

# TRIBUNE

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A NEW ERA IN  
JOURNALISM

THE END OF  
AN ERA

THE FOOD  
CRISIS  
THE PM'S  
ASSURANCE

DREAMS ARE  
MADE OF THIS

SAFARI IN  
CEYLON

CHRONICLE





# Tribune

## A NEW ERA IN JOURNALISM

In This Issue

THIS IS the first issue of *Tribune* after the National State Assembly had adopted the Sri Lanka Press Council Bill. We have not had time to examine the provisions of the Act in the light of how it will be administered. We know the limitations which have been imposed on the press, but it is not yet clear what constitutes "Cabinet" news and what is not. In any case, we have to learn to adapt ourselves to the dynamics, imperatives and under-currents of this new era in journalism in this island. Readers will therefore bear with us for a week or two until we know the perspectives within which we can make our comments.


*TRIBUNE* is essentially and primarily a journal of comment. Government spokesmen claim that comment is free, but what we are not certain is on what we can comment and on what we cannot comment. The Prime Minister has assured us that there is no food crisis and went on to say that if anybody had got the impression that there was such a crisis it was because the newspapers had tended to create this impression. Once the PM makes this categorical statement, is it open for a commentator to question the validity of the PM's statement? Such criticism can

be only done on the basis of information which newspapers have published as emanating from official sources. As everything published in the papers now becomes *ab initio* bad, unless covered by a government communique, could any information be used to show that the PM has indulged in euphemism when she declared that there was no food crisis in Sri Lanka? Will it be wrong if we argue that there must have been some kind of crisis in food for the PM to thank Pakistan, China and Burma for coming to our "rescue" by sending us rice? Or is the PM's statement that there is no food crisis a final *diktat* and *fiat* which ends all argument and comment on the matter of the food situation?

These are problems which have to be resolved in the new era of journalism which has dawned in Sri Lanka. It is difficult to bottle up the spirit of human freedom, but history has shown that countries, nations and even continents can slip into a dark age of reaction, persecution and suppression for long periods of time. Europe receded into its wellknown Dark Ages because the Church (and the monarchs who were in partnership) wanted to

suppress freedom—in the name of God. Today, freedom has been limited under various excuses, but the revolt against such oppression comes faster and quicker than ever before in history.

As *Tribune* has repeatedly stressed the daily press in Ceylon (and now in Sri Lanka) has not conducted itself in a manner which can be said to have been praiseworthy. Our daily papers have been guilty of many of the lapses they are accused of and there is very little which can be said in their defence. These papers have displayed all the arrogance of power which stems from monopoly. They have slanted news, they have managed the news and set out to be kingmakers. But what *Tribune* has maintained is that the Press Council is not the remedy. There



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were and are so many other options before Government to deal with the irresponsible press—without infringing upon the fundamental rights of freedom and self-expression.

But it is too late now in the day to argue this matter. We are now in the new era of the Press Council Act and we have yet to learn how we should function as an "independent journal" under the present laws. Until we can find our bearings, *Tribune* will tread warily. We do not believe in mock heroics or harsh words. We do not want to flaunt clichés about "freedom" in the way in which some of the daily papers, which had never distinguished themselves for veracity in news-reporting, have done recently. We do not propose to offer ourselves to be burnt at the stake. We want to be in a position to tell our readers what we think on current problems. We also want to be in a position to offer other writers, commentators, columnists and contributors an opportunity to tell our readers what they feel on the burning topics of the day. What-  
ever the limitations, *Tribune* will continue to reflect the times in which we live.

IN THIS ISSUE the Editor in his Rambling Notes speculates on the Press Council and its impact on the newspapers, but he merely skips over the surface of the problem. It is yet too premature

for any examination in depth. *Pertinax* has a few comments on the food crisis. For the rest, we have some of our usual features: *Safari*, *From The Easy Chair* and the *Chronicle*, *Alkardi Mugana* completes another of his journeys, the first two parts of this safari having appeared in the last two issues. *Canax* gets deep into the problem of land reform and productivity with a new incisiveness in his humour. We also start a new series entitled *SHAMBA* by *Anatory Bukoba*. It is all about opening a piece of land for "development" in the Kala Oya area, and readers will find this a fascinating series which will reflect one of the most important problems of the day. For the rest we have a variety of articles on matters of international significance.

THE COVER is a grim reminder of what Sri Lanka is in for—if we continue to be buried in phlegmatic apathy satisfied that the slogan of the United Front about "socialism" will automatically herald an age of plenty and contentment.

**NEXT ISSUE**

- **SHAMBA**  
Settling Down in Kala Oya.
- **FROM THE EASY CHAIR**  
Canax on Time
- **THE BLACK SEPTEMBER**  
Killing in Khartoum

**RAMBLING NOTES**

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

**THE END OF AN ERA**

SRI LANKA has now moved into the era of the United Front's Press Council Bill. On February 22, the National State Assembly passed the Press Council Bill "unanimously with 112 for and none against (the entire Opposition having walked out in protest). At the beginning of the sessions the Speaker had stated that the Constitutional Court had dismissed all eight petitions in a 43 page decision.

This is how the *Daily News* of 23/2/73 reported the historic day "The Press Bill was passed through all its stages shortly after six o'clock yesterday evening. Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike, Minister of Justice, opened for the Government and, he was followed by Mr. C. X. Martyn (Ind-Jaffna). Mr. Bandaranaike then wound up for the Government and a vote was taken: 112 voted for the Bill and none against as the Opposition had walked out in protest. The House then went in to committee to discuss the Bill clause by clause. This took very little time; and thereafter the third reading of the bill was passed also by 112 votes to nil."



"Just before the second reading of the Bill was taken up, Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, Leader of the Opposition, wanted 'time to read and study the decision' of the court, but this was refused by the Minister of Justice. The entire Opposition consisting of the UNP, the FP and the three Independents—Messrs. W. Dharmapala, Prins Gunasekera and Mudiyanse Tennekoon then walked out.

"None of the provisions in the Sri Lanka Press Bill is inconsistent with the Constitution. This is the opinion of the Constitutional Court as announced by the Speaker when the National State Assembly met yesterday afternoon.

"The opinion of the Constitutional Court, running into 43 pages, dealt with each of the provisions of the bill challenged by the eight petitioners. All the petitions were dismissed. The Speaker, Mr. Stanley Tillekeratne, made the announcement soon after the Assembly began its sessions. It was decided that the 43 page document be tabled in the Assembly for the information of members.

"Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike, Minister of Public Administration, Local Government, Home Affairs and Justice, then moved the Second Reading of the Bill. Earlier yesterday morning the Government Parliamentary Group decided to go ahead with the debate on the Press Council Bill and complete the debate in two days.

"The Group also decided that the Bill should be passed by a two-thirds majority, whatever the decision of the Constitutional Court on the petitions against the bill. The Group also discussed the rice situation. It was suggested that the guaranteed price for paddy be increased by a further two rupees making it Rs 20 per bushel. The government recently increased the guaranteed price to Rs. 18. However, no decision was taken on this suggestion. The increasing cost of living was also discussed and a government member suggested that prices should not be pushed up by gazette notification taking even government members by surprise."

IN A COMMUNIQUE from the office of the Leader of the Opposition said: "The Opposition requested time to read and study the decision and the reasons of the Constitutional Court on the Press Council Bill announced in the Assembly today. This was refused. The Government insisted on proceeding with the Press Council Bill immediately. The Opposition wanted the second reading postponed till the court's reasons were made available to them as the reasons were not even read out in the Assembly. This was refused. Therefore, the entire opposition in the National State Assembly walked out of the Assembly at 3 p.m. refusing to participate in the debate as a protest against the un-

reasonable and undemocratic attitude of the Government in denying the right of the members and the public to know and study the decision and the reasons of the Constitutional Court before proceeding with the second reading of the Press Council Bill.

"The Opposition also decided not to participate at any stage of the debate on this bill.

"The Opposition condemns the inderent haste with which the Government is attempting to rush through this bill while the country is facing a grave financial and food crisis."

The Daily News did not write an editorial on the question of the Press Council on February 23. Its editorial columns were devoted to "Slum Landlords" and the MCC Cricket Match. An editorial will no doubt be forthcoming later. But for the moment it will suffice to cite the editorial published by the Daily Mirror on the morning of February 23. It was a remarkably good piece, hard-hitting but restrained (in the circumstances). On many occasions, in past, the editorials of the Daily Mirror hit the root with hard words but this editorial entitled AND SO TO AUTOCRACY deserves to be placed on record.

The full editorial is reproduced below: "Government trounced freedom by 112 votes to nil yesterday, the nil representing the Opposition that decided that it did not have



the ghost of a chance against that kind of steam-roller majority. The conclusion was a foregone one: The autocratic trend of the Government convinced those pledged to democracy—the genuinely democratic that is, not the phoney lip-servicers, that the Press Council Bill was, in truth an executioner's axe to behead the freedom of the Press first and, having silenced it, to chop off the freedom of the individual.

"That in our opinion, is the greatest danger in the Press Council Bill. As we have pointed out times without number in this column the decapitating of the Press is the text-book preliminary in the autocrat's handbook for the destruction of democracy. While it is tragic that millions of the democratic are blind to this danger it is even more tragic that democrats in the Government are even more blind to the shape of things to come. Power, Lord Action said, corrupts. He forgot to add: that it also blinds. Had he been living in these times and looked Lanka-wards, he would, doubtless, have wished up to the other evils of power, namely, that for increasing power politicians are prepared not only to kill the more treasured virtue of democracy, freedom, but they are even more prepared to murder their Motherland. We are witnessing this tragedy, right now in Sri Lanka.

"Power, as the poet Shelly wrote, 'like a desolate pestilence, pollutes whatever it touches... makes slaves of men, and of the human frame a mechanised automaton'. That is the danger implicit in the Press Council Bill spawned entirely by lust for lasting power. The Minister of Justice, Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike, apparently desirous of proving that 'not only should justice be done but seem to be done', has posed this question on almost every platform he has spoken, including the State Assembly yesterday; 'What is it that the Press writes today, that it cannot write after the Press Council Bill is passed?'

"For answer we quote no less a person than Mr. Donald Tyerman, former Editor of the London 'Economist' and now Chairman of the Commonwealth Press Freedom Committee. In a letter to the Prime Minister Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike, dated December 1 1972, he wrote: The Press Council Bill 'would impose upon journalists blanket prohibitions on the discussion of political and economic matters (Section 16) which if applied in this country would, for instance have made it quite impossible for me to have produced a single issue of my paper when I was editing *The Economist* (London). Our misgivings, he states, 'which are shared by our

members in Sri Lanka, concern both the character and the scope of the proposed Press Council. We are convinced that the freedom of the Press could only be put in peril by the institution of a body which would be neither independent nor representative, possessing the powers of a special and summary Court from which there could be no appeal and in which journalists could be arraigned and punished for the widest range of offences (Sections 15 and 16).

"As we see it, the proposed Press Council Bill of Sri Lanka would be, in function, an administrative Court, controlling the Press according to the policy of the Government of the day. In its 'inquiries' which would in fact, be trials it would be subjecting journalists to special legal processes for many offences which in the case of other citizens would be dealt with in the ordinary Courts.

"That should over trump for all time Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike's trump card of a question which he has dealt dramatically everywhere."

It is difficult not to endorse what the *Daily Mirror* has so forcefully stated.

Sri Lanka has quietly but surely slipped into a new way of living. We stand in queues in front of dingy and dirty co-ops for our food purchases. We have to



# Tribunian

## THE FOOD CRISIS: THE PM'S ASSURANCE

By PERTINAX

THE PRIME MINISTER, in a statement in the National State Assembly on

get permits for most things we buy. We are at the mercy of bureaucrats at different corporations for the essentials we have to obtain. We cannot buy a mammy without getting a permit after endorsements from many officials that we are farmers entitled to purchase a mammy. We can detail many other changes in our lives.

All this has been done to give the under-privileged a sense of equality. The down-trodden want to be free, and they have the right to be free. They have the right not to be exploited. But to ensure these rights and freedoms, it is wrong to curtail the freedom of self-expression. The lapses of a few newspapers must not be visited on the whole nation setting back the clock for several generations.

It is yet too early to say what life will be like in a Sri Lanka where the UF's Press Council reigns supreme. Government spokesmen claim that a free press will continue to flourish. This is yet to be demonstrated in actual practice.

February 22, 1973 assured the Assembly and the nation that there was "no food crisis" as alleged in the country. Mrs. Bandaranaike who was answering a question raised by the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. J. R. Jayawardene, said that any person, who read the newspapers, would have got the impression that such a crisis existed. She said that food was being supplied to the People as before, and she did not want to comment on newspaper ethics.

Mrs. Bandaranaike tabled a reply in answer to the question made by the Leader of the Opposition, and then made a statement on the food situation, which she said, she was obliged to make for the benefit of the public. She said that in the country's recorded history, (it has been stated that Ceylon was once considered the granary of the east), no one had died of starvation. During World War II when there was a food shortage, the people had resorted to substitutes such as manioc, jak and sweet potatoes.

Today, the people were using flour as a substitute for rice, but it could not be hoped that wheat could be grown in this country

economically. The question could be asked as to who was responsible for the present situation. Her answer was that all those present in the House, as well as those who were there formerly, were to blame. The leader of the Opposition too should be prepared to accept the blame, she said.

She added that there was no food crisis as alleged, and food was supplied to the people as before. Mrs. Bandaranaike then outlined the difficulties faced by the Government in regard to the supply of rice.

Last year's Yala crop was affected by an unprecedented drought. The available rice in the country too could not be purchased as at that time the Government did not have the monopoly of purchasing rice from the producers. The partial failure of the Yala crop was still with us. The stock would improve in March since the bulk of the Maha crop too would be available at this time. Besides, rice from Burma, Pakistan and China too would arrive in March.

The Government had taken steps to increase rice production by increasing the guaranteed price for paddy. This would serve as an incentive for more production. The price of rice in the world market had increased, and this year's price was 200 per cent more, as compared to last year.



She had received a cable yesterday that a ton of rice would cost £200 per ton. Speculators, the Premier said, created artificial shortages and that was why raids were carried on by the Government as a deterrent against the machinations of speculators.

Mrs. Bandaranaike concluding thanked the governments of China, Pakistan and Burma for coming to Sri Lanka's aid despite the difficulties these countries were facing.

**Mr. J. R. Jayewardene:** I asked for bread and got a stone.

**Mr. J. R. Jayewardene:** (Leader of the Opposition) stated earlier that he had written to the Prime Minister that he intended to ask on February 22, 1973, in the National State Assembly, the following questions of an urgent character and relating to a matter of public importance, namely—

(1) Will the Prime Minister make a statement to the Assembly on the scarcity of food prevailing in the island today and the measures taken by the Government to meet this crisis, with particular reference to—

(a) the buffer stocks of rice and flour that were available on December 31, 1972.

(b) the arrangements made to procure supplies of rice and flour from abroad for the year 1973

(c) whether the Prime Minister and the Cabinet were informed of the failure to secure these supplies—if so, when?

(d) the action taken to remedy the failure to obtain supplies from abroad;

(e) the amount of paddy and rice purchased by the Government in 1972, and how far these purchases fell below the target anticipated.

(2) Will the Assembly be given an opportunity to discuss the grave food situation prevailing in the country on the 22nd or 23rd February 1973?

**Mrs. Bandaranaike:** replied that she would make a statement after the tea interval.

After the Premier's statement, Mr. Jayewardene wished to know whether they could have a debate on the Premier's statement.

**Mr. Maitripala Senanayake:** (Leader of the House) replied that they could do so on "the next sitting day."

The Prime Minister has thus issued a fiat that there is "no food crisis" as alleged. Being now in the era of the Press Council, it is difficult to know just what we can say and what we cannot.

But in the meantime, it would be open to us to point out that there is a food crisis in the greater part of the world. Only in Sri Lanka, under the benign rule of the United Front, we have no "food crisis."

A NEWS AGENCY report (AFP), datelined Geneva February 9, appeared in many newspapers throughout the world under the heading **FAO WARNS**

**MILLIONS MAY DIE IN FAMINE THIS YEAR:** this is the text of the message.

"The United Nations Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) experts have warned that several million people might die of hunger this year in all the countries situated between Dakar, on the West African Atlantic coast, and Dacca, in the East, due to insufficient rains and rise in cereal prices. The experts, meeting in Rome to streamline programmes of the FAO and the Economic Commission for Europe, said India had finally ordered only three million tons which would cost her almost as much as the six million tons she originally wanted to import. Prices had now risen far above the possibilities of the developing countries, even for credit buying, for they were already deep in debt.

"The experts said in six months, the price of a ton of wheat, transport included, had risen from 68 to 120 dollars. This increase was essentially due to massive orders by the Soviet Union of 27 to 30 million tons of wheat, to be supplied over three years. They said many other countries had also bought cereals and silos contained only 29.6 million tons of what compared with 49.7 million tons a year ago.

"In addition the massive orders, like that from the Soviet Union bit deeply in to stocks endangering the future. And finally the world's merc-



hant fleet was only just sufficient to supply these huge orders.

But already the ports and road transport of customer countries were saturated they said. They appealed to producers to increase the area under cultivation. They also urged customer countries to increase their own efforts, and they hoped that the monsoon rains would be abundant in India this year.

**"But these proposals concern the future, still several months away. For the moment, FAO experts admit that nothing can be done for the millions of Africans and Asians threatened with famine.**

ANOTHER AGENCY despatch also referred to certain developments in Sri Lanka. And it set out certain "facts" which indicated that Ceylon was short of food because its domestic production had not increased adequately.

HECTOR

## DREAMS ARE MADE OF THIS

BY

CANAX

I'LL NEVER again talk out of turn, I can tell you that. I'll even gladly skip my turn, if it's all the same to you, especially when it comes to talking in my dreams, which I seem to do more often than talking in my sleep.

I have a perfectly harmless, dreamy chat with people I thought were my friends, and the next thing I know we have a lot of banner-headlined

This is how the report read: "Sri Lanka's Trade Ministry Secretary Jayantha Kelegama on Thursday left for Pakistan to obtain urgent rice supplies to avert a serious food shortage in the country. Current stocks are barely sufficient to meet this month's requirements. The shortage is because of delays in delivery by China, the main supplier.

"Sri Lanka's rice production is not sufficient to meet its requirements and the deficit is made up by imports from China under a Sino-Sri Lanka bilateral trade agreement. However China has indicated that it would be unable to help Sri Lanka as Burma has defaulted in its supplies to China because of a severe drought. The Government is now arranging to send delegations to Egypt and Japan, which have surplus stocks of rice. Meanwhile, observers ex-

pect Britain to increase its economic aid to Sri Lanka following an urgent appeal by Mrs. Bandaranaike to British Prime Minister Edward Heath."

As far as can be seen, there are no falsehoods in this statement, and it would indicate that Sri Lanka was undergoing a "crisis" in the same way others countries were. To insist that there was no food crisis because the co-ops were able to sell the rations of rice and flour was castuistry.

That there is a shortage in Sri Lanka must be admitted. Off-ration rice is only available at a price, in spite of the seizures and requisitioning of stocks on February 11

It is good to know that there is "no food crisis" in the country. This is not a fairy tale. The Prime Minister has told us that the crisis was a concoction of the newspapers.

had a pretty long reputation as a born dreamer. My father thought so, my teacher said so, my girl friend suspected so and, not surprisingly, my wife says she knows so. In the face of such life-long praise, it's only my inborn humility that has helped me keep my head, if only in the clouds. Why, I even remember the time, a few years back, when some Minister said 'I dreamed a dream' and everybody went ga-ga over what he said he dreamed, my wife kept urging me to take to politics because, she said, I could out-dream



From The Easy Chair

the whole ruddy lot in Parliament with my eyes wide open and both feet firmly on the ground. I declined, of course. I still prefer dreams to nightmares.

TO GET back to my own woolly world. I keep dreaming so many dreams I've stopped maintaining an index card-system of records for ready reference. If I can't recall a particular dream, and I find I want to, I don't behave like so many insomniacs worrying themselves to death instead of to sleep. I simply go ahead and have another dream just like the other one, and nine times out of ten it's just as good. (I didn't make it ten times out of ten so my statistics will appear real, not dreamed-up. So don't ask about the tenth. It's the one that got away.)

I wasn't dreaming of anything in particular, but everything in general (it takes time to be able to do this about 30 years' time) when, somehow, I found myself in Hector's company. It's probably safe to assume that, for his part, Hector too found himself in mine. I can't dream up any reason for finding ourselves thus, but that's because I'm afraid I'm no Freud, and don't get paid like he was anyway.

We talked of many things, like cabbages and kings and the conversa-

tion, as I recall it, was somewhere between the two when I thought I discerned the likes of Mr. Niyathapala a little to the right of where Hector was. Now Niyathapala and I are very close friends, you see, much closer than what you would call bottle pals; we're in fact dream pals, because that's where I keep meeting him all the time. Since Hector happened to come first in this particular dream, and since I scrupulously follow a policy of first-come-first-served in my dreams, I paid no attention to Niyathapala. In fairness to him, he returned the compliment. I remember thinking at the time—or, maybe, dreaming, though it doesn't matter—that Niyathapala seemed pre-occupied, as though he was looking for something. It was only after the newspaper ho-ha I realised he had been looking for trouble. Seems he found it. (The only exception I've made to my first-come-first-served policy was when Racquel Welch got preference over I-can't-remember-who-now, and that too only because she had some vital statistics to show me, like 38-24-36.)

HECTOR is such a simple, unassuming, self-effacing sort of character he hasn't yet learned to accept a compliment gracefully. And I was generous with my compliments during our little chit-chat. He seemed so uneasy at one point, the thought did actually

cross my dream that had Hector been armed with a mammoty (which he wasn't), he would have dug himself into the good earth rather than stand there and listen to me sing his praises.

One of the things I praised was his land reform, especially the missionary zeal he brought to the task. "Keep at it, Hector," I remember saying, "and you simply can't miss."

He began fidgeting with his fingers. "Miss what?" he asked, not even looking me in the eye.

"Miss the bus," I said assuringly. "You'll get there ahead of the others."

Hector looked apologetic. "But I always use my Benz," he said.

"Your name will go down in history," I said, but he wouldn't believe me. He squirmed visibly when I said he was a national hero, but worked up sufficient courage to ask why I thought so.

"Because," I said, "you've given the peasants their rightful place. You're giving them the land they want so much."

He brushed it aside as though it was undeserved, if not worthless praise. "Nonsense," he said with an embarrassed smile, "it's not my land I'm giving them."

"But you've won the hearts of the people,"



I cried. He wouldn't believe that, either.

"Look, Hector," I said at last, "don't be so impossibly modest. You may not think much of yourself, but the people think differently and you can't stop them thinking what they want because this country is wedded to democracy."

He blushed (like a school girl, I suppose, only I don't know what a school-girl's blush is like). "I have no idea what you're talking about," he blurted.

That was when I told him the unpalatable truth.

He recoiled in horror. "What are you saying!" he cried. "That I can become the next Prime Minister?" I had never seen Hector so agitated before, but there was good reason for that; I had never seen him before, agitated or otherwise.

"Yes," I said, "That's what I'm saying."

POOR HECTOR became an almost incoherent, quivering mass, but he managed to make this much clear: "But I pledged my full support and co-operation to the Prime Minister," he cried. "I have never betrayed her, nor will I ever do so."

"You talk as though I asked you to cut anybody's throat," I yelled. "I know you're not the sort of person who'll do anything

wrong or improper. What I'm saying is that, the way you're going, you can't help becoming Prime Minister."

He calmed down a bit, but still didn't see things my way. "You're a born dreamer," he sighed.

"Thanks," I whispered, accepting the compliment with practised ease. "Right now I can dream of a couple of Ministers of Agriculture before you who didn't do even one-tenth of what you've done in so short a time, and yet they got to the top, and one even got a stomach-ache while up there."

"I can stand anything but a stomach-ache," said Hector, gently and pensively rubbing his tummy.

"If you get one," I advised him, "don't run away and hide in a ship, for that remedy was tried before and proved ineffective. What you should do is go to your nearest Doctor."

"Who's the specialist," he asked. "NM or Colvin?"

"They're both specialists of sorts," I said, "but they claim one hundred per cent success only in cases of stomach-ache induced by themselves."

HECTOR said not a word for several minutes, but he had a far-away, dreamy look in his eyes, so I knew I was not the only one who was dreaming.

His gaze was downward. "I love the land," he said softly, picking up a handful of earth, "and I love the people. I'll do anything for them. But I still can't believe such things are in store for me."

"You have no ambition, Hector," I admonished him, "but don't let every Tom, Dick or Colvin fool you. In these hard times, you have to learn to fool yourself."

That was all that took place. So now you know where Niyathapala got the gen for the outrageous charge he made in public, distorting in the process what really happened in my dream. I never realised the things one can do with an innocent bit of conversation. At least, not until I saw what Niyathapala did with it.

I know there's a lot of talk about safeguarding Cabinet secrecy, but what I'd like to see is legislation to ensure dream secrecy.

WE APOLOGISE FOR THE DELAY IN PRODUCING THIS ISSUE OF **TRIBUNE**. WE HOPE TO OVERCOME THE TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES HOLDING UP SCHEDULES SHORTLY.



# IN AND AROUND ANURADHAPURA

— a little philosophising —

BY

ALKARDI MUGANA

AT HABARANA I saw a very rare kind of plantain called *Marratawalu*, very tasty and worth the unusual price I had to pay for it. Like all exotic plantains it came from Kandy. I had missed the boat coming into Habarana as I had dozed off in the bus. Beyond Habarana towards Kekirawa most of the country is jungle. Cultivation of paddy has not yet started. There are some fine tanks behind Ritigala, miles from any main roads, and one of these irrigates a great stretch of paddy fields, but I did not see quite as many young people about as I did in villages elsewhere.

This might have been an illusion, or rather delusion, because they may have been just out of my sight. Abba whatever that is, is being grown in the chenas, and chillies and hill paddy too. The chenas are doing badly because of the drought.

At a time when people would be coming back to their chenas, two men on a bicycle passed me, one carrying a gun in a cross-wise position on the bicycle. I was going

to be in its firing line as we passed, but with a neat gesture, he lifted the muzzle so that it pointed over my head at the right moment. This is what I had been taught in my tender years, and what much later I had been trained to do, and it was something that had been decidedly lacking in people who one would have thought would have known better (since they were the only people authorised to carry guns) not so very long ago, and it was pleasing that a person whom most people would call a yokel or a raw villager, had such good manners in the matter of firearms.

There are villages around here that are four or five miles from a bus route, and routes where buses are very irregular in their schedules. The children in the villages can go to their village school until they are about fourteen, but to do the S.S.C. they have a problem. There is not only the long walk to a bigger school but also a very long bus journey. So it would seem that in some villages, there are no children doing the S.S.C. while in others

where there are children doing it, their only way to cope with the problem is to board themselves in towns where schools have the S.S.C. courses.

THERE ARE about six kinds of rushes out of which mats can be weaved. Near me, at the moment are bundles of three of these. About three feet long, and making a nice soft mat, is *gal-lena*. Varying in length from four to six feet is *havana*, a wider reed. Six feet long and at least half-an-inch wide is *Thungiriya*. All three are found in this village. They are found near paddy fields wherever there is constant water. I have just spied a fourth rush on this verandah, *thal-kola*, which is of course a leaf from the *thal* tree, and it is used to make baskets. It is under three feet long, and too short for mats. All these are given the general name of *pang*. Three kinds of *pang* out of which mats can also be weaved are *pothu pang*, *mal-lena* and *boru pang*, the last being the best of all, so I am told. They can all be used to weave baskets. There is still another kind, I have just found in another village *indi*, about a foot long and it is used for making hats. It is really a leaf from a small palm which has a fruit which can either be eaten raw, or soaked first in salt water to make it more tasty or made into a sweet called *dodol*.



THE KALA WEWA mentioned in these notes before, looks like two big tanks joined by a water way. The over-flow is by this water-way, and half-way along the bund. Each "half" of the Kala Wewa would be a very big tank alone if that was all there was of it. The land below the bund might be like any part of the southern, western or north-western Provinces where there were coconut estates, thus testifying to the fact that this is not only a very old tank, but that it has been well populated with people all along. The bund is covered with trees, good big ones, so that it looks like a little forest. There was only a veneer of jungle at one place below the bund, such as one might find in some places in Colombo.

These impressions from a moving bus might need some correction later. An old person sitting beside me tells me that there are many old jungle tanks not far from where we are, that is some miles to the south of the Kala Wewa, two of which, if they were restored, would, each of them, provide water for a whole host of other tanks which could also be restored. The particular areas are called "50 thulana" and "49 thulana", whatever that may mean in "Dhakuna Kala Gamapalatha" or more specifically "Battahira Kirilalowa Korale."

One of the two tanks is called "Rathmalla Wewa".

He has been writing to the Government for the last sixty years, he says. Twice people have looked at the place, but that is so far as government action has gone. He wanted me to do some thing to rouse the authorities, and writing this is the most I can do to help, was my reply. Farmstead around here have planted teak along their frontage with the road, and elsewhere in their gardens, too, and I also saw halmilla, quite a lot of it, but not nearly on the same scale as the teak.

IN THE RITIGALLA area, impressed with the number of fine houses, all traditional village ones, in that place, I asked if there was a *walauwa* too, and I got the nice answer that all the houses were *walauwas*. I had thought that the *walauwa* was the Ceylonese equivalent of the English squire's house, but what ever it may mean I liked the answer I have received to my question. I was convinced, too, with his reply.

Our old style village houses may not be impressive from outside, but they are very well furnished. There is a great contrast in villages. Some of them have a very utilitarian look or rather, the houses in those villages. I have already remarked that in Puttalam some houses are built entirely of cadjan, even the exterior walls but inside there is often considerable refinement and no looks at all of impermanency. I had found

this, too, previously, in Africa, in the case of grass huts.

One consequence of civilization is that people come to be dominated by civilizing instruments. They will wait around for a bus for hours rather than walk, is but one example. Now the really educated man is not like this. The older civil servants will go out of their way to walk five miles. They would have put aside time to do so. I think theirs' was the better way. To walk two miles now has become almost *infra-dig* unless the way is not a bus route.

With all this, there is something about the villager which is very sane and healthy, people are not dominated by time. This works both ways. This evening I saw a villager working right up to the dusk. But they are still not dominated by the clock. When they are going anywhere, they have a tendency to start at dawn, which I find too early. Life itself seems to count for more than the use of time.

This means that the villager often gives you something of this time, because he is not bound by the clock. But he knows when his work has to be done and he is primarily a paddy farmer. This may make him in some cases, not so particular about the weeds that grow round his vegetables. I think it is primarily a question of his knowing



instinctively what he can do and what he cannot do, and in the last resort he knows he has to keep himself fit both physically and mentally for his paddy cultivation. If he fails in that, all else fails and he knows it.

LAST NIGHT three of us set off from a house. We stopped for something or one of us would almost certainly have stepped on a *mapila*, a very dangerous snake. We saw it and there was frantic activity. While one of us had the *mapila* covered with his torch, the other dashed madly the few yards to the gate to find a stick. He moved as quickly as I have seen rugger players move at times in a match but he took a few seconds to find a stick. Then he laid about the *mapila*, but he was rather hindered by the vegetation overhanging the snake. Next there was hectic poking about in the grass by the six who had gathered, but there was no *mapila*. It had escaped and no one was at all happy about that.

Walking through paddy fields some minutes later, we flushed out some wild pigs. We heard their splash in the water as they took alarm. The morning revealed their track through the growing paddy.

IN ANURADHAPURA, I saw four double bullock carts loaded with *cadjans*, and on top of the *cadjans* a neat little bundle of straw. I asked one of the men some questions. He

was very friendly. The carts had brought their load of *cadjans* from Kurunegala taking five days over the journey, starting at six and finishing at six each day, with a break between eleven and three, but even then not sticking to a strict schedule. They had arrived the night before and the bullocks looked fit. They hoped to sell their *cadjans* at Rs. 22/— a hundred. The cost in foreign exchange of the whole operation—nil. Our socialists will not see it, of course, that way.

Anuradhapura is beginning to look up. I saw last night its first bit of refinement in ten years—a public clock at the Bank Street roundabout leading to the Central school, which is a very fine school. I stand over the roundabout and it is held up by four arched pillars and it faces four ways, up and down Bank Street and the other two roads. It is large enough and high enough to be seen at a considerable distance away. So we shall all now know the time with out having to ask for it.

Chena cultivation for the time of the year has not yet started in these parts—that is, the felling, burning and clearing of jungle for the cultivation of gingelly. Felling of course, has started. The *chenas* I have referred to up to now are those cleared up to the start of the NE monsoon last November, or one more permanent *goda iddung* or

“high land” cultivation, that is, everything but *kumburu* which word means paddy fields.

The high land that has been cultivated has suffered because of the drought this month, the immature chillies falling off the plants for lack of water, and other crops just dying off. Where the crops have been watered, either by hand or pump this has not been their lot. The *goviya* takes this all very philosophically. He is used to vagaries in the weather, and somehow he will not starve, and he seems to be covered by some kind of insurance with the *mudalali*.

It is the Government which worries, concerned as they are with public reaction and the loss of the seat of power either by one way or the other—normally it would be through the ballot box in a general election. But where no elections are held there is not this safety valve. Perhaps it is as well, for the country is not ready for a general election yet. It needs a little more time to sort itself out. Most people accept the U.N.P. and the United Front as the alternative Governments in a fatalistic sort of way.

MOST PEOPLE in power, whether in or out of the Government are mesmerized by the labour problem that capitalism threw up, and its constant potential threat to good order, which more often than



not takes the form of strikes. There was no lack of people waiting to capitalize on this. But there comes a new element in April 1971. We must distinguish between the form this took and its cause. We shall probably never know the real cause. But the form it took was the ability of young people, the new generation to combine to effect their ideals, whether they were mistaken or not.

That is the new element and I cannot but feel that it has supplanted the older worker — employer antagonisms. Any person today, whether it be executive or worker, first looks on himself as a young man and he hardly thinks of himself as a worker or an employer—I do not think I am wrong when I say that the young men of the western world are looking to the east to sort out their physiological problems, but they are looking in a cultural sense and not in a religious sense, for they largely have no religion. They come largely from Protestant parts, and not Catholic. You do not see any French, Spanish or Italians here.

Perhaps it is well that this little philosophical discussion of mine should be written in Anuradhapura, for when I first saw it after many years which was ten years ago, I thought it would make a wonderful university city, its ruins with its park-like country comparing

very favourably, I should think, to places like Christ Church Meadows in the older university cities, and much more spacious of course. It is places where one can talk that makes the university, and not classes or lecture halls—Sir Ivor Jennings knew this when he planned Peradeniya. At that time, I should imagine, Anuradhapura was still much a jungle, especially the ruined city areas which now form the parks.

Someone has told me that the new street clock in Anuradhapura was donated to the town by Germans, and that the citizens of the town subscribed towards its erection. The actual cost of the erection was half that of the final subscription, and the other half of the subscribed money is going to be used for scholarships. The clock is controlled from the Bank of Ceylon building.

This has been a tiring day, and I have given much attention to what I should write. I can only mention what forced itself on my attention and what other impressions I formed. First the amount of firewood for sale on the Puttalam side of the Kala Oya bridge along a considerable stretch of road. Each bundle of sticks cost 10 cents, or two cents a stick. One often hears of political interference with the bureaucracy wherever one is in Ceylon. This might be a good thing where the politician or the minister of state acts as a kind of swedish ombudsman

whatever it is, between the citizen and the bureaucracy, relieving some of the harsher situations caused by the rule of our inelastic law, but usually 'political interference' is not used in that sense, but as something more capricious, sectarian and political. There seems to be very little of that here in this part of the country and I cannot help but be impressed by our government servants.

BANGLADESH

## BEFORE THE ELECTIONS

*From A Special Correspondent*

*Dacca,*

There is nothing strange in the fact that in 1973, in spite of the position taken by China with regard to the recognition of Bangladesh, the admission of a new state in the sub-continent to the U.N. has ceased to be an acute international question and a No. 1 problem.

The existence of an independent Bengali state is an irrevocable fact now and there will be no way back—the idea nourished in Peking and Islamabad till recent time. Hardly anybody can have any doubt in this regard.

ONLY ONE year has passed since Bangladesh was liberated. But the country has been recognised already by 95 states of the world, the USA included. For the last half a year the internal political situation has also markedly stabilized and this is a significant phenomenon in



## Bangladesh

our unstable contemporary world. Moreover, in spite of prophecies and forecasts of numerous enemies of Bangladesh, the young Republic, not only has not perished from hunger and devastation during and after the civil war, but, on the contrary has found strength and means to liquidate the chaos in economy, switched over to the restoration of the economy and has nationalized several branches of industry - for instance, the jute industry, as well as commercial banks, insurance companies etc.

At the same time, a lot of problems still remain, since it is known that in the course of the civil war, in the course of this short but savage war, the country has suffered losses amounting to almost half of its national income. Even now, there are shortages of foodstuffs, clothing the total absence of qualified managerial staff, malfunctioning of the system of foreign trade, of transport, an acute financial shortage is felt.

Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, however, is taking active and resolute measures. The Bangladesh government has lately published the first plan of economic development for 1972-1973, a five year plan of the development of the Bangladesh economy is being elaborated, the country is receiving credits both from the Western countries, the U.S.A included, and the East European countries.

ALL IN ALL, despite the difficulties, the prospects of Bangladesh development may be regarded as not so bad. Sheikh Rahman and his party enjoy popularity in the country. Last mid-December the Constituent Assembly adopted the first Constitution of Bangladesh where principles of nationalism, socialism, democracy and secularism were proclaimed as a basis of the policy of the new state. It is expected that the forthcoming elections which will take place in March will further strengthen the political position of the Awami League: this is the opinion of both political and business circles. For instance, such is the view of the international London *Financial Times* which had carefully studied the situation prevailing in the Subcontinent.

And it is not incidental that the majority of observers recognize the realistic nature and effectiveness of the peaceful foreign policy of the young Republic. The Chairman Mao's thesis that the popular movements in East Bengal had been inspired by India, that Bangladesh itself was an Indian puppet etc. is not substantiated. Besides, as Sheikh Mujibur Rahman pointed out at a meeting held last November in connection with his decoration with the international peace medal, Peking's policy with regard to Bangladesh in general runs counter to the statements by the Chinese

Leaders about peace and support of the oppressed peoples. Mujibur has categorically stated that Bangladesh "would never be a pawn on the chessboard of the global policy of a great power."

EVEN PAKISTAN'S President Bhutto does not see at present an alternative to the recognition of Bangladesh and to the normalization of relations with that country. He has repeatedly stated that "the past mistakes should be overcome". Such a position is more realistic than categorical declarations of Peking to the effect that China will allow Bangladesh to join the U.N. "only after the problems of the Subcontinent have been settled." Peking has in mind not only the question of the return of the Pakistani POWS, but some other "non-specified problems." Just those problems, according to Peking, "create obstacles to peace and normalization of relations in the subcontinent."

What is behind this vague formula? It is not difficult to guess. The Chinese are insistently persuading the delegates of Bangladesh to the U.N. that Peking will change its approach to the Republic only in case Dacca frees itself of Indian and Soviet influence. This is Peking's main condition.

One can understand the stand of the Peking leaders. They are obviously annoyed by the existence of an independent state friendly to Moscow and New Delhi



in the Subcontinent in the close proximity from China and on the crossroads of routes important for China. The creation of Bangladesh has indeed changed the balance of power in the Subcontinent, not in China's favour. And Mao does not want to lose his influence in this area. He wants to enter the club of the great powers on an equal footing. The more so since Bangladesh, apart from its strategic position, is of ideological importance to Peking—Bengal (both parts of it) has always been the center of Maoist activities in the Subcontinent.

Now while the situation in Bangladesh is hotting up in the course of pre-election struggle, it would have been logical for local Maoist leaders to try and increase the tension even further. Sheikh Mujibur has repeatedly stated that certain elements endeavour to create chaos in the country, to incite religion and communal contradictions, to undermine independence from the inside.

Simultaneously reports are coming about the ever increasing activities of the opposition National Awami Party headed by Maulana Bhashani, a politician with pro-China leanings. In the course of the pre-election campaign he succeeded in uniting 14 opposition parties and organisations and in setting up of a joint action committee. One may suggest that the committee not only organizes meetings, appealing to resist the policy of the

Bangladesh government, which is called a "fascist" one by Bhashani whose partisans are acting in the countryside and in the towas, trying to frustrate the economic measures of the country's government, to dis-

organize foreign and domestic trade, and also they attack with arms governmental authority. It is reported that terrorist activities and armed struggle are increasing from day to day.

### ARAB COUNTRIES AND BANGLADESH

There are indications in political and diplomatic circles that the Governments of Arab countries are watching the elections in Bangladesh with great care and attention. On the outcome of the elections it is expected that Arab countries would base their future attitude to the newest state in South Asia. These countries are aware that Mujibur Rahman and his Party would most probably sweep the polls, but what they are keenly examining is the likely orientation of the Bangladesh government on internal and external affairs. Will Mujibur Rahman fulfil the election pledges set out in the Manifesto of the Awami League on February 20? Will he show enough political wisdom to find a way out of the deadlock which has arisen on the subcontinent? Or does he merely want to win a parliamentary majority to stay in power "by legal and constitutional means" for another 5 years?

There is not the slightest doubt that if Mujibur Rahman is able to sweep the polls keeping intact the unity

with his Awami League including the progressive and left forces, the Arab countries would be duly impressed and early recognition by Arab countries is likely to follow. It is significant that the election manifestos of practically all political parties in Bangladesh do not differ very much from each other. It has been noted that in all the plans of nationalisation, the Awami League has deliberately left the tea industry out—an industry where the British still have dominant interests.

Another significant factor which has been a matter of comment is the diametrically different policies of the Great Powers towards Bangladesh. While China is said to have extended sympathetic support to the Maulana-Bhashani-led extremists groups, the USA has been active mainly in seeking to create a powerful lobby for itself. India and the USSR have not hidden their sympathies to Mujibur Rahman and are doing everything to stabilise his regime as the surest guarantee of a sovereign and independent Bangla Desh.



# IS IT TRUE?

## Sherlock Holmes

### ABOUT OUR RAILWAYS

IS IT NOT TRUE that on the first of January this year the Prime Minister inaugurated the Production year by opening a Carriage building workshop at Ratmalana in the Railway Workshops? That according to information the Railway had called for tenders for 10 four-coach Diesel train sets to be indented from abroad as complete units of one power-coach and three trailer coaches each? That workers at Ratmalana represented to the Minister that the coach bodies for the 30 coaches could be built in Sri Lanka Railway Workshops if the under-frames could only be purchased from abroad and only the ten power coaches are imported as complete units. That, this being a very big step in the annals of the history of the Railway the Prime Minister was invited to declare open the new Workshop?

IS IT NOT TRUE however, that what the Prime Minister was not told was there are 45 train sets in the Railway, some running and others stopped? The 45 sets have 135 passenger coaches? That these were all built in the workshops of the

Railway many years ago but there was no Prime Minister to proclaim the fact? That coach bodies were built in the Railway workshops far back as 1936? That it would be interesting to find out, who was responsible for making the Prime Minister the laughing stock of train travellers and all those who know about the Railway?

IS IT NOT A FACT that the Railway has designed and built its own under-frames a number of which are running? Was the Minister aware of this? Why did the Railway decide to buy the complete units from abroad? Is it that the price in foreign exchange is higher or is it incompetence? That at a time when foreign exchange is not available to buy even drugs, this extravagant expenditure should be investigated?

That purchase of ten new Diesel power coaches cannot be understood either? That the manner of purchase is even more mysterious? That Diesel coaches now running, cost according to available information, about Rs. 800,000 each? That a new one now ordered

is Rs. 2.2 million each? That an offer from an East European country of 1.6 million rupees each was not accepted? Why? Was it because it would have been a Government to Government deal with no foreign exchange? Of course, it would be said that they were not up to specification? Who drew up the specification? That, according to tenderers the specification is far in excess of the requirements of power coaches and as a result the identical power units installed in the Diesel main line locomotives have to be fitted to these power coaches? That locomotives trail heavy loads on long distances and on heavy grades up-country? That the power coach has to pull only three coaches but with sufficient power to give good acceleration on level country? That according to some, the specifications for the purchase of the locomotives in 1966 have been copied with few alterations here and there? And so, of course, the same power unit has to be fitted? And the cost? The locomotives cost a little more than Rs. 850,000, in 1968.

Further, according to some, vital safeguarding clauses in other Railway specifications were omitted? That tenderers were asked to await a new specification which never came? That it is not alleged that the Minister or Tender Board has acted incorrectly? That



it is true that they have called for tenders according to the requirements of the Railway and awarded the contract in terms of normal tender procedures? That neither the Minister nor Tender Board had been given the correct facts?

IS IT NOT TRUE that an even more serious matter should be examined? Are these purchases necessary costing as it does nearly 30 million rupees? that of the 45 at existing ones least 15 or even up to 20 are stopped in any day for repairs? That spares are difficult as these power units purchased some years ago are obsolete and that they are not being made anywhere? According to a news report sometime back? That according to the tender specifications the Railway preferred to have the same type of engines and gear as those now running. That there is now no foreign exchange to buy spares costing—a third or less of the price of the power coaches?

FINALLY it is not true that there are no coaches to run the services? That new coaches must be bought? That one reason is that the output of workshops has fallen badly and that there are many coaches in a bad state? That there are no spares although most of them were made in the Railway workshops? That we may need another 50 million rupees to buy coaches?

SHAMBA — I

## ONE ACRE

BY

ANATORY BUKOBA

The Cultivation Officer (C.-O.) got to the land first. It was 9.10 and I was ten minutes late. He had cut himself a stick six feet long to use as a measuring rod. The first thirty six feet, I think, from the river's edge belongs to Government. From there he measured 210 feet along the road and another 210 feet at right angles to it. This is roughly an acre.

The land is slightly undulating, and, as far as I can see, it has two hillocks. There are a number of *dihul* (wood-apple) trees on it, and some kumbuk trees down by the river. There is a certain amount of grass and weed, which will have to be cut and many thorn trees for which I can see no use. There are a dozen or so roughly cut stones which might come in useful. The place does not lack for trees, tall ones by the river side, short ones on the property itself.

From the other bank, the place looks quite beautiful, with a nice pick-nicking place at one spot by the river's edge. It would be a pity to dig up the grass there to plant paddy, although the paddy could easily be watered there by hand from the river. A footpath or cattle track goes right

down the middle of the land and it leads directly to the river. No house and where do we sleep tonight?

It takes a little time to get to know the neighbours, and it was well that time was spent on this. The job of expecting people takes a little time, too; buses to meet, and places to visit, when the only address one had to give one's friends was an address that did not yet exist and so they had to be given other addresses, too, to fall back on. It must have been after five o'clock that I got started with some work.

As my great idea is to have the place look nice, and not just cleaned, I decided to start with cutting what grass there was. For this I used an instrument shaped like a fork or a spoon, with a cutting edge on both sides; a piece of iron nailed on to a shaft or handle. Holding this with one hand I swing it in a wide arc from side to side, cutting the grass quite effectively—a little at a time. I did until there was only just enough light to get down to the river to wash and get back to where I was to stay the night, which was the place where I had borrowed this grass and weed slasher.



A POLONGA was killed today on the main road near our place. It was a good size and I was able to have a good look at its markings. As for wild animals, I have heard talk of elephants, but I shall not say anything about this until I have more evidence of their existence in these parts. Wanderoos there certainly are, sly creatures, mostly out of sight but there just the same, because you can both hear and catch glimpses of them occasionally and I saw them at someone else's crops, too. They promise to be a great nuisance and we shall have to watch our crops.

Another problem is going to be our neighbour's cattle, buffaloes and goats. The more they eat on the land now, the less there will be to cut, and there is also the possibility, that their dung will manure the land; but their owners have acquired a kind of proprietary right to graze their stock on crown land that has not been alienated and unless one is in a position to put up barbed wire at once, it is difficult to exercise control. Fortunately the cattle, buffaloes and goats that come on our land always come attended by their owners, who are friends, and so it ought not to be difficult to exercise control when we have to do so.

It is galling not to be able to find out the names of plants and scrubs when one is on the actual pro-

cess of clearing. I do not want to cut anything that may be beautiful or useful. So many shrubs and plants look alike, and it is when they are small that they and the trees are in great danger of being destroyed. The true cultivator would not care. He would destroy it all and burn it.

I am cutting the grass but I am not going to burn what I have cut for fear of destroying the grass that I have left underneath. I want grass, even poor grass and not bare earth. I shall remove what grass I need to remove as I plant the vegetables. The true villager knows the name of every tree, plant and scrub. I have gone through the holding with some of them, but it is not easy to remember everything they say or to recognize all they point out.

SOMETHING else I must be careful about is not to damage the tools that people lend me. The V.C. *Katha* which is what I used to cut grass, is a delicate tool, and its edges are easily damaged if they are used on stalks that are too strong for it or too stout. It can also be damaged on stones, and on rough ground. There are many of these around. The V.C. curiously stands for Village Committee or Council, for its workmen are given this *katha* or slasher to keep short the grass on the sides of our roads.

It is great to look back on the work one has done in the course of a day or a few hours, and to see the transformation that is taking place. Then you look at your hands which, perhaps, have done no hard work for over a year and you are proud to see they are becoming hard again, and even red with the skins coming off in places.

TODAY, we had an interesting lunch. I had not seen the cook at work, and so it took me by surprise, for it looked a plain lunch. There was something about the rice we had, but I shall not go into that here. There was a vegetable curry and a gravy. I asked what the vegetable was, and I could hardly believe that it was what I was told. It was papaw, half-ripe papaw, cut into small pieces and boiled. While it was a-boil certain ingredients were mixed and pounded together such as mustard, pepper and cumin seed. Then this was added to the papaw. The gravy was yellowish in colour and one part of it was coconut. The rice was what is called boiled rice, that is the paddy was boiled and then put out to dry and when it was half dry it was husked. This is polished rice and not supposed to be nutritious, but I am told that the unpolished, rice, if it is cold, is not nutritious either.

Cutting the grass verge that runs by the road



can make a great difference to the look of the property, I discovered a little while ago. I also learnt what a difference it makes to a place to keep what grass there is, if the grass is kept short. This is a job that has go on like getting a haircut. It is important, too, to keep the paths clean and wide by cutting the grass and the weed back on either side of the path. One learns these things by a little reflection, the fruit of walking around the place a bit.

Coming back from bathing in the river just before dusk, I saw what a big difference it would make to my comfort not to have my bare ankles and legs scratched by the thorn on the side of the path, and to know for certain, too, that there was no likelihood of trampling on a snake accidentally.

The true English navy, they say, spits on his hands and reflects before starting his day's work. The people of this country, especially if they are Buddhists, join their hands together and bow their heads momentarily in prayer before starting anything. I am afraid I was prosaic. The principle I am working on is that there must be an aesthetic side to everything we do, and that this, rather than a purely utilitarian outlook, will have more enduring results.

## REPORT

# BERLIN CONFERENCE OF NATIONAL PEACE COMMITTEES

BY  
T. DURAISINGAM

*The following is a report given to the Sri Lanka Peace Council by Mr. T. Duraisingam on his return to Sri Lanka after attending the Berlin Peace Conference.*

A CONFERENCE of representatives of the National Peace Committee, organised by the World Peace Council was held in Berlin, capital of the German Democratic Republic, from December 5th to 8th 1972. This conference was held to bring together representatives of national peace committees so that they may have exchange of opinions and experience concerning the strengthening and broadening of the national peace movements in all the regions of the world.

Chandra Gunasekera M.P. and I attended this conference as delegates of the Sri Lanka Peace Council. 163 delegates from 89 countries from all continents took part in this meeting.

THE SESSIONS were opened on December 5th, 1972 by Romesh Chandra, the Secretary General of the World Peace Council.

After the welcoming speech by the President of the German Democratic Republic Peace Council the Secretary General gave his report on "The Results of the World Peace Council Presidential Committee session in Chile, the situation of our movement, and our efforts to strengthen and extend it.

He referred to the discussions which took place at earlier peace conferences in 1965 and 1966, on the new developments in the peace movement and the consequent changes required in the structure and approach of the World Peace Council. He said that stress was laid on the fact that there had come into existence scores of organisations, associations and groups in several countries, which had begun to act in their own way for peace and national independence, justice and progress. No longer was the situation the same as during the foundation years of the World Peace Movement in the late forties and the early fifties, when the national peace committees represented in the World Peace Council were perhaps the sole



organisations in many countries, which believed in the power of public opinion for peace and were initiating peace actions.

He stated that "this process, which was seen developing already during the period of the discussion of 1965, has gone ahead as the years have passed. We can see most vividly the fact of the existence of these many organisations and groups in the United States of America. Here literally, there are thousands of groups associations and movements of all types which are working to mobilise U.S. public opinion for the ending of the United States aggression in Indochina. We can see the emergence of these new groups also in several other countries, particularly, following the great upsurge among people everywhere against the war in Vietnam."

Mr. Romesh Chandra then went on to draw attention to yet another development, which has become accentuated in the last two or three years. This development is the taking up of peace issues in a more active way than before, by many political parties and mass organisations of workers, youth and students, peasants, women, etc., which had not been active in the work for the mobilisation of public opinion for peace earlier.

He also noted a third characteristic of this period.

The old cold war prejudices, which existed during the early sixties and right up till 1966, when the World Peace Council met in Geneva and adopted the general line for its work of co-operation with other organisations—those cold war attitudes have given place to a desire and willingness for cooperation, which never existed before.

He pointed out that the United States aggression in Indo-China led not only to the coming together of international organisations in the Stockholm Conference on Vietnam and in other ways; it also led to the coming together on a national scale of very different types of national organisations, movements and groups. This process has been seen vividly in the formation of the People's Coalition for Peace and Justice in the United States. It can equally be noted in the coming together of the 48 organisations in France, which have been working together now for quite a considerable period in demonstrations and other actions against the war in Indonesia.

SIMILAR COALITIONS exist equally in many other countries including Britain, Italy, Canada, Belgium, Australia, German Federal Republic, Sweden, Finland, etc.

He further stated that the emergence of these Vietnam coalitions in the countries of the West

and, in a specially significant manner, in countries whose governments are directly or indirectly involved in the United States' aggression, is an indication of the change in the character and composition of the national peace movements in this period.

He referred to the new forms which the national peace movements are taking. The national peace committees or movements which have the longest history of work for peace, and which are associated most closely to the World Peace Council, have, in all cases, taken a leading part in the formation of these broad coalition on the issue of Vietnam.

He suggested that special account should be taken of the fact that the World Peace Council itself during the recent period had achieved a new influence, and that it is in contact with, and is cooperating actively with a very large number of international organisations. The relations which the World Peace Council has today with the United Nations and its specialised agencies are, or at least should be, of decisive value in broadening the national peace movements. He said that it is necessary for the national peace committees and their local organisations, at all levels, to take into account this new development which was unimaginable during the period of the cold war.



ROMESH CHANDRA also advised the delegates that the main direction of the work of each national peace movement has to be towards building the movement in its own country as a national movement, specially and primarily concerned with the country's own struggle for peace and independence justice and progress, its own struggle against imperialist attacks and burdens imposed by the pursuit of a policy, opposed to the interests of peace

In the afternoon the plenary session resumed work and contributions were made by delegations from many countries.

In my speech at the plenary sessions of the conference I stated that the Sri Lanka Peace Council is broad based and that we have always been trying to broaden it still further. Members of our organisation belong to various political parties in our country. I pointed out that the government power is a coalition government of three left political parties—The Sri Lanka Freedom Party, the Lanka Samasamaja Party and the Communist Party of Sri Lanka—and that leading members of our Peace Council are from all three Parties. Officials of trade unions and other organisations are active members of the Sri Lanka Peace Council.

I then gave a report of the work that our Peace Council is doing. I also referred to the work of the Sri Lanka-

Vietnam Solidarity Organisation of which the Sri Lanka Peace Council is a constituent member. About 25 organisations including political parties, trade unions, journalists and others are united in this organisations giving support and solidarity to the heroic struggle of the Vietnamese people against American aggression. This organisation arranges demonstrations lectures, photo exhibitions and film shows to constantly keep in the minds of our people the contribution of the Vietnamese people to the cause of independence and peace and to expose the machinations of the American imperialists and the atrocities they perpetrate on innocent men, women and children. I stated that in these activities members of our Peace Council play a very active role.

I WELCOMED the advice given by Romesh Chandra that the national peace movements should now be built up as a national movement, specially and primarily concerned with the country's own struggle for peace and independence justice and progress while strengthening its actions in solidarity with the peoples of the world fighting against imperialism. I stated that individual members of our Peace Council have, of course, been in the forefront of our national and anti-imperialist struggles. But our Peace Council, as such, has not been participating in these struggles. In

future our Peace Council should participate actively in our urgent national tasks and thereby be able to enlarge and strengthen its actions in solidarity with the peoples of the world.

On December 6th the plenary sessions were resumed and a number of representatives from various countries spoke. In all about 80 delegates spoke at the plenary sessions during the four days of the conference.

A REPORT on the preparation for the World Congress for Peace, security and National Independence to be held in Moscow 1973 and of the 25th anniversary of the foundation of the World Peace Council and on the Programme of activities was given on 6th December. The Congress will be held in Moscow, in autumn 1973 and it is to be a Congress not only open to all organisations and movements which agree with its aims but jointly sponsored and prepared by a large number of such organisations and movements. Many delegates spoke on the report. It was generally accepted that we should seek to bring to the Congress reports of political developments, of experience of activities, as well as proposals for mass activities, prepared by workshops, commissions and working groups, by conferences, meetings and study groups at all levels from all over the world.



On the international level the Congress itself will be sponsored by an international committee, which would include representatives of a number of international organisations, which would be responsible, together with the World Peace Council for the direction of the Congress and for its preparations. On the national level it was stated that unless we can assure the participation of the actual leaderships of the national political parties, organisations and movements in the national preparatory committees for the Congress, all efforts to have a really broad participation at the grass roots level would be not possible. All the participants stated that we must make the 1973 Moscow Congress a grand success.

In the morning of December 7th the regional groups met separately in different rooms. Delegates who belonged to a particular region attended the meeting of that regional group. There were separate regional groups for Asia, the Arab Countries, Europe, United States and Canada, Africa and Latin America.

All regional groups discussed the principal reports in their entirety, including all questions connected with efforts to increase the activities of the national movements, about working in co-operation, effectiveness of the national committees, utilisation of the mass media etc.

The Sri Lanka delegation attended the Asian regional group. In my speech I described the work of our Peace Council. I also mentioned that as a result of the situation created by insurgent activities in Sri Lanka we had a setback in our work for a period but that we had already resumed our activities some time back. I assured them that we would organise a representative national preparatory committee in Sri Lanka and that we would contribute our share to make the Moscow Congress a success.

A report was subsequently submitted to the plenary sessions on the basis of the discussions we had in the Asian regional group. Similar reports were submitted by other regional groups.

In the afternoon of the 7th December the plenary session resumed its sitting. I was nominated to preside at this session. At this session the German Democratic Republic Peace Council presented gold medals to Romesh Chandra, the Secretary General, and the other secretaries of the World Peace Council in token of their great service in the cause of peace. I congratulated, on behalf of the participants, Mr. Romesh Chandra and the secretaries at the great honour bestowed on them.

THE FINAL PLENARY sessions of the conference

was held on 8th December when the recommendations were adopted and the communique was endorsed.

The communique stated that the participants were "firmly convinced that peace can be safeguarded if the peoples resolutely fight for it, the participants in the meeting expressed their determination to develop close co-operation, on the international and national levels, with all forces concerned about peace. This cooperation will be based on full equality and mutual respect for the benefit of the peoples, true to the principles of the World Peace Council and the national peace committees.

"The participants in the meeting express their unwavering determination to continue even more energetically the struggle for the implementation of the principles of peaceful co-existence, equal cooperation, and detente."

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## CHRONICLE

*A Diary of Events in Sri Lanka and the World compiled from the English-language newspapers published in Colombo.*

## JANUARY 12 - 30

**FRIDAY, JANUARY 12:** The *Daily News* reported that the Permanent Secretary to the Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs Prof. H. A. de S. Gunasekera, was expected to leave soon to contact the World Bank authorities and other members of the Consortium countries to make a case for convening an early meeting of the Aid Consortium. Trade Unions were advising their members to reconcile themselves to the increase in the price of flour and bread because this was due to reasons beyond the control of the Government: Flour was up by 5 cts a lb and the sugar ration had been halved. The law on the ceiling on houses would be effective from next week. The Government increased the prices of all textiles as from January 17—the Government was the sole importer of textiles. The *Sun* revealed that there would be talks between India and Sri Lanka at an official level in mid-February. The Vietnam peace talks in Paris were now reported to be taking place in a "warmer climate". At the Watergate trial in Washington, an ex-White House aide pleaded guilty to the charge of "bugging" the Democratic Party's national headquarters.

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 13:** The Government proposed to buy chilli from cultivators at a fair price and sell them through the co-ops. The *Daily News* stated that many workers faced retrenchment in the private sector because of the lack of raw materials. Many small industries had already folded up: particularly the new trade of cloth printing. President Nixon stated that the US would not use nuclear weapons in North Vietnam.

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 14:** Hindus celebrated the Thai Pongal festival today. Cardinal Cooray, Archbishop of Colombo, pleaded with the Government in a statement to reconsider the decision to push through the Press Council Bill in its present form. The *Weekend* published an interview with Sir John Kotelawala in which he stated that S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike would never allow the Press

to be put into fetters as it was proposed in the Press Council Bill. The Kotte Mahanayake Thera also criticised the Press Council Bill and stated "freedom of expression was a national and religious right." Henry Kissinger returned to Washington yesterday for consultations with President Nixon.

**MONDAY, JANUARY 15:** The prices of all locally produced textiles went up thirty percent because of the turnover tax and the FEECs on cotton and yarn imports. A sharp drop in tavern rental was expected this year because of the scarcity of arrack. The daily papers continued their campaign against the Press Council Bill. There were indications that the Vietnam peace agreement would be finalised within a few days.

**TUESDAY, JANUARY 16:** Three days grace were granted to taxpayers who had to send in their self-assessed returns and tax payments before yesterday's deadline. The mission to contact consortium countries headed by Prof. Gunasekera left yesterday. The *Sun* reported that the PM had ordered a probe into the Paddy Board to investigate why it had failed to collect the stipulated quantity of paddy last year. The Sri Lanka Air Force was to get 10 light Cessna planes from the US during 1973: a few had already been delivered. President Nixon had completely suspended the bombing of North Vietnam and the mining of its coastline—this is taken as an indication that peace was at hand. Syria has threatened to withdraw from the Arab Federation if Libya and Egypt did not give it more support in its confrontation with Israel. The Israeli PM, Golda Meir, met the Pope yesterday.

**WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 17:** The *Daily News* frontpaged a lead story that there was anxious speculation in political circles as to what the Speaker's ruling would be on January 19 on the point of order raised by the Opposition. The *Daily Mirror* spotlighted a report that Rs. 500 million in foreign exchange was urgently needed to finance the import of basic needs in 1973: the Gunasekera Mission would bring this fact home to the World Bank and the Aid Consortium countries. With the US suspension of bombing North Vietnam, the talks in Paris entered a crucial phase with Kissinger back to resume his nego-



tiations with Le Duc Tho. It was also reported that military experts from South Vietnam had flown to Paris.

**THURSDAY, JANUARY 18:** At a press conference, yesterday, the Deputy Minister of Defence and External Affairs, Mr. Lakshman Jayakody, disclosed that the brain drain out of Ceylon continued last year and that over 800 persons had left the country: doctors, engineers, university teachers, accountants, architects, lawyers, nurses and technicians. He also stated that the security situation within the country was "much better now." The Conference Lines had imposed a 15% freight surcharge on all cargo loaded in ports in Sri Lanka for the UK. The daily papers increased the tempo of their campaign against the Press Council Bill. The Soviet mooncraft Lunakod-2 was about to start its first investigations after charging its batteries with solar energy. President Amin of Uganda stated that the whole of the continent could have been "africanised" at "supersonic speed" if not for the moderate policies of Jomo Kenyatta. Saigon denied that the ceasefire would come into operation before the weekend: it was stated that a few more problems had to be resolved.

**FRIDAY, JANUARY 19:** After further debate in the National State Assembly, the Speaker gave his ruling on the Opposition's objections to the Press Council Bill in the evening: he held with the Opposition that the Bill had to go before a Constitutional Court to test its validity because the earlier Court had not been properly constituted. LSSP leader, Dr. N. M. Perera, had created a scene by challenging the Speaker's ruling and the House had adjourned amidst unruly scenes. It was reported that harbour workers will get a wage rise of 40% this year but that they will have no overtime. President's rule had been imposed in the troubled state of Andhra. India had suffered the worst drought in ten years and over 200 million were affected: the country was compelled to import food. It was reported that Saigon was likely to accept the Peace Agreement. Egypt and Libya had dropped the deadline to complete the merger before next September: there were many forces against a hasty merger.

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 20:** The news papers reported that the PM had promptly

disassociated herself from Dr. N. M. Perera's threat to remove the Speaker on the basis of a vote of no-confidence: Dr. Perera had uttered such a threat in the National State Assembly after the Speaker had given his ruling. The *Daily News* reported that the Ministry of Education was considering the need to make English a compulsory subject for higher education. The Prime Minister at the opening of the Ceramics Exhibition appealed to the nation to talk less and work more. The Government had increased the price of cement as from January 27. President Nixon was sworn in today for his second term with the aura of the Vietnam peace overhanging the ceremony. It was reported that \$ 4 million would be spent on the three-day festivities connected with the Presidential inauguration. The final round of talks in Paris was expected to take place next Tuesday, January 23.

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 21:** The *Observer* had a frontpage lead that Sri Lanka "might soon become" one of the key centres in the world's illicit drug traffic, and that this fear had been expressed by the United Nations Narcotics Division for Drug Control. The ruling made by the Speaker of the National Assembly was described as "breath of fresh air as regards democracy in Sri Lanka" by Mr. Dudley Senanayake, Leader of the UNP, at a press conference at his residence yesterday morning. At a public meeting at Lunuwila, Dr. N. M. Perera attacked the Speaker's ruling and stated: "It has become a tradition that most Speakers have become reactionaries. We have no confidence in reactionaries. The reason the people gave us a two third majority is to defeat reactionary elements. We are not ready to allow the Courts to tie up the progressive measures of the Government. If we cannot do this inside the National Assembly we will fight the reactionaries outside the Assembly...." There are indications that a ceasefire and peace were round the corner in Vietnam. President Nixon began his second four-year term in the White House with a fanfare of trumpets, a giant carnival and a promise that the world stands on the threshold of a new era of peace.

**MONDAY, JANUARY 22:** The *Daily News* reported that there was "deep concern" in political circles over Dr. N. M. Perera's



statement that as the NSA had no confidence in the Speaker he would move a no-faith motion at the earliest possible date: this matter was likely to be taken up at the next meeting of the Government Parliamentary Party. The 15% freight surcharge announced by the Sri Lanka-UK Conference is likely to depress tea and coconut prices. The *Daily Mirror* reported that an "emergency summit" of the United Front would be held this evening to discuss the situation over the Speaker's ruling that the Press Council Bill should be referred to a properly constituted Constitutional Court. The *Sun* however, reported that the SLFP would stand by the Speaker, and added that "authoritative SLFP sources yesterday categorically denied any moves by the Government Parliamentary Group to introduce a motion of no confidence on the Speaker of the National State Assembly, the sources said that the Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike, had made this quite clear when questioned in the National State Assembly on Friday...." The *Observer* speculated as to what the LSSP would do next if the SLFP did not agree to a no-confidence motion against the Speaker. Bloody battles were raging near Saigon and other parts of South Vietnam whilst the final touches were believed to given to the Peace Agreement.

**TUESDAY, JANUARY 23:** The President appointed three judges to fill the vacancies in the Constitutional Court created by the earlier resignations: the three new members of the Court were Mr. Jaya Pathirana, Mr. C. V. Udalgama and Mr. T. A. de S. Wijesundera. The leaders of the UF met yesterday evening regarding the measures to be taken on the Press Council Bill and the *Daily News* reported that no conclusive decisions were made. The UNP has appealed to the Government to abandon the Press Council Bill. The *Daily Mirror* also reported that no firm decisions had been taken at the summit of UF leaders yesterday: and that the Kotte branch of the SLFP wanted disciplinary action taken against Dr. N. M. Perera for making statements disparaging of the Speaker. The *Sun* reported that many Trade Unions supported the Speaker's ruling. The *Times of Ceylon* reported that the LSSP did not get support for its view at yesterday's UF summit. Former US President Lyndon Johnson died yesterday from a heart attack. A Jordanian airliner

on a charter taking back Mecca pilgrims crashed at Kano in Nigeria: over 200 pilgrims are said to have died. There was speculation in many capitals whether the Vietnam Agreement would be initialled shortly.

**WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 24:** The LSSP, according to a report in the *Daily News*, was expected to canvass the Government Parliamentary Group for support for the resolution it wished to move disagreeing with the ruling of the Speaker. Over 4000 shirt makers faced retrenchment owing to the lack of raw materials. The GMOA had stressed in its annual report that doctors were quitting the service and the country in disgust because of nepotism and the fact that politicians had no appreciation of their work. The *Sun* reported that the SLFP Ministers who had met last night "denounced" the no-faith move of the LSSP against the Speaker. President Nixon had announced, simultaneously with announcements in Hanoi and Saigon, that a Vietnam Peace Agreement had been initialled in Paris and the ceasefire would be effective from the midnight of Saturday January 27: Nixon stated that it was an "agreement to end the war and bring peace with honour to Vietnam and Southeast Asia." All papers were happy that the guns would be silent after a period of 12 years.

**THURSDAY, JANUARY 25:** The *Daily News* reported that the SLFP Ministers had fully endorsed the PM's decision not to question the Speaker's ruling. It was reported that Sri Lanka would go metric by July. Several further cases of food poisoning were reported in the city. The Vietnam Agreement was hailed universally, and it was stressed that it was the end-result of four years' patient negotiations by the Nixon administration. The demand for a separate Telegana state was growing everyday: increasing violence was reported from the Andhra region in India. Switzerland floated its powerful franc in a bid to head off unwanted foreign funds flowing into the country, and this led to a drop in the value of the dollar.

**FRIDAY, JANUARY 26:** The *Daily News* felt that LSSP faced a crucial test today when its proposal to censure the Speaker came before the SLFP Parliamentary group today. The *Sun* felt certain that the SLFP would in-



dorse the PM's views and reject the LSSP proposals to throw out the Speaker and his ruling. The *Times* was of the view that the LSSP would beat a strategic retreat in view of the opposition to its proposal to censure the Speaker. The *Observer* focussed attention on the growing pamphlet war which had developed between the two factions in the CP. The Prime Minister of Sri Lanka issued a statement yesterday welcoming the Vietnam Peace Agreement and hoped that it would usher in an era of peace and stability in Asia. The Vietnam Peace Agreement was to be officially signed tomorrow by the parties in Paris tomorrow.

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 27:** The *Daily News* reported that though a "large and vocal" section of the SLFP Parliamentary Group launched an attack on his ruling at yesterday's meeting of the SLFP Parliamentary Group, the SLFP as such would not support a formal vote of no confidence in the Speaker, if it was moved in the National State Assembly. The US had granted a credit of 6 million dollars to buy 40,000 tons of US flour. Whilst the *Daily Mirror* also reported that a section of the SLFP was critical of the Speaker, the *Sun* stated that the SLFP was unanimous and firm in its decision against the LSSP move. The Vietnam Peace Agreement was signed in Paris today and the ceasefire was expected to come into force at midnight: in the meantime there was savage fighting in parts of South Vietnam.

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 28:** The Public Health Inspectors' Union had sent a memorandum to the Government that the food sold in the city of Colombo was exposed to filth and infection. Doctors in the city were mystified by the poisoning cases, the number dead was already over 10 which had occurred after people had eaten their food. The *Weekend* reported that Dr. N. M. Perera, in a speech at Yatiyantota at a Teachers' Seminar yesterday had stated that we cannot achieve progress without a dictatorship. He was reported to have said: "This country cannot achieve progress without a dictatorship. If it is under dictatorship development can be achieved easily. But the masses have given power to work through democracy. If one single party came into power it would have been easy to work out these projects."

Referring to ruling of the Speaker of the National State Assembly, Mr. Stanley Tillekeratne, on the Press Council Bill, Dr. Perera observed "The Speaker's decision was wrong. But even if the decision was wrong the Prime Minister says it has to be accepted. If it is a wrong decision it should be rejected. But because the Prime Minister says so, it has to be accepted. Parliament is a place where only talking is done. This is where when new measures are presented a lot of talking is done. The word "parley" is to talk. Whenever any work-project is introduced there has to be a lot of talking about it here," Dr. Perera added. Though the ceasefire came into effect in Vietnam at 5.30 a.m. Ceylon time, bitter battles were still waging in several places in South Vietnam.

**MONDAY, JANUARY 29:** The new Constitutional Court was expected to begin its work shortly. The CP criticised the Government's action in increasing prices of essential goods through Gazette notifications. The daily papers reported the proceedings of several anti-Press Bill rallies which had been organised throughout the country. Fighting continued in South Vietnam even today 36 hours after the ceasefire was announced.

**TUESDAY, JANUARY 30:** The rules of the Constitutional Court were gazetted yesterday: the decision on any matter had to be given within 14 days of the reference; this was mandatory. The *Sun* reported that the cost of living was rising by leaps and bounds. The UTA had signed an agreement with Air Ceylon to set up a two-million DC repair complex in Colombo. The *Times* reported that Dr. N. M. Perera had announced at a meeting at Deraniyagala during the weekend that LSSP had been "compelled" to accept the PM's decision on the Speaker's ruling. Mr. Justice Jaya Pathirana had been elected to head the new panel of the Constitutional Court to hear the petitions against the Press Council Bill. President Nixon presented his new Budget to the US Congress yesterday: it marked a departure from the principles of the Rooseveltian New Deal and the Johnsonian Great Society welfarism that had characterised all US budgets in the post-war era.



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