

# TRIBUNE

JANUARY 30, 1972

CEYLON NEWS REVIEW

FIFTY CENTS

VOL. 17 - NO. 18



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WITH COMPLIMENTS

**C. V. BHATT**

# From the Editor's Desk

There is an indefinable atmosphere of uncertain expectation and suspense in the air, both in the political and economic sectors in the country. The budget proposals to bridge the Rs. 400 million gap have still not come. The big daily news-

papers indulged in speculation as to whether the visit of Mr. McNamara, the President of the World Bank, on January 22, would result in some magic *Open Sesame* to help Ceylon out of its difficulties.

But the *Nation* of January 21 sought to throw cold water on all hopes which had been fostered by the big daily papers. Under the heading **ORDINARY VISIT—UNFOUNDED SPECULATION ABOUT MCNAMARA**, the *Nation* in a frontpage lead stated that there was "wild speculation about the occasion and consequences of his visit." The *Nation*, being a weekly close to the inner councils of the Minister of Finance, is a newspaper which usually throws a great deal of revealing light on certain aspects of the Government's policies.

It is therefore worthwhile quoting *in extenso* from this story—at least for the record, if not anything else. The main argument in the article was that: "The monopoly press has started several hares concerning Macnamara's purposes. One story has it that he is coming to Ceylon at the invitation of the Prime Minister to continue discussions that she commen-

ced with him in Washington, during her visit to the USA late last year. Another story relates that, since the Government of Ceylon still hesitates to devalue the Rupee and slash Government spending still further, Macnamara comes to Ceylon to force the issue. According to yet another story, the World Bank is greatly concerned about the Government of Ceylon's decision to impose a Rs. 2,000 ceiling on incomes and a ceiling on the ownership of land. Macnamara comes to Ceylon, the story goes, to endeavour to persuade the Government to abandon its catastrophic policies."

The *Nation* was also at pains to establish that there had been no special discussions between the Prime Minister and Mr. McNamara when she had gone to the USA last October. Admittedly, there has been talk in political circles that the Prime Minister had given assurances in the West that the private sector would suffer no discriminatory treatment within the broad outlines of the politics of the United Front. On the basis that the UF policy envisaged a *mixed economy* in which the private sector had a definite role to play, it was whispered that financial and commercial circles in the West had sought assurances from the Prime Minister that no discriminatory *cum* punitive legislation or measures would be adopted which would result

## TRIBUNE

CEYLON NEWS REVIEW

Founded 1954

A Journal of Ceylon and World Affairs

JANUARY 30, 1972

Vol. 17 No. 18

43, Dawson Street, COLOMBO. 2

Telephone: 33172

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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

WHITHER CHINA ?

NIXON'S VISIT

TRIBUNE, January 30, 1972

in the total liquidation of the private sector. Such assurances had been given by the Minister of Finance in his two Budget Speeches. Ministers T. B. Subasinghe and T. B. Ilangaratne had also stated in a number of speeches that the private sector had a definite place in the new economy and that its interests would be safeguarded within the limits of the Common Programme. When the Prime Minister had gone to the US and UK last October, it is believed that she had given similar assurances.

But the *Nation* seems to think otherwise—on the ground that she has not been accompanied by the Minister of Finance on that occasion. This is what it said: "In putting out these stories, the monopoly newspapers do not consider they have any obligation to their readers to reveal either the sources of their information or the foundations on which they have erected their speculations. For instance, the purpose of the Prime Minister's visit to the USA was to plead before the United Nations for a Zone of Peace in the Indian Ocean. Her meeting with the President of the World Bank could not have been more than a courtesy call because she was not accompanied by her economic and financial advisers."

The *Nation* was not content to dismiss what it felt were canards by the mono-

poly press lightly. It went on to nail down each story as a tendentious falsehood. It said: "The story about enforcing devaluation confuses the identity of two separate organisations. The World Bank of which Mr. Macnamara is President, is little more than a source of long term finance for infra-structural development. It has nothing to do with monetary exchange rates, which are entirely the concern of the International Monetary Fund. It is improbable therefore that even if Mr. Macnamara may be interested in our budgetary deficits, he would venture to enlighten us with his advice on the rupee's exchange rates.

"As for our economic and social politics, they may well be of concern to the President of the World Bank, but there is not the smallest indication that he means to take them up with the Prime Minister or her Ministers or Officials. The little information that is available indicates that Messrs. Peter Cargill and Manfred Elobel the World Bank officials who arrived in Colombo on Wednesday and who will doubtless brief Mr. Macnamara on our problems, are solely concerned with the preparation of their annual report on the Ceylon Economy in time for the meeting of the Aid Group for Ceylon that will shortly meet in Paris under World Bank auspices."

And, this issue of *Nation* contained a number of articles criticising the USA, the World Bank, the IMF and President Nixon. On the front page were excerpts from the Anderson Papers revealing the pro-Pak tilt of the Nixon Administration. On page two were two articles, one on the dangers of accepting foreign assistance especially from the World Bank and the other about the Nixonian escalation of the war in Vietnam. On page four and five was spread an article on *Gunboat Diplomacy in the Indian Ocean—Behind the Recent Intrusion of the USA's Seventh Fleet* together with a *Hsinhua* piece from Peking on China's approach to world problems in which the Maoist tirades against the world's "two overlords", the USA and the USSR, were set out in the pungent and aggressive idiom of current Chinese political terminology. And on the last page (8), the *Nation* had another harangue on the stupidity of depending on foreign assistance, on Mr. Dudley Senanayake's suicidal faith on foreign assistance, and re-told stories about the fate which had overtaken countries which had followed IMF prescription for "setting the house in order". Ghana was mentioned as the latest victim of such World Bank "Interference".

The *Forward* was equally vehement against the IMF and the MacNamara visit.

In its issue of January 22, the *Forward* published an official CP statement on McNamara's visit: that the visit was one "that bodes no good for Ceylon", that "he has always been one of the most aggressive advocates of the interests of US monopoly capital", and that "as President of the World Bank, Mr. McNamara has pursued with similar ruthlessness the neo-colonialist policy of this agency of imperialism."

But more than this, the *Forward* concentrated its attack on J. R. Jayawardena and his latest strategy to transform the United Front government into a National government by the UNP (or a section of it) coalescing with it. The *Nation*, on the other hand, did not have any comment on this topic. The silence of the *Nation* on this question is regarded as significant in political circles. The *Forward*, it is well to remember, had always carried on a campaign against JR and the "rightwing conspiracy" to subvert the UF by active collaboration and that the demand for a Cabinet reshuffle was part of this plan by the "reactionaries" to push the Government into the Right. In the issue of January 22, the *Forward* on its frontpage announced J.R. COMES INTO THE OPEN, and stated that "those who have for many months been working secretly for a 'National' Government decided last week to come into

the open. Ever since the United Front was established 18 months ago, these forces have sought to disrupt it by the counter slogan of a 'National' Government. What they had specifically in mind was the inclusion in the Government of the UNP or a part of it — and thereby the removal of the Left from the Government and the strengthening of the Rightwing....." The *Forward* also went on to point out that it was "no accident that the Rightist forces should have decided to come into the open with their demand at the same time as the World Bank and British capitalist interests have high-powered delegations in Ceylon to push their interests."

Whilst the *Nation* is silent on this issue and the *Forward* is virtually alone in its opposition to any Cabinet reshuffle which will accommodate JR to create a National Government, the three big daily papers are enthusiastically pursuing the objective of inducing the Prime Minister and her closest colleagues to set up a National Government to meet the "crisis" which has obviously overtaken the island. Apart from appointing Mr. Felix R. Dias Bandaranaike to function as the Minister of Justice, in addition to his own earlier ministerial duties, the PM has done nothing about the much-expected Cabinet reshuffle. Something has also to be done almost immediately

with regard to the portfolio held by Mr. C. Kumarasuriyera as he will automatically go out of office by the end of January consequent on the abolition of the Senate last year. The other Minister, Mr. Jayamanne, tendered his resignation from the Justice ministry last week, and the PM merely moved Mr. Bandaranaike into it presumably as a stopgap arrangement. At the time of writing there is no indication what the PM has in mind either about Mr. Kumarasuriyera or a more far-reaching Cabinet reshuffle.

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Minimum Subscription  
Rs. 30 per 60 issues  
post free in Ceylon.

For air mail and sea mail rates abroad, please write to the Circulation Manager, mentioning the country of destination.

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It is said that there had been attempts to persuade one of the existing Appointed Members to resign so that Mr. Kumarasuric could be found a seat in the House of Representatives. Lobby talk is that attempts to pressurise an Appointed Member to resign have not borne fruit. But it is also not known whether the PM favours this method of keeping Mr. Kumarasuric in the Cabinet.

The *Forward*, in the same issue (22/1/72) waxed eloquent about the STATE TRADE IN PADDY. *Chitra* in his column recorded with enthusiasm that "in a typically quiet and unassuming way, the Minister of Agriculture and Lands has started a new scheme that can bring about big changes in the rural areas. From next week, the private trade in paddy will virtually cease..." The Paddy Marketing Board, which has been set up, will have a monopoly of "the purchase of paddy and rice and in carrying out the business of hulling, milling and processing paddy." This, said the *Forward*, "should strike a heavy blow against a powerful section of rural exploiters, the paddy mill owners and certain mudalalis. These sections have for a long time exploited the peasantry, paying them less than the state's guaranteed price for paddy and channelling a great deal of their purchases of cheap paddy and rice into the black-

market....." The *Forward* commended the Paddy Board for taking the right steps to purchase paddy at 3000 purchasing points. The Board was also expected to concentrate on running the 17 government rice mills more efficiently and also supervise the functioning of the private mills. The Board was hoping to handle 26 million bushels of paddy during the coming Maha and 14 million for the Yala. "It has been estimated," eulogised the *Forward*, "that if Ceylon mobilises its total domestic production of paddy, it should have from its own resources enough rice to give the present ration to all consumers leaving only a small 'surplus' that will have to be imported." And *Chitra* concluded the piece on an even more high-falutin' note: "The establishment of a state monopoly in the paddy trade will be followed by the imposition of a land ceiling. These and similar measures that are now being sponsored by the Minister of Agriculture and Lands, such as the proposal to increase the guaranteed price, can help to bring a radical reform of social relations in the countryside."

Land ceilings apart, ( this matter should be constructively and critically examined when concrete proposals are made), it would be interesting to see whether one year hence *Chitra* will display the same enthusiasm for the state monopoly in paddy.

Everyone is agreed that "exploitation" of any kind is bad, and that traders have been unscrupulous; but ever since they had to compete with the GPS purchasing centres, the traders have provided "services" for the "extra" they took from the cultivator. The private trader often gave cash advances for cultivation, he brought his lorry to the paddy field and removed the paddy, and his men did not get a private levy for weighing—as was done in the GPS Stores. In recent years, it was because of the superior services rendered by the private trader, as compared to the GPS purchasing centres, that large numbers of peasants preferred to sell to the trader.

The commendable desire of the Ministry to eliminate the malpractices of the trader must be praised, but there is as yet no indication that any steps have been taken to eliminate the grave corruption and bureaucratic red tape which has always characterised the government purchasing centres. For most peasants, the GPS store has always been a dreadful place. One has to find transport to take the paddy to the store and in many places this is not easy especially at the height of the season when everybody is anxious to collect cash for the paddy he has produced. And at the GPS store itself or the Co-op Union (now managed entirely by government officials and nominated representatives—

not elected), one has to give bribes (directly, indirectly, or otherwise), to three or four functionaries—if one is to hand over the paddy without undue delay, if one's paddy is not to be condemned as being below specifications, for getting the correct weight (if the bribe was large enough one could get the weight inflated suitably), and finally for getting the cheque for payment.

The Government was so afraid of corruption among its officers that consequential paper-work takes along time also, to have a cheque to be honoured by the Bank (duplicate copies of papers had to be received by the Bank under separate cover appropriately counter-signed and this always took time). It is not yet known whether the Paddy Board has devised a simpler method of making payments or whether its staff will purchase the paddy from the peasants without making the bureaucratic extortions previously squeezed out of the cultivators. The misdeeds of traders are proverbial and columnists like *Chitra* can expound learnedly on the need to liquidate the middleman and the trader. But *Chitra* does not know what a rapacious and ruthless creature the bureaucrat is in the countryside, and it is sad and unfortunate that in the era of the United Front bureaucrats who mouth left slogans and pseudo-marxist jargon have become more

corrupt and rapacious than ever before.

Government officials (and even ministers) make speeches about what the new Co-operative primary unions can do, but in all areas from which reports have come to *Tribune*, it is clear that the new Unions (more bureaucratically managed than before) have increased the tempo of corruption, have brought distribution to an unholy chaos—and the situation is that if the Government does not wake up to realities soon enough the new Co-op Movement, devised by the present Government, will prove to be the Achilles Heel of the United Front. The officials are in a hurry—to make money quick while the going is good. And with state monopolies there is no limit to the corruption.

One can only hope that the Paddy Board will be different. It has an administrator of repute at its head, Mr. M. J. Perera. One swallow however does not make a summer and one MJP cannot eliminate the corruption and rot which has taken root in the soul of our bureaucrats—and even the humblest worker and the most unskilled labourer becomes a soul-less and greedy bureaucrat once he becomes an employee of the state. If the Paddy Board is not able to keep under control the known corrupt practices of the GPS and Agrarian Service, there will be greater

chaos. (there was a partial check earlier because of competition from the trader). *Chitra* will find a new kind of upsurge and radically aggressive revolution in the countryside totally unexpected by the columnist.

When one surveys developing trends in this country, it must be admitted that the philosophy of economic growth through capitalistic methods has become discredited here because of the ever-increasing disparities between the rich and the poor. Socialism was declared to be the remedy and it could very well be, but most people who claim to be socialists today are unfortunately wolves in sheep's clothing. They find it expedient to wear the socialistic mask and flamboyantly proclaim radical slogans from time to time. It is from this class that the new bureaucracy of the UF has been mainly recruited and the dangers inherent in such a bureaucracy have already made themselves felt. The nett result will be that the ordinary people will become disillusioned about "socialism", and will begin to think of capitalism as being a lesser evil. It is also significant that some of the most successful bureaucrats of the present era were also the most acceptable and successful in the previous UNP era—there have been casualties no doubt but they are few and far between. A bureaucrat is considered clever if he is able to serve any

master and is able to find arguments to support capitalism as readily he does for socialism. Without a dedicated and committed bureaucracy, free from corruption, any attempt to transform society will result in disaster—and this has happened in many countries, and unless Ceylon wakes up without delay, no one can be blamed for expecting the worst.

The new bureaucracy moreover is untrained. Political enthusiasm (even if genuine and real) is no substitute for training. And the enormous power which has now been concentrated in their hands impels many of them to use this power recklessly. However progressive and radical they may have been in the past, the moment they become bureaucrats, they become new animals with an official car, with pay packets which ordinary people cannot dream of, with other perquisites and fringe benefits and with the tinge of political patronage—these bureaucrats become a menace.

Old values, standards, regulations have been cast aside as being "reactionary" "colonialist", etc, but no new code of conduct has been formulated or has been implemented. The Academy of Administrative Studies is still in embryo, but this institution itself is caught up in the vortex of contradictions which stems from the stinking administrative machine which exists today. Corruption is accepted as one of the inevitable heritages of the World

War Two and nobody seems to know just how to get rid of it.

Whilst this is the situation, we see an earnest band of young men fired with idealism wanting to change society overnight. They want to liquidate capitalist private property without taking into account the concrete historical context of realities in the island. They forget that "the theory of the socialist revolution does not call for thoughtless overnight destructions of all private property and in all circumstances. Socialism presupposes constructive endeavour, and the abolition of private property can be effected only on the basis of constructive activity of the socialist society, of a new type of organisation of the management of the economy " These are the words of a Russian marxist economist, Dr. Victor Mikaeyev, writing in the *New Times* (No. 50 of 1971) on the subject **IS PRIVATE PROPERTY VANISHING UNDER CAPITALISM**. The extract quoted is not torn out of its context, but reflects the logic in the article that private property can be "abolished" only by the constructive transformation of society into a socialist state where public ownership dominates—and not by chaotic destruction of privately owned means of production.

There is inadequate awareness in this country, among impulsive and youthful enthu-

siasts now turned into UF bureaucrats, that destruction of private property and the liquidation of capitalists will not usher in socialism—especially when the bureaucratic and administrative machine to run state and public undertakings is untrained, inefficient, and corrupt. To justify their heroic acts statements are made that state corporations are *now* running at a profit. Some of them are probably doing so on the basis of high selling prices and a total monopoly, but in a number of other cases there is suspicion in knowledgeable circles that profits are being shown on paper—there are a whole host of accounting gimmicks where profits can be shown for one or two years, maybe even three, but the truth will be out sooner or later, but by this time the bureaucrats concerned would have gone places after making a steady pile.

This is not a plea for the *status quo ante*. Nobody wants that, and even those who may want it should know that there is no going back. But with so many experiments, with so many take-overs, with so many state monopolies—all undertaken without adequate preparation, without dedicated cadres—a frustrating sense of gloom has begun to spread even among those who had looked forward to a great deal from a socialist-minded UF government. A mere Cabinet reshuffle will not be enough. There is need for a re-agonising reappraisal—to use a cliché which is not heard so often at present—about policies, techniques, procedures, priorities. Realities must be recognised and faced.



## EAST ASIA

MAO  
AND  
CHIANG*Hong Kong*

China has kept her currency at parity with the pound sterling and the Hong Kong dollar, thereby upvaluing the jenminpi in terms of the United States dollar. The jenminpi (pronounced jen-MIN-pee) is the basic currency unit of the Chinese mainland. After an all-night debate among officials and advisers the Hong Kong Government decided — against considerable opposition — to revalue the Hong Kong dollar by 8.57 per cent against the United States dollar, thus keeping local currency at parity with the pound.

The decision meant some disadvantage for exports from Hong Kong to the colony's principal market, the United States, but it also meant there would be no price increase in Hong Kong's food and other basic supplies, most of which come from China, provided Peking decided to maintain its jenminpi party with the pound.

A strong exporters' lobby had advocated keeping the Hong Kong dollar at parity with the United States dollar or raising its value by only 6 per cent. Local authorities

concluded it was better to let the cost of Hong Kong exports rise in the American market than risk higher prices here. The risk was believed to be almost a certainty since officials were pretty sure China would follow the pound as she has, in fact, done.

The revaluing of the jenminpi means that the few American travellers who go into China will now get only 2.25 Jenminpi for a United States dollar, compared with 2.4 previously. Peking currency decision means no change in Chinese access to what is by far China's biggest single overseas market, Hong Kong.

On the basis of present figures, Chinese exports to Hong Kong this year will reach \$437 million. These earnings constitute China's biggest single source of supply for foreign exchange with which to buy essential imports. Trade is overwhelmingly in China's favor. The colony's exports to the People Republic this year will reach only an estimated \$115-million.

Since Taiwan and South Korea, Hong Kong's two chief competitors in the American market, have not revalued and are maintaining the parity of their currencies with the United States dollar, Hong Kong's decision to revalue will give Taiwan and South Korea a marked advantage. Hong Kong textile manufacturers with branch pl-

ants in Taiwan have already decided to increase production there.

It is known that in accordance with the latest arrangement between Chou En-lai and Kissinger, Peking was seeking to establish contacts with Taipei on the question of starting negotiations with the Chiang Kai-shek government on the peaceful reunification of Formosa with mainland China. The Peking leaders have undertaken this because of Kissinger's statement that at present the United States cannot openly give up its commitments in respect to Formosa, especially the mutual security treaty. Therefore any attempt by Red China to annex the island by force of arms would aggravate the relations between Washington and Peking.

Kissinger had obviously hinted to the Chinese leadership that the U. S. Administration would have no objections should the population of Formosa "display the initiative", even in the next twelve months, on the question of reunification with the mainland and that the White House would show 'tolerance' towards any attempts on the part of Peking to solve the problem of Formosa through bilateral negotiations. Chou En-lai agreed with the American side that the population of the island should be given time to realize the "historical necessity" of the reunification of Formosa with mainland China. The Chinese premier

had also pointed out, it is said that it would be easier to reach an agreement between the United States and China on political issues, among them the question of Formosa, during President Nixon's visit to China if the U. S. President gave his consent to the delivery of goods to China which are of vital importance to the Chinese. First and foremost, he would like to receive electronic computers, complex electronic equipment and aircraft.

In his reply Kissinger is reported to have said that President Nixon would have to discuss this request of the Chinese side with the appropriate U. S. political and business circles before his visit to Peking. He had also informed Chou En-lai that some of the American aircraft engineering firms, such as Boeing and Bell Helicopter had expressed interest in selling planes to China.

In this connection, it is reported that the Boeing Corporation has already contacted Chinese officials in Rumania and was ready to provide China with 165 jets of the latest models for the sum of 1,250 million dollars. According to these reports the Bank of America and the First National City Bank of New York had shown an interest in financing the sale of American aircraft to China. These banks were ready to help Peking obtain the dollar reserves necessary for paying

for this transaction through the expansion of the export of Chinese consumer goods to the United States. In other words, American business circles are ready to offer their services in the strengthening of China's military potential, and Peking, in its turn, is striving to fulfill its promise on the question of the peaceful reunification of Formosa and is seeking for ways of establishing contacts with Taipei to start negotiations with Chiang Kai-shek.

However, China's first attempts to establish direct contacts with Formosa have failed. The Chiang Kai-shek government firmly refused to hold any talks with Mao. Then Peking decided to execute a turning manoeuvre and set up a so-called Committee for the Liberation of Taiwan in Japan with the aim of stepping up the "realisation by the population of Formosa of the sensible necessity of reunification with China". This Committee which numbers more than three hundred members, is supervised by a league of Chinese residents. This league consists of pro-Peking Chinese who reside in Japan and have direct contacts with the Mao leadership. A branch of this league operates in Hong Kong. Members of the committee make frequent visits to Formosa where they have already organised a group of functionaries from among the local population who carry on propaganda in

favour of Formosa's reunification with mainland China. These functionaries have also been set the task of organising an anti-government coup and carrying out the "revolutionary overthrow" of the Chiang Kai-shek regime. According to reports, the Maoist functionaries have succeeded in enlisting the support of a large number of top-ranking officials in the Formosa government who are dissatisfied with Chiang Kai-shek's dictatorial ways and would like to have a greater say in government affairs.

True, the so-called "separatist movement" guided by Japan is a serious obstacle which impedes the activities of the Maoist functionaries in Formosa. The "separatist movement" stands for the independence of the island from continental China and for its separate development. The leadership of the movement gives full backing to Chiang Kai-shek and approves his recent decision to build nuclear weapons not only for self-defence but also for an offensive against mainland China. This decision was disclosed by local scientists from the nuclear institute engaged in research in the production of nuclear weapons in the northern part of the island near the Shih-men reservoirs. According to reports, last summer Formosa bought a 50-million-dollar reactor in Canada for this purpose and invited several atomic scientists from the United States.

It is therefore obvious that the Peking leadership will hardly be able to come to an agreement with the government of Formosa on the peaceful reunification of the island with mainland China. Political observers have pointed to the danger of a nuclear war in this part of the world, a war which could involve not only mainland China and Formosa but other Asian countries as well, and possibly, even the United States which will not be able to remain indifferent to the fate of Taiwan and possibly Japan.

## UNITED STATES NIXON'S VISIT TO CHINA

*New York.*

White House circles have indicated that President Nixon's journey to China in February would take him to three cities in seven days for "free-wheeling" discussions with Premier Chou En-lai and Chairman Mao Tse-tung. He will be accompanied by Mrs. Nixon.

Ronald L. Ziegler, the White House press secretary, had said that the President and Mrs. Nixon and a small working party would stay at a Chinese Government guest house on the western edge of Peking during the four days they will be there. Although the sequence is not yet set, Mr. and Mrs. Nixon are also to travel to Shanghai, China's largest city, and to Hangchow, a place of great scenic beauty about 100 miles south of Shanghai, between Feb. 21 and their departure on Feb. 28.

Henry A. Kissinger, the President's adviser on national security affairs, had outlined on several occasions the United States attitude in undertaking the historic meeting. He had said during news conference that the minimum objective would be to

establish a system of communicating opposing views and thus avoiding "very dramatic, set-piece encounters" with the Chinese.

Mr. Kissinger had cautioned against expectations that dramatic agreements might emerge. Conversely, he said that Mr. Nixon's journey to Moscow in May would deal with "a series of concrete problems we are attempting to move more rapidly toward a solution." Formal diplomatic relations between the United States and China are not likely to result, Mr. Kissinger said. Similarly, he ruled out the possibility of a settlement in Peking of the differences between the Chinese Communists and the Nationalists on Taiwan and he reiterated the President's view that the war in Southeast Asia would not be ended as a direct result of the journey.

"We're not sentimental about this," Mr. Kissinger said. "We recognize that the People's Republic is led by highly principled men whose principles are diametrically opposed to ours." Nonetheless he said that it was in the interest of the United States and China "that we understand what we are about and that on those matters that are in our common interest we know how to cooperate."

Mr. Kissinger explained the President's series of preliminary meetings with the

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leaders of France, Britain, West Germany, Japan and Canada in December and January as efforts to assure major allies that their vital interests would not be threatened by the discussions in Peking and Moscow. In reply to a question at the Press Conference about the absence of Nationalist China from the list of allies with whom Mr. Nixon will consult, Mr. Kissinger said pointedly: "We are well aware of the views of the Republic of China on some of our activities."

As Mr. Kissinger described it, the agenda for the discussions in Peking, Shanghai and Hangchow would be of "a freewheeling nature" to afford either side the freedom to raise whatever topic it regards as urgent. Under such a formula, worked out during Mr. Kissinger's advance journeys to Peking in July and October, both sides could comfortably discuss the status of Taiwan and the conflict in Southeast Asia.

He said that the "major thrust" of the talks would be on bilateral United States-Chinese issues and that "no agreement will be made about thirdparty problems." But he did not rule out the likelihood that third-party issues would enter the talks if either side "considers something of crucial importance." Acknowledging that the subject of Taiwan arose during his visits to Peking, he reas-

serted the United States view that "the future relationships between the People's Republic and Taiwan should be worked out between Taiwan and the People's Republic."

However, if Sino-American relations are analysed in the light of the present rapprochement between Peking and Washington, it will be clear that it was China which initiated this process. Already in January, 1945, Mao Tse-tung and Chou En-lai had informed President Roosevelt that as the leaders of the Chinese political party they are prepared to meet him in Washington for preliminary talks.

In 1955, Chou En-lai again waved an olive branch in the direction of Washington. He stated then that China would like to discuss with the United States the means of easing tensions in the Far East, in particular in the area of Taiwan. He had stated that the Chinese people were friendly toward the American people and that they did not want to have a war with them. A similar offer of negotiations with the United States was also made by the Chinese Premier in 1964. Washington, however, was afraid then, and in the following years, about Mao's communist slogans. Washington was reluctant for another reason: the majority of Red China's leadership still had ideas of orientating the country towards an alliance with Russia. Furthermore Washington at that time had

apparently wanted a high price from Mao for normalising relations with the United States. The Chinese were unable then to meet these demands.

Mao Tse-tung, however, proved himself a man who can wait as long as necessary; until the right opportunity presented itself and then implement his ideas without losing anything and rather gaining quite a lot.

Nixon probably believes that he has outwitted his predecessors and won the first victory over Communist China, and perhaps over the whole of the Communist World, having been able to receive an invitation to visit Peking and conduct the U.S.—Chinese dialogue there. He obviously expects certain concessions from the Chinese leaders. Whether things will develop along these lines is hard to say. What is quite clear is that Mao Tse-tung has already obtained definite gains, and hopes to obtain them in the future from the present round of "ping-pong diplomacy".

What has he gained so far?

Having won an easy victory over Taiwan, mainland China has been admitted to the United Nations Organisation. President Nixon himself has done much to attain this end. In its issue of October 20, 1971, the *Washington Post* wrote that Kissinger's trip to Peking decreased the number of votes for

the U.S. resolution since it showed the small countries that relations between Washington and Peking do not depend on the voting in the UN, while their own relations with Peking can very well be influenced by what they are doing in the World Organisation. In other words, the hasty rapprochement between Washington and Peking had expedited and facilitated China's admission to the UN in the sense that the smaller nations were frightened that they may fall in disgrace with the Chinese leaders if they aligned themselves with the United States and opposed China's admission to the World Organisation.

What does Mao hope to achieve in the future ?

*Firstly*, the annexation of Taiwan. According to a UPI report of July 26, 1971, Mao Tse-tung told Edgar Snow that his aim is the peaceful assimilation of Taiwan. The *Washington Post* wrote on May 2, 1971, that President Nixon knew very well what Mao and company were after: that they want the U.S. to break all ties with Chiang Kai-shek.

*Secondly*, an acceleration of the rocket-nuclear programme. The *Chicago Tribune* wrote on June 9, 1971, that the recognition of Red China would accelerate the creation of her nuclear potential since it will boost her economy. The *New York Times* admit-

ted on July 25, 1971, that an improvement of Sino-American relations may signify an influx of large American capital investments and technical assistance.

*Thirdly*, the strengthening and expansion of China's influence in Asia. On July 17, 1971, the *New York Times* wrote that Nixon promised the Chinese in quite unambiguous terms that they would be given an opportunity of strengthening their influence by peaceful means all over Asia. On July 21, 1971, the same paper wrote that China wanted to put an end to the American military presence in Asia. Then, she will be able to draw into her sphere of influence all her neighbours, using for this purpose the usual methods of economic aid, political subversion and military bluff. The *Time* magazine wrote on November 16, 1970, that the possible recognition of Communist China by the United States greatly boosted China's diplomatic offensive, in particular in Asia, and may lead to China's political offensive in this area.

*Fourthly*, an obligation by the Americans not to undermine militarily or diplomatically the long-term Chinese interests. The *New York Times* wrote on July 23, 1971, that the essence of the steps which are being taken is that Nixon's trip may lead to an exchange of commitments whose aim will be to look farther ahead than me-

rely the problem of membership in the UN or Taiwan and act in such a way that neither side undermined each other's long-term interests either militarily or diplomatically. *Fifthly*, to drive a wedge between the United States and Japan. To set up a government in Japan which would be friendly to Peking.

Thus, to the great astonishment of the Chinese themselves, let alone America's allies in Asia, Mao Tse-tung has obtained advantages by his two actions—the aggravation of Sino Soviet relations to the utmost and the invitation of Nixon to Peking the like of which he could not even dream of obtaining by military force until the end of this century.

And what about President Nixon? Can he hope to gain something similar from a rapprochement with China? To the hard-headed realist, the answer is "No". And that is obviously the reason behind the efforts of certain American government circles to prevent even at this late stage the President's visit to Peking from taking place.

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BRITAIN

# China, USSR and the Balkans

London

Political and diplomatic observers here agree that a radical change on Chinese foreign policy has taken place. And there is also not the slightest doubt that a new stage has been reached in Sino-Soviet relations. For one thing, China emerging from the self-denigratory travails of the cultural revolution has moved towards a global strategy in its foreign relations, and at the same time has openly declared that the "social imperialism" of the USSR was a greater menace than the "imperialism" of the USA. This two-pronged diplomatic offensive of China has already begun to have significant impact even in Europe—particularly in regions where China has so far not attempted to get a diplomatic foothold.

In a recent interview published in the London *Sunday Times*, the Chinese Premier Chou-En-lai, had characterised the world among other things, as being divided into a number of "intermediate zones" which were allegedly the areas in which the two super-powers were currently contending for supremacy. Basing itself on this "original" concept of world

affairs, China seems to be now pursuing a policy intended to strengthen her influence in those zones of the world which have never been China's traditional "spheres of influence." In the words, often used by Chinese publicists in the UN and elsewhere, China was intent on establishing herself as a "third force" in the international arena. She did not want to be a "super-power" like the USA and the USSR, Peking constantly re-iterated, but wanted to be a third force championing the cause of the smaller nations, in Europe and in the Mediterranean and the Balkans, as well as in North Africa and the Middle East.

Moscow has been reacting sharply to the new Chinese political *cum* diplomatic offensive. It must be remembered that as long as China had insisted on the ultra-Maoist ideology of the cultural revolution, she had not met with much success. Her insistence on Revolution that stemmed from the barrel of a gun had found no favour with well established regimes, and for this reason there was little response to Peking's appeals to countries of the "third world" to reject economic and military aid from the USSR as well as the

USA (and the West in general), and that the countries concerned should pull themselves up by their own bootstraps.

It was when Peking, having brought the cultural revolution to a halt, unexpectedly switched to a near-Krushchevian policy of peaceful co-existence and co-operation with all states that the situation changed. The Soviet Union has understandably become sensitively allergic to China's current doctrine that, in contrast to Peking's own peaceful and selfless policy, the two super-powers the USA and the USSR were busy carving up the world between themselves. A Soviet commentator, G. Apalin writing in the *Izvestia* (Sept. 9, 1971), stated: "The proclamation of this doctrine has brought a shift of emphasis in declarations by Chinese leaders on a number of vital problems. For tactical reasons they are pushing into the background Mao Tse-tung's thesis, legalized at the Ninth Congress of the Chinese Communist Party, on the inevitability and desirability of war and are even trying to present themselves as advocating the prevention of war and as being the most staunch champions of peaceful co-existence. . . . whereas previously the Soviet Union was subjected to jibes from Peking for its 'fear' of war for propounding a disarmament program and advocating a policy of peaceful coexistence, Chinese propaganda now, after having made a turn of 180 degrees, is

accusing the USSR of being involved in a 'wild arms race' and of pursuing a 'policy of threats and blackmail' . . ."

Peking now ridicules the *detente* which has been set in motion on Soviet initiative (with overtures to West Germany) and other countries in West Europe and is constantly endeavouring to play up the differences between Moscow and Washington. Apart from everything else, China probably thinks that if the tension in Europe and even in the Middle East were continued, Russia would be tied down and pre-occupied with the problems in these two areas and not be able to "interfere" in Asia and the East. Peking has, therefore, not hidden its antagonism to the treaties concluded between Russia, Poland and West Germany, as well as the four-power agreement on West Berlin—in the same way she has denounced Soviet proposal for the European security conference and the world disarmament conference. China is also cynically hostile to the reduction of armed forces by the two major blocs.

China's new strategy places considerations of state above ideology and is now willing to enter into diplomatic and other relations even with countries she continues to brand as "capitalist" and "imperialist" — a strategy most dramatically demonstrated by the dialogue with the USA coupled with the invitation to President Nixon to visit Peking.

Furthermore, China strives very hard to increase her influence with countries which are on bad terms with the USSR. For example, when Moscow Clashed with the Sudan following the abortive communist coup against President Numeiry, China used the opportunity to increase her "friendship" with the Numeiry government. Apalin in the same *Izvestia* article stated: "The Chinese leaders previously claimed hegemony over current 'revolutionary' forces under "revolutionary" banners, calling in particular for the creation of 'the broadest possible united front against American imperialism and Soviet revisionism,' the front being given a predominantly anti-Soviet slant. Now, however while leaving the idea of an anti-Soviet "front" in force, they are dropping the last 'revolutionary' camouflage and seeking out nationalistic sentiments, wherever and in whatever form they may show themselves, claiming leadership of everyone and everything on a non-class basis."

There is no doubt that Moscow is deeply concerned with Peking's attempt to win new friends and turn them against the USSR. The Soviet paper *Literaturnaya Gazeta* (Sept. 8. 1971) had approvingly cited an article from the GDR paper *Neues Deutschland* which was most revealing: . . . . A stream of invitations to visit the capital of the Chinese People's Republic is pouring into the Afro-Asian countries. Peking

is making promises to the left and right and extolling and showering false assurances on this or that politician, provided there is a hope of winning him over to an anti-Soviet course. Today, one can meet Chinese diplomats engaged in this instigative activity in the most remote corners of Africa. The gestures with which they accompany their offers of military, economic and technical "assistance" are calculated to testify to their outstandingly noble generosity."

Peking's diplomatic offensive against the Soviet Union has thus assumed global proportions and is no longer confined to in-fighting within the world communist system or to attempts to create an anti-soviet bloc of "progressive" states. Nevertheless, Peking continues to pay special attention to activities aimed at undermining relations between Russia and her European communist partners. By resorting to the tactic of a "differentiated approach" to Moscow's socialist allies in Europe, Peking is seeking either to neutralise them or, at best, bring over some of them to China's side in the ideological argument with Russia. Many of these east European countries are being induced to adopt "independent policies" and China renders every possible support to various "national models" of socialism in order to lessen their dependence on the Soviets.

Furthermore, in recent times Peking's struggle for influence has moved from the periphery of the world political arena into the very heart of Russia's nearest neighbours - the Balkans. Whereas earlier China only had tiny Albania on her side in this region, she has now waded with some success Rumania and Yugoslavia. An article in the *Pravda* on September 4, 1971, written by I. Aleksandrov had stated that Peking was creating a "war psychosis" in Albania in order to "sow seeds of tension in the Balkans" and had added that the Chinese leaders had also "solidarized with anti-socialist forces in Czechoslovakia and their imperialist sponsors, and then bewailed the collapse of their counter-revolutionary plot". This is what the *Pravda* article stated:..... "Whereas previously Peking carried out a broad propaganda offensive against all socialist countries, it is now striving to 'narrow the sphere' of battle and show a discriminating approach to socialist countries in order to draw some of them into its political orbit. All this is to the accompaniment of expansive gestures and promises. At present Peking is not demanding much from those receiving its advances. The Chinese leaders are happy about any step which, in their opinion, can lead to even a small crack in relations among socialist countries....."

Such cracks have no doubt begun to appear especially where Rumania is concerned. There has been a great deal of fraternising recently between China and Rumania, and Peking has given Bucharest extensive credits, one according to Japanese sources amounting to US \$ 250 million. The Chinese communist party organ in an editorial on August 22, 1971, entitled THE HEARTS OF CHINESE AND RUMANIAN PEOPLES ARE BEATING IN UNISON concluded: "We deeply value our friendship with the Rumanian people. We are full of determination to fulfil our proletarian, international duty and support the Rumanian people in its fight for sovereignty and socialist construction."

All these developments, in particular rumours of a forthcoming visit to the Balkans by the Chinese Premier Chou En-lai have given rise to talk in East European circles about a Peking-Tirana-Belgrade - Bucharest axis obviously directed at Moscow. Political observers in London are emphatic that although China cannot pose any serious danger to Russia in the immediate future in the Balkans, either politically or militarily, Moscow is naturally unhappy about China's efforts to corrode the unity of the European "socialist community" by encouraging the Europeans to become more national-minded and therefore more independent of Moscow.

China has thus opened "new front" in the Balkans. China's efforts to set up a "Balkan alliance" will undoubtedly be welcomed by the NATO because it will be a counter to Russian influence in the area. In the Mediterranean and in Europe, China has set out to be a champion of the small nations—under bombastic slogans about the need to wage a struggle against the super-powers which are now, according to Peking, engaged in dividing up the world between themselves. China is also active in countries like Turkey and Greece, and China is clearly striving to ensure for itself a bridgehead in Asia's "anteroom" to 'penetrate into Europe through the backdoor.'

Peking is seeking to exploit to the full the tendency in some of these countries to form restricted separatist groupings in a way that it will help "Great China" to establish herself as the world's "third force". Politicians in many West European countries have expressed fears and alarm about Chinese incursions into the Balkans and into countries like Turkey. It is noteworthy that the Chinese diplomatic offensive in the Balkans is being developed against a background of the detente with the USA and the escalation of her attacks on the USSR.



CHINA

## ★ Security Council in Africa

### ★ Vietnam

Peking,

China overcame serious natural disasters in 1971 to reap a good harvest for the 10th successive year, according to *Hsinhua*, the Chinese press agency.

Both the harvest and the yield of grain in 1971 broke records set last year, the agency said. Progress was reported in farming, forestry, animal husbandry and fisheries.

The report attributed the good harvests to the fact that peasants conscientiously studied works by Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Chairman Mao.

*Hsinhua* also released a despatch from the United Nations datelined January 19, 1972. Huang Hua Permanent Representative of China on the U. N. Security Council, speaking at the 1626th Security Council Meeting today, expressed full support for the just demand of African countries to hold special meetings of the Security Council in Africa. He exposed certain big powers for showing brazen contempt for and sabotaging and resolutions adopted by the U. N. General Assembly and Security Council, condemned the ruthless

persecution and suppression of the African people by the reactionary authorities in Rhodesia and South Africa and the Portuguese colonial authorities, and demanded that the Security Council and the U.N. Secretariat speedily complete the preparations for the holding of meetings in Africa so that they can take place as scheduled.

Huang Hua said: "The Chinese delegation fully supports the holding of special meetings of the Security Council in Addis Ababa, Africa. The Chinese delegation is of the opinion that it is very proper and most timely for the organization of African unity to ask the Security Council to hold its meetings in Africa. It reflects the strong desire of the overwhelming majority of African countries and the entire African people for more direct concern and attention by the United Nations and the Security Council over the development of the current situation in Africa, although the record of the United Nations and the Security Council on the settlement of the grave issues facing Africa has been most disappointing."

Huang Hua, emphasized, "At present, the struggle of the African countries and peoples in defence of their national independence and

state sovereignty and the movements of the people in the non-independent regions of Africa for national independence and national liberation are vigorously surging forward. In the meantime, imperialism, colonialism and neo-colonialism are still carrying out frantic bloody suppression of the African people's national liberation movements and subjecting the independent African countries to intensified aggression, subversion, control, interference and bullying. All this seriously affects the peace and security in the African Continent and the world."

The security council decided to hold a meeting in Addis Ababa on January 28.

On January 21, 1972 *Hsinhua* released a statement of the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the recent developments in Vietnam, strongly supporting a statement made by the government of the National Liberation Movement of South Vietnam which denounced the policies of the Nixon administration. The Chinese Foreign Ministry statement, among other matters, stated... "A major objective of U. S. imperialism in pushing the 'pacification' policy is to cut the flesh-and-blood ties between the South Vietnamese people and the South Vietnam people's liberation armed forces, and isolate and weaken the people's armed forces and proceed to put down the

revolutionary armed struggle of the South Vietnamese people. However, U. S. imperialism will never succeed in its scheme. In the past the U. S. — puppet clique pushed in South Vietnam 'pacification' programmes of varied names, such as 'emergency pacification', 'special pacification', 'additional pacification' and 'comprehensive pacification', but one after another they all went bankrupt in the face of the South Vietnamese armed forces and people who are united as one and fighting with tenacity. The U. S. — puppet clique's present scheme of

massive forcible removal of population will only further arouse the South Vietnamese people to brave resistance and absolutely will not save U. S. imperialism and its lackeys from their thorough defeat.

"The Chinese government and people strongly condemn U. S. imperialism for this new crime. The U. S. government must stop its brutal persecution of the South Vietnamese people, stop pushing its 'Vietnamization' scheme, stop its war of aggression against Vietnam and the other Indochinese countries, immediately withdraw all the U. S. ag-

gressor armed forces and its vassal troops and immediately cease supporting the puppet regime in South Vietnam, the Lon Nol-Sirik Matak clique in Cambodia and the rightists in Laos. The Chinese Government and people firmly support the people of South Vietnam and Indochina as a whole in their war against U. S. aggression and for national salvation. So long as U. S. imperialism does not stop its aggression against the people of Vietnam and the other Indochinese countries, we will firmly support them to the end till final victory".

## CEYLON: MARGINAL NOTES

# Cabinet Reshuffle

by SERENDIB

**ONE UNFAILING** question which comes up in any gathering today is: when is the big Cabinet reshuffle to be? Sometime ago it was only: will there be a general Cabinet reshuffle? The filling of the two portfolios held by Senators was regarded as something uneventful—if there was no major switch in the other portfolios. Many had correctly anticipated that the Prime Minister would do no more than make stopgap arrangements about filling these vacancies. At the time of writing, she has done that in

regard to the Ministry of Justice: ex-Senator Jāyamanne had tendered his resignation (probably at the request of the PM) and Minister Felix Dias Bandaranaike was appointed to look after the affairs of the Justice Ministry in addition to his other functions. By the time this copy of *Tribune* is on the newsstands, the PM's decision about the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications will be known.

Regarding Kumarasurier, the friends of Kumarasurier, have been extremely anxious to keep him in the Cabinet

even after he ceases to be a Minister on February 2, that is, four months from the date the Royal Assent to abolish the Senate. Various devices have been thought of in order to keep Kumarasurier as Minister. One was to induce an Appointed Member to resign and thereafter persuade the PM to appoint Kumarasurier as an appointed MP and a Minister. During the last fortnight there was a great deal of speculation about this: the names of two appointed MP's one from the North and another from the coastal area near Colombo were mentioned as possibilities. But as the days went by it became clear that this method of keeping Kumarasurier in the Cabinet was not likely to materialise—*either* because the Appointed Members concerned were not will-

ing to resign (and lose a further six years spell as a parliamentarian), or because the PM did not favour this method of retaining Kumarasurier especially in view of the backbencher opposition to further selections of appointed members as Minister—Minister Baduidin Mahmud being considered adequate to look after the “interests” of the *unrepresented* who are said to be “looked after” by the appointed members under the Soulbury Constitution. (In the new National Assembly there will be no appointed members, but until the first election under the new republican constitution the six appointed in May 1970 would continue as MPs). Another reason why this method of keeping Kumarasurier in the Cabinet may not have worked so far, (but anything can happen anytime in Ceylon today) is that the PM may not have been willing to offer (kick upstairs) the appointed member, willing to resign in order to find a parliamentary berth for Kumarasurier, a diplomatic assignment.

**WHEN LOBBY** circles spoke about a deadlock on this matter, and Kumarasurier, himself had publicly proclaimed that the matter was entirely in the hands of the PM, the *CEYLON DAILY NEWS* on January 28 published an obviously inspired piece entitled **ANOTHER FOUR MONTHS FOR KUMARASURIER—BY RE-APP-**

**POINTMENT?** The problem was posed in this way: ‘Can Posts and Telecommunications Minister Chelliah Kumarasurier be given a new lease of ‘life’ without being brought into the House of Representatives? Informed political and parliamentary circles believe that he can.’ What was contemplated was a crude constitutional gimmick. Kumarasurier, on his resignation, “could be” re-appointed anew, and under the old Constitution he could go on for another 4 months—(in which time some appointed member may decide to resign his seat, or the PM may be persuaded to enforce this kind of switch, or some other miracle to save Kumarasurier may occur). The *Daily News* story, written by Manik de Silva, concluded that: “political circles have been widely expecting an Appointed Member to vacate his seat for Mr. Kumarasurier to be brought into the House of Representatives. The newest interpretation of the relevant section of the Constitution puts an entirely new complexion on the Minister’s position. It is generally agreed in political circles, however, that the Government would not indefinitely continue to give four months extensions to a Minister who is not a member of the Legislature. But with the new Constitution and other changes in the offing, they believe that a single extension for Mr. Kumarasurier might be a possibility”.

The *Daily News* has not indulged in this kind of political kite-flying for long time, and it would not have done so even now unless there was support for this among a strong and influential section of the SLFP and UF hierarchy. The pro-left group inside the SLFP, centred on the now-inactive Socialist Study Circle, are anxious to retain Kumarasurier. The LSSP-CP group also want Kumarasurier (but a CP appointed member from the North evidently would not oblige Kumarasurier by tendering his resignation). And, as it was still felt that the PM was “neutral” on this matter, the *Daily News* flew this kite.

But the *Sun* on the very next date, January 29, spread a banner headline right across its front page: **KUMARASURIER TIPPED TO BE OUR MAN IN MALAYASIA** and stated that Kumarasurier was likely to be given a diplomatic assignment once he relinquished his post “within the next few days”. The post of High Commissioner in Malaysia was vacant and Kumarasurier was a likely and suitable appointee said the *Sun*. It went on to say that “informed political sources..... discounted the possibility of an appointed member of the House resigning in order to accommodate Mr. Kumarasurier and to enable him to continue with his present portfolio after February 2.

This is the date on which he ceases to hold office... The wave of speculation that the Post and Telecommunications Minister could be re-appointed for a four-month term of office as a Minister outside the legislature, is now being dismissed in political circles. ...Although there is no stipulation in the Constitution to the effect that a Minister or Parliamentary Secretary cannot be re-appointed, it is believed in political circles that the extension of a Minister's term beyond the four-month tenure of office outside Parliament will be 'bad constitutional practice'. In these circumstances, the extension of Mr. Kumarasuriy's ministerial office for a supplementary four-month term 'will not be permissible', it is asserted. According to political circles either the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Posts and Telecommunications Mr. V. T. G. Karunaratne, or a senior Minister, will take over Mr. Kumarasuriy's portfolio until the general Cabinet reshuffle takes place shortly."

**THAT WAS THAT.** And the "general Cabinet reshuffle" the *Sun* referred to is what is today the talking point in all drawing room, cocktail and political lobbies in the country. A general Cabinet reshuffle has been talked about for a long time because there was so much dead wood in the Cabinet appointed in May 1970 and

also because the policies and procedures of certain Ministers had created problems which had brought the Government into disfavour. It was therefore expected that the PM would seek to streamline the Cabinet with a general reshuffle.

Just about the time when the Cabinet reshuffle could be initiated, with the senatorial ministers ceasing to function, Mr. J. R. Jayawardena of the UNP introduced a new dimension to the problem. He publicly announced that if the PM "invited" the UNP to join the Government, he would endeavour to persuade the UNP as a party to do so, and failing that a section of the UNP willing to cooperate with the Government, would cross over. Mr. J. R. Jayawardena *did not* stipulate any terms, for instance that the Left represented by the LSSP and CP should be pushed out of the Cabinet as a precondition for his joining the Cabinet. He seemed to know the realities inside the Government and the United Front: that what was needed was a strengthening of the Right and the Centre inside the SLFP as against the aggressive Left in the United Front in order to stem the tide of policies which would completely destroy the private sector.

The JR strategy, worked out in collaboration with influential Centre and Right ele-

ments inside the SLFP, actively endorsed by the *Sun-Dawasa* group, enthusiastically supported by the *Times* combine, and referred to with caution in the *Lake House* papers, was and is intended to provide a catalyst in the "general Cabinet reshuffle." It will help to polarise political alignments in the current situation in the country, inside the SLFP, inside the UF and inside the UNP too.

At one time it was thought that JR would be able to cross over only as a kind of *lone ranger* (with the bulk of the UNP rank and file remaining loyal to Dudley Senanayake who is opposed to any collaboration with the SLFP—unless the latter accepted certain preconditions). But after JR announced his current political strategy he has been gaining ground within the UNP, and both territorywise and groupwise the JR caucus has been winning support inside the UNP. Most of the UNP groups and stalwarts in the South seem to favour the JR strategy and the youth leagues in many areas also seem to support JR.

The question now is: when will the PM issue the invitation to the UNP and JR to join the Government?

The matter of inviting JR and the UNP to join the Government is a matter said to be in the hands of the Prime Minister. But coming

events cast their shadows earlier, and as early as January 15, the Minister of Finance, in a speech at Panadura, stated: "...Seasoned politicians like Mr. J. R. Jayawardene have fully realised the position and the future of the capitalists in the country. I am sorry to find Mr. Dudley Senanayake is refusing to accept the position... Sooner or later, Mr. Jayawardene will stage a breakaway from the UNP. Mr. Jayawardene knows that there is no future for the UNP in the country any more. The UNP will not be able to scare the country with its ghostly policies. Few realise that I have massacred the capitalists in the country. With the capital tax I have introduced in my last budget proposals the capitalists will have to sell even their houses and properties to pay the 25 percent tax."

Whilst the Minister of Finance thinks that it was his anti-capitalist measures which has stampeded JR to want to stage a breakaway from the UNP to join the UF, it is not clear what has motivated JR, apart from his wanting to push the Government away from the policies of the LSSP which has created a stalemate in many sectors of the economy. Whatever be the dramatic statements made by the Minister of Finance taking credit for frightening JR into wanting to come into the UF camp, it was also clear that Dr. N. M. Perera

was willing to accommodate JR on the Government side. This same sentiment was echoed by another top LSSPer, Mr. Dhanapala Weerasekara, MP for Dehiowita who in a speech at Dehiowita a few days later, stated: "If the Government is honest in its recent appeal for co-operation from all sections of the Community irrespective of political differences, then it should accept Mr. J. R. Jayawardene with open arms." Mr. Weerasekara pointedly stated that "the Prime Minister, Mrs. Srimavo Bandaranaike and the Minister of Finance, Dr. N. M. Perera, had been continuously appealing to the people to sink their differences and co-operate with the Government to extricate the country from its present mess." But, there is evidently a big division of opinion within the LSSP, and on January 26 in a speech at Matugama, the Minister of Plantations and Constitutional Affairs, Dr. Colvin R. de Silva, stated very clearly that he was one of those who had doubts about Mr. J. R. Jayawardena's sudden and overnight change in his political complexion. Dr. Silva said that of late Mr. Jayawardena had shown a strange concern about the Government to the extent of preferring advice. No one in the Government would be duped by Mr. Jayawardena. In recent times certain individuals were shedding crocodile tears over the fate of

the masses. He was intrigued by their change in attitude towards the Government.

The *Nation* of January 21 had been silent on this issue, but in its issue of January 28, it came out strongly against JR. On its frontpage was a cartoon entitled OH! WHEN IS THE INVITATION COMING? and before a garlanded portrait of JR stood a line of men wanting "that invitation" and these men were collectively described as PRIVILEGED ANTI-PROGRESSIVE FORCES. But it was on the last page in the *Notes and Comments* column that the campaign against JR was mounted. He was taunted for wanting a portfolio and the *Nation* suggested a way out for JR. "If Mr. Jayawardene's nostalgia for his ministerial post was his only problem, there is a simple remedy available to him. Since he himself has publicly declared that the UNP of Mr. Dudley Senanayake has no future, he has only to resign his membership of that party and fill a membership form of the SLFP, LSSP or Communist Party (depending on which he chooses to join) and forward it with the appropriate membership fee. Once he has proved his dependability as a new party member, there could be little doubt about rapid elevation to ministerial rank."

But the *Nation* dismissed such ambitions for JR. He

was too big a man for that. He was not the leader to want to change only for a ministerial portfolio. This is what the *Nation* said:

"It would be most uncomplimentary to him, however, to think that Mr. Jayawardene could permit his political moves to be motivated by nostalgic considerations. Not only is he a singularly unsentimental person, but his personal ambitions have greater substance than mere compensation for personal inadequacy or loss. Mr. Jayawardene has the stature of a party leader on the national plane, which means that his decisions and actions have to do with large social and economic interests with which the drive of his personality is identified. His attempts to solve his own individual political problems have, therefore, to be interpreted in terms of the solutions they bring to problems of large social and economic groups at the same time.

"When Mr. J. R. Jayawardene states his own dilemma as a political leader in the Opposition in terms of the crisis of our political system and the futility of old hunts for popularity in the current context, he is not being pompous or hypocritical. He has enough standing in the politics of our country to frame his alternatives realistically in this way. But he has chosen to soliloquise in a Hamletian style that is totally alien to his usual political self, rather than make his own decisions and go out to implement them in the blunt and direct manner that so often delights his admirers. This makes several things that have taken place more than a little suspect."

Thereafter the *Nation* examined some of the recent statements made by JR and stressed that if he were convinced by his own arguments he should in the first instance "wage a life and death struggle with Mr. Dudley Senanayake to correct the policies of his party." But JR, said the paper, had taken a different course. "He has made what amounts to a public request that the Prime Minister should invite his party, the UNP 'to join the Government and cooperate with it to solve the basic problems that face us today.' It does not appear at all odd to him that this is a most amazing thing for any Prime Minister to do. The main opposition party has overwhelmingly turned down a motion by one of its principal leaders for cooperation with the Government. Yet the Prime Minister is expected to invite the same Opposition party to 'join' the Government and 'cooperate' with it. Is Mr. Jayawardena being really naive?"

With this onslaught from the principal ally of the SLFP in the UF, what will the Prime Minister do?

The CP, the other ally of the SLFP, has also been vehemently against J. R. The Aththa had campaigned against this for sometime and some of the leading lights of the CP had made this clear in their speeches. The *Forward* of January 22 had stated the position of the CP very clearly. It did not want JR. The leading article concluded thus: "Mr. J. R. Jayawardene has however, found that everything is not plain sailing. Although certain Rightist elements in the United

Front, and especially the new mudalali strata who seek to advance on governmental patronage, warmly welcome Mr. Jayawardene's move, the rank-and-file members of the United Front and vast sections of its leaders are strongly opposed to having anything to do with Mr. Jayawardene or his group.

"Mr. Jayawardene himself is moving cautiously. Up to now he is on public record only on advocating that the UNP as a whole should join the government if invited. But he is well aware that this invitation is unlikely to be received.

"The question of a break-away and a group attempt to apply for membership of the United Front as a constituent partner is also not likely to produce much results. The alternatives—joining the Government Parliamentary Group as backbench members as the Tamil Congress did or seeking individual membership of the SLFP after quitting or being expelled from the UNP are not so palatable or likely to produce the results that Mr. Jayawardene and his supporters have in mind".

With all these imponderables to consider, it is difficult to say when the major Cabinet reshuffle will come. And what shape it will take.

And when it comes, will JR be brought into the Cabinet? And if he is, what will the LSSP and the CP do?

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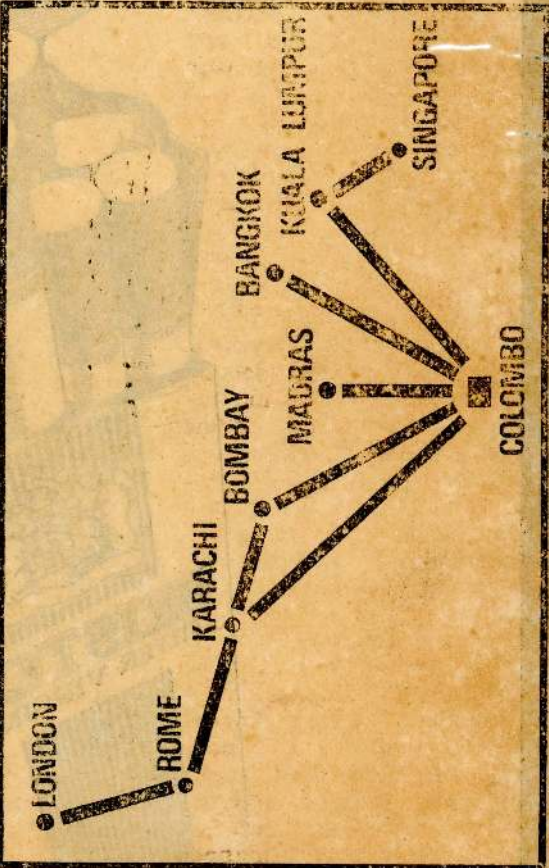
Printed and Published by P. Alagesan at Tribune Press, for Tribune Publications, 43, Dawson Street, Colombo-2.

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