two year's time: Support for Malborough House as a venue is discounted here because too much unearned credit might rub off on the British Prime Minister, Mr. Harold Wilson: The arrangement of a piece-meal withdrawal of sanctions against Rhodesia.

their own deep-rooted differences that had forced them apart a decade before. The Rev. Ndabaningi Sithole, the detained Zanu leader who had been paroled by Rhodesia to fly to Lusaka, wanted to continue guerrilla warfare in the northeast. Zanu gangs had been active there for two years.

Mr. Joshua Nkomo, the Zapu leader who was also freed for the Lusaka indaba and whose movement was virtually militarily impotent, argued that talks with Mr. Smith were timely. Informed Lusaka sources suggest that because of the bitter rivalries between the movements the meeting with the Rhodesians looked at one stage as though it would not even get off the ground. But for President Kaunda and South African Premier John Vorster, who initiated the atmosphere of detente in the sub-continent, too much was at stake. Weeks before, Mr. Mark Chona, the Zambian leader's able envoy, had been in Pretoria for discussions to set the stage for the Lusaka get-together. Further contacts had established that there was a mutual desire for moves towards a Rhodesian settlement to speed the process. And the Lusaka sources say it was President Kaunda's gentle persuasion that finally brought about agreement between the quarrelsome nationalists.

What happened next is unclear

The South Africans were confident that Rhodesia's preconditions for negotiation—an immediate ceasefire and acceptance of the vague demand that there be no lowering of standards—would be acknowledged when the mediators met the Rhodesian team. Inspired leaks from Pretoria and Cape Town heightened optimism. Mr. Smith in Salisbury was scheduled to make a crucial broadcast to the nation last Sunday night. Farmers in the northeast had been told "wait a bit" for more trucks to patrol against rebel gangs.

And Rhodesian Internal Affairs Minister Jack Mussett had driven to the Seki tribal land outside Salisbury to tell the Council of Chiefs that while they would continue to be recognised as the traditional representatives of the people there would be African political leaders as well. The Lusaka version of how the talks collapsed differs from the statement released

by Mr. Smith's office after an emergency Cabinet meeting. Mr. Smith's statement the next day said the nationalists would agree to a constitutional conference only if the Rhodesians first accepted immediate majority rule as a prerequisite. And these proposals were "not acceptable," his statement said.

But Lusaka sources—and officials of the ANC—insist that what was demanded was general agreement on the principle of majority rule, a timetable for which would be negotiated at talks between the movements and the Rhodesian Government. If there has been a misunderstanding on the part of the Rhodesian negotiators, as is suggested in the Zambian capital, it was President Kaunda who cleared it up. Suggestions have been made in the South African Press that the talks with the Rhodesians, at which the three heads of state spelled out the terms wanted by the nationalists, had been torpedoed by President Julius Nyerere of Tanzania.

Mr. Smith himself said as much in a television interview before the Zambian leader's message had been received: "It is unfortunate that the President of Tanzania was present and sitting in the chair. I don't think he has anything in common with the rest of us who live in Southern Africa. I don't think he has any particular interest in settling the dispute here, whereas the other countries do." But Lusaka observers are adamant that the Tanzanian leader was as dis-

appointed as the other heads of state that the meeting had apparently failed. One Tanzanian diplomat said before he returned to Dar es Salaam he felt there had been a misunderstanding on the part of the Rhodesians, and that the nationalists, terms had been diluted with the agreement of President Nyerere.

Whatever happened is now more or less irrelevant.

Mr. Smith's Government is satisfied it has sought assurances that the war on the frontier will be over. The nationalists are happy they are now freed from detention and restriction, and able to organise politically for forthcoming talks that will establish the basis for a full constitutional conference. And the South African and Zambian leaders can point to the agreement between the Salisbury Government and the nationalists as a hopeful sign that at least some progress has been made to strengthen the detente they both seek to preserve. But closer examination shows the concessions by the Rhodesian Government are greater than those of the nationalists. At least, the nationalists can say, the Rhodesians must now talk about their demands for majority rule—something Mr. Smith has flatly refused to do before.

And that in itself, according to the nationalists, is a victory.

—Sunday Tribune  
15.12.74.

## NORTH SEA COULD PROVIDE HALF BRITAIN'S OIL IN THREE YEARS

London.

There is now evidence to suggest that oil production from the North Sea could meet half of Britain's needs in three years, says the Minister of State for Energy, Lord Balogh. Speaking to the Institution of Gas Engineers in London he said there was also a prospect of Britain becoming self-sufficient in energy by 1980. Of the Bank of Scotland's estimate that the value of all oil in the North Sea could be worth more than £ 100,000 million, Lord Balogh said this was consistent with Government figures. Estimates of reserves from commercial fields so far located had been up-dated to 1,160 million tons, worth around £ 40,000 million at today's prices. "There is a good chance that in 1980 we shall be able to produce oil equivalent to our demand," said the Minister. Britain is developing a four-fuel economy. In addition to North Sea oil eleven million gas consumers are now using natural gas from the North Sea where there are prospects of reserves sufficient for all major production for many years. Lord Balogh said the Government had recently chosen the type of reactor for new nuclear power stations while the local industry was assured of a long future.

## BUILDING A VILLAGE HOUSE-17

# Onward And Downward..... With The Corporations

By Herbert Keuneman

I am not sure whether I would rather not deal with the State Corporations than not deal with a pure—the word is relative—Government Department. But the choice is academic. One must deal with both. And in either case the inevitable result is trauma!

**THE LANGAMAYA.** I could quote examples of inefficiency and utter indifference to the public interest—as could any bus traveller in the Island—that would make any head but an official one spin. For example, the way buses are withdrawn from their regular routes, and without warning, to be 'hired' for some political use; so that, whereas in urban areas the buses that are left are merely late and overcrowded, in rural areas—with less buses to subtract from—whole routes are temporarily abandoned.

Or item: the Conductor of a bus that parks overnight in Embogama (the next large village to Ehetuwewa) to be ready for a start at dawn used privately to employ a lad to clean the bus and also sleep in it, so that he himself might have the night for his enjoyments. One night the lad, typically convinced that he could drive the bus as well as could clean it, invited a bunch of friends on a joy-ride which fortunately for them ended within a few hundred yards but with the bus damaged and overturned in a paddy field. I cannot tell what departmental action was taken against the Conductor or if any was taken at all, but it is common gossip that the boy suffered nothing at all, neither he nor any of his companions so much as pulled a muscle even in the crash. The only obvious sufferers were the commuters, who had to write off all the routes served by that particular bus until the authorities—very much later—got round to replacing it. And of course they, and other ratepayers, had the privilege of paying for the repair.

But one does not need seek any out-of-the-ordinary example to start a doubt as to the philosophy of the C.T.B. The evidence suggests that the public as individual travellers come very far down in its priorities. I am not forgetful that we enjoy the world's cheapest bus rides, and the concept conforms on the surface to some sort of socialist ideal. A complicated organization expresses it. But somewhere along the way the traveller (who is the socialist reason for bus and fares and organization and all) becomes a statistic: the only people apparently recognized are the Board's own employees. The solicitousness, one begins to think, is for them rather than for those who keep them employed. I give below a completely unvarnished account of a typical journey, an average trip in every way, to bear out my contention.

**THE DAY'S BUSINESS** took me from Ehetuwewa to Talawa and thence to Anuradhapura and back: a round trip of less than 80 miles, which took me more than 12 hours to accomplish although barely three hours were spent on the jobs

I went to do. The rest was travelling... and waiting to travel.

I caught the 6.30 a.m. bus to Galgamuwa. We pulled into the Galgamuwa bus stand as a bus to Anuradhapura was just making to leave. You might (if you were not by experience hardened to the single-mindedness of C.T.B. drivers) have expected this bus to pause a minute—one minute—to see if our bus carried passengers hoping to make a connexipn; but it did not. The next bus was so full I could not get in at all; but after an hour and twenty minutes I fought my way into a bus which provided me with standing room. Standing as I was, I could not see out: even if I ducked my head below my shoulders I still could not see, because other standees blocked my view. I begged the Conductor to drop me off at the Talawa State Timber Depot, but he forgot, and I was overcarried to Talawa Junction whence I had to walk back nearly a mile.

Leaving the Timber Depot I tried to stop the first two Anuradhapura buses that passed, outside the gate; but they were going too

well for the Drivers to bother. I re-walked the mile to Talawa Junction and joined a group (characteristically it was not a queue) at the labelled Bus Halt north of where the side road from Kekirawa debouches. Two buses arriving from the Galgamuwa direction came and stopped at an un-labelled halt on the south side of the junction. Thinking the first one would stop again at the labelled halt, I waited for it. It did not stop. The other arrived without my noticing it; and when I did notice it and ran over to catch it at the unauthorized halt was I too late. I stayed where I was (at the southern 'Halt') and meanwhile a bus from Kekirawa stopped at the northern, labelled Halt but pulled away before I could reach it. Back I went to the proclaimed Halting Place, having realized that the way to win this game of C.T.B. musical chairs (there is also a City version, played after dark: where the Halts carry the numbers of the buses due to call at them and the hazard is provided by the numbers on the buses themselves' being so ill-lit as to be quite illegible) was to decide which of the halts—the official or the Driver's Choice—one would take a chance on and abide by that decision. Luckily, a second bus from the Kekirawa direction followed quite soon after the previous one and I caught it.

**WITH ALL THIS OSCILLATION,** it was lunch time when I reached Anuradhapura, and I had to hang about for 50 minutes waiting for the Government offices with which I had business to open. After I had finished at the Cement Corporation, it took me 20 minutes to catch a bus to the Regional Office of the Timber Corporation; but after I had finished at the Timber Corporation it took me 55 minutes to catch a bus to the town Bus Stand, although there were still remnants of a crowd waiting just up the road to get home from Visitor's Hour at the Government Hospital.

For all the City's importance and holiness, the Anuradhapura Bus Stand must be the most chaotic and ill-organized in the Island. It is certainly the most filthy; and this is saying a great deal. (The stand at Kurunegala, on the other hand, is a model of order and efficiency, and I recalled it ruefully



while I waited the nearly two hours it took me to find a bus back to Galgamuwa.) The trouble is—or that was one trouble—that for some reason the C.T.B. seems unwilling to commit itself and buses will not change their destination boards to announce where they are bound for until just before they set out. As for making direct enquiry...C.T.B. employees regard any question concerning C.T.B. operations as, apparently, a reflexion on the efficiency of their service. (Which, of course, it generally has to be.) At all events, after several rebuffs I patiently resigned myself to standing about until chance should bring a Galgamuwa-bound bus to my feet. Meanwhile, there was no usable public convenience within sight of the Bus Stand. I longed, at the same time, for a drink. There were a number of shacks selling refreshments around the perimeter of the place; but, having seen cups and tumblers being washed in a miasmal little brook no better than an open sewer that flows behind them, I had perforce to inhibit this craving of the flesh as well!

I suppose one could look upon this kind of frustration, too, with a wryly humorous eye if one were not too often subjected to it. But with the C.T.B. the only transport available and that transport urgently required again and again, to do so demands a degree of resignation to which I have not, even after three years, attained. *Nor, in this context, do I as a tax-payer see any reason to cultivate it.*

**TIMBER.** We Ceylonese have a pedagogical, not to say a didactic, temperament. I arrived in Ehetuwewa with the resolute intention to demonstrate to its inhabitants, steeped as they were in the bad old tradition of ignoring Government directives and ganging their own gait (smoothing the path for themselves, when necessary, by recourse to the immemorial and unquestioned custom of the bribe) selfishly unmindful of the long-term interests of the country at large, that it was perfectly feasible to build a house even in these times and not contravene a single official ukase. Especially, I was going to show that the restrictions recently imposed upon the private exploitation of the country's timber resources was reasonable and logi-

cal and that a co-operative attitude would breed a similar complaisance on the State Timber Corporation's part.

I was of course wrong and forced to end up purchasing private timber and even illegally felled timber at a considerable saving and with a deal less trouble, just like any other villager and as the other villagers had all along advised me!

On 1 June (1972) I called at the Corporation Depot at Talawa to place my first order. This was chiefly for *palu* scantling of 6x3 and 5x4 ins. for joists and wall plates. They cost me, when I eventually got them *two months later*, Rs. 1,150.71 plus transport; whereas I could have obtained them locally—unseasoned; but neither was the Corporation timber—within two weeks and at a much lower price—all I had to do was 'purchase' a tree and pay for feeling, sawing and carting, with a small *pour boire* where advisable—about Rs. 500, say; certainly not a cent more. Altogether, I spent Rs. 2,234.88 at the Depot (in addition to the cost of the timber they make unadvertized surcharges of 10% on scantlings of more than 15" sectional perimeter besides 10% over and above as 'Selection Charge' for merely inspecting the darn stuff to check that the pieces are not defective, as I found they sometimes turn out to be) so that I spent at least Rs. 1,000 for being overburdened with civic consciousness.

The middle of July I had still no word of the timber I had ordered, and I went back to the depot to enquire. I was a little indignant, for I had learned that another order *placed later than mine* had already been delivered; and when I asked the fortunate consignee how he had achieved this, he had explained, adequately, without actual resort to verbalization! Now, this was precisely what I had sought to avoid and it was in a dark mood I presented myself before the Depot Keeper. Or, more accurately, the Depot Keeper's depute; for the Depot Keeper was on leave.

The Depot Keeper's Deputy was in no dark mood at all: he explained sunnily and breezily that the depot had been very busy. I asked about my acquaintance's fulfilled order, but he professed no knowledge at all of that. I thereupon played

my one trump card which—on my honour—I keep up my sleeve for use only on desperate occasions. 'I must write to my cousin', I said.

Actually, in village idiom it comes out rather more effectively; *malli*, a common word for cousin, means also 'younger brother'; and the relationship is generally accepted as that. (I must add that an *elder* brother has in village circles in inherent standing above a younger). 'Ah!' asked the deputy, still sunnily and breezily, 'and who is that?'

I said: 'The Minister of Housing'. Darkness descended upon the mood of the deputy also!

I did write to Pieter, on the 20th of July. On the 24th I had a friendly and hopeful verbal communication from someone in the Regional Office of the Timber Corporation trusting that my matters were going well. On the 25th I had a letter from the Chairman of the Corporation himself stating that the Regional Office had been instructed to issue the material immediately. On the 26th I had a letter from Pieter, dated the 24th, to say that he was doing what he could. Yet I suspect the mere invocation of him had already done it; for I received a letter from the Depot Keeper, Talawa (dated 18 July, though it did not reach me until several days later) saying that my timber had been 'converted'.

Apparently the Depot itself had been, also. For with two subsequent orders I had not the least trouble.

But what shall the ordinary villager, with no important *malli*, do? What shall I advise him to do? Or shall I let him advise me? After all, he has lived with officialdom a long time!

### Twice Stolen Goods

The Paris "Monde" reports the arrival in Marseilles of two representatives of the National Police to investigate thefts involving three policemen employed in the city's port. The trio, who had access to the goods confiscated from thieves, are accused of misappropriating them.

## POINT OF VIEW

TRADE UNIONS  
IN SRI LANKA

—how they differ  
from those in socialist  
countries—

by Helen Suriyapperuma

IN SRI LANKA when we talk of Trade Unions we talk of either the SLFP or LSSP or the union of some other political party. There are very few independent T.U.s and they are not very influential. So in fact the more powerful unions are really part of the structure of the various political parties in the country. The result is that in every public or private work place in the country there are various groups of workers with often diametrically opposed political views, bringing in their party rivalries into their work place. This gives rise to a situation where the very purpose and benefits of an organisation like a T.U. is lost to a worker. The ambition of each union is to be the most powerful—often giving rise to thuggery intimidation and outright bribery by the bigger unions for the purpose of expanding its membership and holding sway generally in the affairs of the labour force in the work place. This kind of situation in our work places in Sri Lanka has given rise to rampant corruption, wastage of time by the employees who when in power unashamedly waste precious work hours gambling, drinking cups of tea in canteens and generally wasting the poor tax payers money that is invested in these undertakings.

These trade unionists who shout from public platforms against capitalism will not hesitate to waste the poor tax payers, money by calling out their membership on frivolous strikes which could easily be settled by negotiation. This gives rise to a situation where even administrative officers become the tools of powerful unions. It is not uncommon to find unions taking up cudgels or behalf of a particular officer who is partial to their union. The services rendered to the unions by such officers are innumerable, like selecting men of

their party to vacancies especially in the lower grades, treating members of these unions lightly when charges are framed against them, and transferring them to favourable stations and posts where invariably they could earn a little extra by unauthorised means or overtime.

But take the situation in a socialist country like the Soviet Union which has progressed at a fantastic rate in the sphere of Industry and agriculture. It is the well organised system of T.U.s and Agricultural co-operatives which has helped. The difference in this premier socialist country is this.

IN THE USSR Trade Unions are a mass non-party public organisation in which workers and other employees of all occupations are united on a voluntary basis without distinction of race, nationality, sex or religious belief. Membership is open to all citizens employed at industrial establishments, transportation services, construction projects, state farms and those students at higher learning and technical or occupational schools. A most important feature of these trade unions is that they are organised on industrial and not political lines. All persons employed in the same factory or establishment belong to the same union. This type of structure makes it possible to take better account of the requirements and specific working and living conditions of the people employed in each industry. The general meeting of the workers is the highest directing body which expresses the will of the members without fear or favour. Thus the central committee they elect is composed of the best men at the Institute—men of honour and integrity who are dedicated to the welfare of the men they represent, which means every single worker in the workplace. Political influence and patronage play no part. The members regard trade union work as a public duty to which they give their time and energy without pay. This applies to every single person in the establishment both ordinary members and those elected to higher trade union bodies. But how often in public work places and corporations in Sri Lanka do you see the privileged T.U. boss importantly walking round during working hours doing nothing?

He has been given a cushy job to free him for trade union work whilst the leaders of other unions who have unfortunately been unable to or unwilling to use the nefarious methods adopted to increase their membership, have to do a full 8 hours work. It would be of great public interest if some of these union leaders would declare in public the hours of work they put in on the jobs they are recruited for, and for which the tax payer pays. Also if they would list the trade union work they perform during working hours. In a socialist state whether he be trade union leader or not he must perform the unit of work he has been recruited to perform and for which the state pays him with public funds.

In the Soviet Union the principle of collective leadership is scrupulously observed. Trade Union organisations educate their members in a spirit of collectivism and participation in public affairs and develop their sense of duty in feeling for the country as a whole and not for the benefit of a particular political party or group. Trade Unions therefore have a tremendous influence on the composition of the elected organs of Soviet power. They help to elect to these organs the finest people from among the working class and the intelligentsia—men and women who enjoy the confidence and respect of the population. These Trade unionists have time to do their legitimate work at the work place, their trade union activities and also work of social welfare. How does this compare with trade union activities in Sri Lanka. Here one seldom hears of trade unions participating in social activities. Do the union leaders ever pull up their membership for not fulfilling their full legitimate hours of work? In the Soviet Union, trade Unions supervise the construction of dwellings and cultural and public service establishments as well as the work of hospitals, polyclinics, health and holiday centres, kindergartens, children's nurseries, shops and public eating places. At the orphanage I visited in the Soviet Union the Trade Union of a factory close by was even building a swimming pool for the children.

**INDUSTRIAL ESTABLISHMENTS** are administered by directors appointed by the Government body. At the management level the system of "one man" management ensures order and discipline in all departments of an industrial establishment without which it would be impossible to run the establishment successfully. At the same time "one man" management means that the executives are personally responsible for the work of the establishment. A director of a Soviet establishment is a representative of the people and therefore must see to it that the establishment under his management fulfills the plan as set down in the general development plans of the country. His unit of production is a part of a general whole and any let up in his unit has some bearing in the fulfilment of the production plans of the country as a whole. The whole unit under him is developed and improved in the interests of the state and people. Therefore the administrators and the workers do not represent two hostile camps. The administrators and workers, and hence the trade unions as well make a joint effort to increase output and raise labour productivity, for this means an increase in the public wealth, greater prosperity and a higher living standard for every member of society. It is for this reason that in a production unit in the Soviet Union you do not find a trade union representing only one section of the work force striking for a particular benefit or pressurising the management just for the sake of prestige in the eyes of the workers of rival unions. A Soviet Worker is aware that it is more important for that money to be utilised in the overall industrial planning scheme of the whole country which ultimately brings down the cost of living of the workers throughout the country and thus benefits them personally. In this country every time a section of the workers in the public sector pressurises the Government for a benefit, usually by strike action which entails exorbitant losses and inconveniences to the working class throughout the country, they do not realise that they are setting back a production programme in some other unit.

In a planned economic set up the general financial structure is

planned for the overall maximum development of the whole country and not for one isolated project as in the private sector industry. In the Soviet Union as the history of its economic and social development has shown, the workers were aware that they too would have to make sacrifices like all members of society if a speedy development of the economic structure of the whole country was to be achieved.

The "one man" management does not exclude but rather presupposes the active participation of the entire personnel of the establishment. At large establishments different units elect delegates who meet at a conference instead of a general meeting. These conferences discuss questions of state and national importance which concern the entire personnel in the factory. Problems of public welfare, cultural services and construction and repair of dwellings occupy a big place at these meetings. The meetings freely criticise short comings in the work of the administration and the trade unions themselves. This type of general meeting is unheard of in Sri Lanka where there are 5, 10 or even 15 different trade unions in one work place, such collective action is impossible. Even in individual trade unions the practice often followed is for the central committee who might or might not get its instructions from the headquarters to summon a so called general meeting where an announcement is made that such an action will be taken and through fear of victimisation by their own men no opposition is offered. It is a fact that very often the general membership is not appraised of the true facts or have very hazy concepts of the reason for a strike, as very often no free discussions are held before the strike order is given.

**COLLECTIVE AGREEMENTS** play an important part in production sites and state farms in the Soviet Union. These agreements are concluded annually between the unions and the management. Contained in the agreements are the definite obligations assumed by the management and the trade union committees representing the entire personnel. The obligations are to be fulfilled during the course of the year by the dates stipulated in the agree-

ment. Such an agreement would contain the obligations undertaken by the management and the committee to fulfil and exceed the state production plan by encouraging efficient proposals, popularising better methods of work and introducing new machinery and techniques. Collective agreements also deal with wages, training of new workers, labour discipline, labour protection safety engineering, and industrial hygiene. They would also deal with matters of housing and cultural undertakings for the benefit of the factory personnel. These agreements are distributed in booklet form among all the workers and therefore every man from manager to the lowest grade worker knows what is expected of him in the annual production plan, the exact date of the fulfilment of his individual labour output in the framework of the general production target of the whole factory.

Cultural activities sponsored by the unions instil in the workers, love for the culture of their country, broadens their horizons and respect for all nations. They have their own news papers, libraries, clubs and places of culture. Trade unions sponsor talks and lectures on various topics by public figures. Even the children of the workers are not neglected. All kinds of interesting pastimes are arranged for them. They take an interest in their education and take an active part in parent teacher organisations. In the Soviet Union nearly 80 per cent of union funds are used to finance cultural and welfare services of the membership. The accounts of these funds are strictly kept and auditing commissions are elected by secret ballot.

Compared with trade unions in the Socialist countries, trade unions in Sri Lanka have a long way to go in efficient collective activities, devoid of petty rivalries which would bring real benefits to the workers themselves and ultimately to the country as a whole.

(Mrs.) Helen Suriyapperuma has been active in political and trade union circles in Sri Lanka for many years and she has been a member of the Board of Directors of the Milk Board from 1970.

# IS IT TRUE? Sherlock Holmes

## Jaffna Municipal MPCS

IS IT NOT TRUE that there is a great deal of justifiable satisfaction in all circles in Jaffna that some action has at last been taken against the Jaffna Municipal MPCS in regard to goods that had been overdrawn by its various depots? That the Daily Mirror of January 18 had reported under the heading RUPEES ONE MILLION RACKET BARED IN JAFFNA MUNICIPAL MPCS? That the report reads as follows: "The investigations conducted on the instructions of the GA Jaffna, Mr. Wimal Amerasekera, into allegations of malpractices in the Jaffna Municipal MPCS have revealed that the losses are in the region of Rs. 1 million. It was alleged that authorised dealers and managers of MPCS depots had drawn weekly consumer rations far in excess of what they were entitled to draw according to the number of 'B' slips in the possession of each authorised dealer and MPCS depot. There are 82 authorised dealers and 44 Municipal MPCS depots in the City. Police have been asked to take into custody an employee of the Jaffna Municipal MPCS who it is alleged can throw much light into these happenings. The GA Jaffna has written to the President of the Jaffna Municipal MPCS, Mr. Alfred Durayappah to make good this loss on or before the 18th of this month."

IS IT NOT A FACT that for a long time now—for well over 18 months—there has been talk in informed circles in Jaffna and also in knowledgeable circles in Colombo that all was not well with the Jaffna Municipal MPCS? That there is no doubt that some of these stories about the Jaffna MPCS were part of contemporary political mythology? That the blackmarket in Colombo was fed by various MPCS from different parts of the island and that the Jaffna Municipal MPCS probably took a leading place in the matter of feeding this blackmarket? That it was ironic that the con-

sumers in the Jaffna Municipal area were not only denied the benefit of the goods allotted to them but were also deprived of goods in the blackmarket (to which citizens in the Colombo Municipal area had ready access)? That the press reports indicate that the goods collected by the Jaffna Municipal MPCS were far in excess of the number of people registered in their various depots and branches?

IS IT NOT SURPRISING that from the press reports that the matter has been treated as a "civil matter" and that the MPCS in question has been asked to make good the "excess" of about Rs. 1 million? That more than being a "civil matter" these actions of the Jaffna Municipal MPCS constitutes a grave anti-social crime with far reaching criminal implications? That if these actions of the MPCS do not constitute fraud of the highest anti-social nature nothing else could be termed a crime? That it had whispered for a long time that investigations into this matter were going on? That it was said that political influence would help to provide the MPCS with a kind of immunity which an ordinary citizen could not hope to get? That the immunity has now come in the form of the matter being regarded as a "civil matter" where the MPCS authorities had been "surcharged" a million rupees? That it would be interesting to know who was going to pay the surcharge? That if the top boys of the MPCS have their way they will pass the burden on the ordinary folk who are compelled to buy all their essentials from the depots of the MPCS? That it is important to know who had profited by these supplies that had gone into the blackmarket? That the first scandal big of this year is no doubt the Jaffna Municipal MPCS fraud? That the term "massive fraud" is the only appropriate term

to describe what has been revealed in the press reports? That a "civil" monetary surcharge will be rightly considered a cover-up? That the Watergate cover-up had led to fateful results in the USA? That any attempt of a cover-up in Jaffna will have equally damaging and fateful consequences?

IS IT NOT INTERESTING that the President of the Jaffna Municipal MPCS, Mr. Alfred Durayappah should write to the Daily Mirror on 21/1/75 in connection with the paper's report published on 18/1/75? That this is what his letter stated: "The Jaffna Municipal MPCS has nothing to do with the so-called fraud which was spotlighted in the Daily Mirror of January 18, 1975, under the caption Rs. 1 million racket bared in the Jaffna Municipal MPCS. It was I as President of the Municipal MPCS who detected the discrepancy in the "B" slips and immediately informed the Hon. Minister by letter and also requested the Government Agent, Jaffna, to take immediate action in this connection. Up to the receipt of two letters from the Govt. Agent asking the management to pay this amount, no effort was made to contact the management much less to inquire from the management regarding these malpractices. It is an elementary principle of natural justice that both sides should be heard and inquiries conducted either way before any decision is taken in any matter. The Govt. Agent apparently has arrived at this decision of finding the MPCS guilty on an ex-parte inquiry. As this is a mass scale racket between some of the depot managers and kachcheri officers I am writing to the Minister to institute a full inquiry into this whole matter and bring to book the culprits whoever they may be. I hope you will give the same prominence to this statements as to the Jaffna correspondent's report regarding this racket." That a comprehensive inquiry by an Independent Committee (not a Whitewash Committee) is absolutely essential in the public interest? That many believe that this inquiry will turn out to be a mini-watergate in regard to Jaffna politics?

