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TRIBUNE

CEYLON NEWS REVIEW

Vol. I

COLOMBO, MAY 1, 1954

No. 1

BAN ON NEHRU

IS HE SUBVERSIVE?

The Ceylon Government's decision preventing Mr. Jawharlal Nehru from addressing a public meeting of workers at Gampola today is nothing short of a ban on the Indian Premier. He was told that he is not to address this public meeting which was arranged some weeks ago with the knowledge and consent of the Premier of Ceylon.

mentation of the Indo-Ceylon Agreement.

The reasons now given for the cancellation of Mr. Nehru's address is that security reasons demand same and that a political party, the Ceylon Indian

Continued on page two.

What then was the reason for this ban? The reasons given by Ceylon Government sources are so painfully childish that even a babe would not be taken in. In a democratic state, such as Ceylon claims to be, every individual is guaranteed the right of free speech and association. As long as no breach of peace is apprehended this right is unrestricted. Only in the case of persons convicted of offences against the laws of the land, democratic countries permit restriction of an individual's freedom to speak to and associate with others.

What then was the reason for banning Mr. Nehru?

Suppression of Civil Liberties

The Ceylon Indian Congress, the organisation most affected by the ban, issued a statement on April 27th. The statement reads:

"The Prime Minister of Ceylon, Sir John Kotelawala, has informed the Ceylon Indian Congress that Mr. Nehru will not address the meeting of workers at Gampola on May 1.

"As this meeting was arranged through the High Commissioner for India with the knowledge and consent of the Prime Minister of Ceylon, the decision to ban Mr. Nehru's address to the workers at this late stage has not only caused grave disappointment but also come as a rude shock to those who had hoped that Mr. Nehru's visit would help ease the growing tension as a result of the difficulties arising from the imple-



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BAN ON NEHRU

Continued from page 1

Congress in this case, should not derive advantage from this visit of the Indian Premier.

"These reasons have been described in an editorial of the *Ceylon Observer* yesterday as 'too thin' and anaemic to convince anyone."

Discourtesy

"This decision to stop Mr. Nehru's speech is high-handed as well as arbitrary. It is an act of discourtesy to a distinguished visitor and a denial of the rights of free speech and association to an individual under the cloak and guise of security reasons.

"No emergency or state of emergency exists in the country to raise this bogey of security reasons to suppress civil liberties. It is not too late for the Prime Minister of Ceylon to change his decision.

"The Ceylon Indian Congress is requesting Mr. Nehru to fulfil his engagement on May 1. In case the Prime Minister of Ceylon makes it impossible for Mr. Nehru to address the workers at Gampola, the Ceylon Indian Congress will take steps to register its protest against the unwarranted suppression of civil liberties."

Tries Again

After his arrival in Ceylon, it is learnt, that Mr. Nehru once again indicated to the Ceylonese authorities that he would like to keep his engagement at Gampola on May 1. This was refused, no doubt in polite language, but unequivocally.

This ban on Mr. Nehru only brings to the fore-front the reactionary and undemocratic attitude of the Ceylon Government in the matter of civil liberties and fundamental democratic rights.

Towards the end of last year, Sir John Kotelawela, who has assumed the role of a saviour of democracy, banned the entry of Mr. Harry Pollit, the leader of the British Communist Party. The excuse for the ban was that for security reasons Mr. Politt could not be allowed into the country and that the Communist Party of Ceylon would derive advantage from the visit. For the same reasons, the visit of Mr. Cheddi Jagan was stopped. Mr. Jagan is not a Communist but the fact that Sir Winston Churchill and Mr. John Foster Dulles did not like him

were sufficient for the Ceylon Government to ban his visit.

After that the Ceylon Government distinguished itself by proclaiming that delegates from U.S.S.R. and China to the E.C.A.F.E. conference should avoid meeting the people of this country during their stay in this island.

When Mrs. Vi'ayalakshmi Pandit came to Ceylon, the Government insisted that it would allow only pro-Govern-



Saviour of democracy ?

ment (U.N.P.) organisations to meet her, entertain her and have the benefit of listening to her.

And, about the same time as Mrs. Pandit visit, the Government, owing to a technical loop-hole in the emigration laws, forcibly deported two non-Ceylonese women married to citizens of Ceylon on the grounds that they were "communists."

And now, the ban on Mr Nehru. What next ?

This suppression of civil liberties and democratic rights began with the discriminatory laws against the racial minority known as the Ceylon Indians. Hitler used the same methods. He persecuted the Jews, and suppressed civil liberties with the excuse that he was fighting 'Communism' with the result that even the mildest liberal found his way into a concentration camp.

Before that happens, the people of this country must make it clear to the Government that they will not stand for any suppression of civil liberties. If a visitor is to be banned, it must be for good and substantial reasons: if a person is to be deported or his democratic rights curtailed, it must be after a public trial in a recognised court of law.

What has Mr. Nehru done ?

OURSELVES

To interpret events in the context of Asian and world politics, to reveal the facts behind the complex news of the tumultuous days in which we live, and to explain how they affect the interests of the ordinary people and taxpayers in Ceylon, will be the primary function of this paper. Before us, will also be the constant objective of helping to build an economically independent and politically democratic Ceylon which will participate in the bigger task of creating a better world that will banish war and secure peace.

These aims, we believe, can be achieved by scrupulous adherence, in letter and in spirit, to the fundamental human rights embodied in the Charter on which the United Nations Organisation rests. We are convinced that it is practicable and necessary that negotiation should replace threat and aggression in international relations and that disputes should be solved through discussion at conferences and not by resort to war.

Countries in Asia, awakening to new freedom after decades of colonial subjugation, have an unenviable role to play in the increasing conflict between the so-called Western bloc and the Socialist group. We must emphasise that Asiatic countries should disassociate themselves from the cold war between the West and the East, and that they should strive through friendly neutrality to both blocs to reduce tension, to remove suspicion, and do everything possible to establish friendly relations between the contending groups to pave the way for stable international peace.

In national affairs, this paper will

zealously guard the fundamental rights and democratic civil liberties of the individual, of whatever creed, caste or race, who has made this country his home and who is prepared to work for its betterment and prosperity. Only a contented community, free of racial rancour, unhampered by political or economic disabilities weighing down under-privileged sections, can constitute a proper basis for genuine economic reconstruction.

A better and happier Ceylon can emerge only through the combined efforts of all sections and groups of people inhabiting this country. We will untiringly promote all efforts directed towards the building of a truly free democracy in this island. For this purpose, we will measure all action, political and social, with the yardstick of national interest. We will support Government in all its endeavours that tend to promote the common weal; and we will not hesitate to criticise it when its actions adversely affect the people. In like manner, we will examine the policies and practices of the Opposition and other political parties. Every question will be discussed on its own merits and tested in the crucible of public good.

Conscious of our responsibilities, we will do the utmost we can to discharge the obligations a newspaper owes to the reading public. From our readers, we expect guidance, correction and encouragement so that we might be the better able to analyse, discuss, comment, criticise or support, as objectively and impartially as is humanly possible, matters and events of importance and consequence.

PEACE

Heaven is now sending down calamities;-
Do not be so complacent.
Heaven is now producing such movements;-
Do not be so indifferent.
If your words were harmonious,
The people would become united.
If your words were gentle and kind,
The people would be settled.

— Confucius.

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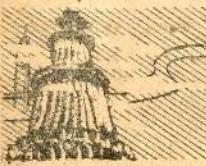
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Notes from New Delhi

COLOMBO CONFERENCE

With the monstrous hydrogen bomb looming large round the corner the South East Asian Premiers Conference at Colombo does not evoke more than a passing interest to the political observers in the Indian capital.

National newspaper commentators only a few weeks ago were trying to pin a fading hope to the outcome at Colombo but now everything seems to have receded to an uninteresting background. Besides the hydrogen bomb the second biggest factor which has dimmed the importance to the Colombo Conference to the eyes of the Indians is the complete surprise annihilation of the ruling party (Muslim League) in the eastern wing of Pakistan general election.

To New Delhi the present set up at Karachi is only a temporary phase. Since the announcement by Sir John Kotelawala to convene the said conference much water has flowed down the Jamuna here. New expectations, newer hopes of better vision are expected to emerge from the forthcoming new leadership in Pakistan. To New Delhi the Colombo Conference was mainly important because of the sinister American Arms Aid to Pakistan.

Many responsible world political leaders now visiting New Delhi feel that Colombo is insufficiently a neutral place to creating a proper understanding among the South East Asian Countries in order to reach a common area of general agreement. I have heard it said here by seasoned international Conferencers that Rangoon or D'akart would have been a better venue for such a conference.

There are others belonging to rightist and leftist groups who feel Sir

John Kotelawala's distinct pronounced political leanings do not unfortunately make him an ideal convenor for a conference of the type envisaged. Circles intimate to Jawaharlal Nehru, India's Prime Minister, however, state that Nehru has hardly any illusion of the outcome of the Colombo Conference.

The Indo-Ceylon Problem

The series of the latest manoeuvres in Colombo to deflect the recent nebulous Indo-Ceylon Pact, their unequivocal condemnation by the entire Indian Press — Nationalist, Socialist, Communalist, Communist including the British owned and edited "Statesman" and the hurried visit of C. C. Desai, Indian Envoy in Ceylon, to the Capital make an interesting epilogue to the much trumpeted Indo-Ceylon January parleys. There is an element of drama in Ceylon's trying to "frighten" and "bludgeon" the Ceylonese of Indian origin, as an eminent philosopher-cum politician puts it to me.

I am tempted to quote a few lines from a comparative mild editorial from what the "Statesman" recently wrote in this connection:

"...but all in the island continue to emphasize goodwill. Even when talking about sending 'people of Indian descent away from Ceylon, Sir John Kotelawala says it must be done by 'love and affection.' The chief reported evidence for this sentimental approach appears to be his appeal to the Planters' Association to give Indians with long service on estates a gratuity 'so that they may return to their homes' — in India, the context shows — and 'spend their old age in retirement'. This will apparently facilitate 'progressive Ceylonization.'

"Kindly as the Prime Minister's thought for tea garden labour

is (at somebody else's expense), other statements as well as executive steps render plausible the suggestion that many persons of Indian descent may be repatriated to India by methods hardly distinguishable from compulsion.

At a time when a Parliamentary Delegation from Ceylon was touring India the vapours from Colombo seemed most inopportune for it helped to make personele of the Delegation nervy and inconveniently uncomfortable. But certainly they have learnt a great deal of the feelings now flowing under current in India and their report to Sir John should be illuminating.

A Cultural Delegation

Since Independence New Delhi has almost become a cultural clearing house of Asia. During the past few months we have had cultural delegations from many countries in Asia and Europe. The Soviet Ballet Troupe which came here as the honoured guests of the Government of India stole the hearts of many a thousand people. To strengthen Indo-Ceylon cultural relations one would always love to have similar cultural delegations exchanged between India and Ceylon. Ceylon has her distinct artistic contributions to her credit. Kandyan dancing would be a treat anywhere in the world. The painters in Ceylon are more advanced than those in many Asian countries. Why should not Ceylon sponsor in India exhibitions of her paintings, dances, and documentary films as other countries are profitably doing here?

SHIBDAS BANERJEE



INDO-CHINA

by

TRIBUNE STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Owing to a barrage of propaganda by interested parties, the issues in Indo-China have become clouded. This small Asiatic country is perhaps the main headache of the Geneva Conference of the Big Powers and the Colombo Conference of the South East Asia Premiers.

A "Tribune" Staff Correspondent sets out as objectively and dispassionately as possible the facts about the recent history of this unfortunate country.

He prefaces his report with an extract from the speech of Mr. Nehru when he announced his cease-fire plan for Indo-China in the Indian Parliament on April 24.

—EDITOR

To those who have had a surfeit of the pep talks in some of the local papers about the nature of the war in Indo-China, the following extract from the speech Mr. Nehru made in the Indian Parliament last Saturday will be most revealing. The extract speaks for itself and it gives the lie direct to the fallacy that the war in Indo-China is an example of "communist aggression." The aggression was started by French imperialists against a free republic and the aggression still continues.

In the House of the People, Mr. Nehru in announcing his cease-fire plan declared that :

"The conflict in Indo-China is in its origin and essential character, a movement of resistance by the traditional methods of suppression and divide and rule.

"Foreign interventions have made the issue more complex, but it nevertheless remains basically anti-colonial and nationalist in character. The recognition of this and the reconciliation of national sentiments for freedom and independence and safeguarding them against external pressures can alone formed the basis of a settlement and of peace.

"The conflict itself in spite of heavy weapons employed and the large scale operations, remains even a guerilla war in character with no fixed stable frontiers

"In Indo-China, the challenge to imperialism, as a large scale movement, began in 1940 against the Japanese occupation. During the war against Japan, the U.S. and Allied troops were assisted by the Viet-Minh (founded in 1941) and by other Nationalist and other groups, at the head of which was Ho Chi Minh.

"The Viet Minh proclamation of the time referred to the defence of democratic principles by the United States, the U.S.S.R., Britain and China and asked the great powers to proclaim that after Japanese forces had been overthrown, the Indo-Chinese people will receive full autonomy.

A Democratic Republic

"After World War II, a provisional Government of which five out of the 15 members were Communists and which was supported by moderate Nationalists, Catholics and others, was established. Ho-Chi Minh was elected the President of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam which was proclaimed in September, 1945, and was recognised by the then Government of China. On March 6, 1946. France, which had now returned to Indo-China after the war, signed an agreement with Ho-Chi Minh, recognising the democratic republic of Viet-Nam as a free State with its own Government, Parliament, army and finance and form-

ing part of the Indo-Chinese Federation and the French Union.

"This arrangement however, did not last long. Conflict between Ho-Chi Minh Republic and the French Empire began in 1947 and has continued ever since. In June, 1948, the French signed an agreement with Bao Dai, the former Emperor of Annam, and made him the head of Viet Nam which they recognised as an associate State within the French Union.

"Similar agreements were made by the French with the other State of Indo-China, the Kingdoms of Laos and Cambodia.

"At this stage the conflict in Indo-China begins to assume its present and most ominous aspect of being a reflection of the conflicts between the two Power blocs. Material aid and equipment given to France by the U.S. became available to the French for the war in Indo-China.

"The Viet Minh, on the other hand, although still maintaining that the war was one against French colonialism, it is reported, received supplies from the People's Democratic Republic of China, whose Government continued the recognition accorded to the 'democratic republic of Viet Nam (Viet Minh, by its predecessors."

Early History

It was in 1860 that French troops began the conquest of the Indo-Chinese peninsula.

Continued on next Page



Will it be Used ?

NEWSPAPERS IN CEYLON

Ceylon should be proud of her newspapers. In fact, it is an island of newspapers. People read very few books. Most of their reading is confined to newspapers. The Ceylon newspapers are far ahead of all Asia except Japan in their technique and circulation.

There are eight daily newspapers in the three languages selling round about 300,000 copies every day. Of these, the three Sinhalese dailies—**Dinamina 80,000**, **Lankadipa 60,000** and **Janata 20,000** sell between themselves half of the 300,000 copies. The other five English and Tamil language papers altogether sell the balance of **150,000** copies—**Daily News 40,000**, **Observer 25,000**, **Times 20,000**, **Virakesari 35,000** and **Thinakaran 15,000**.

The Sunday or Weekly papers of which there are five sell round about 450,000 copies—**Silumina 150,000**, **Sunday Lankadipa 100,000**, **Virakesari 35,000**, **Sinhala Jatiya 25,000**, **Sunday Thinakaran 35,000**. So that for a week Ceylon newspapers sell about 750,000 copies of daily and weekly newspapers which means that one person in eleven of the whole population buy a newspaper for a week. If you take it that in a population of $8\frac{1}{2}$ million, only about $2\frac{1}{2}$ million are adult and literate (according to statistics), it will be seen that nearly one in three buy a newspaper every week. We know that every newspaper bought is read by at least three persons. On this basis we might go so far as to say that every one who can read does read a newspaper once a week at least. This is a very high rate for any country. But we are here talking only of statistics!

What do the Ceylonese Read?

The *Dinamina* the Sinhalese daily, had, in the old days under the famous Sinhalese literary celebrity Mr. Martin Wickramasinghe, the status of the London *Times* as far as Ceylon was

concerned. It is a 40-year paper for which once Sir Baran Jayatilaka regularly wrote. But after the emergence of the *Lankadipa*, the older paper began to ape the younger upstart. If the *Dinamina* had stuck to its old traditions of conservative and rigid journalism, no power on earth could have shaken its solid foundations. But its newly acquired spirit of sensationalism and the search for popularity in an effort to vie with *Lankadipa* went ill with its traditions and gave the younger paper, full of pep, vigour, and originality, a grand opportunity. Thus, the *Lankadipa* within six years has increased its circulation to 60,000.

The *Ceylon Daily News* under the late Mr. D. R. Wijewardene was something like the *Daily Telegraph* of London, a reliable, serious, but a popular political paper without sensationalism and any ballyhoo. But, of late, it too has gone off the rails and no one can say what it exactly is today. Clearly it is the mouthpiece of the Christians, the Managing Director and all Editorial Staffers being Christians. There is, I believe, one Buddhist, Mr. Austin de Silva on the higher rungs of the ladder

at Lake House. But he is the forgotten man and nobody knows what he does. To the *Daily News* all Buddhist leaders are jokes. All those who show any kind of national aspirations have to be laughed out of the newspaper. Any man who does not pay poota to the English language as the most indispensable precious possession deserves to be pilloried. Big Buddhist school events get only a few lines. When one considers that more than two-thirds of the readers of the *Daily News* are Buddhists, the wonder is not that it is not increasing its reader but how it keeps the readers. That is simply because there is no other English morning daily at present!

Newspaper Tycoon

The *Daily News* appears to be under the influence of the American Embassy which gives scholarships generously to its staff to the U.S.A. and takes a lively interest in the machinery Lake House purchases. Time and again, the paper seems to sample the best interests of the country to those of the U.S.A. The *Daily News* is also controlled by the U.N.P. to such an extent that it is virtually a party paper. Once when a very "big noise" in the U.N.P. was asked why they didn't start a daily paper he asked blindly "Why should we? We have the *Daily News* and the *Dinamina*!"

Indo - China

Continued from Page 5

The decrees of 1887 grouped the three countries — Viet-Nam, Khmor [Cambodia] and Pathet Lao [Laos] under the single denomination of "French Indo-China" and put them under the authority of a Governor General responsible only to the Minister for Colonies in the French Government.

After the occupation of France by Hitler's army in 1940 there was a general rising of the people of Cochin China which was mercilessly suppressed by the Vichy Government authorities. The latter hastened to hand Indo China over to Japanese fascism and allowed it complete freedom to put the country under military occupation.

On July 29th, 1941, the French Admiral Darlan and Kato, the Japanese representative, signed an agreement whereby Indo China was incorporated in the Japanese military system "for joint defence" against the allies.

Continued on Page 11

STALEMATE

Rarely has so much diplomatic activity been packed into a single week. The Geneva Conference opened on Monday and the Colombo Conference on Wednesday. It so happens that some of the countries kept out of Geneva by the American insistence that the conference should be confined to countries that had participated in the Korean War are meeting in Colombo to discuss similar problems though in a more limited sort of way.

Colonial "Wars" Continue

Whilst these two conference are in progress there is no abatement of the "wars" in different parts of the world against the demand for independence. In British Guiana, the British colonial office is waging a small "war" against the people. The tension continues to mount as the leaders are sentenced to prison and demonstrations

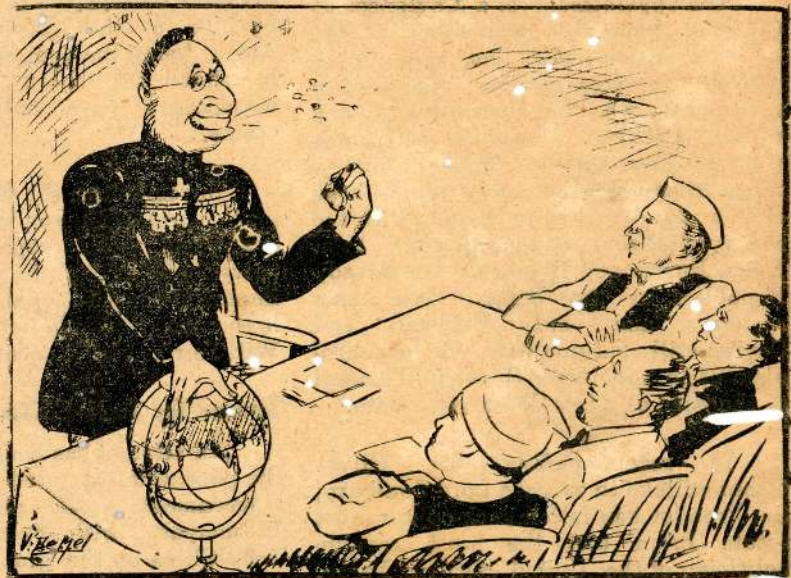
broken up with tear gas and police brutality.

In Kenya, a mass campaign to annihilate a whole tribe is in progress. In a week, over 10,000 persons have been rounded up. Tribal reservations into which the people of the soil had been herded so that the white man could flourish in the better lands are being bombed by a host of jet planes and other aircraft.

In South Africa, Malan continues to give effect to his anti-social and reactionary racial theories. To him, a coloured man asking for equal rights is a "communist", and a white man pleading for such justice is a renegade who has committed crime worse than treason.

In India, the French and Portuguese insist in keeping colonial rule in the little pockets they still control. Both Governments have resorted to the most savage police terrorism, to shooting, and torture in order to suppress the popular demand for merger with the free Indian Union. [Continued page on 15]

BOSS!

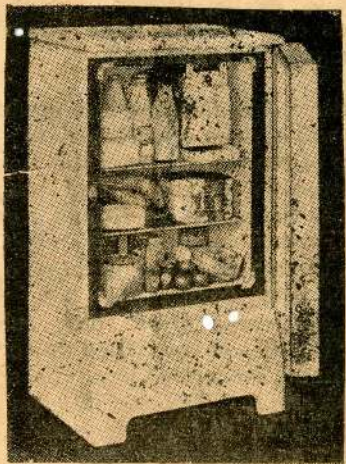


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Comment

Governor General

The appointment of a Ceylonese as Governor-General is undoubtedly a step in the right direction, but there is an increasingly large number of persons in this country who look forward to the day when an elected President will grace what is now Queen's House. Such a transformation of the constitutional head of this island will be in keeping with the new spirit that is surging through Asia. India, Burma and Indonesia are already Republics in the South East Asian region, and only Pakistan and Ceylon still continue with the anachronism of an appointed Governor-General as the head of a free democratic state.

In recommending Sir Oliver Goonnetilleke to succeed Lord Soulbury, the Premier has fallen back on the most astute brain and the most capable politician of the United National Party. Nobody in this country dare deny Sir Oliver's talents. He has dominated the life and politics of this country right from the days of the Japanese war. He has left his impress on the way of life and thought of this generation. To somehow get things done, to somehow succeed in life, is a philosophy that has grown from the technique and method of Sir Oliver's genius.

Though the daily newspapers have hailed Sir Oliver's appointment with fanfare and trumpeting, they do not reflect, as in a great many other matters, the prevailing mood of the people. It would be nearer the truth to say that the people are a little bewildered by this appointment. Whilst there is universal recognition of Sir Oliver's supreme skill for organisation, negotiation and diplomacy, people wonder whether a politician so deeply involved as he is with the United National Party (or any other party for a matter of that) is the best person to officiate as the constitutional head. Rightly or wrongly, the country had been led to believe that the first Ceylonese to be a Governor General would be some one who had been aloof from the rough and tumble of the political arena.

Sir Oliver is not a man of the people. And as such, his appointment has not evoked the popular enthusiasm one would have expected when a

Ceylonese was made the Head of the State for the first time. For one thing, the public has still not forgotten the controversies that raged about some of transactions Sir Oliver was responsible for as Civil Defence commissioner and later as High Commissioner in London. These unhappy controversies were highlighted by the same newspapers that now herald by him as the greatest in the land; and if today the people seem unwilling to shout the chorus of praise, the newspapers have only themselves to blame.

Nevertheless, Sir Oliver is a man of many parts and many talents. If there is anyone who is capable of shedding party affiliations to function as an impartial constitutional head, Sir Oliver is the one who can most easily do so. Will he rise to the occasion?

Troops for Indo-China

An attempt has been made to justify the permission granted by the Ceylon Government to U.S. planes to land at Katunayake with French troops for Indo-China on the ground that the war in Indo-China is a war against communism. Elsewhere in this issue there appears an article which sheds light on the nature of the war in that unfortunate country.

But, apart from that question, it is a matter of supreme importance to the people of this country to know whether the Government is neutral or whether it is partisan. If it's foreign policy is one of neutrality, the permission granted to the U.S. planes is indefensible. If the



Will he rise to the occasion?

Government has decided to join in the holy crusade of John Foster Dulles against his pet phobia, the people must be plainly told. Then, they can prepare themselves for the inevitable napalm, atom and hydrogen bombs.

It is necessary to recall that some years ago, shortly after Ceylon became independent, that the Dutch claimed that the war they were fighting against the Indonesian patriots was a "war against communism". When they wanted to take troops through Ceylon, the then Premier, the late Mr. D. S. Senanayake, refused them permission. India and Burma too refused the Dutch such aid. This attitude of neutrality was not only correct, but it hastened the day when the new Republic of Indonesia was born.

Sir John Kotelawala is fond of repeating at public meetings that he is following in the footsteps of the Father of the Nation, Mr. D.S. Senanayake, in all matters. Would that he had followed him in the matter of granting permission to foreign troops to land at Katunayake?

Rubber Study Group

For the first time in its history, the Rubber Study Group meets in a producer country when it opens its sessions in Colombo next week. This Group has so far always met in the consumer countries in the west. The composition of the Group too is over-weighted in favour of the purchasing countries.

The Group meets now at a time when the rubber industry in this country as well as elsewhere stands at the crossroads of destiny. How far will the synthetic challenge succeed in reducing the demand for the natural? How far will the consumers go to keep the industry alive by paying prices on which the producers can survive after paying a living wage to the workers?

Further, this meeting in a producer country will give an opportunity to the members of the Group from the consumer centres to go round and see for themselves the actual conditions prevailing in rubber estates. It must be stressed, though this fact is now often forgotten, that during the last war, Ceylon slaughtered her rubber trees for the sake of the Allied war effort at a minimum controlled price for sheet as well as crepe. This sacrifice on the part of Ceylon has so far not been adequately recognised by the Western consuming countries. This meeting of the Rubber Study Group should go into this matter which has necessitated large-scale and costly rehabilitation schemes.

JUST BRIEFLY by SERENDIB

Ceylon abounds in columnists, Sardonyx, Margin, Courier, Contact, Tatler, Sagitta, the great and mighty Uncle Flybynight—and many others. I feel over-awed by this galaxy of shining lights. But a back-bencher might add to the fun. So here goes.

Diplomat in a Well

Jaffna is agog with the story of how a representative of a great and mighty nation fell into one of her wells. A dry, dilapidated well, at that.

It happened after the great event of laying the foundation stone for the new Central Library in Jaffna. With the usual acumen for business, Jaffna had persuaded the representatives of four (or was it five nations?) to jointly perform the ceremony. Result—Donations and gifts from each country concerned now (and in the future too.) One country has led with a donation of over a lakh of rupees. But that is another story.

At the end of the foundation-laying ceremony, the diplomats and others were entertained by the Mayor at the cocktail party. I don't know whether the beverage that took Navaratnasamy across the Palk Strait was one of the drinks served, but I am told it was a bright and merry party. The only disturbing note was the grouse of one diplomat, the hero of this tale, that another diplomat had in his speech at the ceremony declared that in Ceylon he felt no different from his own country.

After this party, some of the diplomats and others were entertained by the Government Agent to dinner. It was also, from all accounts, quite a convivial show. Towards the end of this, our diplomat hero walked into the garden. The Government Agent's residence is in what is called Old Park, and there are a number of old dilapidated wells in this place. (Why they are still there is one of the mysteries of the place!) Anyway, to cut the story short, before anyone knew how it had all happened, this diplomat was down one of them.

The work of rescue was terrific. At first, a rope was thrown down to him

and the other end was tied to a car. This attempt to haul him out by motor power was a failure. Then, the police were summoned, and the gallant boys succeeded in getting the diplomat out.

Doctors had already been summoned and they pronounced diplomat fit and well, but they advised him against taking the wheel of his car.

All's well that ends well. The diplomat returned to Colombo by plane the next day with another diplomat without paying a visit to Delft Island as scheduled.

Globemasters

There has been an attempt to shroud the Globemaster carrying troops to Indo-China in a mystery. The *Times* and the *Observer* came out with screaming headlines that American Globemasters had landed at Katunayake with paratroopers for Indo China. It was also reported that the Permanent Secretary Gunaseena de Soysa had stated that he had known nothing about this matter. Who had given permission, asked the papers?

The next day, the *Times* and the *Observer* took it upon themselves to blame some un-named official of the Ministry of Defence and External Affairs for having given permission to the Americans. An anaemic statement from official circles was the excuse for these editorials.

The matter did not end there. The omniscient Collette drew a cartoon the following day showing Premier Kotelawela as Humpty Dumpty who had had a great fall owing to this Globemaster business. And finally, on the day of the Premiers Conference, an official communique was issued which tended to give the impression that it was not an official of the Ministry who had blundered but that someone more important had made the decision.

Whatever be the truth, there is a current story circulating in diplomatic circles in Colombo which may shed a little light.

Katunayake is one of the bases leased out to Britain. Those who know say that under the Defence Agreement, the British and Ceylon Governments would consult each other if defence facilities of any kind were to be offered to any third party. Movements of troops is a defence facility.



HE IS STILL A DRAW

In the case of the Globemasters, the story is that the U. K. High Commissioner's Office knew nothing about the planes until an official from the U. S. Embassy told them that the Ceylon Government had given the necessary permission. It would appear that the Aerodrome Officer at Katunayake had refused permission for the planes to land in the absence of any instructions from the U. K. High Commissioner. It was after this that the U. S. official confronted the Britisher with proof of the Ceylon Government's unilateral action in this matter.

Diplomatic gossip, has it that the U. K. High Commissioners Office are peeved about this matter, but they are keeping their chin up for old times sake.

Privy Councillor

When Premier Sir John Kotelawala was recently honoured by being made a Privy Councillor, Colombo dailies emphasised that he was the *second* Ceylonese to be elevated to that high position. This is undoubtedly true, the first being the late Mr D. S. Senanayake.

But what does not seem to be generally known is that the *second* Ceylonese to be a Privy Councillor would have been Mr. Dudley Senanayake *if only he had accepted what had been offered him.* It was known in knowledgeable and certainly top newspaper circles that just before the Commonwealth Premiers Conference in June 1953, the U. K. High Commissioner in Ceylon had intimated to the then Premier of Ceylon, Mr. Dudley Senanayake, that Her Majesty would be pleased to make him a Privy Councillor.

Continued on Page 15



FOR A VIGOROUS BANKING POLICY—I.

BANKS MUST SEEK MORE CUSTOM

—By Rupee

There has been much discussion in recent years on the evils of foreign banking in Ceylon. About twelve months ago there was a tremendous outcry against the proposal of an American Bank to open shop in Colombo. And consistently the leaders of Ceylonese Business and banking have called for greater government patronage and sympathy towards the one powerful indigenous bank that exists.

The trends of argument have been that foreign banks use indigenous funds to finance foreign resident and non-resident business houses; that foreign banks extract large profits from exchange transactions even where the local end of the business deal is a Ceylonese Business House or the Ceylon Government itself; and that foreign banks already operating on the basis of sound "home" resources are further supported in their dominance over the local money market by colossal Ceylon Government deposits at their disposal.

Bank of Ceylon

It is in the context of this foreign banking domination that the Bank of Ceylon was founded and has developed. It is a tremendous reflection of credit to the skill, tenacity and wisdom of the Ceylonese directors and the Ceylonese General Manager that this bank today is a vital and important component of the economy of independent Ceylon. This position has been achieved with only the verbal, moral support of the government without any real, active, practical, banking assistance from the government even of independent Ceylon.

But among the arguments against the extension of foreign banking in the island has emerged the view that foreign banks are competing with the Bank of Ceylon for the limited available indige-

This is a first of a series of articles urging a more vigorous banking policy.

The writer occupies an important position in the mercantile life of Colombo and for this reason has adopted a pseudonym.

The Editor welcomes contributions from all interested in the subject in support or against the views expressed in this series.

nous deposits. And so the view has been advanced that the establishment of more Ceylonese deposit (or "Joint, Stock") banks would eat into the Bank of Ceylon's hard won share of these local funds and so weaken the Bank of Ceylon in its position vis-a-vis the foreign banks.

No Real Shortage

Is there really a shortage of deposits in the country?—for it is only on shortage (of supply or demand) that any kind of competition thrives—, a shortage of money in local pockets that could be placed as banking deposits)?, and as a result a shortage of funds to provide banking loans to build up local business agriculture and industry?

An immediate and obvious answer to this question is "No", because of the restrictions on new banking placed by the arbitrary minimum initial deposits demanded by all banks.

A cheque book, as common in other countries as a wallet, still has a snob value in Ceylon. It is still a sign of at least middle-class affluence. In Ceylon, it is still the banker who bestows favours; it is still the depositor who receives such favours, despite the fact that all banking profits are made out of customers monies.

Complete Re-orientation

As long as all banks, including the Bank of Ceylon, are "choosy" in selecting their constituents there cannot be said to be a limitation in the supply of indigenous deposits.

But this answer touches only the surface of the volume of unbanked monies. A true appraisal of the total loose cash in the country can only be made when local bankers make a complete re-orientation of their attitude towards actual and potential customers.

No less in banking than in other forms of business it is the client who gives business to the merchant. The wise merchant is he who, not satisfied with business that comes to his door, goes out and seeks his custom.

When local bankers realise and exploit this mercantile road to success, they will find ample idling funds in the country to fill their coffers. They will reap their reward by interest on channelising such funds into industrial and business loans for which there is no dearth of demand.

It will be the purpose of the next article in this series to show just were the Bank of Ceylon, (and any other indigenous joint stock bank that may be set up) should look for these idling funds. It will also show that the policy of vigorously collecting smaller deposits for the purpose of strengthening Ceylonese business and Ceylonese banking will at the same time be the policy of extending the banking service and the cheque system of payment to a much larger strata of society.

Such a policy will transform these banks into "Peoples Banks."

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THE MASTER

Simon's master was very kind.

He knew he was kinder than his father's master whom he remembered very vaguely in a far off manner as the lord and master of the household and the surrounding plots of land.

His father's master was dead and gone.

His master paid him Rs. 12 a month. He was very proud of this fact. His father's master had never paid him. His master was very kind.

When he was twenty two years old he met Emily. She was a dark winsome girl who came to serve in his master's household. They fell in love at first sight. It was mutual and spontaneous. During that period he felt he had entered a different world altogether. He had experienced the same thrill when he received Rs. 12 per month with his eager fluttering hands. They were so impatient to close upon four weeks earnings. The difference was a sustained thrill. It was as if he was being paid all over again day after day. They wanted to get married.

His master was very kind. He was learned. With Rs. 12 per month how can you think of getting married? He asked.

Simon had no money, no house no prospects. His father had married. He had children. Had suffered and was still suffering. Did he want to commit the same mistake? the master asked.

Emily was sent home. She wept bitterly. Simon was very miserable but he overcome it with time.

* * * *

He could not always live on Rs. 12 per month. He wanted to earn more. Most of his friends left for the settlements in the interior. His father too joined. He was old and feeble but still he went. He worked to get a dowry for his daughter. Simon too contributed to that every month from his Rs. 12 per month.

His master was very kind and learned. He asked his father not to go. His father was obstinate. The father told Simon that before he died he must get his daughter married. He left the mother and sister in Simon's charge. All of his Rs. 12 went home regularly after this.

Their little house was in the plot of land his father's master had given his parents as a wedding gift. It was next to the cemetery and the land had a haunted and barren look. His father's master's wife had not liked the look of the cemetery. She had intense dislike for all things concerned with death. She had kindly given away the land. It was a boon.

Simon's father could not write. He sent messages through other settlers who came back on occasional visits. He was doing well. He had even put up a decent hut and cleared the jungle around. If only he had Simon there he could do wonders. He needed help. Manual help. Simon's master was very kind. He tried to dissuade him. He talked and talked to him. It was hard work in the settlement. You had to fight your way through. There were wild animals rampant, fevers, draughts. Would he like to ruin his health? He had a healthy body. Would he like to get wrinkled and fever-stricken like Appuhamy? Appuhamy had come back too ill to do anything but sleep. He sat in the sun in the morning and slept the rest of the day.

His father was fighting alone up there. Simon wanted to help him. His sister was blooming out at an alarming rate. He packed his things and left by train.

* * * *

Up there it was all disorder. His father was stricken with fever. He shivered in the mornings till the bout of fever left him. He had to work in the garden but there was not much done. The whole night he groaned with pain of fever in his bones. He cleared the jungle and sowed seeds. There was no water.

His father grew feeble daily. His groaning increased.

Pathetic letters from home reached him. There was no food. No money. No clothes. When will the harvesting be?

When was a question that was more tantalising dazed before him? There was no water. The sown seeds died with the drought. His father become an invalid.

Simon wrote a letter to his master.

His master was very kind. He asked him to come back. Even promised the Rs. 12 per month. He packed to go back.

But his father died. He died groaning with the pain of fever in his bones. He buried him in the cleared ground. The virgin soil he had cleared for seeds. The soil from which he would have reaped such healthy harvests.

He went back to his master. His master was kind. He was learned. He knew people made mistakes. He knew people wanted to be more than what they were. He knew their follies and forgave them.

He forgave Simon and took him back. He paid him Rs. 12 per month most of which went once again home. This time not to make a dowry for his sister. She had passed the need for a dowry.

She had a baby of some months. He did not know whose child it was but he liked him. He would be a great man one day because he had the penetrating eyes of the master and lord who was so kind.

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Indo-China

Continued from Page 6

On September 8th, 1941, a National Front was set up "to fight French and Japanese fascism until Viet Nam is completely liberated" - this was the birth of the Viet Minh, which is an abbreviation of "Viet-Nam Dac Lap Dong Minh" [The "Independence Front of Viet Nam]. Under the leadership of the Viet Minh the people of Viet Nam tirelessly resisted the Japanese occupation and, throughout the war, fought alongside the allies for the common victory. The guerilla war against the Japanese began, mainly in Annam and Tonkin; it subsequently spread to the whole of Viet Nam.

On March 9th, 1945, the Japanese authorities expelled the French and set up a Government picked by themselves, leaving Bao Dai to reign as emperor.

Independence

On August 10th, 1945, the Viet Minh gave the command for a general insurrection and took Hanoi on the 20th.

On August 25th, Saigon fell and the emperor Bao Dai abdicated - the Viet Minh was in control of the whole of Viet-Nam.

On September 2nd, 1945 in Hanoi, the Government presided over by Ho Chi Minh officially proclaimed the Independence of the country and the advent of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam. Ninety seven per cent of the population voted in the general election to the National Assembly and the National Front received more than 90 per cent of the votes. Meanwhile, the peoples of Cambodia and Laos rose up and proclaimed their independence.

The French Government decided to send troops to Indo China under the command of General Leclerc. On August 16th, 1945, Admiral Thierry d'Argenlieu was nominated French High Commissioner in Indo China.

On October 5th, 1945, General Leclerc disembarked his troops at Saigon. Officially they were there to disarm certain Japanese units still in Indo China, but as soon as they had disembarked they set about the military reconquest of the country. They launched armoured attacks from Saigon and carried the war throughout Cochin China and South Annam.

According to a statement of the French authorities in Indo China, all the

territory South of the 15th parallel had been reconquered by the French Expeditionary Corps. The Vietnamese forces in this region were still in an embryonic and ill-equipped condition and were not able to put up strong resistance to the French troops.

The Governor-Generalship, led by Admiral Thierry d'Argenlieu, considered in its official documents that, since the conquest of the South had been achieved, North Indo-China should now be regained. But the French were not strong enough at that time to break the resistance of the people of Viet-Nam, who were getting organised, and had to negotiate with the Government of Viet-Nam.

On March 6th, 1946, a very important agreement was signed in Hanoi. Here is the text of the first paragraph:

"The French Government recognises the Republic of Viet-Nam as a free State having its own Government, Parliament, army and Treasury. As to the union of the three 'Ky's' the French Government undertakes to ratify the decisions of the population as given in a referendum."

The French Government also undertook to put an end to hostilities.

French Treachery

On April 19th, before the signature of the final Treaty in Paris, a preliminary French-Vietnamese Conference opened in Dalat. After this Conference, at which fresh difficulties arose apropos of the Vietnamese Government's demand for the unity of the country, President Ho Chi Minh left for Paris. At that moment Admiral Thierry d'Argenlieu, in violation of the agreement of March 6th, which provided for the holding of a referendum on the Union of the Three 'Ky's', announced the setting up of a "Government of the Autonomous and Provisional Republic of Cochin-China". This manoeuvre rendered very difficult the Franco-Vietnamese negotiations just opening in France.

In August, with President Ho Chi Minh still in France pursuing the negotiations, the High Commissioner in Indo China convened a second conference in Dalat with delegates from Laos, Cambodia and Cochin China. He did not invite the Government of Viet-Nam to send representatives.

On September 14th, at Fontainebleau, the French Government and the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam finally

reached a *MODUS VIVENDI* which was to enter into operation on October 30th, 1946. But as soon as it was signed the French authorities, believing they were now strong enough to reconquer the country, finally replaced negotiation by a policy of coercion.

On November 10th, the French decided to collect the Vietnamese customs, whereas Art. VI of the *modus vivende* provided for the creation of a "Co-ordinating Committee for Customs and Foreign Trade." This decision provoked serious incidents in the port of Haiphong, thus providing the excuse for military intervention for which the High Command had been seeking.

Haiphong Massacre

On November 23rd, the French fleet began to shell Haiphong, Viet-Nam's second port, and killed 6000 civilians. The port was occupied by French forces who wanted to use it as a bridgehead for the reconquest of Tonkin.

In November 1946, the expeditionary corps occupied the province of Langson by force. Langson is situated on the China-Viet-Nam border and is of vital importance.

On December 17th, the expeditionary corps attacked Hanoi, the capital of Viet-Nam, and utterly destroyed one part of the town.

In December, military operations began in Nam Bo (South Viet-Nam) and soon reached the centre of the country. The war rapidly spread to the whole of Vietnamese territory.

As these very grave events succeeded each other the Vietnamese Government never stopped proclaiming its readiness to negotiate. In November, President Ho Chi Minh sent a telegram to M. Georges Bidault, the President of the French Government, informing him of the unilateral creation of a French Customs Office in the port of Haiphong and protesting against this step.

On December 6th, after the Haiphong massacre, President Ho Chi Minh, in a speech on the radio, asked the French National Assembly to put the *modus vivendi* into operation "so as to lay the foundation for sincere and lasting Franco-Vietnamese co-operation."

On December 15th, President Ho Chi Minh sent a further message to Leon Blum, President of the Council of Ministers, proposing yet again the application of the *modus vivendi*.

On December 31st, some days after the war had become general throughout Viet-Nam, the Vietnamese Government renewed its proposal to the French Government.

Whose Aggression?

In France, distorted news stated that a Viet Minh "aggression" was responsible for the conflict.

A serious debate began in the French National Assembly. The M.P.'s of the minority, reflecting the views of the most diverse milieux, demanded that an immediate end be put to this war on free peoples which violated the French Constitution and agreements signed in the name of France.

To be continued next week.



ITS HARD ON

WORKING WIVES

by ARUNA

Planning the family budget and running the home carefully are the most difficult tasks that any middle class or lower middle class woman has to face these days.

With the cost of living rising the house wife has to fight against many odds to keep things moving smoothly.

The difficulties and expense of servants and the problems of marketing are among the inevitables that are involved in running a home, however large or small. And these problems become much more serious for those of us who go out to work of to add to the income side of the family budget.

Shopping and Storage.

Take, for instance shopping. In the case of the working housewife, shopping in Colombo sometimes presents an almost insoluble problem.

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With fluctuating prices on the one side and limited storage space at home on the other, marketing becomes an item in the program of nearly every day. Buying provisions on a monthly basis and storing it up for gradual use is a practical proposition only in the case of a very few commodities. To begin with it may require the investment and locking up of a large sum of money in advance.

Then there is the question of *where to keep provisions until they are consumed*. Many homes do not have store rooms. Even in those that do have, the store room has quite often to be converted into an extra bedroom as children grow up. Few houses except those of very modern construction have kitchens with storage space sufficient even to keep all the cooking utensils and gadgets. Proper use of the space that is available demands the construction of specially designed shelves and cupboards, meat safes and boxes that just fit in.

But even ready made meat safes and food almirahs are expensive enough for those who can afford to fit scientifically designed storage.

Provisions and groceries bought monthly involve other problems as well. Ants, rats, flies and damp must all be kept at bay. Even those who are lucky enough to be able to afford a refrigerator cannot keep all their foodstuffs within its chilled walls. A cool-room would be required for that. So there is the question of items which perish or ferment when kept for too long. There is the necessity for air tight containers, bottles or tins, for the smaller items, and the need to keep rust from the lids.

Weekly Purchasing

Then consider price fluctuations during the month. In most cases only at the beginning of the month is there sufficient funds to finance large scale purchases. And that is the very time when everybody else too has money. So the prices for a few days after pay day are usually higher. Most often you stand to lose on bulk buying both on the price and then on the wastage in quantity that is inevitable over a thirty day period.

So it is weekly provisions that remains more workable. It does seem easier and cheaper to plan the expenditure and marketing for just a week. Weekly buying gives a better chance to check on the amounts brought home, the amounts consumed, and the amounts left in stock. And it is easier to keep pace with changes of market prices within a period of seven days.

But this it just where the other difficulties of the working wife arise. Is there time once a week for a major shopping expedition to get the whole purchasing job done in one shot? The expense of an outing by taxi could not be justified for the smaller quantity of goods required for one week. And with the existing shop closing times there is no other way to get the whole job done in one day. So that part must be done one day and part the next. And in the end it becomes a little bit each day. And even that cannot be properly planned because a lot depends on how soon the bus will take first to go home and then to go to the shops. Then again on which shop has the particular variety of goods that are wanted, and whether it is possible to get to the next shop before the shutters go up.

Closed Shops.

Here the worst enemy of the working house-wife are the labour regulation that keep the shops closed until nine in the morning and after six in the evening. The municipal markets by comparison are much better. What a nuisance it is

[continue on page 15]

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In Indo-China, the battle for Dien Bien Phu goes on with savage ferocity. It has now become quite apparent that the Bao Dai Government has little or no support among the people and that the position of the French could not be saved unless foreign troops were brought to their rescue.

And over all this, hangs the gloom of the hydrogen bomb. The fact that this bomb is in the possession of the two great world powers has had a sobering effect on those who wanted to rush into war to regain Indo-China for France and the mainland of China for Chiang-kai-Shek.

STOP PRESS

Premiers' Conference

At this goes to press on Friday afternoon, the five South East Asian Premiers seem to have reached a deadlock on all matters. Pakistan has been the stormy petrel. Ali first tried to block discussion by raising the red herring of Kashmir, and when Nehru retorted that he would discuss Kashmir if the U. S. Pakistan Pact were put on the agenda. Ali cooled off.

But he showed his hand again in the discussion on Indo-China because it had a clause that all foreign troops and interference should be withdrawn. Undoubtedly, a Prime Minister who receives U. S. arms aid and invites U. S. interference in Pakistan affairs cannot very well object to U. S. interference in Indo-China.

Pakistan also wanted the conference to start a crusade against Communism and when India and Indonesia objected. Ali stated that he would back out of the support he had given for the resolution against colonialism. Indonesia pointed that colonialism was ahistorical fact and that Communism was only an idology, but this was

It was also known that Mr. Dudley Senanayake had declined the honour with thanks. It is believed that he had indicated that he would be happier to meet the common man in Ceylon not burdened with any Imperial Honours.

During the London Conference itself, it is said, that the British Premier, Sir Winston Churchill himself, at a special lunch, had repeated the same offer. Mr. Dudley Senanayake had once again declined it much to Sir Winston's chagrin, it is believed.

For some unknown reason, Mr. Dudley Senanayake's activities seemed to be blacked out in the local dailies. I know that he has addressed a very large number of meetings in the last six weeks, and that some of the meetings are bigger than some high-lighted in the press as "mammoth". Backbenchers and others in the U. N. P. seem to find comfort in taking him for meetings in their constituencies. He is still a draw.

lost on Pakistan.

Burma, India and Indonesia proposed that Red China be immediately given recognition and her place in the U. N. O. but Pakistan, again vigorously objected.

The only matter on which the Premiers seemed to agree was that there should be a standstill on H. Bomb. But even here, Mohamed Ali of Pakistan felt that Communism was a greater menace than the Hydrogen Bomb. When John Foster Dulles reads of Ali's great doings, it will warm up the cockles of the great American's heart.

Ceylon painfully trailed behind Pakistan, though a little unemphatically. It became obvious that Ceylon had no consistent foreign policy of her own, and for some strange reason chose to follow Mohamed Ali's lead on all matters, forgetting that Ali has been repudiated in his own province of East Pakistan, and that Opposition to him in West Pakistan is openly gaining ground.

to creep through the door of one of the few shops in the suburbs that run the gauntlet, make the necessary purchases and then find the door barred from the inside in response to rumours of a prowling inspector in the vicinity. Half an hour may be wasted until the scare dies down and one is allowed to creep out again. For the next two weeks, perhaps the letter of the law may be observed, and no after hour marketing can be done at all.

Could not some change be made in these controlled hours for suburban shops? While maintaining the reasonable maximum working day of 8 hours, could there not be some flexibility in the actual hours of business. For instance a morning session from 8 to 12 noon and an evening session from 4 to 8 p. m. would be much more suited to Colombo suburban conditions. Surely even full time housewives would find these hours more convenient than those enforced at present.

These, then, are some of the problems that militate against the working woman taking a planned and personal interest in the family marketing. Rarely arriving home before 5.30 or 6 p. m. she has a hazardous start to the whole routine of house management. *Some relief might come by more common sense applied to shop-hour legislation, so kitchen designs of both houses and furniture, and to credit and delivery facilities from the retail shops. But then most of these things are controlled by mere men.*

If Ceylon had no foreign policy of her own, why did she not take inspiration from the leaders of stable Governments such as India and Indonesia and whose populations constitute over 75% of the total population of the South East Asia region?

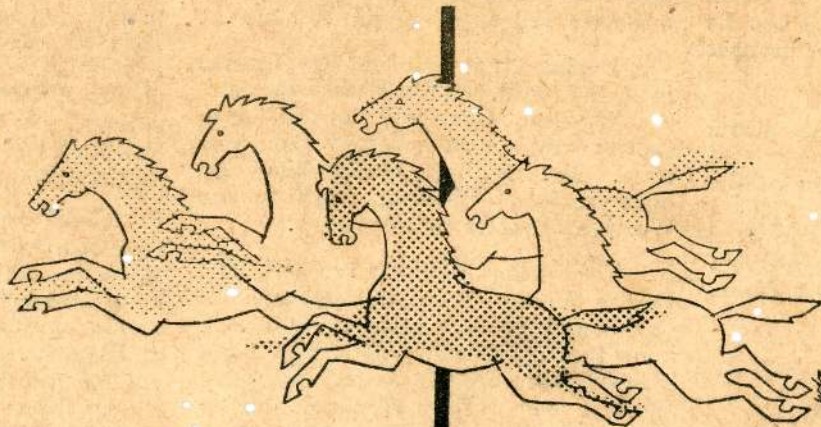
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