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TRIBUNE



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Letter From The Editor

WHAT HAS THE NEW YEAR in store for the young people on our Cover this week? What has the future for them, and for hundreds and thousands, nay millions, of poor people in our country and elsewhere in the world? Poverty is a relative term. The so-called "poor" in the USA and in some countries classified as "affluent" are richer, in the material good things of life, than those regarded as "rich" in the developing countries of the third world. It is not necessary to enter speculative metaphysical discussions on poverty, happiness, contentment, subsistence level, poverty line, quality of life, GNP and a whole host of other concepts devised by philosophers and economists to determine the state of man's mind under the impact of differing and changing socio-economic and political factors. For our limited and mundane purposes in Sri Lanka, it is enough to examine some of the immediate prospects in the New Year for the vast multitude of our people. What has the government to offer them? And will the promises so lavishly made by Ministers and Deputy Ministers (very few MPs now tread the dangerous paths where even angels refuse to venture to make promises of a UNP millennium) be ever fulfilled even in some small part? Some Ministers brag about the wonders that the new policies they have initiated will produce. Others are for ever gloating about the economic prosperity the government's free economy and the liberalised import-cum-export trade will bring. Other countries in contemporary times have tried these experiments in *laissez faire* with fateful consequences—the rich became richer and the poor poorer pushing contradictions inherent in a society of imbalance to the forefront and thus compelling upheavals and revolutions such as the one seen in Iran today. UNP theoreticians are hoping that their new free economy policies will postpone the confrontations of a social revolution by offering the young and the poor the crumbs that private enterprise in developing countries grudgingly throw to these who sweat and toil. Wishful thinking of this kind vanish very quickly especially in countries like Sri Lanka where civic consciousness, political awareness and a burning desire for universal human rights have become part of the fabric of logic of all classes of peoples, more particularly the under-privileged. On an overall view, the UNP Government led by President J. R. Jayewardene, has brought new hopes to a people who have long endured innumerable hardships under the searing turbulence of negative policies promoted by atrophied radicalism thrown up by an ideological brew concocted by misguided LSE Fabians and frenzied revolution-mongers who believed that socialism could be achieved by shouting slogans in a parliamentary democratic system. Within the limited options available to any Government of Sri Lanka in the contemporary era, the Jayewardene government has done better than any other elected government after independence. Furthermore, the government is willing to make all necessary changes to make the Constitution more viable for development and more acceptable to the people. But there are grave problems to be resolved—the problem of the Tamil minority, of unemployment, of poverty and mal-nutrition. There are, however, a few silver lining on the distant horizon, but the immediate prospects are still bleak. Prices are high but not unduly so where essentials are concerned. Many people cannot still afford to buy the essentials they need. Ordinary people, however, are infused with a sense of hope that a better day will soon dawn. Why—it is difficult to say, but there it is. All shortages have been limited. Unfortunately, bureaucrats are still what they were—and in many cases even worse—and the administrative system continues to retard progress and development. Corruption is still rampant in high and low places. And there are many question marks hanging over the Government.

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EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

1978 to 1979

Colombo, January 3.

1979 has overtaken us even before we had done with 1978. That happens everytime, but in recent times more so than ever before in history. Events tumble over each other in such a way that we are in the midst of the new before the old is over. There is no time today, in this fast moving era of atomic and nuclear power, to wait for one set of events to resolve themselves before tackling the multitude of other problems that continuously beset the world.

History, as always perhaps, is one perpetual chain of events that baffles man. Many things happen over which we have no control, and many more things occur where the vanity of man believes that he had everything under total control. And many claim to detect an unseen method in the madness that presently seems to characterize events, but this is probably wishful and not real.

Take the international scene. The world had more than its normal quota of natural disasters in 1978—storms, cyclones, floods, droughts, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions and what have you. Sri Lanka too experienced the worst cyclone in living memory, and floods, drought and landslides have now become endemic. The world also has had an overdose of man-made disasters in the air, sea and land. Even Sri Lanka had an air disaster that shook the world.

On the economic front, everything seems to be in a state of flux. President Carter and his Brains Trust seem to be totally incapable of stopping the down-grade slipping in the value of the Dollar, and this has thrown the

capitalist world into greater disorder than at any time after the collapse of the postwar Bretton Woods system in the early seventies. In the mightiest and richest country in the world, the interest rate is 12% and the inflation rate is 9%, but what is really disturbing is that growth rate has come to a virtual zero in 1977-1978. Does this mean a recession in 1979? A 1979 recession seems inevitable. Can it be avoided or will the rest of the world have to suffer because American economy is in the throes of a crisis?

Many economists are convinced that 1979 will be a Year of Recession in the USA; that the Dollar, on which the capitalist world depends for its trade, commerce and exchange, will be in greater and more real trouble than ever before. In the light of these developments, can it be said that the governmental authorities in Sri Lanka have focussed adequate attention on matters of global finance which are likely to have serious impact on Sri Lankan economy, as on the economies of practically all countries in the capitalist world. (The economic structures of socialist countries have immunity from capitalist crises behind a curtain of near-total control of the economy through centrally planned and regulated economic structures). What are we doing in Sri Lanka to meet the threat of recession in the USA and the capitalist system to which this country is now firmly and inescapably tied? The price hike in petroleum products in 1979 by OPEC has multiplied the problems of the capitalist world and more especially the poor developing countries of the third world.

Can UNCTAD and other international agencies help to bring relief to poor countries like Sri Lanka? Will the Non-aligned Movement be able to usher in a new

economic order? Will 1979 see the beginnings of a realistic shift to a new economic order where the rich advanced countries will stop the exploitation on which they have made and continue to make themselves richer and richer at the expense of the underdeveloped third world countries which they were held under colonial subjection until very recently? Not enough attention is being paid to this matter in the media or the radio in Sri Lanka, and it is ignorance of world trends in such matters that often triggers strikes and social revolutions.

Whilst a bizarre and dangerous situation is developing on the international economic situation—it can lead to a global explosion under certain circumstances—on the political front the picture is a fantastic jig-saw puzzle of unresolved and apparently unresolvable confrontations. Sri Lanka is fortunately out of any such confrontation, and, as the Chairman of the Non-aligned Movement, it has so far succeeded in tripping the light fantastic toe to keep out of all involvements even whilst attempting to bring contending parties to the negotiating table. The question of finding ways and means of settling disputes between different members in the Non-aligned Movement (NAM) is one of the challenges facing Sri Lanka and the other leaders of the NAM—at the ministerial meetings at Maputo and Colombo, and the Summit in Havana. The conflicts in Mauretania, Ethiopia-Somalia and Indo-China are among the most difficult confronting the NAM.

In the meantime, peace in West Asia, in spite of the Carter Administration's most heroic efforts has stalemated, and the most significant part of the situation is the deadlock between the USA and Israel. It is so complex that it is difficult to see a way out—unless

Israel or Egypt make concessions which they do not seem willing to make and are probably unable to make owing to domestic and extra-domestic complications in global Zionist and Arab politics. Even the premature award of a joint Nobel Peace prize could not bring Begin and Sadat together. The situation in West Asia has become more complicated than ever (for the US especially) after the recent developments in Iran, where the Shah is not likely to survive for long. The USA, now, has to come to terms with the Shiite and radical elements in the nationalist movement in Iran. It will never be the same as before for the USA, but America is so rich and powerful that it can afford to bargain by offer tempting concessions to the new regime in Iran.

In its relations with People's China, the USA has shown remarkable flexibility by establishing full diplomatic relations as from January 1. But Peking too has gone more than half way to persuade Washington to drop Taiwan (and the two China's policy) and comes to terms with Peking. The dynamics and the mechanics of the way the USA and China have come together is an interesting study in global geo-political manoeuvres. In the current period, China has today achieved a great deal under the cover of a determined anti-Soviet and anti-Russian sloganising—it had similarly succeeded in getting Soviet and COMECON assistance in the forties and fifties by raising anti-American slogans. But how far can such slogans take a country today in global politicking? China has also signed a peace treaty with Japan with the magic "anti-hegemony clause" to which the USA has also subscribed. With Peking virtually giving up its claims to overlordship in Taiwan except for a formal and wishful "unification" slogan, the USA said 'yes'.

1979 has brought a new international situation into existence. The bi-polar cold war of the post 1946 era has been replaced by a multi-polar world of complex confrontations and complexities. The Shah has evidently decided to quit, and the cry for human rights has begun to manifest itself in China where even the post cultural revolution regime had sent unwilling youth to work in rural farming areas.

1978 was a difficult year for Sri Lanka. The UNP, which came to power in 1977, has introduced major political and economic changes. From October/November 1977 the new economic policies of the UNP were introduced. And this was done in spite of the debilitating communal holocaust in August/September 1977 that had been triggered by extremist racialist elements. In 1978, the Presidential system was inaugurated from February 4 by amending the 1972 Constitution, and on September 7 a brand new Constitution (which some political scientists regard as a Gaullist experiment in Asia) was inaugurated.

The new Constitution is undoubtedly an improvement on any other Constitution this country has had and ensures basic minimum human rights and individual freedoms in a way that has won the admiration of the constitutional experts in many countries. The new Constitution has also envisaged a new system of provincial administration through District Ministers whose functions have still not been properly defined in the Constitution. In fact, the system of District Ministers has not yet become part of the Constitution and much of the reluctance on the part the TULF to accept District Ministerships stems from the fact that the system has not yet been accorded constitutional validity.

Whilst these political and eco-

nomic changes were effected, the Sansoni Commission investigating the communal disturbances of 1977 has gone on and evidence has been led on the entire basis and history of Sinhala-Tamil communal tensions and conflicts in

Notice under Section 7 of the Land Acquisition Act (Cap. 460) as amended by the Land Acquisition (Amendment) Act No. 28 of 1964

R.f. No. 99/1/175

It is intended to acquire the land/lands described in the Schedule below. For further particulars see Part III of the Gazette of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka No. 17 of 29.12.1978.

Schedule

Situation:

Hapugala, Kalegana, and Madawalamulla villages, D.R.O's Divisions of Four Gravers (Galle) and Bope-Poddala in the District of Galle.

Name of land:

Muththettuwa, Kolapuwattiyadda, Kohombanwatta, Etambagaha Kumbura, Diyagahamullawatta, Assessment No. 28 (a part) Kumbalawella Road, Ambagaha Kanatta alias Breakman Mahathmayage Watta, (No Assessment No.), Ambagaha Kanatta alias, Breakman Mahathmayawatta, assessment No. 36 (a part) Kumbalwella Road, Henawatta, Assessment No. 36/5 (a part) Kumbalwella Road, Henawatta, Assessment No. 26/2 (a part) Kumbalwella Road.

Plan and Lot No.:

Lots 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, & 11 in P. Plan No. Gaa/1265.

S. J. Pathirana
Acquiring Officer,
Galle District.

The Kachcheri,
Galle.

13th, December 1978.

this island in the modern period. By the time, the Sansoni Commission completes its work and finalises its report, even the imperatives of the communal confrontations in Sri Lanka would have undergone major changes. The Presidential Commission has become another marathon with writs, judicial findings and legislative amendments. Where it will all end is difficult to say. Another Commission that hit the headlines was the Commission to Investigate Air Ceylon, but its report seems to have been pigeon-holed in the way similar reports have been buried in the archives in the past. What is surprising is that some of the evidence recorded before, and findings made by, the Air Ceylon Commission has been ignored by the government in the setting up of the new Air Lanka.

The government has not yet been able to pump new life into the bureaucrats and the administrative system. The concessions granted to public servants of all categories in the Budget for 1979 constitute a foundation for a regeneration of the public service, but whether the public servants will respond in the way expected or whether the government will be able to induce productive effort is yet to be seen. For one thing, the government has realised that one important step is to have a complete overhaul of the system of holidays. Admittedly, public servants and even workers in the private sector in Sri Lanka enjoy far too many holidays—our working year is under 200 days—and this is something that must be changed. *Tribune* has been campaigning for many years for a reduction in the number of holidays.

But what government must realise is that more important than increasing the number of working days every year is the need to ensure that public servants work

the eight hours a day for which they are paid. There are two kinds of malpractices in this matter: one many officials work only a fraction of the eight hours every day and the other is that many officials continue their work in such a way that they earn more in subsistence and in overtime than in actual salaries.

It is a notorious fact that the officials in the upper brackets turn up at the office long after the opening time and disappear long before closing time—after having taken a substantially long time off for lunch. Most of them do little or no work on any day. But even more scandalous is the way they manipulate their work so as to ensure long circuits from which they earn lucrative travelling and subsistence allowances. Even a cursory scrutiny of this travelling will show that much of the travelling is totally unnecessary. The first step to get money's worth of work from the higher staff officers is to ensure that (a) work eight hours is done in the office every day, and (b) all unnecessary and useless travelling is cut out.

In regard to other categories of public servants, the scandal about overtime must be ended. Take a case which forcefully came to the notice of *Tribune* recently. A carpenter and some assistants were sent by a Colombo head office to a provincial town to repair one of its buildings. The carpenter and his gang started work only at 9 or 9.30 every morning and stopped work well before 11.30 a.m. Then a little work was done after a long siesta between 3 p.m. and 4 p.m. and thereafter they went to the arrack tavern in the town. But in the work sheets, for a number of days, the entries showed that the carpenter and his assistants had worked from 6 a.m. to 8 a.m. on overtime, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on normal time with an

hour off for lunch, and again from 6 p.m. to 12 midnight on overtime. The Supervisory Officers who were expected to check the work of the carpenter and his gang were (for the most part) either on leave or on circuit. And in any case, the unwritten code among public servants is that they do not complain about fellow public servants travelling or overtime. What we have mentioned is not an isolated instance, but more often than not the general rule in the public service. Unless this situation is changed no progress is likely to be made to make the bureaucracy and the administrative machine to function as they should.

Even more important than the bureaucracy today is the burning

Ref. No. 99/2940.

Land Acquisition Act (Chapter 460) as amended by the Land Acquisition (Amendment) Act. No. 28 of 1964

Notice under section 07

It is intended to acquire the lands described in the Schedule below. For further particulars, please see the Gazette of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka No. 18 (Part iii) of 05/01/79

Schedule

Situation of Land:

In the village of Owitigamuwa, Gangaboda Pattuwa North, Matara District.

Name of Land:

Aragalawatta, Liyangahawatta, Welipothehena, Welipothehena-Welipothehenedeniya.

Lot & Plan No.:

Lots Nos. 464 & 465, in Final Village Plan 572, Sup. Nos. 9 & 10.

G. S. Ediriweera
Acquiring Officer,
Matara District.

The Kachcheri,
Matara.
20.12.1978.

question of the Tamil minority in the North and the East. It would be imprudent for the government to think that the partial settlement of the Tamil problem by the concord with Thondaman is a sufficient political gesture to this minority for the moment. Even more important for the future of the country is a settlement with the Tamils of the North and the East many of whom live and work in Colombo and other parts of the island. A great deal of the tension was defused by many of the provisions in the new Constitution, but there seem to be several hurdles to be cleared before the TULF can be persuaded even to take the first step towards conciliation by accepting District Ministership under the new Constitution.

Tribune has never supported Eelam, but Tribune has for many years advocated some form of regional or district autonomy within a unitary system to satisfy the aspirations of the Tamil minorities. Regional autonomy in a unitary system is a way that many countries in the capitalist as well as socialist would have adopted to end communal tensions and conflicts. This is a way that Sri Lanka can easily adopt. The system of District Ministerships envisages such a system of devolution of power, but to inspire confidence in the TULF and the minorities it is essential that constitutional amendments should be effected after mutual discussions between the UNP and the TULF, and if possible all other political parties.

One complicating factor stems from the activities of the militant terrorist movement in the North. Terrorism is usually a manifestation of deep and intense frustration, and like the terrorism of the JVP which was a result of the United Front-SLFP rigidities and die-hard attitudes, the terrorism among Tamil youth grew up in the same

period and more especially in the years after the 1972 Constitution which had reduced the Tamil community to a second class status.

The discrimination against the Tamil community has been removed, but positive measures to ensure some kind of autonomy to remove fears of cultural, economic and physical genocide are needed. A terrorist movement cannot be eliminated by the police and the army. A political settlement is always the first step. Unless such a settlement is effected soon, the leadership of the Tamil community in the North and the East will before the next elections pass from the moderate, liberal-minded TULF to more radical and militant youth which may be even dominated by terrorist groups. The options before the government and the TULF limited and clear and the sooner the necessary steps are taken for a settlement are taken, the better. If this is not done, extremist elements on both sides of Elephant Pass will be tempted to trigger one crisis after another to denigrate the efforts of the government to ensure rapid economic development.

The government has many other problems on its heads which are beyond its control. The Budget which was presented on November 15 has been knocked into a cocked hat by the cyclone of November 23/24 and the decision of the OPEC countries to raise the price of petroleum products in 1979 in three stages. Rice production has increased in the island to the point where the Rubber-Rice Agreement with China has been transformed into a General Trade Agreement where rice from China has been replaced with diesel oil and kerosene. But this cannot solve all our problems.

It is as yet too early to say how Sri Lanka will fare in 1979. International help has poured in from

all countries for cyclone relief, but in the crucial days immediately after the cyclone struck the East, it was the United States, India and Britain that rushed to our rescue. No doubt the most spectacular was the way US aid was brought to Sri Lanka—almost within 72 hours of the appeal for relief. The US is furthest from this country and it was willing and able to send necessary aid within a short time. Since that time aid has come from nearly all countries.

But such aid alone is not enough. The people of Sri Lanka must get down to the work of reconstruction and rehabilitation as a preliminary to development. This is the basic task before the nation in 1979.

The Land Acquisition Act (Chapter 460) as Amended by Act No. 28 of 1964 Notice under Section-7.

G.A.'s No. 2/6/WALA/13/70
Land Ministry's No. J 71/L 143 (VE)

It is intended to acquire the land described in the schedule below for a public purpose. For further particulars see the Gazette of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka No. 18 (Part iii) of 05/01/1979.

Schedule

Situation:

Situated in Ragala Village at Udapalatha Korale in Walapane D.R.O's Division of Nuwara Eliya District.

Name of Land:

Liddesdale Estate.

Plan & Lot No.:

Lot No. 1 in P.P. NU 599.

L. Premaratna

District Land Officer,

Nuwara Eliya.

District.

The Kachcheri,

Nuwara Eliya.

12-12-1978

FOR THE RECORD

J.V.P. Statement

PRESS STATEMENT ISSUED BY THE POLITBUREAU OF THE JANATHA VIMUKTHI PERAMUNA ON THE CURRENT POLITICAL SITUATION IN THE COUNTRY

The government has recently declared that several incidents have taken place in the North in connection with bank robberies and the killing of several persons. We do not know who is responsible for these incidents. It should be stated that terrorist tactics of this nature are detrimental to the struggle of the Tamil people, as an oppressed section of our society, to gain their basic human rights. The JVP is of the opinion that the struggle of the Tamil people for their rights can only achieve victory as a result of the triumph of the socialist revolution. We therefore condemn terrorist tactics that place obstacles in the path of the socialist revolution in its march towards victory. We do not encourage or approve of such tactics.

However, it is to be seen that this, and other incidents, have been utilised to launch a programme of harassment and repression of the Tamil-speaking people of this country. Over the past weeks, we have also seen an attempt to stir up racialism while taking shelter behind the activities of a few persons. It is at a time when such an atmosphere prevailed within the country that it was announced that these bank robberies and murders had taken place. This was an excuse to deploy more members of the Police and the Armed Forces in the North.

Since this situation arose, a series of clashes between sections of the Armed Forces and the Police

on the one hand and the Tamil-speaking people on the other, have been reported: on the 5th of December in Jaffna town, on the 14th, 15th, 16th, 17th and 18th December in Vaelvettithurai, on the 16th December at Vagavilan junction and on the 17th December at Palaly. According to information received, large numbers of shops and houses have been destroyed and set on fire. The actions of the Government Agent, Jaffna, in the face of their situation, has been highly commended.

Just as rumour was used to spread racialism, divide the population and urge them on to kill each other in August 1977, we can see an attempt being made to stir up racialist feeling by spreading similar rumours today. A letter bearing the stamp of a high Police official which is supposed to have been circulated throughout Police Stations also brings to mind the incidents of August 1977. Since the government has not yet taken any definite steps regarding such incidents, the doubt naturally arises as to whether the government lends its concurrence to this situation. Persons who have access to modern equipment have also begun to roneo and distribute literature which arouses Sinhala chauvinist feeling. At a time when the people are fast reaching the stage where they can no longer shoulder the burden of the socio-economic crisis which has been foisted upon them by the state, an attempt can be discerned to divert the attention of the population away from their situation in this manner.

The JVP strongly condemns this programme of action on the part of the government and protests against such activity, while calling upon the State to halt the repression measures adopted by the Police and the Armed Forces against

the Tamil people immediately. The JVP, which appeals to the Sinhala and Tamil working people of this country not to be led astray by activities directed towards the arousing of racialist feelings, condemns the actions of racialist organisations and individuals in stirring up racial disharmony and calls upon all organisations of the working class to come forward to combat this situation.

The Tamil people of the North live in constant fear due to harassment by the Police and the Armed Forces. Any visitor to the Jaffna peninsula today can see the Tamil-speaking people of the North living in a state of terror com-

Land Acquisition Act (Chapter 460) as Amended by the Land Acquisition (Amendment) Act No. 28 of 1964. Notice under Section 7.

Ref. No. 02/3066.

The lands described in the Schedule below have been acquired. For further particulars please see the Gazette of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka No. 18 of 05/01/1979—(Part III.)

Schedule

Situation of Land:

In the villages of Bandattara and Paranadugala, Gangaboda Pattuwa (South), Matara District

Name of Land:

Edandegawakumbura, Mide-lagahakumbura, Palamalanga Indura, Edandegawa Liyadda, Watakeiya Attakumbura, Thambigekumbura, and Malayakumbura.

Lot & Plan No.:

Lots numbers 1 to 15 in Preliminary Plan No. 06/775.

G. S. Ediriweera
Acquiring Officer,
Matara District

The Kachcheri,
Matara.
20/12/1978.

parable to that which affected people all over the country in April 1971. While we strongly protest against the use of terrorism by the state against a section of the population of this country under the pretext of combatting the terrorist activities of a few, we call upon the government to call an immediate halt to these actions.

Lionel Bopage

Member of the Politbureau
Jagatha Vimukthi Peramuna

People's Liberation Front,
14, K. Cyril C. Perera Mawatha,
Colombo 13.
26. 12. 1978

—O— —O— —O—

LETTERS

The CTB

Sir,

The steep rise in the price of petrol will compel many more to travel by bus. This will create a situation for which the CTB is totally unprepared. Some of the long-distance bus services, Colombo-Kandy for instance, are quite commendable. But the City service is in a pathetic state. Promises of a better service are periodically made, but the reality is longer queues, more crowded, dirtier buses.

There are many bus-halts, even important ones like those in front of the Fort Railway Station, with no indication as to which buses stop where. The main bus station in the Pettah does not even have route maps for sale.

The buses are so crowded that buying a ticket is a problem both for the conductor and the passenger. There will be some measure of relief if the CTB introduces, for those who want it, a flat-rate, monthly ticket valid for any num-

ber of trips, on any route within a certain radius from the Fort. This has proved very popular in countries that offer this facility.

The CTB has proved itself to be thoroughly insensitive to the needs of commuters and incapable of providing an adequate City service. It is a disgrace to the country, and if allowed to continue, will prove to be a liability to the Government. It is high time that the Government came to the rescue of the bus travelling public by permitting private buses on City routes. The CTB should be happy to share with someone else a burden it cannot carry.

Fr. James Cooke O.M.I.

St. Joseph's O.M.I. Seminary,
26, Green Path,
Kohuwela,
Nugegoda.
26th Dec. '78

—O— —O— —O—

Telephone Rentals

Sir,

With the intended increase in the telephone rentals from this year, the postal department anticipates to reap three fold the revenue it used to get; but if 2 out of every three telephones are returned, the revenue will continue to be the same or bound to be less and the Honourable Minister of Posts will be with Alice in Wonderland. I strongly suggest to him not to count the chickens before the eggs are hatched. It might even lead to killing the hen that laid golden eggs. Is the telephone a luxury meant for the elite or a utility meant for the scavenger even? This is an era of speed when even television is to be introduced. An ambulance may have to be summoned, or the fire brigade. Sometimes electri-

city has to be switched off to save so many lives. Are these luxuries?

The so called official telephones are maintained at the expense of the private subscribers. Is it fair on the part of the Dharmaseka Government to exploit them to this extent?

Il ne faut pas vendre la peau de l'ours avant de l'avoir tué

(Don't sell the skin of the bear until it is killed)

H. D. Patrick Jinadasa

Gampaha.
1st January 1979.

• • •

Soldiers in Iranian City Defy Orders

Teheran, Dec. 18.

An Iranian army unit guarding the route of a big anti-Shah demonstration was recalled to barracks to-day in the north-western city of Tabriz after some men refused to obey officers' orders, a senior official said. The incident, the first known case of its kind in months of political turmoil, appeared to be the most serious in a day of mourning called by the Shah's opponents for about 100 people killed in disturbances in other towns last week. Shops in Teheran were shut in what a senior Western diplomat described as "a very, very total response" to a one-day strike, called by religious and political Opposition leaders. The capital was without newspapers and sugar. Cooking gas was short, and queues formed for several hundred metres outside service stations.

—Reuters and AFP.

IN THE TUB

by Diogenes

The True Christian

Christmas has come and Christmas has gone and Diogenes saw all the merriment, as he lay in his Tub contemplating on the ways of men and the nature of things and projecting his mind through the centuries. The Church bells have been rung, the carols have been sung, crackers have been lit, the cakes have been eaten, greetings have been exchanged and the stuffed turkeys have been devoured. The Master wondered whether men and women were celebrating the birth and life of some Bohemian playboy whose memory stirred them to let themselves go with food, drinks and dress on the birth of Christ who gave the most inspiring and beautiful message to all mankind—a message of love, peace and goodwill.

Christmas comes but once a year and when it comes it brings good cheer. Yes, but to whom and to how many, questioned Diogenes. Glad tidings are proclaimed by the merry-makers and like butterflies on the wing, they were preaching peace and contentment to the people immersed in the mud. Christmas is over and the same sermons have been preached in all the places of worship year after year but the preachers and the preached can never make the world a better place for man. The steeples and the spires of the churches go on pointing towards the skies without meaning or purpose like so many tired hands which no longer have the strength to be clasped in prayer for peace and goodwill among men.

"Do not lock up Christ in the churches," the Master was heard to whisper, "open out your hearts for Him to enter and live with you. Live in the presence of Christ, understand the message of Christ and let it get into your soul, blood and bones. There is no half way. You have to go the whole way to love your fellow beings. Realise the Christ-consciousness in you. Totally accept that message of positive humanism. Listen to that inner voice within you. There can be no compromise. The kingdom of God with all its meaning rational or otherwise is within you. It is not in the skies. It is while you live. The churches are no more and no less than places where men and women meet in Christian and that means humane fellowship. The churches preaching the message of Christ can no more mean to be for those only who profess Christ. Their doors will be thrown open to all mankind. The message of Christ is not only for those who are called Christians."

Christ preached a Universal Religion. It was never his intention to found a sect and to divide man. He was the greatest humanist, the world has seen whose noble message has inspired many a man and woman to totally sacrifice their lives in positive service to their fellow beings. Christ taught the Oneness of Man and he saw no difference between the Jews and the Gentiles. Every human being who realises his true self and lives with his inner conscience listening to that inner voice lives the message of Christ. You can call him a Christian if you like. It matters not if you don't. He lives with Christ and Christ lives with him.

On the other hand all the merry makers this season do not live in the presence of Christ. They do not live the message of Christ. They can call

themselves Christian if they like but they know not Christ nor does Christ know them. It matters not that they call themselves Christians.

They think they are on visiting terms with Christ when they attend church and some fear not to be on visiting terms with him. But the true Christian is on talking terms with Him and keeps Him in his conscience. It matters not whether he is born a Hindu, Moslem or Buddhist. Christ is not crucified during Easter. He is crucified during Christmas. Herod failed to crucify him at birth, but those who profess Christianity have succeeded where Herod failed.

Such were the thoughts which passed through the mind of the Master, and the Master himself did not know whether these random thoughts were wrong.

SPOTLIGHT

A Sense Of Proportion

by Canax

A survey of the country's fertility rate made between 1946 and 1965 by a Census Dept. team, and published recently, showed that the number of women in the 20-24 age group who postponed marriage in favour of employment increased dramatically from 29% in 1946 to 61% in 1965.

I don't mean to find fault, but I happen to know a woman who was part of the 29% way back in 1946, and she has an entirely different story to tell. She was in love with her cousin, but the horoscopes didn't match. The marriage brokers brought in at that stage failed to come up with a horoscope that matched hers. "Actually, mother urged me to elope with my cousin, but father wouldn't

hear of it," she confided. New that, I believe, must surely have had an important bearing on our fertility rate at the time, but I find that the Census team says nothing about it. Just imagine, if you can, what our fertility rate would have been if we had no horoscopes to believe in.

I also could not help wondering why the team lost interest in 1965 after spending 19 years on such an absorbing subject. So I took up where the Census team left off—and my findings are somewhat different. On the employment-for-marriage point there now seems to be two distinct schools of thought. Almost half the women I polled were quite categorical about the reason why they choose to give marriage a miss. Said a spokeswoman for the group: "Having seen our kind who are full-time housewives, we decided that if we were going to be treated as slaves, we might as well get paid for it."

The rest of the women, the other half, were candid enough to admit that they sought employment for the express purpose of "catching" a man, as one of them phrased it. Going on the law of averages, explained another, the chances were greater of a girl finding a husband at work than if she stayed put at home. "You then come across so many men, it's easy to trip one up sooner or later without his even noticing" she said. Indeed, more often than not the men ended up convinced that it was they who had done all the chasing—a point which, all the girls agreed, suited them fine.

I have also discovered something which I believe the Census team didn't even know existed. I have actually found many women who have, in fact, thrown up their jobs to marry; only they would

rather not talk about it much, which is understandable.

Like the Census team, I too found a marked preference for small families. I was however intrigued by the team's conclusion that the use of contraceptive devices was "very negligible" and was not the reason for the smallness of the families. So I talked to a young wife who had two children in six years. Of course, she favoured birth control, but did not like artificial methods. Instead she used plain language because, unlike some devices which were often unreliable, she found the word "NO" to be absolutely safe and totally effective all year round, with little or no unpleasant side-effects. It might be a good idea, then, to spread the word, because it consists of only two letters—and not abbreviations, either.

My findings tally with the Census team's about the high birth rates among certain races and in some districts, which I find quite disturbing. I've tried hard, but in vain, to get through to Mr. Cyril Mathew who I know can work wonders with vital information such as this. I would have liked him to take the credit for this, but in the circumstances I'll take it myself and strongly urge the government, with immediate effect, to allow marriages also only on a strictly proportional basis to ensure that the population ratio of multi-racial Sri Lanka is maintained at current levels and not upset by thoughtless love, specially among the minor races.

A leading statistician, now retired, who listened to my idea, merely shook his head and said: "We'll only end up with a lot more bastards than now, I guess."



A LEARNED "MISTAKE"?

Professor

P.P.G.L. Siriwardene

by James T. Ratnam

The *Hansard* of 11 December gives a verbatim report of the proceedings in Parliament relating to the accusations made against Tamil examiners of the University. This copy of the *Hansard* is quite an interesting and revealing document deserving of the widest publicity, especially because the pertinent details appearing in this Report seem to have been omitted in the accounts given by the daily press.

The upshot of this debate was firstly, the opposition (not surprising) of Mr. Cyril Mathew to an impartial enquiry into his charges and secondly, the firm and fair stand taken, on the other hand, by the Minister concerned, Mr. Nissanka Wijeyeratne. He was not only ready to enquire into the matter himself, but was also forthright in condemning certain "officials" in his Ministry, who had, he deplored, "extended to the previous Government the secrecy and exclusiveness" which he did not expect "to be principle which officials should follow." One of these "officials" was obviously Professor P. P. G. L. Siriwardene, whose tenure of office as Vice-Chancellor has now ended to the great relief, I am sure, of the Ministry.

An "unhappy" incident in the career of Dr. Siriwardene was brought to the notice of Parliament by Mr. Rasalingam and Mr. Sivasithamparam. His "friend" Mr. Mathew tried hard to explain it away, but he only made confusion worse confounded.

The facts of this affair are given below.

TRIBUNE, January 2, 1977

The 1964 Report of the Council of the University of Ceylon listed two research publications from the Radio Isotope Centre as follows:

"N. Rajapakse and P. P. G. L. Siriwardene: 'The Flight Range of radiophosphorus labelled *Culex fatigans* in Ceylon'. Bulletin on Radiation in Entomology, International Atomic Energy Agency, July 1963.

N. Rajapakse, P. P. G. L. Siriwardene and D. A. Weerasekera: A method of tagging *Culex fatigans* and the activity of the Emerging Adults. Bulletin on Radiation in Entomology, International Atomic Energy Agency, September 1964."

This information was, to give his own words, "sent to the Annual Report of the Council," by Dr. Siriwardena himself.

Following the publication of the Annual Report, the newspapers seem to have given further publicity to this achievement. On learning of this Professor Stanley Dissanayake D.Sc. (Lond.) of the Faculty of Medicine in the University had protested in a letter to the Dean of the Faculty of Natural Sciences that the researches done by him and his brother Professor George Dissanayake have been claimed by "others" viz., as would appear from the Report, by P. P. G. L. Siriwardene, N. Rajapakse and D. A. Weerasekera. Following this serious charge the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine had in a letter dated 16 March 1970 even refused to serve on the Advisory Committee to co-ordinate the work of the Radio Isotope Centre.

A lively discussion took place at a Senate meeting in April 1970 and Professor Siriwardene was called upon to answer. He admitted that:

(1) It was he who sent this information for publication in the Annual Report of the Council.

(2) That he did so on information given by Dr. Rajapakse.

(3) That it was a "mistake on his part" not to have verified this information submitted by Dr. Rajapakse.

At a subsequent meeting of the Senate held on 26 May 1970 the Chairman announced that Mr. Siriwardene had informed him that he had written to the University of Ceylon stating that an "error" had been made in the report submitted by him and requested them to make a correction in the Report.

What an "error"! What a "mistake"! How is this different from being a "plagiarist" or an "imposter"?

While the learned Dissanayake brothers have continued to do further researches and achieve signal distinctions in the academic field, Prof. Siriwardene seems to have contented himself to resting on his "laurels" and playing politics since that ill-fated year of our Lord nineteen-hundred-and-sixty-four. However, he was found worthy enough in Sri Lanka to become a memorable (and honourable) Vice Chancellor indeed! Believe it or not!

CYCLONE 1978

Lessons To Be Learnt

by R. Kahawita

The Tribune goes back to 1964 when we experienced another cyclone. The worst affected areas were again in the North from Chilaw onwards. The damage to property was much but to life was negligible. There was the threat of a cyclone in 1977 and Sri Lanka escaped it by a neck

and the worst of it was in Tamil Nadu. She had two visitations within two weeks.

CYCLONES in our region have become frequent in recent years. The 1978 cyclone—fourteen years after the terrible 1964 cyclone—has caused havoc to life and property, never experienced in Sri Lanka heretofore. The path the hurricane followed, as reported by the Meteorological Department, was almost North West. Striking at Batticaloa it maintained its destructive course towards Mannar and crossed over to the Sub-continent.

The damage to life and property in its wake cannot be visualised by us living in Colombo and others in non-affected areas. The news reporting or the Radio did not give much material to visualize the damage and the suffering of the people who went through it. Even with such scanty information the people of Sri Lanka have rallied round the Government in a generous scale to share and help the unfortunate brethren in an unprecedented manner. Help pouring in from the Western and Developed Countries is also fantastic and magnanimous—magnanimous in the sense all barriers have been transcended and the foremost desire is to help man in suffering. Considering the way how the rest of the world has reacted to the suffering of our people, one begins to think, that disasters of this nature are just pricks or pinches to remind mankind "one mess of man". It pricks the conscience of man, where resides his faith and belief in a force beyond his ken. Man can do nothing in such confrontations, except to strengthen his belief that his capacity to save himself does not exist. His survival is beyond his control. So he forgets all the man created barriers, caste, race, creed, nationality, richness and poverty, political divisions and such other devices for survival and force

man to gather together to share and alleviate the suffering of others. So let us be convinced that these are reminders to man of his limitations.

How violent the destructive force of the cyclone cannot be experienced unless one was caught in it. Even at the periphery of the "core of the cyclone" considerable damage has been caused to property, though such damage in these areas have escaped the notice of the Government due to greater concern of the Government in the more devastated areas, where suffering is the greatest.

A FEW DAYS AGO I happened to be in one of these areas—about 20 miles North of Kurunegala. In the couple of villages I passed through, several trees have been uprooted, particularly, Tamarind, Margosa, Cadju, Kapok, Jak and some shallow rooted jungle trees around the homesteads of the people. Some of these trees have fallen on the houses, causing damage and injury to the occupants and their meagre belongings. Practically all the village huts constructed in wattle and daub have collapsed due to the beating rain and the force of the wind. Many roofs have got blown off where the walls stood the battering. To illustrate how systematic the destruction has been, in an around the village I hang out, there were three blacksmiths serving the "hardware" needs of the village folk. I went round on the 28th in search of these Smithys to get some work done and found the all the three places had been razed to the ground with all the working tools under the debris of the workshops. Their consolation was—"All have suffered the same fate, so what to do, let us bear it together." Practically all the houses in these villages have suffered and as their huts gave way they moved into the school buildings and other better class houses if they had not suffered by the force of the gale.

The contents of the houses they lost might not be much, but what they say, they lost their cooking utensils, the *Kalagedi*, the *Ethiliya Muttie* etc, viz the essentials they use to prepare their food. To rehabilitate these people, these are the wares that should be moved into the area to enable them to cook whatever food they can find.

In this area, the damage to roads and public works are also considerable—a major irrigation channel maintained by the Dept. has got washed off, the rushing water through the breach has caused considerable damage to the paddy fields with a standing crop or just sown, then another tank in the chain also has breached, washing away crops and houses that stood in the way of the rushing water, an anicut—a diversion structure across the main river has been out-flanked, mainly because the controlling gates were not open, the water rushing down the channel has breached in several places.

IN THIS AREA, very small indeed, compared to the places that were in the path of the cyclone, the aggregate damage to private and public property may be in the region of four to five lakhs of rupees, and loss of "maha crop" may be assessed around five thousand acres. To undertake restoration work, there is no village level organisation to get into action in an emergency of this nature. Everybody is awaiting, some at the disaster spot, as I have seen, the arrival of "Nilafare Mahatmaya" to assess the damage and commence restoration operations.

In the good old days, there were the village level officials—the Peace Officer, Vel Vidane, Gam-Vidane, Aarachi Ralahamy, all living in the village and with a stake in the village. So they organised themselves to start rescue work, repair the damaged, call out voluntary

service, collect financial assistance and as the work of restoring to normal life was started immediately.

That system of "on the spot officialdom and authority" we destroyed legally in the name of progress and subjected the village organisation to a system which the people do not understand. So we have to wait till things move out of Colombo, arrival of international help etc. What some of the village folk told me was, what they want is a supply of pots and pans to prepare their food—food they can find—there is still a spark of human kindness left in our village folks so they say and they know best.

After what I have seen and experienced in this small area, we have to take a second look at our development programmes and how we maintain and repair the works completed, may be housing, roads, irrigation schemes, public buildings and all these appurtenances we scatter in the villages to improve their lives, maintenance and repair of what we have completed is as important or more important than adding more works to our inventory, many a disaster may have been avoided if regular inspections and maintenance were carried out.

AT THE PRESENT DAY we seem to be mainly concerned with development and construction at the expense of maintenance. So with the seasonal rains, winds and even in normal times the new works added to our list begin to decay. It is necessary now to lay greater emphasis on maintenance, more men and money on maintenance and repair.

The Government should also look into the re-introduction of the village level administration that was before the new system was introduced. The old system of village level administra-

men was changed for political reasons. It may have been a good move to drive home in the village the importance of political adherence in contrast to official, social or economic allegiance to a village resident. But in the final analysis village level allegiance to one of their kind is advantageous for over-all benefit of the residents.

The Government should give serious consideration to re-introduce the administrative order that was there before the new system was foisted on the village. The need for that system becomes evident in situations of the nature we are experiencing after the cyclone. To deal with the situation expeditiously, on the spot, information is necessary. This was readily available under the old system and schemes of officialdom at "the Head Quarters" took notice of it. When the village official was in the village, he was one of them and he had to take quick action. If he did not he could not live in the village—so he was alive to the needs and how and who should be given the help first.

Whatever the reason may be, these village folk must have a voice in the village to be heard at the higher level. The man who lives and works with them understand them better than an alien who is there because he is paid to do so. He has no attachment to the village—his interests are elsewhere. This is why the present system has not produced results to "create better life in the village".

So let us do some rethinking and see how the old system can be streamlined meet the new aspirations of our village folk.

HELD OVER

The third instalment of NIKIL Chakravarty's *China* Revised will appear next week

THE CYCLONE THAT SHOOK BATTICALOA

On The Night Of 23rd November 78

by

K. Kanapathipillai
B.A., F.R.C.S.

The cyclone came and shook the Batticaloa District on the Eastern bulge of Sri Lanka from Verugal in the North to Oluvil in the South, and its track, it was estimated, had a width of 120 miles in diameter. From the extent of the damage caused it may be surmised that the 'Eye' of the depression passed over the town of Batticaloa causing the worst damage to the town and its immediate environs, that it had a north-east and northerly component in the first lap, and that it had a south-eastern component in the second lap; that it was the most ruinous and deadliest natural calamity ever experienced in living memory in Sri Lanka.

On 23rd November, somewhere about noon, Radio Ceylon announced that there was an atmospheric depression forming in the Bay of Bengal off the Eastern Coast of Sri Lanka, and that it was travelling at fifty miles an hour in the direction of Batticaloa. Immediately after the announcement on the Radio there was a loud thunder clap in Batticaloa at about one p.m.; and it was observed that the entire sky was covered with a thick and even pall of leaden grey clouds and the wind was blowing from north-north-easterly quarter and that it came in heavy gusts; in intermittent violent blasts. By 4 p.m. the entire sky dome was overcast. The previous day at about 3 p.m. three giant fish hawks, harbingers of storm, squeaked and

screamed and squawked and were seen high up in the heavens announcing, and in a way, forecasting very squally and dark weather the next few days. At 4 p.m. the gusts that came from the North had veered to the north-east, and then to the south-east, and the blast was in no way the ordinary type of blowing that was usually experienced in this part of Sri Lanka. It was an unusual weather phenomenon. At first the softer and sappy vegetation like plantain trees succumbed to the blast. They fell on one another helter skelter, like a house of cards.

Then the sky assumed a lurid grey, never before seen on an evening sky; the blowing freshened and came with gale force and the effect could be observed on the crowns of coconut trees that swayed to and fro, and shook and quaked as if handled by a mighty giant who had the destructive intent of twisting them out of their deeply rooted trunk.

Still the people, lethargic and complacent as they usually are in this part of Sri Lanka, didn't take the warning with any degree of seriousness and in earnest, and went about doing their usual round of activities. Says a lady teacher who had just returned from school: "Hearing that fish was available at a very cheap price at the Batticaloa Sand Bar I braved the squally and wet weather boarded a Bar-bound bus and having alighted at the spot bought a fairly large quantity of fish for a mere song, for the fishermen were in a hurry to dispose of their wares as quickly as possible, and scoot off to their huts, and took it to a friend's house to have it shared and distributed among my colleagues. The wind was blowing with uncommon fury at 5 pm; and the line-bus could not proceed. I got out and took the shortest cut to my friend's house. But I

could not proceed even a few yards. The wind was so strong that it would have easily blown me off my feet. Fearing that I might be hurt by falling trees and torn off branches, and hurtling pieces of tiles, asbestos sheets and debris that came flying on the air like a thousand darts, I went and stayed in my friend's house which was in no way a safe place to stay. A number of us remained huddled up under a small area of sheltered roof fearing that none of us would be able to see the sun of the following morning. It was a most gruesome experience; nay an ordeal."

At 6 p.m. it was blowing with added force and violence, perhaps at eighty miles per hour. Entire trees were uprooted. Even such strong and tough giants like the banyan, the tamarind, the neem, the mara and cassia trees were turned and twisted like the king-post of a 'Checku', and uprooted, and fell in confusion one upon another. The coconut trees in the villages were torn off their base like tender blades of grass and lay upon one another in a criss-cross pattern, so that the following morning, when it dawned and day light crept in as if unwillingly and spread over the entire landscape, it was one vast chena of fallen trees and tangles of telegraph and electric wires that resembled tough lianas.

One could scarcely believe one's eyes; not a tree stood unshaken and erect and not a building remained intact and unaffected. Even the biggest and strongest buildings such as the Kachcheri, St. Michael's College, St. Mary's Cathedral, the Hospital, the Post Office, the Public Library, the Town Hall, the Bank of Ceylon, People's Bank, the Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama, the YMBA, the YMCA etc., had lost their roof tops; the asbestos sheets, the flat tiles, the galvanized sheets that covered them having been

completely torn off. These buildings covered with the country type of half round tiles seemed to have resisted the onset of the blast with less damage.

As one saw the day on 23rd November coming to a close on this God-forsaken eastern sea board of Sri Lanka, one felt running through one's spine a 'creep' and chill that damped one's spirit and gave one a sense of a blasted hope and a strange and inexpressible foreboding that left one with a far-away feeling of being completely forsaken. The blasts that came at 6 p.m. were perhaps the fiercest that one might have experienced. From 6 p.m. till about 8 p.m. it blew at a speed of 80 miles an hour or even more, at 8 pm there was a sudden lull that lasted about half an hour. And every one had some lurking feeling of relief and thought the gale had spent itself. There was a sigh of relief in everyone who happened to be a victim of this first lap of the fierce blast. Broken tiles, asbestos, sheets and corrugated galvanized sheets and aluminium sheets lay scattered all over the place. If one got out of one's dwelling place one would have found it very difficult to pick one's way through the fallen trees and the tangle of electric, telegraph and telephone wires and fallen debris and broken tiles. In its first lap the gale had come from the north-north-east quarter.

Then once again the blast came swirling and whirling; this time from the south-south-east quarter. It came with added fury. It was surmised that it blew at 100 miles; perhaps the fiercest in the recorded history of the Batticaloa District. It was a most shocking experience that lasted till 4 a.m. on 24th November. Only those who experienced it know the horrors that forces of nature perpetrated that night. As one remained huddled up with one's dear

and near ones under a rickety old table, or perhaps clinging to a wall with one's body pressed against its dank and cold surface one eventually developed the notion in one's mind that the end of the world had come. One could hear a loud boom, now and again a heavy thud; the creaking of galvanized sheets and the seaming and heavy banging of doors and windows, the creaking and groaning of the beams and rafters; the crashing and cracking of timbers and the falling of walls. Showers of broken tiles and the shooting of spray that beat through the bare roof were all that one felt. One's limbs ached, the back doubled in its posture seemed to crack under the strain of a coiled up form. The mind filled with the worst of horrors; of the end of the world, of parting from one's near and beloved ones. These are the inherent trends in one's feeling. It would be too rash to venture to describe the sensations that surged through one's mind. There were the elemental forces at full play, in all their fury attacking from above; and there was a continuous stream of icy cold water underneath every one's squatting form. Every one was soaked to the skin, shivering and benumbed to the very marrow of one's bones. One felt that the end of the world had come, and lost all hopes of greeting the sun of the morrow. Leave alone the vigorous and the healthy and the young who could have braved the horrors perpetrated by the wind and the rain. But how about the infants, the aged and the invalids? As the roofs of the buildings of the General Hospital were bared the patients had to be huddled on the ground-floor and some for instance, in the Hospital at Kattankudy died under crumbling walls. There were seven casualties in this and in the VC buildings.

The people who were worst affected were those in the coastal villages of Sittandykudy, Eravur, Amirthakali, Kalladi, Kalladi Uppodal, Navalady, Kattankudy, Araipattai, Kalawanchikudy, Eac'antivu, Kokkadicholai etc. A tidal drift came into the lagoons and eroded the coastal areas, and in consequence the water level in the lagoon rose by about seven feet. Says a Technical Assistant resident in one of the Government Quarters of the Kalladi Beach: "I was sensing the strength of the blast that came at about 5.30 p.m. It was very fierce: it was very strong; it became dark all of a sudden; I was in my quarters with my wife and children when the salt spray from the sea at a distance of quarter of a mile came into my house. I tasted it. It was saline. Somehow or other I felt that a tidal drift was spreading over the beach. There was salt water in my living room. Then I had the presence of mind to scoot off with my wife and children to the main road; the Batticaloa-Kalmunai Trunk road. I took shelter in a friend's house at Kalladi." A jeep driver working in the Department of Highways had his quarters just on the back of the Engineer's office. All of a sudden at about 7.30 p.m. there was water in his house and before he could evacuate, it had risen to four feet.

A burgher youth living at the Burgher Colony at the Kalladi Beach had the following tale to tell: "I was in my hut with my aged father when the wind came at about 7 pm. There was another family of four persons who sought shelter in my home. The wind was so strong that it brought heavy loads of sand. It pricked us like a thousand needles. Our feet were bruised; our limbs seemed to be torn off their joints. As the gale gained fresh force we were compelled to flee to another house;

a safer place. It was a distance of a few yards that we had to cover. But the wind was so fierce and blew with such great fury that I had to abandon my aged father on the way, and scoot off for dear life. The family of four that came with me died having been caught under a falling wall. The following morning at about 4 a.m. I went in search of my father's dead body. I found it half buried in the sand; but to my surprise I found that he was quite alive."

There is no doubt that had not the wind direction changed from N.N.E. to S.S.E. a tidal drift as high as 15 feet would have swept away the entire coastal belt: between the Batticaloa lagoon and the sea. Fortunately, as is usual with cyclonic gales, the wind veered and the water that piled up in the lagoon returned to the sea bursting through the sand bar. The Saverithurai Causeway over which the road to Mantivu is laid, has been completely washed away; and the following morning people coming to the town had to be ferried across at an exorbitant rate. It must be known that there are human sharks that wait for a calamity to prey on their fellow men. Such are the unconscionable traders, government officers and looters and way-layers. It is thoroughly shameful to narrate here the story of even refugees who hacked and sawed and broke school furniture and used it for firewood; and other vandals who have deprived schools of all their furniture and even laboratory equipment.

Ruin heaped upon ruin in one single messy mass of trees and trunks and branches of broken tiles and asbestos sheets, and the debris of shattered and crumbling edifices. Heaps and heaps of shards, of broken bottles and cans, of looted and broken and damaged refrigerators, deep-freezers and other valuable equipment and

household belongings. The sight presented to an impartial observer the following morning was the most pathetic imaginable. Thousands of people were left homeless and shelterless. They had very little left to say: this is our own. One very energetic lady teacher and equally enterprising husband who had, through sheer hard work, built up a neat little cottage, and invested on a few acres of coconut land said: "We are reduced to paupery today. Yesterday we were worth a lakh of rupees, if not less. We have only this wet rag of cloth to call our own."

It would appear that the end of the world had come for all of them. Children and old people died in hundreds. The death toll for the whole district may be estimated at a 1000; and this is a very modest figure. But the number of human lives lost is low when compared with the fierce aspect of the forces of nature that turned out to be man's adversaries.

(To be Concluded)

52, Angle Road,
Batticaloa.
18.12.78

BATTICALOA CAMEOS

Cyclone And After

by
John B. Kumarakulasinghe

December 3,

54,000 houses, 94% of schools, coconut and mango trees, fishing boats, 40 CTB buses, hydrel and tele lines, in Batticaloa district were smothered and rendered topless by the cyclone that lashed the East coast, with its 150 mph. savage fury. Sinhalese, Tamils, Muslims and Burghers experienced the faultless impartiality of the savage force of the wind, during the nightmare of the November 23/24

Cyclone Reportage

night. The cyclone became the great equaliser. On the morning of the 24th Batticaloa district could not be identified.

When relief poured in through governmental generosity, there was no official or village level organisation to handle it. The inflow increased. And on the 14th December, that is twenty days after the disaster, deputations from Cheddypalayam, (10 miles south) Aiythimalai, Kannankudah, Karuwapakerny, Karadiyan Aru and periphery hamlets split their woes. That evening a Grama Sevaka was arrested, when the Police unearthed, bales of gift clothing from abroad in the garden, and he has been remanded. This man, is probably small fry. There should be big fish, who should have kept the fry along the orderly lane. Its time, those who couldn't avoid such misappropriation are themselves, stripped of their powers. Administrative inadequacies, in not having statistics and priority plans have wrought havoc. No planning is conceivable. Not even, the best government, can escape the wrath of the troubled masses. If it persists in holding the delivery monopoly. Things must be placed in the hands of the masses, in the hands of youth volunteers and religious units.

December 6,

Statistics on cyclone damage was not available even when an American team of benefactors, wanted them. Such insensitive planning will take relief to the wrong hands and erode the base of rehabilitation work. Doling out relief on the roadside—has become a gamble, and the needy are ignored. Relief must go to the hovels and homes of the victims. Donors should be the Distributors, with local volunteers.

The Jayanthigama Buddhist centre, is doing a nice job in fair,

equitable and speedy relief. Roofs, clothes and food have been issued through volunteers—the youth of the area and the urge for pilfering is minimised to negligible limits. Elsewhere Grama Sevakas and Co-op Managers had been arrested for crimes against suffering humanity. A home-to-home delivery system, however cumbersome it may be is the one fool proof way to maintain the dignity in relief work. This avoids the horrors of queues, where a full family can take up places and nobody seems able to do anything about it. Government Servants aren't the answer, in the rehabilitation of a ravaged Society. Social workers and local volunteers should take over the relief lines. Grama Sevakas should never be asked to make issues. Pilfering by officialdom is allowed to pass unnoticed. And opposition by the less articulate, carry reprisals from the officials. 54,000 houses are reportedly damaged at least 50% on the average. 90% of coconut trees were laid low. Almost the same percentage of Mango and Jak trees suffered. All 610 Fishery Dept. houses are uninhabitable. Edgar Fernando, Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries, visited the area and introduced communalism into the sanctity of relief. Sixty percent for the Sinhala and 40% for other Fishermen, was his recipe for relief. He would have to keep his communal aid with him. He will no more be allowed to undertake such work, the Justice Minister said at last week's conference.

Schools had suffered to the tune of 2 millions. An attempt to take over Vincent Girl's High School because the Lady Principal wouldn't permit removal of tiles, has been shelved. At Vantharamoolai MMV the Co-ordinating officer was at a gala party, when the tiles placed that morning were

stolen. 94% of PTA (Parent-Teachers-Association) constructions were damaged. The Sinhala MV's Nissanka Block, is in shambles. The materials used by the PTA Contractor was found to be below specifications. But he will continue playing about with PTA money, with the connivance of a few individuals. Ministerial moves to castigate and keep out such PTA committees must follow immediately, if the school buildings are to be preserved. Batticaloa's older (and the oldest colonial replicas) defied the cyclone bravely. A team of Engineers must submit a report and the contractors responsible should be punished. The officers connected with the supervision of the constructions must have their share of punishment too.

December 10,

Batticaloa District has been disfigured by the cyclone, her peasants displaced, her houses swept away, her coconut trees gone. Relief is low, lopsided and vindictive. Batticaloa District has harder days ahead. The unusually fierce Monsoonal rains and winds, would interfere with roofs. The lagoon and sea would be rough. The farmers and fishermen—the vital arms of the district's economy would have to be rehabilitated—and that too soon.

It is very unfortunate, the item¹ used sum of cyclone damage is still not known. It is more unfortunate that the delivery-lines of Relief are a partial failure. Co-op Managers, and two Grama Sevakas—the key points in the delivery process have been arrested and remanded, for appropriating the Relief supplies. It is most unfortunate, that social service was not allowed to flow. Officials monopolise the delivery lines. And 90% of the ravaged areas, have all not got their dues still.

In the Pettuvil electorate and in Sinhala settlements there has been commendable orderliness. In the scientific delivery of relief. Here the village youth leaders and Rev. Hanguranketa Somananda Thero, the Chief Priest of Jayanthipura Buddhist centre; must be commended, because every victim has a roof over his/her head, and they have their quota of all food, including milk, warm clothing and cadjans. There are Tamil volunteers and victims, who have sensed the sanity of controlled distribution. The Chief Priest does it; with "his" share, for destitute callers, as well.

The Rural Development Organisations must take over and the petrol-consuming officials must get back to their desks. Officials have no business to arrogate to themselves, the right of the village volunteers, in this business of not appropriating relief, meant for the needy.

There are dark days ahead. The victims would have to be looked after, for quite some time, with mainly food and monetary assistance. The Sinhala Race, have been Batticaloa's major relief donors, who rushed lorry loads. The "Eelam" lovers saw Opposition Leader Amir for a few days, amidst them. And he could not, poor man, see the damage in full. He still does not have the statistics of damage, that means all the folly in Planning, development and comment, in or out of Parliament.

The cyclone, has generated human feelings of extreme sympathy. The Sinhala, Tamils, Muslims and Burghers have been united through a crisis. This happy trend, would be blasted, if Edgar Fernandes come round and dole out the inhuman, communal-relief, the victims of a common disaster. The cycle had no communal bias. So should Edgar Fernando, the lone

interloper, whom the Justice Minister K. W. Devanayagam, swore (with other MPs agreeing) would not be tolerated in the District, on such vindictive missions, that make mercy, false.

It would be good planning if fertilisers, seed paddy, tractors, tanks and channels are all in good shape for the post-cyclone hopes of survival.

Else, there is danger ahead.

CUBAN ANNIVERSARY

The Granma Expedition

by
Ana Maria Ruiz

Havana,

The arrival of the yacht Granma at the eastern coast of Cuba on December 2, 1956 ranks among the most outstanding events in this history of the Revolution, which will soon celebrate the 20th anniversary of its conclusive victory. The Granma expedition launched the final phase of the armed struggle against Fulgencio Batista, waged by the Rebel Army, with the support of majority sectors of the population. The training and preparations for the voyage were carried out in 1955 and 1956 in Mexico, rallying point for the Cuban revolutionaries after the attack on the Moncada fortress in Santiago on July 26, 1953.

As a consequence of that action, Fidel Castro and a large number of attackers were imprisoned for two years, after which they were obliged to leave the country and go to Mexico due to the repressive situation in Cuba. Preparations for the expedition confronted many difficulties deriving from the clandestine conditions in which they were being carried out and the

limited resources available to the revolutionaries. The yacht Granma, bought from a North American, had been built in 1939 for relatively short pleasure voyages, with capacity for 20 passengers and crew members. However, no obstacle proved to be insurmountable, and in two manifestos to the people of Cuba, July 26 Movement leader Fidel Castro reaffirmed the decision of the revolutionary vanguard to continue the struggle begun at Moncada.

On November 25, 1956, the craft left from the Mexican port of Tuxpan Veracruz, loaded with the members of the expedition, large amounts of additional fuel, arms, uniforms, equipment and a minimal supply of food. The members of the expedition included, besides Fidel Castro, Ernesto Che Guevara, Raul Castro, Camilo Cienfuegos, Juan Manuel Marquez, Juan Almeida, Ramiro Valdes, Jesus Montane and others. The characteristics of the yacht, the overloading to which it was subjected and adverse weather conditions, caused serious difficulties, including a 25 percent reduction in speed, which naturally increased the estimated travel time. That eventuality meant the failure of one of the fundamental premises of the tactical plan, consisting of effecting the landing on November 30 in order to coincide with an uprising in the eastern region organised by the cells of the July 26 Movement.

At the time of the Granma epic in Cuba there was a critical economic political and social situation triggered off by corruption and the policies of the regime of Fulgencio Batista, who after seizing power in 1952 through a coup d'etat, inevitably bowed to foreign interests and impositions. The public debt amounted to 800 million pesos (dollars), the main

economic sectors and resources were controlled by United States interests and regime repression included the indiscriminate killings of citizens.

The members of the expedition had as their main objective to reach the mountainous region of the Sierra Maestra and take up positions there to wage a prolonged war. On December 2 the craft arrived at a spot called Los Cayueloa, near Los Colorados beach. The swampy terrain and profuse vegetation of the area impeded the advance of the revolutionaries, who were loaded with weapons and other equipment. Notified of the landing, the regime lifted constitutional guarantees in Oriente province and launched a press campaign backed by US news agencies on the failure of the expedition and the alleged death of its top leaders.

At the same time, regime troops were sent to the zone and on December 5, they surrounded the revolutionary force in the locality known as Algeria del Pio. Forced to withdraw, the *Granma* revolutionaries lost their way in the midst of fields of tall, closely planted sugar-cane. Due to dispersion, many of them were left alone, or in tiny groups. In the days to follow, a large number of combatants were discovered by regime troops when they attempted to make contact with the other revolutionaries. The military reverse at Algeria del Pio, the Rebel Army's baptism of fire, resulted in combat experience for the revolutionaries and a reaffirmation of their decision to fight until total victory.

Co-operation by local peasants, many of whom joined the revolutionary force, played an important role in the survival and re-encounter of the members of the expedition. With the main nucleus

of the *Granma* crew reunited, on December 25, its members began to advance towards the highest zones of the Sierra Maestra, where they set up the main center of revolutionary activities until the January 1, 1959 victory.

CHINA-US

Long March To Normalisation

by
W. Lionel Fernando

December 16th 1978 will be remembered in world history as the end of the "long march" for normalisation of relations between the People's Republic of China and the United States of America. Talking of normalization, one remembers the days of the COCOM the Advisory Committee for Trade with Communist Countries and its Sub-Committee the "CHINCOM" dealing specifically with China. Those were the days of the embargos on China and the Eisenhower-Dulles campaign to keep China out of United Nations.

The verbal warfare between the two countries, especially during the early years of liberation, received wide publicity in the western press, mostly in Hongkong where the press to a hundred per cent was antagonistic to the Mao regime. Backing a policy statement as "US and Red China", issued by Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles, I remember the lengthy editorials in the Hongkong press particularly in the *Hongkong Standard*. In one of its editorials on June 30, 1957 on "Dulles And The Flowers That Bloomed", the *Hongkong Standard*, commending the text of the speech to its readers said: "It is a worthwhile Sunday afternoon reading because its forthright analysis of Communist China

and its bold exposition of the American attitude clears away much of the fuzzy thinking on the Red China question. A clear cut, categorical and dynamic statement of American policy toward Red China has been sorely needed in view of the confused and conflicting views which now prevail in Washington. Part of this confusion was the result of President Eisenhower's comments on the question of trade with Communists which led people to believe that the United States was on the verge of back-tracking its Red-China policy and taking up a more compromising posture toward Peking. Such an impression has done America harm in Asia. It has caused her Asian allies to doubt the steadfastness of American policy and it has prompted the faint-hearted in this part of the world to waver anew in their resistance to Communism."

Then it went on to say that the speech came at "a crucial moment to counteract these perplexities and to inject a much-needed measure of confidence into the hearts of America's allies in Asia. As the Secretary of State, he spoke on behalf of the Eisenhower administration and his speech undoubtedly carried the approval of the fullest support of the President. His speech, therefore, was not merely the expression of Mr. Dulles' personal views but a formal exposition of American policy. By far the most important portion of Mr. Dulles' speech was the appraisal of the status of Communist rule on the Chinese mainland and elsewhere in the world. He said: 'We can confidently base our policies on the assumption that International Communism's rule of strict conformity is, in China as elsewhere, a passing and not a perpetual phase. We owe it to ourselves, our allies and the Chinese people to do all that we

can do to contribute to that passing.'

"This," the editorial said, "was a statement of basic policy of the United States. He said it without the slightest mincing of words and he apparently wanted the Peking regime to be fully and correctly informed on this point. Such a clarification, while it may not be palatable to Peking, is useful in destroying some of the illusions and misunderstandings which may exist among the Chinese Communists and some of the middle headed 'neutralists'." Continuing its lengthy editorial, the *Hongkong Standard* said that the Dulles' statement taken as a whole had two main objectives. One of these objectives, the editorial said, was expressed clearly, the other was implied. His first objective was to "tell America's allies in Asia that the United States is prepared to carry out a policy towards Red China that is steadfast, that is not subject to change either to comply with the wishes of Communism or because of America's momentary whimsy. This is an important declaration because a steadfast policy will provide a rallying point for the free nations of Asia. It will enable America's Asian allies to co-ordinate their own policies with those of Washington. Such a close co-ordination between the United States and her Asian allies is indeed the basic requirement for a strong united front in the resistance against Communism. Mr. Dulles' second objective which he merely implied is the encouragement his speech will give to those people on the mainland who were bold enough to voice their opposition against Chinese Communist rule. The storm of criticism against the Peking regime has thus far brought no official response or encouragement from abroad. Mr. Dulles' speech was the first one which gave a firm voice of support

to all those who oppose Communist rule and contribute—however little—to its passing. It is this implied but no less definite encouragement to the opponents of Communists on the mainland which makes Mr. Dulles' speech not only a significant statement of policy but a timely act of diplomatic tactics during a crucial moment in trouble-laden Red China."

Dulles' speech made when the fourth session of the First National People's Congress was in progress came in for close scrutiny by the NPC I was in Peking then. Vice Premier Chang Han-fu, who was also the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, focussing attention on this speech referred to "recent fanatic outcries against the Chinese people", which, he said, "the aggressive group around Dulles in the US had set going in order to bolster up its already bankrupt policy of hostility toward China." Referring to Dulles' speech, he said: "This vicious attack by Dulles on China, just at this moment, came because US war policy had become more and more unpopular. Dulles stepped in to confuse right and wrong so as to cover up the US intrigues for armed aggression, establishing military bases and threats of war in the Far East." Recalling the US "record of successive armed aggression," Chang Han-fu said: "It had unleashed the Korean war, buttressed the French colonial war in Indo-China while working to replace France there, established military bases in the Philippines and control over its economy and policy, helped Britain in its cold-blooded suppression of the independence struggle in Malaya while trying to replace British rule there, carried out subversive activities in Tibet and has encroached on China's territory of Taiwan. Emphasising that "vituperation and slander would not stop China from advancing and

growing stronger", Chang Han-fu said "Dulles does not understand that it is not within the power of the US to bar China's friendly contacts with other countries. In the short period of eight years since its founding, the CPR has established formal diplomatic relations with 27 countries, trading relations with 68 countries and friendly contacts with over a hundred. This has contributed to friendship among the people of various countries and to relaxing world tension in a way that Dulles could hardly imagine."

Continuing, he told the NPC that the UN itself was the first to suffer "from the withholding of China's legal place in the UN. It has not been able to settle many important international problems, particularly those concerning the Far East and Asia, due to China's absence. "Dulles looked on the denial of recognition to China as his trump card, but without this recognition, the Chinese people still live quite well and in future will live still better and no force on earth could prevent China growing stronger day by day as it travelled the road to socialism. The US aggressors would one day discover, to their loss, if they persist in their policy of hostility, it is they and not China that would come out badly. "Contrary to Dulles' desires," he told the Congress, "the trade embargo has helped China's economic independence, strengthened its co-operation with the socialist countries and provided good conditions for speedy progress in socialist construction. At the same time countries allied with the US had lost many chances of mutually beneficial and equal trade. Now one after another they are showing unwillingness to follow US policy; and the US is chasing them very obviously to prevent them from slipping entirely from its control."

It is entirely up to the US to recognise China or not. The Chinese people will never beg for such recognition. They will never waver their opposition to the persistent US policy of hostility toward China, encroaching on Taiwan and carrying out subversion against China."

After these almost prophetic statements, Chang Han-fu referred to Dulles' "worry" that recognition of China would "immensely discourage" the bourgeois rightists within the country on those anti-socialist and anti-communist party actions, he had placed his hopes on. Dulles has openly praised those rightists for their 'brave words' implying that it is the duty of both the US and the rightists to strive for a 'passing' of the socialist system and Communist Party leadership. With these remarks Dulles had simply exposed himself and the intrigues of subversion in China. This 'worry' on the part of Dulles is unnecessary. Despite non-recognition of China by the UN, the rightists, anyway, have immensely been discouraged through the withering exposure to which they had subjected them and they will continue to meet with complete and thorough failure."

This is now part of history. The "fight" then was centered on recognition of China by the United Nations which the US persistently blocked and the creation of trade barriers against China which was also spearheaded by the United States. As time went on the trade barriers had to be removed and China's recognition by the UN became a reality. Yet the normalization of diplomatic relations between the two countries dragged on till the Eisenhower-Dulles regime was out of office. With the advent of the Nixon-Kissinger regime, the cold-war between the

two countries ceased, attitudes and approaches changes. Chou En-lai, China's Prime Minister with his persuasive diplomacy "coaxed" Kissinger to "see" Peking which was followed by Nixon-Kissinger talks with Chairman Mao and Chou in Peking. It remains to the eternal credit of Chou En-lai for creating the correct atmosphere for these meetings and but for his death in 1976 normalisation may have taken place earlier. It was left to Hua Kuo-feng and Teng Hsiao-ping on China's side and Carter and Vance on behalf of the United States to continue negotiations from where Chou En-lai-Kissinger had left and make it a reality within two years of Chou En-lai's death. It is now left to Teng Hsiao-ping, the trusted Deputy of the late Premier Chou now a Vice-Premier in the Hua administration, to fix the stamp of authority on the agreement when he visits the United States at the end of this month.

The normalisation of relations between China and the United States besides stabilising world peace and strengthening commerce between the two countries, will enable the thousands of Americans who have been waiting in the queue for a long time to visit China to do so now. It has also, once and forever established the position of Taiwan as part of the mainland of China. This agreement will also enable China to go ahead with its "modernisation" plans without the threat of an immediate war hanging over its head.

Hundreds of Americans whom I met in Peking during my tour of China in July-August this year were keen that the doors of China should be made wide open to the rest of the world to enable them to know the developments taking place behind the "bamboo curtain". There was a time when foreigners were not wanted in China. That phase has changed and China wants

more foreigners to visit China and have a clear picture of what is taking place behind the "bamboo curtain". In the past, and I believe it is so till now, only 2000 visas were allowed a year for Americans to visit China and under the protocol no invitations to visit China could either be issued to Americans or accepted until normalisation became a reality. The Americans I met in Peking, though some of them were members of the Sino-American Friendship Association had to foot their own bill for the visit which included passage up and down—a lot of money, as they told me.

Dr. Harold C. Hinton, Professor of Political Science and International Affairs of the George Washington University—a leading specialist on US foreign policy and the triangular relationship between the United States, the People's Republic of China and the USSR, who was in Sri Lanka early this month for a talk on "The US-Sino-Soviet triangle and South Asia" is himself waiting for the opportunity to visit China. It was ironical that Prof. Hinton, a specialist of the "triangle" could speak on China and yet has not seen China. He was returning from Taiwan after touring the other countries of the region and his attempts made on three occasions to get visa for China had failed. He and many others like him will now find access to China made easy.

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CHINA TO END FRIENDSHIP TREATY WITH RUSSIA

Brussels, Dec. 3.

China has advised some Governments of the North Atlantic (NATO) alliance it intends shortly acting to end the 30 year Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, Alliance and Mutual Assistance. Diplomats attending NATO's Council of Foreign Ministers, who reported this on Thursday, said Peking was preparing formally to tell the Soviet Union of its decision by February. The informants who declined to be named, said their understanding was the Peking-Moscow treaty laid down that either signatory must have a year's notice of a wish to end it. The pact was signed in February 1950. To some extent China's decision has seemed to be inevitable for some years—since the two giant communist neighbours burst loose in an ideological dispute in the early 1960s. But formal Chinese denunciation of the treaty, signed when Mr. Joseph Stalin was Premier, would represent a political act of extreme symbolic importance. NATO authorities take the view the Chinese are keeping the allies informed of the state of their relations with the Soviets as part of an effort to improve political economic and other forms of co-operation with the West. This co-operation, the Chinese hope, would include the purchase of defensive arms and technology and negotiation of credits.

—AP.

SOCIALISM HAS FAILED IN CHINA

Peking, Dec. 10.

A wall poster yesterday vehemently accused socialist society of failing to feed its citizens. "Tens of thousands of people do not have the means to clothe themselves or eat," the poster affirmed. "What has happened to your communist humanitarianism?" "Go to the devil, you who only (communist) society," it said. The poster, written in simple characters, was addressed to the "gentlemen, ladies and misses of the Peking City Government." The poster said, "We comrades in misery want to take our destiny into our own hands, we want to be the masters of the country. Go to the devil, you who only fatten yourselves on the people's blood and tears... The people want pancakes to soothe their hunger." The poster appeared on "Democracy Wall" at the Hsitan Street intersection. Another poster on the wall ironically reduced political developments in the last 12 years to a mathematical equation: "First bourgeois headquarters on cultural revolution equals second bourgeois headquarters plus third bourgeois headquarters."

—Reuter

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CARTER ANNOUNCES BREAK WITH TAIWAN. USA AND CHINA TO RESUME. FULL TIMES FROM JAN. 1

Washington, Dec. 16.

The United States would establish full diplomatic ties with the People's Republic of China on January 1, severing diplomatic ties with Taiwan, President Carter announced in a dramatic television address on Friday. The Chinese Vice-Premier, Mr. Teng Hsiao-ping, will visit the US on January 29 and Mr. Carter may make a trip to China later. The two coun-

tries will exchange ambassadors and establish embassies on March 1. These were also set out in a formal joint communique by the two sides, which reiterated the principles agreed upon in the Shanghai communique. The announcement was the climax of rapidly moving diplomatic activities and was totally unexpected even the day before. There was no hint of so momentous a development when Mr. Carter was asked about ties with China in a television interview on Thursday. He had then said it was the turn of the Chinese leaders to visit the US and that the next move depended on Peking. While agreeing to establish full diplomatic ties with the People's Republic, the US will meet the three conditions laid down by the Chinese. These are: withdrawal of the small remaining military force of 750 from Taiwan, scrapping of the mutual defence treaty with Taiwan and severing of diplomatic ties with the Nationalist regime.

The only concessions from Peking were minor ones. It would allow the US-Taiwan treaty to expire on its own, without insisting that the US abrogate it immediately. Also the People's Republic has not taken objection to the US continuing arms sales to maintain the half-a-million strong Taiwanese army. The US would maintain cultural, commercial and other unofficial relations with the people of Taiwan. Mr. Carter, in his television address said, "In recognising that the Government of the People's Republic of China is the single Government of China, we are recognising simple reality. We do not take this important step for transient, tactical or expedient reasons." In language directed pointedly to the Soviet Union, he added, "The normalisation of relations between the US and China has no other purpose

than this—the advancement of peace."

The Soviet Ambassador in Washington, Mr. Dobrynin, was called to the White House on Friday afternoon and told of the developments by the President's National Security Adviser Mr. Brzezinski. About Taiwan, Mr. Carter said, "I have paid special attention to ensuring that normalisation of relations between the US and the People's Republic will not jeopardise the well-being of the people of Taiwan." The US has been trying to get from Peking a public assurance that it would not take Taiwan by force, but both the communique and US State Department officials were silent on this point. The reaction in the US to these developments has been mixed. Mr. Carter's decision drew support from the former President, Mr. Gerald Ford. Senator Edward Kennedy and the Senate majority leader, Mr. Robert Byrd. The conservatives led by Senator Barry Goldwater, denounced the move as "a stab in the back of Taiwan."

Here is the text of the joint communique: "The US and China have agreed to reconsider each other and to establish diplomatic relations as of January 1, 1979. US recognises the Government of the People's Republic of China as the sole legal government of China. Within this context, the people of the US will maintain cultural, commercial and other unofficial relations with the people of Taiwan. The US and China reaffirm the principles agreed on by the two sides in the Shanghai communique and emphasise that once again—both wish to reduce the danger of international military conflict—neither should seek hegemony in the Asia-Pacific or in any other region of the world and each is opposed to efforts by any other country or group of countries to establish such hegemony neither

is prepared to negotiate on behalf of any third party or to enter into agreements or understandings with the other directed at other States—the US Government acknowledges the Chinese position that there is but one China and Taiwan is part of China—both believe that normalisation of Sino-American relations is not only in the interest of the Chinese and American peoples, but also contributes to the cause of peace in Asia and the world."

The US and China will exchange ambassadors and establish embassies on March 1, 1979.

—M. Ravi in Hindu

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USA—CHINA: INDIAN VIEW: WASHINGTON'S HUMBLE PIE

The decision of the US Government to extend diplomatic recognition to the People's Republic of China on January 1979 has come twenty-nine years too late. The People's Republic of China was founded on October 1, 1949, and very soon after, the Republic of India recognized the reality of a new state founded in the vast country of China, after the total collapse of the corrupt Kuomintang regime. That was the time when the US Administration was leading the crusade against Communism and the call for "rolling back Communism" came from Washington. It was the US Administration which propped up the KMT regime in Taiwan, propounding the monstrous fiction that Taiwan, in its eyes, is the real Republic of China. Never in history has there been such a stupid and illegitimate stand held on to by a power for so long. Despite this insistence by the US Administration to regard the People's Republic of China as "non-country", China played its role—sometimes significant, sometimes

turbulent—in the affairs of the world. The US itself could not escape facing it as it had to at the Geneva conference in 1954 and on many other occasions. The attempt on the part of the diehards in Washington to quarantine China was as futile and unreal as King Canute trying to rule the waves.

Slowly but irreversibly, the reality that is People's Republic of China forced itself upon the US Administration. And one witnessed the amazing spectacle in 1972 when the President of the mighty United States of America had to undertake a trip to Peking, the capital of a country which his Government had refused to recognise. From this point onward, the US was only stone-walling the inevitable. It lost its majority against the entry of People's Republic of China into the UN and had to make a virtue out of a necessity by falling in line with the UN majority and acquiesce in the seating of the People's Republic of China as one of the five permanent members of the Security Council. What has been announced now is therefore nothing new; it had to come and it has come.

From available indications, the visit of Brzezinski to Peking last May could have clinched the issue but for the US insistence that the Chinese Government would have to give a formal assurance that it would not take Taiwan by force—a position which was obviously unacceptable to Peking since it has always regarded, and correctly, that Taiwan is a part of China and how the Chinese Government would or should deal with it is purely an internal affair of China.

For the US Administration, the ignominy of having to officially recognize the People's China is not as severe as its humiliating defeat in war at the hands of little Vietnam in 1975 when the US personnel had

to escape by helicopter from their Embassy roof in Saigon at the imminence of the entry into the city of the liberating Vietnamese forces. That day marked the final and irretrievable decline of the US overlordship in Asia. This is a point which is worth reminding ourselves when the US recognition of China is being assessed.

For the Brzezinski school, the present posture of the Peking Government provides a rationale for this latest step, even if it means a galling reminder for all the satellites of the USA that it will not hesitate to sacrifice them when it comes to the compulsions of its own power-politics. The fate of the KMT regime in Taiwan is one more example of the unreliability of dependence on the protection of the US arms.

In the world appraisal of the Trilateral Commission of which Brzezinski is a major protagonist, the present policy stand of the Peking Government is welcome. The Trilateral would like to rope in China as a major acquisition in its global network. The present phase of the Sino-Soviet animosity in which Peking regards Moscow as the Enemy Number One is indeed a bonanza for the Trilateral. To get a Communist country to be at loggerheads with another Communist country is one of its objectives, and nothing cheers up the Trilateral partners more than that they could get China, the country with the largest mass of population in the world, to set itself in angry confrontation against the greater part of the Communist world particularly the Soviet Union.

It is this intransigence on Peking's part against the other Communist countries as also its demonstrative bonhomie towards countries of black reaction like Chile and Zaire, which have to a large measure, taken the shine out of the present phase of China's foreign policy.

Historically speaking, the US recognition of China is a setback to the vaunted prestige of Washington in the eyes of the Asian nations. It is only to be hoped that this is not permitted to be exploited by the policy-makers in the US Administration for their own neo-colonial world objectives.

—Analyst in *Mainstream*, New Delhi, December 23, 1978.

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IRAN

CONSTERNATION IN USA

Washington, December 20,

The present situation in Iran is something the Americans never bargained for, and the possibilities of retaining the US influence there have begun to recede. It is believed that President Carter has expressed his strong dissatisfaction with the National Security Council, State Department and the Intelligence Services, which had failed to predict or even anticipate the present turn of events in Iran. The President's disappointment caused by inability of his officials to properly evaluate the influence of the Islamic (shiiite) leaders headed by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini on the majority of Iranian people and also by the total absence of contacts with the Iranian opposition within the country and abroad.

Belatedly, the Carter administration is making urgent efforts to sustain the US strategic, economic and political interests in this region. A special group on Iran consisting the experts from the National Security Council, State Department and Secret Services was set up on the State Department. This group, it is believed has formulated recommendations, which are now being expeditiously fulfilled. For one thing it is known that steps have been taken and to put under surveillance Iranian emigrant organisations in the US, West Germany,

France, Italy and other countries. US Intelligence Services will endeavour to infiltrate these organisations. Meanwhile, because the Military Government has begun to arrest former VIPs of the Iranian administration, and the US authorities will also do everything to use its influence to prevent the arrest of long-term US supporters and in case of any danger to their lives to organise their departure, from Iran.

There is, consternation here that demonstrations in Teheran and in other cities of Iran are becoming more and more strongly anti-American. This has upset the US administration a great deal. It is unable to find a way out of the Iranian crisis. And what is most exasperating is that all efforts to utilise the mass media both in the US and Iran, as well as in West European countries to make it out that all what happened in Iran was due to the devilish work of "international communism," have misfired. The main resolution adopted at the over-the-million strong demonstration in Teheran in December had stated *inter alia* that the attempts by the Shah and the American media to suggest that "international communism" had infiltrated into the anti-Shah movement were totally and completely groundless.

From A Special Correspondent

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Teheran, December 20,

According to official Iranian figures, US investments in Iran amount to well above 4 billion rials, which accounts for over half of all foreign investments in that country. Over 300 US companies and firms are listed among the foreign companies in Iran. The US also tops the list in Iranian foreign trade. Over a period of 1975-80, the US will sell Iran \$ 10

billion worth of armaments, at the same time buying from it oil at the sum of \$14 billion, which can only mean that the profit from the oil will, in effect, go to pay for the armaments. There are around forty thousand American "advisers" in Iran.

The question that will inevitably be asked is: will the US find it easy to lose the privileged position it enjoys, and to be deprived of "the hen that lays golden eggs" for American monopolies? Certainly not. Furthermore, the US had recently supplied Iran with additional consignments of police appliances for fighting people demonstrating against the government: viz., tear-gas grenades, and all sorts of special helmets and clubs. What is significant, however, is that a State Department spokesman should officially declare that such support given to a military government was by no means inconsistent with the stand Americans take on human rights. Besides, lest it should lose its grip on Iran, Washington seems to have decided to slowly ease the Shah, hated by nearly all Iranian people from his throne. But this was to be done gently in the spirit of American diplomacy. At the height of one phase of the anti-Shah campaign, President Jimmy Carter declared his support for the Shah and, demonstrably to prove that he meant it, received the Crown Prince in the White House and assured him that there was no danger to the Pahlavi House and that the US would give a helping hand to its "friend and ally."

Washington is, apparently, on the horns of a dilemma that while the US President was shaking hands with the Crown Prince, secret instructions had been sent to the US Embassy in Teheran, it is believed in political circles here,

that should the army rise against the Shah, no American intelligence services inside the Iranian army should intervene or try to prevent it. In giving this order, Washington was guided, it is said here, by a secret report from American intelligence organs, which gave an evaluation of the situation in the army. The report, it is rumoured, said there was need for strong measures to be taken in the country, to forestall the danger of a civil war and that an underground "Vandate melli" organisation was in existence in the Iranian army, including the Air and Naval forces, its nucleus made up of middle-rank officers headed by a general: and that there was also information that the dissident opposition leaders in the army had secret contacts with the Shiite leaders Homeini and Shariat Madari, who are believed to have assured them that the army uprising would meet with the support of the popular masses.

At the same time, through its contacts with Saudi Arabia, Washington is believed to have got in touch with the Shiite leaders to assure them that if no changes are made in Iranian policy towards the US in future, the US would withdraw its support to the Shah. It appears that the Shah's inability to control the situation in the country, the army's discontent and its readiness to rise against the Shah, as well as his failure to guarantee the continuous oil delivery, have contributed to making the US decide to discard the weak ruler.

Political circles in Teheran are convinced that the US in its own interests in this strategically important region of the world, has made up its mind to sacrifice the Shah. As an Eastern saying goes "a live jackal is better than a dead lion". All things considered, it is

Ali Amini whom Washington has cast for the role of a lion. Ali Amini is Washington's old and true friend, known for his long-standing ties with US influential political circles; of late, clearly with US support, he was harping on the theme that he alone could cope with the current difficulties, since he would be able to come to terms with the Opposition forces. Nothing would suit Washington better than to have its own man installed in the seat of power. Iran resembles a volcano that can erupt any moment now. That is why the money bags have lost no time in transferring their capital abroad and quitting the country. According to press reports, about 50 million had leaked abroad annually. The rats are leaving the sinking ship of the Pahlavi empire. And what about its captain? He has already set an example by evacuating members of his family and the wealth and treasures of the Iranian crown.

There is also talk here of Washington showing one last courtesy towards its friend and ally the Shah. US Ambassador to Iran Ardeshtir Zahedi is said to have been told in Washington that he should hint to the Shah that the time has come for him to move to his castle in the Rocky Mountains, a refuge and asylum that had in good time been bought for him in the United States.

—From a Special Correspondent in Iran.



PAKISTAN—PERSECUTION OF LIBERALS

It is a sad reflection on the prestige and standing of the Martial Law Administration in Pakistan that it arrests and puts on trial on devious charges all those who are bold enough to disagree with its policies. Such actions undermine international public confidence in the Government of Pakistan. The Martial Law authorities will do well to ponder on the fate that overtook governments that recklessly arrested even mildly liberal elements, especially in neighbouring Islamic countries, under the excuse that even constructive criticism was tantamount to "subversive activities".

General Zia had made a bold bid to woo and win the liberal and fair-minded intelligentsia of Pakistan. By persecuting and prosecuting independent-minded persons like Muzhar Ali Khan, the editor of the Lahore weekly *Viewpoint* and also the Secretary of the Peace Council of Pakistan, the Martial Law Government of General Zia will alienate sympathies of peoples and governments in many countries throughout the world.

Below we publish an editorial from *Viewpoint* of October 22, 1978. The importance of this editorial lies not only in its assessment of the present political situation in Pakistan but also in its remarkably courageous stand as a critic of the Martial Law Administration, showing the drastic curbs under which the journal has to be brought out.—ED.

EDITORIAL: DANGEROUS PORTENTS.

Lahore, October 22

As the mist of obscurantist confusion continues to spread and the atmosphere becomes more suffocative, there is increasing concern among serious-minded citizens about the country's future—and even its political viability. Cloaked thinly in pious platitudes, concerted attacks are being made on the fundamental concepts and aims of the State—a democratic polity, with a genuinely federal structure, wedded to the goal of an egalitarian society. Although the military regime is still pledged to maintain the constitutional *status quo* and its initial promise to the nation to hand over power to an elected government as soon as possible is reiterated frequently, its PNA partners certainly do not view this prospect with equanimity and are engaged in a desperate struggle to fortify their positions by defeating the objectives which gave Martial Law legal validity.

Having stopped to accepting nominated offices at the Centre, as *quid pro quo* for unconditional support to military rule, the remnants of a frayed Alliance seem determined to extend this obnoxious pattern to the provinces and even to local bodies. As if to explain their betrayal of democratic intent, quaint theories are being invented to counter the growing public demand for early restoration of the Constitution, and restitution of the people's political rights. The sensible dismantling of One Unit is mourned as a tragedy—as if this undemocratic arrangement forced upon an unwilling people with bayonet-power could have lasted after the dictatorship had been ousted or could possibly be revived without provoking a convulsion. Plans are being hatched for dismemberment of the provinces and resuscitation of the divisional units scheme, with union councils as the base of the pyramid.

A galaxy of publicists have begun to denigrate parliamentary democracy for its inefficiency and proclaim that our people are

far too gullible to be entrusted with the responsibility of deciding the fate of their land. New formulae are therefore, being concocted to ration or control democracy: and the first major amendment to the Constitution has opened the doors to others that may emasculate the system generally accepted by the people.

More recently, accompanying the imposition of pre-censorship on nine journals, the Political Parties Act has been amended to enable the Government to ban the functioning of political parties that do not conform to certain principles. Its only saving grace is that the ban will be subject to a reference to the Supreme Court. In addition to the ban on an organisation considered guilty of offending the Act's new provisions its office-bearers will automatically be barred from taking part in any political activity for seven years, and even ordinary members who have been convicted of any offence entailing imprisonment for two years or more will be disqualified from being elected members of any representative body for the same period. Some of the amendment's stipulations appear to be unexceptionable, but others are so nebulous that they could easily be misused to put in the dock any party that is considered a threat at the hustings to the ruling groups.

For obvious reasons, in the prevailing circumstances, economic problems cannot be dealt with properly and, though the influx of the earnings of the Pakistani labour abroad is helping to keep the country's neck above the water, the absence of clear-cut plans allows little optimism about the revival of any economic sector. Similarly, international problems of vital concern to Pakistan loom larger and seem to be more intractable.

Understandably, the multifaceted crisis is viewed with concern bordering on alarm, and many observers feel that if the drift is not checked it may lead the country to disaster. It is widely felt that the situation calls for a broad-based effort by all political parties that have not lost faith in democratic principles and are genuinely interested in finding a way out of the present impasse.

The latest suggestion in this regard has been made by the Muslim League's Secretary-General who has urged all political parties and groups to take note of the grave dangers that face Pakistan and consult with each other in order to work out a plan to end the uncertainty and dispel fears of continuing instability. Although Malik Muhammad Qasim only represents one faction of his party, this should not stand in the way of his initiative yielding worthwhile results. It needs to be kept in mind that the combination of

parties and groups, that under Mufti Mehmood's leadership, are working assiduously for purely partisan or factional ends do not command much public support in any region and cannot even pretend to do so. The main danger of course, is that they are likely to follow the present course of hanging on to the coat-tails of military rule and avoiding genuinely free elections.

It is, therefore, necessary for all political parties earnestly interested in saving the country from chaos, to begin informal consultations among themselves. If during their preliminary talks they are able to discover common ground on the main issues, they should go on to convene an all-Parties' Conference of organisations committed to the restoration of democracy. When such a meet evolves a consensus on a programme that can end the existing stalemate, it should be possible to mobilise massive public opinion in its sup-

port and, therefore, to persuade the interim regime to give up its dependence on the PNA's miniscule parties and base its policies on a programme that will approximate to the will of the people.

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SRI LANKA CHRONICLE

Dec. 14—Dec. 20

SRI LANKA CHRONICLE

DIARY OF EVENTS IN SRI LANKA AND THE WORLD COMPILED FROM DAILY NEWSPAPERS PUBLISHED IN COLOMBO.

CDN—Ceylon Daily News; CDM—Ceylon Daily Mirror; CO—Ceylon Observer; ST—Sunday Times; DM—Dinamina; LD—Lankadipa; VK—Virakesai; ATH—Aththa; SM—Silumina; SLD—Sri Lankadipa; JD—Janadina; SU—Sun; DV—Davasa; DP—Dinapathi; CM—Chintamani; WK—Weekend; RR—Riviresa; EN—Eelanadu; IDPR—Information Dept. Press Release; DK—Dinakara.

MAZHAR ALI KHAN

Mazhar Ali Khan, Editor of *Viewpoint*, a progressive weekly published from Lahore, was arrested by the Pakistan martial law regime on December 3. He has been enlarged on bail but according to a brief report circulated by *Reuters*, the martial law authorities propose to try him under the Official Secrets Act. Readers are well acquainted with the scintillating and objective writing of Mazhar Ali Khan from the several editorials and commentaries reproduced in *Mainstream* from *Viewpoint* from time to time. In fact, discerning readers on both sides of the border have been closely following this weekly for a balanced assessment of the developments in Pakistan, particularly after the military take-over on July 5, 1977. *Viewpoint* has been consistently demanding an elected representative government in Pakistan and criticising repeated postponement of the promised elections by the Chief Martial Law Administrator and Chief of Army Staff General Zia-ul-Haq, now also President. *Viewpoint* has been strongly critical of General Zia's nominated civilian administration and his proposal to incorporate in Pakistan's 1973 Constitution a substantive role of the army in the governance of the country. In any case, with its editorials and comments, *Viewpoint* could not have endeared itself to the military-bureaucracy regime that rules the roost in Pakistan today.

—*Mainstream*, New Delhi, December 9.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 14:

Fifty thousand families in the Polonnaruwa, Matale, Batticaloa and Amparai districts have been rendered homeless and will have to be provided temporary shelter according to a committee investigating the recent cyclone damage. President said that whatever difficulties are encountered the necessary relief measure to those affected by the cyclone and floods will be continued without interruption. The government will not denationalise the CTB and hand over the service to the private sector as rumoured in certain quarters, the Minister of Transport told Parliament last night. The Jaffna police have interrogated over 100 persons in connection with last week's slaying of two policemen and the robbery of over one mil-

Don't refuse from the bank at Nallur—CDN. Sri Lanka has about the lowest university dropout rate in the world; according to the deputy registrar of the university the dropout rate is less than two percent. Over 12,000 persons in the Batticaloa district alone are still marooned as a result of heavy rain during the past 48 hours. Rice shops are to be opened in the city and suburbs shortly to enable consumers to get their rice at fair prices—CDM. The government is to prohibit repairs and reconstruction of buildings in areas earmarked for townships in the cyclone affected areas; such projects will be allowed only with the express permission of the Competent Authority of the area, the government decided yesterday. A ministerial committee has been appointed to study ways of selecting students to the university on a basis of the percentage of communities. Transport Minister yesterday indicated that there would be an increase in certain rail fares shortly—SU. The airport at Palaly, Jaffna will be completely closed for civilian air traffic; according to this decision the Colombo-Jaffna and the Trichy-Jaffna air services will be terminated—VK. Police have received information that many of the items sent as aid to cyclone victims was being taken by unscrupulous persons for their own use; they have launched an intensive campaign to hunt out those guilty—DP. UNP has decided to conduct seminars all over the country on government development projects and its success to explain to the people of government plans—DM. 1000 Agricultural officers will be recruited shortly. Rs. 600 million will be spent annually to repair 70 tea factories and to build new factories—DV. Revenue from tea has gone down by Rs. 100 millions because of bad administration after the tea estates were taken over by

government—ID. UN High Commissioner for refugees said last night that talks on easing Indo-China refugees crisis had been a diplomatic success. US Secretary of State Cyrus Vance embarking on a fresh round of shuttle diplomacy today will put new ideas to Israel's leaders on ways to resolving the deadlocked Egyptian-Israeli peace talks. New Kenyan President Daniel Moi showing increased confidence and authority yesterday released all those held in political detention under the late President Kenyatta—CDN. Zambians voted yesterday for a new Parliament and to decide whether to give President Kaunda the only candidate a 4th term in office. Serious violence was reported from Iran's second city of Isfahan yesterday with official sources saying 9 people were killed when troops opened fire on anti-Shah demonstrators—CDM. Many Indian politicians and political commentators predicted today a split in the country's ruling Janata party. First returns in Zambia's presidential and general elections yesterday indicated that President Kaunda would be returned to power with a reduced majority after a heavy turnout at votes—SU.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 15: The government has decided to vest in the Cabinet the responsibility of making all local and foreign purchases for state institutions above the value of one million rupees; under this decision the Cabinet will appoint special tender boards to evaluate and award purchase orders both local and foreign. A major breakthrough in the combating of smuggling between India and Sri Lanka was made this week when delegates of the two countries agreed to conduct joint investigations in cases in which both countries had an interest. The government will bring legislation

next month to make revolutionary changes in the holiday system and the pattern of working hours in the public and private sectors. The department of National Housing has received foreign assistance for the purchase of some building materials required under the 100,000 houses program for 1979. A man who had given information to the Army about the location of the cash Rs. 1.18 million robbed from the Nallur bank last week, was shot dead by youths on Wednesday night a few hours after he had accompanied soldiers in a raid on a house at Thondaimannaru—CDN. The Minister of Trade and Shipping yesterday described much of what the developed world said about its aid to the Third World as 'humbug' and called on the third world countries to see through this and adopt a more realistic attitude—CDM. The government has imposed a ban on the import of Malathion and Penithrothion by sources other than the Health authorities. A group of 40 Tamil youths from the North, involved in cyclone relief work in Batticaloa were asked on Wednesday to quit the Batticaloa Maha Vidyalaya within 24 hours by the IP and another officials; the leader of the opposition has complained of this to the District Minister—VK. Some police stations and many sub-post offices in the northern province will be closed down little by little it is reliably understood—DP. The Minister of State has appointed a Special Committee to approve the building of Hotels in the country—DM. 3½ lakhs of cadjans are needed to repair houses affected by the cyclone in Batticaloa and Amparal districts alone—DV. The Chairman of the Lake House has asked the President for permission to close down Lake House for one week to make changes in the editorial dept to solve the present crisis situation—DK. Former PM Indira

Gandhi asserted in the Lok Sabha yesterday that she had not committed any breach of privilege of the house but that the ruling Janata Party was trying to convert the house into a medieval Star Chamber. PM Morarji Desai today announced a parliamentary motion considered certain to be passed to imprison ex-Premier Indira Gandhi and expel her from the Lower House. British PM Callaghan announced last night he would seek a vote of confidence in Parliament today following a government defeat on a central part of its anti-inflation policy. US Secretary of State Cyrus Vance last night decided to cut short his Middle East peace mission as Israel apparently balked at new proposals brought from Cairo. A wave of demonstrations in support of the Shah in more than a dozen Iranian cities introduced a new element yesterday in to the months of political unrest throughout the country. President Anwar Sadat insisted yesterday that an Egyptian Peace treaty with Israel must be signed on Mount Sinai—CDN. Rhodesia suffered a great disaster in the black nationalist guerilla attack which destroyed millions of litres of vital fuel at a storage depot, PM Ian Smith said yesterday. The US has enlarged its embassy staff in Teheran with CIA personnel and others in an effort to bolster support for the Shah, the New York Times reported—CDM. The DMK President Mr. Karunanidhi has urged the ruling Janatha Party to reconsider the decision favouring strict punishment to former PM Mrs. Indira Gandhi on the privilege issue. The People's Liberation Army is expected to complete its purge of supporters of the Gang of Four by the end of year—SU.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 16: The Sino-Sri Lanka trade protocol for next year scheduled to be signed on Wednesday is expected

to take a different complexion from agreements signed in the past; purchase of rice by Sri Lanka will be minimal and instead a variety of other commodities will be purchased. Police have arrested a person from Kayts who is believed to be involved in the Nallur bank robbery; he is now awaiting identification. The Port of Colombo is to be made an international centre for the trans-shipment of cargo. A massive world bank aided food production drive has got under way in the Kurunegala district and a production of over 10 million bushels of paddy is envisaged—CDN. The President will address delegates at 9.45 am today when the annual sessions of the UNP—open—CDM. A public cum private sectors company is to be floated shortly to operate a taxi service in Sri Lanka. A SLFP allegation that a number of Sri Lanka journalists have been identified in a US Senate committee document as being agents of the CIA has no foundation the Minister of Foreign Affairs told Parliament last night—SU. The Youth Front in a statement says that no one can stop them from participating in relief activities in the Eastern Province—EN. The Ministry of Local Government, Housing and Construction hopes to complete Rs. 11,000.00 millions worth construction work next year. The President has decided to invite a number of foreign firms to help to complete the aimed amount of construction. The National Apprenticeship Board will recruit 10,000-11,000 persons next year. A bank loan of Rs. 25,000 will be given as an experiment to some of those youths to undertake self-employment—DM. The Job Bank will recruit people on two bases: GCE (OL) qualified persons will be recruited through a computer and better qualified people will be recruited on district basis—DV. Britain's embattled labour govern-

ment last night bowed to parliamentary pressure and said it would no longer impose economic sanctions on firms which flout its tight wages policy. Sri Lanka voted for Pakistan's unilateral proposal for the establishment of a nuclear weapon-free zone in South Asia in the UN General Assembly. The White House told Israel yesterday that it now had the sole responsibility of determining success or failure in negotiating to reach a peace treaty with Egypt. The Iranian government last night announced tough tactics to end street demonstrations and break strikes which have virtually crippled the country's economy. Iraqi Oil Minister said yesterday his country would reject out of hand any increase in oil prices as low as 10%—CDN.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17: The President speaking at the 24th annual meeting of the UNP said that the government would not tolerate lawlessness anywhere. With colour TV to be introduced to Sri Lanka around February next year the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and the Ministry of Finance are considering the reduction of the import of TV sets from 50 to 5 percent. The President has ordered all ministries to report immediately to the Job Bank all vacancies that already exist and those that are likely to occur during the course of 1979. The de-coding of the black box of the Loftleider aircraft which crashed outside the Katunayake airport last month has revealed that there has been no malfunctioning of airport equipment—CDN. The government will not tolerate communalism, no matter in what form it rears its ugly head said the President in his address to the 24th annual session of the UNP. The PM of India Mr. Morarji Desai who will visit Sri Lanka in February will

address Parliament on February 5. Charges are to be framed against seven top officials of Air Ceylon against whom adverse findings were made by the three member commission who enquired into the working of the national carrier from 1970 to 77—ST. An increase in the price of petroleum products would be inevitable if the OPEC countries decided to raise it the President announced yesterday—WK. The President addressing the 24th annual sessions of the UNP said that before the term of this government ended 12 lakhs of people would have got employment—EN. Israel's Cabinet throw out the peace treaty proposals brought by US Secretary of State Cyrus Vance and said it was Egypt's fault the December 17 treaty deadline could not be met. Saudi Oil Minister said today his country had the power to make the whole world suffer if Israel fails to accept peace in the Middle East—SO. US Secretary of State Cyrus Vance flew back to Washington today at the end of a weeklong Middle East peace mission which failed to resolve the differences blocking an Egyptian-Israeli Peace treaty. Pakistan's condemned ex-Premier Zulfikar Ali Bhutto is expected to appear before the Pakistan Supreme Court next week during the hearing of his appeal against a death sentence, defence lawyers said—ST. The People's Republic of China and the United States have agreed to establish diplomatic relations as of January 1, 1979 according to a China-US joint communique made public in Peking today. The ordinary people of Peking today enthusiastically welcomed the normalisation of relations between their country and the US. India's Lower House will on Monday take a decision on a Janata Party motion to send former PM Indira Gandhi to prison for a few days and to deprive her of her

Lower House seat as punishment for violation of parliamentary privileges—WK.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 18: The Kirindi Oya Development project which would irrigate approximately 6000 acres in the three electorates of Mulkirigala, Beliatta and Tangalla is scheduled to commence next January. Sixty million rupees is to be given by UNESCO to restore ancient monuments in Anuradhapura, Polonnaruwa and Mahanuwara. The death occurred yesterday in Colombo of Sir Oliver Ernest Goonetilleke, first Ceylonese Governor General; he was 85. Sir Oliver returned to the island recently after spending several years abroad. The government will provide every opportunity to the youth of the country to reach the highest possible levels according to their capabilities, said Prime Minister Mr. R. Premadasa addressing a public meeting at the Model Housing Scheme, Ambalangoda yesterday—CDN. When prices of goods went up people blamed the government, although this was beyond the control of the government but when the prices come down the people did not give the government credit for it; the President Mr. J. R. Jayewardene said this at a mammoth rally at the Borella junction last Saturday evening after the annual UNP sessions. Eight suspected cases of cholera are reported from the Jaffna District—CDN. Sri Lankans will have to pay more for their petrol, kerosene and other petroleum products from next year. Army and Police officers are likely to search almost all buildings between Urumpirai and Malakam for the Rs. 1.18 million robbed from the People's Bank at Nallur last week. The Government Agent, Jaffna Mr. Lionel Fernando, rushed to Vasavilan, Kankasanturai, recently to settle a dispute when some Army per-

sonnel created trouble by demanding cigarettes from three shops. Detectives of the Bribery Commissioner's Department are now out in the field to catch bribe-takers; this is one of the first measures taken by the Acting Bribery Commissioner, Mr. Noel Wijenaike to revamp the activities of the department—SU. The Minister of Transport has decided to recruit 10,000 persons for the CTB and the railway department. The Minister of Fisheries has decided to increase the production of fishing boats to replace boats that were damaged or destroyed by the cyclone—DV. Technical schools will be set up in 40 districts next year to train masons, carpenters and other workers necessary for the building industry under a new project of the education ministry. 2,600 teachers will be selected for training under the new Training Programme by January 8th—DM. The CWE has ordered Rs. 2 million worth of cigarettes from Pakistan when Rs. 40 million worth of unsold cigarettes imported before are stocked at the CWE warehouses—ATH. OPEC oil ministers have decided to increase world oil prices by a total 15 per cent during 1979. The hike would be spread out over four instalments during the year. The Ethiopian authorities plan a mass resettlement programme to move 250,000 people from the erosion and hunger hit provinces of Wolle, Begender and Socei Central Ethiopia. Strict Martial Law was clamped on Taipei yesterday after the shock announcement that the US has severed diplomatic relations with Taipei to open such ties with Peking. British Foreign Secretary David Owen said yesterday he hoped the US, Britain and France would be able to persuade China to develop a dialogue with its arch foe the Soviet Union. Iran's striking civil servants appeared to be

defying a government order to return to work or face dismissal. The Israeli government is prepared for a bitter dispute with the US over what officials see as Washington's one-sided criticism of Israel for the halt in Peace talks with Egypt—CDN. A senior US Defence officer on Saturday discounted any fears that China might attempt to capture Taiwan, following the US decision to sever relations with the Taipei government. Iran's military-led government today clamped a ban on all demonstrations for Monday; the day earlier had been proclaimed a national day of mourning by country's political and religious opposition—SU.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 19:

The PM, Mr. Premadasa, once again appealed to political parties not to make use of the national calamity caused by the cyclone to gain narrow political ends; he said there was absolutely no discrimination where aid and rehabilitation were concerned and the government was doing all it could to give all assistance to those affected irrespective of any other considerations. Throwing overboard all regulations and procedures governing recruitment to the Public Service a Minister and Deputy Minister of the former Government conducted an interview for the CAS (now Sri Lanka Administrative Service) and appointed some candidates with less qualifications, ignoring 10 candidates who scored exceptionally high marks; this was revealed by Mr. Percy Samaraweera Deputy Ministry of Public Administration and Home Affairs at the daily press briefing held yesterday. A peon attached to the People's Bank, Nallur, which was robbed of Rs. 1.18 million on December 6, was alleged to have been kidnapped at Kokuvil, Jaffna, while cycling to work yesterday

morning. The Government Agent, Colombo, told a press conference yesterday that jobs will be given only to those who have applied through the job banks. A public servant in Valaichenai has been re-manded following the detection at his residence of goods sent for distribution to cyclone victims. "Ghost" Sri Lankans are being used by big-time international narcotics rings as couriers to smuggle drugs into many of the world's capitals; emigrant Sri Lanka youths in Indian cities driven to desperation without jobs or money are selling their passports. Public servants who absented themselves on the day of the recent token strike, September 28 would be given back their jobs; those public servants and those who did not take their oath of allegiance numbering about 600 in all would, however not be paid any salaries for the period of absence—CDM. The Government is likely to subsidise the price of kerosene when prices of petroleum products are raised from January next year. Government will incur over Rs. 175 million to repair the damage caused to buildings, roads and other installations by the recent cyclone, Mr. T. G. Gunasekera, Secretary Ministry of Social Services said yesterday. Air Lanka, the one hundred percent locally owned airline venture will be floated on Thursday. President J. R. Jayawardene has picked on Captain Rakkitta Wickramanayake as the Chairman of Air Lanka; flight operations will begin on October 1, 1979—SU. Cholera is spreading in Batticaloa and Jaffna—DM. The President has postponed the final decision whether to disband the present FTZ board till Mr. Gnanam a member of the board returns to the island—JD. 300 persons have been questioned by the Police on thefts of over 28 million worth of goods from government and public offi-

cers in the Batticaloa and 50 persons have been taken into custody under emergency regulations on these charges—DV. The Government is considering increasing the price of school text books by 30 to 40 percent—ATH. A new security scheme with alarm bells automatically closing doors, electronic equipment to detect arms will be set up in Parliament shortly—LD.

The Minister of Lands, Land Development etc., stated that people who were farming on government lands would soon be owning them as the government was taking steps to implement this plan—VK. The GA, Jaffna, rushed to Valvettiturai as some army officers and policemen are alleged to have set fire to some houses in that area and the situation was brought under control—EN. Pandemonium broke out in the Lok Sabha of Parliament in New Delhi today as legislators debated whether or not former PM Mrs. Indira Gandhi should be punished for breach of parliamentary privilege. Ayatollah Khomeini, the Shah of Iran's principal religious opponent, has challenged President Jimmy Carter to apply his human rights policy to the political situation in Iran. The world's big oil exporters yesterday ended 2 a year freeze on petroleum prices when they agreed to boost prices by a total of 14.5 percent by the end of next year. The Charan Singh group is likely to boycott the Janata Party organisational elections due to be held next month. British Foreign Secretary David Owen said yesterday that the new European Monetary system lacked flexibility and political weight adding that at present Britain could not promise to join—CDN. Pakistan's former PM, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto broke down in tears today as he appealed to the Supreme Court to over-turn his conviction and death sentence—SU. Egypt yesterday blamed Israel's intransi-

gence for the failure to meet the deadline for a peace treaty but said it hoped a new target date could be set—CDM.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 20:

The Prime Minister appealed to the leadership of the TULF to desist from making provocative speeches which may trigger off a repetition of the communal tragedies of 1958 and August 1977. He said that the government would not condone any illegal act on the part of anyone, whether they were civilians or servicemen. Some members of the Opposition had tried to create the impression that the Government was trying to condone acts of brutality. Subsidiaries of the Insurance Corporation and the other independent corporation are to be set up to carry on insurance business; the Bill empowers the Minister of Trade to establish a subsidiary of the Insurance Corporation whenever he considers it desirable that the right to carry on the business of any description of insurance should be extended to any other insurer. There is concern in city circles about a possible shortage of currency notes. On Monday the Central Bank stopped issuing two rupee notes and instead issued two-rupee coins—CDN. 'As order nisi could not be served on my wife, as she is supposed to be out of the island, my last will has been written in favour of my daughter. But I fear my wife's relations will cause harm to my life,' Mr. George Rowlands who was found brutally murdered with his 11-year old daughter, Koomerine, at their Gothotuwa, Angoda home on Sunday afternoon had said this in a statement made to the police last November—CDM. Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Amirthalingam, led a walk-out of the TULF Parliamentary Group during the adjournment debate last night consequent

to a verbal clash between Government Ministers and TULF MPs on the alleged excesses of Army and Police personnel in the Jaffna Peninsula during the past few days. About 30,000 estate labourers including their families are expected to return to India within the next two years under the Indo-Sri Lanka repatriation agreement. Government is today expected to study the impact of the 14.5 per cent increase in the world price of crude oil on the public bus and rail transport services. The Central Transport Board is now issuing postage stamps to its bus conductors as substitute for small change—SU. 7200 graduate teachers who were recruited by the last government on a lower salary scale will be paid a graduates salary from this month—DM. The government has decided to exempt goods imported to be used for the relief of cyclone affected people from Import License—LD. The wastage at the flour milling factory at Mutuwal is over Rs. 1 million each month. This was revealed by a high official of the factory in a report to the Flour Milling Corporation. Engineers and technicians who have retired will be recalled for service to accelerate the reconstruction work in the cyclone affected areas—DV. The former Minister of Industries, Mr. T. B. Subasinghe has joined the Communist Party—OK. The peon working at the Nallur Bank which was robbed, and who was kidnapped has now been arrested by the police and will be kept in remand till he is produced in court on January 2. On the day of the Nallur bank robbery a packet containing Rs. 10,000/- was found thrown in the compound of P. C. Satchidanandan's house—VK. Three suspects in the Nallur Bank robbery have apparently been identified by the police and they suspect that they haven't left the Jaffna

Peninsula—DP. Former Indian Premier Indira Gandhi was today expelled from Parliament and ordered to be sent to jail on a charge of grave breach of parliament privilege and contempt of the lower house. Nationalist President Chiang Ching-kuo yesterday launched a stinging attack on the US and angrily refused even to negotiate with Chinese communists after Peking and Washington's normalised relations. As the dollar plunged and stock prices fell sharply on Wall Street fears were expressed yesterday that the OPEC oil price rise would cause severe inflation and higher unemployment and hamper economic recovery. An Iranian army unit guarding the route of a big anti-Shah demonstration was recalled to barracks yesterday in the north-western city of Tabriz after some men refused to obey officers' orders, a senior official said—CDN. The world's major oil exporting countries yesterday seemed surprised at the international outrage which greeted their decision to raise 1979 oil prices by 14.5% in quarterly stages. Egyptian Vice-President to-day rejected Israel's claim that Egypt has raised new demands which aborted the latest record of peace negotiations between these two countries and laid the clause for the obstacles that arose at the Israeli government's clever step—SU.

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OBITUARIES

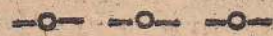
DECEMBER 22—29

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Confidentially

Air Lanka ?

IS IT NOT A FACT that the cryptic news releases about the new Air Lanka has stirred up wonder and interest in knowledgeable circles? That a longtime reader of *Tribune* has sent us an interesting comment on an article that had appeared in the *Ceylon Daily News* of Tuesday, December 19, 1978? That the heading of the *CDN* article had been AIR LANKA—AN AUSPICIOUS START? That this had appeared in the regular column *Travel Diary* by *Wayfarer*? That *Tribune* publishes the communication from our reader with the proviso that we are prepared to publish any corrections, amplifications, clarifications or explanations that any interested person may want to make on this matter? "*Wayfarer* writes of wise and practical decisions on the establishment of Air Lanka. One can only wonder how wise and practical *Wayfarer* is to lavish such praise on something that is unadulterated tripe. Let us examine some of the wise and practical points mentioned: Air Lanka is going it alone? Really? Who is going it alone? Unless everything that has been printed to date is grossly in error, it would seem that Singapore Airlines is providing The Chairman, The Management, The Aircraft, The Pilots, The Technical Facilities, The Training and other assistance. I suppose it could be said that Singapore Airlines is going it alone! But wait! The people of Sri Lanka are going to be allowed to pay for all the things! Maybe. 'GOING IT — ALONE' means only paying the bills. That the Government was able to obtain the services of a Sri Lankan

holding a senior post in this airline (SIA), was a signal achievement.' A signal achievement indeed! Once this same man worked for Air Ceylon. Wasn't this the same man that flew an Air Ceylon aircraft to another country, abandoned the aircraft and simply disappeared? If one reads the report of the Presidential Commission of Inquiry on Air Ceylon Ltd., one finds that Capt. Rakitha Wickremnayake, a pilot working for Air Siam, was lobbying for the Air Ceylon/Air Siam agreement. The same report states that this abortive agreement cost Air Ceylon at least Rs. 4.65 million. And wasn't this agreement the one that caused Air Ceylon to cancel a very favourable agreement with UTA and later to go it alone and becoming a 'tramp'? This same man, now working for Singapore Airlines, is foisting another agreement on Sri Lanka which will give Singapore Airlines a place to dump their obsolete and unwanted 707's. How fortunate can the people of Sri Lanka be? Speaking of aircraft—*Wayfarer* says, 'The selection of the tough, rugged Boeing Aircraft is a wise one as spares are also readily available. Does this mean that Singapore Airlines (or other airlines) are unable to obtain spares for their more modern aircraft? How brilliant *Wayfarer* is to possess such a depth of knowledge and understanding. Hasn't anyone told him that every major airline (including SIA) is attempting to phase out the 707s and the DC-8s as rapidly as they can be replaced by more modern aircraft? Neither the 707 nor the DC-8 can be placed on the register of either the UK or the Netherlands today, and according to present laws these aircraft will not be allowed in the US after 1985. How very wise it is to select the old, unwanted aircraft. According to *Wayfarer* there are so many wise and won-

derful decisions. Air Lanka will fly to and from such destinations as London, Singapore, Bangkok, Hong Kong and POSSIBLY Bombay and Karachi. Of course, it would be absurd to expect the "management of Air Lanka" to have any definite routes in mind yet. Singapore Airlines hasn't yet told them where they will be allowed to compete. Did I say Singapore Airlines might allow Air Lanka to compete? Wouldn't it be nice to be able to run the business of a competitor? Sri Lanka just might be the biggest competitor that Singapore has for both business and tourism. Not to worry though, SIA will provide obsolete aircraft which cannot compete with their Boeing 747s and DC-10s. When you exercise absolute control over your competitors it is only necessary to give them a few scraps. An auspicious start! Indeed it is! It is the start of a brand new Air Ceylon adventure. Did no one learn anything at all from the first 31 years? Has no one the imagination to see the incalculable harm that is being done to this country by allowing such blatant activities? The world doesn't really need another second class airline, yet this seems to be exactly what Sri Lanka is determined to have. Must this country always think and act as a poor relation, content to use the cast-off, worn out things of others? Is there no one in Government who has the vision to see something better than the Air Lanka this country will be stuck with? Well, Air Ceylon became the laughing stock of the aviation world, maybe everyone should be content to see Air Lanka as an even bigger joke. Laughter may be good for the soil! Air Lanka—Air Ceylon, they are the same." Is it necessary for anyone to say Amen?

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