

Vol. 23 No. 30 — January 27, 1979 — Re. 2-00

TRIBUNE

CEYLON NEWS REVIEW



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Letter From The Editor

SNAKE-CHARMING is fast becoming a dying occupation. Snake-charmers generally came from one of the semi-magic gipsy tribes. They were mainly employed by householders to capture and get rid of poisonous snakes in close vicinity of dwelling places. Enterprising snake-charmers often planted the snakes they captured in the gardens of their richer patrons, but this method of making a little more on the side has been part of man's ethos from the beginning of time. Today poisonous snakes are (and have been) liquidated by more modern methods. But few realise that the drastic reduction of our snake population has caused a dangerous imbalance of our environment. Pests like rats and mice which snakes hunt and eat have proliferated and these rodents cause more destruction what all that the snakes needlessly killed could have done. Snakes are being killed in their thousands for their skins. They are being ruthlessly slaughtered because of the occidental fears and susceptibilities for serpents which have been implanted in our oriental minds by western inhibitions. Peasants or denizens of the Wannil, where snakes are most plentifully found, have no fear for them. Fewer people die of snake bites than road accidents. Careless and drunken CTB drivers have in the last three months killed more people than snakes have in the last one year. Anti-snake bite serum now available in most hospitals has brought the number of snake-bite deaths considerably down. Nevertheless, the snake population in this country has already been brought well below the minimum required for environmental balance. Without snakes, rat poison is being indiscriminately used to kill rats and other even forms of life essential for our environment. This also adds to the general pollution. Environmentalists and lovers of our animal and reptile life must re-educate our people with scientific logic in the knowledge of our ancestors and forefathers about nature and environment. Only the polonga and a few other rare poisonous varieties of snakes were killed if they crossed one's path—all others were shoo-ed away. This homily is not merely a plea for the preservation of our snakes and reptile life in their natural and ordinary habitat. It is a plea that education in Sri Lanka must be re-oriented to ensure a proper understanding of our environment. The snake is only a case in point. Too many of us are only concerned with the preservation of the environment to attract foreign tourists to scenic spots and to wildlife game sanctuaries. Only dead snakes are valued and that for their skins that can be exported. Alive, snakes are regarded as useful for exhibition in the local zoo and also for export to other zoos. A few of them with marked hoods (all allegedly terrible cobras) are used to entertain bus-loads of package-tourists who are assured that all poison fangs had been pulled out before they (the tourists) get close to the charmer and his basket of snakes—to take photographs to show folks way back home. It is a tragedy that whilst our society shuns snakes they are not scared of alcoholics or drug addicts—although the latter do more harm to society than snakes. It is therefore heartening that the President and the Government have now decided to launch a campaign against the liquor habit among under eighteens and drunken alcoholism among the over-eighteens. This will help Sri Lanka to evolve to better sense of values than they have had for many decades now—ever since Western Sahibry upset our traditional standards of values. But, it is even more necessary to inculcate a true love for the flora, fauna and the environment of this country. Without this, and an active determination to save our environment, disaster lies ahead for Sri Lanka. In less than a hundred years, this emerald isle of green foliage, can become a semidesert of scrubland if we continue to do what we are doing?

TRIBUNE

Ceylon News Review
Founded In 1954

A Journal of Ceylon and
World Affairs

Editor, S. P. Amarasingam
Every Saturday

January 27, 1979

Vol. 23 No. 30

TRIBUNE

43, DAWSON STREET
COLOMBO - 2

Tel: 33172

CONTENTS

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK	
—Difficult Days Ahead	p. 2
WINDOW ON INDIA	
—SLBC Talk	p. 5
CWE on	
—Chinese Broiler Chicken	p. 7
LETTER	
—From Our Reader	p. 8
SRI LANKA CHRONICLE	
—Jan. 7—11	p. 9
THE WORLD TODAY	
—Iran	p. 15
CHINA REVISITED—5	
—Is War Inevitable?	p. 18
ICJ ANALYSIS	
—New Constitution	p. 20
DISTRICT MINISTERS—2	
—How The Scheme Should Work	p. 23
RURAL DEVELOPMENT	
—And Ministers	p. 26
SPOTLIGHT	
—Kampuchea	p. 28
SHORT STORY	
—From Nigeria	p. 29
CONFIDENTIALLY	
—New Brain Drain—2	p. 32

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Difficult Days Ahead

Colombo, January 22.

The Government, last week, decided to impose a surcharge of twenty percent (20%) on personal income tax and also company tax to bolster the Cyclone Relief Fund. The Finance Minister, in defending these measures, said that the rich should bear part of the cyclone relief. This is the highest surcharge any Sri Lanka government had imposed in the Island's post-Independence history. The government has also put up taxes on cinema tickets, cigarettes and local and foreign liquor. Government expects to collect an additional Rs. 500 million avowedly for cyclone rehabilitation programmes. Furthermore, the President addressing the Parliamentary Party had stated that cyclone rehabilitation would cost about rupees two thousand million, that is, two billion rupees, and he had gone on to suggest that if every citizen gave three rupees a month for a year the amount could easily be collected.

Gainfully employed people, even those close to the poverty line (on Sri Lanka yardstick), would be glad to contribute a monthly five rupees each if they had the confidence and assurance that the money so collected was expended in a proper manner. Already the confidence of the public has been shaken in the Administration by stories that are circulating about the manner the relief received from abroad and the monies collected and voted locally have been distributed and/or expended. Some of the stories may be false and some may be even malicious, but when the exaggerations and the

unbelievables are discarded there yet remains a hard core of what must be regarded as true—and this is alarming. Judging from reports reaching *Tribune* and from the reports sent in by some of our investigators, there are good reasons to believe that all is not well with Cyclone Rehabilitation. And the Government has not been able to publish credible accounts of the work so far done. The sunshine stories in the daily papers and the official media only tend to increase the growing credibility gap.

In this situation, the imposition of the new taxes and surcharges has evoked widespread suspicion that these levies are really for the purpose of increasing the government's cash collections to sustain Treasury liquidity at a reasonable level. Though the government has not mentioned it, people have developed suspicions that the government's finances are not in such a healthy state as the media pretends they are.

The latest Central Bank bulletin reveals that whilst Sri Lanka had a surplus balance of trade in 1977 of Rs. 1,259 million (due to an export boon 1976 which the SLFP government could not exploit to the full owing to reduced production of tea and other crops), there is a deficit situation in 1978. In the first half of 1978, the deficit was Rs. 467 million whereas in the same period in 1977 there was a surplus of Rs. 338 million. According to Manik de Silva (vide *Ceylon Observer*, 14/1/79), "Government economists expect the deficit to be well in excess of Rs. 1,000 million when the last year's accounts are finalised....." The Central Bank attributed the deficit to a fall in export earnings and an increase in the import bill. During the first six months of last year, total exports improved in rupee terms due to the revision of the

exchange rate in November 1977. But in terms of hard currency earned—the Central Bank maintains accounts in terms of Special Drawing Rights (SDRs)—a 4 per cent decline of export earnings has been noted during the first half of 1978. Imports had cost more both in rupees and SDR terms. Looking at the figures for the first six months of last year, the Central Bank does not consider the 9 per cent increase in the import bill very significant due to the liberalisation of imports."

In this situation, Manik de Silva said that: "The Government of Sri Lanka has applied to the Trust Fund of the IMF for balance of payments support during the current year. The application for this loan went out at the end of last month."

And he amplified further to say: "Last year, Sri Lanka received two loans amounting to Rs. 778 million from the IMF Trust Fund. These loans were at a very soft half per cent interest rate with ten and five year maturity. A Government spokesman explained that these loans were for balance of payments support only and not utilisable for the normal expenditure of government. He said that with the new policy of freeing the economy and liberalising imports, the authorities had foreseen that the balance of payments would be adverse in the short term and these IMF loans had been negotiated to meet this situation. The IMF Board is due to meet at the end of January and Sri Lanka expects the first instalment of an extended financing facility of Rs. 600 million to be made after this meeting."

As matters stand today, the liberalised imports and the IMF and other loans to meet this deficit—in spite of the "invisible" foreign exchange earnings from

Cyclone Damage?

Shipping, Tourism and Remittances from Sri Lankans employed abroad—will accentuate the inflation which has taken a heavy toll of our economy in the last eighteen months. Income from the Mahaweli is not likely to materialise until 1982/83 (at the earliest) and the FTZ is as yet an uncertain undertaking. Without massive doses of real earnings from the Mahaweli and the FTZ, Sri Lanka will soon be hit by an inflationary spiral of unprecedented dimensions. And with every deficit after 1979, the IMF will demand devaluation after devaluation. It is not necessary to draw lurid pictures of what the state of Sri Lanka will be after one or two more devaluations, but all we can say is that unless the government reverses a large number of its so-called liberalised free economy and free trade policies, the country will run into major economic difficulties with fateful consequences.

The government is following an ostrich-like policy in these matters. The media does not set out the true facts but revels in propaganda gimmicks and sunshine stories which very few believe anymore. People do not even believe that the 1978 Cyclone damage is as disastrous or heavy as it has been made out. The suspicion has grown that the cyclone damage has been over-estimated to cover up other sins which entail money expenditure to cover deficits stemming from wrong policies and bungled programmes. *Tribune* is now engaged on a survey to find out how far these suspicions are correct—that damage and destruction caused by the 1978 cyclone has been grossly exaggerated in order to collect funds for the governmental expenditure. Already many knowledgeable observers have told *Tribune* that in their view the 1957 Floods had caused far more extensive and widespread damage than

the 1978 cyclone which was confined to a restricted area in the Eastern Province.

The feeling that the Government was keeping too many matters under the hat (or under the lid) through the controls it exercised over the media has begun to escalate. If any country today can be described as having a "managed press", Sri Lanka is one. But with the press freedom permitted so far, the small Opposition Party weeklies and dailies have begun to tear aside the smokescreen of suppressed news, distorted facts and inhibited comment which the big national dailies have imposed on the reading public. Take the question of the strikes. The news of the Tobacco Co. strike could not have been hidden because of the shortage of cigarettes and because the CWE was compelled to import third grade low quality cigarettes from Pakistan (which was being marketed at prices normally fetched by grade one or supergrade cigarettes). The Tobacco Co. strike has ended up in a fatal deadlock. In this we do

not propose to go into the merits of the strikers' demands, but the fact is that the government has failed to effect a settlement even by the old device of referring the dispute to the Industrial Court for arbitration. The Tobacco Co. strike has brought into public focus two other strikes which have been going on for months now—and to which only the Opposition papers had made occasional references.

But now, the cat has been thrown out of the bag. The SLFP weekly *The Nation* went to town in its issue of January 19, 1979: "The entire work force, consisting of over 300 workers, in Asian Cotton Mills Limited have been on strike for the past three months due to the failure of the management to grant their reasonable demands. The Mills are owned by the Jayewardene family, and the Chairman of the Board of Directors is H. W. Jayewardene. Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, his wife and their son transferred their shares to D. Jayewardene on the 25th of September 1974. The Company how-

AIR LANKA — CAPT. WICKREMANAYAKE

Our attention has been drawn to one statement which referred to Captain Rakitha Wickremanayake in the *CONFIDENTIALLY* column article in the *Tribune* of January 6, 1978 on Air Lanka. The statement read ".....Wasn't this the same man that flew an Air Ceylon aircraft to another country, abandoned the aircraft and simply disappeared.....". Inquiries reveal that Capt. Wickremanayake had gone out of the island on leave and whilst abroad had sent in his resignations as he was legally entitled to do. We are sorry that this mistake had crept into the article. We regret this error. Readers will recall that the same article had stated: ".....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 may want to make on this subject.....". Following this article a very large number of persons have communicated with us on the matter of Air Lanka and several had pointed out this single factual error in the article. But all have commended *Tribune* for focussing attention on a matter of vital importance for aviation, and we will publish some of the comments and additional particulars brought to our notice in the coming weeks.

ever continues in the family, and at present includes the following Jayawardenes among its shareholders: H. W., Dr. R. P., S.P., N. S. H. V., and Chairmaine Mendis, the President's daughter in law. Despite regular negotiations by the trade unions and a meeting with the Chairman H. W. Jayewardene, there has been no resolution to the strike. Among the other members of the Board of Directors are Mr. A. Y. S. Gnanam who is a Director of the FTZ and Mr. Oscar de Livera, who is the Chairman of the National Textile Corporation. Presumably Mr. Livera must have resigned from the Board, now. The failure of the Jayawardene management to resolve its problems with a mere 300 workers is being seen by business community and potential investors in the FTZ in the context of the claim being made by the government about the improved nature of the climate for investment. One highly-placed businessman commented wryly: 'The Jayawardenes must put their own house in order before offering to build castles for us.' The workers have asked for a salary increase of Rs. 75 a month, a special allowance for night work, cost of living allowance of Rs. 2.50 and a five day week. Most of their demands are well within the norms accepted by much smaller business operating through out the country. Meanwhile the strike at Ceylon Synthetic Mills which is owned by Mr. Gnanam continues into the fourth month without resolutions, whilst Mr. Gnanam continues regarding to 'manage' the affairs of the entire FTZ? "... The public, kept in the dark about the two strikes by the official media are prepared to believe anything every opposition paper says. The Government has only itself to blame if the credibility gap keeps growing.

In the meantime, the country

is being readied for the visit of the Indian PM Morarji Desai, on February 3. He will be here until February 6 and will be the chief guest at the Independence Day celebrations at Kandy. Informed circles assert that the visit is nothing more than a goodwill visit and there are no pending unresolved matters between the two countries. One interesting point that may arise may well be the question of the new Kampuchean regime. Sri Lanka has, it is known, taken up the position that it would consult other non-aligned nations either through the Bureau at New York or at the Ministerial meeting at Maputo starting on January 26 before it decides on the question of recognition.

The Indian Prime Minister, however, seems to have jumped the gun before other non-aligned countries had time for discussions. At a press conference at New Delhi on January 20, he had referred to this question in no uncertain terms: "Another important remark made by Mr. Desai at this press conference related to the impending recognition of the new Cambodian Government. He stated quite categorically that India would recognise the new Government in Phnom Penh as soon as it received a communication from it. The Indian attitude, he stressed, was not to interfere in the internal affairs of any country, but recognise the Government which was ruling it." (*Hindu*, Jan. 21, 1978). This attitude differs sharply from the Yugoslav line.

Judging from available reports, whilst the Non-aligned movement will insist that interference by one country in another is wrong, most countries will accept the realities—that the Pol Pot regime was unpopular and that the new regime must be recognised if it was fully in control of the terri-

tory. Exaggerated reports from unidentified sources in Bangkok of the resistance by the Pol Pot guerillas may tend to make some countries delay recognition for a time, but the realities of the situation must be recognised sooner or later.

Moralistic posturing to hide ideological (cold war) geopolitical inhibitions will not take any country very far in these days. The USA indulged in such posturing in regard to the People's Republic of China for nearly thirty years and finally accepted the simple reality of the PRC recently. Even Saudi Arabia, which had refused to recognise the USSR from 1921 now seems to have decided to initiate measures to establish diplomatic relations with Russia!

And Sihanouk has finally decided to abandon the Pol Pot caucus. He has now said that he no longer represented them. He had been allowed to leave Phnom Penh for Peking no doubt because he agreed to represent them at the UN and condemn Vietnamese aggression. This role for Sihanouk was underwritten by Peking. The Prince performed his part at the UN and immediately thereafter sought, convenient asylum in a hospital, from where he appealed to the USA to intervene in Kampuchea and restore him to the throne. But this evoked no response. Sihanouk, no doubt, felt that the USA which had overthrown him in 1971 to instal Lon Non should not set right the injustice by restoring him to this throne. Sihanouk no doubt knew that the US did not have the power to do this at this stage of history, but he probably felt the urge to remind the US just what its "intervention" in 1971 had led to. The KNUFNG regime, Sihanouk said, had invited him to be the head of State, but he had declined the honour after making it clear that he had cut

Morarji, Charan Singh, Indira

himself from the Pol Pot group.

Sri Lanka is not likely to follow unrealistic policies in regard to the changes in Kampuchea, but she will move cautiously only after due consultations with other leading members of the Non-aligned Movement.

Whilst the situation in Indo-China is getting calmer, in West Asia fighting is hotting up in Lebanon. The Camp David Accord is very much on the rocks with Israeli determination to crush the PLO and Palestinian resistance not only inside Israel and the occupied territories but also in neighbouring Lebanon. There can be no settlement in West Asia without a just solution of the Palestinian problem acceptable to the Arabs. Israel cannot bulldoze them out of existence. The decision of Iraq and Syria to merge brings a new dimension to the geopolitical complexity of West Asia. Sri Lanka will have to tread a wary path to keep her non-aligned flag flying in the Middle East and (after the recent developments in Iran) in the Persian Gulf region as well.



SLBC TALK

Window On India

by R. Varadachar

PTI Correspondent in Colombo

EVEN AS CRISIS-RIDDEN ruling Janatha Party in India is being plagued with repeated threats of resignations from some of the senior cabinet colleagues of Prime Minister. Mr. Morarji Desai, to induce him to patch up his differences with his former home minister, Mr. Charan Singh, Mrs. Indira Gandhi seems to be making headway in rallying the two factions of the Congress once again into a united party to mount a greater challenge to the Janata Party.

While in the past ministers of standing like Mr. George Fernandez, Mr. Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Mr. Biju Patnaik had threatened to resign over the in-fighting among the top trio of the Party namely Mr. Desai, Mr. Charan Singh and Mr. Jagjivan Ram, the latest who resigned and has subsequently decided not to press for it for the time being is Mr. L. K. Advani, the Minister of Information and Broadcasting. There is a qualitative difference in the resignation threat of Mr. Advani from that of others who had only pressed for reconciliation between Mr. Morarji Desai and Mr. Charan Singh.

Mr. Advani has struck a different note for his resignation which is of course more galling to Mr. Desai. As the leader of the house in the Rajya Sabha, the upper house of Indian Parliament, he is facing all the fury of the opposition which is in a majority there. The opposition parties spearheaded by the Congress (I) had not allowed any business to be transacted in the house for a long time till it recessed mercifully in December. They were demanding that the Government take meaningful steps to have an enquiry into the allegations concerning the financial transactions of Mr. Desai's son, Mr. Kanti Desai. The stalemate was unprecedented in the history of the Indian Parliament.

As the leader of the house, Mr. Advani who is responsible for the purposeful functioning of the house had grown exceedingly unhappy over the impasse. He had also been greatly embarrassed by the stiff stance of Mr. Morarji Desai that he would agree to refer to the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court only specific charges in concrete form which are made against his son outside the privileged precincts of the Parliament.

MR. DESAI had in the past firmly turned down several suggestions

to get over the impasse, including the reference of the issue to the Select Committee of the house making his government's position untenable and Mr. Advani's position unenviable. If Indian press reports are any indication Mr. Advani seems to be in favour of accepting a suggestion by an opposition congress member that the entire proceedings of the Rajya Sabha be referred to the Chief Justice of India for a decision on whether there is a prima facie case against Mr. Kanti Desai on the basis of information made available during the protracted debate on the subject which was marked by much acrimony and heat.

Mr. Morarji Desai's position hitherto is that this suggestion would create a bad precedent. Such a procedure, if followed, could, in his opinion, lead to the persecution of any one at the hands of the majority in either house of Parliament. There would be no limit then as there might have to be commissions galore on the basis of frivolous allegations against innocents, made out of political vendetta or personal malice. Those claiming to stand for purity and integrity in public life, particularly at high levels, insist that a probe would only expose any false implications and insinuations. But Mr. Desai wants such of those who make such unfounded allegations to face the consequences by making them in public so that they would be liable to defamation if they were proved to be untrue in an impartial enquiry. And so the arguments goes on endlessly.

Finally there has emerged a ray of hope. Mr. Desai has now agreed to the suggestion that a small cabinet subcommittee go into the issue and submit its recommendations on the Kanti Desai affair. One should hope that this modus vivendi worked out after hard bargaining would find an effective

solution to the vexed question. Mr. Advani's resignation would have come as a surprise and also as embarrassment to Mr. Desai as the Jan Sangh group within the Janata Party has so far been his staunch supporter in his confrontation with Mr. Charan Singh. The Jan Sangh is now apparently convinced that an amicable solution to the Kanti Desai affair is imperative if the Janata Party has to function as a cohesive unit and move with united determination in pursuit of its programmes on the economic front. Perhaps this realisation also explains Mr. Desai's belated and reluctant acceptance of the cabinet subcommittee suggestion. He does not want to stand further isolated among the ruling ranks.

Threats of resignations from the Janata Cabinet has been so frequent of late that the President of the Indian Republic, Mr. Sanjiva Reddi, was compelled to make a somewhat derisive remark in public last month. In an outspoken speech at the function in New Delhi to mark the inauguration of the year-long Rajaji centenary celebrations, Mr. Reddy said, to quote him, "don't be afraid. nobody will resign. It is easy to get into a job but is very difficult to get out. It requires a lot of courage to leave ministership. None of us has that courage." This broadside and his other remarks about the in-fighting in the Janata Party have come as a great embarrassment to those at the helm of affairs. His remarks, unusually forthright for a figurative Head of State, have been so unpalatable to some that they have spread the uncharitable suggestion that Mr. Reddy was trying to become Prime Minister himself, further relying on his remarks, to quote him again, "I am counting my months in the Rashtrapathi Bhavan. Living there as President is nothing but simple

imprisonment." Then such is the course of politics everywhere.

THUS WHILE THE JANATA PARTY is striving hard to retain its unity and identity as a single party which after all emerged as an amalgam of five distinctly different political entities, Mrs. Gandhi has embarked on a course to reunify the congress. The success of her party in the state assembly elections in Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh and subsequent parliament and assembly byelections and her spectacular victory at the Chikmagalur Parliamentary by-election have led to her re-emergence as a force to be more than reckoned with in the Indian political scene. This has also left the Swaran Singh group of the Congress in the cold and forced them to handover the opposition leadership of the Lok Sabha to the Congress (I). Serious rethinking in the Congress camps has led to three meetings so far between Mr. Swaran Singh and Mrs. Gandhi. Both would now appear to have agreed to come together again under the old banner of the Indian National Congress.

While agreement in principle has been reached on the merger by Mrs. Gandhi and Mr. Swaran Singh, modalities are yet to be worked out. Unification at the lower party levels where personal rivalries are dominant would pose a problem. Already the Maharashtra Unit of the Swaran Singh Congress is in turmoil and is vertically split on the merger question. Kerala and Bihar units are also likely to revolt. Such teething troubles are however to be expected as Mrs. Gandhi's 20-month long authoritarian emergency rule is too much for quite a number of Congressmen dedicated to democratic functioning of the party. Mr. Y. B. Chavan, in particular, is anxious that the unity move should

not result in the revival of the personal dominance of the party by Mrs. Gandhi and her coterie and should ensure that there is collective leadership at all levels.

Mrs. Gandhi has of course made such political headway after her rout in the last general elections but she is now facing a series of litigation in the form of nagging difficulties at several places. Her Chikmagalur victory has already been challenged on grounds of large scale impersonation by her supporters. This charge may look as one of mere academic interest to some in view of her expulsion from Parliament but it carries grave portends. If the charge is established in a court of law, her victory will become pyrrhic and her image will be tarnished.

She also has been summoned by a Magistrate in Karnataka State to appear in connection with a complaint that she had given a false address in a bid to register herself voter there. She is alleged to have declared falsely in a court affidavit last June that she was a resident of a Hindu religious rest house in Dodaballapur. The local electoral officer has rejected her claim after an on-the-spot inquiry. She is alleged to have made the false declaration as she had then the intention to enter the Rajya Sabha for which residence qualification in the state whose seat one is contesting is mandatory. If convicted, Mrs. Gandhi could receive a one year sentence and also be disqualified from contesting elections for five years. She is already facing contempt charges in a Delhi court for refusing to testify before the Shah Commission which went into the alleged excess during her emergency rule. She is also to be summoned by a special court for which the Supreme Court has given clearance for various acts of omission and com-

Price War To Help Consumers

mission. Political observers believe that Mrs. Gandhi is thus getting more and more entangled in a legal mess which may have an impact in the public mind.

Jan. 13, 1979



C. W. E. on

Chinese Broiler Chicken

The Chairman, CWE, contacted *Tribune* in regard to the *CONFIDENTIALLY* article of January 13 on the *Mystery of the Chinese Broilers* and was good enough to answer some of the queries raised in that article. We had raised five questions: "(a) the actual quantity of broiler chicken meat ordered by the CWE from China—whether it was one order for 300 tons, and another for 500 tons, or just one order for 300 tons; (b) the total quantity of broiler chicken already received by the CWE from China; (c) the amount, if any, still on order; (d) whether the order or orders were placed through the accredited agents of the Chinese Export Organisation in Sri Lanka or whether the order, or orders were placed through a free lance agent in Hongkong; (e) the actual cost of the import of this broiler chicken meat; (f) the actual quantity of broiler chicken sold at the different selling (wholesale and retail) prices of Rs. 9.50 a lb; then Rs. 9.00 a lb. then Rs. 8.50 a lb. and then Rs. 8.00 a lb. and finally at Rs. 7.50 a lb.....".

We had also raised a few other matters: (1) whether the sale of broiler had been adversely affected by the "rumour" that the Chinese broiler chicken was hormone-treated (and which was alleged to cause infertility); (ii) whether it was because of this that a hundred

weight of rationed item called Mysore dhal was offered at Rs. 4/- a lb. to all who bought 25 cartons of Chinese chicken (iii) the truth about a juicy story was going round that the order had been placed through a Hongkong agent (and not the local one) and that this had pushed up the price by US \$ 175.00.

The CWE's answers—and files and papers were shown to *Tribune* in support—were: (a) that there was only one order for 300 tons: the order was placed in June 1978 and the cargo was received end October 1978; (b) that the total quantity received was only 300 tons; (c) that no further orders were pending; (d) that the order had been directly placed with the appropriate Chinese Government Export Corporation through the Chinese Trade Counsellor in Colombo and not through any agent in Sri Lanka or Hongkong. (e) that this chicken meat was sold at prices from Rs. 9.60 to Rs. 8.00 retail depending on market fluctuations. But no details were available about the quantities sold at the different prices, nor the total quantity sold so far—there was only a guess-estimate that about a "third" had so far been sold. No chicken had been so far been sold less than Rs. 8.00 a lb.

With regard to the other queries, the CWE answers were: (1) the Chinese broiler chicken conformed to all requirements of the Food and Drugs Act—the question of hormone-treatment was not specifically answered: that the 300 ton shipment had been inspected, checked and passed by the health authorities: that the broilers were being stored in the approved fashion under the stringent health conditions; (ii) that there was no consumer resistance; the offer of dhal had been

to induce big local hotels to buy large quantities of chicken but the offer had been withdrawn and no sale had taken place with the dhal inducement: that Chinese broilers were selling fast; (iii) that the story of an over-price of \$ 175,000 through a Hongkong Agent was a canard set afloat by local parties who had unscrupulously and unsuccessfully tried to gatecrash into the deal to collect a commission.

The CWE's position was that this import of broilers was a government exercise to bring prices down at a time when broiler chicken meat prices were climbing to Rs. 14 a lb.

The Land Acquisition Act (Cap. 460) as Amended by the Land Acquisition (Amend- ment) Act No. 28 of 1964. Notice Under Section 7.

Ref. No. 3/62/524/J.76E.6

It is intended to acquire the land/lands described in the Schedule below. For further particulars please see the Gazette of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka No. 21 (Part III) of 26.01.1979.

Schedule

Name of Village Etc:

Tnawalandana village in Yati-kaha Korale South, Kuliya-pitiya D.R.O's Division, Kurunegala District.

Name of Land:

Bogahakanatta Pillewa, Thim-birigahamulla Watta

Plana & Lot Nos:

Lot Nos. 47 and 48 in Supplement No. I in F.V.P. 562

H. M. W. Chandraratne
District Land Officer
Kurunegala District.

The Kachcheri,
Kurunegala.
15th January 1979

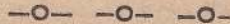
with Elephant House imports from America and Australia—imports allowed owing to local shortages. No sooner the CWE announced that it would import Chinese chicken, the prices had come down immediately to about Rs. 11.50 a lb. When the Chinese broilers became available in November, prices dropped further and there was a price war—and during Christmas broiler prices were around Rs. 8.50 a lb. Now, the Elephant House had dropped its price still down (even for American and Australian chicken) to Rs. 8.10. The CWE might have to drop its price further to sell its Chinese chicken.

The Government, said the CWE, was only anxious to push the prices

down to reasonable levels. Local producers had also started increasing prices and it was they who had started the "rumour" about "hormone-treated" Chinese broilers. It was a sales gimmick on their part to create consumer resistance to Chinese broiler chicken, and thereafter keep price at a high level.

Such were the CWE answers to the queries raised by *Tribune*.

What have the local producers of broiler chicken to say? *Tribune* will be willing to publish whatever the Poultry or Livestock Producers Association have to say on this matter.



LETTER

Throne Of Power

Sir,

Power thirsty politicians robbed property and buses and entrusted to henchmen for management not with any sincere motives for doing any better service to the country; but for merely being on the throne of power with the henchmen/unmindful of whatever calamity the country may fall into, if they can sit on the throne. This government never rode into power with false promises and so far splendid work had been done with much sacrifice, devotion and dedication. All monopolies, restrictions, quotas controls and slavery in all spheres have vanished in so short a time; but the only slavery that exists is the travel slavery in public transport. Commuters have become slaves to bus crews and they (the commuters) are robbed of their balance due to them. Although plain clothed officers are supposed to be on duty to detect malpractices of bus crews, their performance of duty ends victimising the commuter at the receiving

end. Why has the idea of parallel transport being shelved? with the persuasive editorial of a reputed journal, it transpired that 43 firms and individuals have applied for bus transport. It is high time that this is permitted. With the exorbitant price of petrol, even those who have cars are compelled to use public transport. In the guise of nationalism, robbing took place and thereby, emerged a set of bureaucrats in the name of socialism and their sole aim was to remain loyal to a certain political party that gave them a place. They will always be prepared to dance to the tune of the party hierarchy and try to prevent any other party from coming into power even if the economy of the country is reduced to zero.

This government was not given the mandate by tie changing top brass and eel type unionists of degenerating corporations like the ever ailing giant (SLTB). It is the peaceful civilians who underwent inhuman torture under the "REIGN OF TERROR" for seven years and who belong to no union at all, are those who sent this government to office. Therefore the government will have the support of the countryfolk in general. However much politicians may grumble in parliament about bus denationalisation if the commuters are found a means of moving without wasting time at bus halts and being victimised to bus crews, it alone is enough to face the polls. Train service is no better than the bus service vis-a-vis. It is hoped that a parallel transport be permitted in the near future so that the conductors' "BUSRAJ" may end and commuters may have some relief after two decades. "Nous avons besoin de mieux transport".

H. D. Patrick Jinadasa

Gampaha,
16.1.79.

The Land Acquisition Act (Cap. 460) As Amended By The Land Acquisition (Amendment) Act No. 23 of 1964.

Notice Under Section 7.

Ref. No. 3/62/437/1.73 E. 706

It is intended to acquire the land/lands described in the Schedule below. For further particulars please see the Gazette of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, No. 21 (Part III) of 26.01.1979.

Schedule

Name of Village Etc.:

Dampitiya village in Walgampattu Korale, Wariyapola D.R.O's Division, Kurunegala District.

Name of land:

Kankundahena

Plan & Lot Nos.:

Lot No. 1 in Preliminary Plan KU.781

H. M. W. Chandraratne
District Land Officer
Kurunegala District.

The Kachcheri,
Kurunegala.

11th January 1979

SRI LANKA CHRONICLE

Jan. 7 - Jan. 11

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—Silmuna; SLD—Sri Lankadipa; JD—Janadina; SU—Sun; DV—Dayasa; DP—Dinapathi CM—Chintamani; WK—Weekend; RR—Riviresa; EN—Eelanadu; IDPR—Information Dept. Press Release; DK—Dinakara.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 7: President J. R. Jayawardene announced at Giriulla on Friday that the Minister of Education would soon start a scheme under which four to five hundred scholarships would be granted by the Government every year to promising students to study science abroad. As the Government's district ministry system gets going and its benefits percolate to the people Government offices will become places where the negative attitudes that reign today will have no room, Prime Minister Mr. R. Premadasa said in Gampaha yesterday. A government directive has gone out to Ministers attending public functions, including cocktail parties hosted by foreign Embassies to celebrate their National Days, to refrain from consuming alcohol. The Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation is actively considering the establishment of another commercial broadcasting station. The Colombo Museum has decided to reprint a number of rare books on Ceylon for the benefit of scholars, collectors and other interested persons—SO. Eight hundred plain-clothesmen will soon be mingling

with the public collecting information about terrorist and subversive activities, hardcore criminals and pickpockets. The Intelligence Service Division of the police is trying to find the answer to the question how unemployed youths from the North visit European countries and stay for between two weeks to one month before they return to the Island—ST. The Police were making formal inquiries into the case of 53 employees of the National Lotteries Board who won prizes in sweeps during a 16 month period. A new security operation in the north which will ensure the presence of the Police in any given spot within a matter of minutes will go into operation this week. The Minister of State, Mr. Anand-tissa de Alwis, has recommended to the Government the setting up of a Press Clippings service; he told a recent meeting of Ministers that such a service would obviate the misrepresentation of facts about Sri Lanka which occur in foreign media—WK. The Minister of Finance said that this government was prepared to grant all rights to the Tamils except Tamil "Eelam" and the Tamils should not let this opportunity slip. The Ministry of Agriculture and Agricultural Development is to undertake 10 Irrigation schemes in the Northern Province this year—VK. It was decided by the Cinema Owners Association to increase cinema fares by 50 cent—CM. A female army of 300,000 is to be set up on a suggestion by the Minister of Rural Development to do sramadana work to develop rural areas. Sri Lanka is expected to use Rs. 2000 million worth of petrol this year—RR. A co-ordinating officer will be appointed to every Ministry to work with the Ministry of Plan Implementation to streamline the Job Bank work. 20,000 will get employment this year through the projects launched by the Ministry

of Textiles—SLDP. Prospects for a multi-million dollar British trade deal with China including the sale of military Jets, were disclosed today at the western big four two-day summit on major world issues. Iran's new Premier ex-opposition leader Shapur Bakhtiar today presented his civilian cabinet to the Shah in a fresh attempt to end strife in Iran after two months when the military led government failed to restore law and order in the country. Still awaiting a decision on his appeal against the death sentence ex-Premier Zulfikar Ali Bhutto celebrated his 51st birthday in Jail today—SO. Seven political parties last night agreed to take part in the Bangladesh elections next month. The Soviet Union was capitalising on the crisis in Iran by using every effort to gain a new foothold in the Gulf the *People's Daily* said—ST. Chinese vice Premier Teng Tsiao ping effectively ruled out on Friday any possibility of China sending its massive army—the world's biggest into Kampuchea. Posters are appearing in Peking calling for a mass rally on Monday the 3rd Anniversary of the death of Premier Chou En-lai—WK.

MONDAY, JANUARY 8: The United States Government on Friday agreed to help Sri Lanka complete its accelerated Mahaveli program by making a yearly grant of 15 million US dollars (Rs. 240 million); to ensure smooth co-ordination of United States assistance for the Mahaveli Scheme the USAID Mission has also indicated that it will set up a separate Mahaveli Project Unit at the USAID offices in Colombo. Forty trade ministers mainly from Arab countries, South Asia, the ASEAN group, the Far East and the new Pacific Island nations will assemble in Colombo on January 15 for the most important international conference to be held in Sri Lanka

so far this year. The Norwegian Government assesses very highly the economic and social policies followed by the present Government and would be pleased to help the government of Sri Lanka in its constructive efforts at nation building; this was revealed yesterday to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. A. C. S. Hameed when the delegation from the Norwegian Government Agency called at the Ministry for talks with the Minister—CDN. The pace of Sri Lanka's industrialisation has accelerated so much that nearly one hundred new industrial ventures are being approved every month. Mr. N. Deniz Fernando, the Deputy Minister of Industries and Scientific Affairs said yesterday. The President, Mr. J. R. Jayewardene has appointed a special committee headed by Mr. T. B. Werapitiya, Deputy Minister of Defence to look into the several petitions and representations made by parliamentarians regarding the transfers of police officers by the Transfer Board. The Kandy police last week seized a car transporting eight gunny bags full of cupro-nickel five and ten cent coins—CDM. A centre where countries in the Asian region can share their expertise and experience in regard to the evaluation of projects and the negotiations of contracts with multi-national corporations is to be established shortly; this centre, called the Asian Centre for Contract Negotiations is also expected to co-ordinate Government legislation and policies in regard to multi-national corporations; it is likely to be set up either in Colombo or Kuala Lumpur. Six more horses were brought from Singapore yesterday to strengthen the Mounted Division of the Police—SU. The 50/- salary increase which was mentioned in the last budget will be granted to plantation workers only if they work for a minimum of 21 days in the month—VK. Ten police officers from the Jaffna

police station have suddenly been transferred—EN. The World Bank has decided to help the CTB to develop its services; new bus chassis will be bought from loans provided from the world Bank—DM. Lower grade workers working in government departments will not be transferred away from the district they live for any reason hereafter. The Ministry of Plantation Industries has decided to cultivate cashew in 20,000 acres for export. 4 JVP members have been expelled from the party for disciplinary reasons and for criticising the leadership of the party—LD. If the expected consignment of oil does not arrive, there will be a oil crisis in the country—DV. Radio Hanoi tonight reported that the Kampuchean capital of Phnom Penh was captured by Pro-Vietnamese rebels today. The Congress President Swaran Singh and former PM Mrs. Indira Gandhi agreed in principle yesterday that the two factions of the Congress party should unite and that the united party should be known as the Indian National Congress. Ayatollah Khomeiny the Shah's principal religious opponent yesterday described Iran's new government as illegal and called for a day of national mourning next Monday. Iran's new PM Bakhtiar presented a Cabinet of 14 political unknowns to the Shah yesterday and later told reporters that the 59 year old Monarch wanted to go abroad shortly for a rest. The Western Big Four leaders yesterday gave strong assurances that they would not allow developing relations with China to damage their drive for detente with the Soviet Union. China has rapidly moved major military units towards its border with Vietnam in an apparent gesture of support for Cambodia US official said yesterday. Israeli PM Menachem Begin said last night that Egypt and Israel were coming

close to signing a peace treaty. A leader of the Fateh Palestine guerilla movement was quoted yesterday as saying it was prepared to cease attacks against Israel and accept a Palestinian mini-state in areas held by the Israelis since 1967—CDN. Cambodian leader Prince Norodom Sihanouk emerging after years of palace arrest in Phnom Penh is to present Cambodia's case against Vietnam before the UN. A general strike called by opponents of the Shah of Iran toppled Teheran a city of 4 million people into a ghost town. The Shah of Iran went on National Radio yesterday saying that a holiday he needed may take him out side the country. President Anwar Sadat wants to discuss the Marshall Plan like scheme envisaged by him for Egypt with Germany in the course of the year; The President told Hamburg Mayor Kleso today; the Sadat plan expects the US, W. Germany and Japan to provide Egypt with 15,000 million dollars over a period of 5 years—SU.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 9:

Thirty per cent of the admissions to the Universities will be on an all-island basis and will be purely on merit on the raw marks obtained at the GCE A-level examination; Fifty five percent will be admitted on a district basis on the relative population of the 24 administrative districts; the remaining 15 per cent will be allocated to the educationally underprivileged districts; in every case raw marks will be used and merit will be the criterion. Prof. Stanley Kalpage, Secretary, Ministry of Higher Education, told a press briefing yesterday. Import duty on raw materials and packaging imposed on local Pharmaceutical manufacturers is killing the industry; by contrast importers of drugs from abroad pay no duty at all; this allegation is made by seven registered phar-

maceutical manufacturers in Sri Lanka. The Minister of Trade and Shipping Mr. Lalith Athulathmudali yesterday called for vigorous action by the developing countries to combat what he called the growing menace of protectionist policies adopted by developed countries in international trade; the Minister was addressing the Senior Officials meeting of the Asian Group of the Group of 77, held at the BMICH. The Libyan government yesterday handed over a cheque for Rs. 1 1/2 million to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. A. C. S. Hameed, as a contribution for the permanent rehabilitation of areas affected by the cyclone. The first batch of community health workers (barefoot doctors) for the city of Colombo—a scheme initiated by Prime Minister Mr. R. Premadasa commenced training yesterday, at the Colombo Municipal Council premises—CDN. The state Film Corporation has not authorised any increase in the price of cinema tickets by exhibitors, Mr. D. H. Abeyasinghe, Director of the State Film Corporation and Chairman of the Public Performances Board said—CDM. Sri Lanka has clinched a multi-million rupee deal to repair French naval vessels in Colombo; the task is being undertaken by the State owned Colombo Dockyard Limited. The Minister of External Affairs of the Republic of Maldives, Mr. Fathullah Jameel arrives in Colombo today for a five-day official visit. Doctors attached to the Colombo Eye hospital staged a walk out yesterday afternoon in protest against the alleged abuse and intimidation of a lady doctor by a senior Police officer. A Government Psychiatrist yesterday ruled that M. Victor alias Ananda 17-year-old servant and alleged killer of land owner George Rowlands and his 10-year old daughter Koomarine, was fit and not mentally ill. Talks held

in Jaffna between leaders of the TULF and leaders of the Tamil Youth Federation to iron out the differences between them have, it is reported, proved futile. These talks were held following the decision of the Youth Federation to sever all connections with the leadership of the TULF and "go it alone."—SU. The Minister of Finance said that the government had set aside Rs. 10 million for rehabilitation work in the cyclone affected areas—VK. A rule to prevent students from entering university by sitting for the entrance exam from other districts will soon be in force; a student will be able to sit for the exam only if he has been a resident of the district for three years—DP. The government of Sri Lanka has appointed Mr. B. J. Fernando, Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka in the UN as Ambassador of Sri Lanka in Brazil—IDPR No. 6/79. Revenue from the export of ready-made garments for 1978 has been over Rs. 300 million. The Ministry of Industries has approved 1070 industries last year and 23,000 have been employed by those factories—DM. The Ministry of Education has ordered all Principals that a special fee must not be levied when enrolling students to the school. The Jute Corporation is to launch a scheme to produce 10 million gunny bags a year—LD. The smuggling out of gems and smuggling gold bars in to the country has increased in the last few months—JD. Thai PM Chamanel said today that Cambodian PM Pol Pot and his colleagues were still in Cambodia according to latest intelligence reports. Radio Hanoi tonight announced the formation of a People's Revolutionary Committee to administer and named pro-Vietnamese rebel leader Heng Samrin as Chairman. The US state department last night called for the withdrawal of foreign forces

from Cambodia saying the violation of its territory by Vietnam was a threat to peace in the region. The Soviet Union last night hailed the reported capture of Phnom Penh by Vietnamese-backed rebel forces as a triumph for the Kampuchean people. China bitterly accused Vietnam yesterday of launching a major war against Cambodia and appealed for international support and UN intervention on behalf of the Phnom Penh government. A strike by more than 40,000 truck and tanker drivers yesterday threatened supplies of food, fuel and industry's raw material and the British government considered whether to declare a state of emergency. After the assassination of Madrid military governor the political situation in Spain has taken another turn for the worse; tension was visible even at military barracks—a matter of special concern to the Spaniards—CDN. Former Cambodian strongman Prince Sihanouk addressing a historic Press conference in Peking after the fall of Phnom Peng, sometimes in tears made a emotional plea for world help in supporting Cambodia, but at the same time said there was no doubt that for the moment Cambodia was lost—as France in 1940—SU.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 10: Dr. Stanley Wijesundera, Prof. of Bio-Chemistry of the University of Colombo has been appointed Vice-Chancellor of the University of Colombo. The total import value of rice, flour and sugar recorded an unprecedented 20 per cent decline in the first nine months of last year compared with that of the same period in 1977. This was mainly the result of a substantial reduction in rice imports from 422,000 tons in the period January to September 1977 to 146,000 tons during the same period in 1978. The Salvation Army is to put up in Sri Lanka a ten storeyed com-

mercial development project costing rupees thirty million to finance its varied activities—CDN. Members of Parliament, other than Ministers, Deputy Ministers and District Ministers will be allowed to practise their professions; the President Mr. J. R. Jayewardene has decided to allow this on a proposal made by a member at the Government Parliamentary Group meeting. Crime prevention societies in every district will be organised by the police shortly; the Inspector General of Police, Mr. Ana Seneviratne recently gave the green light for the formation of such societies and has asked ASPs in charge of districts to take steps to bring them into being—CDM. The new Road Traffic Bill with more teeth to control and regulate traffic on highways is now finalised; it is expected to be presented in Parliament next month by the Minister of Transport, Mr. M. H. Mohammed. The UNCTAD senior officials conference which began at the BMICH on Monday is now meeting in three committees to discuss the items on the provisional agenda for the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD V) at Manila in May. The Ministry of Social Services is launching three schemes to give children the family atmosphere they are denied and a new approach to child care; explaining the plans for the International Year of the Child, Mr. T. G. Goonesekera Secretary of the Ministry, said, they plan to start Child and Family Welfare Centres, Nutritional Centres and a sponsorship programme for children—SU. Circles close to the President have disclosed that he is exploring possibilities of what action should be taken against groups who try to rouse communal passions, thereby disturbing the peace and order in the country. The government has decided in the Year of the Child-

to give financial help to families who adopt orphans and bring them up as their own children; children's villages too will be established where orphans and poor children will be rehabilitated—VK. There is fear that the prices of fertilizer may be raised as there is news that world fertilizer prices have increased. The Ministry of Plantation Industries has decided to plant cadju trees in 20,000 acres in the Mannar district; this is in view of the great demand in many countries for cadjunuts—DP. A CID team has gone to Maldives to investigate how a consignment of Textiles worth lakhs of rupees bound from Singapore to Maldives turned into a bale of hay in the Katunayake air port. A harbour fund will be set up soon to develop the harbour. A centre to train 1200 youths in New Industries and development work is being constructed with Swedish aid. The Minister of Power and Highways has decided to begin 100 rural electricity schemes in each district and complete the project as soon as possible. The Health Ministry is considering setting up Ayurvedic Medical herb plantations in every electorate—DV. A National export Development Board will be set up with the President to streamline exports—LD. Iran is to revise all its current military contracts and cancel those completely contrary of its interests Dr. Baktiar the newly appointed Iranian PM said today. The CIA estimated that Russian arms deliveries to developing countries totalled 8.5 billion dollars compared to 7.9 billion dollars in US deliveries. The US reported yesterday further Chinese and Vietnamese troops build up along the two countries border following the Vietnamese backed take over of Cambodia. The Soviet Government newspaper *Isvestia* suggested yesterday former PM Pol Pot and other defeated Cambodian

leaders were hiding in the Cardamom mountains. Tens of thousands of people gathered in the centre of Peking yesterday to mourn late PM Chou En-lai and there were fresh calls for democracy and human rights in China—CDN. France today implicitly condemned Vietnamese interference in Cambodia but criticised the conduct of the Pol Pot government in the former French-Chinese colony. Embassy staff of various countries and hundreds of Chinese technicians streamed into the eastern Thai border town yesterday from embattled Cambodia. The insurgent group now in control in Phnom Penh urged the security council today to refuse to take up the complaint of aggression by Vietnam lodged by Vice-Premier Sory diplomatic sources said—CDM. Vietnamese insurgent leader forces claimed today in a message to the security council to be in control of all Cambodia. 15,000 people have moved out of Jungle villages to the safety of going along the Nagaland Assam following the killing of at least 40 people in raids by armed Naga guerillas. Sleet and snow snuffed out the usual street demonstrations against the Shah in Teheran today while opposition leader renewed demands for the Monarch to step down. George Fernandes, Indian Industries Minister has proposed a national construction Army to reduce unemployment and contributed to the nations development projects—SU.

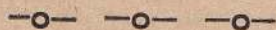
THURSDAY, JANUARY 11:
The Government of the People's Republic of China has informed the Sri Lanka Government that it would help set up experimental farms, rice mills and construct hydro power stations under the accelerated Mahaweli Program; Mr. N. G. P. Panditharatne, Chief Co-ordinating Officer, Mahaveli said that a Million will benefit from the accelerated program; he added that

under the Mahaweli Accelerated Program 350,000 acres of new land would come under cultivation in addition to the 125 to 150,000 acres of existing land. Air Lanka Ltd., was incorporated as a Public Company yesterday; the Company will be Sri Lanka's International carrier. In cyclone devastated areas, alongside long-term rehabilitation programs, there should be a short term plan as well to carry out essential rehabilitation work immediately, said the Minister of Agricultural Development and Research, Mr. E. L. Senanayake yesterday. At official talks held at the Foreign Ministry yesterday, Foreign Minister Mr. A. C. S. Hameed told the Maldivian Foreign Minister that Sri Lanka had decided to open a diplomatic mission in Male and early action would be taken to implement this decision—CDN. The Youth Movement in the North and East has agreed to work with the TULF leadership in seeking a solution to the problems confronting the Tamil-speaking people, Mr. A. Amirthalingam, leader of the TULF said yesterday. Mr. S. Thondaman, Minister of Rural Industrial Development has evolved a scheme to increase the supply of beef, according to a Ministry official. For the first time a privilege enjoyed by the President and the Prime Minister has been extended to the Leader of the Opposition; he has been given an official residence in Colombo in "Sravasti" premises—CDM. Government was yesterday examining the introduction of an "Offences Committee Under the Influence of Liquor (Special Provisions) Bill" which deals with taking drastic penal measures against those causing annoyance in public places whilst under the influence of liquor; this came as President J. R. Jayewardene directed his Cabinet Ministers to provide a detailed report in respect of drun-

keness in their respective Ministries and recommend ways and means to curb it. The United Kingdom has announced that the entire Rs. 3.5 billion (£ 115 million) financial assistance towards the 180 Mega Watt Victoria Power Project under the accelerated Mahaweli Ganga Diversion Scheme will be made to Sri Lanka as an outright grant, Mr. T. Sivagnanam Secretary, Ministry of Lands, Land Development and Mahaweli Development said yesterday. The number of unemployed persons in Sri Lanka is increasing at the rate of 150,000 annually, Mr. T. Sivagnanam Secretary to the Ministry of Lands, Land Development and Mahaweli Development said. Chronic weakness of the political leadership, lack of commitment in implementing government policy, inefficient management among top administrators, and the appointment by Ministers of their relatives and loyalists who lack education, experience, skill and training as top administrators have been listed as some of the leading reasons for an inefficient bureaucracy; this has been revealed in the report of the Parliamentary Committee appointed by President J. R. Jayewardene (then Prime Minister), to look into obstacles created by the bureaucracy in the formulation and implementation of Government policy. Around eight twin-cottages will be built in each of the 300 state-run estates this year to replace the line rooms, Mr. P. P. Gunawardene, General Manager, State Plantations Corporation said yesterday; this was part of a programme, which envisages the construction of 20,000 cottages during the next ten years—SU. The leader of the Opposition and the TULF, Mr. A. Amirthalingam stated yesterday that the State of the Tamils was worsening daily that they were being discriminated against in the fields of education, employment and district

development—VK. In a bid to combat acts of terrorism taking place in the Northern Province the Jaffna Police have decided on a pre-phased scheme and submitted it to the police High Command—DP. The Department of National Housing has completed the construction of 35 houses; this was done on the basis of a scheme to construct five houses for each district—EN. The Ministry of Labour has come to know that a large number of Rubber Estate owners have under-paid their workers by about Rs. 4 a day for over a period of one year; this amounts to over Rs. 30 million. The Minister of State said that over Rs. 4000 million worth of Alcohol is being consumed a year in the country—DM. The CWE has reduced the redistribution of Lakspray to co-operatives by 30 per cent. The Secretary to the Ministry of Mahaweli development said that 350,000 acres of new land will be cultivated under the 5 water reservoirs under the Mahaweli development scheme—DV. Half a million acres of government land were being illegally acquired, most of them in the Northern and Eastern region—LD. A Train drivers' strike brought misery for millions of London commuters today and the whole country faced the prospect of a crippling transport stoppage. The US said yesterday it would take no further steps towards normalising relations between Washington and Hanoi following Vietnam's invasion of Cambodia. The Soviet Union and its three Warsaw Pact allies, East Germany, Hungary and Bulgaria yesterday announced recognition of the People's Revolutionary Council formed in Cambodia after the fall of Phnom Penh to pro-Vietnamese forces. China today declared that the Peace and security of South-East Asia out of Asian countries would be in grave danger once Moscow and Hanoi have had their

way in aggressive war against Cambodia. The Janata Party yesterday suffered a major setback in its bid to make a break-through in Andhra when its candidates in two prestigious by elections to the Lok Sabha from Secunderbad and Siddipet constituencies were defeated by overwhelming majorities by the Congress Party led by former PM Indira Gandhi. Political weather vane indicated a possible military take over in Iran as the new civilian government wallowed in difficulties after only 14 days in office. Britain could be in the grip of an official strike by all its 175,000 road transport drivers by the end of the week. Trade Union chiefs said last night—CDN. The Shah of Iran has handed over personal assets worth about 50 million dollars to the Pahlavi foundation, which uses his immense wealth for charity its chief executive said today. Communist Romania broke ranks with the Soviet bloc today to denounce the Soviet-support Cambodian take over as a measure to world peace—SU.



OBITUARIES

Jan. 11 Jan. 17

Percy Dias Goonewardene, 167, Dombawela, Udugampola, Gampaha; D. E. Edirisinghe, Madala; Mrs. D. B. Gunawardene, "Gunasevana", Kahatuduwa, Polgasowita; Mrs. Rangani Gunawardena, 23 Rosmead Place, Colombo 7; Mrs. Mainena Gunasekera, "Gunasekera Villa", Munagama, Horana; Mrs. Zillah Morel, Flat 1/14, Chatsworth Road, East Prahran, Victoria, 3181, Australia; Rev. Fr. Robert Ponniah, Kovilpatti, South India; Mrs. Eugene Rajapatirana, 30, Sea View Avenue, Colombo 3; Jerome Seneviratne, 24, Kandawatta Road, Dehiwela;

George Udugama, 57/4, Maha vihare Road, Laxapatiya, Moratuwa; Mrs. Nellie Cruze, Australia; George Karunaratne, Patuwa Wellaruwa, Haniduma; W. K. E. Wijesekera, 'Vijitha', Bemulla; Edmund Weerasinghe; 202/5, Main Street, Kalutara; South; Anura de Silva, 107, De Zoysa Road, Moratumulla, Moratuwa; Peter de Zoysa, "Renuka", Egiduwa, Kosgoda; Mrs. Maglin Jayawardana, 78/1, Old Road Nawala; Mrs. Kamala Liyanage, Rakwana; Mrs. Reiban Izedeen, K. B. N. Karunaratne, Town Hall, 64, De Waas Lane, Grandpass, Nawalapitiya; Lakshman Perera, Flat No. 4A, Housing Scheme, Forbes Lane, Colombo 10; Mrs. Sellammah Saravanamuthu, Atchuvally; G. M. R. Aponso, 11/8, Union Place, Dehiwela; Mrs. Matilda Abaysinghe, 22, Union Place, Dehiwela; Mrs. Sithy Zubaida Didi, 59, E. S. Fernando Mawatha, Wellawatte, G. A. Geewanda, 17/4, Vijaya Road, Mount Lavinia; Tiddy Jayawardena, Pahala Wala Yatagama, Rambukkana; Gavanis Jayasinghe, "Singhapaya", Mapalane, Kamburupitiya; Anthony Mirando, "Rosary", 160, Melawatta, Pallansena Road, Kochchikade; Mrs. R. Belin de Zoysa, Raja Telwatta, Ambalangoda; Mrs. Zulaiha Hallaldeen, 143/1, Mahabuthgamuwa, Kottikawatta; Mrs. Esln Karunasekara, 511, Galle Road, Wadduwa; N. A. M. Mansoor, 32, School Lane, Dematagoda Road, Colombo 9; G. K. Podisingho, 12/2, Sri Dharmapala Road, Galkissa; Mrs. Sarojini Peiris, Anandagiri, Katuneriya; Mrs. Celestina Amarasekera, Gunasekera Mawatha, Mutugamage Road, Ragama; Don Sorandasa Elayaperuma, 39, Col. T. G. Jayawardene Mawatha, Colombo 3; D. P. A. Jayasekera, 152, Bandaranayake Mawatha, Kandy; Willette Kurunera, 297/1, Circular Road, Kandy; Mrs. Mercy Thangaratnam,

Maalle, Galle; Miss Veronica Wambeck, Block B3, Flat 11, Bloemendhal Flats, Kotahena; Mrs. Pakiam Edwards, Vaddukoddi; Mrs. Hevage, Horatuduwa, Moratuwa; Solomon Kotalawela, Ratnagiri, Dodangoda; Mrs. Lewisa Perera, 30, Albion Road, Dematagoda; C. S. N. Singham, No. 1, Mount Avenue, Mt. Lavinia; D. M. Edwin Silva, "Sonagiri", Kegalla Road, Dodanduwa; Edmund Wijeratne, 95/4, Rodrigo Place, Mattakkuliya; Raymond Fernando, "Maryvilla", 610, Kurana, Negombo Alston Carl Jayetilleke, "Jaynivasa", Malala Road, Ratnapura; Martin Cooray, Udakannampella, Porale; Babynona Dabare, 10, Tissa Mawatha, Melder Place, Nugegoda; William de Silva, "Saliwasa", Bawila, Parakaduwa; Vivil de Kretser, 5/17, Hope Street, Gleniris Victoria 3146 Australia; Vivien Ferdinandus, 309/3, Nedimala Dehiwela; Mrs. Soma Halpe, 'Piduma Walauwa', Kuliypitiya; Mrs. Margaret Kumarasamy, 361, Jaya Mawatha, Hunupitiya; Wattala, D. B. Johns, Kumbaloluwa, Veyangoda; W. Lewis Perera, 9, 1st Lane, Rawawatta, Moratuwa; Graham Ekanayake, 40/1, Ananda Balika Mawatha, Pitakotte; K. Wilfred Fernando, "Henrietta House," Lake Road, Chilaw; A. G. Pragasam, 626, Aluthmawatha, Road Mutwal; Mr. Mallika Sirimal, C/o. Barney Raymonds, Colombo. Daya Bastian, 18, Anderson Road, Havelock Town, Colombo 5; Mrs. Agampodi Aslin de Silva, "Sanasuma", Egodamulla, Ahungalla; D. E. Munasinghe, 73, Cotta Road, Borella; Mrs. Joyce Rodrigo, 46, Alwis Town, Hendala; Mrs. Jane Tillekeratne, "The Bungalow, Kehelwatagoda, Yakkala; Shirley Vanden Driesen, 31/1, Station Road, Dehiwela.



THE WORLD TODAY

compiled by
The Recorder

Iran

THE INTERNATIONAL RE-ACTIONS to development in Iran have been on a low key no doubt because there has been no overt or covert interference from outside whilst the upheaval went on inside—and the upheaval itself was admittedly a purely indigenous revolt against the Shah, his SAVAK and the American (and Western) presence that had made Iran's masses, especially the peasants, among the poorest in the world in spite of the oil riches.

The Shah has now left the country admittedly on American advice, but whether the "civilian" government and the Regency Council he left behind would be able to save the monarchy and restore normalcy is yet to be seen. Fears have been expressed that the Shah had endeavoured in his last days to push some elements in the Army to stage a military coup, establish a dictatorship and retain the Pahlavi dynasty.

A *Tass* report from New York, dated Jan 10, stated: "According to reports of Western agencies, rumours continue circulating in Teheran about a military coup of a right-wing character being prepared there. The possibility of such a coup was mentioned in particular by leader of the National Front, Karim Sanjabi. If a coup takes place, he said, this will be a tragedy for the Iranian people. The American press reports that General Oveissi, who resigned the other day from the post of Commander of Ground Forces and head of Teheran's military administration, is now holding consultation

in Washington on plans for the capture of power by the military. According to one of scenarios of a coup, says the report of the UPI agency, the military are to start acting immediately after the Shah leaves the country. After coming into power, the military junta could then invite the Shah to return to Iran." It is not clear when this scheme will be put into operation, if at all.

In the meantime, the Bakhtiar Government is doing its best to win popular approbrium and support by measures that are part of the demands of the Opposition National Front. But Bakhtiar has no easy task before him. Some army units had started going off on a rampage the day after the Shah left—and this made some suspect that it might be a prelude to an attempted military coup. The Opposition National Front has no use for Bakhtiar who has been branded as an American stooge and a pro-western politician. Ayatollah Khomeiny has denounced the Bakhtiar Government as illegal.

The USA is doing its best to save its investments and interests in Iran. N. Ravi, in a despatch to the *Madras Hindu* from Washington dated Jan. 9, stated: "...In Iran, the US is trying to shore up the new civilian Government of Mr. Bakhtiar by a two-pronged strategy. The first and more difficult task would be to legitimise the Government in the eyes of the Shah's opponents through liberalisation measures. The second effort is to eliminate the threat of a military coup by the hardline supporters of the Shah in the army. The Iranian Ambassador in Washington, Mr. Zahedi, one of the monarch's staunchest supporters, is in Teheran but he is being discouraged from trying to rally the hardliners. The Deputy Commander of the US Forces in Europe, Gen. Huyser,

has been sent to Iran to prompt the army officers to support the new government. Meanwhile the US Energy Secretary Mr. Schlesinger, has come out with a warning that Americans may face petrol rationing and price increases if Iran's oil exports remain interrupted for another three months. Before the current turmoil, Iran was producing six million barrels a day but the output is now down to 250,000 barrels. The Opposition Front is trying to persuade the workers to raise it to the 600,000 barrels needed for domestic consumption, but remains totally opposed to exports as long as the Shah remains.....".

THERE IS NO DOUBT that the US Government is doing everything it can to salvage what it can from the mess in Iran. A composite report in the *Hindu*, January 11,—from *Reuter*, *PTI*, *AFP* and *DPA*—gave a clear picture of the situation. It was datelined Washington, Jan. 10: "The US Government is believed to have advised the Shah of Iran that his country's dire political and economic situation could be improved if he left the country for a holiday. US officials said yesterday the American Ambassador in Teheran, Mr. William Sullivan, had been given new instructions five days ago. But the officials would not say whether the advice had been passed on to the Shah. One official implied that an understanding had been reached and said they expected the Shah to announce holiday plans once the new civilian government of Mr. Shapour Bakhtiar had been officially installed. It has meanwhile been reported that a four-star American General spent about a week in Teheran to counsel the powerful Iranian military leaders not to stage a coup but to support the new Government. The name of the senior American military officer, sent by President

Carter to Teheran, was given as Gen. Robert E. Huyser, Deputy Commander in Chief, American forces in Europe. According to reports here, the possibility of a coup in Iran still remains and is being widely mentioned in Teheran. The Iranian Army is said to be displeased with some of the initial pronouncements of Mr. Bakhtiar.

"Mr. Bakhtiar too feels that the Shah would leave the country 'in the coming days' although he would not abdicate. In an interview with French radio, Mr. Bakhtiar added that a Regency Council would be set up prior to the Shah's departure. 'The departure of the King is already virtually accomplished' he said and stressed that the important thing was to preserve Iran's 'independence, integrity and unity'. Mr. Bakhtiar also spoke of a vast plot by communist agents to destabilise the country and vowed to fight them to the end. Mr. Bakhtiar said he respected Paris-based Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, the exiled leader of the Shiite Muslim opposition to the Shah, adding that the latter's presence in a 'democratic government' would be desirable." But Ayatollah Khomeini said in Paris he would be neither President of Iran if the Shah departs nor hold any governmental position. 'I shall content myself as in the past, with being in a nation's guide', he said. The Ayatollah described Bakhtiar's Government as illegal because 'it was appointed by the Shah's regime' and because 'the two Assemblies have no popular base'. Meanwhile Mr. Karim Sanjabi, leader of the National Front, has reaffirmed his opposition to the Bakhtiar Government and has called for free elections. Addressing a press conference, Mr. Sanjabi reportedly stressed that the only solution to the Iranian crisis was a Govern-

ment formed with the consent of religious leaders. The opposition leader reportedly said the people did not want Iran's future to be decided abroad whether in Washington, London or Moscow. Radio Teheran announced today that the Shah had donated several hundred million dollars worth of shares from the royal family's assets to the Pahlavi Foundation, a social welfare organisation. Work is resuming in three of Iran's four previously strikebound refineries. a National Iranian Oil Company spokesman reported. The Iranian Muslim leaders have appealed to the people to leave "useful" foreigners unmolested. The appeal, published by the daily "Teheran Journal" yesterday, said these foreigners included journalists, technicians, medical men, office staff and workers. [Meanwhile the exodus of foreign residents continues. All foreign oil industry employees in the city of Ahwaz have left the country. It added that all foreign staff in other oil production areas of Khuzestan province had been dismissed and would leave Iran. The agency did not give any figures. The dismissal of all foreigners is one of the demands of the striking oil industry workers.]

IT IS NOT THE USA ALONE that is worried about Iran and vast changes taking place in that region. Batuk Gathani in a despatch to the *Hindu* from London on Jan. 10 made some interesting observations about the *Emergence of Muslim Power—A Threat To The West*: "The fact of the Shah and its possible consequences in Iran, coupled with the fortunes of Mr. Bulent Ecevit, the embattled Turkish Prime Minister, raise many question marks about the game of power politics in West Asia. With the serious civil disorders in Turkish towns, the West fears that if the country's economy is not put back on its feet, Turkey may follow Iran into

turmoil and uncertainty. The question now is, how much money needs to be pumped into Turkey, and how, to nurse the economy back to health. Iran and Turkish are fast heading towards economic bankruptcy amidst political chaos. The southern flank of the Western alliance remains grossly exposed. Strange as it may seem, a new spectre of right-wing and deeply conservative Muslim power is now haunting the West Asian sub-continent. In Lebanon, during the last two years, it has wrecked a flourishing economy and a civilised and tolerant society. For many years, Beirut was referred to as the Paris of West Asia. Today, it is a ghost city trying to find its economic and cultural mooring under the shadow of Syrian armour. In Pakistan, Muslim power has produced a fanatical theocracy, which bases its law literally on the teachings of the Koran. In Turkey it threatens to tear apart long established and cherished democratic institutions. And in Iran, they say, it has the King of Kings by the throat. The Shah tried to modernise Iran, but in a country having a high birth rate and deeply conservative religious factions, the effort has proved disastrous. Iran is a big country, almost the size of Western Europe. It is essentially a vast collection of religious minorities many of which hate and fear one another. The sense of nationhood is sustained by its magnificent history which was created around the monarchical principle. The King was supreme and that edifice is fast crumbling. Iran has a better record of stability and social progress than most of its neighbours—Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan and even Turkey.

"For the Western world this is a nightmarish situation. The Western fortunes are very much tied up with free flow of West Asia

oil. The West has not yet recovered from the mid-1973 oil crisis which technically ended the post-war boom and left the free enterprise industrial economies with two crore skilled men unemployed. The Western monetary system has passed through the most turbulent fiscal crisis, and observers here suggest that if the decline of the dollar is not arrested in the next few months the system may even collapse. The latest reduction in Iranian oil supplies has already produced another big increase in crude oil prices and a consequent plunge of the US dollar. What is really worrying the West is that the fall of the Shah would be followed by the collapse of the Arab monarchies in the Persian Gulf. The Royal families are now busy buying juicy chunks of real estate in the Western capitals. In the centre of London alone, rich Arabs and Persians own property worth some Rs. 200 crores, according to latest estimates. The general consensus is that the longer the Shah and the army hang on to power in the hope of a compromise with the opposition, the tougher the opposition gets. America and Britain appear optimistic about Dr. Bakhtiar's Government and about the chances that the Shah will take his leave once the Government settles down.

"In Turkey the scenario is more complicated. In the towns of eastern Turkey there is a large population of Alevis or Shiite Muslims and they are regarded as heretics by the Sunni sect, which claims an 80 per cent following among Turkey's population of some 40 millions. Sunnis are traditionally rightwing while the left-wing attracts the Kurbish speaking minority Alevis or Shiite Muslims. Since the early seventies the extreme right has kept up a sustained campaign against the extreme left and the

urban intelligentsia. It strove to establish its supremacy in universities, student hostels and even cafes frequented by students. Today sectarian prejudices between Shiites and Sunnis are being exploited by both left and right-wing fanatics, and over 700 people have been killed in a spate of religious riots. Mr. Bulent Ecevit has little choice, but to let the Turkish military decide the future course of events. This is why for the West this is a crucial period. Turkey's strategic position has long made it important for NATO planners, Conditions being what they are in Iran, stability in Turkey is all the more desirable." This analysis, however sketchy, draws attention to the fast changing developments in West Asia.

BATUK GATHANI in a further despatch on Jan. 12 has more interesting revelations about the implications of the changes in Iran: "Since the three hardline generals who were against concessions to the Opposition in Iran have resigned and the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces, who was Prime Minister until recently, has been replaced for medical reasons, the struggle in the country is moving in favour of those who would rather opt for a compromise. The rightwing elements, at one time suggesting another military coup to 'save the Shah', are fading into dark shadows of complicated Iranian politics. General Oveisi, the Martial Law Administrator of Teheran, flew into London last week but has chosen to remain silent and is unwilling to talk to the press. All this suggests that the new Prime Minister Mr. Shapour Bakhtiar, appears to have partially won the first-leg of a power struggle with the Army's hardline wing. More rightwing officers are expected to quit the armed forces in the next few days. Meanwhile, the

exiled Ayatollah Khomeini, who lives modestly in a Paris suburb, has suggested that the Shah 'must be tried' for the crimes of which his opponents accuse him. He told correspondents the other day that the departure of the Shah would not suffice. His current 'Shah must go' demand means much more than exile for the 'illegal' monarch and his family. But aides say that he has always made it clear that most Iranians consider the Shah and his family guilty of many crimes including corruption. They should be tried under the Islamic law, and the minimum sentence for these crimes, if proved, is life imprisonment for the Shah and his family.

"On the other hand, the Ayatollah, after weeks of denouncing America and Britain for supporting the Shah, has now moderated his hostility by suggesting that he was prepared to deal with the Americans 'on friendly basis' provided they 'stop interfering in our affairs' and respect our nation. The Ayatollah and his aides are currently working on a 250 page programme for the 'Islamic Republic' which will succeed the 'illegal' Pahlavi empire. At this stage it is difficult to assess the political thinking of the Shiite Muslim leader—is he inclined towards a revolutionary and leftwing kind of Islamic Republic on the model of Col. Gaddafi's Libya or is he suggesting a rightist new Iran a sort of cross between Zia's Pakistan and Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood. Mr. Bakhtiar's government, for example, has hinted that oil supplies to Israel would be cut immediately but South Africa would not be. The Iranian economy which depends heavily on oil, is almost at a standstill with hardly any petrol for cars or oil for heating. The national airline is grounded and the trains are not running. Banks and Government offices hard

ly function. Most shops are closed and the supply of food in Teheran, particularly, is diminishing. Most expatriates are leaving the country and without their badly-needed expertise, the Iranian ports are congested with unmoved goods and ships lining up to unload. In the Western capitals, the rich Iranians are busy making 'permanent' arrangements to pull out family members from the country. Estimates of the amount of money the Shah his immediate family members and wealthy pro-Shah Iranians have moved to America and Europe in the past two years run to as high as Rs. 3,000 crores to 4,000 crores equivalent. The Shah, controls directly only a part of this money. But through a family trust, the Pahlavi Foundation, and various Iranian banks in which the Shah has a substantial interest, he has an indirect interest in numerous spectacular investments. The rich Iranians have been putting their money chiefly in New York, Zurich, Paris, London, Frankfurt, New Orleans, Los Angeles and San Francisco. The Shah's immediate family has selected Los Angeles, where his sister has bought a palatial residence in the 'world's most expensive suburb' for some Rs. 1.5 crores equivalent. It is also rumoured that the Shah has acquired 140 to 150 acres of undeveloped land in the same suburb. Mr. Bakhtiar thinks that the Avatollah and the other clergy do not have the intellectual ability to run a government and should stick to religion. He talks of a regency council. "If the Shah goes and gradual lifting of martial law in a step by step return to stability. But the heart of the matter is that no one including the Shah, the Ayatollah or Mr. Bakhtiar knows which way Iran is heading."

As we go to press, the news is to hand that Ayatollah Khomeini has rebuked President Carter for

advising him to bring calm to Iran and support the Bakhtiar Government. Khomeini in an indignant statement has asked President Carter and the Americans to stop their interference in the internal affairs of Iran. And to make his meaning clear he called for a nationwide demonstrations against the Bakhtiar government.

What next in Iran? It's anybody's guess.

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CHINA RE-VISITED—5

Is War Inevitable?

Nikil Chakravartty
Editor, *Mainstream*

IN TALKS WITH THE CHINESE FRIENDS, I noticed a common refrain; war inevitable; if the people assert, they can postpone it but not prevent it. This struck me as something that was refuted by Stalin, whom the Chinese revere; according to Stalin, war can be prevented if the people of the world act.

At many places, I saw Mao's call inscribed boldly: "Dig tunnels deep, store grain and never seek hegemony." I saw one of the underground shelters built under a Peking street. Its depth is less than 10 metres—hardly sufficient to stand the shock of a big blast, not to speak of a nuclear attack. As it is, these shelters can be gainfully used for peacetime purposes, as good airconditioned stores.

The propaganda about the war danger has an unmistakably anti-Moscow edge. Whenever I have asked Chinese journalist friends why they regard the Soviet Union as a greater menace than USA, their explanation in brief is that US is already an exhausted power and fully exposed, while USSR being a newcomer in the

field is in better health and also it moves under the deceptive sign-board of helping national liberation—so, the immediate Chinese propagandist target is the social imperialism of Moscow. In the bargain, the role of China as the intrepid crusader for national liberation that Chou En-lai had tried to project during his African safari of 1963-65 was never recalled by any Chinese friend during all the talks I had with them. Instead-Mao's Three-World thesis is reiterated. About this, the Albanians in Peking have made a bitter parody—"one world for USA, one for USSR, and the third for me, China."

The augmentation of defence deals is very much on Peking's agenda at the moment. The purchase of British Harrier aircraft is being talked about. China, I heard, is also negotiating with the French for military helicopters and a special anti-tank missile which is actually the product of Franco-German collaboration. While the US has not yet formally lifted its embargo on arms shipment to China, Washington is believed to have told its NATO allies that it would have no objection to their selling arms to Peking.

Brzezinski, during his Peking visit in May, I learnt, handed over satellite maps of not only the entire terrain of China but of the frontier areas as well, from the north to the south. This could very well include not only the maps of the Soviet frontier defence but of the defence of other neighbours of China, which, in the south, should include both India and Vietnam.

PRESIDENT CARTER sent this Science and Technology Adviser, Frank Press, to Peking in July at the head of a high-powered delegation which included, among other persons connected with the US

National Security Council and space technology. The US administration has supplied sophisticated geological equipment—together with a specialist—to explore China's western sector, particularly the strategically sensitive Sinkiang region. In the Chinese view, the opening up of Sinkiang adds importance to the Karakoram Highway with the followup promise of assistance for the expansion of the Karachi harbour. China is now very much engrossed in tapping the vast oil reserve in the Yellow Sea down through East China Sea to South China Sea. According to Selig Harrison's estimate in a Carnegie Endowment study, China's oil production will reach 400 million tons by 1990, that is, the current level of Saudi Arabia's production.

I found Chinese tourist maps showing the country's International boundaries stretching right along the coast of Vietnam, skirting Malaysia, (Sarawak, Brunei and Sabah), then up along the Philippine coast, passing by Okinawa right north to the North Korean coasts. When I asked the Chinese friends the basis of this claim, they said that the continental shelf belonged to China because it was formed by the sedimentary deposits washed down the Yangtze and the other Chinese rivers into the sea. Along with this extraordinary claim one is told that the islands and coral reefs in the region belong to China by virtue of having been claimed from imperial times.

The first open breach with Vietnam came over the Chinese takeover of the Paracel Islands. Malaysia, the Philippines and the Koreans are not likely to abandon their claims on this soil basin—which may land China into disputes with these neighbours as well.

One of the reasons why both Peking and Tokyo hurried with

the signing of the Sino-Japanese Treaty is the lure of oil. The Japanese are keen on getting at this oil reserve, as this will reduce the freight charges on their much-needed oil imports. The Chinese, on their part, are interested in getting Japanese technology and working joint exploration of this huge reserve. Meanwhile, US firms are negotiating with Peking for some off-shore drilling in Po Hai zone in the north.

With all the assurances by the Chinese friends that war cannot be prevented, I have come back from China with the feeling that there would ultimately be no war with the Soviet Union. For one thing, the Sino-Soviet border clashes have not taken place since 1969, that is, for nine long years despite all the vitriolics poured over the relations between the two countries. Secondly, despite all the official propaganda about the Soviet social-imperialist monster, I noticed no Russophobia in this far-flung country.

Rather, at Canton, I saw next to the moving memorial to the martyrs of the Canton uprising of 1927, a pavilion dedicated to "the friendship between Chinese and Russian people". On a stone book is inscribed the tribute to "the selfless support" of the Soviet Union to the uprising in which the entire staff of the Soviet Consulate in Canton was killed by the Kuomintang forces when they butchered the Canton working people's uprising. This pavilion was opened in 1964 when the rift with Moscow was complete.

THE LARGE INVESTMENTS that many of the Western countries have been making in China's crash programme of industrialisation, is a good indicator that these

investors do not expect it to be a war-torn country tomorrow. Sources close to the Japanese, whose deals in China total 20 billion dollars, made it clear to me that they do not envisage that war is round the corner. *Had they thought so, they would not have risked investing such a huge amount in China.*

Very much, of course, will depend on China's outlook and approach after the completion of its modernisation programme. The Chinese friends frankly say they need twenty years for this modernisation drive, and for these twenty years China is interested in peace. Modernisation does not necessarily mean liberalisation. Bismarkian Germany tried to catch up with its rivals in industrial revolution, and Meiji Japan superimposed modernisation on a feudal base to emerge as a top military power. Will China with its socialist base, turn into a modern military power or harness its modernisation in the fight for peace? Only Future can tell.

At the moment, China is hardly at peace with some of her neighbours. The conflict with Vietnam and the potential conflict over oil are not omens for peaceful co-existence. The understanding with Japan or dalliance with USA are not for charting out a course for world peace, but to meet the contingency of a world war, as friends in Peking frankly said.

It would have, of course, been uncharitable to quote before them Lu Hsun—one of their revolutionary writers whose books are openly sold all over China—who had said that the Chinese had only two ways of looking at foreigners: "Up to them as superior beings or down on them as wild animals. They have never been able to treat them as friends, to consider them as people like themselves.* As I left Peking for Canton, I only

hoped that these words, sixty years old, would not turn out to be true in the fateful years ahead when China would be striving to emerge as a mighty world power. The 900 million people freed from poverty, imbued with amity towards all and rancour towards none, can, if they want, become more formidable than the biggest of arsenals in the world.

IN THIS CLOUDY PROSPECT, where do India-China relations fit in? Most of my Chinese friends, both old and new, stressed that instead of touching on the border disputes, there could be improvement of mutual relationship in other fields. At the same time, they seem to be anxious at assessing the direction of India's foreign policy. In discussions marked sometimes with brutal candour, they did not conceal not only their distaste of India's continuing friendship with Moscow but equally bitterly, on out growing bonds with Hanoi as well.

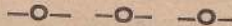
How there could be lasting friendship with China—undoubtedly a very desirable objective—without tackling the border question, baffled me, and there was no need to conceal this in Peking. And what *quid pro quo* will Peking expect for any adjustment on the border? Can we afford to change the tested course of our foreign policy? Can we afford to lose Vietnam with its pivotal role in the emerging contours of South-east Asia, to placate Peking?

Indian statesmanship will be put to test when it deals with China in a serious manner. It can hardly be clothed by mere talk of bilateralism; because each country acts within the parameters of its own objectives. To seek a common ground in the foreign policy objectives of New Delhi and Peking will demand more than effusion of

generous platitudes; it will require a careful understanding of China today, of China which is in a state of transition, of China with all its tensions and constrictions. Our expectations from our rapport with China have to be based on this understanding of Peking today.

These are the thoughts that kept me engrossed as I crossed the frontier at Lowu and almost missed the first signboard on the British territory of Hongkong colony, sternly warning: "Beware of Pick-pockets"—a timely reminder that I have crossed back from the world of socialism, into the world of inequities, that to our shame, is still our very own.

Concluded



SRI LANKA

New Government, New Constitution

By courtesy of the **Review Of The International Commission Of Jurists**, Geneva, December 1978, we publish this article which our readers will find most interesting.

THE REVIEW, Nos. 14 and 17, carried earlier articles concerning the human rights situation in Sri Lanka. In the July 1977 election, the United National Party, led by Mr. Jayawardene, achieved an overwhelming majority, with more than five-sixths of the seats in the National Assembly, replacing the Sri Lanka Freedom Party government of Mrs. Bandaranaike.

The new government, in fulfilment of its electoral promises, adopted a new Constitution last year. Among other changes it pro-

vides for Members of Parliament to be elected by proportional representation, rather than by districts. Also, the President is to be popularly elected, rather than appointed by the Prime Minister. He, rather than the Prime Minister, becomes head of the government.

New Constitution and Human Rights. The new Constitution proclaims and extends protection to a number of internationally recognised civil and political rights. Articles 10, 11 and 12 provide for freedom of thought, freedom from torture, equality before the law and non-discriminatory treatment generally. Article 13 guarantees the right to be informed of the grounds for arrest at an appearance before a magistrate, establishes the presumption of innocence and prohibits the retroactive application of criminal law. Article 14 guarantees freedom of expression and speech, peaceful assembly, association, the right to organise trade unions and the right to religious association. The right to residence and movement are preserved, as well as the right to return.

Article 14 also protects the right to cultural heritage and the use of one's mother tongue. Article 19 provides that both Sinhala and Tamil are national languages. The elevation of this to the Constitutional plane is an important advance for the nation's significant Tamil minority.

Importantly, Article 17 provides for relief in the Supreme Court with respect to the "infringement or imminent infringement, by executive or administrative action, of a fundamental right to which such person is entitled under the provisions of this Chapter." In addition, Article 156 provides that the Parliament shall establish a Parliamentary Commissioner for administration (Ombudsman). This person shall hold office during

good behaviour and will have the duty and authority to investigate and report upon complaints or allegations of the infringement of fundamental rights and other injustices by public officials. Thus, the citizen has two avenues for redressing such violations; both are positive additions to Sri Lanka Constitutional law.

Regrettably, Articles 15 and 16 permit, in the interest of "national security", derogations from the presumption of innocence and the prohibition against retroactive application of criminal law. It is difficult to imagine a situation which would justify these derogations. Others of these rights may be derogated from in the interest of "racial and religious harmony", the "national economy", "public order and the protection of public health and morality", for the purpose of "securing due recognition and respect for the rights and freedoms of others", or of "meeting the just requirements of the general welfare of democratic society."*

THESE RIGHTS are further limited by Article 16, which provides for the continued validity of "all existing written law and unwritten law, notwithstanding any inconsistency with the preceding provisions of the Chapter." It also provides that punishment assigned under a law promulgated prior to the adoption of the Constitution shall not be a contravention of the Chapter (which contains, *inter alia*, the proscription against cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment).

This reservation is not required to ensure a smooth legal transition, since a general provision for this purpose is to be found in the Transitional Provisions Chapter. In addition, there is no indication that this is a temporary measure, calculated only to provide the government with sufficient time to

bring current laws into concurrence with the Constitution in an orderly fashion.

The new Constitution is more difficult to amend, any amendment requiring a two-thirds vote in Parliament and a majority vote at a national referendum. On its face, this change does not make amendment impossible but, under the new proportional representation system, it is unlikely that any future government will enjoy the necessary two-thirds majority. Had proportional representation been in effect prior to the last election, the UNP would not have had the votes to secure passage of its new Constitution.

THE NEW CONSTITUTION formalises the procedure for declaring a state of emergency. i.e., allowing regulations to be promulgated under the Public Security Ordinance. Article 155 provides that no section of the Constitution may be overridden by any regulation passed under the Ordinance. However, the Constitution permits derogation on grounds of public security from the provisions guaranteeing the rights of equality before law and non-discriminatory treatment generally, the rights to be free from arbitrary arrest; to be held only on judicial order; to be presumed innocent and not to be subject to retroactive criminal sanctions; and freedom of speech, publication, assembly, association, religious worship, cultural expression, and movement. Any proclamation of a state of emergency by the President must be approved by Parliament within fourteen days, or such reasonable time as is necessary to reassemble Parliament, and it automatically lapses unless approved by Parliament. Once approved, the Proclamation is valid for only 90 days

and must thereafter be reissued and reapproved. If the state of emergency has been in effect for six continuous months, a more stringent Parliamentary majority is required to extend it again.

This two stage procedure for invoking the Public Security Ordinance is a valuable check on abuse of power and makes a notable addition to the Constitution.

Independence of the Judiciary. SEVERAL ARTICLES of the new Constitution affect the Judiciary, designed to protect it against political influence and pressures. The previous Judicial Services Advisory Board and the Judicial Service Disciplinary Board are now consolidated into one Judicial Service Commission. This Commission makes recommendations to the President regarding the appointment, transfer, discipline and dismissal of judges. The members of the Commission are the Chief Justice and two members of the Supreme Court appointed by the President for five years. The scope of the Commission's power extends to scheduled public officers working in the judicial branch. The court system is restructured and there are now two appellate courts, the Supreme Court and a Court of Appeal, and several courts of first instance, including a High Court.

There is one disturbing provision affecting the security of tenure, and consequently the independence of the Judiciary. Article 163, to be found in the Transitional Provisions Chapter, terminates the tenure of all judges of the previous Supreme Court and High Court holding office on the day before the promulgation of the Constitution. While a number of judges have been reappointed to either the new Supreme Court, Court of Appeal or High Court, eight former Supreme Court Justices and

five former High Court Judges have been removed from the bench with no cause stated.

Under Sri Lanka law, these judges are not allowed to practice as attorneys-at-law without the permission of the President. It is understood that in one case already such permission has been refused. Thus, these former judges may be forced out of the profession they have been engaged in their whole lives.

The idea of judicial independence demands that judges be removed only on cause presented, and not for reasons of convenience after a change of government. It is no justification that a similar procedure was adopted by Mrs Bandaranaike's government at the introduction of the 1972 constitution. A procedure of this kind impedes the independence of the Judiciary and can only tend to weaken the judicial process.

The previous government did, at least, reappoint all the judges who were under the new retirement age. This time, a total of thirteen judges have not been reappointed, including eight from the Supreme Court and five from the High Court. None of these judges have reached the retirement age.

Special Commissions, Legislative Imposition of Civic Disabilities. Under the "Special Presidential Commissions of Inquiry Law," No. 7 of 1978, the President is authorised to appoint a judge or judges to constitute Commissions of Inquiry, whose purpose will be to inquire into alleged abuses by members of the previous administration. There are a number of objectionable features to this law.

The Commissions have the power of summons and subpoena and can invoke the aid of the Supreme

Court in punishing contempt. Yet, they are not bound by the rules of evidence, and may admit evidence which would be otherwise inadmissible in a court. They are empowered to exclude both press and public from any of their proceedings.

They are empowered to find any person guilty of "any act of political victimisation, misuse or abuse of power, corruption or any fraudulent act, in relation to any court or tribunal or any public body, or in relation to the administration of any law or the administration of justice." When a Commission makes its findings, it refers them to the President, who is obliged to publish the report in the *Gazette*. This report is "final and conclusive, and shall not be called in question in any court."

MANY INDIVIDUALS have been required to appear before such a Commission, notwithstanding the availability of the criminal courts for the prosecution of those against whom allegations of misconduct have been levelled. These persons have not enjoyed the benefit of trial, and they are not even entitled to legal representation before the Commissions unless and until formal charges are made against them. Persons have been attacked to state counsel in speeches widely reported in the press, without any right to legal representation. There is no appeal of issues of law or fact.

Sentencing under this procedure is carried out by Parliament, by passing legislation imposing disabilities on persons who have been condemned by the Commission. Thus, the party previously in the opposition is now passing sentences on those who recently held the reins of power. Over thirty Ministers, Deputy Ministers, Mayors and other public figures have been the object of such bills imposing

civic disabilities. They have lost the right to vote or run for office for up to seven years. They have been prohibited for life from holding a position in the judicial or government service and from working for government owned or partially owned corporations. That these individuals can be deprived of their civil rights and, in some instances, their livelihood, without trial of judicial process is to be deeply regretted.

The fact that legislation is required to impose these disabilities indicates that, at least in part, this is a form of retroactive penal legislation. It is hard to reconcile these procedures with the rights and guarantees proclaimed in the Constitution.

**Footnote:* This presents more than theoretical problems. For example the "Criminal Procedure (Special Provisions) Law," No. 15 of 1978, provides that a person may be detained with no possibility of bail "on an allegation that he has committed" one of a number of scheduled crimes (e.g. destruction of property by 'offensive weapons' murder, crimes against the state, or conspiracy to commit one of these crimes). Those detained for lesser offences such as robbery, attempted robbery, lurking by night, or attempt and conspiracy to commit any of these or other crimes may be granted bail only in exceptional circumstances.

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NEXT WEEK

- KAMPUCHEA, IRAN,
MIDDLE EAST
 - UNCTAD V.
 - ALCOHOLISM
-

DISTRICT MINISTERS—2

How The Scheme Should Work

by R. Kahawita

WE CONCLUDED the first part of this article by stating that the aim of the new administration should be "to unify the village folk." We are not alone in seeking to maintain community harmony in the Villages. India has a vast net of Village Panchayats (equivalent to our VCC) to look after the village interests. In order to streamline Panchayat activities and develop local responsibilities. The Union Government appointed a Committee, headed by no less a person than Asoka Metha. This report recommended "that political parties should play a part in Panchayat Elections."

Asoka Metha report was discussed by the All India Panchayat Parisad (convention) a week ago and the Parisad opposed vehemently the recommendation that political parties should play a part in Panchayat elections. The reason was that such a move would completely demolish the "community feeling" prevalent in village communities. This is what we have been advocating all along the line—For progress, there must be community harmony. Government of India like ourselves, draws her strength from the villages and she feels that "Power should move from the village to the higher level and not the other way round.

Before we go into how the District Ministers should work, we would like to ask how much of the old village level administration, a national heritage which the colonial Government adopted with modifications and refinements as the most suitable to meet the

aspirations of our people, will be resuscitated and given recognition under the District Ministers? Remember, with our employment and development policies we are moving more and more people into rural areas.

With Mahaweli development programme gaining momentum, there is bound to be a powerful pull towards the now so called "backwoods". In such a process of shifting employment opportunities into the "backwoods", the new or alien cultures, assimilated in the urban areas are bound to be introduced by the new comers creating social problems. Thus it may become necessary to adopt, the new to blend with desirable old traditions and Institutions.

Such a transfer of migrants, alien to the permanent residents is inevitable and the best we could do is to listen to the elders who, over generations have become a part and parcel of the soil. Therefore an adoptable form of dialoguing machinery between the village residents and the administration must be instituted so that their voices are heard to work out how the old can be put into new bottles in keeping with the national heritage they fostered over the centuries and then blend it with the new ideas assimilated by the new comers.

THE VOICE that the old residents will listen to, will be the voice of one of their kind who lives in their midst and are experiencing their problems and privations. This points to the old system which we replaced after Independence for dubious reasons. We say this because our politicians have carried out changes in our way of living saying that these changes are necessary to revive our cultural heritage. So far these utterances

are made with the tongue in the cheek so to say.

In brief, we took over with Independence three slabs of Administration—The Provincial Government Agent, the District Assistant Government Agent and the Divisional Chief Headman system. Thereafter we started to change, not the system, but the appellations. The Provincial GA was done away with. The AGA became the Government Agent in charge of a District, the Chief Headman came to be called the Divisional Revenue officer, and then changed to Assistant Government Agent. The Headman who used to be a permanent resident of the area he served became the "Grama Sevak"—a new transferable service. Today, this individual is called the "Grama Sevak Niladhari" (GSN). The substance in the three slabs has remained the same, what has been changed is the "skin" to satisfy the whims and fancies of the officers who chose to be Government Servants and not that of the village residents—They are "mute on-lookers" in the game.

The village folk abhor the epithet—"Niladhari". To them it implies too much of officiousness, creating a barrier between them and the "Niladhari". Thus a mini-bureaucracy has crept into the village level welfare. What the people desire is one of their kind whom they can trust, respect and listen to and abide by his advice before enforcing his "Niladhari authority". This is what successive Governments have failed to understand. At last today, with the supremacy entrusted to the people, a system of administration they can understand must be given to them—The system they understood and accepted is the best suited to our cultural background.

WHY THE OLD SYSTEM was changed is common knowledge, but with proportionate representation there cannot be that degree of "political fear" which was the root cause of the change, though it was not said so in so many words. It is the fact at the unofficial level, successive Governments set up Institutions as rewarding havens to supporters of respective political parties at the village level. There was the Political Authority—PA—about which we have already commented; another innovation for the same purpose is the Agricultural Development Committees—ADC—Co-operative societies where only the officials co-operate to "hood-wink" the rural people, Agricultural Committees etc. All these organisations are given certain Statutory Powers. So far they have proved ineffective to take the message to the village residents to enliven them into action to better their own conditions of living. It has only created factions among them.

As far as the village communities are concerned the impact of these multiple streams of authority has been to share their meagre monies with the authorities to enable them to survive in their own village. What these people miss is their own respected representative, residing amidst them, and of their own choice. This single individual has been replaced by a plethora of officials, committees, and societies. Their functions they do not understand. To the village folk they are intruders on their privacy and way of life. We have not yet understood that we Sinhala are Individualist, by culture, religious convictions, and habits. We have to recognise this before we attempt to change our social structure.

Still the village will be the beginning of our social, economic, and

cultural organisation. Village will be still where nation-hood will develop. In the new Constitution the people have been given the right to choose their leaders and tell them what they want.

And in our villages, ten million out of the fourteen million are there who can make the political decisions. This was something the erstwhile Colonial Government recognized and did not wish to interfere with the village administration they took over and step by step introduced reforms like the establishment of Village Councils and other local authorities. In this direction we have moved fast. Today there are 550 village councils representing 4.9 million voters out of a national strength of 6.25 million voters. It is from this 78.4 per cent of voters a Government draws her strength.

Bearing this in mind, what we wish to be achieved by the District Ministers must begin in the Villages and move upwards towards the Apex—the Cabinet and Parliament. THE NEW SYSTEM of District Ministers, now in the process of being organised/is primarily—I take it—meant to establish a dialogue between the people and the Government at a political level. It may be a means of getting the people to understand what lies behind the "directive principles of State Policy", their fundamental duties, and to enable them to participate in the implementation of Policies, development programmes and in turn the people to keep the Government informed of their needs, their aspirations, social goals, and what progress is being made in achieving them—starting from the village. The colonial Government did this in a way by meeting the people at "Division days" and giving them a hearing where they

lived.

Thus a District Minister and his officials are, in fact a District administrative entity as much as a Government Agent or an Assistant Government Agent was such an entity during the colonial days. But there is a difference. The District Minister will function as such, as long as he is a member of Parliament. The maximum period of his tenancy of office will be six years. There-after changes will take place according to the Political wishes of the people. Now two questions arise. One, should the people in a village be divided among themselves party-wise politically to disrupt rural harmony? And the other, with the six year change, should the progress in a village be halted or changed at the end of this period if the Political Party in power were to be changed? To us the answers to these two questions are a definite no. Let us now explain why?

The village life must be maintained as a harmonious unit with common objectives for contentment and happiness of the village people, and to improve the quality of life. However, much variegated the political hues in a village may be, all have a common desire to improve their life in the village. So political divisions have no meaning to the village people when it is a question of what they need to improve the village and its environment. In this, there cannot be divisions; to achieve their goals there must be unity, and unity is their strength to press home their needs.

Once the process of development in a village is set in motion through accepted policies which the people endorsed at the polls, the work must go on irrespective of political divisions, in the village. The political pattern may change

at the centre but the development process in the village should go on, without being changed due to political weathering. So what is needed at the village level is unity and continuity of development process.

These are matters the village residents themselves should decide not politically but according to their needs. Therefore political divisions should be discouraged in village level elections and even administrative action taken to encourage the election of a suitable candidate to represent them in the village councils—the grass root democratic but “welfare institution” and see that what development work or changes started by one administration is continued by the next. This is what the people desire in their own “centres of living—the village”. To maintain continuity of development process, the village level officials also must form a part of the village. This was the *raison d’être* for their own choice of the “official functionary,” we replaced by an alien Grama Sevaka Niladhari.

We have experienced divisions, a communal-wise, caste-wise, class-wise, religion-wise, and while we are straining to unify our basic social group, should we introduce an ideological division also to create human antipathy against another human because of his politics as well, where unity is the essential ingredient for their betterment? If we mean to implement section 12-2 of the constitution “No citizen shall be discriminated against on the grounds of race, religion, language, cast, sex, Political opinion place of birth or any one of such grounds.” These Rights can best be developed and cultivated at the village level. This is where these ideals should be encouraged to grow, flower and bear fruit—the one

fly in the ointment to pollute the village life is party Politics. We have had the sad experience of what could happen when a village is divided party-wise. From such divisions other hatreds surface to disrupt the whole village life. “The aim of The Dharmista Society” we propose to establish, should be to encourage the development of a single coherent community of human beings with one common aspiration—To make their community a harmonious, united group to maintain progress and prosperity—The beginning should be the village and it should not be divided into different political groups.

Often with ideological changes we see and have experienced the abandoning of accepted policies and programmes and new ideas imposed on the village life according to lines of thinking of the new Government. Consequently progress has come to a stand-still and the improvements in the village got rolled back to where it was. This is what has happened in the past entirely due to ideological rivalry, and there is no guarantee that it will not continue to happen if the village is divided according to party or ideological concepts at the centre. To remind us what happened in the past, these are relics of many “a brick dropped” by an ousted Government.

We do not seem to have learnt a lesson, we Sinhala seem to move in the same groove—self-glorification. Else what is the explanation for the following advertisement appearing in the CDN of 25.12.78 under the authority of the Commissioner of National Housing: “Tender for the supply of Grey Granite Tablets for Foundation stone laying and opening ceremonies of Housing Schemes, Flats etc.” This is of course a grand idea to buy the Patronage of Powers be. We hope this kind of bluff

will not spread to other Departments too.

This kind of opening and closing ceremonies we have had in plenty. There is one such relic glaring at the visitor on the Negombo Road erected in 1969 to the dumping of a cart load of earth to construct a new approach road to Colombo. The result is we lost the election in 1970 and we have an alternative road, “The Bandaranaike Mawatha to the Bandaranaike International Air Port.” Our monument has been left high and dry.

Another, for some months past, I have been passing a six house, housing scheme at about the 20th mile post on Narammala Kuliya-pitiya PWD road—bang on the road, complete with a brick pillar to encase the “Grey Granite Tablet for opening Ceremonies of Housing Schemes.” The Department must be awaiting the tender supply. In the mean time the completed houses have been abandoned and stray cattle have taken possession while the people for whom the six houses were built are living under trees.

We still want to introduce political schisms into our peaceful villages. The important thing is not to give relief to the homeless people but the opening ceremonies. So the tax payer’s money is wasted to pander to the vanity of some VIP who wishes to see his name monumentalized before his death at the expense of the taxpayer. This kind of thing will not happen, if our development and administrative inspirations are drawn at the village level. The people have the answer to this kind of buffoonery of the people whom they trusted to deliver the goods. We repeat we have not yet learnt a lesson.

We have strayed from our main theme. These asides are neces-

sary to remind us how our rulers can be misled by scheming officials.

Now getting back to the track—so far, may be due to political factions, the basic improvements to village life have not reached them. It is reported, once in a while in the press that a "model village" was built in a couple of months and ceremonially a commemerating tablet was unveiled by a VIP. They cannot be real villages but mousou-leums. There is no life in them as understood by a "village" and without life there cannot be a village.

The task is to take the art of living to the 6000 odd villages from where the present Government draws her strength. To sustain that strength unify the village and show the way how to act as a harmonious unit to improve their living conditions. This cannot be achieved if the village is divided into as many political groups as there are power hungry political parties at the village elections too. This is something the Administration should give serious consideration to when the elections to the village councils come up next year.

(To be Continued)

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STRAIGHT FROM THE
BACKWOODS

Rural Development— And Minister

The *Daily Mirror* of December 10, 1978 had a brief report of the parliamentary discussions on the vote of the Rural Development Ministry, reported by Richard de Silva and Ravi Thavarajah. The Minister had mentioned of the "living" conditions in our village

being contrary to the UN declaration of Human rights. The Minister had also stated that the basic human amenities like water, latrines, housing etc, are not available to the villager. She also admits that this situation in all our villages is a disgrace to human beings. *Well, Minister, I feel it is a disgrace to all previous governments, the present government, all opposition parties, ministers, MPs, all learned people and the urban folk. It is a disgrace to the whole social system.*

The Minister has stated that the money allocated to the R.D. Ministry was not sufficient and that she wants more money, for more work or for more overtime and travelling expenses and, we do not know for what. It's good if the "more money" is to provide water, better housing and latrine facilities to the villages of Ceylon through the Rural Development Societies. As according to the paper report a few MPs had expressed their views and suggestions on how the ministry should work and what should be done through the RD Societies.

SPEAKING ABOUT rural development, many people, especially the MPs think that RD is "Shramadana" and therefore RD societies should be limited to Shramadana. Very often the RDs is called to clear a road in the village or cut a new one and the MP of the area comes for the opening ceremony; he gets the credit for providing a road. Thereafter the RDs is forgotten and neglected until another road has to be cut! Rural Development is not only Shramadana; nor is it the appointment of more RD officers to overcrowd the already crowded govt. offices in the rural areas. Nor is it, to provide the Grama Sevakas and RDOs with housing facilities, nor is it the sending of RDOs to foreign countries for training in rural

development.

A few months ago the Peoples' Bank *Economic Review* had an article with a good definition of rural development. It said "...Rural Development does not mean agricultural development. The latter though is an integral part of the former. Emphasis on the latter in terms of growth, increased output and income however can run counter to the basic objectives of R.D. Rural Development also includes such activities as improvement of community development and improvement of health and educational facilities in rural areas. These aspects although vital are not enough for Rural Development. Therefore RD has the ultimate aim of making maximum use of the available human and local resources. The improvement of income levels and living conditions of the village people as a whole and more particularly of the village poor. And RD envisages an effective participation of all people in the overall development process."

Today RD is necessary and urgent because all previous governments took the produce of the village to feed the city and completely neglected the rural areas and it's people. The District Minister for Kalutara has stated that 80% of our national income comes from the rural areas, but what have these rural people got in return for it? Cattleshed like huts, dark, tiny, overcrowded, insecure, unsuitable for human living, Long walks for drinking water, no water for cultivation, no proper health and education facilities, no ownership of land, no proper transport system for people to move about and to move the produce to market, no credit facilities for an emergency,

no recreation facilities, no planned marketing system for the produce and no fixed prices for it. In short the majority of the local peasants living in our villages have no fundamental human rights!

It does not matter who's who started Rural Development but its high time the govt. got down to some constructive work on RD. It is a crime to note that a few cities are modernised (highly) with skyscraper buildings and parks with costly fountains, baby trains when most of our villages are in total darkness without the basic amenities. Due to the government's failure to have a fixed agricultural policy and plan more and more village youth are leaving cultivation to secure jobs in the city. Hence the unemployed in the village increases. This has become a trend in the dry zone villages.

GOING THROUGH the progress of the govt's new RD movement what could one see. The main concentration is on a solid RD hall in the village, money is approved for this and the contract of it given to a govt. supporter. Before the hall is completed the RD society has liquidized. The villager seeing no immediate relief for his problems gets disgusted and discouraged easily and leaves the society.

Whatever the Minister may say from Colombo there is political discrimination and revenge at the grassroot level of the RD movement. The non-government supporters are not informed of the meetings or they are kept off the committee or if the non government supporters are officials in a RD society the MP not only neglects the society but also instructs the government officials not to co-operate with the RDs. This has happened in this area and evidence is available. Today, the Government has proved to the

rural folk that the RDs is the official UNP branch in the village and also some sort of secret service to provide the government with details of anti-government supporters and activities in the village.

As a result of this it is very difficult to get effective participation from the villagers in rural development efforts sponsored by the government. Another reason for the failure of the present RD movement is that, the peasant expected the RDs to be a powerful village body that could solve their problems. When the actual village problems and the peasants immediate economic demands were put forward to the officials viz., RDO, Grama Sevaka, they conveniently kept off the scene. And the leadership of many RDs being government supporters they too could not give the needed answers to the hungry and angry peasants. This too discouraged the villagers and some militant village youth and elders have given up future participation in village development work for good.

It also should be noted that some RDO's refused to register a few RDs and this also has created a set back to some village leaders. It should be said that although many government officials have been instructed to visit even the remote villages, these officials have not seen the colour of the villages but have claimed travelling allowances for visiting them. This is how the Rural Development goes on in the villages today.

IN THIS CONTEXT the minister and all others interested in Rural Development should rethink as to how the RD movement should be moved forward to benefit the rural peasants. The minister and other concerned govt. officials on the village levels could be more open to the ideas of the village, could learn from the villagers how the RD movement could help them.

Selection of RDOs should be carefully done. For the sake of being a graduate from a university does not mean the only qualification to become a RDO. The RDO must be ready to love, understand, live and work with the village folk. He should be available to the villagers at any time of the day. He should share the joy and sorrow of the village. It is best if the experienced elders and dedicated village youth are selected to do this job being in their respective villages.

The present RDOs are from the city or village towns and they are mainly in the DRO office or Kachcheri. More than half the month they are on leave either at their own home towns which are far away from the working area or they are busy attending to some of their private matters. One RDO could handle about 5 villages and the selected one could be a resident of his village and operate from there. If the selected RDO is not active or corrupt the village majority should be given the power to remove him from office and elect a suitable person. This is a better way of giving the village its leadership and power. Further the government could save the cost of providing housing facilities to RDOs.

Instead of sending RDOs to foreign countries to study rural development, the government could request the services of the local persons, groups and organisations educated and experienced in rural development, community services, social welfare etc., to train these RDOs. The trainees should be kept in their respective villages and trained than to take him out of his working situation to train him elsewhere. There are so many mushroom voluntary groups and organisations that are involved in rural development at the village level and the government should get their co-operation to make it a joint effort.

Costly village halls of concrete and tiles are not needed urgently, its only a small hall to meet the village needs. A wattle and daub structure with cadjan or grass roof would meet the need of the day. Talented and learned persons in the village should be given a prominent place and the necessary backing to serve the village, instead of bringing highly educated (over qualified) pandits to the scene.

The most important of all is to draw the villager into the movement and get his full co-operation towards its work. This could be done if the RD movement could prove to him or her that it could provide some relief to his problems. The poor villager especially should be the most important part of the movement. The govt. must give ear and hand both to what the Rural Societies say and all village level govt. officials should co-operate and help the societies. Unless the full co-operation of the govt. officials are rendered to the village RDs it is impossible to make the RD movement a success. These are the biggest incentives this govt. could provide for the villagers to get involved in the Rural Development.

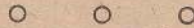
Lastly, the govt. should remember and keep in mind when dealing with the Rural Development Societies that RD is necessary today because the political system so far in Ceylon has failed to provide at least the basic human needs—food, clothing, health care, education, housing to the majority of the people who are involved in agricultural production in the rural areas. Hence these people who would be involved in RD are tensed, frustrated, easily discouraged, unhappy, uneducated, ill-mannered and hungry. They want quick results for their immediate prob-

lems and fool proof plans for a long term action to liberate them. They could be very demanding and ungrateful.

Is the Minister and Government ready to take a chance. I wonder?

Loghead

Lower Uva Area.
Jan. 1, 1979.



SPOTLIGHT

Too Close For Comfort

by Canax

Kampuchea, or Cambodia to give it its better known name, falls to the rebels backed by Vietnam and people I know get the jitters—all because a Ministry spokesman would say no more than that our Foreign Minister, Mr. A. C. S. Hameed, was studying events in that country "closely". Period.

There's a lot to be said for conducting diplomacy on the quiet, but there surely are times when even the thoughts, let alone words and deeds, of powerful men like our Foreign Minister should be given adequate publicity, not for their own sake, but to assure the people of this, the 99th most powerful country in the world, that the situation, whatever it may be, is well under control and that there is no need to panic. Sri Lanka is, after all, chairman of the non-aligned Third World community, which is no small responsibility.

My daughter was terrified at the thought of Mr. Hameed catching the first flight out of Katunayake and jetting it to Cambodia in a desperate bid to stop the fighting. No, she was terrified not that he would successfully bring about a truce but that he would inadvertently get caught in the cross-

fire and create another vacancy in Parliament.

My wife was shaking with fear herself, somehow convinced that, because of what she called "this non-aligned Third World nonsense" the only possible outcome would be the Third World War, which she considered imminent. But when my daughter expressed her own fear, I was surprised to hear her explaining to the child that our Foreign Minister simply could not get caught in the crossfire even if he wanted to; that it was all over in Cambodia bar the shouting. What was more, she told the child patiently, Mr. Hameed, being a man of action, wouldn't be so foolish as to go to Cambodia when he should be taking the first flight out in the other direction because the United Nations was where all the action really was.

I know the Foreign Ministry will not sing my praises for this, but I honestly think it will help my fellow countrymen to know the many roles Sri Lanka considered playing in Cambodia in the interests of world peace. After all, America has shown itself to be a bad loser, sulking and displaying little or no sportsmanship since Vietnam. So if the world's most powerful nation cannot, or will not, get into the spirit of the game and give the world the lead it so desperately needs, Sri Lanka cannot stand idly by and take refuge in false modesty. We know we are a Super Power, even if the dest of the world doesn't, so what is there to feel so shy about?

The truth is that, as an obvious world leader, Sri Lanka has been studying events in Cambodia more closely than our Foreign Ministry spokesman was willing to admit.

One of the contingency reports prepared and considered by our National Security Council dealt with the possibility, necessity and de-

sirability of Sri Lanka providing military assistance to bring about peace. But the Labour Ministry had intervened, wanting everything "cut and dry". A Ministry official had pointed out that the terms and conditions of employment would, at best, be uncertain, and that there was every likelihood of our fighting men being exploited in the jungles of Cambodia in much the same way as our women were being taken advantage of in the oily jungles of West Asia.

As a result of the West Asian experience, our Labour Ministry is understandably wary about job opportunities abroad—which is what the Cambodian situation really boiled down to. Even the accommodation available, it was pointed out, would be nothing to write home about, and certainly not five-star class. But what finally decided the issue was the Labour Ministry's reluctance to endorse military intervention until and unless we got written guarantees from both sides, the Pol Pot regime as well as the rebels, that our boys would be brought back safely, pay packets and all, once the game was over.

I understand that, as an alternative, we even thought of sending Major-General Sepala Attygalle as an adviser—to both sides, of course—but our harbour and airport authorities couldn't imagine carrying on for even a month without the aid of his organisational flair. In the circumstances, our government took the view that charity began at home.

The last I heard was that the rebels, by then reportedly in command, had sent a communication to our Foreign Minister. But Mr. Hameed hadn't got the message and said so, though he fogot to explain whp. The rebels may get disillusioned with Sri Lanka

unless someone gets word to them pretty quickly about the horrible state of our telecommunications network. Mr. Hameed's hot-line has been out of order for weeks, and he is dependent entirely on the postman on a push-bicycle.

This may really surprise the rebels of Kampuchea, but they must be told the truth that even our telegrams go by post.

O O O O

SHORT STORY FROM NIGERIA

Obatala's Blessing

by Sita Selvadurai

Kemi could hardly contain her joy. She felt so happy. The doctor had confirmed that she was with child, and had given her the reports to substantiate his verdict. It was now nearly three years since she had been united in wedlock with Eneka, and it had pained her so, that she could not bear him a child. She had attended the Clinic at the hospital in Abeokuta, the town where they now lived. The gynoecologist had done a thorough medical check-up on her and Eneka, and had even performed a minor operation on her. But still there were no signs of fertility. Then six months ago, she and Eneka had made trip northward to the banks of the Oshun river and offered a fowl each to supplicate the deity Oshun to give them children. Barely two months had passed by, and Kemi had missed one period and then another and her hopes had been confirmed today by the doctor.

The door bell of their ground floor flat rang shrilly, and Kemi ran to open it. "Eneka darling," she sobbed hanging on her husband's neck. "I am with child. The doctor gave me the reports today." Eneka dropped the brief case he was carrying on to the floor. "I am so happy, Kemi," he cried as he hug-

ged her in turn. Kemi made akara for dinner that day with ground beans. She usually fried them plain, or with only tomatoes or onions, but today as a special treat she added sardines to them, for her heart was light and joyful.

But though her heart was light Kemi slept not that night. Instead she lay gazing into the darkness, listening to Eneka's deep breathing. She thought of her childhood days when she had lived in the village with her grandfather and grandmother, about 200 kilometers from Abeokuta—the city of rocks. She had grown up in the village and spent the most impressionable years of her life, inured to simple ways and simple things. Grandmother was big made and large, and every inch the resourceful housewife. Besides running the home with meticulous care, and attending to material needs of grandfather and herself, grandmother had a little kiosk at the edge of the garden where she sold such sensible household items as washing powder, milk tins, matches and the like to the less organised housewives. She added the few extra kobos she made in this way, to the modest income that Grandpa gave her from his farm. Grandpa on the contrary, was a kindly man, and in grandma's words 'dreamy'. But Kemi adored him. All the love she had had in her childhood, was from grandfather. Grandmother never believed in petting, she said it spoiled the child.

Grandpa believed in the intrinsic powers of the orishas or gods, and many were the tales he had related to Kemi/about them. How Orunmila the eldest son of the supreme sky deity Olurun, was the arch diviner who through the reading of palm nuts and cowries, was able to predict the intentions of Olurun in advance. How Obatala, whose name signifies King of the

White Cloth, and whom Olurun trusted as his own son, had come down to earth on a gold chain and created land out of the watery wastes of the earth, and how he had created the first humans by shaping figures of clay and giving life to them with the help of Olurun. Why the orisha Eshu who was responsible for confusion had been banished to live in the open forever. How Ogun the god of iron had traded his secret to the people of Ife for an Oba or chieftanship. How Shango had come to be the god of the thunderbolt and so on.

Grandfather had a very special way of relating stories, and Kemi never tired of listening to him. He cleared his throat and began in a nonchalant droneful drawl. Then as the tale progressed his face lit up with animation, and towards the end it was eloquent with delight. Besides, these childhood stories had made a profound impression on her. They had in fact helped to build her character. Kemi reflected that many of the values and principles that she held good today, had been acquired as a result of these folklore.

At the beginning, when the earth and humans and animals in it were new, and it had not still been determined what place each creature should have in the scheme of things, Orunmila decided to ask every orisha, human being, and creature a simple question, and that the nature of each individuals reply would determine his fate and his style of living. When Orunmila asked the guinea fowl if he would wear a cord round his neck, the guinea fowl had answered, "No, I do not want to wear a cord." So it was decreed that guinea fowl shall not wear a cord. When the goat was asked the same question, he had answered flippantly, "Do you think you can do it." Instantly, the goat had got a rope round its neck and wears it to

this day. Then when it came to the orisha Eshu's turn to be questioned, Orunmila asked him if he would choose to live inside or outside? And because Eshu's mind was full of confusion, he had replied, "Why outside, of course!" Then correcting himself immediately he had said, "No, on the contrary, inside." But because he had not given a direct answer in the first instance, and had left the question hanging, Eshu had been banished to live in the open forever. "So my child," grandfather would add in his own inimitable drawl. "You must always try to give a direct answer to a simple question". And Kemi had endeavoured more than ever to fulfil his expectations.

Her favourite folklore had been the tale of Obatala's farm at Abeokuta. She had made grandfather repeat this tale to her over and over again. The story goes how Obatala owned a farm at Abeokuta, the very town where she now lived, and how at the very beginning when he apportioned land to humans after creating them, he had doled out all fertile portions of land to others, and kept the barren rock for himself. But in spite of its stony and barren nature, Obatala's land yielded more crops than all the other lands. Because of their ignorance the people became envious and resentful of Obatala, and they began to whisper unkind things about him. "He has doled out to us portions of land that begrudge us our crops, and kept for himself a portion that yielded more than he can eat," they said. And the jealousy in them prevailed. They decided after much contemplation and conference to put an end to Obatala by rolling down stones on him as he passed by. When Olurun the supreme deity heard that Obatala was done to death by the envious people he sent a messenger down to earth

to collect the battered pieces of Obatala's body. Because of his mighty powers Olurun was able to give life to these pieces, and so Obatala lived on, an even greater orisha than before. Obatala was regarded as the shaper of infants in the womb of humans, and by extension the special protector of the malformed.

So when Kemi, after a few months of their marriage found that she had not conceived, she had got a statue of Obatala, draped it in a white cloth and had given it special significance. Even after she had learnt that she was pregnant, Kemi had continued to burn incense at his statue and always made it a point to keep the cloth draped round Obatala, a spotless white colour.

During the early months of her pregnancy, Kemi went about her daily tasks as usual. She taught in the Primary School in the mornings, and when she returned home in the afternoon she busied herself with her household work. She wrote and conveyed the happy tidings of her pregnancy to Grandpa, Grandma, and Eneka's parents. She had written to her father too, for though he was married again, he was still her father. Kemi had lost her mother when she was a child, and that was how she came to be brought up by her grandparents. It was her mother who had given her the name Olu Kemi—meaning God's blessed One. Kemi loved her name. It was not just the euphony of it—it brought back memories of her mother. She had been christened Patricia when she was baptised. But having grown up as she had with her grandparents, Kemi's culture was steeped in tradition, and Christianity was but to her only a name.

The post took its time, and slowly letters began to come in from friends and relatives, who

had heard of her pregnancy. They were full of well meaning advice. Kemi attended the prenatal clinic at the hospital very regularly, and everything seemed to be going on as it should.

Then one fine morning when Kemi was about seven months pregnant, grandma turned up. She had left Grandpa, who was now too old and feeble to travel she said, in the care of neighbours, and had come to put things in order for Kemi. Grandma seemed to release energy in proportion to her avoidupois. From the moment of her arrival she busied herself cleaning, polishing and scrubbing, and within a day the house gleamed as it had not done for a long time. She cooked many delicacies for Kemi and Eneka. She forbade Kemi to eat tomatoes. It was bad for the kidneys when you are with child, she said. She made Kemi promise that she would lie in bed with her feet up for a hour every afternoon. Then when she thought that she had set things right again, she prepared to leave. As a parting bit of advice she said, "I suppose you know Kemi, that you have to offer a new born kid to Obatala, so that your unborn child will be healthy and whole. Fun-fun is to kid soon. I shall send her to you as soon as I go back. Within a week of the kid being born, you will have to offer it as a sacrifice to placate Obatala." With that grandma left. True to her word within three days of grandma's departure Funfun arrived in a pickup. Her belly was round and big. Kemi was delighted to see Funfun and she knew Funfun reciprocated her feelings. Funfun the white goat had been Kemi's special pet when she lived with her grandparents. It was Funfun she used to cuddle and fondle whenever she was lonesome for love. How could she sacrifice Funfun's kid so that her unborn child

would be whole and healthy? Surely Obatala was a great orisha and he would understand. Kemi housed Funfun in the wooden shed at the back of the house, made her a bed of straw, gave her plenty to eat and cared for her as best as she could. Then one night about a fortnight after Funfun's arrival she was awakened at dead of night by a loud bleating. "Baa—aa, Baa—aa, Baa—aa," came the sound. It rent the stillness of the night air. Had Funfun kidded?

Kemi put a wrap round her and quietly opened the door as not to wake Eneka and tiptoed outside. The full moon shed a silvery light across her path, and the rocks of Abeokuta beckoned from afar as she made her way to Funfun's shed. There sure enough was Funfun tenderly licking her new born kid. It was white in colour like its mother. Kemi knelt down and stroked Funfun, and Funfun looked at her trustingly. Then she covered the kid with a cloth and tiptoed back to bed. The kid was as precious to Funfun as her unborn child was to her. She could not offer it as a sacrifice. She will not do it, she determined.

As the days passed by, Kemi's abdomen grew bigger and bigger, and she began to feel the strain of her pregnancy. The doctor assured her at the regular checkups that all was well. But a strange fear lurked in her heart, for she had not made the customary sacrifice.

Then one night after dinner, Kemi felt the muscles of her abdomen tighten. At first she did not take it seriously, but then it began to repeat itself. Perhaps she should go to hospital, she told Eneka. The next day, at the maternity ward of the hospital, Kemi gave birth to a baby boy—eight pounds in weight, whole and healthy. A week later she came home with her son.

That night as Kemi lay again in her very own bed, her heart was happy. She could see the full moon through her window. It was like a big, silver coin, the same as it had been on the day that Funfun's kid was born. Then out of the silence of the night came the white, goat's bleating. "Baa-aa, Baa-aaa Baa-aa," it rang. Then in a wee shrill voice came another "Baa-aa, Baa-aa,". It rent the silence of the night air. The rocks of Abeokuta took up the sound and echoed it.

Kemi drew her infant son closer to her bosom, and shut her eyes blissfully. A smile flitted across her face, for she had no doubt now, that Obatala's blessing on her household had been double fold.

LETTER

TULF

Sir,

The Tamil United Liberation Front, by its actions, appears to be a contradiction in terms. One wonders whether it looks after the interests of the Tamils or whether its members of parliament are united among themselves. The TULF members of parliament had promised to fight for a separate state, but they took their oaths to uphold a unitary state. They want to liberate the Tamils, but are reported to be negotiating with the government to become District Ministers. They want to be in the opposition and at the same time in the government! How can one member be a District Minister and another the Leader of the Opposition!!

How long will this continue? Who suffers?

M. H. Subramaniam

Kanarthamadam,
Jaffna.
2.1.79

Confidentially

New Brain Drain—2

IS IT NOT TRUE that Ministers of this Dharmista Government have begun to bemoan the fact that there was a dearth of skilled men for development projects? That the *Ceylon Daily News* of Monday, January 22, 1978 on its front page reported: "...The shortage of skilled personnel, such as accountants, engineers and technicians, is retarding the economic and development programmes of the Government. Only 60 per cent of the de-centralised budget allocations for the districts is being utilised because of the lack of skilled personnel. This warning was given by the Minister of Youth Affairs and Employment and the acting Foreign Minister, Mr. Ranil Wickremasinghe, yesterday addressing the 2nd Annual Conference of the Sri Lanka branch of the Institute of Cost and Management Accountants (ICMA). He said that the public and private sectors now very badly needed crash programs to train skilled personnel. This Government was endeavouring to transform the economy of the country from a stagnant backward one to a progressive expanding economy. But the lack of personnel to implement the many programs was a matter of concern to the Government..." That this is a sad confession for a Minister to make nearly 19 months after this government was installed in power? That no sooner this government had come to power in July 1977 there were euphoric statements that a majority of those who had fled the country on the brain drain from 1956 to 1977 would return because of the dharmista policies of the government? That instead of even a small fraction of the technically qualified who

had gone abroad returning to help the economic development programmes, more and more technically qualified persons are getting away as fast as they can? That it is one thing for the unemployed, under-employed, and poorly-paid manual and semi-skilled workers going to the oil rich countries for jobs? (That the export of this kind of manpower already brings in an estimated Rs. 600 million a year?). That it is, however, a totally different matter to continue to loose more and more of the technically qualified? That they are going in spite of the New Constitution and the new Income Tax Concessions? That *Tribune* is aware that a large number of technically qualified and functionally experienced bureaucrats, technocrats and officials in the public sector are moving heaven and earth to get jobs abroad or even in the private sector? That the number of such officials, including blue-eyed Secretaries, who are circulating their bio-datas to possible employers abroad will surprise the top government hierarchy? That UN and International Civil Service officials who attend conferences in Colombo are besieged by the technically qualified and the highly placed bureaucrats wanting a helping hand to find jobs abroad?

AND IS IT NOT A FACT that what is driving these technically qualified persons to go abroad even now is not the money or the more lucrative salaries? That ministers and politicians are tempted to say that this continuing brain drain was motivated by greed for power, position and money? That whilst this may have an element of truth, it does nobody any good to dismiss the problem through such over-simplified populist utterances? That the time has come for a proper examination of the psychological dimensions of this new

drain? That apart from the brain drain government must also know why qualified technocrats and bureaucrats continue to feel frustrated—in fact more frustrated than at any time in the past, even during the seven bad years of 1970-1977? That this frustration has led to virtual inertia? That many bureaucrats and technocrats now openly say that with all the other limitations, they were able to do a better job of work in the 1970-77 period than they can do today? That as a result of the post-1977 UNP's imposition of political and personal (often based on family bandyism) control of bureaucrats and technocrats an inhibited environment has been created which is not conducive to proper and constructive day-to-day work in any development project? That they feel that fairplay and justice have become disappearing virtues and that administration in the main has passed into the hands of imposters, knaves and fools who have succeeded in securing control of key positions through party or family stoicism? That the activities of these favourites have made it impossible for honest-to-goodness bureaucrats and technocrats to function regularly and efficiently? That this failure to generate constructive work in the public sector by the government has been misconstrued as sabotage and anti-national subversion? That saboteurs and subversionists may exist, but to brand all the frustrated as saboteurs will only make matters worse? That as a result of this there is a virtual stalemate on all development fronts in the public sector? That it will be foolish to fall for the usual gimmick of blaming everything on "sabotage and subversion"—whereas the truth is otherwise? That the attempt to politicise (UNPise) the Administration (via family bandyism and favouritism) is the main cause for the growing rot?

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