

# TRIBUNE

CEYLON NEWS REVIEW

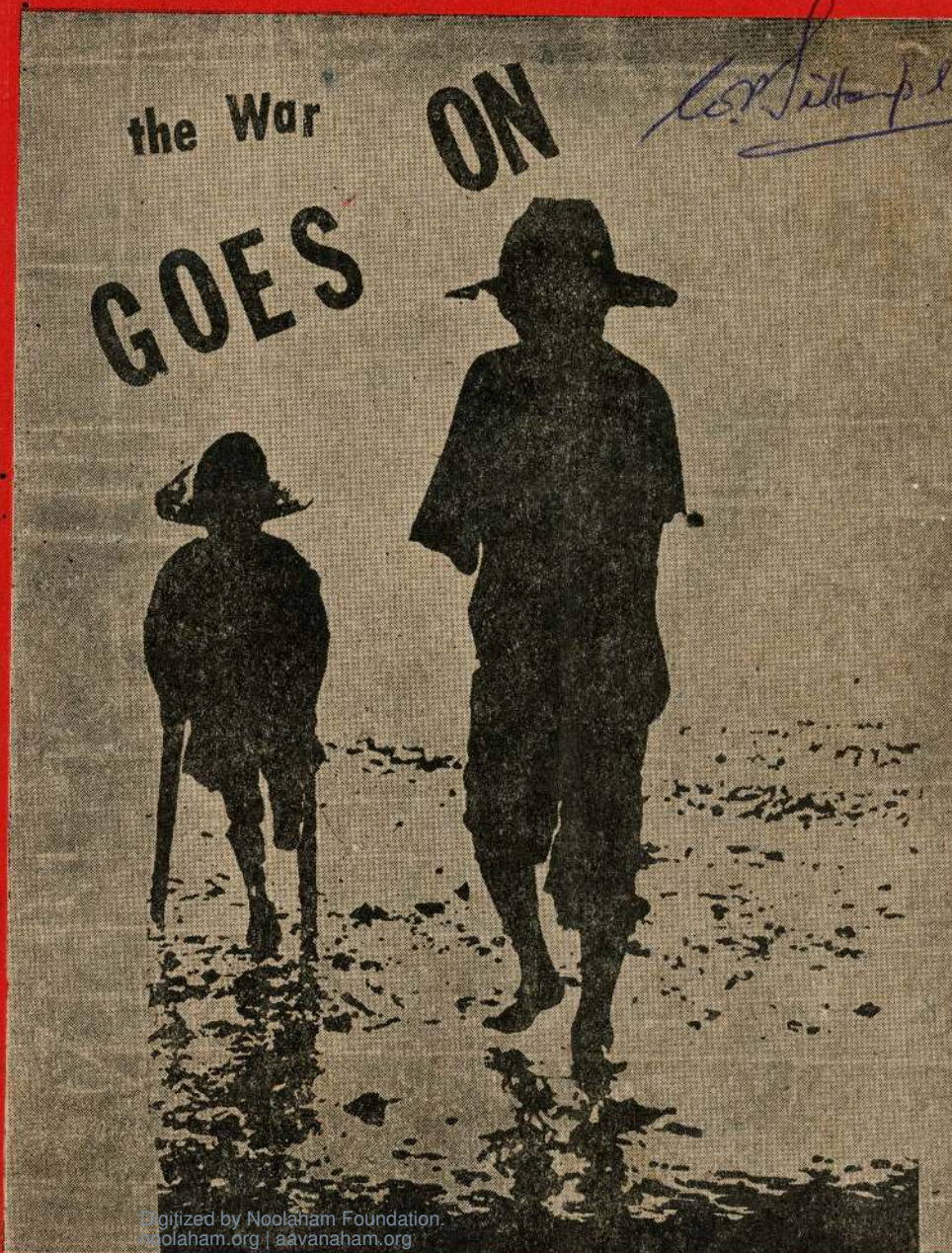
50 Cts.

December 20 1972

Vol. 17 No. 50

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WITH COMPLIMENTS

C. V. BHATT

# Tribune

IN THIS ISSUE

## A Note On The Contents

THE WAR in Vietnam has resumed with a ferocity that is uncalled for after the negotiations which have been going on between Dr. Henry Kissinger and Mr. Le Duc Tho. On the cover we have a reminder what this war means. The Editor in his *Rambling Notes* deals at some length with the breakdown of the talks between Washington and Hanoi in Paris and refers to some of the reactions which have become available after the return of Kissinger and Le Duc Tho to their respective capitals. The Editor's *Notes* which deals in this issue with matters international, also draws attention to the leftward swing in the recent Japanese elections and to the increased attention being paid to People's China. *Serendib* has a piece on the *Constitutional Court*, and about the misconception which presently exists in the minds of many people that the present Constitution of Sri Lanka is wedded, in some mysterious way, to the principle of the separation of powers and the consequent independence of the judiciary.

ALL OUR DAILY PAPERS have been delivering sermons on the independence of the judiciary without

realising that with the adoption of the new Constitution we have made the National State Assembly the supreme body in all matters legislative, judicial and executive. There is no point in crying over milk spilt with our consent, and until we replace this Constitution with another based on the separation of powers, we, the people of Sri Lanka must bear with what we have chosen through the representatives we elected so joyfully in May 1970. *Pertinax* continues with the theme which he has been plugging in the *Tribune* for some time: that many of the legislative measures adopted by the UF government are self-defeating because nearly all of them successfully destroy existing production units without effectively replacing them with new alternatives.

IN THIS ISSUE, he deals with the new tax system and supports the view held by many competent persons that the new tax laws will not induce either greater investment or productivity; and that on the other hand everything might go into reverse gear. *Canax* in a bubbling column *From the Easy Chair* endeavours to pierce the mysteries surrounding the visit

of a delegation of Japanese businessmen who had attracted a great deal of attention. His *Tora! Tora! Tora!* will not only make many readers chuckle with suppressed laughter but will make them think seriously about the way this country is run. *Sherlock Holmes* in his column *Is It True?* spotlights the travails of people who have no alternative but to travel on the CGR; he asks a few nasty questions, about the goings-on in the Colombo Goodshed and the difficulties many people encounter when they attempt to send or receive parcels. *Sherlock Holmes* also raises some fundamental questions about paddy production. *Alkardi Mugana* is on a *Safari* again, this time in the North Central and Northern Provinces. His notes on this trip appear in two parts: the first

**TRIBUNE**  
CEYLON NEWS REVIEW

Founded 1954  
A Journal of Ceylon and  
World Affairs  
DECEMBER 20,  
1972  
Vol. 17. No. 50  
43, Dawson Street,  
COLOMBO 2.  
Telephone: 33172

TRIBUNE, December 20, 1972

## RAMBLING NOTES

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Mainly

International:

Vietnam, Japan,

China & India

THE UNITED STATES has scored another brilliant success with its Apollo 17 moon flight, and the most important part of the great achievement is that a scientist was one of the astronauts who had landed on the moon's surface.

But USA's peace negotiations to bring a ceasefire in Vietnam has floundered. Great hopes had been entertained that a peace agreement was round the corner and President Nixon had hinted from time to time that an agreement was in sight, although Hanoi's negotiators had not been so hopeful.

*(Continued from page 1)*

in this issue and the concluding part in the next. He moves from Puttalam to Cheddikulam, then to Vavuniya and a little further north in the article appearing in this issue. In the next issue, his notes relate to Anuradhapura, Rajangana and once again to Puttalam. His observations range from the dynamics of village life to the mechanics (and economics) of ploughing with buffaloes and tractors.

The first indication that something had gone wrong with the talks Kissinger had resumed early this month in Paris came from President Nixon himself on December 14. Before a group of US Information Agency advisers, the President admitted that a "fundamental issue" remained as a final obstacle for a Vietnam peace settlement, and that an agreement was not imminent. President Nixon admitted that "a fundamental issue" remained as the final obstacle to a Vietnam peace settlement and that its resolution was not imminent. Mr. Nixon did not describe the issue, but there were indications that it centred on withdrawal of Hanoi's troops from South Vietnam or some variation of it, such as Saigon's demand that its sovereignty should be conceded over all of the south in the peace agreement.

During the last round of negotiations Hanoi did make some concessions, but stiffened on some issues as a quid pro quo. A Vietnam spokesman in Paris had insisted that South Vietnam must sign any peace settlement. A separate peace, said Ly Van Sau, Viet Cong spokesman, was insufficient. "The agreement must be signed by all four parties, taking part in this conference which will be responsible for its application." One interpretation in Washington was that Hanoi was having its problem with its ally the Viet Cong

just as Nixon had his with Mr. Thieu.

IN THE MEANTIME, the White House refused to support President Thieu's proposal for a temporary ceasefire for the Christmas holidays on the ground that it wanted to be associated only with one truce plan. But, at a press conference on December 16, in Washington, Dr. Henry Kissinger had stated that Hanoi was raising one "frivolous issue" after another and was blocking a final peace agreement. Kissinger's charge shocked Washington which was expecting an agreement any moment on the assumption that the only problem President Nixon faced was in Saigon.

Kissinger said: "Perhaps we are closer to an agreement than we were at the end of October if the other side is willing to deal with us in good faith and goodwill, but it will not do that. Every day an issue is settled, a new one is raised; when an issue is settled in an agreement, it is again raised as an understanding, and if it is settled in an understanding it is raised again as a protocol."

Kissinger said the talks were broken off because President Nixon decided that "we should not engage in a charade with the American people." Kissinger still felt that the talks could be concluded with an agreement if Hanoi decided to do so.

Kissinger gave a warning to both Saigon and Hanoi,

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To Saigon he said that the United States would proceed with the agreement if President Nixon considered it just. He told Hanoi that the United States would not be "black mailed or stampeded" into an agreement.

Stunned political observers in Washington contrasted Kissinger's "bleak and gloomy" statements with his last press conference. Since October the peace prospects have regressed and this was clear from Kissinger's statements. Hence, in the absence of any change, the war continues.

Kissinger was prepared to tolerate North Vietnamese forces at the present level in South Vietnam but he insisted that "we cannot accept the proposition that North Vietnam has a right of constant intervention in the south." While he conceded problems with Saigon, Kissinger said the present obstacle to agreement was Hanoi, not Saigon.

Kissinger further said the United States and North Vietnam have failed so far to reach an agreement that President Nixon could accept as a just and fair settlement. He indicated clearly that the difficulties which remained were not only of a technical nature but were also political. They mainly concerned methods of enforcing an internationally controlled ceasefire.

Kissinger further accused the North Vietnamese of trying to deceive the Ame-

ricans by drawing up an English text which was very different from the Vietnamese one. He told the press conference that he had agreed with Le Duc Tho not to make any comment on the state of negotiations but explained that Nixon did not want speculations on an imminent peace agreement to continue when they were unfounded.

AT THE TIME of writing, reactions from other capitals have not been forthcoming as yet, but the few which have become available make it clear that there is great disappointment that the war continues — with the United States starting a new round of bombing of Hanoi and the North.

The *New York Times* columnist James Reston from Paris has written: "It has been obvious for months, even years, that while Washington and Saigon were allies their national interests would not be the same once Hanoi was ready to sign a peace agreement: Nobody here in Paris pretends any longer that the technicians who have been left behind will be able to arrange a compromise which Kissinger failed to negotiate. So now, the President either has to go along with General Thieu and the war as it is and forget his hopes of getting the American prisoners back by Christmas and the war behind him by his inauguration day on Jan. 20, or to make clear to Thieu that he is going to sign the

separate peace however, reluctantly by a certain date and soon... The resolution of the Paris talks does not lie here but in the White House and with Nixon." A *Washington Post* despatch from Paris quoted "informed sources" as saying that even if a peace settlement was not possible there was still the possibility that Hanoi and Washington could sign a purely military accord, leaving political problems to be solved by the Viet Cong, Saigon and presumably Hanoi.

In Moscow, a communique issued at the end of a visit by Le Duc Tho said: "The assurance was given that the forces intervening against the settlement of the Vietnam conflict will not be allowed to nullify results achieved so far. The agreement must be signed on the basis of the draft worked out in October. It also said the USSR reiterated its "resolute and continuous support" for "the Vietnamese people". In Peking Chinese leaders apparently discussed the situation at the stalled Indo-China peace talks with North Vietnamese politburo member Truong Chinh who arrived from Hanoi en route to other communist countries.

James Reston, the *New York Times* columnist has stated that President Nixon had now the responsibility of ignoring the demands of President Thieu and proceeding to sign an agreement with Hanoi. Le Duc

Tho had left Paris at the same time as Kissinger, and the USSR in a restrained statement adopted the Hanoi line that the US should sign the agreement as finalised last October. The reactions from Peking are not known, but there is no doubt that China will support Hanoi to the hilt. Russia has gone so far as to suggest that the progress made at these negotiations should not be thrown away but a way found to conclude an agreement.

WHILE THE WAR IN VIETNAM has re-started once again with renewed vigour and barbarity, the ferment in the rest of Asia continues with unexpected zig-zags at every turn. The victory of the Labour Party in New Zealand as well as in Australia has started a new series of chain reactions in all ANZUS and ASPAC countries and in the South-east. Asia region. *Tribune* will look at this aspect of developments in Asia in another article, but in this piece attention will be focussed on Japan and China as they constitute the most important segment not only in East Asia alone but the whole of Asia.

The election results in Japan had come as a surprise to practically all observers of the Asian scene. The sweeping gains by the once outlawed Japan Communist Party (JCP) in the general election appear to have created major difficulties for Prime Minister Kakuei Tanaka in carrying out his policies.

Coupled with the revival of the hitherto declining Socialist Party, voters have created a powerful left-wing anti-Government force to harass Mr. Tanaka over the next few years.

Many commentators believed it was only the charismatic personality of the 54-year-old Prime Minister—in office just five months—that saved his ruling Liberal Democrats from worse humiliation. As it is, Mr. Tanaka has not been given the sweeping mandate he wanted for his "grand design" to solve Japan's social and economic ills by a radical re-distribution of industry and population and greater emphasis on social welfare.

Final results announced gave the LDP 271 seats in the 491 member Lower House. But 11 elected conservative independents said they would join the party to help push the total closer to the record 297 seats the party held in the old Parliament. The Socialists and Communists won 156 seats and 35 per cent of the popular vote with bitter attacks on the Tanaka programme.

The party-wise break-up is: Liberal Democrats 271 (Old Parliament 297); Socialists 118 (87); Communists 38 (14); Komeito 29 (47); Democratic Socialists 19 (29); and Independents 16 (3).

One of the surprises was the collapse in the Buddhist-oriented Komeito, an offshoot of the powerful Sokagakkai lay organisation.

Its almost perfect winning record was shattered, the party losing 18 of its 47 seats. The Democratic Socialists also faltered, losing 10 of its 29 seats.

Despite the popularity of Mr. Tanaka's China moves, three leading Liberal Democrats prominently identified with them, were defeated. They were Mr. Yoshimi Furui, Mr. Kaneshichi Masuda and Mr. Hideji Kawasaki.

Though Tanaka has emerged weaker in a parliamentary sense in Japanese politics, there is not the slightest possibility of any corrosion in the growing Sino-Japanese entente. There is a great deal of speculation just how far and how deeply the new "friendship" between Peking and Tokyo has gone and from time to time articles and comments have appeared in various US papers on this subject. Even if these are intended only to probe, there is a great deal which can be learnt if one follows these kite-flying controversies.

For instance, the Japanese Government has flatly denied a report in the *New York Times* that China might give military assistance to Japan if it was attacked by the Soviet Union. Japan's Chief Cabinet Secretary told a press conference that Mr. Chou and Mr. Tanaka merely discussed Japan's fourth defence build up programme starting this year, but made no reference to military assistance, at their

September summit. Other Government sources expressed embarrassment and said the report was particularly untimely as Japan was just about to start negotiations with the Soviet on the return of four Soviet-held Japanese islands and on the long delayed peace treaty. The *Times* report said "China welcomes the Japanese defence build-up as a counter-weight to the Soviet Union."

AN EVEN MORE interesting "controversy" which is raging in US circles involved in Asian affairs is a comparison between India and China. Back in the days when Nationalist China was China to the Americans their propagandists and scholars drew unfavourable comparisons between the slow rate of growth of the People's Republic of China and the rapid growth of Nationalist China's economy. The Taiwan-based "Republic of China" with a per capita Gross National Product of 390 dollars and a growth rate of 7.1 per cent is indeed a success story.

However, with Nixon's opening to China, the point of comparison changed. Instead of comparing Mainland China to Taiwan, the Americans at both official and non-official levels have begun to compare Mainland China with India —on the whole to China's advantage. Another fortuitous circumstance also puts India in an unavoidable economic race with China. For years the World Bank omitted any reference to

Mainland China. Lately, it too has begun to publish figures for Mainland China and due to the sheer size of China and India in terms of population their figures tend to appear side by side, so that to any student of economics a comparison becomes unavoidable.

The correspondent of the *Indian Express* in Washington has devoted a whole article to this "controversy". He finds that such comparisons are unfavourable to India, and this is to be expected considering the present relations between the Nixon Establishment and the Indira Gandhi Government. This is what he says:

"Two quotations should suffice to show that India is in the race whether she likes it or not. One is from the widely distributed State Department publication in the *Issues* series, entitled *Peoples' Republic of China*... It says, for instance, that although much of Communist China's military-industrial success to date has rested on foreign assistance, (China inherited the industries built by Japan and then came massive Soviet economic assistance) still Communist China has no hope of self-sufficiency in the near future. "the policy of economic self-sufficiency is an unqualified success in one important dimension. The Chinese have no long term foreign debt in contrast to other developing countries which are staggering

under a heavy burden of external debt. India, for example, must allocate 500 million dollars each year just to service its foreign debts."

"One may wryly recall how the Agency for International Development, functioning in the same building in which that publication originated, used to advise India that she needed more aid to end aid. Now that the Americans want to be nice to the Communist Chinese, the debts which the Americans urged India to incur have become black marks against her! But that is beside the point."

The correspondent draws particular attention to what economist Gailbraith has written on this subject. Economist John Kenneth Galbraith as ex-Ambassador to India knows India's strength and weakness and his article in the *New York Times* magazine giving his impressions of China is, therefore, of major importance. He too regards India and China as being in a race. He says, for example, there has been much snobbish comment about the uniformity of Chinese clothing. In a poor country an arrangement by which every person gets two sets of sound basic garments every year at low prices seems to me an exercise in the greatest good sense. The proper comparison of the comfortably clad Chinese is not with Americans or Europeans but with the huddled and halfclothed people.

of northern or upland India in its winter months."

And then he goes on to examine what the consensus of opinion is on this matter on the basis of views expressed in many publications. "For a person who insists on comparing the figures given in different publications it is not easy to come to any conclusion at this stage whether India or China is ahead. The figures differ widely and wildly, even making allowance for swings based on whether one is using the current dollar as the measure or the 1964 dollar or 1969 dollar. What, for instance, is the population of China? The State Department publication in the *Issues* series places it at 750 million to 850 million. Its estimates of population growth rate range from 1.5 to 2.5 per cent. The World Bank atlas places the population of Mainland China precisely at 836 million. But another World Bank publication published in 1971 entitled *Trends in Developing Countries*, is even more precise: only it places the population at 772.9 million.

"The figures of Gross National Product, the one inevitable basis of comparison—also vary widely. One World Bank publication issued last year entitled *Trends in Developing Countries* gives a figure which works out to 78 dollars per capita for China—lower than that of India. But the World Bank atlas just issued gives China's figures as 160 dollars

and India's as 110 dollars. The State Department's figure is 85 dollars for India and 145 dollars for China.

"Professor Galbraith says that China's economy is growing at 10 to 11 per cent a year—an economic miracle comparable to the German and Japanese miracles if true. But the World Bank says that Communist China's economy is growing at 2.1 per cent per capita. The State Department places the annual GNP growth rate at 4.6 per cent. Making allowance for population growth, it more or less agrees with the World Bank, not with Galbraith.

"Lumping all figures together, India is ahead in some and China in others, China is ahead in steel, for example, with 17 million metric tons produced and in grain yield at 220 million tons. But India is ahead in such key areas as electric power and cement. India also produces more cotton textiles than China, although the Chinese production is more evenly distributed. This would show that China is ahead or India is, depending upon which set of figures is correct. If Professor Galbraith is right we may have lost the race. However, if the State Department and the World Bank are right India still has a chance to win the race, provided she sheds her complacency and decides to run real hard."

ASIA, LIKE THE REST OF THE WORLD is, moving

from a bi-polar world of the era of the cold war (i.e. the camp of capitalism versus the camp of socialism) to the new era of multi-polar relations where each country has to define its relations with other countries on the basis of its national interests. In fact, many countries which had been closely aligned to one bloc or other have now the difficult task of re-defining their national interests.

The Nixon visit to Peking last year finally heralded the dawn of this new epoch in world relations between states. This was preceded by China's admission to the UN at the end of 1971, and China had already begun to re-define its relations with other countries on a new basis. With Ceylon, for instance, Chou En Lai condemned the JVP and the insurgents as "reactionaries and ultra-revolutionaries", and set out to give a new dimension to the interstate relations.

In this new Chou En lai reappraisal of China's foreign policies, China has not only won admission to the UN, but has been recognised by practically every country in the world. New Zealand and Australia were among the last of the mohicans who stood out for the ostracism of China as required by the imperatives of the cold war bi-polar system of foreign relations. Now, the new governments in these two Countries have recognised China.

(Continued on page 7)



# CEYLON: MARGINAL NOTES

BY SERENDIB

## On The Constitutional Court

TRIBUNE has been "sceptical about the new Constitution being the perfect instrument of a parliamentary system of government contrary to the view held by those who had framed the Constitution. Adolf Hitler had been foolish enough to proclaim that the Third Reich of the Nazis, built on the Bismarckian Empire, would last a thousand years. Those who had produced the Constitution of Sri Lanka did not openly say that it would flourish for a thousand years, but they went about with a messianic halo permanently hovering over them and

gave the impression to the suffering "masses" that this Constitution was a firm stepping stone to the golden millenium of a "socialist state" after the style and manner fashioned by the United Front of Sri Lanka. It was not stated, but implied, that Sri Lanka was the only country in the world so far—unique in every sense—which will succeed in attaining socialism through democratic elections and a parliamentary system of government.

But before the socialist ideal was even sighted, the Constitution has run into deep trouble, and the "father of the Constitution", Dr. Colvin R. de Silva, has announced that it may be necessary to amend the Constitution to make it workable. This is a significant admission from a man who was so cocksure about himself and the Constitution he had drafted that he had not bothered about the views of persons and organisations which had submitted memoranda on the draft Constitution. All criticisms, however constructive, were brushed aside in the most patronisingly supercilious manner. The only

adjustment he was willing to make was to ensure the political *entente* between the "leftists" in the UF with the Buddhists chauvinists in the UF and outside. What is apparently a secular constitution has provisions which make Sri Lanka a *de facto* theocratic buddhist state. The provisions on language confirm the language chauvinism of the Sinhala majority, whilst only lip-service is paid to national unity.

BUT WHAT is most important is that the new Constitution makes the National State Assembly the supreme and sovereign body with the Judiciary and the Executive under it.

The separation of powers was thrown overboard as being obstructive infringement of the sovereignty of the NSA and therefore of the people. The principle of the separation of powers, with statutorily safeguarded independent functions and powers for the Judiciary, and with an Executive with statutory rights empowered to carry out the practical implementation of the decisions of a policy making legislature, has been discarded. And in its place we have a unicameral NSA combining all the functions of the legislature, judiciary and executive—but with the judicial trappings of a Constitutional Court of appeal and a Supreme Court, and an Executive boast.

From the Editor's Desk

—Continued from page 6

In the new multi-polar world of inter-state relations, Sri Lanka is still fumbling along. We still stick to the bi-polar world of imperialism versus anti-imperialism (part of the cold war of the two blocs) in many parts of world, most notably in West Asia where we are hamstrung to the Arab world and have cut ourselves from Israel for the most doctrinaire of reasons—reasons which the Arabs themselves no longer seem to believe in.

**ing of multitude of politicalised Permanent Secretaries and Assistant Permanent Secretaries.**

The dilemma which has arisen now regarding the Press Council Bill and the Constitutional Court is the natural and inevitable outcome of trying to work a Constitution which has discarded the separation of powers with the assistance of men and judges who were born, bred and had flourished in the spirit of (and the letter) of the separation of powers (and with the total independence of the judiciary based on the rule of law). The judges of the Constitutional Court were handicapped because they thought it was their function to safeguard the sovereignty of the people from laws which violated the Constitution even as it stood.

That is why the President of the Court and other Judges felt that the 14-day limit to produce a verdict was not an imperative provision but was something of an exhortatory or advisory character. They exceeded the 14-day limit because they thought that the Constitution had given them a sacred inviolable, infallible and sacrosanct position.

But the UF members of the NSA thought otherwise. If the Constitutional Court was not able to produce a verdict within 14 days or if the Court did not kow-tow to the NSA and obtain an extension of time, the Court

had to go. To save the Constitution and to keep up appearances, behind-the-scenes efforts were made to persuade the judges to crave the indulgence of the NSA for the delay and obtain a further period of time. The Government wanted this done to demonstrate that the NSA was supreme.

THE PRESIDENT of the Constitutional Court, Mr. T. S. Fernando, had the obviously misguided notion that the Court had been created to safeguard the "sovereignty of the people" in terms of the Constitution. This brought about a short-term crisis; and a constitutional stalemate might have followed but for the fact that one of the judges chose to resign leaving no alternative for the other two judges but to submit their resignations. In a sense this ended the "conflict", if conflict it was, but the situation which has resulted from all this continues.

Will the Government persist with the Press Council Bill without getting a verdict from a Constitutional Court? Will the Government seek to rush it through? Or, will the Government withdraw the existing Bill and re-introduce in the next Sessions, whilst at the same time constituting a new Constitutional Court and obtain a verdict from it?"

These are no doubt interesting questions, but what is important at the moment is the way the

first Constitutional Court under the new Constitution had come to a sticky end. On Friday December 9, when the 14-day limit had just expired, Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike had announced in the NSA that it was his view that the life of the Constitutional Court had ended. The Leader of the House Mr. Maithripala Senanayake, had later announced that the NSA would proceed with the second reading of the Press Council Bill at the earliest possible date. When the Opposition raised an objection, the Speaker announced that he would give his ruling on Monday. The Speaker gave his ruling on Monday December 11 that the NSA could proceed with the Bill. At this stage the Opposition raised a demand for an immediate debate on this "urgent question of importance" and a debate was held on the next day Tuesday, December 12.

IN THE MEANTIME, the Constitutional Court had bravely held its sittings on Monday and Tuesday, December 11 and 12. Whilst this "conflict" ensued, the President Mr. William Gopailawa, had tried to bring about a "settlement" no doubt by trying to persuade the Judges to apply to the NSA for an extension, but he had failed. Then, one of the Judges of the Court resigned on the morning of December, 13. This judge was Mr. H. Deheragoda, one of the

member of the Supreme Court and who is also sitting on the first Criminal Justice Commission. He had always been on the official side of the bar and had been elevated to the Supreme Court bench recently. Then, in the afternoon of December 13, the other two judges sent in their resignations. The President, Mr. T. S. Fernando, is a retired Supreme Court judge and is also the President of the Court of Appeal (which has replaced the Privy Council). He is also the Ceylon head of the International Commission of Jurists. The other judge was Mr. J. A. L. Cooray, a member of the unofficial Bar and a leading authority on Constitutional Law.

With the resignation of the three Judges, the ball was in the court of the NSA. In the NSA, Mr. Felix R. Dias Bandaranaike had stated on December 9, that if the Court went beyond the 14-day limit, its sittings were akin to a "mock trial" of no consequence. At this stage, Mr. T. S. Fernando had expressed his determination to go on with the hearing of the case, saying that the "interpretation of the Constitution is the duty of the Court and the Court's alone."

On the debate on December 12, during the one-day debate, Mr. Bandaranaike said "the Constitution is clear on the fourteen-day limit." It was now a mock trial because the court was acting be-

yond its jurisdiction. "That is why I decided to withdraw the Attorney-General from participating in the court proceedings after the fourteenth day", he said.

"If the court does not respect the wishes of the House (Assembly) it has to go", Mr. Bandaranaike said. "There is no question of the House giving way and accepting the verdict (of the court) at its (latter's) convenience", he stressed while opening the debate in the House on the constitutional impasse centring round the fourteen-day time limit set in the Constitution for the court to give its verdict on any bill referred to it by the Speaker for an opinion on its constitutional validity.

He said the new republican Constitution did not envisage any theory of separation of powers and the Constitutional Court was only an advisory body set up by the Assembly. "There is no question of the court being a rival body or parallel authority to the House, which is the supreme instrument of State power and repository of all residual powers.

Mr. J. R. Jayawardene, who is one of the nine persons who have challenged the constitutional validity of the bill, said that to prevent such an "impasse" in future a constitutional amendment could be brought forward to enable the Speaker, with the consent of the House, to grant time to the court if the

House is satisfied that the request for time to exceed two weeks was bona fide.

To meet the present situation, Mr. Jayawardene suggested that the Government withdraw the bill and present it again in the House, giving an opportunity for those who were now before the Constitutional Court to renew their applications and to have their representations heard by the court anew.

He also observed, "I have always felt, first, the creation of the Constitutional Court was a mistake and we might have left the decisions on validity of legislation to be considered by the normal courts of the land. Secondly we must respect the views, of the Constitutional Court though we may not agree with them and also respect their independence and integrity. This House should not attempt to bulldoze anyone to accept our individual views when an interpretation of the Constitution was considered."

As to the future course of action, the LSSP leaders Dr. Colvin R. de Silva (father of the Constitution) and Dr. N. M. Perera felt that the NSA could proceed with the Bill forthwith. Mr. Bandaranaike, the author of the Press Council Bill, although it was presented to the House by the Minister of Information, Mr. R. S. Perera, assured the Assembly that he would not proceed with the Bill until he obtained adjudication on its validity according to the law.

# Tribunania

## On The New Tax System

by PERTINAX

THIS COLUMNIST had pointed out in his last article that many of the measures adopted by this Government were self-defeating in that the very ambitious objectives which the Government wanted to achieve with the help of these measures would be defeated by seeds of destruction inherent in the legislation adopted for the purpose. If the Land Reform Act has the ultimate objective of securing greater productive effort from the "common masses" it is a safe bet that the result which will be valid for the foreseeable future is that agricultural production in many sectors, especially in the coconut areas, will drop substantially. In a subsequent article, this columnist will endeavour to show why he thinks the land ceiling measures will have such a disastrous impact on the coconut industry—with the distinct possibility of Sri Lanka having to import coconuts within the next five years, at least to keep its desiccated and coconut oil industries going.

In this piece, the columnist seeks to show how the new tax proposals combined with income

ceilings and compulsory savings is a sure way of ensuring less income from Income Tax during the next five years. The geese which have laid the golden eggs in this country all these years are being slowly killed, one by one, in the hope that the common masses and the trade union elite will bring forth even bigger golden eggs—but very soon the Government will find that its old sources of revenue have dried up without new sources of greater or even equal bountifulness being found to replace whatever has been destroyed by class war measures of the UF.

THE NEW TAX system was the subject of a discussion recently at a seminar organised by the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Sri Lanka on the question of "income ceiling". The *Ceylon Daily News*, 11/12/72 carried an excellent report of the proceedings of this Seminar, and this columnist proposes to rely heavily on what was stated by various speakers there to drive his point home to the readers of the *Tribune*.

The *Daily News* report carried brief summaries of what was stated by (1) Mr. S. Ambalavanar, Tax Consultant, (2) Mr. L. O. de Silva, Senior Assistant Secretary of the Ministry of Finance, (3) Mr. B. E. Fernando, Commissioner of Inland Revenue and (4) Mr. C. Pasupathy, Chartered Accountant.

"The new scheme of taxation would make normally honest people dishonest, said Mr. S. Ambalavanar, Tax Consultant, at a public seminar on the 'Income Ceiling' at the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Sri Lanka on Friday. Mr. Ambalavanar said that very many companies and individuals will not be able to discharge their debts with the new taxes. The government he said, wanted to reduce consumption but it was a matter of doubt whether in curbing consumption one would raise productivity. He was of the view that curbing consumption would not automatically mean an increase in productivity.

"Mr. Ambalavanar also said that another danger of the new scheme of taxation was that one would find in Sri Lanka a new 'black' money sector as in India squatting side by side with the 'white' sector. If that happened the entire exercise of Compulsory Savings and the Income Ceiling would be a failure. He said it was useless indulging criticism for the sake of criticism against government. The government had a real problem on their hands and if the present policies failed they would all suffer. Referring to the roseate picture of allowances which taxpayers could claim a subject referred to by a previous speaker the Commissioner of Inland Revenue. Mr. Ambalavanar said that his experience was that

when one wanted to claim an allowance like a 50 per cent lump sum depreciation one would never get it. The application of the law was quite different.

"Referring to the White Paper on investment, he said that foreign collaborators should be given assurance by a special law. The present White Paper from this point of view was just a blank paper. He said that he had known that the government had acquired lands and motor vehicles amounting to lakhs of rupees from taxpayers but not a cent had been paid to these persons. This sort of situation created an unhealthy climate. In attempting to curb consumption there would be less investment and less productivity. His personal opinion was that the new scheme would not lead to an increase in investment and productivity."

Mr. Ambalavanar was quite categorical in asserting that the new scheme of taxation would not lead to an increase in investment and productivity. This columnist not only agrees with Mr. Ambalavanar that the new scheme will neither induce greater investment nor higher productivity but will also go further and assert that the new tax system will have results diametrically opposite to what was intended. Investment and productivity will go into reverse gear and the results will have the most de-

### vastating effect on the economy.

MR. L. O. DE SILVA, one of the closest bureaucratic collaborators of the Minister of Finance, defended the new tax proposals as best as he could. He trotted out the usual clichés about the Government wanting to establish a socialist state and that it was necessary to resort to devices such as income ceilings and compulsory savings to achieve socialism (by peaceful constitutional parliamentary means). He went so far as to say that as the private sector was disinclined to invest, it had become necessary to bring legislation to compel savings from the private sector and thereafter channel these monies into productive investments. It will not be long before Mr. L. O. de Silva becomes a sadder, more disillusioned, but wiser man—when he discovers that the new tax system will neither take the country any nearer socialism nor bring savings from the private sector for investment.

*It must be remembered that the proclaimed objective of the Five Year Plan is to sustain and nurture a private sector, but Mr. L. O. de Silva gave the show away when he said that it was his personal view that the incentives given to the investors were too generous and that there was "no need to fondle them". He then gave the clue to his thinking: that a*

*situation may very soon be created where the only tax payers would be those in the PAYE system". What this means is clear. That the self-employed and the private sector entrepreneur would be liquidated in the class war and only those who are employed in the joint ventures of the Government or the public sector undertakings of the State will survive to pay tax.*

This is how the Daily News reported what Mr. L. O. de Silva said: "Mr. L. O. de Silva, senior Assistant Secretary to the Ministry of Finance, dealt with the social aspects of the ceiling on income. It was absurd for people to say that the new taxes would act as a disincentive for investment. It was precisely because there was inadequate investment from the private sector in development that the new taxes had been introduced. The government was dedicated to achieve a socialist state and it was bent on obtaining the savings of the people which would be channelled into more useful and productive sectors. Despite all the incentives given since 1960 the entrepreneurs in this country had failed to produce a real industrial base. The Five Year Plan spoke of a 6 per cent growth rate for GDP and the government wanted now to syphon off consumption expenditures to investment. This called for a climate of austerity and simple living. This was the Finance Minister's theme

in all his three budgets which had the one link of development. We had to develop with our own resources or perish he said.

"Expressing his personal view Mr. de Silva said he thought the new incentives to investors were far too generous. There was no need to fondle them and a situation may very soon be created where the only tax payers would be those in the PAYE scheme."

This is a far cry from socialism. There is no personal tax in a socialist state. Wages, Salaries and prices of all commodities are regulated on a planned basis according to the GNP and the productive levels attained each year. The State derives its revenue from the profits it makes from all the undertakings it runs. But, in Sri Lanka, we are a mixed economy and the Five Year Plan wants a private sector, whilst the leading bureaucrat in the Ministry of Finance has openly and categorically asserted that "a situation may soon arrive" when the private sector has to be eliminated completely.

THESE TWO TRENDS are very strongly "co-existent" in the UF, and until now the enthusiasts of the class war wanting to liquidate the private sector have had their way in most matters. It is not clear when those who want the private sector will cry halt to all this: most of them do not realise what is happening. The new tax

system is obviously intended to destroy the private sector—quite contrary to the objectives of the Five Year Plan, but with the mess of pottage in the guise of a free measure of rice those who are avowedly committed to continuation of the private sector have forsaken temporarily, at least, one of the basic tenets of the Five Year Plan adumbrated by no less a person than the Prime Minister herself.

Neither this columnist nor *Tribune* have any vested interest in the private sectors and over the years this paper has preached the virtues of socialism. But we are certainly opposed to measures which will neither bring socialism nor increase the productive capacity of the country. It is also a futile and self defeating exercise to wage a class war to destroy something without having the ability to replace what is destroyed with something better. **Mr. L. O. de Silva did not make any effort to show that the new tax system will take the country anywhere near socialism. Sadistic and vindictive actions to destroy political opponents, individually or collectively is not socialism even though the exercise is couched in pseudo-marxist jargon.**

After Mr. L. O. de Silva, who is undoubtedly the most politicalised bureaucrat in the higher echelons of the Treasury, had come Mr. B. E. Fernando, the Commissioner of Inland Reve-

nue. He did nothing more than explain the mechanics of the new tax system as a bureaucrat would see it. "Mr. B. E. Fernando, Commissioner of Inland Revenue explained the way the Ceiling on Income would be implemented. He said that a person with an income of Rs. 4000 a month, would be affected by the ceiling. He said that the government had given very generous allowances for deduction from ones 'contributable' income. Some of these allowances like 120 per cent for motor vehicles for agricultural undertakings were unbelievable he said. He allayed fears of taxpayers that the monies would not be paid back. Already Rs. 3 1/2 million had been paid back to people who had left the island from their savings. The Minister of Finance could make five kinds of gazette orders granting exemptions, withdrawals etc. He said the department had set up a special Tax Assistance Centre in the Fort head office to help taxpayers."

Mr. B. E. Fernando was not concerned with the political dynamics of the new system—not even in the oblique way in which Mr. L. O. de Silva sought to present the political objectives and implications of the new tax system.

Like Mr. Fernando, Mr. C. Pasupathy confined himself to the mechanics of the new tax system as it affected the private sector. "Mr. C. Pasupathy, a Chartered Accountant said that

# The Japs Again

## Tora ! Tora ! Tora !

BY CANAX

THE JAPANESE came, the Japanese saw, and the Japanese, well, just went away. Which is what's worrying a lot of people. If my Aunt Lillian can be considered as representative of a lot of people. Knowing her as I do, I think she can.

She got so agitated about the comings and goings of the Japanese that she actually sat down and wrote me a long tome. Doing that probably had a therapeutic effect on her. The effect on me, though, was anything but.

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in 1973 taxpayers would be called upon to pay one and three quarter years taxes in one year which was unfair. The government should consider giving such taxpayers a waiver for six months. Revenue would not be affected with the self assessment scheme coming into effect in 74-75. He said the new taxes would result in many companies just folding up because the burden of paying taxes was just too much. In the private sector one planned for a certain level of taxation but the new taxes had upset all these calculations. The new automatic penalties were also harsh because some firms could not anticipate their liabilities. Some firms and individuals with an income of Rs. 30,000 would be called upon to pay Rs. 90,000 as taxes. Companies would have 50 per cent of their profits taken for compulsory savings."

BRIEFLY, BUT COGENTLY Mr. Pasupathy explained what the fate of the private business houses would be

under the new tax system. This would apply also to private individuals who are self-employed and succeed in earning an income which will bring them into the current tax net. Mr. Pasupathy enumerates the hardships which will be imposed on persons in the private sector of commercially profitable undertakings, but either intentionally or unwittingly failed to point out (at least according to the Daily News report) that the private sector was completely doomed. The new tax system would not liquidate private capitalist or entrepreneur at one swipe. The process of liquidation will be slow and devious and would take a number of years—because of the lip-service still being paid to the "private sector" under the Five Year Plan.

When Lenin came to power in the former Tsarist Russian Empire all the means of production in the country were taken over at one go and socialism introduced the hard

I'm wondering if I shouldn't claim compensation from Aunt Lilly for all the sleepless nights she's caused me. On second thoughts, I'll lodge my claim with the Japanese Embassy instead. Given a choice, I'd say the Japanese are more sensitive to such things than my aunt could ever be. And more generous, too, if their war reparations is anything to go by. (All I ever get from her is a

way—probably still the only way. But in Sri Lanka today we think that we can introduce socialism by piecemeal legislation which makes only vicious incursions into the existing economic structure to destroy the "class" (political) opponents of the UF (demonstrated during elections) and to hand out the land and other assets to UF supporters (taken over from owners who had done a fairly good job of production).

This certainly is not socialism, nor will it even take this country in a general socialist direction. The new tax system and laws fall into this category of legislation of a self-defeating nature. The class enemies of the UF will only be partially destroyed (they may not suffer anything more than mere debilitation). And investment and production will register an all-round drop in 1973 (unless figures are falsified), and unless something is done to reverse the process the deterioration will be much more rapid in the years after 1973.

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big, wet kiss for my birthday, and a bigger and wetter kiss for Christmas. I wish X'mas wouldn't come round so often.)

IN THE MEANTIME I've shot off an equally long tome, meeting her point by useless point and also throwing in a couple of extra ones of my own, just to induce a little insomnia into her otherwise orderly and ordered way of life. This is what I said:

Dear Aunt Lilly,

Thank you for your long and interesting letter. It really made me sit up and think, which would be okay by me if I didn't find myself doing it at three in the mornings. You probably intended me to spare you a thought or two at a less ungodly hour, but then, that's me I guess. So please don't you lose any sleep over it.

I'm afraid you're wrong, Aunt, taking that bet with Uncle Leo, but not because he's right either. I don't know what made you so sure the Japanese were here to close the deal. As far as I know, Japan is not for sale, only their goods.

Uncle Leo was pretty way out too, yelling that some people were preparing to sell Sri Lanka, not buy Japan. As you yourself have told me so often, Uncle is a born grumbler and is always saying the jokers will sell this country down the river, but never speci-

fyng which river, probably because he doesn't know himself.

That was a wonderful picture you dreamed up, I know, but a bit fanciful. I doubt your having been able to buy for a song, as you put it, the latest quadrophonic sound system from the co-operative store next year: For one thing, the Japanese are not tired of Japan—at least not yet. Even if they were, the Japanese are nothing if not shrewd businessmen and would be willing to part with their country only to the highest bidder. As you rightly suspect, the Americans would certainly out-bid us without even trying, though I'm not so sure the Americans want to buy Japan in the first place. They're having enough headaches with Japan just as an ally, I doubt their eagerness to add another star to their already over-burdened flag. You may remember the obvious relief with which they handed back Okinawa, which shows how the Americans feel, so in the event of our seriously wanting to buy Japan we need not worry about competition from that quarter.

You've got it all wrong about the Japanese reactions during their stay here. No, Aunt, it wouldn't have mattered if we invited them at some other time of the year. The climate which they found not ideal has nothing to do with our weather or that

is not identical to theirs. And while I'm on the subject, I think you were less than fair by our weather. There's nothing wrong with it. It's also not as unpredictable as the weather one finds in most other countries, thanks to our Meteorological Department. If the weathermen say it won't rain, you can bet your last onion it will, so the secret is in properly interpreting the daily reports. I can't honestly answer your question about how it is in Japan, but have a feeling their weather reporting is not as advanced as ours since they're still toying around with transistors and have a long way to come to catch up with us. But they will, they will, if we don't watch it.

No, don't blame the Government for what you call its failure to charm the Japanese into selling their country to us. As I said, Japan is not up for sale yet, but that didn't prevent our Government from giving them the works. The Japanese were, in a sense, immersed in a heady mixture of yesterday's charm and tomorrow's comfort, so we effectively got the message across to them that we not only live beyond our means but beyond our time as well.

In the circumstances, your suggestion that the Government should have made a last-ditch offer, of all the dried chillies they want, would not have



made any difference. The Japanese are not that great chilli-eaters anyway, and besides, we don't have all the chillies we want, to begin with. You can't also be serious in suggesting we should have brought in the Americans to help clinch the deal, surely not after seeing the spectacle of Kissinger negotiating to sell South Vietnam without even owning the blessed country?

But you're quite right, and Uncle Leo quite wrong, about the Japanese. They are a charming race. Uncle, on the other hand, depends entirely on his unreliable memory of the war. I agree with him, though, about the Japanese being people of few words, but not that they tend to be repetitive. True, they shouted *Tora! Tora! Tora!* when just one *Tora!* would have amply described the havoc they played in Pearl Harbor, but that doesn't really prove anything, does it? Which reminds me, Uncle is just being mischievous or alarmist by observing that the Japanese called here about the same time of year they paid their surprise visit to the New World quite some time ago.

You're right again when you say that getting hold of Japan would have made NM stop worrying about our unemployment, but you're out on a limb when you imagine the Doctor would then have had enough industries to hand out one to each of our un-

employed over-18s and still have enough left to keep the ST(OP)C also happy. I don't think the Government plans to start a State Trading (Overseas Possessions) Corporation just now. It's nice of you to remember Ilangaratne and Subasinghe, I admit, but I doubt if they can find the time or the energy to devote to out-moded Japanese industries.

Take no notice of Uncle's warnings. Japan's prosperity is not merely because they lost the war but also because they work like busy bees all the time, stopping only to greet people. If anyone can do two things at the same time, I suppose the Japanese can, but you can't really bow the way they do and also manage to do your work simultaneously. And the Japanese are practical enough not to even try. Despite what he says, what's wrong if they persuade us to believe that hard work is a good thing? We can lose much, certainly no more than our laziness. Hard work happens to be one of the few acceptable addictions in the world, and laziness is not one of them.

Don't go to argue with Uncle Leo, especially when he himself feels fairly sure no clown can sell Sri Lanka even if he wanted to. I know it was Uncle who expressed the fear originally, so let him enjoy contradicting himself. No, Aunty, I haven't been able to check on his asser-

tion, but I do vaguely recall that we still owe the IMF something, so it's quite possible the IMF won't hear of it or approve any sale until we pay up. I'm sorry to appear so ignorant, but I also don't know where Uncle picked the one up about Americans not being worried if we sell ourselves, so long as we don't sell to Japan. I know Uncle reads a lot, but I didn't know Agatha Christie dishes out such info in her yarns. He may be right, though about US fears that Japan will, on buying Sri Lanka, flood the American market with cheap tea, cheap rubber and cheap coconut, as well as cheap arrack, cheap devil masks and cheap ebony elephants, in addition to what they already dump there by way of cut-price TV sets, transistors, cars, cameras and kimonos (sometimes with cute little Japanese girls inside, so Uncle is right on that point.)

Jokes apart, Aunty, why don't you take Uncle up on his suggestion and get yourself into a kimono? No, not because I agree with him that a kimono hides a multitude of sins, a lot more than a saree does, but because I think you'll be in for a pleasant surprise if you do, with the swift discovery that Uncle is feeling thirty year's younger—unless, of course, you don't consider that sort of surprise pleasant these days. However, simply ignore his remark

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# IS IT TRUE?

## Sherlock Holmes

### \* Train Travel

### \* Colombo Goodshed

### \* Paddy Production

IS IT NOT TRUE that rail travel today has become a hazardous undertaking? That, apart from the hazards of trains being chronically late, passengers have to be on guard every minute during the journey to look after themselves and their luggage? That the Railway authorities admit that thieves, pickpockets, ruffians and even armed bandits operate freely on the trains?

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that he'd like nothing better than a Geisha, if it will make you any happier, tell yourself he wouldn't know what to do with one, since he can't talk Japanese.

Finally, I agree with you that with the Japanese gone, we'd better stop day-dreaming, put our shoulders to wheels and our noses to grindstones, or even the other way round, and make the Five Year Plan tick like it really should, even if no-

That only those who travel without any luggage (or have somebody else who can look after it) can go to the restaurant for a cup of tea or a bun? That to reach the restaurant car through the crowded compartments is an undertaking as dangerous and difficult as climbing Mt. Everest? That once a passenger gets to the restaurant car he is left standing because all seats

body knows how it really should.

And, Auntie, one more thing: if you have any further questions, don't hesitate to drop a line—to the Japanese Ambassador here. Diplomats get paid for losing sleep over such queries.

My regards to Uncle Leo and tell him I said Geishas are not all that bad, unfortunately.

Affectionately yours,  
**Canax.**

are permanently occupied by those who drink beer and alcoholic spirits? That after the catering became a monopoly of the CGR there are no private caterers at the stations and at the important stations there are no persons selling coffee, tea or *vadai* on the platforms? That in some of the smaller stations where the CGR does no catering a few private hawkers operate? That the railway travellers are thankful for such small mercies? That the catering staff now consider themselves public servants (as important as Permanent Secretaries and the like) and treat the public in the most standoffish and cavalier fashion?

That frequently trains halt unexpectedly for hours because of engine failures? That a cursory Sherlock investigation revealed that of the 45 power sets the CGR has, over half are on the sick list every day? That on "lucky days" about 75% of the engines succeed in fulfilling their quota of work without a break down? That the average for breakdown is about 50%? That this is the reason why the Minister has decided to import 15 new power coaches? That there are whippers around railway yards that 15 of the old engines would be cannibalised to supply urgent spare parts to the engines which are functioning? That the lack of spares has begun to adversely affect the efficient running of these power coaches?

That foreign exchange is short and spares cannot be ordered? That an even greater problem, which is not talked about, is the lack of know-how to keep these 'engines' in good trim? That with the political witch-hunting (a totally unnecessary exercise) after May 1970, and the inevitable brain drain out of the CGR (into the private sector and abroad), the CGR does not have enough senior technical staff to cope with the work? That the trade unionists, who have become all-powerful in the CGR after May 1970, are in no position to supply the know-how to keep the engines and power coaches in running condition? That unless something drastic is done soon the CGR will face a disastrous shortage of skilled know-how? That the trade unions, which beat the tom-toms of the UF, cannot supply this need?

That there is something else which the trade unions cannot supply the CGR? That this is an essential service, namely a Security Service. That CGR trade unions used all the pressurising they could mobilise immediately after May 1970 to disband the fairly good Security Service which had operated on the CGR before? That as long as this Service had functioned on a centralised basis there was some check on thieves, ticketless travellers, pilferers and the like? That the UF government disbanded the Security Service because some favoured trade

unionists did not like the nose and face of the former Security Chief who had done an excellent job in keeping some order in the CGR? That the security service was thereafter decentralised and units were placed under station masters at different important stations? That after two years of this kind of operation passengers have forgotten that a unit called the Security Service exists on the CGR? That regular railway travellers say that they would consider themselves lucky if they see a Security Officer on duty once every ten trips on the Railway?



IS IT NOT TRUE that graft and corruption has increased in the CGR on the freight side in the last two years? That the way the Colombo Goods Shed operates is a scandal and even the trade unionists (members of the Advisory Councils and even Janatha Committees) accept this graft as part of the way of life in Sri Lanka? That if one takes a parcel for despatch to the Goodshed for transport by passenger train the man at the counter unashamedly asks what he would get if he is to send the parcel on the first available train? That the rate for such a "tip" is Rs. 2 a parcel? That if this tip is not given a whole lot of difficulties are raised about the box not being nailed down "correctly" or about the fact that the parcel was not "secured"

in terms of the CGR rules?

That once the santhosam is paid all these difficulties vanish into thin air? That if the tip was not according to schedule the consignor is penalised by the parcel being sent by a later train? That even greater difficulties are raised when parcels are received in Colombo from the outstations and have to be cleared? That if scarce commodities like onions and chillies are received, certain persons who work in the Goodshed expect gifts of such commodities? That this kind of levy is only made by one or two of the persons who work there? That the majority of them are satisfied with the scheduled santhosam paid to them?

That in the last one year or more the CGR has put up its freight rates? That one would expect greater and better service with the higher rates charged? That the opposite is now the rule? That standards of efficiency have dropped? That pilferage has increased? That sending goods by rail is a hazard which many have to face because they have no alternative way of sending their goods? That cultivators and producers in the rural sector who are able to get buyers and selling points in the city of Colombo and other towns have to depend on the CGR to transport their goods? That with this kind of additional expenses for santhosams and the like,

the cost to the consumer is pushed up?

That with the cost of private passenger transport becoming prohibitive people in the rural countryside have no alternative but to rely on public transport? That the CTB keeps people moving in the countryside though buses are often uncomfortably over-crowded? That one expects something better from the CGR but there is not the slightest doubt that the CGR is worse than the CTB? That ticket checkers at railway gates raise difficulties about passengers' luggage and demand a *santhosum* to let them through?

That very recently a firstclass passenger (in the air conditioned) had just one piece of luggage—a parcel which he carried himself in his hand without the help of a porter? That at the station he got down, the checker — out asked him what the parcel contained and he was told it was a sewing machine? That the checker told the passenger that according to the Railway Regulations a sewing machine could not be regarded as "luggage" and that it had to be "booked" and paid for? That the checker wanted the passenger to wait till all the passengers had left the station so that he could take him to the station master and get the "luggage" excessed? That the passenger found that it would be easier to pay the scheduled Rs. 2 and get his luggage passed?

And that is what he did?

That in the old days one paid excess only when the weight of luggage exceeded certain minima for the different classes? That personal luggage of passengers were not scrutinised to see whether they had only "clothes" and other goods the CGR thought was "personal"? That the present system is harassment? That rates laid down for freight is being imposed on passengers who take hand parcels (less than the stipulated minima in weight) which are not considered "personal goods" by the railway staff? That this new system has the door open for a new avenue for *santhosums*? That passengers prefer to pay the Rs. 2 than wait half an hour to see the Station Master and get their luggage cleared?

ISN'T IT TRUE that the Government is placing great hopes about the bountiful crop of paddy which the Maha will yield? That various "projected" estimated figures have been published? That on the strength of this Sri Lanka proposes to buy 50,000 tons of rice from China this year? That Sherlock Holmes is extremely doubtful whether these estimates will be fulfilled? That Government will do well to have alternate sources of supply if the harvest does not turn out to be what the Government hopes it will be? That apart from everything else the rain has not been up to the average in many

parts of the Dry Zone? That many tanks which should have been full by the end of November are still half empty? That rain has been patchy and irregular? That a few places have had the usual quota of rain? That many places have not had adequate rain? That it must be remembered that the rains for the Maha in the Dry Zone came late this year? That even after that the rain has been poor—except in a few places?

That, as this partial drought follows the failure of the Northeast Monsoon last year, the prospects in the Dry Zone are not very hopeful—in spite of the wishful thinking on the part of Government "agricultural" pundits? That in addition to the inadequate rains so far, many cultivators did not sow all the lands they could? That they had the problem of crop protection? That without cartridges protection of crops from wild animals like the wild boar becomes impossible? That even crackers and "gunpowder" to make a big noise are not available as in the past? That the result of all this is that the acreage under actual cultivation is less this year than even last year (after the April insurgency)? That departmental pundits have spread a smokescreen about high yielding varieties on lesser acreage to sustain their figures of spiralling production? That high yielding varieties of paddy need more fertilizer and

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## SAFARI IN CEYLON

Wandering in the Northern and North Central Provinces, Puttalam, Cheddikulam, Vavuniya: Thoughts on Village Life, Buffaloes and Ploughing and Chilli Planting.

By ALKARDI MUGUNA

THE WEATHER looked dismal when we left Colombo, the bus crowded and even more people from Negombo outside. When first I noticed anything it was at Madampe, the inter-planted coconut and the new, so it seemed, coconut plantations. The Deduru Oya seemed to be bestrewn with flowers, but from the bridge the flowers turned out to be white-foam or froth. The journey from Negombo to Chilaw took much less time than from Colombo to Negombo.

A cluster of small *Mara* trees looked beautiful. Near it was a gypsy camp. Further on there was a small forest of *Mara* trees, a strange sight because one usually sees the *Mara* tree only along roads on the long-distance routes. One of the finest *mara* trees in Ceylon is to be seen in Guildford Crescent.

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insecticides than ordinary paddy? That statistics, honestly compiled, will show that adequate fertilisers have not been bought? Most cultivators are in arrears with the MPCS and have therefore not drawn supplies on credit? That 1973 will bring shocks to all those who paint a rosy picture about paddy cultivation for Maha?

The first sight of a *thal* tree reminded us that we were approaching the Arid Zone of which Puttalam forms a part, but by then, it was too dark to see much. Red in the sky reminded me of the rhyme—

Red at night, shepherd's delight,

Red in the morning,  
Shepherd's warning.

The sunset may have been beautiful, but I had seen that sort of magic tropical sunset in Cumberland in the Lorton-Lowerwater valleys.

IN PUTTALAM there are neat little houses with walls made of coconut thatch. *Suriya* trees line the Town road out to Anuradhapura. This tree never grows straight, but it grows and leans over to one side. A very fine *suriya* tree is to be seen in Ambalangoda; it has grown in an arc. And the top of the tree nearly touches the ground. All the branches of this tree in Ambalangoda are on the top skyward side of the arc.

Young coconut at all stages of growth, and interplanted with the older palms, are the sight as you leave on the Anuradhapura road. The transition from coconut estates to jungle is abrupt, but

behind the jungle fringe on the roadside are teak forests which stretch for miles. You can see them if you peep through the jungle.

After the teak came the *chenas* or *henas*. The first *chena* I saw was of plantain trees very closely planted as in Africa. The next *chena* was an extensive one and had Indian corn. The third had paddy. So it went on. Some *chenas* seemed to have nothing, but I suspect they had plants newly sown and too small to see from a passing vehicle unless you looked hard. When I did look hard I always saw something. Here was not much manioc. *Murunga* trees were an arresting sight, light, airy, and pale green. They were to be seen near the Kala Oya. Grass grew lush near its banks.

Someone was growing mustard at the Kala Oya. I was told it grows to a height of about three feet. From here we do a long hop to Cheddikulam.

AT CHEDDIKULAM, I saw a *suriya* tree growing more or less straight. And there were three of them. I also saw a fine flower growing to a height of seven feet. The orange bud, from two to six inches long, opens out into yellow flowers, called *kira*. The plants were growing in clusters like a weed. Then I saw a wonderful sight.

Growing even more luxuriantly was a flowering

plant that could have been twelve feet high with a flower over a foot long and looking like ostrich feathers when gathered into a bunch. The feather was, in fact, more than two feet and is called *eethana*. My hostess gasped when she saw it, although she lives close by to where it grows. A small *mara* tree was in flower with its red, and red and yellow, flowers. Rather sparse on the tree, they would look better in a vase.

Now a word, about fences. I hate barbed wire as much as it is hated in hunting country in England, and I have often wondered what durable substitute we could use in Ceylon. I found it at Cheddikulam. *Arda-thoda* makes a good fencing shrub, growing thick and strong, but because it is not thorny I think it would be necessary to grow it on a good stout bund as fences are grown in England. Hard by was a thorny fencing plant called *ballan-kottu*.

By the Royal Cinema at Vavuniya there was a riot of bird song. Somebody said there were four varieties of birds, but I could only count two, one of which was the parrot. The birds were awfully busy singing perched on *mara*, coconut and *thal* trees, and flying around them. So it was, as far as the Roman Catholic Church, the time five o'clock in the evening. Beyond the Church, the

crows were in charge. At six in the morning there was the same riot of song, but a little more subdued. By 1.30 a.m. the birds had gone.

FOR ABOUT twenty miles north of Vavuniya some paddy fields were ploughed, many of them broadcast with seed, a few looking as if they had been transplanted. I also saw a few fields sown with seed paddy for transplanting

The few coconut trees I saw appeared a few dozens at a time round some homestead, and there was not many of this. Sometimes the trees did not even number a dozen. Plantain trees were much more in evidence. In the middle distance I saw the long arm of wood that is used in Jaffna for drawing water from wells. A sudden roar from over a hedge sounded like a tractor, but the rattle of wheels behind it betrayed it as a railway engine. The railway line lay hidden close to the road.

My furthest north was to a place where there were large farms as farms in Ceylon go. The one I saw, more than the rest, had a fine house close to the road, but screened from it by trees, but generally it was the lack of trees I noted most, for most of the land was under paddy. Anyway, there were lime trees, plantains, and coconut, and a lot of coconuts in a young nursery. There were cattle, some of them of an imported breed, fine looking

geese, and turkeys, the latter particularly susceptible to marauding animals. Chillies were the thing, and I have never seen such a fine lot of red chillies.

Retracing my steps, I saw a bread fruit tree, not supposed to grow in the dry zone, and clumps of *murunga* trees. The *vira* tree and the *palu* had replaced the *mara*, found further to the south, as trees lining the road. I had my meal, at one place, served to me on a *nelun* leaf.

WHAT IDEAS can one use to describe village life? No two villages are alike, especially the older villages which do not depend on any colonization scheme. Each has its own traditional way of life, its own traditions, and even its own material standards. A lot depends on each village's own environment. These villages forming a group can be utterly unlike each other. As marriages are usually arranged with a partner from another village, this does bring about a certain cohesiveness between villages.

In one village no ploughing is done, and I had quite a time to find out why. One person said that the wooden buffalo plough was just too expensive. Another said that there were not enough buffaloes. And yet the fields are tilled into mud by getting buffaloes to walk round them.

Yet another said that the buffaloes were not trained for ploughing, until I pointed out that this could hardly be an adequate reason. Finally, the same man said that even if they used a plough, the clayey soil would stick to the plough and make ploughing very difficult.

The nearest town plays a great part in village life. I think too easy access to a town discourages any cultivation at all in the dry season, and the bicycle brings towns that are far away very close. It is so easy to run up an account at the shop too. Bad roads do not deter traffic, but good roads makes travelling much more pleasant. Schools tend to take children away from the land, and there is hardly a village that does not have access to a school.

Villages have a fine way of life and it would be a pity to destroy it. The incidence of illness in villages is probably much less than it is in towns. Ceylon has every reason to be proud of her village children.

BASICALLY there may not be much difference between a village in the interior off the south coast, and one deep in the jungle in the N.C.P. if they are equally ancient, but there could be a lot of difference between two villages a mile apart. The differences are mostly on the surface because when it comes to the children

there is not much difference at all.

Some villages seem indescribably poor just as others appear well off compared with them. And a body that looks undernourished must not be taken as a sign of a hungry man. There are people who have told me in all good faith that there are people starving in the N.C.P. Frankly, I have travelled much, but I have failed to see anybody who could be described as starving anywhere in Ceylon these last ten years, except recently in the case of one or two professional begging types in Colombo. As for the years preceding the last ten years, an old man told me that on a monthly salary of Rs. 17/- a month when he was young he lacked nothing that he wanted, which is not the case now.

There is one village I know which I would describe as poor, both materially and intellectually. It has no one at the university as its neighbours have. An army of children can be seen going to school every morning to the next village and yet it is a small village. Some of the youth are nearly six-footers. I have seen them grow up over the years from e'kelo into massive hulks of men. Some of our youth are lean because they have not had the food that an American boy gets, but he is not hungry, whereas a well-nourished man who

missed one meal could be very hungry.

Chronic hunger is just a scientific term. It has not much more validity than that. It can by no means be equated with chronic illness. I once saw a F.A.O. map which depicted a large part of the people of East Africa as undernourished and yet I have passed right through the middle of that area and saw the people were healthier than ours in Ceylon and full of energy. I thought nothing was more absurd and misleading than the U.N.O. (F.A.O.) map. The world famous authority on these matters, Colin Clerk, would bear me out.

OF ONE THING I am certain, and that is that if there were less children in that village I have just mentioned, those that were left would be less well fed and not better fed than they are now. Mathematically such a proposition would be absurd which just goes to show that there is a higher science than mathematics. When the Black Death removed about half the population of England, there was less food to go round and not more, and there was more hunger because of that plague.

Fashionable ladies and educated men would swear it cannot be so. So Family Planning goes on because of this error. Nobody in Ceylon really likes Family Planning especially  
(Continued on page 22)

# SPRINKLER IRRIGATION

—By C. N. N. MURTHY—

NO DOUBT water is a valuable input in agriculture. But whenever water is taken from a canal, tank or well, it is wasted considerably during its run to the field either by seepage or evaporation or breakage of channel bunds. About half of the irriga-

tion water is also lost by surface flooding. Indiscriminate use of irrigation water also presents difficult drainage problems.

Thus, we waste water on one hand while elsewhere the crops may be in desperate need for water. Sprinkler irrigation,

instead of surface flooding is most ideal for efficient and economic use of water.

In sprinkler irrigation, water is pumped under pressure through pipeline and is delivered to the field through specially designed outlets called sprinklers. Sprinklers with perforated pipes deliver water through small holes, drilled at close intervals

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the younger generation, and as we are not yet as corrupt here as in certain other countries, they will not practise it. Thank heavens for that.

The rice I had today was *sunsa hal*, which really describes a preparation of the pounded grain. I understand it consists of all the broken pieces of grain that you get from pounding or husking and, it excludes all the whole pieces. The result is that when it has been boiled it tastes anything but rice, and it has a peculiar taste. I remember tasting something like it before, but I cannot remember now what it was. With the *sunsa hal* I had a white sambol mixed with very finely sliced green chilli, and also something that I have never had before, mango sliced as fine as a wafer and served with coconut milk and little pieces of dried fish. We had absolutely nothing else, and it all tasted so good that I was able to eat much more than my fill.

A LITTLE WHILE ago I was going through some of the reasons given me for not ploughing their paddy fields by people who just let their buffaloes churn their flooded fields straight into mud by driving them round and round, in small circles around the fields. You might call this harrowing with buffaloes without using a harrow. Perhaps the best explanation given me was by a man who said that as the "mudding" has to be done anyway even if the field was ploughed, it was a great time-saver to go straight on to it without the preliminary ploughing. If this is true then one might ask why those who plough do so. I would say that the answer is that it depends on the Land.

Sometimes you can get a fine crop of chilli plants but very few chillies on them. Weeding chillies with a mammoty when the plants are small is rather exacting on the eye. Like any farming job it

has to be done fairly fast or the sheer immensity of the job would mean that it would never be finished. There is a skill or art about the way you kick the soil and so it will not grow again if it rains before they have dried. Some people use an English gardening rake to gather up the weeds into small heaps. In England much of this sort of weeding is done by hand and not with an implement, the man crawling between the rows. But here the chillies are transplanted and do not have to be trimmed out, as turnips do in England. But there a "stitcher", drawn by tractor or horse, is used to throw the soil back on the turnips after they have grown little. Weeding chilli, like as weeding turnips is a back-breaking job, whether the one is done with a mammoty or the other on your knees. On your knees you have a sack tied round each leg to keep them clean and dry.

*(To be concluded)*



## Overseas Chinese and Peking

From  
A Special Correspondent

Kuala Lumpur,

OUTSIDE China, mainly in the countries of South-East Asia, there live around 15 million Chinese. The drive by the Chinese towards developing and exploiting natural resources and subjecting local population in the countries of South-East Asia to ex-

tend their influence became apparent in the second half of the last century.

As a matter of principle that policy underwent no changes after the establishment of "Mao's regime" in continental China. For example, from 1949 to 1972 the number of the Chinese coming to Burma amount-

ed to 190 thousand, to India-around 80 thousand, to Indonesia—over 60 thousand, to South Vietnam—about 50 thousand. A considerable expansion of the Chinese communities was also observed in Laos, Thailand, Nepal, Pakistan and in the Philippines.

After 1949 the investments by the Chinese in the area of South-East Asia sharply increased. Before 1949 their value amounted to slightly over one billion US dollars; in 1956 the

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along a segment of the circumference of a pipe. The water jets provide fairly uniform distribution of water over a strip of land along both the sides of the pipeline. What ever is thus applied to the crop above the ground in the form of spray.

THERE ARE three systems of sprinkler irrigation. Stationary system: Here the pump, the pipeline and the sprinklers are fixed, i.e. they cannot be moved from place to place. With the starting of the engine or the electric motor, water is pumped and passed through the pipes, up the sprinklers and fanned out on the fields. Semi-stationary system: The pump and the main lines are fixed in a location, but the lateral sprinklers are carried from field to field. Portable system: The pump, the lines and the sprinklers can be carried from field

to field. It is also a mobile unit.

All the three systems have one thing in common they consist of a pump to tap the water, a pipeline to convey the water, and sprinklers attached to pipelines to sprinkle water over the field. But in the case of stationary and semi-stationary systems the main lines are usually laid underground. In the stationary system, the sprinklers form a part of the underground pipelines whereas in the semi-stationary system the sprinklers are detachable.

This system can be effectively, worked only on non-windy days. On windy days, the spray from the sprinklers gets destroyed and water may fall in place where it is not needed.

The advantages of sprinkler irrigation are many. It requires little or no land levelling. So, time and labour involved in level-

ling and making channels for surface irrigation can be saved. No channel bunds are required, so more space for crop growth is available.

Water supply can easily be controlled, thus no water is wasted and more area can be irrigated.

Sprinkler system can be worked even at night. Irrigating by night save on water as it does not evaporate as quickly as in the day time. Fertilizer application is also made easy with the sprinkler method. By dissolving soluble fertilizers in water, an effective foliar spray can be done through this system. Another advantage is that this method helps in conserving the soil. Sprinkler irrigation can be used for almost all crops except rice and jute, and on nearly all types of soils.

Continued from page 23

amount reached 3 billion dollars; in 1966 it was 6 billion dollars while by 1972 the amount of the investments has reached 10 billion dollars.

In the area of South-East Asia the Chinese have under their control 90 per cent of retail trade as well as a considerable proportion of wholesale trade and transport facilities. They hold in their hands almost the entire money credit. To the Chinese belongs a great number of various industrial enterprises, gambling houses and cinemas. Millionaires Y.K.Pao and C.Y. Tung of Hong Kong compete with Niarnos and Onassis in the amount of the amassed wealth.

CHINESE BUSINESS capital is closely connected with the foreign monopoly capital. From the very first day of its emergence in South-East Asia the Chinese bourgeoisie was used by Western colonialists as an intermediary in the economic enslavement and plundering of the population of the area. Nowadays, especially after a rapprochement emerging between Washington and Peking, the U.S. big business and the Chinese capital have considerably increased their co-operation. The Chinese emigrants readily organise mixed companies and act as intermediaries in the exchange of goods between U.S. companies and local manufacturers.

Peking makes use of the opportunities open to the Chinese emigrants so as to sell their goods in the countries of South-East Asia. Getting round the customs barriers Peking floods the markets of neighbouring countries with its goods and this undermines their economy. A considerable amount of Chinese goods is regularly supplied to the markets in Thailand, the Philippines, Indonesia and other countries of South-East Asia. In view of the fact that the Chinese sell their goods at dumping prices the local manufacturers are not able to compete and are forced to close down their enterprises.

The Chinese emigrants in some countries are engaged in growing opium, buying it up and taking it across borders within the "fertile triangle" which comprises Burma, Laos and North Thailand. One of the most prosperous opium dealers Chan Chih-fu lives in Burma. The opium trade brings tremendous profits to the Chinese. Another source of profits for the Chinese emigrants in Burma is buying up and resale of precious stones. Hong Kong and continental China receive annually millions of dollars worth of precious stones.

Peking had striven to turn emigrant communities into strong points in South-East Asia. The French magazine *Revue de France* had recently stated: "One

should not discount ideological subversive activities in the countries that are China's neighbours carried out with the help of a sizable Chinese minority whose nationalism can sometime take an upper hand over ideological differences with their mother country. The slogan *Asia for the Asians* in the minds of the Chinese means *Asia in the hands of the Chinese*. 14 million Chinese in South-East Asia and the peoples of the region are meant to be under their influence and not under that of the whites."

In the countries where the Chinese are not permitted to engage in political activities they make a wide use of the patronage system, i.e. they finance and help their agents out of local nationalities to climb the ladder of success and influence. Greatest successes in this field were attained by the Chinese in Cambodia and Indonesia where they managed to push their proteges into governments.

#### PROBLEM SOLVED

Bill Shepherd, who owns a taxi company in Wolverhampton England, found an original way of solving union management problems. He urged his drivers to join the Transport and General Workers Union; then he joined it and appointed himself union shop steward.

# Black Money Inherent In Indian Capitalism

By. **ASHIS BARMAN**

INDIAN CAPITALISM did not come into being over the ashes of feudalism. It did not take shape by developing capitalist forms of production and an infrastructure of science and technology. It started its stunted existence by way of borrowed, obsolete machinery and technology sold to local traders by British imperialism. Even this deformed growth was allowed by British capitalism only in a handful of manufacturing sectors like textiles, jute and sugar. In the iron and steel making enterprises, only Tatas and Indian Iron could survive against heavy odds.

Born thus, with its roots in both feudalism and trader-speculation, Indian capitalism never gained the entrepreneurial élan and independence of early, western capitalism. On the contrary, its productive tendencies remained firmly anchored in the attitudes of the trader-speculator in terms of quick gain, instead of laying the foundation of the country's self-reliant industrialization. In the sphere of management, therefore Indian capitalism relied mainly on evasion and manipulation of accounting and production of low quality goods. As a consequence, excepting perhaps Tatas, Indian capitalism has

even ignored the training of good management cadre for its enterprises. Dominated by feudal values and the trader disposition, our capitalists relied mainly on trusted members or caste brothers adept at book manipulation, to run their show.

In the wake of independence, Indian capitalism, found itself, historically in a jam. It discovered that it lacked the technology and know-how of modern capitalist economics on the one hand, while on the other, its capacity and will to mobilize internal resources, as against world imperialism, was extremely poor. Because of having largely kept out of the struggle for the independence of the country and got stigmatized in the eyes of the poorer section of the people as heartless speculators, the capitalist class has been unable to create any independent base of its own among the masses of this country.

IN THE PROCESS of the national liberation struggle and the trade union and kisan movements, and lastly in view of the ideological impact of world socialism on our people the possibility of exploiting our people for fourteen hours, as in the early capitalist countries also

became remote. Another source of primitive accumulation of early capitalism, namely plunder and exploitation of the countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America was also beyond the capacity of our tycoons.

All these factors condemned Indian capitalism to play the role of the small-time collaborator of imperialism while simultaneously indulging in the severest possible exploitation of the people by way of manipulation of the market mechanism through speculation, black market, and supply of sub-standard products. Black money gains became the Indian variant of primitive accumulation. Unable to go in for plunder in foreign lands and legally debarred by the aroused nationalism of the country from exploiting the people as in the early days of capitalism this, massive manipulation, both of the books and the market, became the crucial method of primitive accumulation of our bourgeoisie. But this accumulation, being purely non-productive and hidden, unlike in early capitalism, has in the course of only two decades become the most potent danger to our economic advance, even on capitalist lines. For Indian capitalism itself feeds this monster of black money.

HOW TERRIBLY destructive the vast hoard of black money has now turned out to be can easily be guessed by the following

facts — which are more likely to be understatement than the reality. According to the Government's estimate the total assets of 25 big business houses in 1963-64 were Rs. 2,609.0 crores, while it is reported that, according to the Wanchoo Committee, the total black money deals in 1968-69 alone was to the tune of Rs. 1,400 crores.

Again, while it is estimated that the assets of these big business houses have increased in 1967-68 to Rs. 4,032.4 crores, it is reckoned by the Wanchoo Committee that the total estimated black money in the country is Rs. 7,000 crores. This means, in terms of the Indian economy, that the entire economic activity of this country, inclusive of planning, is being held to ransom by black money. This cancerous hoard, unless it is flushed out ruthlessly, can any day over-turn the entire Plan estimates, the price ratio between demand and supply of finished goods, raw materials and services—in short, the entire economy could be, and, in fact, is largely being undermined by the operation of black money. Nothing else explains the sudden spurt of prices of foodgrains and various consumer items in recent months.

THE GROWTH and danger of this black money economy is inherent in the character of our capitalism,

half of which is trader-speculator while the other half is deformed entrepreneur. However paradoxical this may sound in terms of developed capitalist economics, because of this peculiar growth of stunted capitalism, our Government has no other alternative in the matter of economic development than firstly, to nationalizing all the vital sectors of our economic activity and secondly, to crushing black money operations. Since both are rooted in the same system of economy and flourish not independently of each other but in a perverse togetherness, no solution to our economic crisis can be found in piecemeal action on the part of the Government, which is committed to socialism.

Apart from the doctrine of socialism, and whether the ruling party is committed to it or not, any partial measure either to control the prices of essential commodities or to tackle the menace of black money—both of which are interconnected—would provoke the non-cooperation of our big bourgeoisie. Go slow, closure, lock-out and disruption of the distributive channels will become the order of the day, unless the Union Government at one move takes over the key sectors of the economy, destroys black money and controls distribution of essential goods.

In the abstract, simultaneous take-over of such vital sectors of the economy may appear a forbidding challenge, but, if one takes into account the complete isolation of our monopoly gentry from the people, the already established and intact distributive channels, the railways and other communication systems, the popularity of Mrs. Gandhi and the mood of the people it becomes clear that these steps will not only be welcome but eminently viable, given the will. They will in fact, inspire a large number of trained management cadre, fretting in the private sector today, to come forward with their ability to help the country. Legislation could ensure, if necessary, that those trained personnel who still sit on the fence and are required by the country to render their services, are also inducted to assist the nation's progress.

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# A CRAM COURSE IN HOTEL-KEEPING

By NAOMI BARRY

*Hong Kong.*

The 16 men from Peking trooped through the Hotel Mandarin here, taking copious notes and asking many questions about building materials, drainage, air conditioning, garbage disposal, carpets, tiles and room service. Through an interpreter, they repeatedly said, "Oh beautiful, oh very good".

"The Trading Group of China National Metals and Minerals Import and Export Corp. from the Ministry of Foreign Trade of the People's Republic of China" then went studiously down the halls of other hotels—the Peninsula, the Lee Gardens, the new Excelsior, the unfinished Furama and the Lisboa in Macao. Although they didn't talk much, the object of their research was clear: China wants to find out how Hong Kong receives foreign visitors.

AT THE FURAMA the group busily snapped photographs of air vents, door details and fixtures, admitting they needed to acquaint themselves with international standards. In their existing hotels, there is so little modern comfort that you have to get out of bed to switch off the center light in the room.

To be less conspicuous, the men from Peking wore conservative business suits, ties and white shirts instead of black Mao costumes. Their "discreet" presence—of course, noted all over the colony—sparked the question.....

"How soon will China open up for tourism?"

Hong Kong architects and hotel operators estimate it will take five years, may be three, if its immense manpower reserves are used. Hong Kong's Excelsior Hotel went up in 18 months. But China does not yet have Hong Kong's know-how. Committee decision is a deterrent to fast building, a local hotel operator noted.

NO HOTEL construction on the mainland has been reported since before World War II, although a recent official visitor to Peking says he saw six excavation sites.

There are other hints that China's getting ready: The study of Russian has been dropped for English; an American interior decorator, Dale Keller, has been to Peking three times; more than a million visa applications have been filed; a representatives of Carrier Air Conditioning was

invited to one of the trade delegation's cocktail parties.

About 23,000 foreign businessmen were given approval to attend the recent Canton Fair, but the unprecedented number was a strain. Because of limited accommodations, many had to remain in Hong Kong. Whenever a group departed, leaving bed space behind, another group was allowed to proceed.

A British businessman who has made the trip to Canton several times advises a survival kit of personal stores, which he says should include instant coffee, salami, tinned pate, cookies, and dark bread. Since there isn't much doing after business hours, people tend together for snacks in their rooms late at night. Room service is not reliable, so Mr. Cumine also suggested a few tea bags. Boiling water, he said, is always available.

The Chinese permit two bottles of spirits to be brought in by each person. Mr. Cumine suggests half-gallon bottles, since the size is undefined. Gin drinkers should bring their own tonic. One visitor, he said, brought 48 cans of tonic along with a large bottle of gin and there were no problems. (He also recommends bringing openers for cans and bottles). The local beer is considered to be good.

**SOAP AND SHAMPOO** should be carried, he said, adding:

"Aerosol fresheners, we found, were necessary. Some of the floors of the hotel are only used twice a year, during the fairs, thus giving the rooms an unused smell. Bedbug and mosquito killers had their uses.

"Visitors should not be put off bringing what they need because baggage can be checked through from the Kowloon railway station to their Canton hotel rooms. They don't have to carry anything except their briefcases."

In Hong Kong the, visiting Chinese technicians were eager to learn. They were particularly impressed with chilled drinking water attachments on hotel bathroom faucets, the signal in the housekeeper's office that tells whether a call for room service has been answered and such features as outside balconies on every bedroom. This seemed like extravagance at first glance, but the explanation that the balconies take the brunt of the sun and thus save on air conditioning brought forth a chorus of "very good."

The trade commission indicated that it thought highly of the quality and durability of German machinery, respected American elevators, admired the precision of Swiss watches and granted that the Japanese were good imitators but felt that their merchandise would not last.

**THE CHINESE** delegation was reluctant to discuss the sites of the proposed hotels, which Hong Kong experts surmised will be primarily for businessmen with perhaps a luxury hotel for visiting dignitaries.

Leading Hong Kong architect Eric Cumine (a Eurasian born and raised in Shanghai) was invited to a select reception given the delegation by the China Resources Company in the Harbour Room of the Mandarin.

Said Cumine, I targeted on the leader, asking whether there was a 30-story 3,000 room hotel really being in built Canton. I insisted on an answer. He did not know but queried a colleague. Not 30 stories but 27, not 3,000 rooms but nearly 1,000.

"I told them that four of the hotels they visited were designed by me. They listened. By parading one subject after another we found their real interest.

"Accustical treatment between rooms. Privacy and security. How did we manage that?

"I told them of the high costs of a studio-like job, and that it was not practical to have more than a six-inch concrete wall which would be a supporting wall. This also transfers sound to another floor, particularly if it were well built.

"They were humble."

Cumine believes that future Chinese hotels for "foreign friends" will be located outside the cities, and based his deductions on history and a knowledge of the national psychology.

"They will give them good settings and beautiful gardens. Being outside the cities, the hotels will be controllable compounds. There will be independent buildings nearby to house the bureaucrats who deal with the visitors.

"Not long ago I designed a residence for an important Hong Kong Communist. The man said to me, 'How did you know what the plans should be?

"I told him, 'I am Chinese too. I knew you would be wanting lots of separate entrances for secret visits."

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