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* BLEAK PROSPECTS

* THE EVASION OF TAXATION IN CEYLON — THE AMNESTY

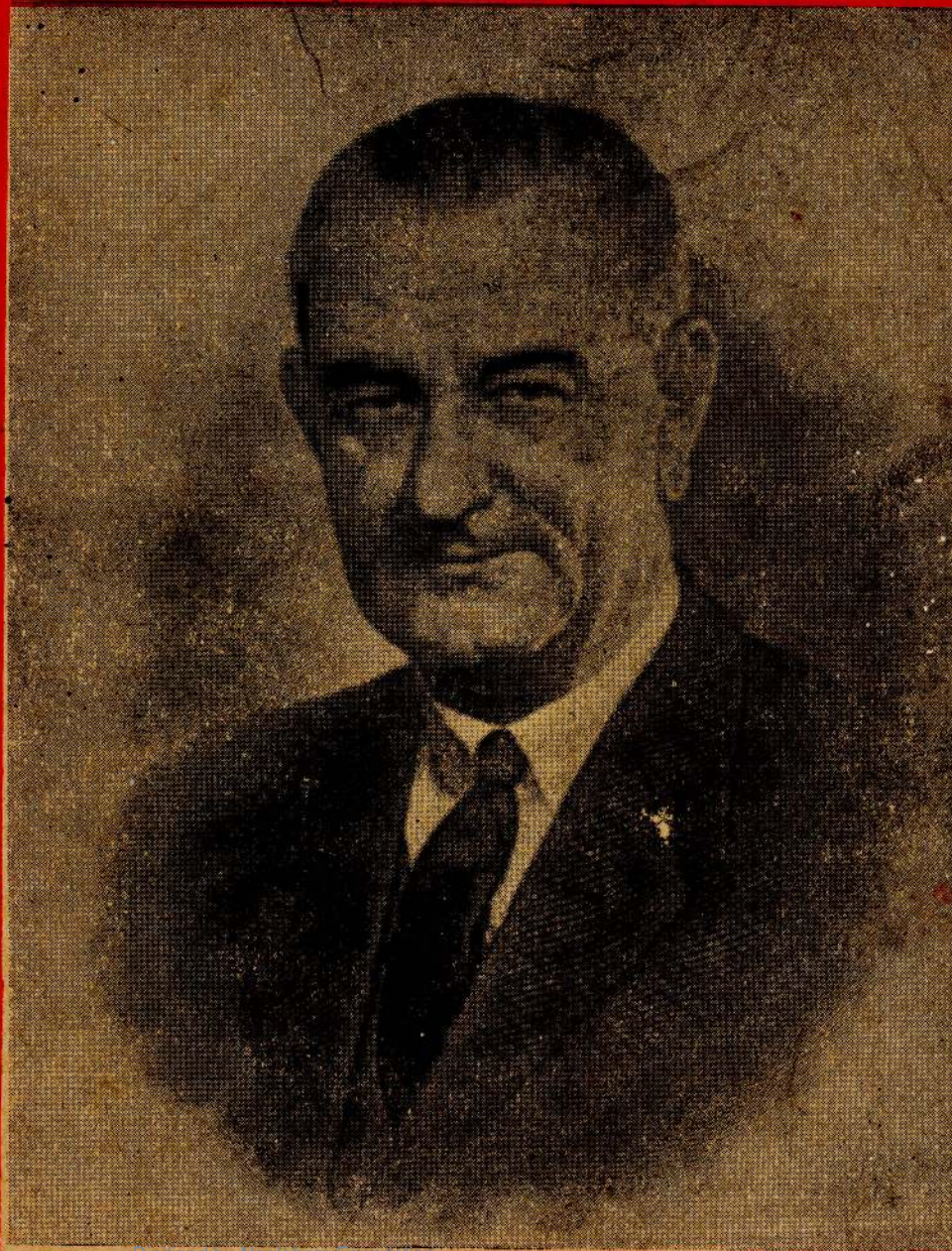
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Tribune

BLEAK PROSPECTS

ARTICLES in this issue also reflect the bleak prospects ahead of this country in the year 1973.

Even though one need swear by what a bourgeois paper like the *London Economist* says—especially of a country like Sri Lanka which is committed firmly to a socialist path—yet one cannot deny that journals like the *Economist* set out facts in an objective manner and that these facts are more telling than any comments they make or sermons they preach. The latest quarterly review of the *Economist* Intelligence Unit examining the situation in Sri Lanka stated:

"The political situation is full of pitfalls as the high rate of unemployment which seems to have been the basic cause of the insurrection has not yet been tackled, and the hard-line sector among the (Moscow) Communists who are members of the present coalition Government has gained control of the Communist Party. It is possible that the CP will either be pushed out of the Government or leave it. This may further strengthen subversive elements although it should make it easier for Mrs. Bandara-

naikie to pursue a middle-of-the-road policy.

"But the crux of the matter is the country's critical foreign exchange predicament. With dubious export prospects, balance-of-payments aid (as distinct from project aid) is needed on a large scale if imports, already severely pruned, are not to be cut down to a level at which economic activity ceases up altogether. So far, such aid is not forthcoming either from the IMF or from non-Communist countries because Sri Lanka has held out against the IMF's request for a significant devaluation of the rupee. Provided international bankruptcy is kept at bay and sufficient investment goods and industrial materials are imported, a modicum of growth may be achieved next year. In fact, a very high level of investment is stipulated under the ambitious Five-Year Plan (1972-76) which by next year should be well under way but so far has not yet got off the ground. Because of this, and of the need to increase export earnings the Government has again turned to the foreign private investor with transfer gua-

rantees and attractive investment incentives.

"But this policy will only succeed if foreign enterprise, which has been completely discouraged by the xenophobic state-orientated economic policy of recent years, is reassured by the better treatment of existing private investors. A notable exception is the tourist industry in which foreign business is taking an interest and which seems to have recovered more swiftly than expected from the setback suffered by the insurrection: 1973 could be a good year for this sector provided the political scene remains relatively calm."

MANY ARTICLES which have appeared in the *Tribune* in the recent past and many more which will appear in the immediate future will tend to confirm the factual conclusions of the *Economist*. We do not accept the *Economist's* remedies to solve the problems of the world, but nevertheless we always examine with great respect the factual data set out in an objective manner by the *Economist*—even though the rather sharply cynical idiom the *Economist* often indulges in tends to put off many who might otherwise pay greater attention to what it says.

In this issue we have the second instalment of the article on THE EVAISION OF TAXATION IN CEYLON by Manil Silva. In this article she deals more

specifically with the problems stemming from the Amnesty which "brought out" a great deal of the black money in the country. Canax is back again this week in his *From The Easy Chair* with AN EXCLUSIVE STORY on the PRESS. It is a rather topical piece on a burning question of the day. *Alkardi Mugana* is on *Safari* again, and this time he makes a trip to Ambalangoda, and his roving eye probes the manner in which string hoppers are made to the bathing facilities near the Resthouse in that town.

Hamilton Gnanamuttu writes on the ROCK RIVER VALLEY. It is a nostalgic and sentimental piece about the Gal Oya valley where he has spent many years of his life. This article is the text of a broadcast he made in the series *Off the Beaten Track* in Channel One, of the SLBC. The Editor and other contributors deal with the Constitutional Crisis and there are references to the worsening economic situation in the country. It is hoped that the *Production Year* campaign will produce some results and provide a silver lining to the dark clouds on the Sri Lanka horizon.

In India, drought has brought hunger and misery to over 200 million people in 14 of the 22 states but apart from this natural disaster the political unrest in many states has begun to take a heavy toll. Tamil Nadu is torn between the DMK and the ADMK,

The Evasion Of Taxation In Ceylon: The Amnesty

By Manil Silva

A FAIR PICTURE of the extent of tax evasion in Ceylon can be seen from the information given annually in the Administration Report of the Commissioner of Inland Revenue, but more particularly from the analysis of the results of the 1965 Amnesty. What is significant is that voluntary declarations were made under the Amnesty, so that evasion disclosed therein is admitted by the evader himself and not based on the assessment of evaded income made by an assessor after an investigation.

The Administration Report of the Commissioner of Inland Revenue for 1966 contains a report on eva-

but more serious is the trouble in Andhra where there is a compelling demand of a further bifurcation into *Telengana* and *Andhra*. Two articles we publish provide background information on the difficult situation in that part of India. In the international scene, the prospects of peace in Indo-China is most heartening and a new phase will open in the history of East Asia in the contemporary period. We also carry an article about Indonesia which should bring revealing light on current problems in that region.

sion of tax which reflects the study and work done by the Department on tax evasion, and an analysis of the types of business and incomes with the relevant figures of evaded income, from which many significant conclusions can be drawn. This is what the report says:

"Apart from the inspections carried out by the Investigating Officers, number of searches under the Inland Revenue Act had to be completed in order to deal with the principal fields of tax evasion. The activities of dealers in motor spare-parts, textiles and food-stuffs were fairly thoroughly investigated. The number of searches carried out was in respect of 46 cases. In these cases, the department insists on proper stock-taking and accounting so that future evasion will be substantially reduced. The number of taxpayers investigated and assessment settled by the Investigation Branch were 58 and undisclosed income assessed is Rs. 15,657,514 and the tax on that was Rs. 7,056,708. Apart from this work, investigation has also been completed in the Regional Offices and Assessing Branches into the affairs of 199 taxpayers and this resulted in the final assessment of additional income of Rs. 13,701,261 and addi-

tional tax of Rs. 3,859,021. When regard is had to the fact that Rs. 138,210,200 was declared under the Amnesty during the period of two months, it will be seen that the total extent of evasion is very considerable. The results of investigation work alone total Rs. 29,358,775 undisclosed income and additional tax of Rs. 10,915,729.

"The previous Amnesty which was in force for two months ending on 31st December, 1964, had yielded declarations of undisclosed income amounting to Rs. 20,346,086. It was clear from information available to the department that this was a very insignificant part of the evaded income. It was therefore decided to grant a second Amnesty which was in force for the period 18th December 1965, to 21st February, 1966. The second Amnesty has no doubt proved successful in that 596 persons made declarations amounting to Rs. 138,210,200 resulting in a tax of Rs. 46,070,066 as against the estimate included in the Budget of Rs. 15,000,000. The success of the Amnesty was due to the widespread publicity through notifications and announcements by the department and even to a greater extent by voluntary publicity by the Press in the normal dissemination of news which had an appreciable impact on these taxpayers. It must be admitted that this publicity along with pinpointed searches proving to such

persons the awareness of the department as to the extent of evasion has contributed very largely to the success of the Amnesty. Steps were taken to ensure that persons who had made declarations under the Amnesty will hereafter keep proper accounts and make correct return."

THE STATISTICS relating to the Amnesty are set out below:

TABLE: 2.
Declarations under the Amnesty

	Rs.
Cash	66,108,035
Stock	40,044,978
Debts	11,753,688
Articles of value	6,579,815
Personal Expenses	13,723,684
	<u>138,210,200</u>

TABLE: 3.
Declarations as to Source of Income

Agriculture	1,794,251
Textiles	42,090,743
Hardware	17,550,187
Foodstuffs	7,134,010
Motor Spares	8,258,769
Paper and Books	5,241,574
Gems and Jewellery	10,949,472
Miscellaneous	14,597,013
Export	1,798,433
Illegal Trade	7,902,810
Manu- facture	6,811,608
Profession	1,523,497
Rent and Interest	6,489,045
Other Sources	6,068,788
	<u>Rs. 138,210,200</u>

(See Table 4 on next page)

THE ANNUAL personal income assessed for tax purposes during the years preceding the amnesty was of the order of Rs. 1000 million of which little over 50% was from employment. In this field tax evasion by making false returns is insignificant and as pointed out earlier the non-declaration of liability to tax constitutes marginal evasion. If the residual annual non-employment income of about Rs. 500 million, (assessed on the basis of returns as well as investigation and consequent higher assessment) is compared with the figure Rs. 138,210,200, the amount of the voluntary declaration of evasion in 1966, consisting of purely non-employment income, shows a very high percentage of evasion.

The following table (5) shows the extent of evasion according to the principal sources of income namely agriculture, trade, professions and investment.

It is clearly easier to make incorrect returns of agricultural and professional incomes. Personal agricultural income consists mostly of coconut income and to a lesser extent of other incomes. As is well known most of the coconut acreage is not company owned. The omission of sales of nuts and the actual amount of the crop are not easy to check. It will not be far wrong to say that tax payers have no fear of the danger of discovery and were therefore not induced much

TABLE: 4.

Declarations classified according to amount declared.

Rs.	Rs.	No. of Declarations	Total Amount Declared Rs.
50,001	50,000	159	4,535,221
100,001	100,000	128	9,938,824
250,001	250,000	163	26,356,827
500,001	500,000	93	32,501,359
750,001	750,000	24	14,997,412
1,000,001	1,000,000	11	10,200,096
	and over	18	39,680,461
		Total	596
			138,210,200

Tables - 2,3,4. — Source: Administration Report, Commissioner of Inland Revenue, 1966

TABLE: 5

	Amount declared in Rs. under 1965 Amnesty	Average of the total Income Assessed in 1963 and 1964*	Column 1 as a % of Column 2
Agriculture	1,794,251	1593	1.0
Trade	124,129,870	3231	34.7
Professions	1,523,497	233	6.6
Investment	6,488,045	405	16.2

* Figure to nearest Rs. 100,000
Source- Administration Reports Commissioner of Inland Revenue.

by the advantages of the Amnesty.

The same applies to professions. Hence the evaded income of 1.0% and 6.6% are insignificant, and most of the evaded income from these sources had to be assessed by actual investigation as the Amnesty was of very little help. It is reasonable to infer that the results of the Amnesty did not reveal the extent of the evasion of tax in these fields.

IN THE CASE of trade, the methods of investigation adopted included raids and searches. The

checking for purposes of turnover tax also created a strong sense of the danger of discovery by the Inland Revenue. Consequently in this area of activity persons took advantage of the Amnesty.

In the period prior to the Amnesty the Revenue Department had publicised the checking work done in particular branches of the trading sector—motor spares, hardware, textiles and wholesale dealers in grains and food stuffs. This publicity had the effect of driving many evaders

to take quick advantages of the Amnesty.

Looking at the figures relating to trade (Tables 3 & 4) classified according to amounts declared there are several inferences to be drawn.

There are 24 cases of incomes of Rs. 5 to 7 1/2 lakhs 11 cases of Rs. 7 1/2 lakhs to a Rs. one million each and 18 cases of over Rs. one million. Nearly all these are cases of income from trade. That returns previously made by the tax payers did not include such large amounts, shows the utter disregard the tax payer in this area had for the tax laws of the country.

As all this income would be taxed at 85% the revenue loss exceeds Rs. 42 million. Thus the extent of tax evasion disclosed is unbelievably large and constitutes a significant portion of an year's income tax revenue; Rs. 217.2 million for 1963/64, Rs. 219.2 million in 1964/65 (which included the tax of Rs. 46 million under the Amnesty). It will also be seen that the Amnesty declaration amounted to 24.7% of the average annual assessment of income from trades as previously assessed by the Department. Since these amounts also include the income kept out by the tax payer but discovered and taxed by the assessor, the percentage of income not disclosed by the tax payer must be very much higher.

SINCE STOCKS in hand refer only to trade and business the under declared Rs. 40 million under this head (Table. 2) - is again a very high percentage of the figure of income previously declared. This picture is not complete without reference to the investigation work and re-assessment by the Department, stated in the Administration Report of the Commissioner of Inland Revenue.

The figures above indicate a disturbingly high degree of tax evasion. Even after the intensive raids and declaration of the 1965 Amnesty, the investigation work for 1967/68 onwards does not indicate a decline in the amount of evaded income tax, which constitutes nearly 10 percent of the annual income tax revenue.

Significant evidence of evasion is also available from the results of the inspections under the Business Turnover Tax laws. Table 7 provides statistics of the number of inspections and the undeclared additional turnover being the amount of sales which have been kept out of the accounts.

The type of evasion in this case is only that of omission of sales which is one of the many methods already referred to. The number of inspections carried out do not constitute even 1% of the number

TABLE: 6.

Evaded Income & Tax thereon Recovered by Investigation

	No of Cases	Additional Income Rs.	Additional Tax Rs.	Penalties Rs.
1662-63	11	383,875	165,361	37,810
1963-64	75	14,723,828	7,019,653	790,500
1964-65	60	24,110,063	12,509,988	204,660
1965-66	257	29,358,775	10,915,729	156,195
1966-67	495	49,642,140	17,872,438	196,675
1964-Amnesty	72	20,342,086	6,780,695	—
1965-66Amnesty	596	138,210,200	46,070,066	—
1967-68	621	63,976,367	23,107,363	201,550
1968-69	520	51,894,249	18,829,781	113,525
1969-70	552	57,851,176	23,005,257	207,425
	3259	450,492,759	167,376,331	1,908,340

Source: Administration Reports-Commissioner of Inland Revenue

TABLE: 7.

	Number of Inspections	Sales Omitted Rs.	Income Omitted Rs.
1969-70	233	31,322,969	15,551,190
1968-69	331	17,470,571	12,210,718
1967-68	707	11,528,593	Not available
1966-67	527	16,393,939	8,265,762

Source-Administration Reports-Commissioner of Inland Revenue

of Businesses, (nearly 10,000) liable to the tax. The total extent of undisclosed sales and incomes should therefore be taken at an estimate very much higher than that shown above.

(To be Concluded)

RAMBLING NOTES

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

EVENTS HAVE MOVED so fast since the last issue of *Tribune*, both on the domestic front as well as the international scene that it is difficult to keep pace with them. It is, even more difficult to refer to all the significant events and trends in the space available in this paper, and particularly in this column. The best that could be done is to draw attention to the trends which are likely to make the history of the immediate and the foreseeable future, and also point to events around which these seem to revolve.

IN CEYLON, the Speaker of the National Assembly gave his ruling on January 19, on the objection raised by the Opposition to the debate on the Press Bill. Many circles on the Government side, especially the LSSP and the vociferous young radicals in the SLFP, had confidently expected the Speaker to rule that the Assembly could go on with the Bill—because a Constitutional Court had failed to give a verdict within 14 days. The Opposition had raised a fresh point that the Constitutional Court in question had not been properly constituted in that the rules regulating its procedure had not been gazetted, and that until the Bill was properly before a

correctly constituted Court, the Assembly could not proceed to debate the Bill.

The Speaker of the National Assembly, Mr Stanley Tillekeratne, contrary to the expectations of many in the Government, had ruled that the controversial Press Council Bill should first be tested for its constitutionality before a Constitutional Court before it could be debated in the Assembly.

In his ruling, the Speaker had said that the Constitutional Court had not been properly constituted because rules of procedure and conduct had not been gazetted as required by the Constitution. In view of that the Press Council Bill has not yet been referred to a properly constituted court and the bill now awaited such a proper reference. The bill therefore could not be proceeded with in the Assembly till it was referred to the court, the Speaker said.

As soon as the Speaker concluded his ruling Dr. N. M. Perera, Finance Minister and leader of the second largest coalition partner, the Trotskyite Lanka Sama Samaja Party, rising amidst shouts of "resign" directed against the Speaker from the Government benches, said he would move a vote of no confidence in the Speaker and have the Assembly vacate his ruling.

The Speaker had adjourned the Assembly at that stage and left the chamber

amidst confusion. Opposition parties gave the Speaker a rousing send-off as he left the Chamber.

A FIRST CLASS constitutional crisis seemed to emerge from the Speaker's ruling. The LSSP and a section of the SLFP MPs wanted to move a vote of no confidence in the Speaker but the Prime Minister had made it clear that she was against any such resolution. She was so firm that the SLFP Parliamentary Party "formally" decided not to support the LSSP vote of no confidence—although there were indications that many SLFP MPs were very much in favour of the LSSP move and that there were many others who were on the fence. LSSP leaders had gone round the country campaigning against the Speaker and his ruling, but with the unequivocal stand taken by the Prime Minister, the LSSP thought it better political strategy to climb down and accept the Prime Minister's decision that the Assembly should accept the Speaker's ruling in a "democratic way."

It is obvious that the LSSP is not ready for a collision course and that it raised a storm (it was more than in a mere teacup) in order to mobilise the support of the young radicals in the SLFP who tend to follow the LSSP lead on many matters. But it is a fact that the Speaker's ruling, which came as a political blow to the UF, was not popularly

received by the SLFP MPs. There seems to be a subterranean move to "compel" the Speaker to tender his resignation "voluntarily"—although the no-confidence motion idea has been dropped. It is said that many SLFP backbenchers have threatened to carry on a campaign to make the Speaker's position "untenable" until he tendered his resignation. LSSP circles were confident that Speaker Tillekeratne would resign before the next sitting of the Assembly on February 6.

In the meantime, LSSP leader Dr. N. M. Perera is reported to have declared at several meetings that the economic crisis could not be solved in this country without some kind of "dictatorship" (no doubt "democratic dictatorship") and that for this purpose the Press Council Bill was an imperative essentiality. The SLFP has not had many meetings, but the Prime Minister at every meeting has stressed that the food and economic crisis in the country was very grave.

The UNP organised a large public meeting in Colombo on Sunday January 28. While many speakers at the public rally described Prime Minister Sirimavo Bandaranaike as 'a prisoner in the Marxist camp', Mr. Dudley Senanayake, leader of the United National Party warned the Government that if it acted against the principles of democracy, he would lead a peoples'

struggle to "topple the Government."

"Were the situation in the country, which is heading for a dictatorship, not so serious, I will not make such a statement in public," Mr. Senanayake told the rally. Referring to the reported statement of the Finance Minister—and leader of the Trotskyite Lanka Sama Samaja Party—that it was necessary to set up a dictatorship to solve the country's economic problems, he said the nation was on the brink of a disaster, the like of which it had never faced in its long history. He called upon the people to prepare themselves to fight for their rights.

He said certain people were planning to obstruct the Speaker in the National Assembly because he had given a ruling unfavourable to the Government. If they did so, that would mean the end not only of the parliamentary system of government in Lanka but of the freedom of the people as well.

Mr. J. R. Jayawardene, leader of the Opposition in the Assembly and deputy leader of the UNP, said there were clauses in the Press Council Bill (now before the Assembly) which were against democratic principles. If the bill was passed without suitably amending these clauses, the UNP and the masses would rise up to oppose those provisions. The party would tell the people at the

appropriate time what measures they should adopt to rise up against the Government. He warned the people that if a Marxist style dictatorship was established there would be no party system and no democracy in Sri Lanka.

Mr. Jinadasa Nyathapala leader of the trade union front of the UNP, said the party would organise a satyagraha against the Government. He appealed to the people not to buy items the prices of which might be raised by the Government to fill its coffers.

He claimed that a conspiracy was being hatched by some 78 members of the National Assembly, including old and new Marxists, to make Mrs. Bandaranaike the President of the republic and Mr. Hector Kobbekaduwa (now Agriculture Minister) the Prime Minister. The Marxists wanted a puppet Prime Minister so that they could make the country a Marxist State and achieve their ends, he said. He added that the Marxists in the Government were trying to brush aside the right-wing Sri Lanka Freedom Party members and this was evident at the last meeting of the SLFP members where the Marxists emerged victorious over the issue of the Speaker's ruling on the Press Bill.

These are some of the more significant of the developing trends in the political crisis which is brewing in the country side by side with the

economic and financial crisis—the gravity of which many people in important positions of power do not seem to have realised. Most of them are still looking forward for aid from the IMF, or foreign investors, or some other help from abroad to tide over the crisis. They fail to understand that what was needed was not project aid from abroad but hard cash to import goods and commodities—which this country cannot do without just now.

The Production Year campaign (really a grow-more-food campaign) has not really gripped the nation. The Government instead of offering incentives for production to persons, groups and communities able and willing to produce more, are subjecting them to restrictions, ceilings and other dis-incentives which are seemingly believed to introduce "socialism".

WHILST IN SRI LANKA uncertainty seems to prevail on the political front and a total inability to get production going concretely, in the world at large even good and bad, seem to occur with unexpected rapidity—unknown in recent history. Two hundred passengers were killed in an air crash in Nigeria; a volcanic eruption split an island off Iceland into two; famine and starvation have spread their tentacles over large parts of India whilst violence continues unabated in Andhra; large parts of Indonesia

have experienced crop failures owing to drought—this list can be unending if we examine country after country.

But, over all this, stand out the fact that Britain and a number of other countries have become members of the ECM, and the western European bloc is now a major economic force in the world today. Former US President Lyndon Johnson died on January 22, two days after Richard Nixon was sworn in for his second term. Johnson also died two days before the announcement about the Vietnam agreement was announced and five days before the ceasefire became effective.

On the cover, we have a picture of Johnson. To many in this part of the world Johnson was identified with the war in Vietnam, and his premature withdrawal from US politics in 1968 was undoubtedly due to the failure to achieve either an outright military victory in Vietnam or negotiate a lasting peace.

Mr. Johnson, who had a long history of heart illness, was stricken at his lonely LBJ ranch when his wife was away in Austin. He died while being flown to hospital at San Antonio, Texas. During his Presidency, Mr. Johnson persuaded Congress to enact more civil rights and social welfare legislations than at any time in the American history

with the possible exception of Roosevelt's New Deal era. But these massive achievements were overshadowed by the tragedy of Vietnam where he escalated the American commitment until there were over a half million US soldiers in the war-torn Asian country. Ironically his death comes as a peace settlement in Vietnam looked imminent.

Mr. Johnson became President in 1963 on the assassination of Mr. John Kennedy in Dallas. He won an overwhelming mandate in the 1964 election with one of the biggest majorities in Presidential history against Republican Barry Goldwater.

But his decision to commit the US to full-scale war in Vietnam divided the American people and led to bitter protests at home and abroad. Rather than fight what threatened to be a divisive campaign for re-election in 1968, he announced in March, 1968 in a dramatic television speech that he would not seek re-election.

That dramatic decision saw the partial eclipse of the Democratic party on the national scene and the rise of Mr. Richard Nixon.

With the death of Mr. Johnson, while the USA was still flying flags at half-mast for another ex-President, Harry Truman, the United States has no living ex-President to play the role of an elder states-

man. As soon as the death of Mr. Johnson was announced over radio and Television, flags that were flown at half mast for the late Truman were hoisted back to full mast and then lowered immediately to half mast.

President Nixon led the nation in mourning on the death of Mr. Johnson, calling him "a dynamic leader, a unique personality and a man of great ability and unshakeable courage."

Mr. Nixon ordered all flags on federal buildings and installations at home and abroad to fly at half mast for 30 days. "It is particularly heartbreaking that even as our flags fly at half staff in President Truman's memory, another of our leaders has fallen." Mr. Nixon said, "Yet just as their names are linked in death, I believe that America will come to understand that they are also joined in greatness."

In a tribute to Mr. Johnson, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi described him as one who "guided the destiny of the USA at a difficult time and brought earnestness and social vision to his office." In a message of condolence she sent while on board the pilot vessel "Samudra" on the Hooghly, the Prime Minister said, "The people of India share the sorrow of American people in the death of one of the leading personalities of our time."

At the time of going to press, the full details of

the Vietnam ceasefire agreement have not yet become available. The ceasefire has been welcomed all over the world. In the coming weeks, *Tribune* will deal more fully with this "peace agreement" which, may well turn out to be most important event in the contemporary history of Asia. The US has ended military conscription. For the moment it would suffice to cite from a report from Paris by Marie Koeing setting out some of the historic moments at the final end.

Filing a despatch on January 27, she said: "The final diplomatic act to silence the guns in Vietnam has now taken place. In Paris January 27, the Foreign Ministers of the United States, South Vietnam, North Vietnam and Viet Cong signed the peace agreement at the former Hotel Majestic, the site of the semi-public Vietnam negotiations that began four years and two days ago.

"The nine-chapter agreement and its implementing protocols were signed at morning and afternoon sessions that were completed about nine hours before the scheduled cease fire was to take effect at 2400 Greenwich Mean Time, ending 25 years of Vietnamese hostilities and a decade of US military involvement.

"Tran Van Lam, Saigon's Foreign Minister, was the only delegation leader to address the large crowd

gathered outside the Majestic's entrance before the morning session. He pledged that South Vietnam would strictly observe the agreement. Inside, at the conference table, the documents were signed without any formal statements being made by the heads of delegations.

"However, US Secretary of State Rogers had already set the tone of the American attitude when he arrived in Paris the night before. He said that the agreement was an 'unparalleled opportunity to put an end to the violence and the misery that has become a way of life for millions of people in Indochina. President Nixon, his administration, and I am sure, the Congress of the United States are fully prepared to turn all of our efforts toward making peace work," Mr. Rogers said.

"One of the first concrete acts in Paris January 27 marking the end of the war was to be North Vietnam's handing over to the US delegation complete listing of American prisoners of war. Another almost immediate action following the agreement's signing was the United States operation to clear all the mines it had placed in North Vietnam's ports and waterways. The mine-clearing operations was to open as soon as the cease-fire went into effect.

STOP PRESS

AN EXCLUSIVE STORY

By CANAX

THE PRESS is the cause of a lot of trouble, and I'm not saying it just to make some people happy. I say the Press is to blame for all the world's ills even at the risk of finding myself in good, exalted company. Both here and abroad.

Here? Who here? Well, forget I said that. I must have been out of my mind momentarily. No, no such company here, because that's too close for comfort. But abroad—ah, that's another matter altogether. I'm in the Big League there. Like the company of President Nixon, no less.

He, like Queen Victoria before him, was not amused not so long ago. (She by a dirty joke, because she hadn't heard one before, and he by a dirty Press, because that's all he hears about). Seems the Fourth Estate is pretty unclean wherever it's found, which is everywhere, unfortunately, including that little island in the middle of nowhere just across the Atlantic that Nixon lords over for another four years with luck, even without it.

You've probably heard it already, but let me tell the story my way. If it sounds strikingly like Nixon's way, don't let it fool you and I won't let it stop me. We are two minds but with one thought—about the Press, at least. Nixon's Press (in a manner

of speaking, that is, because it's not his, yet) managed to lay its filthy editorial hands on some classified material called the Pentagon Papers, which was unbelievable, then published them in full, which was unpardonable. Nixon screamed only that the papers were unprintable, which has some people still puzzled—and still looking for the purple passages. Exciting reading, yes, but hardly erotic, certainly no rival to Peyton Place in its unprintable content. Some readers concluded that Nixon was probably more puritanical than a lot of people give him credit for. But that's not the full explanation.

I THINK I can guess why the President was so put out with the Press. He was perhaps secretly hoping the Press would help build up his statesman—like image by stealing the Pentagon itself, thus giving him a good excuse to end the Vietnam war and bring his boys back home pronto, or at least by X'mas '72. But the Press, incapable of such selfless courage, settled to swipe only the Papers instead, leaving the Pentagon intact and infuriating the President no end in the process. He didn't actually blame the Press in so many words for not helping him save America and himself, but I know just what he meant when he said the Press, by its

action, had made a Vietnam settlement more remote. It's not everybody who can put two and two together and get four-and-a-half, but I can.

So much for the Press abroad. Looking homeward, I can say without fear of contradiction (over the SLBC) that the Press is no better, if anything only worse. While the Press abroad won't play ball with, say, a Head of State, the Press here plays hell with the likes of me, who's no more than a mere Head of the Family. I let the Press come right into my home every day, even twice a day, and it repays my hospitality by disseminating smart ideas to not-so-smart people. That's gratitude for you.

THE PRESS here has never had it so good. It has been, and is being, aided and abetted by an indulgent Government which pretends our Press doesn't exist. (It won't, but only if the Government remains indulgent for a little longer.) The Government's pretence is understandable for it is too busy solving national problems, like whether Dodampe Mudalali jumped or was pushed, and even international problems, like suggesting the Indian Ocean be declared something or the other (I forget which) to help keep it only, no, not for the Indians, but for the fishes.

I'm not the only one who thinks the Press here is lousing things up in a

big way on the home fronts. Take my friend, for example. If the incident he mentioned to me seems trifling to you, it's because you are not married to his wife. Let me, again, tell it my way.

"What is informed financial circles?", she asks, reading from a morning paper, late at night, just when my friend is catching up on his sleep, or may be his sleep was catching up on him, he's too confused to know which. So he pretends to snore, which she interprets pretty accurately. "I thought you wouldn't know" she sighs, "you never know anything."

MY FRIEND stops snoring long enough to say, "I'm unformed, non-financial and, what's worse, I'm a square". They didn't talk for a whole week and then it transpired that her interest in informed financial circles was kindled by a Press report which attributed to them an observation so astute, says my friend, it's a profundity in a class by itself. Seems the increased prices of sugar and flour in the world market would compel the Government to either increase prices or absorb the losses. To give them their due, these informed financial circles certainly get down to basics, as it were, and present the clear alternatives. My friend was somehow under the impression, he says, that if the Government chose not to increase prices,

the alternative was for it to go jump in the sea, not absorb the losses. One lives and learns, though not always.

Getting nearer home, the situation gets worse. The Press has been dangerously neglected by the Government for too long, and it's innocents like me who are in most danger because I'm largely in with the the new Order since May 1970. (It's the same Order we had back in April 1956, only it was recalled from retirement, so what harm in calling it New?) My wife, on the other hand, is greatly influenced by you-know-what, and is in tune only with herself. Pretty discordant that is, I can tell you. And there's the rub.

"I'm busy... go ask Daddy, though he wont know," I hear her say one Sunday morning. But the child insists on asking her. The question: "Why do we want higher prices for our tea, rubber and coconut?" Answer: "Because we'd look foolish wanting lower prices for them." Now that's a patently reactionary response, and triggers a prompt reaction from me. "No, son," I say, "Mummy's talking nonsense. We do that because we want the money."

THE BOY asks the inevitable question, "Why?" Her answer: "Will you stop annoying me and eat all your egg? If we don't get more money, Daddy won't get his salary next month, and we won't have anything to eat."

"And Mummy won't have anything to wear," I add. The child reads me perfectly, for it says, to Mummy, "Daddy is talking nonsense, no?" Mummy, always willing to put me down, agrees.

The next question: "Will we get our flour and sugar from Heaven?" While I try to figure out, since when they included essential commodities in religious instruction, my wife says, "Yes, if they let us buy now and pray later."

I can feel the subject fast getting out of hand. "Look, son", I say, "like we have tea, rubber and coconut, some other countries have flour and sugar. We buy what they have to sell, and they buy what we have to sell."

"That's not all", says my wife. "Go on, tell him also how we thought of getting rice from the lunar regions not long ago, but dropped the idea because our two ships couldn't make it to the Oceans of the moon."

I ignore the jibe and instead concentrate on my son's next question. "Is it all right," he wants to know, "for us to ask more money for tea, rubber and coconut?"

"Of course it's all right", I assure him, "Our sovereign people slave from morning till night, so they deserve to get more."

THE BOY looks really worried. "Then why is it all wrong for other countries to want more money for their flour and sugar?"

"Because," I explain patiently to him, "They're different from us. They're capitalists, we're not."

"What are we?" he wants to know.

"We're bloody dreamers" my wife pipes in.

"No, son," I say firmly, "we're socialists."

"Fat lot of difference that is," she says.

"What is socialists?"

My wife again gets in before me. "Socialists are people who couldn't become capitalists. Now do you understand?"

"No."

"Why can't you understand a simple thing like that?" she says irritably. "Everybody else does."

"Because he does not know what capitalist means" I say, running to the boy's defence. "Besides, you're telling him a lot of rubbish".

"All right, then," she announces defiantly, "you tell him from now on."

"I will, if you will let me," I answer quietly.

"Come son, Daddy will tell you... socialists are people who believe in sharing and sharing alike. Now, if you have a thousand rupees, you'll want to share it with everybody if you're a socialist."

I clearly hear my wife's alleged aside. "We're graduated up the socialist ladder to bigger things, like equitable distribution of essential items. We now make sure everybody shares nothing equally."

Wide-eyed, the boy asks "Do I have to share my marbles, too?"

"Yes," says my wife emphatically. "Now do

THE LAST APOLLO FLIGHT

By V. Begishev

When the three courageous American astronauts, Eugene Cernan, Harrison Schmitt and Ronald Evans, boarded the aircraft carrier Ticonderoga, which was waiting for them on their splash-down in the Pacific, they brought to an end the Apollo programme of Moon exploration. This was the most expensive scientific experiment in human history: the American press says it has cost about 26,000 million dollars. The huge allocations—true, somewhat cut by Congress in the final stages—made it possible to enlist the assistance of 20,000 contractors. Several hundred thousand workers, engineers and scientists worked on drawing up and carrying out this bold programme which will doubtless occupy a place of honour in the annals of human endeavour.

The launching of Apollo-17 was stated for 5.53 a.m. (Moscow time) on December 7, but was delayed for almost three hours by an electronic-circuit failure. The "electronic brain", which issues orders to various mechanisms three and a half minutes before the launching, "missed" one of the operations. The computer operator noticed

you want to be a socialist?"

Pity that's one less for the cause. I try to catch 'em young—and lose to a few measly marbles. That's life.

it at once and sent the order himself, but the machine failed to register this. It soon discovered its mistake, however, and did the only thing it could do: it stopped all further operations. Fortunately, technicians found a way out and the flight started safely. If they had not done it on that day, the launching would have had to be postponed until January 4, and that would have cost an additional 11 million dollars.

Initially, the ship orbited the Earth almost twice. Schmitt, a geologist by profession and the first American scientist to travel to the Moon, immediately began to describe what he saw on our planet and transmitted a good deal of valuable information, especially about the state of the atmosphere.

Schmitt continued his scientific reports throughout the flight, causing one of his colleagues on Earth to compare him to a manned satellite. Later, when the tireless explorer had spent a "night" on the Moon together with Cernan he was told from Earth that meteorologists nevertheless preferred to receive their information from the just launched Nimbus-5 automatic station. Schmitt burst out laughing.

"Can your satellite talk?" he demanded.

It must take a great deal of real courage and

spirit to be able to "keep smiling" when one is travelling in outer space, 400,000 kilometres from home. The three astronauts lived up to this American dictum.

During their second excursion on the Moon, the radio transmitted to Earth Cernan's ecstatic cry:

"The soil is orange! Everything is orange!"

"Only don't touch anything before I get there", Schmitt, who was gathering samples nearby, yelled back.

He hurried to Cernan and saw a truly fantastic picture: some bright orange streaks of unknown origin running down the slopes of Shorty Crater into its interior. The spacemen forgot everything, including the fact that their reserve of oxygen was running out. They

decided to explore the mysterious mineral, took samples and left the crater only when categorically ordered to do so from mission control on Earth.

This was a real scientific feat because everything on the Moon is timed to the last second and they were already out of schedule. Had their lunar rover broken down, they might not have had enough oxygen to get back to the lunar lander. Scientists regard their discovery as the most important result of the expedition. For the orange substance may turn out to be something like rust—hydrated oxide. And this would mean that water and oxygen escape from the interior of the Moon to the surface—something only the authors of the boldest hypotheses believed possible.

Lack of space prevents us from enumerating here all the experiments carried out by the crew of Apollo 17, or naming the different instruments they have left on the Moon to transmit back to Earth information about procession on the celestial body nearest us for several years to come. Most likely readers have already gleaned a good deal from the newspapers, and the astronauts themselves will soon tell their story in greater detail. All that remains to add is that it has been officially announced that no Americans will fly to the Moon in the next ten or fifteen years, and perhaps not until the end of the century. There is no money for it.

IN ANDHRA

A CRUCIAL DECISION

To Split or Not To Split

By KALPANA SHARMA

THERE IS no simple solution to the Andhra problem. The trouble in the state has evolved over many years. It has been aggravated by indecisive leadership from the Centre and the state Government. However, it is easier to apportion blame without understanding all the reasons for the trouble.

It began at the time of the former Nizam of Hyderabad. The Nizam brought

in people from UP and other places for jobs. This was resented by the local people who launched an agitation similar to the one today. Finally the Nizam conceded and issued a "firman" (order) in Persian, later translated into Urdu and then in English in 1949. (Some believe the meaning of the order was slightly altered in the course of these translations). However, this

"firman" was the basis of what is now called "Mulki Rules". It stated that "No person will be appointed in any superior or inferior service without the specific permission of His Exalted Highness if he is not a mulki in terms of the rules laid down." According to the rules a mulki was one who by birth was a subject of Hyderabad State or who had permanent residence for 15 years in the state.

In 1953 the state of Andhra Pradesh came to birth and in 1956 the Telugu speaking area of Hyderabad State, that is Telengana, was included in it. At that time there

was a gentleman's agreement between the people of the two regions (Andhra and Telengana) that the Mulki Rules would continue till 1974 in Hyderabad.

It is important to understand why this issue of the Mulki Rules has remained such an explosive issue for so many years. The main reason is economic, though it has been exploited by politicians.

Telengana has been a backward region and the disparity between it and the Andhra region has been considerable. However, in recent years the Central government has poured 67 per cent of its total allocation for the state to Telengana. Its rate of growth has been higher than Andhra's in the last few years.

INSPITE of all this there has been a great deal of unemployment due to economic stagnation. The number of unemployed in the state increased from 1.60 lakhs in 1967 to 2.20 lakhs in 1969 to 3.39 lakhs in 1971. About 1500 medical graduates, a few thousand engineering and post-graduates as well as agricultural graduates and trained teachers and over one lakh matriculates are looking for jobs in the state. As with most other educated people in the state their main source of employment is the state Government. That is why the Mulki Rules issue has gained such overwhelming importance.

One other aspect is that of literacy. There are far less educated and qualified people in Telengana than in Andhra. The result is that in a number of cases the Mulki Rules were waived and non-Mulkis given jobs. Now some of these people face the threat of losing their jobs as the Telengana people want them back.

There have been many contradictory decisions by courts on the different aspects of the Mulki Rules. In 1969, the Supreme Court ruled that the Mulki Rules were *ultra vires* the Constitution. This triggered off the agitation for a separate Telengana and the formation of the Telengana Praja Samiti. The agitation came to such a pitch that Mrs. Gandhi had to personally intervene. The Chief Minister at that time Mr. Brahmananda Reddy, an Andhra man, was forced to step down in September 1971 and Mr. P. V. Narasimha Rao, a Telengana congress man, was made Chief Minister. Again, through Mrs. Gandhi's personal initiative the Telengana Praja Samiti agreed to merge with the Congress and for the time being things calmed down.

In February 1972 the Andhra Pradesh High Court by a four to one majority also declared the Mulki Rules *ultra vires*. But later in October the Chief Minister took the matter to the Supreme Court which overruled the High Court judgement and deci-

ded that the mulki Rules were valid. The Chief Minister said he would do all in his power to implement the Rules.

THIS STATEMENT riled the Andhra people and trouble flared up once again. There was chaos and violence. The state administrative machinery came to a standstill. Telengana and Andhra people would not communicate even if they were in the same office. Even employees of autonomous bodies who were not affected by the Mulki Rules joined the agitation.

Now there seems to be a complete breakdown of law and order in the state. The Chief Minister has not been able to control the situation in spite of the Central Reserve Police whom he asked for.

The General Secretary of the Congress party, Mr Chandrajit Yadav, after returning from Hyderabad recently, has strongly recommended President's rule at least for a brief spell in Andhra. He has also taken the step of dissolving the state Congress and has formed a high-powered committee of 20 consisting of people from both regions. The Congress hierarchy has concluded that they must first get some unity in their own party in the state before there is any hope of a compromise solution.

THE CHIEF MINISTER, Mr. Narasimha Rao, continues to astonish people with

his actions. He has recently added eight members to his cabinet to fill in the ten vacancies left by the resignation of Andhra ministers after the Mulki Bill was enacted by the Lok Sabha. He has done this without consulting the central leadership and in spite of the fact that in all likelihood President's rule will now be imposed. Now the extremist Andhra elements will not be pacified till he steps down.

Dr. H. N. Kunzru, the only surviving member of the three member States Reorganisation Commission has come out strongly for the bifurcation of Andhra. He feels it is not realistic to expect a "union of heart between the two areas" and does not favour undue pressure being used to keep the two regions together. Dr. Kunzru's views cannot be pushed aside lightly.

Another suggestion is that President's rule should be imposed for a longer period, say three years. That would give enough time to help things to return to normal. It would also give a chance to develop the less developed areas in Telengana and the Rayalaseema regions. A real effort could be made to integrate the two regions. If at the end of such a period the two sides are still dissatisfied and an impartial commission, similar to the State Reorganisation Commission feels that it is not possible for the two regions to

be one—then the state should be divided.

IT IS SIGNIFICANT that in the present agitation the Telengana people have not raised much of a voice. Their demands for the moment are satisfied with the Prime Minister's five-point formula according to which the Mulki Rules will continue till 1977 in Hyderabad city and till 1980 in their region. Finally they may be coming to the conclusion that it would not be all that beneficial for them to break away at this point.

Paradoxically, the Andhra people, who were for integration and in fact started the process of states on a linguistic basis, are now demanding separation. The Andhra region has not much to lose if the state was divided. They will only lose the capital Hyderabad. They have industry and the sea ports and a population with a higher literacy level than Telengana.

The other factor that not many people realise is that the under-developed region of Rayalaseema is also straining to break loose. And if Telengana separated then it may want to follow suit.

Mrs. Gandhi is indeed faced with a very crucial decision that does not affect only the state in question. As she sees it the future of India is threatened not so much by communists but by regionalists and

communalists who will pull the country to pieces.

For one thing Mrs. Gandhi needs to reconsider the structure and functioning of her own party. Much of the trouble has come about through replacing a man of the people's choice as Chief Minister with one of her own choice who had no popular base. In fact her party may be reaping the fruits of a decade of the politics of convenience, of glossing over the problems rather than dealing with them forthrightly.

With the concentration of power and influence so much in her hands Mrs. Gandhi can do little else but intervene personally. If she can unite the state Congress alongside with imposing President's rule, there is a chance that the state could hold together. If, however, that does not work there seems no alternative but to divide the state—and reap the consequences of similar agitations elsewhere.

—Himmat.

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SAFARI IN CEYLON

AMBALANGODA

Tourists: String Hoppers: Swiming: Fish:

JANUARY 11 - 12, 1973

By ALKARDI MUGANA

A QUICK TRIP towards Galle, during the rush hour to get away from the Fort, leaves certain impressions. One notices that traffic can still move fairly freely, perhaps more freely than it did some years back. Buses can thunder along. One blesses the shortage of foreign exchange these last few years, for without it there would have been unbridled importation of cars, with the attendant horrors of noise, traffic jams, hold-ups in traffic, crawling vehicles making a mile a minute.

Nonetheless, the traffic was fairly heavy until we got to Panadura. There was a constant flow of traffic until Kalutara. We were never really clear of other vehicles even till Ambalangoda—and this was the only exit out of Colombo. Although the buses were crowded, the travelling was not too bad, especially if, as a would-be standing passenger, you managed to persuade others to squeeze up and give you a corner of their seat. Not everybody is anxious to do this, and some people just cannot. Others just will not. I always think it a waste of money if you cannot see the view.

The sun this evening was quite red, an enormous disk, looking much too big for the sun, resting on the horizon, and being rapidly absorbed by it. The road kept the sea and the railway company for miles. Two great stretches of water were Bolgoda and the Kalu Ganga. Beruwela and Bentota made me think of tourists. When I think of tourists, I wonder all over again at the bloated prices they pay, and the little contact they have with the people. I wonder, too, if those whose business it is to meet them as a part of their job, do not cultivate a tourist manner, and leave the rest of us seeming like savages, as people not just worth talking to. Certainly taxi drivers seem to do so, and they speak English in a way they would never dare to speak Sinhalese, unless they were drunk. Fortunately they are all not like that and those that are seem to congregate only in certain places, places where they are not easy to avoid.

One gets the impression that the youth do not go to the cinema now as much as they did quite a short time ago, or as much as we in our youth

did. The cinema may be much to blame. I feel that pictures, or movies as they are sometimes called, are no longer an entertainment, and that they leave us strung up emotionally, and on a lower key, than when we went in. One young man told me that they are a plain waste of money.

THIS MORNING I learnt a thing or two about Ceylon cooking. The reader will, I hope, excuse any mistakes I make, for the sake of the point I want to bring out. String hoppers, it appears, requires only rice or wheat flour and a fire, but it is equipment that might cause trouble. You need a *mutti* for the boiling water, and a cover. The cover I saw might be twenty years old, I was told. It was rather elaborate and might have cost some money.

Then you need a wooden instrument for squeezing out the strings, and a circular wood and string meshes for holding each hopper while it steamed by the boiling water. The actual cooking of the formed hopper in this way only takes a minute; but the flour has to be cooked before the hopper is formed. Another thing I discovered is that a sweet can be made out of whatever rice is left over the dish. The rice is pounded, and then mixed with sugar, and wetted with tea to give it a dark colour, pounded again I unders.

TRIBUNE, January 30, 1973

tand, and then presumably cooked. All it costs is the extra sugar, and the labour and time. The time—women certainly have on their hands—but they will not expend the labour. That is what is lacking in Ceylon.

It is enough to drive a man to drink. How can a man work without these little luxuries? And how can children be contented without them, too, especially when they become adolescents? Perhaps I am wrong because the youth of the West have all these and are still unsettled and insecure. Perhaps what is lacking is right leadership.

IN A STREET in Ambalangoda, I got a whiff of a rather pleasant smell, and I looked around to see what it was. It came from a house, I was told and it was the smell of cinnamon. In another street I saw cinnamon laid out to dry. Then I remembered that there is a place, not very far from here called *Kurundugahathakma*, which means "a mile from the cinnamon tree".

The beach at Ambalangoda, where the champions and winners of the two-mile swim at Mount Lavinia these few years, boys from Dharmasoka College, have trained for the race, is very attractive and it provides some good swimming and good diving. Human faeces strews the approach to the swimming pool in spite of the watcher who, I

understand, is paid to patrol that area, not a big one by any means. There is a little pool which has some safe swimming, although the walls of the pool, if you happen to rub against it, as I did accidentally, has something clinging on to it which pricks you; but there is no need to touch the stone at all. Then there is some open sea swimming. There is also an island to which you can go if you are a strong swimmer, and if the season is right, as it is now.

Fishing boats seem to work in pairs, a big one and a small one together. Both are outriggers, and I was surprised to see nine or ten men on the big outriggers, seven of whom were plying seven oars, five rowing and two steering, a steering oar on each side of the boat. There was also a big outboard motor attached to the outrigger of the bigger boats. Not all had caught fish, but the ones that had had fish of a nice size.

ON THE WAY back to Colombo, I saw a man on a bicycle with two enormous fish across his pillion. The tails of the fish almost touched the ground on one side, and the heads of the fish were a good half way down on the other. They looked like sharks to me. I have seen some balancing feats with merchandise performed on bicycles, and this matched with the best of them.

The little fishing harbour at Ambalangoda is a natural one, and it looked almost as cosy as the man-made ones at Tangalle or those off the Cambrian coast in the North of England.

It goes without saying that the bus back to Colombo, at the end of my trip was crowded, and I had to stand nearly all the way.

HOUSE-SITTING

The drastic increase in robberies and burglaries in the United States has brought a new profession into existence. It's called "house-sitting". Fearing that their property will be burgled while they are away on holiday or long business trips, people find trustworthy persons, through their friends or by advertising, willing to live in their homes free of charge while they are away. The **New York Times** writes that some families thus manage to live in well-appointed houses the year round without spending a cent.

TANGLED SKEIN OF MULKI RULES

By D. SITARAM

THE EXPERIMENT of one-language one-State is perhaps never put to so severe a test as now in Andhra Pradesh, in the wake of the Supreme Court judgement on Mulki rules which confer a privileged position to Telengana region in matters of recruitment to Services and admission to colleges.

Even before the wounds of the 1969 Telengana agitation were fully healed, came again the regional feud sharply dividing Congressmen, Servicemen and students, not excluding Ministers themselves, undermining joint responsibility of the State Cabinet. The integrity of the State is thus under stress and strain, about to debunk the theory that language is a unifying force

The Telegus, to be more precise, the Andhras, had earned a reputation of being the pioneers in the formation of linguistic States. They had crusaded even before Independence for a linguistic State out of the composite Madras State.

It then needed a Potti Sriramulu's self-immolation, followed by widespread violence and vandalism for Delhi to bow to their aspiration and form Andhra State in 1953. Three years later, their joy knew no

bounds at the merger of the Telugu speaking areas (Telengana) of the erstwhile Nizam's State, as if their dream had come true!

The merger was brought about despite reservations, to the point of hostility in Telengana, due to the hundred per cent "craving of Andhras, wanting to move from the tentative capital at Kurnool to the readymade capital of Hyderabad on November 1, 1956.

PARADOXICALLY, sixteen years later, the Andhras, more than the people of Telengana, are now giving expression to the desirability of splitting the enlarged Telugu State into two, in the event of the continuance of Mulki rules framed by the Nizam of Hyderabad in 1948 ostensibly to protect the interests of his "subjects" but actually making a close preserve of the ruler as he retained all the powers to give exemptions in a discriminating manner.

That, indeed, was the original intention of the Mulki rules; for the senior jobs under the princely rule had mostly been filled by non-Hyderabadis during the premiership of Nawab of Chattari, Maharajah Kishan Pershad etc., The

despotic rule, however, did not enable the local people even to raise their little finger.

It is also worth remembering that in the erstwhile Hyderabad State, literacy was probably at the lowest compared to the rest of the country and education was confined to the elite in a few colleges that could be counted on fingers. Many districts did not have even high schools, let alone colleges. Thus, there was nothing like educated unemployment even in small proportion until the sixties, and the local people were content by and large with petty jobs.

It was only after the Police Action in 1948 and subsequently during popular regimes that schools and colleges had come to be opened in a big way, throwing up educated youth in large numbers in 1960. It was that the Telengana people began to feel the pinch of competition from the more educated Andhras for jobs, particularly in Government. The feeling grew gradually year after year, culminating in a mighty movement of Telengana.

AT THE TIME of merger of Telengana with Andhra, such fears were entertained and the States Reorganisation Commission itself had given expression to them. Says the SRC report: "...The apprehension felt by the educationally backward people of Telengana was that they may

be swamped and exploited by the more advanced people of coastal area. The real fear of the people of Telengana is that if they join Andhra, they will be unequally placed in relation to the people of Andhra, and in their partnership, the major partner will derive all the advantages, while Telengana itself may be converted into a colony by the enterprising coastal Andhra."

The Committee had therefore recommended a separate State, with option for merger with Andhra after five years of separate existence provided two-thirds of Telengana MLAs voted for such a merger.

The Andhra leadership, evidently in its anxiety to seek merger then and there, had made a unilateral commitment to safeguard as a precondition, with the concurrence of Central leadership. A shape was given to this in the form of a Gentleman's Agreement between (Congress) leaders of the two regions, for a period of five years. The essence of Mulki rules, as also provision for a Telengana Minister to be designated a Deputy Chief Minister, were provided in the agreement.

On the very next day after merger, the Agreement was punctured when the first Chief Minister of the enlarged State, Sri N. Sanjiva Reddy, had failed to nominate a Deputy Chief Minister from Telen-

gana saying that such a designation was nothing but a "sixth finger". Sri Reddy was a signatory to the Gentleman's Agreement. This, in fact, was the starting point of the growing misgivings in Telengana.

The same attitude was discernible in other fields of activity, too, giving a feeling of Andhra domination among the people of Telengana. Telengana champions pointed out that a good many jobs which should have gone to the candidates of the region were cornered by Andhras either on the ground that local suitable personnel were not available or by dubious means, wangling domicile certificates (Mulki) for public appointments in the Telengana region.

A more serious complaint was the diversion of funds of the region for development in Andhra, again because the more advanced area could be developed quicker with better administrative machinery. These were sufficient grist for the disgruntled Congressmen to whip up regional feelings which had caught up, resulting in bad blood even among the common people.

THE ANDHRA LEADERSHIP which was virtually in control of the Government until September 1971 when Sri Brahmananda Reddy yielded to Telengana Chief Minister, did little to promote the language—

Telugu—which was supposed to be the cementing force between the two regions. They championed a linguistic State to bring administration nearer to the people but not even the sign-boards had the pride of place for Telugu. Significantly, the leadership had more weakness for English and convent public school type of education, catering mainly to the upper strata.

Instead of the forces of integration getting strengthened through language, song and drama, mutual prejudices, feeling of neglect and exploitation gained the upper hand.

In the very nature of it, it was difficult to give a fool-proof constitutional shape to a preferential treatment to a particular region in a State. No wonder the Public Employment (Recruitment as to Residence) Act, 1957, enacted by Parliament, providing safeguards to Telengana was struck down ten years after being in operation, on a writ petition, on the ground that the provisions of the Act violated Article 16 (3) of the Constitution which did not contemplate the prescription of residential qualification for public employment applicable to only a part of the State.

Then came up another litigation, resulting in the AP High Court upholding that the Mulki rules to regulate the conditions of appointments to public services in Hyderabad prior to the commencement of

the Constitution, would continue as a valid law in force in the Telengana area of the State in so far as they prescribed a residential qualification of 15 years for the purpose of appointment to any Government job.

THIS JUDGMENT was, however, superseded by a fuller bench of the AP High Court, whereafter the State Government went in on appeal to the Supreme Court which finally put its seal of legality on the Mulki rules, raising virtually a hornet's nest.

The wisdom of Narasimha Rao's Ministry to go to the Supreme Court, inviting on itself the current crisis, is questioned, perhaps gleefully, by his adversaries and the Andhra politicians. While Andhras generally regard the Mulki rules as something obnoxious, with equal vehemence in Telengana there is over-enthusiasm not only for their retention for all time to come but implementation in toto.

These extreme postures have so far rendered difficult a satisfactory solution. All kinds of interpretations and (mis)apprehensions in the Andhra region have been raised, so much so an agitation has been whipped up, threatening to assume a law and order problem in a big way.

The Andhra services, students and the gullible public are made to believe that the Mulki rules would make them alien in the State

Capital of Hyderabad situated in Telengana) and that they would not only be denied employment but also admissions into colleges for their children. Of course an extremist Telengana believes the Mulki rules mean the giver of all bounties!

There is no denying the fact that the Andhra leadership is unitedly disposed in favour of dividing the State than putting up with the Mulki rules if they are for an indefinite period and if conditions are not created for equal status in the State Capital. The Congress leadership in Andhra is not budging beyond the scope of the Gentleman's Agreement of 1956 for a specific period of three to five years.

THE TELENGANA spokesmen, however, argue that the Gentleman's Agreement was dead and gone, after all that had happened in 1969 agitation and the Central Committee's findings upholding certain grievances of Telengana in the matter of development and services. Ministers from Andhra and Telengana have also been advocating conflicting claims making nonsense of the joint responsibility of the Cabinet which so far has not evolved its own proposals.

The solution was also rendered difficult because the whole issue got entangled with the infighting in the Congress in Andhra Pradesh. Some of them see in the present impasse

an opportunity to elbow out Sri P. V. Narasimha Rao from Chief Ministership, Sri Rao has been a little bit of a political lightweight, not withstanding his intellectual abilities and long years in politics. He has been brought in to succeed Sri Brahmananda Reddy, first, because he hails from Telengana region and is non-controversial. He has yet to give confidence that he is capable of handling the situation.

He is, however, not unaware that he owes his office wholly and solely to the Prime Minister and would like to function by consent and approval from above rather than with his own drive and initiative. This was largely responsible for his colleagues from the two regions to take their own line, bringing in a kind of cleavage in the Government, not conducive to handle the law and order situation that many fear would grow in the coming weeks.

While Smt Indira Gandhi and Union Finance Minister Y. B. Chavan, who had been to Hyderabad as former's emissary, wanted the State leaders to thrash out a workable solution, the Chief Minister has been looking to Delhi for a formula which he would like to faithfully implement. He has kept his counsels to himself, and has not shared them with his cabinet colleagues.

Ultimately Delhi summoned important figures from the State which included two former Chief Ministers, Sri B. Gopala Reddy and Sri Brahmananda Reddy, as well as Telengana stormy petrel, Dr. Channa Reddy, who had led the Telengana Praja Samithi, and Sri J. Chokka Rao. Already there were a dozen Ministers camping in Delhi for a week shuttling between the Andhra Pradesh House and the bungalows of Prime Minister and Sri Chavan. They had met separately and collectively and an exasperated Chavan told them to put their signatures appealing to the people of Andhra Pradesh to maintain peace, and advise

the leaders to come back with agreed proposals.

The ball has thus, been returned to Hyderabad. There is lack of appreciable optimism in the State circles that the Congress leaders, divided as they are hopelessly and with tempers running high in both the regions, will climb down from the positions they have taken. They have been clearly told that they should work out a formula within the framework of the integrated State. Any delay in finding a solution is regarded as a setback to the leadership of the Chief Minister, making the atmosphere in the State still stuffier. The admini-

nistration has already come to a grinding halt with uncertainty prevailing among the Services.

A charge freely made by some is that separation demand from Andhra is backed by vested interests who are sore with the land reforms legislation just enacted by the State Government and that Sri Narasimha Rao is being made the victim. But this can only be a side effect for he still has a section to back him up, provided he emerges as a leader in his own right rather than giving an impression all the time that he is merely a protegee of the Centre.

—Mainstream

INDONESIA

THE CHINESE BOGEY

From A Special Correspondent

Singapore,

The *Far Eastern Economic Review* in its issue of January, 22 1973, pointed that that: "The Chinese of Indonesia—rarely free of accusations of treachery—continue to be convenient scapegoats. The country is experiencing a serious shortage of rice, and the capital only recently shook off a major electricity failure. On both issues, the Government has managed to deflect criticism from itself; as a result, general frustrations and resentments have fallen—unfairly—on the heads of the local Chinese....."

"ANTI-CHINESE feeling simmered again last month when Chinese business men were alleged to have accepted capital from the Moscow Narodny Bank in Singapore in an attempt to corner the sugar market. This was subsequently denied by the bank which while confirming that it provided loans to Chinese, emphasised that similar facilities had been made available to Chinese capitalists in other Southeast Asian countries. The amount of the loan was not disclosed, but the Army-run weekly *Khas* put it at US \$100 million...."

"More recently, Jakartans

questioned the loyalty and integrity of Indonesian Chinese in connection with a joint parliamentary hearing into the activities of the Central Bank. Its Governor, Dr. Radius Prawiro, denied accusations that the bank had already awarded credits totalling US \$500 million to local Chinese. (Curiously, the accusation had been made earlier by Dr. Sanusi, a Golkar parliamentarian.) Commentators and politicians noted that Prawiro failed to refute charges that 70% to 80% of bank credits had fallen into the clutches of enterprises owned fully or in greater part by non-pribumi (non-indigenous) capitalists....

"There are obvious limits to the degree in which Chinese can be used as

whipping-boys. A host of military generals are involved in many Chinese business empires; this 'Unholy alliance' did not escape attack in the recent outbursts and could be manipulated in future by forces seeking to embarrass the Government.

The reference to corruption was putting things mildly, to say the least. The average Indonesian citizen is aware that some of the generals continue to accumulate great wealth. A former leader of the banned *Parti Socialists* says cynically that the late Sukarno's 'Rogue's gallery' still operates—but with a different set of actors. The Government's saving grace is that Suharto and his closest associates have already given notice of a crackdown on corruption. But, given the power balances within the armed forces, corrective measures will have to be slow and painstaking.

Although the transfer of power from Sukarno to Suharto several years ago was marked by the massacre of thousands of Chinese, they are now the strongest supporters of the Administration and of the military — backed Golkar, which drained the strength of the traditional political parties in last year's elections. One of the most vocal critics of Chinese Economic dominance is the Indonesian Importers and Exporters' Association, whose officials claim that 75% of indigenous enterprises are in

the red and that about 40% of the economy is in Chinese hands. There is also resentment over the Chinese preference to go into partnership with foreign companies rather than local entrepreneurs....

"The attempts to absorb Chinese into Indonesia's racial mosaic may ultimately succeed. But the path is strewn with obstacles and pitfalls whose proportions may increase as the country finds that progress and growth do not come smoothly. Indonesia has not seen the last of its periodic persecutions of a vibrant minority—persecutions spawned in no small measure by the activities of the Chinese themselves."

But whatever be the problems inside Indonesia, the Suharto government is keenly aware of the new role China is playing in the world. The visit to Peking of Japanese Premier Tanaka and the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Communist China have caused a major political ferment in Indonesia. However, on the world's largest archipelago they speak not so much about the contents of the talks between the two Asian giants but about their possible impact for the future of Indonesian—Chinese relations which remain frozen since the middle of 1967.

SHOULD INDONESIA follow the example of Japan—its strong Asian protector? What would it gain or lose as a result

of normalizing its relation with Peking? These and other similar questions are constantly asked in newspaper articles as well as by Indonesian statesmen and politicians.

So far, the Indonesian government seems to have gone on the assumption that the rapprochement between Japan and China would not have any effect on the relations between Indonesia and China. At the same time, many political columnists have stated that, before Tanaka's trip to Peking, Indonesia regarded Japan as the most suitable mediator to resolve the Chinese problem. These speculations had arisen *inter alia*, as a result of the trips made to Peking by the President's Personal Assistant Humardani and the meeting between Adam Malik and the Minister-Counsellor of the Japanese Embassy in Jakarta Itaru Tsuga, at the end of last August.

However, few would be able to say definitely whether Japan has assumed the mediator's responsibilities. The majority seem to feel that Japan, with its vast interests in Indonesia, is not willing to see the Chinese Communists, with their great influence on the local Chinese community, return to that country. Nowadays, the Japanese co-operate quite successfully with many Indonesians of Chinese descent. That is why the presence of China would result in the weakening of Japan's position in Indonesian economy.

Probably, Indonesian leaders now feel that they were foolish to depend entirely on their Japanese friends and that they must themselves hereafter have to look for the ways and means of bringing about rapprochement with Peking. There is not the slightest doubt that they are trying to make friends with Peking. Both countries were present at the receptions at the United Nations on the occasions of the national anniversaries of Indonesia and China, as well as the statement made by Adam Malik to the effect that a note from the Chinese would be sufficient for the restoration of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

But, it must be stated at the same time that many radical groups and even larger sections of nationalistic minded masses in Indonesia do not share that viewpoint of the Minister of Foreign Affairs and have warned President Suharto against hasty steps to re-establish relations with China.

THEY POINT out, first and foremost, a very distinctive aspect of Chinese-Indonesian relations which turned from super-warm and friendly into frankly hostile after the attempted Communist coup in Indonesia in 1965. Consequently, while in the case of Japan the strengthening of friendship with China was dependent on various external factors, such as in particular, the problem, of Taiwan and the Japanese

American Security Treaty, Indonesia has to consider complex internal processes.

Firstly, for the Indonesians who have always striven for leadership in South-East Asia and continue to do so now, particularly in the ASEAN, the question of their government's prestige is of great importance. Secondly, the problem of ensuring internal security which is closely connected with Communist underground activities remains quite acute for General Suharto's Administration. And thirdly, the new regime should prove the effectiveness of its program of economic advancement. Such are the problems which give evidence of the delicate nature of relations between Jakarta and Peking.

The Chinese leadership, for example, during the last five years invariably referred to the new administration as "the fascist regime and the Suharto-Nasution clique" in its propaganda. Peking accuses General Suharto of bloody crimes against his people and demands the immediate liberation of all political prisoners. The cessation by Peking of this distinctly anti-Indonesian campaign would have been considered one of the most important conditions for normalizing their relations. It was not by chance that President Suharto, Adam Malik and other Indonesian leaders repeatedly urged Peking to recognize the legitimate government of

Jakarta and to stop all aid to Indonesian communists and to the left-wing emigrants in Peking with Adjitorop at their head.

SUPPOSE, the Peking leaders discontinue their sharp criticism of the Suharto Administration having realized the need to restore direct ties with Jakarta. However, the second request of the Indonesia side remains. Will the Chinese be able to meet it too? Even the most ardent advocates of normalizing Indonesia's relations with Peking cannot give an affirmative reply to that question. At the same time, they become more and more often convinced of the truth of the popular saying that "co-operating with Peking is like carrying a live tiger on one's back." When in conversations with the Indonesians one tries to point out a significant transformation in China's external policy referring to its steps as examples to that effect one usually hears another saying in reply: "A leopard remains a leopard even if it loses its white stripes."

Indeed, the Indonesians have every reason to think so. They understand full well that Peking, having failed in the venturesome inciting of the Communist Party to the riots of 1965 nurtures now the plans of bringing Indonesia back to its sphere. Besides providing clandestine support to underground Communist groups the Chinese leaders try to flare up the

fire of guerilla war on the outlying Indonesian islands and to disrupt the country's economy. The Peking armed groups operating in West Kalimantan tie up considerable forces of the Indonesian Army and bravely raid other areas of the country. Some time ago, an exhibition was set up in Jakarta displaying seized Chinese-made guerilla arms and propaganda literature illegally brought from China. The question was raised on several occasions after the exhibition was opened

as to what would the military authorities do when Peking will send its official representatives to Jakarta.

The presence of Peking's emissaries is regarded as closely linked with the anti-government activities of the Chinese community which numbers nearly 1.5 million Chinese who had or still retain Chinese citizenship. The idea of re-unification with China is quite popular among them. In mid-July, for example, a great number

of leaflets appeared in Jakarta urging the Chinese to make every effort to restore the former positions of Peking in Indonesia. If, besides that, one takes into consideration the dominating position of the local Chinese in Indonesian economy one would understand the misgivings of the majority of Indonesians anxious to preserve the present independent policy line determined after the lengthy period of ups and downs during President Suharto's rule.

OFF THE BEATEN TRACK

ROCK RIVER VALLEY

By

HAMILTON
GNANAMUTTU

This article is based on the text of a broadcast talk on Channel one of the SLBC.

"OFT IN A STILLY NIGHT, ERE SLUMBER'S CHAIN HAS BOUND ME,
FOND MEMORY BRINGS THE LIGHT OF OTHER DAYS AROUND ME;
THE SMILES THE TEARS, OF BOYHOOD'S YEARS
THE WORDS OF LOVE THEN SPOKEN; THE EYES THAT SHONE,
NOW DIMMED & GONE,
TNE CHEERFUL HEART THAT'S BROKEN."

NOSTALGIC MEMORIES come flooding back as I turn back the pages of time on the Rock River valley, for I was born and bred there. My first incursions into its remoter recesses was with my late father, a great lover of outdoor life. The mode of travel was anything from buggy cart to slow of speed motor vehicle, or along water courses in paddle canoe and steam powered boat. It was life at its fullest in those care-

free boyhood days in one of the most beautiful parts of this paradise isle, yet unspoilt by the hand of man.

In youth, my love of wide open spaces and wild, unchartered forests took me to the most inaccessible parts of this valley in search of adventure. Later, I was privileged to work for a few months with a band of brave and pioneering men who lived in shacks, 32 miles up river, at a point

marked on the map by a promontory of rock, called "INGINIYAGALA."

Their assignment was to carry out test drillings of bed rock at a point where a giant dam was to impound the water of the river, later. Subsequently, when the project was launched, I provided coverage to mass media on progress made in the country's first multi-purpose river valley development scheme. Finally, I joined the service of the autonomous development authority there.

Thus, over the years, I had the unique opportunity of seeing this temperamental river that sometimes ravaged and destroyed vast land areas under crop and human habitations, harnessed and tamed for man's progress and welfare. Over the years, the face of the Rock River valley changed even beyond recognition to me. In the process, nearly a million acres of water

spread, of man made lakes and water courses, with their mystic charm and vast tourist potential was created.

THOSE OUTDOOR HOLIDAY lovers who are able to take back their minds to a decade ago will no doubt remember the rush to Gal Oya by every possible means of transport, in season and out. The Sundays, on which invariably, the entire fleet of the national air line was parked on a specially constructed apron to the Amparai air strip, while the passengers on holiday, spread through out the valley.

What caused that stampede?

Undoubtedly, the large herds of elephants so easily seen at Kondawattuwana, near the air strip, about the Uhana Saddle of the main left bank channel, or others, around the Senanayake Samudra seen during pleasure cruises on it, were the key attraction. If luck would have it, seeing papas, mamas, brothers and sisters not to speak of cousins and aunts, and even little toddlers besporting themselves in water, or mama Jumbo bearing the baby on its trunk and swimming across the deepest part of the lake, were not uncommon sights. Courting couples in giant hugs and kisses, and mating in the deep forest privacy were and still are all part of the co-existence of man and beast in the valley. The largest herds of wild buffalo live and have their

being in and around the Senanayake Samudra and some massive herds, with fine horns, can be seen there.

That is not all; the valley is a veritable paradise of birds. Aquatic birds of almost any species can be spotted there, in and around the lakes. Pelican, painted Stork, ibis, egret, heron, spoonbill, Indian darter and commorants, to mention a few, abound and during the nesting season provide a galaxy of nests and fledglings, the latter precariously perched atop the leafless sentinels of time in dead trees, white with bird droppings and silhouetted against the deep blue sky. The orchestra of bird sounds inside the nesting colonies is something that has to be experienced to be believed and goes on endlessly as the little ones are fed, taught to hop from branch to branch with food in mother's beak as enticement and finally prodded and pushed into space to fly and be independent.

Within the forests, the bush birds are no less abundant. The weaver, horn bill, oriole, drongo, imperial, green and bronze pigeon, paradise fly catcher minivets of several varieties, bee eater, wood pecker parrot, parakeet, kingfisher and several others fill the air with their sweet song and call, morning and evening. The mating plumage of the more colourful species, during the season, is exotic at its best. The migrants are

there to, October to March, in whistling teal, garganey, snipe, sand piper and all others that come over to avoid the rigours of the Siberian winter. In the ponds, lagoons and lakes, purple coat, moor hen and jacana strut about balancing delicately on floating lotus leaves and other brush.

Sport fishing with rod and line, is another attraction there. Apart from the artificial lakes, the rock pools and the river course below the main dam provide great scope for reeling in cat fish. Though they are not great fighters, the sizes and numbers that can be caught of a morning or evening, with a little luck, will thrill any fisherman's heart. Getting anything between 5 and 10 lbs. is nothing unusual and the record, as far as I know it, is 12 lbs. 2 ozs. caught by a 15 year old English boy.

A million acres of water concentrated within 1240 square miles, which is a twentieth of the country, is indeed unique potential for development. Consider the possibilities of yachting along inland waters for miles on end—and water sports simultaneously, seeing agrarian enterprise and day to day human life in a part of the country reclaimed from forest less than 25 years ago. Beyond them, animal and bird life in relative abundance, and solitude and peace so much sought after by the frayed nerves and ulcerated stomachs of the

modern technological civilization's human products. To the fair and fashionable women unhappy about their bleached skins and craving a tan in every part of their bodies, secluded nooks are available in plenty for sun bathing away from peeping Toms.

To the "occidental" tourist sick of what the playing fields of the Mediterranean, Carribean and the Far East offers them in casinos, striptease and sexy dance forms, not to speak of more nefarious pastime in institutions of glorified name and questionable fame, here can be a welcome change for health of mind and body. A millionaire American and his wife who went to Gal Oya for two days during their fourth round-the-world trip and stayed there for five days, cancelling the rest of their programme in the country asked me why they had been taken only to Kandy, Nuwara Eliya, the ruined cities and Hikkaduwa every time they came here, when there were places like Gal Oya. Another American, driving on the Senanayake Samudra dam with me, nearly jumped out of his seat exclaiming "God, this is Kashmir again," when the vast panorama of the blue lake dotted with islands, the lush green forest around its 80 mile shore line and the towering hills beyond, standing against whiffs of white cirrus clouds burst suddenly upon him.

Almost every foreigner who went there during my eight years close association with project work, stayed there longer than he intended to, originally. That is the magic spell the valley casts over people who go there and don't want to return. The original blue prints of planned development there included making Inginiyagala, nestling below 770 thousand acre feet of water of the giant reservoir, into a tourist resort area.

A 100 roomed hotel overlooking the big lake, on a hill on the southern end of the main dam, a pleasure garden below on the lines of the Brindavan gardens in India, an orchard of fruit trees, ornamental fountains and an aerial tramway from the hotel to the top of Inginiyagala for a bird's eye view of the giant lake and the blue hills of Uva beyond, were all part of it. Unfortunately, for reasons of economy at that time they were abandoned. But that was also a time when the present all-out effort to earn much needed foreign exchange through tourist development had not been launched. If it had been done 10 years earlier, Gal Oya would have earned a major part of the foreign exchange expended on it already. But it is still not too late to do so and catch up on lost time.

APART from what the liberal hand of nature has endowed this valley with,

let us consider the base that multi-purpose development there has created on which the infrastructure for tourism can be built. Firstly, its heavily capitalised communication system. The valley is on the internal air link and the air port's runway there has an apron for parking planes too. The flight time is an hour; and right across the luxuriant island and with very little divergence from the direct route. Adams Peak, Pidurutalagala, Nuwara Eliya, the Mahaweli river and so much else can be seen very well, the weather gods permitting it. The valley is also accessible by no less than three trunk road routes; through Kurunegala, Polonnaruwa and Batticaloa; via Ratnapura, Wellawaya and Monaragala, by Kandy, Mahiyangana and Maha Oya. Each of them has its distinct attraction and charm to the observant and appreciative traveller. Within the valley there is a well laid out net work of good macadamised and earthen roads.

Next, there is this vital question of accomodation for tourist with clean, comfortable rooms and wholesome and tasty food. In Inginiyagala there is a large Rest House which at one time had 22 double rooms and several of them air conditioned and with bamboo lounge and bar. Apart from this, there is a circuit bungalow there and several other bungalows with the modern

amenities of drainage, water service and electricity. It shouldn't take too much imagination, effort and capital to turn these into tourist lodges—home away from home—with a common eating place, say at the old Rest House. A far sighted entrepreneur could even consider boat houses on the Senanayake Samudra which could be towed by launches and anchored in one or more of the numerous bays and coves of the lake where there is a concentration of wild life at any given time. With this extra attraction we could steal a march on Kashmir itself. I have spent nights in the solitude of this massive lake on a crude, floating platform knocked up on empty oil barrels, with only the

moon sometimes, and at most others, the stars for company. It was experience par excellence and beyond description in words. I feel sure the investor will make his money from local honeymoon couples even before the foreign tourists yield the golden harvest. Grandeur hotels can come later but a start can be made with the nucleus that multi-purpose development has thrown up.

To come to another point, Inginiyagala as a tourist resort can be the spring board to serve the whole south east of the country on a regional development plan. The Lahugala tank which is the only place in the island where one can see

wild elephants the year round and in scores during the dry months, is only an hour's drive from there. Kumanna, the famed bird sanctuary, is another two hours away. With foresight and enterprise, it can also serve as the gateway to the Ruhuna national Park from the South East. Apart from these, the sea is less than a couple of hours drive and there it will be the turquoise blue or emerald green of the bay of Bengal which laps the expansive golden sand beaches of the east coast. The whole region can be written large and bold on the tourist map of this paradise isle "where every prospect pleases" and I would like to think man is not vile. It's off the beaten track.

CHANGE UNHEARD OF

Inside Soviet Central Asia

By

BASIL PERERA

WILLIAM LAWRENCE, a correspondent of the *New York Times* after visiting the Soviet Central Asian Republics in 1944 opined that "more progress has been made here in the years since Alexander the Great first captured Samarkand in 329 B.C."

This is one of the finest tributes, coming from the ranks of Tuscany, to the Soviet Union's consistent implementation of the Leninist policy relating to the problem of nationali-

ties. And the phenomenal progress made in the Republics during the 28 years since then has even dwarfed their former achievements.

How was it possible for these once backward Tsarist colonies, steeped in medieval obscurantism and superstition, to rise to the position of being the advance posts of civilisation in all Asia, while the colonies of the British, French, Dutch and other imperialisms remained stagnant unable to make any

economic or cultural headway for centuries? The answer to this question is to be found in the contrasting philosophies and politics of imperialism and socialism.

UNDER IMPERIALISM vast annual tributes are drawn from the poverty-stricken backward peoples under colonial domination to the wealthy exploiting classes of the possessing powers. Under Soviet socialism the extra cost involved in rapidly helping forward the economic and cultural development of backward peoples has been met by allotting to them consistently a disproportionate share of the total Soviet budget, so that during the transitional period,

they have continuously received more than they have given—a reverse 'drain'.

Thus for example, in the Soviet budget for 1927-28, even before the implementation of the Five Year Plans, the allocation for financing economic development was 1.65 roubles per head in the RSFSR while for example, in Turkmenistan, the figure was 8.9 roubles-over 5 times more. The budgetary allocation for social-cultural needs was 2.16 roubles per head in the RSFSR, and 3.84 roubles per head in Turkmenistan. Similarly, the separate budget of the RSFSR received only 18.6 per cent of the revenues derived in its territories, while the budget of Tadjikistan received 100 per cent.

In this way the former ruling Russian nation, wealthier and more developed received less and gave more. The former exploited colonial peoples having greater needs, gave less and received more, until they could catch up. Such is the contrast in living practices, between imperialist colonial exploitation and the fulfilment of the Leninist principles of the equality of nations, with the most backward rapidly helped forward to the level of the most advanced. We see here the miracle which has made deserts bloom, spreading prosperity and happiness in places where the human footstep has not been seen for thousands of years.

UNDER THE TSARS, industry was concentrated in limited areas round big cities like Moscow and Leningrad where industrial capital originated and developed. Now the former Tsarist colonies in Central Asia and the Transcaucasus are advanced centres of civilisation, of mechanised agriculture and industry, and of high social and cultural achievement.

Let me illustrate what Soviet power has brought these once-backward areas citing significant figures relating to four Soviet republics I myself have visited and whose spectacular advances I have seen with my own eyes—Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan and Georgia.

Within the historically short period of 50 years these four Republics have advanced with mighty strides till today the industrial output (compared with 1922) has increased in Uzbekistan by 228 times; in Kazakhstan by 558 times; in Azerbaijan (which was already developed industrially in 1922) by 62 times; and in Georgia by 150 times.

From backward colonies under Tsarism they have become progressive self-governing republics with a level of development comparing favourably with the European part of the USSR or any other industrialised country. Already by 1946 industrial output in Kazakhstan constituted 66 per cent of total pro-

duction, while in Uzbekistan this percentage was 75 and this despite the enormous parallel increase in agricultural output.

Under the current Five Year Plan (1971-75), while the rate of growth for the USSR as a whole will be 42-46 per cent, industrial production will rise in the Uzbek republic by 46-49 per cent and in Kazakhstan by 57-60 per cent.

IT WAS LENIN who said that Communism equals Soviet power plus electricity. In 1913 (the last pre world War I year), Kazakhstan produced more 1.3 million kilowatt-hours of electricity or an average of 0.23 kwh per capita. By 1971 she produced 37,400 million kwh or 2,700 kwh per capita, which is more than what many advancee countries can boast of. The corresponding figures for Georgia are 20 million kwh in 1913, and 9,490 million kwh in 1971. In Azerbaijan, the output of electricity increased 110 times during this period to reach 12,200 million kwh.

IT was a former British Colonial Secretary, A. R. Creech Jones who wrote with reference to their African colonies that "the philosophy of Lenin will not bring better nutrition or the rearing of cattle in the testse forest belt." But it is precisely this philosophy that helped Kazakhstan, after the Second World War, to

supply 500,000 head of cattle to the liberated areas, finish 1945 with 4.2 million more head of cattle than in 1940. Today the figure has shot up to nearly 7.5 million. And the degree of mechanisation of agriculture in this republic, once the home of nomadic shepherds, can be gauged by the fact that it has at its disposal today over 200,000 tractors, 120,000 combine-harvesters and a great deal of other agricultural machines and implements.

AS REGARDS the question of health, in 1913, Kazakhstan had only 244 doctors. By 1940, this number had increased to 2751, enabling that republic to provide 1 doctor for every 2253 citizens. In comparison, be it noted, the British African colony of Nigeria registered the "magnificent" increase from the ratio of 1 doctor for 135,000 (in 1917) to 1 doctor for every 133,000 by 1948:

Kazakhstan had its bed-strength in hospitals increased from 1,300 in 1913 to 25,500 in 1940—a 14-fold increase which enabled it to provide 1 bed for every 243 citizens. Unhappy Nigeria, after 80 years of British rule could boast of only 1 bed for every 3,700:

It is the same regarding every other republic in Central Asia and the Transcaucasus. The initial conditions there were very much the same as or even worse than in Nigeria and the other African colonies. But with-

in one generation of Soviet liberation, the former succeeded in reaching a level comparable with the advanced European countries.

The latest available figures show that these formerly backward countries of the East have left even American and Europe far behind. For while the USA has only 1 doctor to cater for every 500 and countries like Britain, France and Holland can only boast of 1 doctor for about 800 inhabitants, Kazakhstan in 1971 had 1 doctor for every 83, Uzbekistan 1 for every 100, Georgia 1 for every 109, and Azerbaijan 1 for every 106.

In the field of education and culture, while in India, after close on two centuries of British rule, more than 90 per cent of the population remained illiterate, in the Soviet Central Asian Republics, which started at an even lower level with only 1.3 literate in 1913, illiteracy has long ago been entirely eliminated. Thus, not more than 2.3 per cent were literate in Uzbekistan before the Revolution. By 1950, literacy was 100 per cent. In Kazakhstan, less than 2 per cent were literate in 1913. By 1950, about 90 per cent were fully literate and only 1.2 per cent wholly illiterate—a lower percentage of illiteracy than even in the USA.

BEFORE 1917 there was no tuition in Uzbekistan for the children of pe-

sants and workers. Today there are 3.5 million school children—about one-third of the total population. Uzbekistan can also boast of 309 higher schools and 168 special secondary schools. Kazakhstan has more than 10,000 general schools attended by over 3 million pupils, and 45 higher educational establishments where there was none before the Revolution.

The following figures relating to the number of students in higher educational establishments per 10,000 of the population are many times more than the corresponding figures not only for countries of the "third world" but even for the most advanced capitalist countries: Uzbekistan 189; Kazakhstan 152; Georgia 189; and Azerbaijan 192.

The story is the same everywhere in the USSR, to whichever field of activity we may turn. In particular, the progress made by the peoples of Soviet Central Asia during these last 50 years has been breathtaking in its scope. Truly may it be said that never before in human history has such great strides been made by such vast masses of people—in so short a time.

A FOLKTALE FROM MALAGASY

The Story Of Rice

AT the beginning of the World there were only four men. They were entrusted with four different duties. The first man was a hunter who had a spear, the second was a trapper who caught animals and birds, the third was a fruit gatherer and the fourth was a cultivator, who tilled the land and planted the crops.

Unfortunately, these four men could never agree among themselves. They quarrelled so much that they found it difficult to live together. Each man wanted to do what the other did, they were dissatisfied in having to do the same thing all the time. After a big quarrel they decided to approach their God, so that their lot could be changed and each man doing what he wanted could live in harmony with the others.

ON the day decided they set out to meet their God, but on reaching his dwelling found him busy pounding rice. He told the four men that he had no time for them that day. However, he gave each of them a handful of rice and told them to keep it until he met them again some days later. Each man clutching his handful of rice went on his own way. The hunter saw some game at a distance. He dropped the

rice and took his bow and arrow and went hunting.

The second man, the trapper, heard the cry of a bird. He also threw down his handful of rice and went after it. The third saw some beautiful ripe fruit on the top of a tree. Dropping the rice on the ground he began to reach for it.

The fourth man, who was the cultivator, put the rice on the ground and began to dig nearby. Some of the rice he put into the dug earth and the rest he took home with him.

Some days later, they went to the God's abode again. He asked each man for the rice but none could return it except the cultivator. They each told their story of how they had lost it. The God told them their behaviour showed that their fate could not be changed. From then on, each man followed his skill and lived peacefully together.

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

- WAR OR PEACE IN VIETNAM — ARIEL
- WHERE ARE WE GOING — PERTINAX
- SAFARI IN CEYLON — AMONG VEDDAHS
- TAX EVASION — CONCLUDING

ASIA'S POPULATION

The population of Asia unless its growth is checked, will reach 3,778 million by the year 2000, or more than the total population of the world in 1970 (3,635 million). At present the continent is inhabited by 1,994 million people. In the less developed areas a 365 per cent increase is expected by the year 2000, and in the more developed areas 158 per cent. These figures are given in a report submitted by the U. N. Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East to the second Asian demographic conference which opened in Tokyo on November 1. The conference was attended by demographers and family planning experts from 25 countries, including the Soviet Union. China, which is not a member of the Commission, did not take part.

The report stresses the need for a speedy and sharp reduction of the birth rate "essential for the preservation and development of the Asian peoples and cultures." The compilers believe that if proper family planning measures were taken the population of the area represented on the Commission would in the year 2000 be 764 million less than if the growth is allowed to go on uncontrolled.

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