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BY-ELECTION
RESULTS

END OF U.F.
EUPHORIA

FOR THE RECORD
GEORGETOWN
MEETING & THE
SWISS BANKS
STORY

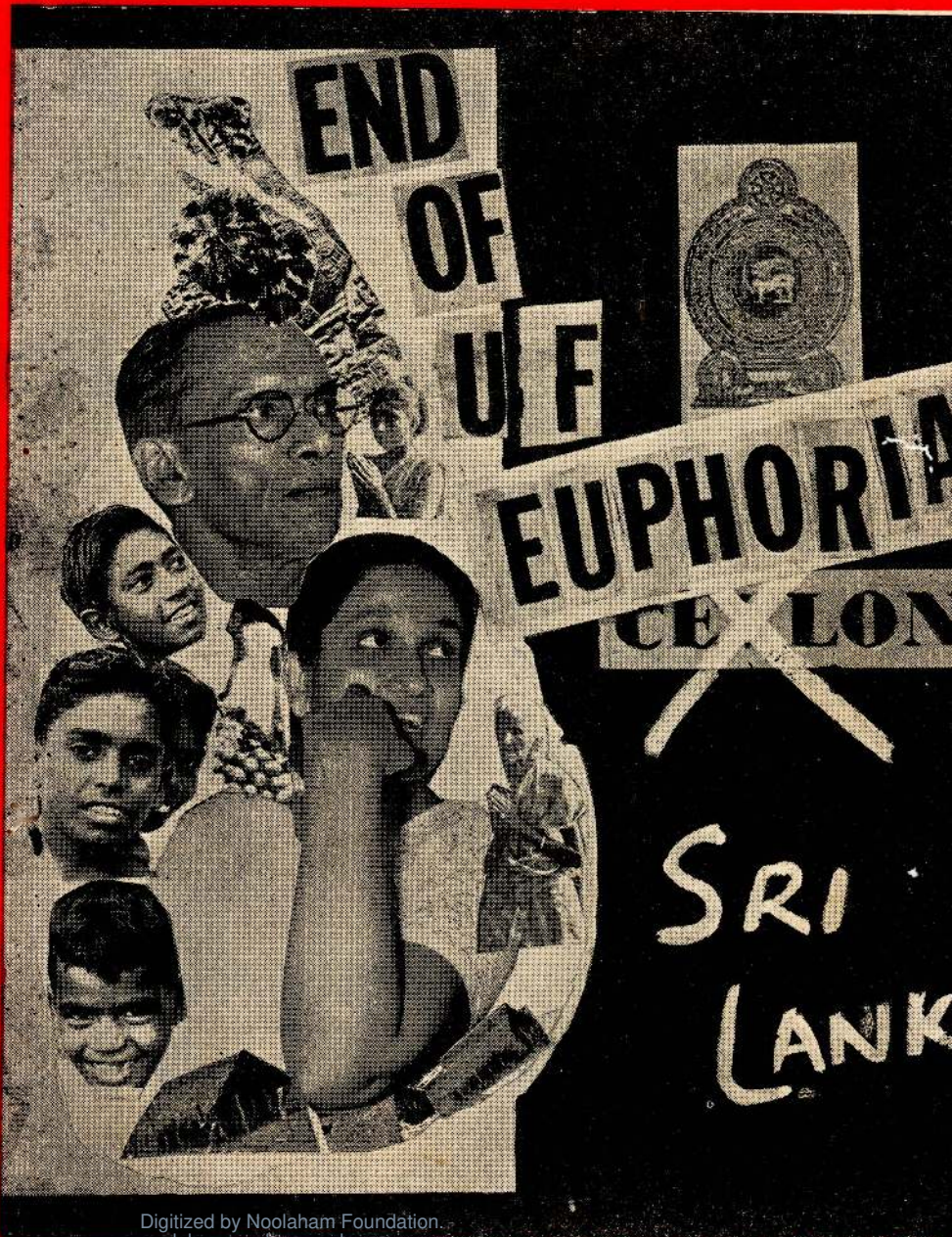
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BURMA'S
DIFFICULTIES

POSTSCRIPT

PM ON THE
BY-ELECTIONS



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OUT SHORTLY

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RESPONSIBILITY**

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EUPHORIA FADES AWAY: THE END OF AN ERA ?

THE FOUR by-elections, at Kesbewa, Ratnapura, Nuwara Eliya and Puttalam,— known popularly as the mini-general elections, took place on October, 9. The results came as a "shock" to many who still continued to be overwhelmed by the euphoria which had assumed unnatural proportions about the invincibility and supremacy of the United Front led by the SLFP. In the last few months *Tribune* had recorded the growing sense of disgust and disillusionment which had grown in the country against the acts of commission and omission of the Government, but even we did not dare to predict that the Government would fare so badly at the by-elections held barely thirty months after May 1970.

The euphoria of May 1970 still hung over us as over many other political observers—not like a sword of Damocles but a dark cloud blinding us to the realities which stared us in the face. We were led to believe that to expect the total defeat of the UF at the by-elections was wishful thinking by anti-government elements (however legitimate may have been their grievances). We believed that the Government would hold the seats they held with reduced majorities, and also that in Nuwara Eliya the "bribe" to the plantation

workers would help the Government to draw even with the UNP, especially after the CWC chief Thondaman had declared an "open conscience vote" for members of the CWC. The UNP majority was reduced in Nuwara Eliya, but the swing against the Government was strong enough to withstand whatever impact the increased wages for plantations would have had on the estate voters. To the credit of Mr. Thondaman, it must be said, that his tactics "defused" the tension which had been building up against the CWC on racialist and communal lines, partly after Mr. Aziz had proclaimed his faith in a "united Sri Lanka"—accepting no doubt the Sinhala desire to "assimilate" all other racial, religious and linguistic minorities into a single composite one-nation state—the process to be spread over a number of decades.

To discuss the by-elections, it is necessary to set out the results:—

KESBEWA

Total No. of voters	—70,674
Dharmasena Attygalle (UNP)	— 22,592
Subash Chandrasiri (Ind.)	— 19,549
Dixon J. Perera (SLFP)	— 14,269
W. G. Shelton Jayasekera (Ind.)	— 332
B. D. Somapala (Ind.)	— 193

D. A. Preman (MEP)	— 129
Majority	— 3,043
Spoilt votes	250
Total polled	57,314
UNP wins the Seat from SLFP. How they voted in May 1970	
Somaweera Chandrasiri (SLFP)	— 32,332
Dharmasena Attygalle (UNP)	17,726
Majority	14,606
Spoilt votes	173
Total Polled	50,231
Total number of votes	
Total number of voters	62,441

NUWARA ELIYA

Total Number of Voters	— 26,326
Gamini Dissanayake (UNP)	— 11,963
H. M. Abeysinghe (SLFP)	— 10,092
B. W. Madawala (MEP)	— 98
D. Seneviratne (Ind.)	— 92
P. M. Abiman (Ind.)	— 52
Majority	— 1,871
Spoilt votes	112
Total polled	22,409

UNP retains Seat

How they voted in May 1970	
Gamini Dissanayake (UNP)	10,887
T. William Fernando (SLFP)	8,810
C. V. Velupillai (Ind.)	170
Majority	2,077
Spoilt votes	143
Total polled	20,010
Total number of voters	24,027

PUTTALAM

Total No. of Voters	— 34,629
M. H. M. Naina Marikkar (UNP)	— 14,026
A. Abdul Latiff (SLFP)	— 12,364
Asoka Ranasinghe (MEP)	— 1,622
Mohamed Farouk (Ind.)	— 315
R. M. W. Jayawardena (Ind.)	— 121
Majority	— 1,662
Spoilt votes	127
Total polled	28,575

UNP wins the seat from SLFP. How they voted in May 1970

S. M. Asenkudhoos (SLFP)	10,995
M. H. M. Naina Marikkar (UNP)	10,892
T. Don Augustine (Ind.)	2,209
C. Saravanamuttu (Ind.)	131
Majority	103
Spoilt votes	122
Total polled	24,349
Total number of voters	29,858

RATNAPURA

Total No. of Voters	— 45,468
Nanda Ellawala (SLFP)	— 21,267
Piyadasa Pelendagama (UNP)	— 15,948
J. K. G. Santa Cyril (Ind.)	— 256
D. Albert Appuhamy (MEP)	— 136
D. E. Senarath (Ind.)	— 125
Ananda Wijeratne (Ind.)	— 119
Majority	— 5,319
Spoilt votes	190
Total polled	38,041

SLFP retains Seat
How they voted in May 1970

Nanda Ellawala (SLFP)	22,633
P. B. Wijesundara (UNP)	12,002
K. V. Dharmadasa (Ind.)	190
K. T. Manis Singho (Ind.)	159
Majority	10,631
Spoilt votes	83
Total polled	35,067
Total number of voters	42,004

THESE ELECTION results have been analysed in great detail by the different newspapers. The factual aspect was dissected by the *Daily Mirror* on October 11 as follows: "Of a total of 177,097 voters only 146,338 cast their votes at the four by-elections held on Monday. This represents an 82 per cent, polling as compared to 84.9 per cent, at the May 1970, General Elections. Though the number of voters at KESBEWA was 70,674 only 57,314 exercised their franchise thus resulting in 13,360 votes not being cast. At NUWARA ELIYA of a total number of 26,326 voters 22,409 voted. Thus means that 3,917 had kept away from the polls. Of 45,468 voters at RATNAPURA, 38,041 had cast their votes while 7,427 had refrained from voting.

"In PUTTALAM 28,575 votes had been polled though the registered number of voters totalled 34,629. This indicates that 6,054 did not vote.

"It will also be interesting to note that the Sri Lanka Freedom Party which polled 74,770 voters at these electorates at the May 1970 General Election had secured only 57,998 votes at the by-elections a decrease of 16,775. The United National Party, however, obtained 64,529 voter's on Monday as compared to 51,507 votes in May 1970 thus recording an increase of 13,022 votes. The increase in the number of voters in the four electorates is as follows:— Kesbewa—3,333, Ratnapura—3,464, Puttalam—4,771 and Nuwara Eliya—2,399. These increases are generally due to the large number of youth who have been entitled to exercise their franchise since the revision of voter's lists after the General Elections of 1970."

The Observer, on 11/10, summed up the situation thus:—

Total polled	146,339
U.N.P.	64,529:44%
S.L.F.P.	57,992:40%
Independents and others	23,138:16%

The percentage is worked to the nearest round figure. The total polled includes spoilt votes.

Editorial comments show developing trends of opinion. The *Daily Mirror* went to town in its editorial column on October 11 under the heading EYE-OPENER. "Thank God for the Ballot. It is one of the last lingering instru-

ments of democracy left in the land. It is also the last near-infallible barometer of the people's political pulse and conviction. It is the ballot that has categorically registered the unpopularity of this Government which was swept into supremacy only two years ago on the crest of one of the most powerful waves of popularity ever, in a general election. The by-election slump must therefore be viewed against the background of the United Front's 1970 voter boom. When the U.F. romped home with its overwhelming majority, both, they and the people believed that the new Government was in an impregnable and unassailable position. It floated on the National scene like a Colossus, sovereign and supreme, with its lordly head in the clouds and its feet nowhere near the troubled earth of Sri Lanka."

The *Daily Mirrorian* alliterative rhetoric was used to sermonise the Government: "The bells of the ballot have tolled the doleful warning to Government—that the people are disillusioned with it, and will not tolerate the perpetuation of its power politics. That message has been clearly spelt out in the comparative voting figures of May 1970, as against this by-election. Whereas the United Front polled 74,770 in the four electorates in 1970, on Monday it polled only 57,592. As against this the UNP which scraped up only 51,000 votes in the

self-same constituencies in 1970, harvested 64,589 votes in this by election. It seems obvious also that in addition to the erosion of its existing following, the U.F. has not attracted the new generation of the over 18 voting group which obviously has voted for the U.N.P.....

"All this goes to prove beyond any doubt that the mini-General Election has recorded a resounding vote of no-confidence against the U.F. Government. Armed though it is with considerable strength, in spite of its losses, Government must not scornfully flick the defeat off its sleeves as something it need not worry about. It should view the setback as symbolic of its growing unpopularity. Instead of sulking in its tent and scheming revenge, which is one of its unfortunate vices, Government must consider its debacle at the polls as an eye-opener to reality and promptly proceed to deal with realities. It must realize that not all its heavy cannonade of Ministerial might, not all the bazookas of the bureaucracy could stampede the people into voting against their conscience. Government must take comfort, nevertheless, from its own show of strength though defeated. Its narrow margins of defeat demonstrate that the UF still has a following and that its flock dwindled at the polls, only because it decided to protest at the utter unconcern of the rulers for the ruled. It is this

attitude which has, in the main, antagonized its followers.

"The policies of the United Front, judging from their voting strength have been partially endorsed. But judging again, from the UNP's gains, the protests of the people have been manifested more strongly than their endorsement. It is this punch of protest that must serve as an eye-opener to the U.F. Government"

The *Daily Mirror* quite correctly pointed out that the voting showed that the SLFP still had basic support but that the Government should take heed of the substantial protest vote which had been cast against it. On the next day, too, October 12, the *Daily Mirror* commented on the election results, entitling the piece POST-MORTEM, but it was only a repetition of the same logic and argumentation as the earlier editorial, with different twists of rhetoric, bombast and fiery barrages intended to awaken the apathetic reader into some hard thinking and action. But whether this kind of rhetoric makes people think is problematic, but it certainly succeeds in evoking a state of emotional upsurge.

The *Daily News* in its editorial of October 11 approached the subject of the election results in a more lordly and supercilious manner. It endeavoured to maintain an objectivity on the question. The Lake House group, according to the LSSP, is still the same predatory leopard it was,

though its spots had been brushed over with the dark blue of the SLFP tinged with the pinkish red of the socialist partners in the United Front,

THIS IS how the editorial read: "Figures matter and statistics don't always lie. Of the three seats that the government won in May 1970, it has lost two, and retained one but with its thumping majority halved. In the fourth, it has made a modest gain in votes and percentages and slightly dented the UNP's majority. In this bleak economic climate and in the emergency conditions prevailing since the calamitous events of April last year, it took the Prime Minister guts to give the electorate a chance to ventilate its opinion and the United Front an opportunity to feel the pulse of the people. Having done so, only a wilful obtuseness or arrogance (any administration's worst enemy) will prevent the UF from studying the statistics and drawing the correct conclusions, while deriving some solace from the fact that this is only a skirmish and not the final battle.

"Discounting personal and parochial factors and also the miscalculation in Kesbewa, it is patently clear that there is a swing away from the UF pronounced in Ratnapura (about 7%) and a significant 3% to 4% in both Puttalam and Kesbewa. Only Nuwara Eliya does not conform to this general pattern of a slump since

1970. The voter has expressed his dissatisfaction and it is easy to see that economic considerations were paramount. Certainly, Mr. Dudley Senanayake who led the UNP's campaign not only opened fire on the questions of living costs and unemployment but sustained his barrage till the end. It should not be forgotten however that his deputy, Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, concentrated on political issues: mainly on democratic rights, on the threats to press freedom and so on....."

The editorial then went on to examine certain aspects of the results with cocksureness. What attracted the editorial writer was the fact that about 80% of the new teenage vote had voted UNP thus discarding the Left which customarily attracts the youth with its clamour for revolution. "To get our priorities absolutely right however, we invite the reader's attention to the electorate's basic response. It has once again notched an impressive 80% and that is as high as any responsible and mature constituency can go except in those places where there is a dictatorship of the proletariat in which the dictatorship does not care to consult the proletariat. There have been self-styled revolutionaries, humbled each time they offered their nostrums to the masses, who have been calling upon the people to ignore the elections and reject the parliamentary system. The people have rejected

that view which may be suited to a backward society but decidedly inappropriate in an educated electorate. What is more the young voter has responded very well too. Unless one accepts the highly improbable hypothesis that thousands who did not vote in 1970 turned up at the polls this time, we must read the new ballots cast as representing the youth vote. Significantly enough it is about 80% too. The figure is extremely reassuring at a time when the young are being told that bourgeois democracy is a farce. Evidently, the vast majority of our young are wiser than the tutors of these threadbare theories."

The editorial draws much comfort from that the fact that young people were no longer interested in the threadbare theories of UF *pothagurus*.

The *Daily News* then turned to the UNP and drew attention to the obvious gains made by the UNP, but it did not pursue this analysis to logical conclusions—undoubtedly because the Lake House cannot as yet afford to show any kind of affinity or allegiance to the UNP—and any lengthy comment would create such suspicions. The editorial then concluded with comments on the Kesbewa electorate which would be accepted by all. "Demoralised by the 1970 debace and by acrimonious squabbles in the higher echelons of the party, the UNP

will no doubt draw strength from these results and provide the kind of spirited Opposition which the Prime Minister once called for. In numerical terms the results will make little impression on the UF's big battalions but dynamic opposition is as much a vital need for a robust democracy as a vigorous government. The UNP received a glorious gift of a seat in Kesbewa which clearly remains an anti-UNP bastion. Yet, it has improved its position in Ratnapura, Kesbewa and Puttalam. No comment on the results would be complete without a reference to the Chandrasiri phenomenon. Making his debut, young Mr. Subash Chandrasiri is a colourful exception to the theory that the consolidation of the party system has driven out the maverick; a theory confirmed by the pathetic performance of a leaderless MEP. It is no insult to Mr. Chandrasiri to say that the voters of Kesbewa have chosen to present posthumous testimony to the extraordinary popularity of his father who, despite his rumbustious and bucolic ways (or was it because of them?) is evidently remembered with warm affection. Meanwhile, in the structure of national politics, the SLFP and UNP remain the two main forces, each enjoying the allegiance of about 35% to 45% of the Ceylonese constituency which is outside the northern peninsula with the precise per-

centage changing as fortunes fluctuate."

The *Sun* did not make any editorial comment on October, 11 and it was only on the next day that it ventured to write a leader under the heading THINK ANEW. It was a low key low profile editorial seeking to write between the lines that the Left with their doctrinaire doctrines had brought disaster to the Government. Such abstruse theorising, the editorial implied, had led the Government into a fool's paradise in which it ignored realities which had made life harder for the ordinary people.

THIS IS what the editorial stated: "There is no doubt that the results of the four by-elections have come as a blow to a Government that faced the hustings with what was plain unvarnished 'cocksureness.' The people have given them not only an answer but, a series of questions that the ruling party should ponder over in the second half of its tenure of office. It is fruitless to find excuses for the United Front's dismal performance. The facts are as clear as ever. The United Front has drifted on a meandering course. Its Ministers have progressively fumbled with the priorities, and are now reaping the fruits of their own lop-sided policies.

"Blinded by their own abstruse constitutional theories, they ignored, or did not wish to look the facts of life in present day Sri

Lanka in the face. It is the common man who will naturally use his vote, not only to protest vehemently but even to warn the Government in power that it cannot fool all the people all the time. When the masses were crying for bread they were given a stone. When infants were starving for milk-food and children went without meals, and prices spiralled like sky rockets, all that they got were the pious platitudes extolling the virtues of austerity as the price of prosperity.."

The editorial also took many swipes at the new Constitution which had been drafted by the LSSP pundit, Dr. Colvin R. de Silva. The editorial concluded by calling upon the Government to draw the proper conclusions from the election defeat and initiate a new appraisal of all burning questions of the day. "We have pointed out before that armies and people do not march with empty stomachs. Time and energy and funds have been frittered away on forming new constitutions, new Corporations, and abolition of the Senate and the Privy Council; land ceilings housing bills and even threats to attack the very freedom of public opinion. These changes may have had an importance for an outdated Communist policy but they certainly have provided all the dynamite for legitimate protest by the people. When the Government forgets that the welfare and survival of the people must occupy its

first and most vital concern, it must naturally lose its popularity.

"The country has come to an impasse. The common man has seen Ministers going by the dozens on foreign trips; he has faced the devious explanation that the cost of living is rising in other countries; he has perhaps been a victim of retirement and laying off in a private sector that is starved of raw material and of incentives; he has tasted the bureaucracy and wastage and utter inefficiency of many State Corporations. These factors have a way of retaliation. The vote is therefore not only a protest but is also an indictment. No wonder the UNP has cashed in on this situation and has watched the United Front 'hoping to catch larks if the heavens fall.' The results of the by-election are a jolt for those in power, and we hope that they will serve as a salutary lesson for a re-appraisal of Government policies and a new thinking on behalf of the common man."

The Observer columnist *Thilak*, who writes a kind of personalised editorial piece every day on the front page of the paper gave vent to his normally super-charged feelings thus: "Now the tumult and the shouting dies; the campaigners exit, some with alarums. Enter the theorists, the statisticians, the pundits, the analysts, the think-tankers. But the hard facts won't

go away. The UNP has captured two seats from the SLFP; the SLFP retains one seat with a greatly reduced majority, while the UNP's one retention is also with a reduced majority; wonderboy Subash creates havoc, with many voters having obviously decided in Kesbewa to cry a plague on both houses.

"I suppose the UNP hoipolloi will go back to a pre-'56 cockiness, while the SLFP's High Command will indulge in a little self-criticism. All that is not going to do us much good: the three additional seats for the UNP will hardly affect any legislation in the National Assembly, come voting time. And the same applies to the SLFP."

The cynical and painfully dilettante approach of the columnist is reflected in what he writes. That the UNP, because of the mini-victory would, he suggested, slip back into its pre-1956 "cockiness", that the elections had not altered the voting strength in the National State Assembly. QUITE CORRECTLY he pointed out that the 44 percent polled by the UNP did not mean a thing, and the fact that the SLFP was able to total a substantial 40 percent after losing three seats only showed that there was a great deal of punch still left in the SLFP.

"But at least the voting patterns should make the government realise that its two and a half years of muddling through has disillusioned a large section

of the voters. Still, nobody expects the new voter to consider the UNP once again as an acceptable alternative to the SLFP, although the conservative the not-young would rather swing like a pendulum between the two known devils.

"What happens now? Statistically, 44 per cent for the UNP and 40 per cent for the SLFP is hardly likely to constitute either a protest vote against the government or an endorsement of its policies. The SLFP lost three seats, but it retained 40 per cent of the total polled."

The Observer then went on to re-iterate a constant and recurrent *Lake House* refrain that the Left was doing harm to the SLFP and the Government. The *Daily News*, as the group's premier English daily, now avoids such McCarthyian verbiage but leaves it to the *Observer* to do what little it could do to divide the Left from the Centre and the Right.

The Observer also warned the SLFP about the theoretical explanations its Leftist UF partners would trot out to explain the election defeats. "If that is so, then let us not forget that the SLFP still constitutes the government. On this basis, surely the Freedom Party should take heart, should realise that there are many persons who expect the government to live up to the promises affecting their day-to-day lives. No doubt it is difficult for any party

to fulfil all the promises made at the hustings, more so when the economic ballchain is constantly dragging down any worthwhile Plan. What then is of importance to the government is not the fact of the defeat, but the lessons that it can learn—particularly the fact that there are many who believe in this democratically elected government to relieve them of their economic burdens. The SLFP's two coalition partners will, I am sure, spawn a host of theorists with dogmatic explanations of the defeat. This is poor consolation for the SLFP proper—and it is right at the core of the coalition that the new thinking should emerge."

Such warning and advice came almost simultaneously with a editorial whiff from the LSSP paper *Janadina*.

The LSSP daily "*Janadina*" commenting on the results of the by-elections stated that it was a lesson for the government but it would be misleading to think that it was a victory for the UNP.

The editorial stated: "The UNP victory was due to the prevailing economic conditions. The people forgot that the UNP was responsible for the present economic plight because of the defects in the government coupled with its debilitating weaknesses. It is no wonder that the attention of the masses were focused on economic problems because they did not have the opportunity to think of other matters.

The people forgot the many progressive steps taken by the government. The people did not consider the progressive moves—the proclamation of a sovereign independent republic, abolition of the Senate, the bills on the ceiling on lands and ceiling on houses, granting of political rights to public servants, establishment of a Gem Corporation, nationalisation of plumbago mines, nationalisation of several estates and companies.

"Two reasons could be adduced: there were no instantaneous solutions and the failure of the government to impress upon the people the benefits accrued. These progressive acts were forgotten by the people and the economic issues were foremost in their minds.

"The progressive measures taken by the government so far were sans enthusiasm. The impression was created in the minds of the people that the government was forced to take these measures.

"Even though the government called for sacrifices, it did not generate the enthusiasm and dynamism that was expected of it. Not only did the government fail to generate enthusiasm and dynamism among the people by even the Broadcasting Corporation

"It is not necessary to prepare a critical analysis of the defeat suffered by the present government in four places on October 9 to assess the extent of the

damage. Any sensible person will accept that even at Ratnapura the Government suffered defeat—Ratnapura which was won with a 10,600 majority in 1970 has a majority of only 5,300 today. And what happened to the increased vote of 3,484

"In this mini-election the UNP did not make any fresh promises. It only showed up the false promises that had been made—piled up were broken promises and the high cost of living.

"Is this piling up of arms for the good of the community?

"Is it for the good of socialist progress?

"Is it for the good of the younger generation?

"It is for a struggle with our own people—it is for an undying hatred with the younger generation and all those who are opposed to their policies.

"By getting foreign loans, by allowing infants to go hungry, farmers and workers to go hungry, patients to be without drugs, young persons without jobs and by ignoring the needs of the country the Foreign Exchange that had been saved by these means has been frittered away on armaments for which crime the present Government's leadership will be fully answerable.

"However let the right wing leadership be warned: It should not be taken that the masses are ready to enthrone reaction but it

was mainly a vote of disapproval. This is an appeal to all those progressive elements in the Government to get together in a spirit of give and take and honesty to build a country that will nourish and support one and all."

The editorial concluded with the customary leftist threats against all "reactionaries" and thereafter calling upon all "progressives" to unite to fight the reactionaries.

Political parties and leaders have been slow in making any comments on the by-elections. Mr. Dudley Senanayake however did not lose any time, in making a statement on the election results.

Mr. Dudley Senanayake, Leader of the United National Party issued this statement on the results of the by-elections:—"For the first time after the 1970 elections, the performance of the government over the last two-and-a-half years and its policies have been adjudicated on by the people, and in so widely disparate areas as Kesbewa, Puttalam, Nuwara Eliya and Ratnapura; and the verdict of the people is uncompromisingly clear. The verdict is that the policies of the Government are unacceptable to the vast majority of the people, that intolerable burdens have been placed on them, a realisation that they had been duped by false election promises and an affirmation of the people's faith in the democratic way of life.

"It is not easy for an Opposition Party to contest a by-election successfully under any circumstances. It is particularly difficult in the special circumstances today when not only has the government a tremendous majority in the National State Assembly but where by the arbitrary and undemocratic abuse of this majority the government has extended its period of office by two years. The general sense of futility among voters that they would get little service from the Government if they returned non-government candidates has been accentuated by the record of the government, of its vindictiveness to its opponents, its partisanship in all areas of activity, whether it be in appointments or in services to an area. That in the face of this the voters bravely refused to be intimidated and with tremendous courage and self-sacrifice voted according to conscience and returned UNP candidates for Kesbewa, Nuwara Eliya and Puttalam and reduced the majority in Ratnapura by as much as 5000 votes is a clear indication of the extent to which democracy is ingrained in our people and their total rejection of totalitarianism and authoritarianism. To me personally it is a most satisfying experience for it is a vindication of what the UNP stands for.

"Never during the history of democratic elections in this country has govern-

ment authority been so blatantly abused, that government facilities and equipment been appropriated for party political purposes, individuals and sections of the people so grossly intimidated by threats and thuggery, promises conditional on the return of a government candidate been so openly made, attempts to seduce voters by the grant of pre-election favours so unashamedly resorted to as in these four by-elections.

"To the UNP this expression of confidence by the people places on it a great responsibility and while expressing the thanks of the party to all those who voted for the UNP and others who worked so hard during the elections, it is necessary for the UNP to be conscious of this responsibility and to organise itself to oppose any inroads by the government on the democratic rights of the people."

Mr. Premadasa and Mr. J. R. Jayawardena also had ventured to comment with circumspection on the election results, but until the time of writing there has been virtual silence from SLFP and UF stalwarts. Except, of course, for Mr. Kalugalle, who had campaigned for the SLFP candidate in Kesbewa and who had ended up a poor third. This is what the Sun reported about Mr. Kalugalle's views on the by-elections. "United Front circles, however, do not believe that the by-election results indicated a serious

erosion of the Government's support in the country.

"On the contrary, the United Front has achieved a significant political victory", said the Minister of Shipping and Tourism, Mr. P. B. G. Kalugalle, who managed the SLFP campaign at Kesbewa. He pointed out that both at Kesbewa as well as in the other electorates, the UNP had not been able to make significant gains as compared with the votes the UNP candidates received at the last general election.

"The Minister said: 'The gains are minimal and do not indicate that the people had turned against the SLFP despite the fact that the Government is at the highest of its unpopularity. All the four results point to the fact that the anti-UNP vote is intact.

"Mr. Kalugalle was certain that the SLFP reverses were a temporary setback and that the Government's electoral fortunes would turn around with the implementation of the Five-Year Plan and the economic and social reforms. Mr. Kalugalle also said that the UNP would never have won Kesbewa but for the division of the UF vote between Mr. Dixon Perera, the SLFP candidate, and Mr. Subash Chandrasiri, the Independent candidate who came second.

"It was more a home-and-home battle because they were the two people

who organised the electorate before they split-up. Although the UNP profited from this division of the UF vote, it is still a political victory for the Government as we were not only able to maintain our position but increase the anti-UNP vote."

It would be extremely difficult for anyone to take Mr. Kalugalle seriously. He is not noted either for political perspicacity or with a capacity to analyse political events. The less said about Mr. Kalugalle's effusions on the elections the better and he has already covered his retreat by proclaiming that he had been asked to take charge of the election campaign just three weeks ago, though newspaper clippings would indicate that Mr. Kalugalle's campaign speeches showed that he was far more involved with the SLFP candidate Dixon Perera than he now seeks to make out.

WHEN OTHER SLFP leaders and LSSP and CP leaders make comments on the elections, it would be time enough to examine them in this column.

For the moment, it would suffice to point out that the by-elections results is a big setback for the Government within the context of parliamentary elections where a swing of two to three percent of the electorate can make and unmake governments. The swing in the recent mini-general election is big enough to cause a landslide in a real general elections.

The defeat of the Government in the by-elections brings to a premature end the euphoria which has from May 1970 pervaded political life in this island. This can well be the beginning of the end of the Bandaranaike era and saga. The coming weeks and months will show whether the Government is able to recapture some of the lost euphoria and thus sustain the Bandaranaike personality cult for a little time longer.

In the meantime, the Government faces serious problems. It has, above all, to balance the next budget and in the process balance yet-unbalanced budget adopted at the end of 1971. Hard, stern and unpopular measures entailing sacrifice and suffering have to be taken to balance Sri Lanka's budget. Unfortunately the, election defeats make it more difficult for the government to adopt such measures. Election victories would have given the Government a kind of Dutch courage to impose measures which must be adopted to save the Budget and the economy. The defeat in the by-elections has thrown the Government into a greater quandary than ever.

The election results will also cause dissension and differences to sprout profusely within the UF as between the different parties and also various political groups within these parties. It is as yet premature to forecast as to what will happen, but there

are indications that splitting, on horizontal and vertical lines, have already begun to take place (even before the by-elections) within each of the three parties in the UF. This process is bound to be accentuated in the coming months, and the major causality in this phase of history will be the CP's traditionally monolithic apparatus which is expected to crack up soon. There are similar trends within all parties and it would be interesting to see just what happens in the different groups with the results of the four by-elections before their eyes.

FOR THE COVER this week we have a representation of the UF euphoria which is no more. Unless the Government pulls itself by its boot-strings fast enough, history will soon record the beginning of the end of an era which began in 1956, and which by all accounts has already outlived its usefulness because it does not seem capable of solving any of the basic problems facing the country. Mr. Kalugalle says that the implementation of the Five-Year Plan would bring popularity back to the Government. He does not seem to know what he is talking about. Already one year of the five has irrevocably gone without anything being done. The Plan has not yet lifted itself into orbit. And, at the moment, there seems to be little prospect of the Five Year Plan getting under way.

Prime Minister's Statements—on the George Town Meeting and the Swiss Bank Story.

On the George Town Meeting

The following is the Prime Minister Mrs. Bandaranaike's statement on the Georgetown conference in the State Assembly on September 5.

AT THE RECENT conference of Foreign Ministers of non-aligned countries held at Georgetown, Guyana, one of the specific items on the agenda was the choice of a venue for the next non-aligned summit meeting of the heads of states and governments to be held in 1973.

Two preparatory conferences had been held prior to the Foreign Minister's meeting at ambassadorial level first at Guyana itself, in February 1972 and at Kuala Lumpur, in May '72. It is clear the venue of the summit meeting was an open issue which had to be decided at the Foreign Minister's conference, in Guyana, and it was in this belief that the Ceylon delegation attended the conference.

As between Algeria and Sri Lanka as a venue for the next summit meeting, the case for Sri Lanka is

overwhelming if, considered on any objective criteria or grounds of principle. Previous summits have been held in Belgrade (1961), 7, Cairo (1964) and Lusaka (1970). With two consecutive summits held in Africa and one in Eastern Europe, the case for holding a next summit in Asia was a compelling one. Indeed this was not my personal view alone. It has been confirmed and endorsed in writing by a number of heads of states of leading non-aligned countries.

Sri Lanka had been one of the founders of the non-aligned movement dating back to the time of the late Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike. I personally have been privileged to be one of the few leaders of non-aligned countries who participated and played a not insignificant role at every non-aligned meeting.

The present world situation, with a build-up of naval strengths of great powers in the Indian Ocean and the need to declare the Indian Ocean and

indeed the whole of South East Asia "Peace Zones" are circumstances that strongly point to the need for the strengthening of non-alignment in the region of southern Asia. And one means of achieving this is by having the next non-aligned summit in an Asian country and thereby focussing attention on these areas. Sri Lanka with its undisputed record of consistent adherence to the principles of non-alignment would from that point of view be an ideal location.

THE ACTION of the Arab League and the organisation of Arab countries in deciding within their organisations on a question such as a summit meeting, which includes all non-aligned countries raises an important question of principle. While it is true that the members of the Arab League and the OAU are non-aligned states, I feel strongly that no decision taken by these organisations should forestall or anticipate decisions which the non-aligned body as a whole including countries from all the regions represented within the movement, should logically make in their own comprehensive organisation.

At the Georgetown meeting it became very clear that some of the countries who have expressed support for Sri Lanka as a venue for the next non-aligned summit had gone back on their assurances and were expressing support for Algeria by virtue of commitments said to have been made at earlier Arab League and OAU meetings. For a non-aligned movement this is an unfortunate trend in the direction of alignments and prior commitments.

I am deeply disappointed also that some countries with whom we had been associated since the earliest days of non-alignment had shown a disregard for principles in this case. This is the more painful in a movement based on commitment to principles. I was sorry to find that all members of the Arab League and the OAU felt that their commitments to these organisations outweighed the merits in Sri Lanka's case upon objective criteria. I am grateful to positive support received from India, Nepal, Burma, Malaysia and Laos, all of whom pledged their support of our position, that it was Asia's turn to host the next summit conference.

OUR DELEGATION at Georgetown debated the issue at the plenary sessions and asked for an open vote and for an amendment of standing orders, if necessary, for a vote to be taken. At the debate, the Algerian Foreign Minister also argued his case, relying strongly on Arab League and OAU commitments.

The Chairman (Guyana's Foreign Minister) suspended the debate to seek the views of every individual delegation on the summit venue question. Upon resumption the Chairman announced that he had ascertained the views of the delegation that there was a consensus for Algeria, and he was not prepared to put it to a vote in spite of the fact that Sri Lanka asked for a vote to which Algeria agreed.

Therefore, we are still unable to understand why a vote was refused. Our delegates made a short statement stating that we regretted the decision and received it with deep disappointment as the issue had really been decided upon prior commitments to the OAU and the Arab League and not on the merits which were overwhelmingly in Asia's favour. If the issues were

already decided there was really no purpose in having the question raised on the agenda as though it were to be decided at the conference. We expressed our dismay at the manner in which the majority decision disregarding considerations of equitable geographical distribution were accepted as consensus, though this really represented the views of the African and Arab blocs. In this view, we were not alone because in the concluding public plenary sessions the foreign ministers of Ethiopia echoed our views by expressing open dissatisfaction at the manner in which consensus had been reached at the conference.

AN INTERPRETATION of consensus in this manner we fear, would mean that we shall never have a summit in Asia because the nations organised within the Arab League and the OAU could at all times use their plurality to this end and shut out effectively the Asian Continent where combined populations comprise the overwhelming majority of the peoples represented within the non-aligned movement. I would like to add here also that the majority of Asian countries in the nonaligned movement are the most senior and founder members like Sri Lanka, India, Burma, Nepal, and Indonesia.

On The Swiss Banks Story

The following is the statement of the Prime Minister in the Assembly on September 21 on the Swiss Banks Story. This is the full text:

I would like to inform Members of the National State Assembly of the investigations that I have caused to be made in regard to reports published in the *Weekend* and the *Riviresa* of 3rd September, 1972, under the name of M. W. Gamage of Independent Newspapers, Ltd. In these reports it was alleged that 1,432 Ceylonese from the time of the second world war, including topnotch politicians, public servants, corporation bosses, gem racketeers, bookies and big business people have top secret accounts in Swiss banks in violation of our exchange control laws. These reports further allege that some of the monies accumulated are pay-offs for political assistance by foreign contractors and organisations to politicians which would, in effect, constitute bribery.

On more than one occasion in this House, Members of Parliament and of the National State Assembly have expressed themselves strongly in their determination to eradicate the evils of exchange control

frauds and bribery in all walks of life, and, particularly among persons wielding political influence. I therefore thought it proper to cause close investigations of these facts to be made by the Exchange Control authorities, by the C.I.D. and the Bribery Commissioner.

FOR A LONG TIME the Government of Sri Lanka has been making efforts to obtain from Swiss and other foreign banks disclosure of the particulars of foreign account holders in order that action could be taken against them under our exchange control and bribery laws. In 1968 the then government canvassed support for a resolution at the International Police Conference for the disclosure of such information and the resolution was in fact passed at the conference, but Swiss banks under their law and policy have nevertheless refused such information to the Ceylon Govt. These articles allege that there had been a change in the policy of Swiss banks whereby this information could now be disclosed and that the newspaper had learnt of the contents of these articles through that change.

On 6th September 1972. I caused inquiries to be made from Interpol, Switzerland, by cable asking for confirmation in regard to the only objective fact in these articles capable of independent verification. That was as to whether it was true that there has been any change in the law or the policy hitherto followed by Swiss banks and whether they had now relaxed their rules so as to enable disclosures of particulars of their account-holders and their holdings in cases relating to fraud or currency offences committed by foreign nationals.

On 7th September, 1972, a reply was received that unless there is a specific treaty providing for the application of the Swiss Criminal Procedure Code, the Banks would not disclose information of transactions between themselves and their account-holders even at the request of a foreign State.

This is exactly the same law and practice that has hitherto been applied and there is no change whatsoever according to the meaning of this reply.

The Controller of Exchange as he is lawfully authorised to do on behalf of the Central Bank of Ceylon under Section 3 of

the Exchange Control Act Cap. 43, served notices upon the Editor of the "Weekend" and Mr. Gamage in terms of Section 39 of the Act, on 7th September, 1972, calling upon them to furnish all information in their possession or control in regard to the 1,432 accounts in Swiss Banks referred to in the articles.

IN RESPONSE to these notices the Editor and Mr. Gamage were questioned on 9th September 1972, by the Controller of Exchange. Mr. Rex de Silva, the Editor, stated that the story in the newspapers was written by a staff reporter, Mr. M. W. Gamage, for the Sinhalese newspaper "Riviresa". It was translated at their Newsdesk and also published in the "Weekend" as a story from Mr. Gamage.

He stated that usually before stories of this nature are published, he, as Editor would satisfy himself that the stories were reliable. But, he says, he does not specifically go through details of questioning reporters of Mr. Gamage's standing — Mr. Gamage having been a reporter for about 8 years. Generally, he says, he accepts the facts as correct.

If the story had come from a free-lance journalist as distinct from a staff

reporter, then he would have gone into it carefully. In the case of this story he says he asked Mr. Gamage whether the facts were correct and on Mr. Gamage's assurance that the facts were correct, he gave orders to publish it. He said he had no other information to give nor had he any documents in his possession to establish any of the facts in the article.

Mr. Rex de Silva was also questioned by the C.I.D. on my instructions, and in his statement to the C.I.D. he stated this: "when I saw the original report of Mr. Gamage written in Sinhalese, I felt that it was not colourful enough to go as the lead story in the 'Weekend'. Hence, when I instructed Mr. Devanarayana to prepare the translation of the English publication. I asked him to pad up the story on the background of Swiss Banks.

Mr. Gamage on being questioned by the Controller of Exchange on 9th September, 1972, stated that he admitted the authorship of the report in question in the Sinhala paper and that he has no personal knowledge of the names of any of the 1,432 Ceylonese said to have Bank accounts in Switzer-

land and that all the information in this report was based upon an oral statement made to him by an individual whose name or identity he refused to disclose but in whom he claims he had confidence.

He was not prepared to disclose this information in order to bring to book any of the 1,432 persons alleged to have violated the law. Neither a sense of duty or patriotism nor his legal obligation under the provisions of Sections 39 and 51 of the Exchange Control Act could persuade him to change his mind. He even took time to consult legal opinion.

ON BEING QUESTIONED by the CID, Mr. Gamage denied that his informant told him anything about pay-offs for political assistance in gaining contracts or that any of the persons allegedly on this highly confidential list were persons who were involved in foreign exchange frauds. He suggests that this has been added by the translator. The translator, Mr. Devanarayana, admits that this was added by him to lend colour to the story.

Newspapers have a great deal to say nowadays about the freedom of the Press and their sacred duties in placing facts before

the public. In fact, the purpose of these articles was to initiate a genuinely useful investigation. It is surely necessary that subject to proper safeguards, the Exchange Control authorities at least should be given all the available information? A newspaper reporter, who, under cover of claiming to protect an informant, who may or may not exist, declines to disclose information of the commission of serious crimes must surely realise that the only conclusion anyone can draw from his conduct is that the entire story could well be a fabrication.

Newspapers behaving in this manner, talk of the freedom of the Press, when what they really want is license to publish false stories of a sensational character without responsibility. It would be no different if a newspaper reporter says of an unsolved murder, "I knew the man who did it, but I am not prepared to disclose who he is or from whom I received information of the commission of the crime." Such a licence is not available to any newspaper or to any journalist in any part of the world.

Under the law, no further investigation is possible, as Mr. Gamage either

will not give information or has no information to give. The Swiss authorities deny that there has been any change in their law or their policy and the only person who claims to have the information declines to assist the authorities in their investigation.

All that may be possible is to prosecute Mr. Gamage and those others in Independent Newspapers Ltd. responsible for the publi-

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...cation, for failing to cooperate with the authorities in their investigations. I shall therefore be sending up the papers to the Attorney General.

I do not know whether it is a coincidence that a similar article appeared in a Tamil weekly newspaper called the "Mithran Varamalar" the author of which was Mr. S. Thillainathan the chief reporter of Express Newspapers (Ceylon) Ltd.

On being similarly questioned by the Exchange Control authorities and the CID he took up much the same position as Mr. Gamage of the Independent Newspapers Ltd. He goes further than Mr. Gamage in saying that his informant gave him some of the names of the 1,432 persons but that he is not prepared to disclose even those names on the advice of his lawyers.

Mr. Thillainathan's article contains a further point, that the Ceylon Government has been informed by Interpol of the 1,432 Swiss Bank accounts. This I can tell you, is totally false. Mr. Thillainathan's conduct also will be similarly reported to the attorney-general.

DDT Controversy: Positive Harm From Unchecked Use

By JEAN DORST

AS A RESULT of the progress achieved in organic chemistry for the past 30 years man has had access to a long series of very effective, cheap and abundant synthetic chemicals. The standard DDT, perfected and launched on the market in 1942, was the precursor yet, it is still the most used of a constantly growing list of pesticides.

Beyond all doubt, man is deeply indebted to pesticides because these synthetic products enable him to counter dangerous crop parasites and minimize the damage they do—a performance highly welcome at a time when nations are striving to increase their supplies of available foodstuffs. They have also made it possible to fight the carriers of certain endemic diseases, notably malaria.

The use of pesticides, however, has been subject to innumerable malpractices. Man thought that he could scatter them around without restraint and wipe out all the depreddators once and for all at no risk.

But he also knew that he was dealing with poisons which are sometimes very strong whose secondary effects could not be predicted. The repercussions of these toxic substances are now being felt throughout all nature, from the soil to man himself. Indeed the abuse of pesticides is

actually poisoning the planet with consequences which only now are we beginning to measure.

The quantities produced and put to use are staggering. In the United States alone, the annual output of DDT has averaged 145 million pounds, or more than the majority of all other organochlorinated insecticides put together. This abuse has given rise to the serious imbalance which the ecologists are now deploring and some effects of which any ecologist can determine.

INSECTICIDES are generally divided into two categories, depending upon their chemical stability in the areas where they are disseminated.

Those of the first category, like the organophosphates and carbamides, decompose rapidly into non-toxic forms. This, of course, does not mean that they are innocuous; some of them are highly toxic and therefore able to inflict serious damage at the moment they are used. In addition, it has recently been discovered that their active duration can be longer than hitherto believed. Parathion, among others, remains intact for a great length of time without losing its potency.

The insecticides in the second category are much more resistant to the agents

End Of The DDT Era

of decomposition. Their life span, therefore, is considerably longer. Thus, they accumulate, wherever they are applied, or else they are scattered far and wide by flowing water and the wind, in the latter case, their deleterious effects are not offset by any beneficial ones.

These long-lasting insecticides are chiefly the organochlorinates including DDT, aldrin, dieldrin, endrin, heptachlor and toxaphene, to cite only the best known. DDT is still by far the most commonly used. The mass of DDT disseminated over the planet, where it has accumulated, is estimated at approximately 1.3 million tons. Indeed, DDT is the most incriminated of all substances in the much-decried accidents of nature, even though it is not, dose for dose, especially toxic by comparison with others.

The organochlorine compounds exert multiple effects on the animals which come into contact with them. Their action is never selective and their toxic properties crop up in many species other than those meant to be eliminated or held in check, especially the vertebrates, including man. Their action is all the more serious in that they are likely to become concentrated all along the feeding chain so that the victim need not necessarily even ingest the pesticide or come into direct contact with it. It can be absorbed into the organism of a living creature and become concentrated there without

harm because of that creature's strong, specific resistance. Thus it can become repeatedly concentrated in each link of the feeding chain before passing into the body of a superpredator, which it poisons. Numbers of such cases are known, mainly among birds. Analysis of the soil, water, and air therefore only yields indications on the degree of pollution from insecticides because very low levels of contamination can be toxic as a result of this important process of bioaccumulation during which the substances can attain concentrations billions or millions of times greater than those existing in the surrounding environment.

THE LONG-LASTING insecticides therefore produce grave consequences to individuals and populations. They are also capable of disrupting equilibriums within biological systems. Since they are nonselective, they destroy all insects, those we want to destroy as well as the harmless and the useful species. The entomophagous insects, including many species which attack crop predators, are often more susceptible than the phytophagous insects we wish exterminate.

Furthermore, by virtue of universal ecological law, in the aftermath of a treatment when all the arthropod populations have been decimated by an insecticide, the phytophagous predators regenerate faster than the predator populations which feed on them. Finally the harmful

insects once again become numerous and destructive well before the natural predators which live on them.

In the long run, the battle against phytophagous insects with strong regenerative powers through the use of long-lasting insecticides is illusory, and requires frequent treatment to maintain the predators at a tolerable level. Thus, the struggle winds up by throwing biological systems off balance and aggravating the very disturbances man tries to cure. Massive and repeated applications of insecticides thus acquire a selective value on the ecosystem scale, and favour those man wants to exterminate. Their resurgence is often worse than the previous attacks. Cases of this sort have been reported many times, notably among insects of the cochineal family.

THESE VARIOUS repercussions resulting from massive uses of insecticides are alarming to more and more people who are worried by the increasing contamination of habitats by deliberately disseminated chemical products. There is no doubt that they produce secondary effects harmful to human beings. Certainly we are accumulating insecticides in our tissues, just as the other species are doing.

Five parts per million DDT concentrations have been measured in American children with a higher percentage in adults. Although with some exceptions the contents of organochlorine re-

residues in foods may seem lower than the permissible norms, according to analyses made in Sweden, a woman's milk sometimes contains a dose 70 per cent higher than the maximum floor and from two to six times as much as in the United States.

It is difficult to examine the pathological aspects in man, except in cases of accidental poisoning, because we can proceed only by analogy with the results of experiments on laboratory mammals. We know that organochlorine substances can influence behaviour by affecting the nervous systems and they can modify many metabolic functions by paralyzing the hepatic enzymes. Even more serious is the cancer rate in subjects exposed to organochlorine producers especially DDT.

The carcinogen reactions they produce in animals lead us to believe that humans could be similarly affected. Therefore the products constitute a potential danger to mankind, Tumours of the liver, the lungs and the lymphatic apparatus have been induced in animals by experimental contamination with relatively mild doses of DDT. It appears, moreover that they can also behave as mutagenic factors. The risks of serious illnesses to man resulting from the constant and repeated action of these substances are therefore very real.

We should observe the greatest prudence in using

pesticides precisely because of our ignorance of their long-term effects and because we cannot draw definite conclusions from experiments carried out on a reduced scale. The use of any new product should be preceded by a series of tests designed to confirm its harmlessness and to establish methods of applications which will restrict its secondary effects to a minimum.

Longterm effects, at any rate, cannot be measured during experiments limited in time or in space. Methods of chemical warfare should be applied with infinite precautions since their potential harmfulness can only come to the fore after a considerable length of time. This applies especially to tropical regions where pesticides, sometimes, useful can be extremely pernicious because of ecological conditions. It is regrettable that countries which produce insecticides should develop a flourishing trade by exporting to the developing countries products considered dangerous and therefore banned at home.

Certainly the great era of synthetic pesticides has definitely come to an end after 20 years during which these products have been passed off as panaceas.

This does not mean, however, that the use of insecticides will be completely abandoned; it is

now a factor of agricultural practice, integrated into a whole system of crop techniques and constituting an artificial means of controlling environments which are themselves artificial. Even if we wanted to ban insecticides entirely, in practice it would be impossible to do so since as yet we have no simple, cheap substitute for them.

In a certain sense this applies even to DDT, which despite its many drawbacks and although it has been banned in many countries, for the present appears irreplaceable in combating certain depredationers and checking the carriers of various tropical diseases. We can only hope to curb the use of DDT and similar substances where no other means can yield the same results

—CERES, (FAO Review)

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WHO wages losing war against Malaria

DESPITE increasing efforts by individual governments and the World Health Organisation, it has not been possible so far to eliminate the menace of malaria in South-east Asia.

This is stated in the 24th annual report of WHO regional director for South-East Asia which was made available recently. The report says the withdrawal of financial aid by most governmental agencies in the fight against malaria will certainly have harmful effects on programmes in the region.

India reported one million cases last year—the war of December 1971 and late deliveries of DDT played a part. The malaria epidemic in Sri Lanka, which commenced in 1967, is showing some decline. The figures now show a plateau of about 10,000 to 14,000 cases a month—which is bad enough.

The problem of urban malaria is receiving WHO's attention and the technique of ultra-low volume spraying now being used in Thailand will be tried out in Jodhpur this year in a joint Government - WHO experiment.

THE REPORT adds Nepal has shown considerable progress in combating malaria and 80 per cent of the country is in the consolidation phase. But it is unfortunate, points out WHO regional director for South-East Asia, V. T. H. Gunaratne, that financial aid from bilateral sources has ceased at this stage.

The report regrets it has also not been possible so far to eradicate from this region smallpox, cholera, polio and tuberculosis. Basic obstacles to better health in South-East Asia such as unsafe drinking water supplies still remain.

However, UNICEF-WHO assisted and other internationally aided rural water supply programmes continued in India, Indonesia, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand during the period under review (1 July, 30 June, 1971-72).

FOR INSTANCE, UNDP-assisted public water supply project in the south-west coastal area of Sri Lanka was completed in July 1971. Similarly, another project—the Greater Kathmandu water scheme—started in January 1971 has made excellent progress with full support from UNDP.

The controversy concerning DDT has resulted in a general ban on its use for agriculture, although it has been retained for public health measures. WHO hopes that DDT manufacturing companies will continue their supplies over the next 10 years. The South-East Asia region consumes 51 per cent of the total global requirements.

CHRONICLE

Sept. 16 - Sept. 25

This instalment of Chronicle had been held over in our issue of September 30. We use it in this issue. Our issue of October 10 carried the chronicle from September 26 - October 4.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 16: On the 16th day of the bank strike, supporters of the UF government among the bank clerks on strike

led by the LSSP faction, called for a return to work on Monday, September 18 and issued a statement characterising the strike as politically motivated to overthrow the government. At a general meeting the Central Bank Clerk's Union threw out the old pro-UF leadership and elected a new "hardline" leadership, but put off any decision on a strike for a later date. Mr. John Clunies-Ross handed over the Indian Ocean Cocos Islands to the Australian government thus ending the personal "non-feudal" rule of the Ross family. The United States held up a 3 million dollar loan to Uganda, whilst Britain announced that it

would shortly begin the airlift of the Asians being expelled by President Amin. India and Pakistan failed to meet the self-imposed deadline for the withdrawal of troops because the line of actual control in Kashmir had still not been delineated.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 17: In the early hours of the morning, Dr. N. M. Perera, Minister of Finance, left for London to attend the Commonwealth Finance Minister's Conference and thereafter to go to Washington to attend the meeting of the IMF and the World Bank. At a press conference yesterday he had stressed that he was reluctant to go—with the bank strike still continuing, but he felt that it was important that he should go to put Ceylon's case before the IMF and the World Bank. At the DWC Annual Convention yesterday at Badulla, the PM Mrs. Bandaranaike, stated that it was the Government's intention to give some relief to the plantation workers taking into consideration the overall economic crisis the country was now facing. Israel continued its fierce attacks on guerilla camps in Lebanon yesterday also. The Lebanese government has lodged a protest against these attacks with the Security Council whilst Libya promised to intervene in the fighting to aid Lebanon.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 18: The Staff Officers Association of the Bank of Ceylon yesterday decided to "act as mediator" between the striking bank employees and the Government to end the 18-day old bank strike. The Government, however, was adamant that it would not negotiate while the strike was on. At an election meeting, Mr. Dudley Senanayake asserted that the free measure of rice had saved the country from starvation. It was reported that the Government had decided that uniform conditions of work and privileges would be applied shortly to all employees whether they are in the private, public or corporation sectors. Whilst Israel forces struck deep into Lebanon, the Lebanese

Army issued an ultimatum to Palestinian guerillas to evacuate South Lebanon. Uganda yesterday declared that troops from Tanzania had invaded her territory and had occupied three towns on the border. Tanzania denied this charge, and said that none of her troops were involved in the fighting.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 19: As the strike-bound banks began an extended service yesterday, the Union claimed that only 5 strikers had returned to work as a result of the LSSP faction's call. The North Korean Mission which came to Sri Lanka about a week ago had left hurriedly at the end of last week without achieving anything: the Prime Minister did not meet them. Israel withdraw all its forces from Lebanon. President Idid Amin claimed that the invasion of Uganda territory was a British plan to restore Dr. Milton Obote. Uganda claimed that it had retaken all towns which had been captured by the invaders.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 20: The bank strike reached the 20th day without any prospect of a settlement in sight. There was a caste clash in Karaiyoor (now renamed Gurunagar) between fishing caste people and one group of Harijans—and in the incidents yesterday one had been killed and 17 injured. The Sun reported that the IMF will not make available to Ceylon SDR drawings (of about Rs. 60 to 80 millions) next January. The Government was taking all precautions to ensure that law and order was maintained during the hartal in the North on October 2 and the peaceful satyagraha thereafter. The Government had made a nett profit of over Rs. 119 million by the sale of arrack. A letter-bomb posted in Amsterdam killed an Israeli diplomat in London. Ugandan planes had yesterday bombed Tanzanian town after pushing the "invaders" to the border. The 27th General Assembly of the UN opened in New York yesterday.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 21: On the 21st day of the bank strike, the Government was still adamant about its stand "no negotiations with the strike on". Four GCSU branches issued statements in support of the strike and the Central Committee of the CP also issued a statement urging the Government to take positive steps to settle the strike without endeavouring to break the strike. There was more violence in the North following the caste clashes: handbombs were used in plenty. China delivered a cargo ship to Sri Lanka in Shangahi under a loan agreement. More letter bombs addressed to Israeli diplomats were discovered in postoffices in London, Paris and other places. Sudan grounded five Libyan planes carrying troops and arms to Uganda when they had come over her air space.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 22: Maha Poya holiday. The bank strike entered the 22nd day with no signs of a settlement and with more trade unions expressing sympathy for the strikers. A UN sponsored Export Promotion Bureau has been set up with Dr. Saevali Ratwatte, the PM's brother who recently retired from Levers, as its first Director-General. The caste clash which had erupted into violence in Karziyoor in Jaffna has spread to another parts of the peninsula with reports of hand-bomb throwing, assaults and arson from different places. Uganda's Chief Justice, Mr. Benedicte Kiwanuka, was arrested by the Uganda Military Police yesterday. More letter bombs addressed to Israeli establishments were discovered in the post at various centres.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 23: The bank strike was in its 23rd day without any hopes of a settlement. Seventy more items—among them water filters, spectacle frames, ballpoint refills, zip fasteners, flashlight batteries, vacuum flask, sandpaper, vanilla and banana essences—were placed on the banned list for imports

in pursuance of the government policy of import substitution. A new State Corporation under the name *Udarata Co-operative Estates Development Board* has been set up to promote agricultural and livestock production in the Kandyan areas. Martial law came into force in Manila from yesterday. Reports stated that Uganda and Tanzania had edged closer to war as OAU representatives had begun talks in Kampala with President Amin. Nineteen members of the Bangla Desh Constituent Assembly were expelled from membership of the ruling Awami League for corruption, nepotism and misuse of power.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 24: The bank strike was now in its 24th day: the People's Bank Officer's Association has appealed to the Prime Minister to intervene and evolve a formula acceptable to all concerned to end the bank strike. In the Philippines, President Marcos assumed special powers under Martial Law to cover the whole country to prevent what he called an illegal attempt to overthrow the government by violence and subversion. Fierce fighting was reported on the Uganda Tanzanian border with Libyan troops fighting alongside President Amin's forces against Ugandan rebels (mainly supporters of Dr. Obote) based in Tanzania.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 25: The 25th day of the bank strike and Government sources had indicated that probationers who had gone on strike would never be taken back. Three million students and teachers were expected to perform shramadana work to commemorate the death anniversary of SWRD Bandaranaike which was to be commemorated on an island-wide scale tomorrow. The Japanese Prime Minister was due to arrive in Peking today on a historic visit in a bid to normalise relations between the countries which has been virtually at war from 1894. It was reported that Ugandan-Libyan forces had pushed into Tanzania where fierce fighting was said to be under way.

U S Elections: Big Carnival of American Democracy

By PROBhat ROY

THE AMERICAN Presidential Election takes place once in every four years. This fall, on 7 November, the American people will go to the polls for the 47th time in their history. At the apex of the constitutional capitalist Democracy is the U.S. Presidency. Down below, walk the common electors through the streets of innumerable cities and towns in the vast continental-type country. In between are the politicians, professionals, industrialists, business executives, mass-media men and a host of other agents of the American Establishment.

Inasmuch as the office of the American President is engrossing and all-powerful the people naturally are exercised about it, even though not always very engagingly. However, this year, perhaps in more than twenty years, there is a certain new quality to the Presidential election. Consequently it has, evoked considerable interest—even apprehension and anxiety—in many capitals of the world, besides involving a good many American people themselves. While the Big Carnival of American Democracy may be a ritual and even fun for a lot of people, it is a deadly serious business for those who count in America.

And America, being the world's self-appointed gendarme today, the spectacle of the Presidential election deserves study.

For the benefit of those who still wonder how American Democracy functions, it needs to be explained that the Founding Fathers, in order to safeguard the unity and inviolability of the nation, enacted the U.S. Constitution in 1787 vesting virtually all power in the President. The President is considered not only the Chief of State, but also the Chief Executive, Commander-in-Chief, Chief Diplomat, the Leader of Legislature and, of course, the Leader of the Party. With such immense and awful power concentrated in one post, the political prize for the winner, consequently is enormous. No wonder the battle for the Presidency sometimes becomes bitter and frenzied.

THERE ARE four distinct phases in the presidential election. The first two concern who shall secure the party nomination. The last two represent the confrontation and the contest between the contending candidates. The election primaries and the party conventions determine who shall be the candidates and the campaign and the exercise of the franchise will signal the result of the contest. The first sequence is a kind of barometer of America's

political climate. The second process is a gradual crystallisation of people's temper and mood.

The method of selecting the President is shaped by the federal nature of the U.S. The U.S. is a conglomerate of fifty separate states with certain autonomous powers. Contrary to popular belief, the people do not directly vote for one Presidential candidate or the other. An electoral college system has been devised as a compromise between the supporters and opponents of direct election by the people. Each state and the District of Columbia—which is the seat of federal government—has a "College of Electors" which in turn, casts its votes for the President. These are called electoral votes. The total number of electoral votes this year is 538. This is based on the aggregate number of seats in both the Houses of Legislature—the Senate and the House of Representatives—of each state. The total number of seats for all states in the Senate is 100 (two for each state, big or small, which is fixed) and the total number of seats for all states and Washington D.C. in the House of Representatives is 438 (the proportionate number for each state is based on the population-count in the census which is variable).

Thus California which is the most populous state for example, has 45 electoral votes, New York 41, Pennsylvania 27, Illinois 26, Texas 26, Ohio

U.S. Elections

25, Michigan 21 and so on. While the small states have only a few votes, as Maine 4, Utah 4, Delaware 3, Nevada 3, Washington D.C. has only 3. A Presidential candidate who secures the most popular votes in a state gets all of its electoral votes. The winner is the candidate with a simple majority—270—of the total number of 538 electoral votes. However, the winning slate of electors in each state, meeting at its capital on 18 December, cast the electoral votes that make the election official.

BESIDES the President and the Vice-President, there are other coveted jobs for the American politicians. In this year's elections, all the 438 members of the U.S. House of Representatives and 33 of the 100 Senators will be elected. In addition, 13 of the 50 state Governors and thousands of state, country, city and other local officials will be chosen. Unlike the Presidency, the candidates for these offices and posts are directly elected by the people. While most candidates for Congressional state or local offices are nominated directly by the people in the state primary elections, the Presidential candidates are selected at the National Conventions of the two major parties.

American politics being, non-ideological in the strict literal sense, often blurs the truth about people, issues, ideas and forces that motivate and ultimately shape

the course of American polity. Moreover, the mass communication culture has created a wonderful world of make-believe for the place.

Recent events, however, have sufficiently jolted them to force attention not only on such matters as business corruption but also on the more fundamental problems of economy, foreign policy and generally the health of the American Nation. This awareness has brought the people face to face with their Government—the Elite who rule the country or those who aspire to rule—sometimes against the very wishes of the people themselves.

WHO ARE these men? What interests do they serve? Where do they get money from for campaigning? If they get elected, will they bring peace or war and more wider and bitter war? Though pluralistic in concept, American Presidential politics has been made to appear bi-polar. This bi-polarism subsumes all divergencies and differences evidenced in the attitude and behaviour of the American people.

The Democratic Party was organised during George Washington's second administration (1792-96). The Republican Party was established in 1834, the first Republican President being Abraham Lincoln who was elected in 1860.

It is commonly assumed that the Republican Party is the party of big businessmen, a basically con-

servative party. On the other hand, the Democratic Party is thought to be a party of liberalism a party of change. No thing can be further from the truth. Even a superficial reading of American political history will establish the fact that neither party—despite apparent differences—really wants to bring about a change in property relations in society. However much the two parties differ on the concept and the nature of change in the policies and programmes of their governments they basically agree on the need for the preservation of the American system of capitalist production and distribution—or what they fondly call the American Way of Life.

Who is Mr. Richard Nixon? Whom does he represent? He is a Californian, a Congressman, a Senator, a Vice-President, an anti-Communist demagogue, a partner in a law-firm in New York and above all a conservative republican. Then, suddenly one day, he is the President of the U.S. How could "Tricky Dick", the name given to him by his own countrymen, occupy the highest public office in US in the first place?

In 1968, the Republican Party spent 29.6 million dollars through 46 different committees to elect Mr. Nixon. Were the Democrats lagging much behind? The Democratic Party burnt another 12.6 million dollars through 67 different groups in their effort to elect Mr. Humphrey.

ACCORDING to the estimate by the Citizens' Research Foundation in Princeton, New Jersey, the cost of all elections in 1952 was approximately 140 million dollars. In 1968 it was 300 million dollars. On a rough estimate, the campaign expenses for a Senator are of the order 5,00,000 dollars to two million; while that of a Representative in the House may be 5,000 to 1,00,000 dollars. Who provides all this money? The vast productive apparatus of American capitalism of course is also a money-making machine. The Big Corporations are the big contributors.

And the American rich are an ingenious and imaginative people. They have now developed the tradition of the Fund-Raising-Dinner, where friends can gather and offer a helping hand to kith-and-kin. In 1968, the Republicans, for instance, had a 1,000 dollars a plate dinner with 1,500 persons attending. The Democrats, likewise, got together with tickets of 500 dollars per plate. Herbert Alexander, the Director of the Citizens' Research Foundation, found that 46 of the richest men in the US contributed 1.5 million dollars to the Presidential campaign. The officials of the 56 Corporations with the largest contracts for space, nuclear and defence projects gave another 1.2 million dollars. The big Nixon contribution came from oil, insurance, mutual funds, and pharmaceutical industries. The largest contributions

for Humphrey were from editors, advertising executives, labour unions and Hollywood celebrities. The idea that the money comes mainly from the "little people" rather than from the "fat-cat" is nothing but naive ignorance.

At the time of the Republican Convention in 1968 Miami Beach put up 6,50,000 dollars in cash and another 1,50,000 dollars in services. And Chicago kept its name by giving 9,00,000 dollars in cash and services for the Democratic Convention. What all this means can be understood when one remembers that to be selected as a convention-city, the city must provide a hall with a seating capacity of at least 14,000 with more than 1,000 box seats; 1,00,000 square feet of press, radio and television workers. Parking space for 1,000 cars and facilities to provide at least one meal a day for 10,000 to 15,000 persons must be arranged for. The city must also arrange more than 10,000 first class hotel-rooms.

THUS the king-pin to Presidential campaigning is big money—"not to buy votes", as they say, but buy television time, jet travel and other commodities that ate essential in the effort "to win votes".

The style of winning votes is no less impressive. Nixon flew 51,000 miles by jet plane. His advertising agency handled 20.5

million buttons embossed with pictures, nine million bumper strips, half a million balloons, almost as many posters and placards, 28,000 straw hats and 12,000 paper dresses to be worn by pretty girls in Nixon parades. Madison Avenue teaches the candidates how to pause at the right time or how to strike the right pose. Experts apply the proper make-up to present the best appearances to television viewers.

One can be sure that much of the same comic-opera shows will be on this year also. Behind the great show lies the substances—the alluring title of the President of the US. To be successful in America, one must have the ability and the resources to brainwash and ultimately to sway the people to one's side, no matter how much some may dislike or abhor such a method.

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Many Problems Confront Ne Win

By A Special Correspondent

THE government of this aloof nation is beginning to let down a little the barriers that set it apart from the rest of the world. While still trumpeting to his 27.5 million people the virtues of "the Burmese way to socialism," Prime Minister Ne Win of the Revolutionary Government of the Union of Burma appears to be relaxing, a tiny bit, the rigid, rigorous and parochial practices of the past decade which have made Burma a loner in world affairs, and stagnant in material progress at home.

Diplomats here of all political stripes normally would be cheering these first tentative experiments by Ne Win to soften his Marxist-inspired political and economic absolutism. But they obviously suspect that any foreign expression of approval would turn off his efforts at liberalism. Burma—so "unaligned" it refuses even to join other non-aligned nations in friendly chats—has diplomatic relations with both Koreas, both Vietnams and both Germanys. But with a 1,300-mile common border with the People's Republic of China, Burma does not deal with the other China on Taiwan.

WHILE continuing to regard foreign goodwill as suspect, in recent months Ne Win has appeared ready

to give up on some socialistic doctrine, particularly by allowing—behind his back—a small scale-incentive-price system to creep into agricultural productions. He has never been able to convince the farmer—about two-thirds of Burma's 10 million workers—that all-government marketing of the crops is good for the peasant. More and more farm produce is being allowed to enter the "free market"—the black market. Police occasionally make token raids on black marketeers, but selling a tiny part of the crop for profit is now being recognized as serving the farmer, as well as the public.

The Burmese housewife is getting tired of standing in long lines at government shops and then finding that the choice items are all sold out. Besides relaxing socialized farming and crop-marketing, Ne Win seems to be slowing nationalization of industry. His last spurt was in January. It appeared to be a punitive measure, directed against small one-family businesses (mostly run by Chinese and Indians) for black marketing raw materials they were granted by the government for "peoples production."

ANOTHER BREAKTHROUGH is that while still treating foreigners with caution, Burma is accepting more and more foreign aid. None of it is from the big three, the Soviet Union, China or the United States. The most active lender is Japan. For the first time in years, there is an American private firm doing business in Burma, representing another easing of Ne Win's ritualistic hostility toward "capitalism". On a straight fee base, Reading and Bates of Tulsa, Okla, and Trans-World Drilling Co. of Oklahoma City are undertaking offshore oil exploration. If oil is found, it all belongs to Burma.

Although a nation where every rented-car driver is considered a government agent to spy on foreign contacts with non-governmental Burmese, there has been a lifting of some restraints, such as the issuance of publications and other forms of "cultural exchange" by embassies in Rangoon. For example, Duke Ellington and his band were allowed to perform here—the first major U.S. cultural presentation in eight years. They were a smash hit.

THE MAJOR FOREIGN policy problem in Burma is her relations with the great northern neighbour,

China. Despite certain improvement of these relations on the state side, they remained complicated and strained. They are developing in an atmosphere of mutual distrust and suspicion.

China's current foreign policy changes in the international arena, particularly with regard to Burma, made a part of the Burmese leadership hopeful as to the possibility of establishing neighbourly relations with China and of putting an end to the dangerous impact of pro-China groups in Burma's domestic affairs. The Burmese hope and anxiety to have normal relations with their powerful northern neighbour have not been fulfilled.

However, it would seem that the essence of China's earlier policy with regard to Burma remains the same.

Uncertainty regarding the actions of the Peking leaders who proclaim their readiness to develop relations with other countries on the basis of peaceful coexistence principles and simultaneously have contrary policies with regard to their home affairs, is the major cause of the Burmese distrust towards China and the main source of present tension in Sino-Burmese relations. After Nixon's visit to the People's Republic of China the apprehensions of the Burmese have increased.

Despite all this, the Burmese government continues to look for such ways of developing relations with China which would enable Burma to preserve her independence and prevent foreign countries from interfering with her domestic affairs.

The Chinese, on their part, do not seem to approve of the Burmese Revolutionary Council's desire for an independent foreign policy. The government of Burma, however, is pursuing its own line in this domain, which is proved, for example, by the fact that they recognized Bangladesh without any delay and established and developed rather live contacts with this state.

THE IMPROVEMENT of relations with such South-East Asian countries as Malaysia, Indonesia, and the Philippines is another instance of independent Burmese action.

The hopes of the Burmese leadership to eliminate or at least mitigate the activities of Maoist groups in the country's internal affairs by means of developing trade and economic cooperation with Peking were not realized. From the end of 1971 the Chinese, on the one hand, met the Burmese half-

way in the field of development of trade and economic ties, and on the other, put their pressure on the Revolutionary Council, by the activities of the armed units of the Communist Party of Burma—the "White Flag" and of other pro-Peking rebel formations.

These groups appear to have made up their mind to overthrow Ne Win's regime and bring to power a government which would pursue a pro-Maoist policy. The present leadership of the Communist Party of Burma—the "White flags" fully endorses Maoism.

The "White Flag" Communist Party incites the armed units of the Burmese Communist Party to military actions against the government troops.

This rebel movement, continues to undermine Burma economically. The Maoists are striving to bring chaos into Burma's economy, and frustrate Ne Win's measures in the field of economic development, disorganise through the Burmese Communist Party the state purchases of rice. The Communist Party of Burma put into circulation a great amount of false Burmese currency allegedly printed in China.

The detachments of the Communist Party of Burma adhere to a wearing-out

tactics, combine subversion and attacks against police and military posts with major operations, thus keeping the Burmese army in a state of constant strain. The "White Flag" party has not only stepped up its activities in the regions under its control trying to consolidate the defence and increase its influence among the population, but has made serious attempts to restore its activities in central regions of Burma, from where the armed formations of the Communist Party were ejected in 1968-1969 by the government troops.

HOWEVER, General Ne Win's policies, particularly those pertaining to the economy have, not found favour with important groups within the country. But it did initially, at least, wipe out the basic inequities which characterised the agricultural sector. Over the years, bureaucratic inefficiency and the regime's attempts to isolate the country has brought about considerable discontent but an assault against the rulers is unlikely so long as the people are well fed and the incentive to revolt is lacking.

The military regime appears insistent on seeing the economic measures through, ignoring all foreign and local criticism. They argue, with some truth, that the grumblers are mostly from the "pri-

vileged" class, but the large mass of the people benefit and that is what matters anyway.

Stock answer.

To foreign critics, their stock answer is that they are imbued with capitalist ideas and, therefore, unable to appreciate the special problems facing Burma and hence unwilling to appreciate the socialist measures enforced.

Virtually every single private business and industrial venture is now in Government hands with the foreigner ceasing to have any role in the economy. But red tape has brought the formerly well-run firms to virtual bankruptcy within a few years of nationalisation. State-run organisations the world over are notorious for their capacity to turn into deficits any well-run firm, and this is only too true in Burma.

IN CONSEQUENCE the Burmese economy is fast reaching the crisis point. Its foreign exchange reserves at (US) 50 million are at their lowest since independence, and it is doubted whether this will see the nation through during the next six months. Foreign trade is not an important factor in the Burmese economy, amounting only to 13 per cent of the gross national product. While world trade has been going up by 7 per cent per year, Burma's dropped by 63 per cent

in eight years to \$ 100 million in 1970.

Rice and teak are its two main exports. But with the increasing world surplus in rice, prices have dropped so low as to cause considerable worry to the administration.

THE STAGNANT economy has added long waiting lists of graduates for employment. Some sources suggest that as many as 50 per cent of the graduates are unemployed at any given time with the problem made worse by the army which runs or has a large say in all State monopolies and tends to trust only its officers and subordinates.

The educated Burmese therefore, migrate, mainly to Australia and Canada. According to unofficial estimates, at least 220,000 have left the country for good since Gen. Ne Win took over in 1962. The immigration procedures were made easier early this year and the brain drain has since begun afresh.

It is, however, a fearsome battle for those who think of leaving. An Anglo-Burman lieutenant-colonel who was attached to a British Indian Army regiment and who is now in Sydney had stated that he was forced to resign his commissions when he applied for permission to migrate and was treated as a traitor for nearly four years before he was allowed to leave, penniless, with his family for the "promised land".

Prime Minister on the By-elections

"The confidence and the mandate placed by the people in me in May 1970, has not changed substantially. I shall take account of the people's views as expressed at the by-elections, and I shall try to solve problems in such a way as to increase their confidence as time goes by."

These observations were made by the Prime Minister Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranalke, in a statement issued by her on October 12, in regard to the four recent by-elections. The following is the text of the Prime Minister's statement:—

MR. DUDLEY SENANAYAKE apparently elated by the results of the by-elections, has issued a statement reflecting what he would like to believe rather than the reality. He says that "in so widely disparate areas as Kesbewa, Puttalam, Nuwara Eliya and Ratnapura, the verdict of the people is uncompromisingly clear against the performance and policies of the Government."

In Kesbewa the hard fact remains that the totality of the anti-UNP votes polled by two SLFP men Mr. Subash Chandrasiri and our candidate is not substantially different from the votes polled for the late Mr. Somaweera Chandrasiri, MP. A single candidate for the United Front would undoubtedly have won with a majority

as great as Mr. Somaweera majority in May 1970 over the UNP candidate.

In Nuwara Eliya, the by-election results show the exact opposite of what Mr. Senanayake has claimed. The SLFP increased its voting strength, reduced the UNP majority and created an interest that led to a record poll of 85 per cent. On Mr. Senanayake's own argument, the voters of Nuwara Eliya must have endorsed the performance and policies of the Government over the last two and a half years by an uncompromisingly clear verdict".

WITH HIS unique experience of governing the country for the full term of a Parliament and, of using the whole weight of Governmental machinery in trying to win by-elections. Mr. Senanayake cannot surely have forgotten the by-elections he held in those days? Did he regard the defeat of the UNP at Bentara-Elpitiya by a majority of over 1000 votes as "an uncompromisingly clear verdict", against his Government in 1966?

Did he react to the Nattandiya by-election result in 1969 when the late Sir Albert Pieris' majority of over 5,000 votes was reduced to a couple of hundred votes in the hands of Mr. Hugh Fernando? Mr. Senanayake regarded this as such a great victory that he appointed Mr.

Hugh Fernando to ministerial office immediately afterwards. Of course he was only fulfilling a UNP promise made at the hustings, which had been calculated to influence the voters of Nattandiya that it was more advantageous to be represented by a UNP Minister of a Government, than a mere SLFP backbencher.

When the 15,000 UNP majority in the Negombo electorate was reduced to 7,000 at the Negombo by-election in 1968 in what was considered to be UNP strong hold, did Mr. Senanayake consider that it was an uncompromisingly clear verdict to his party? IN ELECTION PETITION after election petition, the UNP Government at the time, unseated our Members of Parliament on the ground that false statements pertaining to character and conduct had been made on their behalf by others who were in law their agents, though they themselves were not at fault.

With the exception of Balapitiya, we won every single one of these by-elections, but Mr. Senanayake did not then consider these results as an "uncompromisingly clear verdict" against himself! in Balapitiya his own successful candidate Mr. Lakshman de Silva explained afterwards on public platforms how he came to win at the by-election:

Government power was used to mislead the people

to believe that electricity would soon be supplied to various areas. The technique adopted by the UNP Government was to fix wires to coconut tree trunks along the road, saying that the electricity would soon come. Needless to say it never came. Mr. Senanayake will also not forget the manner in which Governmental power was used by the UNP at the Balangoda by-election.

WITH FALSE PROPAGANDA on Nindagam laws and the shameless way in which the wife of a P.S.C. Member who contested for the United National Party at the Pelmadulla Parliamentary by-election was ultimately given a seat as a defeated candidate in the Senate almost as soon as the election results were announced.

Mr. Senanayake should remember that it was the United Front Government that restored to Mr. Gamini Dissanayake MP his civic rights by changing the Constitution against which his own Party voted. It was the voters of Nuwara Eliya however that reduced his majority, and expressed increased confidence in the SLFP.

Before the by-elections were held, Mr. Senanayake kept on saying that the SLFP and the United Front Government would not hold by-elections at all in violation of our

democratic traditions, because the government was afraid to do so.

NOTWITHSTANDING current shortages and increasing prices due to world market conditions, as soon as the terrorist insurgency had been brought under control, the Government held the by-elections giving the lie direct to Mr. Senanayake's false propaganda on democracy.

The results, in our view, leave no room for complacency. There is much to be done yet, and we shall continue undaunted in our efforts to ensure social justice to set our economy right, to eradicate corruption and to oppose the forces of reaction in our land. There are bound to be changes in public opinion from time to time, both for and against our Government, as evidenced in Nuwara Eliya and Puttalam. But the confidence and the mandate placed by the people in me in May 1970 has not changed substantially. I shall take account of the people's views as expressed at the by-elections, and I shall try to solve problems in such a way as to increase their confidence as time goes by.

IF MR. SENANAYAKE believes that the by-election results are really all that significant and that for instance the change of a marginal majority of 103 at Puttalam, into defeat by 1,000 votes, signifies a complete change in the political balance in this country there is a very simple way by which he can prove to his own satisfaction whether he is right or wrong. He will remember that he too won the Dedigama seat in May 1970 by a marginal majority of 1000 votes.

He can follow the example of his colleague and partner, Mr. Chelvanayakam, and create a by-election at Dedigama. Suppose he were willing to do that, which I do not for a moment expect, he will, I would not regard his personal defeat in case he loses as an "uncompromisingly clear verdict" against his party. The question is how would he regard it?

I would like to express my thanks to our voters and supporters in all the four electorates in which the by-elections were held for their confidence in the Government, and I shall continue to serve their interests through by Government during the term of my Government.

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