

# Forward

THE VIEW FROM THE LEFT

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## We Say.....

### Stick up

If a highwayman sticks a pistol at your head and demands your purse, there is little point in saying afterwards that you surrendered it voluntarily.

But this is what Finance Minister Ronnie de Mel (supported obligato by the Central Bank's Governor Rasaputram) wants us to believe.

Everyone knows that, when Ronnie went calling on the World Bank, he was told:— "Devalue or else!"

The message was rubbed in further when a special delegation from the World Bank came here to tell the Cabinet that no more nonsense would be tolerated.

Ronnie wants us to believe that our rupee has been sinking rapidly in the past fortnight, from Rs. 21.39 to over Rs. 23.05 per US dollar, because unscrupulous tycoons like his arch-enemy Upali Wijewardene want to create a panic and make a few millions on the side.

But his adviser Governor Rasaputram tells us that the "slide" was monitored and controlled by his Central Bank so that the rupee could break the more "realistic" Rs. 23 barrier and stop there.

The real fact, hidden by both, is that the devaluation demanded by the World Bank has not yet started. This is a devaluation against the whole "basket of currencies" and not merely the panic reactions of a 'floating' rupee to the temporary and fluctuating fortunes of the Almighty Dollar on international monetary markets, where it has been tumbling in the same period.

Minister de Mel may be feeling small over President Jayawardene's rescue operation in teleporting him from Devinuwara to Bulathsinhala. But neither shouts nor screams can hide the fact that we have agreed to be a willing victim of an arranged financial stick-up between the World Bank and our government.



### Murder will out

The truth of the old saying that "Murder will out" has been proved again in the report of the special tribunal, headed by Israel's Chief Justice, that probed complicity in the shocking genocide that took place in the prison camps of Lebanon.

It has been proved that Israel's Defence Minister Sharon, its two leading generals, and maybe Prime Minister Begin himself, were aware in advance of this horrible crime against humanity, not to speak of members of the Reagan Administration itself.

The whole world will support the demand of PLO leader, Yasser Arafat, that these criminals should be arraigned before an international court for despicable crimes against humanity.

The "Butcher of Lyons" is behind bars. What about the "Butchers of Beirut"?



### Amendments

The fifth amendment to the 1978 Constitution will be presented to Parliament this month. A sixth and maybe a seventh amendment are being prepared.

Why waste time and money? Why not just scrap the 1978 Constitution and enact another with a single clause that, while he lives, anything President Jayawardene finds expedient should be regarded as Sri Lanka's fundamental law?

## Windfall Profits for Foreign Banks

Foreign banks operating in Sri Lanka, especially the American ones, made windfall profits in the first fortnight of this month, and especially between February 7 and 11, when the government and the Central Bank allowed a dramatic decline in the value of Sri Lanka's "floating" rupee vis-a-vis the US dollar.

Financial circles estimate these windfall profits at over one billion rupees.

With the dollar falling in value on the international market vis-a-vis most major western currencies due to speculation over a possible cut in US discount rates, plus the knowledge that the government had yielded to an insistent demand of the World Bank and IMF for an almost 20 per cent devaluation of the rupee, a highly speculative situation developed in local financial and trading circles.

On the one hand, the demand for dollars to pay for imports and forward orders increased, while on the other hand those with dollars, both banks and brokers, held on to them hoping for windfall profits in a situation where the value of the dollar was appreciating daily vis-a-vis the rupee.

### RATES UP

This led to big fluctuations in the inter-bank and call money markets, with interest rates shooting up to a record 68 per cent as against around 30 per cent, especially between February 8 and 11.

### New Section of Secret Police

Sri Lanka's political intelligence services will be streamlined shortly with the setting up of a new section of the Police, which will come directly under the President.

It will work independently of the existing National Intelligence Bureau, which reports to the President through the IGP and the Ministry of Defence.

Advice on the structure and work of the new section has been sought from America's FBI and Britain's M.I. 5.

The section will concentrate on intelligence work in connection with Left parties, radical organisations, and trade unions. It will co-ordinate the work of planted informers and agents, as well as carry out surveillance, examination of correspondence, "bugging" of telephones etc. It will also carry put special assignments given it by the President.

The question whether any amendments of existing laws are needed for the efficient functioning of this special branch is now under examination.

The foreign banks, which have been allowed by the government to take over the bulk of import financing from the state banks, were in clover.

The more so because the Central Bank, which was anxious to allow the rupee to reach what it considered to be a more "realistic" level of over Rs. 23 to a dollar, kept out of the market for some time.

It also permitted the banks to charge a "premium" rate of around Rs. 24 per dollar when opening letters of credit, although the official rate was between Rs. 22 and Rs. 23.

### "SPOT" BUYS

The American banks also big profits through the device of "spot" buying of dollars in the USA.

Taking advantage of their US connections, the time difference between Sri Lanka and the USA, and the accommodation available for settlement within 48 hours, they bought cheap and sold dear on the Sri Lanka money markets.

Some order was brought into a panicky and chaotic situation in the money markets when the Central Bank at last stepped in temporarily to stabilise the dollar at Rs. 23.05 and interest rates at around 30 per cent.

But by that time the foreign banks and the money brokers had netted vast windfall profits.

Although the Central Bank claims that it was unable to enter the money markets earlier owing to a shortage of rupee resources, financial circles

believe that it was trying to help out the government in a political game.

As both the government and the Central Bank had agreed earlier to a devaluation of the rupee by around 20 per cent by budget time, it was felt that it would be less explosive politically if the bigger part of this financial exercise could be achieved by what appeared to be "spontaneous" pre-budget market fluctuations.

Thus the actual percentage devaluation that would have to be announced with the budget would seem smaller, and help to support the myth spread by the Finance Minister and the Central Bank that they had "stood up to" the IMF.

But the net result is that by trying to carry out a political exercise in a chaotic financial situation, the government has helped the foreign banks and big money boys to make millions.

### Query

Will the government take disciplinary action against the Superintendent of Police, Gampaha, whom the Supreme Court last week censured and fined Rs. 10,000 for violating fundamental rights in unlawfully seizing and confiscating leaflets by members of the clergy of many denominations urging a "No" vote at the referendum?

Or will he be commended, rewarded and promoted for good and faithful service, obeying orders, and upholding the "rule of law"?

### Moldavian Ensemble Here

Sri Lankans are in for a rare treat with the visit of the 35-member ensemble 'Fluerash' from the Soviet Republic of Moldavia, who are here to give performances in many cities.

Journalists and local artistes, who were fortunate to see them rehearse, are enchanted and enthusiastic about the feast of song, dance and spectacle the cultural troupe provides.

An outstanding professional ensemble in the USSR, "Fluerash" was formed in 1949 to restore and develop Moldavia's rich and ancient cultural heritage of traditional music, song, dance and folk

drama. One of the most popular of such troupes in the USSR, "Fluerash" has also toured widely abroad.

Its present visit to Sri Lanka is in connection with the celebrations of the 60th anniversary of the USSR's foundation and the 35th anniversary of Sri Lanka's independence.

The ensemble will perform on February 16 at Peradeniya University, at Nuwara Eliya on the 17th, Kandy on the 18th, Polonnaruwa on the 19th, and in Colombo on the 21st, 22nd and 25th.

Moldavia's Deputy Minister of Culture, Andrei Malik, accompanies the ensemble.



# Crucial Election in West Germany

The election in the Federal Republic of Germany, which is due to take place on March 6, has attracted far more than domestic attention.

"Germany is crucial", says NATO's General Secretary, Joseph Luns. And President Reagan attaches so much importance to its outcome that he has not only personally issued a so-called "Letter to the Peoples of Europe" which has the West German voter very much in mind, but has also dispatched his Vice-President George Bush to the FRG (and West Berlin) as part of a whistle-stop tour of Western Europe to stiffen the drooping support for US nuclear policies.

President Reagan and his advisers have made no secret of their fear that, if the CDU-CSU coalition led by Chancellor Helmut Kohl fails to win the general election or gets cold feet about stationing Pershing missiles on its territory, their whole nuclear strategy will be thrown out of gear, and other West European states may follow suit, "domino fashion".

Peace and jobs have become the main issues of this crucial and hard-fought election, with peace—especially the nuclear missile issue—taking precedence more and more. And central to both issues is whether the FRG should join Reagan in a policy of hostile confrontation to the USSR or else seek to solve its problems through a policy of normalisation of relations with that socialist state, including mutually beneficial commercial relations and peaceful co-existence.

Unemployment in the FRG reached the record figure of

2.5 million on January 1983. This figure will increase if a hostile policy towards the Soviet Union continues.

This is why, for instance, West Germany refused to comply with Reagan's insolent order to discontinue work on the highly profitable natural gas pipeline from the USSR, and why many FRG firms find that expanded commercial relations with the Soviet Union and the socialist community is a major factor in keeping up the level of economic activity and employment.

However, the main issue of the election has become the US decision, supported by CSU/CDU coalition and its lame duck satellite, Foreign Minister Genscher's Free Democratic Party, to station nuclear missiles targeted on the USSR in Western Europe, especially in the FRG, this year.

This issue is particularly sensitive in West Germany as it is (1) a front line state vis-a-vis the Warsaw Pact alliance, and (2) the only West European state selected by the USA for stationing Pershing nuclear missiles.

Chancellor Kohl and his "Christian" coalition have agreed to the stationing of these missiles. They have declared that they will not go back on this decision unless USSR accepts Reagan's so-called "zero option", which is nothing more than unilateral disarmament in medium range missiles by the USSR while the USA and its NATO partners keep their stockpiles of these missile intact.

FRG public opinion is coming out more and more against the disastrous policy supported by Chancellor Kohl and his allies. Apart from the massive demonstrations demanding a nuclear freeze, disarmament and negotiations that have swept West Germany, even many supporters of the "Christian" coalition think that the Reagan-Kohl position is too inflexible. To satisfy them and to help Kohl, George Bush, when in the FRG, said that the zero option proposal was not a "take it or leave it" one. But he did not suggest any alternative.

## CHALLENGE

Although it has not come out categorically against the stationing of new nuclear missiles in the FRG, the main challenger, the Social Democratic Party led by its candidate for Chancellor, Hans-Jochen Vogel, is much more sensitive to public opinion on this issue.

Vogel has declared that the preservation of peace is the supreme goal of his and the SPD's policy, and that the main task in this regard is to halt the spiralling arms race.

He has publicly welcomed the initiative of the Warsaw Treaty states, who proposed a non-aggression pact with NATO at their last meeting in Prague earlier this year, as well as what he called "the constructive elements in the Soviet proposal" concerning medium-range nuclear missiles in Europe.

The SPD is clearly unenthusiastic about Reagan's "zero

option". It has said that the British and French nuclear systems here, which augment the US missiles, cannot be "just forgotten" at the Geneva disarmament talks, and it wants the USA to come up with new and more constructive proposals.

Stressing the difference between the government and the opposition on the missiles issue, Herr Vogel said that, while Chancellor Kohl wants "a mandate from the electorate to approve the deployment of missiles", he wants a mandate to "do everything in our power to make the deployment of missiles unnecessary".

On unemployment, Vogel has said that inordinate arms spending is one of the main obstacles to finding a solution to this problem, but he has not proposed any specific reduction in West Germany's military budget. But he has promised to repeal the Kohl government's cuts in aid to

school-children and students, and its increase in house rents.

Political observers say that neither the "Christian coalition" nor the Social Democrats are, at the moment, likely to gain an over-all majority and they may have to look for a coalition partner. The likely one is the "Green" party, an environmentalist party that is much more definitely against the stationing of nuclear missiles in the FRG than the present SPD leaders.

Meanwhile, Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko's visit to West Germany, the outcome of his talks with both Chancellor Kohl and SPD leader Vogel, as well as Erich Honecker's latest initiative in inviting the FRG to join with the GDR in giving effect to a Swedish proposal for a "demilitarised" strip in central Europe, have attracted big attention in the FRG and enhanced the efforts of the FRG public for peace.



Czechoslovakian women leaders speak to Sri Lankan women.

## Women Visitors from Czechoslovakia

The delegation of the Czechoslovakian Women's Union, which visited Sri Lanka last week, called on and had discussions with representatives of many women's organisations of the country, as well as with state leaders.

Speaker Al Haj Bakeer Markar, Foreign Minister A. C. S. Hameed, and Minister Mrs. Wimala Kannangara were among the state leaders whom the delegation met.

They also met SLFP President Sirimavo Bandaranaike, and representatives of the Sri Lanka Kantha Peramuna, as well as the women's organisations of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party, the Lanka Sama Samaja Party, and the Democratic Workers Congress.

Visiting women at work, the delegation met women workers at Messrs Brooke Bond Ltd., a leading Colombo tea packing factory, and at Pussellawa Estate.

The delegation also addressed a meeting of women in Colombo, organised by the

Lanka Kantha Peramuna, at which representatives and leaders of other women's organisations also took part.

The members of the delegation were MARIA KABRHELOVA, President of the Czechoslovakian Women's Union and a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, and ELENA LITVAJOVA, Vice-President of the Women's Union and a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of Slovakia. Both are members of Czechoslovakia's Parliament.

In their many speeches, the Czechoslovakian delegates outlined the big advances that the women of Czechoslovakia had made under their socialist system, and their feelings of friendship and solidarity with the women of Sri Lanka in the common struggle for peace, the rights of women, and social progress.

The delegation also had a discussion with leaders of the Communist Party of Sri Lanka, K. P. Silva and Pieter Keuneman.

## O. P. E. C. is Stalled

The failure of the Geneva meeting of the 13-member Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) to reach agreement about the cost of crude oil has sent the US and other imperialist states into transports of delight.

They feel that they have followed up successfully a tactic they used to paralyse the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) and hope to use again at the Non-Aligned Summit at New Delhi.

The essence of this tactic is for the US to use its friends and stooges within a movement that may be hostile to its aims in order to create conditions where that movement cannot function.

OPEC was the Third World's first significant attempt at united action to secure a fair price for its natural resources.

For almost a decade it compelled the imperialist countries, which had built up their industry on cheap Middle Eastern oil, to pay realistic prices for it.

For the first time, Third World countries were able to use their natural resources and international trade as a political weapon against imperialism.

### OBSESSION

But at the same time, OPEC also suffered from an obsession with safeguarding short-term interests and ignoring the deeper significance of what they had begun.

The OPEC countries invested their windfall profits in the banks and industries of the US and Western Europe, and paid scant attention to helping some of their less fortunate Third World brother states through loans and aid.

As these countries, too, had to pay the same higher prices as the West for crude oil, while they received no compensatory assistance from the OPEC states, the imperialists were able to enlist the support of many of these countries too in the fight against better prices for oil.

A case in point is what happened in Sri Lanka, where the government and the media berated the Arab states for putting up oil prices, although we had tried—but failed—to achieve similar united action among producers to keep up prices of tea and rubber.

### CHALLENGE

The imperialists sought to meet OPEC's challenge by (a) searching for and developing new sources of oil and power, and (b) using its friends in OPEC, particularly Saudi Arabia and some Arab emirates, as Fifth Columnists within the movement.

By the time of this month's OPEC meeting in Geneva, the imperialists and their friends were ready to strike.

The main goal of the Geneva meeting was an agreement on

production quotas that would keep the price of crude oil at 34 US dollars a barrel, the price at which it had been maintained for the past 16 months.

Threatening an unilateral cut in price, Saudi Arabia, one of the largest producers in OPEC, stalled the meeting. Its Oil Minister Yamani finally announced, "The meeting has ended. There has been complete failure."

The imperialists now seek to encourage a cut-throat price war between oil producers, that will push down the price to at least 30 US dollars a barrel.

But cheaper oil may not be an unmixed blessing. While it will temporarily help US industry and also all consumers of energy in the countries which buy oil from OPEC producers, it can also upset the international banking system, make less funds available internationally for loans to developing countries, and even topple certain governments.

It remains to be seen whether the independent members of OPEC can re-group and save its situation. But what the imperialists and their stooges have been able to do to OPEC—and to the OAU before that—is a good warning to the New Delhi Non-Aligned Summit, and especially to all who are serious about its aim of a new international economic order.



# C. I. A. Plan to Balkanise India

Indian newspapers, especially PATRIOT and LINK, have created a sensation by publishing the text of a C.I.A.-sponsored plan to "Balkanise" India.

*The plan is based on a secret memorandum prepared by a member of the Reagan Cabinet, the US Special Ambassador to the UN, Mrs. Jeane K. Kirkpatrick, after a visit, in August 1981, to India, SRI LANKA, Nepal, Bangladesh and Pakistan.*

It will be recalled that, when in Sri Lanka on this visit, Mrs. Kirkpatrick publicly supported a statement by the US Ambassador to Sri Lanka that the US had no interest in naval facilities at Trincomalee. This statement was subsequently proved to be false.

A close associate of President Reagan and one of the leading "hawks" in his administration, Mrs. Kirkpatrick has sufficient political clout to have had former US Secretary for Foreign Affairs, General Alexander Haig, who was also her nominal chief, fired.

## OPERATION

Mrs. Kirkpatrick's secret report, says that: "President Reagan has recommended that the Central Intelligence Agency should mount special operations especially in the Third World."

The report, which took five months to prepare after her tour of the Indian sub-continent, was circulated for "limited official use" among US posts abroad as early as March, 1982.

The Kirkpatrick report envisages "fostering of division

in the Third World and prevention of a united front of developing countries to the interests of the United States."

Calling India a "paper tiger" and "not a giant it claims to be", Mrs. Kirkpatrick underlines that "India's weakness lies in its many unresolved domestic and international problems apart from endemic poverty" and points out that "there is a noticeable growth of separatist movements to the extent that there is a real possibility of the Balkanisation of India, which would destroy its influence in the Third World and elsewhere."

"Such a development", she continues, "while raising a host of new problems, would undoubtedly seriously damage the interests of the Soviet Union, a traditional front of neutralist India."

## OPTIONS

Keeping her options open, Mrs. K. indicates another line of destabilisation that may be considered.

"Even if India does not succumb to Balkanisation, the non-communist Opposition to Indira Gandhi not only might consolidate its ranks but also create an increasing possibility for the emergence of a realistic alternative government."

Mrs. K. continues: "The United States could watch the erosion of Nehru-Gandhi tradition, almost irrespective of the form it takes, with some complacency."

Regarding Pakistan, she says that US relations with that country have taken "a favourable turn". Pakistan, she emphasises, "is a country of strategic importance and is well placed to help US efforts to influence the policy of Iran, Afghanistan and India."

## I. O. P. Z.

Mrs. K. comes down heavily in favour of making Diego Garcia a major military base to control the Indian Ocean, and recommends the earliest action to set up the US Rapid Deployment Force.

She describes the essence of the RDF as "to take immediate action in the event of an oil embargo, rebellions and revolutions in the oil-producing nations or an outbreak of local conflicts among them which could affect oil deliveries to the US and its allies".

"For these decisive reasons", she continues, "the demilitarisation of the Indian Ocean is out of the question. On the contrary, we must strengthen our forces in the area. Our military presence in the Indian Ocean must be not only substantial in itself, but capable of rapid reinforcements".

She stresses the need for the US to "establish political dominance over key strategic zones—the Caribbean, the Mediterranean, Southern Africa, the Pacific and the Indian Ocean, the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea, and lower regions producing essential raw materials".

Her document recommends eleven countries where destabilisation should be carried out, or, as she puts it, where the governments should be "isolated, restrained or set one against another".

## TARGETS

The targetted nations are Cuba, Nicaragua, Iran, Libya, South Yemen, Ethiopia, Angola, Mozambique, Algeria, India, Madagascar, and Vietnam.

In order to do this, she recommends that the US should seek "help from friendly countries, which play roles of major local influences".

Reminding that President Reagan had called on the CIA to display "a daring and active approach to the procurement of intelligence and the mounting of special operations" in such countries, she urges appropriate follow-up action.

What the US has done in the Indian Ocean since the Kirkpatrick report of August 1981 was submitted suggests that her main recommendations have been accepted.

## CONDEMNED

The Kirkpatrick report has been condemned by major political parties and newspapers in India.

So, too, has the Deputy Prime Minister of Mauritius, HARISH BOODHOO, who has called on all Third World countries to be "very cautious" about US designs towards the region.

After Mrs. Kirkpatrick and the US Embassy in New Delhi tried to shrug off the report in PATRIOT, that newspaper followed up on January 28 with further evidence in support of the veracity of its report, including the text of speech Mrs. K. made on 27.2.82 to the "Conservative Political Action Committee" in Washington, where she alluded at length to the report and its contents. This speech was also circulated "for limited official use" to "all principal US posts".

Mrs. Kirkpatrick's "denial" was carefully confined to writing a report ENTITLED "The Balkanisation of India". The report in question did not, of course, have such a

title as it covered US strategy towards many countries, including India, but the remarks about the balkanisation of India were included in it.

Mrs. K., in addition to being a professor and Cabinet member, has a long experience in intelligence work. She worked for many years as a research analyst for the Intelligence Research Section of the US State Department, and then moved upwards in the intelligence hierarchy. As late as 13 March 1981, she was reported to have had secret discussions with South Africa's Chief of Intelligence, as well as a meeting with Senior intelligence officers from Pretoria.

## Andropov Replies to Reagan

The newspaper PRAVDA on February 2 published the answers of Yuri Andropov to questions by its correspondent on President Reagan's letter to the Peoples of Europe.

**Question:** What is your attitude to the US President's letter to the people of Europe, in which he proposed that the USSR and the United States sign on American terms an agreement in the elimination of medium-range land-based missiles?

**Answer:** First of all, I must say quite definitely that there is nothing new in President Reagan's proposal.

What it is all about – and this all the world's news agencies have immediately taken note of – is the same "zero option".

That it is patently unacceptable to the Soviet Union now is already generally recognised.

Really, can one seriously speak about a proposal according to which the Soviet Union would have to scrap unilaterally all its medium-range missiles, while the United States and its NATO allies would retain all their nuclear weapons of this category?

It is precisely this unrealistic position of the United States that has blocked, and this is well known, progress at the talks in Geneva. Now that the US President has reiterated again this position indicates one thing: the United States does not want to look for a mutually acceptable accord with the Soviet Union and thereby deliberately dooms the Geneva talks to failure.

As I have already said, the USSR will not agree to unilateral disarmament. If things are carried to the deployment of new US missiles in Europe, we shall answer this in a due way. But this would not be our choice.

The Soviet Union is for a different road. It would be best, and we suggest this, not to have in the European zone

nuclear weapons at all, either medium-range or tactical weapons. As it seems that the United States does not agree to this, we are prepared also to such a solution under which the Soviet Union would have no more missiles than NATO already has in Europe.

At the same time, an arrangement should be reached on cutting to equal levels by both sides of the number of aircraft capable of medium-range nuclear weapon delivery.

Thus, there would be complete parity in missiles and aircraft, and parity at a far lower level than now.

The Soviet Union is prepared to sign such an agreement. Is the President of the United States prepared to sign such an agreement based on the principle of equality and equal security?

**Question:** The US President suggests meeting with you to sign the agreement which he proposes. What can you say on this score?

**Answer:** We have believed and still believe that summit meetings have special significance to resolving complicated problems. This determines our serious approach to them.

For us this is not a matter of a political or a propaganda game. A meeting between the leaders of the USSR and the USA, aimed at finding mutually acceptable solutions to urgent problems and at developing relations between our countries, would be useful both to the Soviet Union and to the United States of America, to Europe and to the whole world.

But when the US President makes the meeting conditional on the Soviet Union's consent to the patently unacceptable solution to the problem of nuclear armaments in Europe, proposed by him, this by no means testifies to the seriousness of the American leadership's approach to the whole of this issue. This can only be regretted.

## U. S. Gains Most From Brain Drain

Developing countries have in the past 15 years lost more than 400,000 scientists, doctors, engineers and other specialists to the advanced capitalist countries, says the Cuban newspaper GRANMA, in a survey.

Describing the "brain drain" from the developing countries to the advanced capitalist countries, the newspaper says it is one of the most shameful forms of neo-colonialist exploitation of the developing countries at the present stage.

While the developing countries spend a large part of their meagre resources training such personnel in the hope that they will serve their countries, they are lured away to the developed capitalist countries by the prospect of higher salaries. The developed countries find that this much cheaper than training their own specialised personnel.

The developing countries are thus not only deprived of the benefit of specialists whom they have trained at great expense and with great sacrifice, but they are also unable to use the achievements of the scientific and technological revolution to overcome backwardness, hunger, ignorance and poverty.

The US has been the main "beneficiary" of this brain drain from the developing countries.

Between 1950 and 1980, it received over 200,000 university-trained specialists. Taking into account that it would have cost the US at least 45,000 dollars to train each one of them in the US, it is up on the deal by 9 billion dollars.

37 per cent of the US winners of the Nobel Prize and 24 per cent of the American Academy of Sciences are persons who had been trained in other countries and emigrated to the United States.



## "ATHTHA" BACK ON MARCH 1st

"ATHTHA", the fighting daily newspaper which was banned by the government for three months under the state of emergency, will re-appear on March 1st.

This was announced by the management of ATHTHA last week,

ATHTHA, which has always courageously taken up the various causes of the people and fearlessly fought oppression and exposed corruption, has been the subject of repeated attacks by reactionary forces and governments.

Its last compulsory closure was the fourth in Aththa's history.

ATHTHA re-starts under severe difficulties. It had to undergo considerable expenditure on maintaining its editorial and printing staffs during the three-month closure, in fighting a case against the closure order, and in bringing its printing establishment back to normal after the closure order lapsed.

On top of this, on a Cabinet directive, government departments and corporations have stopped advertisements to ATHTHA. As a result, it loses about Rs. 25,000 a month. The use of public transport for its distribution has also been restricted administratively.

In order to make up for these restraints and to give its readers the same service it gave them before, the management of ATHTHA has appealed to the public for funds.

Donations should be sent to the Manager, ATHTHA, 91, Cotta Road, Colombo 8. Cheques, and money and postal orders, should be made out to the same. All donations will be acknowledged while anonymity, if required, will be respected.

## Sri Lankan Studies in U.S.S.R.

The Institute of Oriental Studies of the USSR Academy of Science held in Moscow the 4th All-Union Conference of Scholars of Sri Lankan studies. It was held to mark the 35th Anniversary of Sri Lanka's Independence.

The previous conferences took place in 1972, 1974 and 1975.

Opening the conference, prominent orientologist Grigori Kotovsky, chief of the India and South Asia Department of the Institute of Oriental Studies, said that all-round Soviet-Sri Lankan cooperation develops on a stable basis, and friendship between the peoples of the two countries becomes stronger. He dwelt on Sri Lanka's achievements in various spheres over the 35 years of independent development. He also reported about relevant Soviet research.

The discussion touched upon the questions of Sri Lanka's ancient and recent history, various aspects of literature, art, economics and social endeavour.

The reports on "The results of Sri Lanka's economic development in the period of independence" and "The role

of foreign aid in Sri Lanka's economic development," written respectively by well-known Soviet scholars, Y. Maslov and A. Romanov, aroused much discussion.

E. Talmud, S. Triotsky and K. Davydov and some other scholars spoke on the problems of the country's modern political and social development.

Of major interest was the joint work by M. Zhdanova and I. Suchkov on Sri Lanka's struggle for turning Indian Ocean into a zone of peace. Soviet scholars praised Sri Lanka's contribution to the drive to peace.

### CULTURE

A series of reports were devoted to Sinhala culture.

Y. Aslanova dealt with the specific literary method of Martin Wickremasinghe whose works have seen several editions in the USSR.

Leningrad scholar N. Kresnodembskaya offered information on her research into Sinhala folk music.

The young scholar Yelkenidze's report dealt with the problems of the genre in the literary trend of "early Sinhala nationalism".

The conference showed the Soviet people's great interest in Sri Lanka.

The reports delivered at the conference testify to the improved level of Soviet-Sri Lankan studies, one of the important directions in the Soviet school of orientology. These reports are to be brought

out in a separate collection by the Moscow Nauka publishers

The USSR Academy of Sciences Institute of Oriental Studies has already released two collections on the work of the previous conference—"The Republic of Sri Lanka: Economy and Politics" in 1974 and "The Republic of Sri Lanka: History and the Present Day" in 1977.

The conference was attended by 16 scholars from Moscow, Leningrad and Yaroslavl.

## THE MISSING BATTALION

Former Supreme Court Justice T. W. Rajaratnam posed an interesting question last week.

In a speech to the Institute of Chartered Accountants, he wanted to know the reason for discrimination between different sections of the government's security services.

In particular, he wanted to know why the JSS storm-troopers and the Mafia thugs had been omitted from the security forces that paraded on Galle Face at President Jayawardene's second inauguration on February 4.

"Surely they have also played their part in keeping the government in power", he said.

## Re-open T.U. offices, says P.S.T.U.F.

The re-opening of trade union offices which were closed by the government during the general strike of July 1980 is demanded in a letter, dated February 3, to President Jayawardene from President J. A. K. PERERA and General Secretary W. H. PIYADASA of the Public Service Trade Union Federation.

They point out that on 29 July 1980, the Acting Secretary to the Ministry of Public Administration, issued a circular (No. 172) entitled "Strike July 1980-Withdrawal of facilities allowed to Trade Unions".

Item 3 of this circular requires all secretaries of Ministries, heads of depart-

ments and heads of public corporations immediately to "close down and seal the offices of trade unions, whose members have participated in the strike, where such offices are situated within the premises of Ministries, Departments and Public Corporations".

This order, the PSTUF leaders say, is still in force even though more than two and a half years have passed since the general strike. They say that 20 TU offices are so closed, of which 15 belong to unions affiliated to the PSTUF.

Repeated representations to the government to rectify this matter have produced no positive response.

When the PSTUF took the matter up in the ILO, the government gave the ILO the incorrect information that "trade union offices are open and are functioning normally".

The PSTUF charges that the continued forcible closure of these offices amounts to a victimisation of the unions concerned, a threat to democracy and the free functioning of trade unions, and a violation of ILO conventions.

### Still Closed

It points out that even where a majority of union members who were dismissed for striking have been taken back, the union offices remain closed.

A case in point quoted is the ALL CEYLON POSTAL AND TELECOMMUNICATION CLERICAL SERVICES UNION, which took part in the strike. Although all dismissed members, except a single probationer, have since been reinstated, the union is not allowed to re-open its office.

The continued closure of the union offices, the PSTUF leaders say, has led to the destruction of union documents, many of historical value, books of accounts, registers of members, typewriters and other property.

The PSTUF leaders also demand that the 15,000 trade unionists in the public sector who were dismissed for joining the general strike of 1980 and are not yet reinstated, should be taken back without delay.

## C. I. A. OVERTHREW WHITLAM GOVT.

The charge that Australia's Labour Party government of Edward Gough Whitlam was overthrown in 1975 by a plot masterminded by the CIA is made in a factual article in the US journal, "Foreign Policy".

The immediate provocation for this, the article says, was the Labour Government's exposure of John Douglas Antony, leader of the National Country Party of Australia, as a paid agent of the CIA.

The Whitlam government had also angered Washington by signalling its intention to withdraw Australian contingents from South East Asia and to support the idea of the Indian Ocean being a peace

zone. Washington also feared that 10 important electronic reconnaissance bases in Australia might be lost.

So the CIA cooked up a scandal against Deputy Prime Minister James Cairns, and handed the fabricated evidence to Governor-General John Kerr, who took the unprecedented step of not merely "dismissing" Prime Minister Whitlam but appointing Opposition Leader, the arch-conservative John Malcolm Fraser, as acting Prime Minister.

This is the fourth authenticated case of a successful CIA inspired overthrow of an elected and lawful government. The other cases are Iran, Guatemala, and Chile.

## US Steps up Military Presence

"The construction of US electronic tracking bases to ensure military operations of the Rapid Deployment Force in the Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf has been started in Pakistan", Vladilen Baikov writes in PRAVDA.

"According to the Indian newspaper NAV BHARAT TIMES, these bases are a component part of a whole system of strongholds created there by the US military".

The commentary points out that Washington is constantly stepping up US military presence in the Indian Ocean.

The US biggest armada since the times of the Second World War is now deployed there. It consists of about 60 battle-ships, including nuclear aircraft carriers and submarines.

The Indian Ocean is surrounded by a network of military bases and strongholds situated on its shores, which is being constantly expanded.

In 1981 alone the US has 'got the right' to create 21 military bases on the territories of Australia, Israel, Somalia, Oman and a number of other countries.

Vladilen Baikov stresses that the Indian Ocean is assigned a special place in strategic plans of the US ruling circles.

First, the US is going to back by force the striving of American monopolies to gain access to the natural resources of the countries of that region.

Second, it tries to exercise a 'deterrent influence' on the process of social and political transformations in that region.

And, finally, Washington would like to dominate this strategically important region, where trade routes pass connecting Europe with East Africa, Asia, Japan, and Australia.

These far-reaching designs are covered by allegations about the need to counter the 'Soviet threat'. However, it is common knowledge that the Soviet Union is not threatening anyone and is not creating military bases in the Indian Ocean.

The USSR has repeatedly come up with initiatives, aimed to limit military activity in that region and to turn it into a peace zone.



# Prospects for the N. A. Summit

(PIETER KEUNEMAN was asked some questions by Forward's STANLEY RANA-SINGHE about the forthcoming Non-Aligned Summit at New Delhi. Here are his answers.)

**Q. Why have US imperialism and its supporters launched such a vigorous offensive against the forthcoming Non-Aligned Summit at New Delhi?**

**A.** Such offensives were conducted earlier too, especially before the 5th Colombo Summit and the 6th Summit at Havana. But they failed.

This time, imperialism—and especially US imperialism—is even more desperate. But it also thinks that it is, in some respects, in a better position than before to intimidate and pressurise the movement.

1983 is a crucial year for US imperialism. It is its "Year of the Missile" in Western Europe. By stationing about 600 new Pershing and Cruise missiles there it hopes to upset the strategic balance, sabotage the Geneva talks, and clear the way for a new spiral in the arms race and a 'limited' nuclear war against the Soviet Union.

It is also the year for the UN's Colombo Conference on the Indian Ocean Peace Zone, which the US sabotaged in 1981 and 1982 and cannot afford to allow even now in view of its escalated militarisation of this ocean.

The US faces similar problems in central and south America, in the Caribbean basin, in Arab and Black Africa, in the Middle and Far East, and elsewhere.

The world crisis of capitalism has also become particularly severe just now. Imperialism's colossal war budgets have led to massive unemployment in its metropolitan countries, to cutbacks on social benefits, and to renewed assaults on democratic rights.

Imperialism needs to exploit even more intensively the natural resources and cheap manpower of the non-aligned countries, to increase their economic dependence on it, to strangle their economies through crushing interest rates on loans, and to enforce an "open door" policy in relation to their markets, while erecting protective barriers against foreign imports at home.

But all this is meeting with stiff resistance—from the socialist countries, from the massive movements in Western Europe and America demanding nuclear disarmament and peace, from the continued upswing of the national liberation movement, and so on.

Imperialism will find things even more difficult if the non-aligned movement, which represents around 100 states and more than half mankind, also comes out against its plans. That is why it is so anxious

to see that the New Delhi Summit does not adopt positions on world affairs that run counter to its interests.

As it can't hope to get the movement to support its policies, imperialism seeks to disorient, disrupt and paralyse it, as it has done with the OAU and OPEC.

In addition to its open and hidden stooges within the movement, imperialism hopes to use the heavy indebtedness and economic dependence of many non-aligned states to arm-twist them into accommodation towards its line.

It also hopes that its bellicose aggressiveness and unashamed attempts to destabilise and overthrow governments that stand in its way will intimidate some non-aligned states into submission, while others can be silenced by threats to split the movement if it remains true to its anti-imperialist essence.

All these tactics were tried at the meeting of the Non-Aligned Co-ordinating Bureau at Managua in January 1983. But they failed. Undoubtedly they will be repeated at New Delhi, and the non-aligned states should be ready to rebuff them once again.

**Q. What exactly do you think these tactics will be?**

**A.** US imperialism knows that the fundamental positions of the non-aligned movement, run contrary to everything it is trying to do to-day.

Take disarmament. Nuclear and conventional disarmament have been a basic premise of the movement since its inception. But this is just what imperialism wants to avoid. So it must stop the New Delhi Summit from taking strong positions on this matter.

Take the flash points around the world. Everywhere it is imperialism, especially the USA, that is aggravating tensions and increasing the danger of war.

Apart from its colossal expenditure on armaments and its new missile threat in Western Europe, it is the US that threatens peace, security and national independence in Latin America. The Managua declaration made that very clear. Even the "toned down" draft condemned the US by name no less than eleven times.

In the Indian Ocean, it is the US that continues to sabotage the holding of the UN conference on the IOPZ. It has set up CENTCOM and the Rapid Deployment Force, expanded its naval armada and nuclear stockpile, and multiplied its offensive military bases in this ocean.

Isn't it the US that helps the South African racists in Namibia, Angola and other parts of Black Africa, as well as supports the Israeli aggressor in Lebanon and elsewhere in the Arab world? A similar tale can be told everywhere else.

Isn't it also US imperialism and its allies who are doing their utmost to disrupt the non-aligned aim of a new international economic order? It has stalled the "North-South dialogue", cut down its contributions to international aid agencies, established protective tariffs and bans against imports from non-aligned countries, put up interest rates, and so on.

Naturally, the US would not like the non-aligned summit to take up such matters. So they try to draw a red herring across the trail by shouting their heads off about Kampuchea and Afghanistan. Apparently, these are the only and main issues worthy of non-aligned attention!

**Q. But aren't these matters also important?**

**A.** Yes, they are. But there is no threat to the peace and security of the non-aligned countries or the world involved in them. The US tries to give such a position through its dodge of "linkage", this is, by insisting that it is not prepared to have any other questions discussed until Kampuchea and Afghanistan are settled in the way it wants.

On Kampuchea, our party agrees with the large number of non-aligned governments like India that recognise the Heng Samrin regime as the only real and effective government of that country. The so-called "coalition" led by Sihanouk is a cosmetic device to camouflage the monstrous Pol Pot genocidists who murdered three million of their own countrymen in five years.

Nobody knows this better than Sihanouk. Pol Pot's men held him in house arrest for three years, and murdered three of his daughters, two sons, three sons-in-law, and 14 grand-children.

Only recently Sihanouk himself told the London OBSERVER that his coalition exists "because the Chinese want this" and that Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge is really running the show.

How can anyone take Sihanouk seriously, when a short time ago he told the Italian newspaper "Repubblica" that he would never cooperate with the Pol Pot forces whom he called "awful murderers" responsible for genocide?

If there is still no consensus in the movement about recognising the reality of the Heng Samrin regime, then the most sensible thing to do is to continue what was decided at Havana and keep the seat vacant until a consensus is reached.

As for Afghanistan, both the Afghan and Soviet governments have repeatedly stated that there will be no need to retain any Soviet troops in that country if a political solution is reached whereby Afghanistan can be guaranteed against an external threat, as exists at the moment in the undeclared proxy war waged by Washington and Beijing

from Pakistan territory. The non-aligned summit should seek a settlement along these suggested lines.

**Q. But hasn't Yugoslavia advocated acceptance of the Sihanouk-led coalition?**

**A.** I read such a report in the newspapers. If it is correct, it is a strange position for a socialist country to take. It runs contrary to all realities of the situation. Our party cannot agree with this.

**Q. What position do you think the present government of Sri Lanka will take at the New Delhi Summit?**

**A.** It's difficult to say. But the government's generally pro-western orientation and its heavy dependence economically on the imperialist powers, not to mention its record over the past five years, do not suggest that any positive contribution can be expected.

President Jayawardene's government started as chairman of the movement. But, as it said itself, it played a "low key" role. Even afterwards, it has generally worked to tone down any anti-imperialist manifestations of the movement, especially criticisms of the USA.

For a short time, especially during the misadventure of trying to join ASEAN, it teamed up with Singapore in a more aggressive pro-western stance, but it seems to have adopted a lower profile later.

In the search for British aid, the government took a very bad position over the the Malvinas (Falklands) issue. On the Indian Ocean, it has continued to press for the holding of the UN Conference, but it has not come out against the US military build-up in this region. On Kampuchea and Afghanistan, it continues to tail behind the imperialist position, but its policies on the problems of Arab and Black Africa have not been too bad.

While the government has begun to move away from

several fundamental principles of the non-aligned movement, it has also generally abided by the consensus reached or, at least, not actively opposed it. The government cannot ignore the strong support among our people for the non-aligned movement and its anti-imperialist policies.

I suppose that the most that can be expected of it at New Delhi is that it should not join up with the US stooges in the movement. We would like it to go further and play a positive role in developing the fundamental positions and values of the movement, but that may be too much to hope for.

**Q. Cuba is giving up the chairmanship of the movement. What do you think of the role that Cuba and Fidel Castro have played since the Havana Summit in developing the movement?**

**A.** Both Cuba and Fidel Castro personally have made a big contribution to the movement during this period.

Imperialism raised a major attack on Cuba when it became the chairman of the movement at the Havana Summit. It said that would make the movement a vassal of the USSR. But nothing of the sort has happened or was ever attempted.

The non-aligned movement itself has answered your question. The Managua declaration contains a special passage praising the positive role played by Cuba and by Fidel Castro as President, and expressing satisfaction at the valuable contribution both have made in finding solutions to problems in different parts of the world.

Similar encomiums were paid to Cuba and Fidel Castro at the Non-Aligned meeting in New York and at the Havana Ministerial meeting in May 1982.

It is not accidental that our western-controlled mass media have not reported this.

## Trade Unions for Peace

Factory and office level activists of trade unions affiliated to the Ceylon Federation of Trade Unions and the Public Service Trade Union Federation met in Colombo on February 10 to discuss ways and means of developing the work of the trade unions and the working class in the fight for peace.

The meeting was presided over by CFTU President M. G. Mendis, assisted by PSTUF President J. A. K. Perera. The General Secretaries of the two Federations, L. W. Panditha and W. H. Piyadasa, were also present, together with a number of secretaries of constituent unions and branch activists.

The meeting took place in response to the appeal of the WFTU for intensified action by

the trade union movement throughout the world in the fight for nuclear disarmament, an end to the arms race, and for safeguarding peace in 1983.

The meeting adopted a number of resolutions opposing the setting up of CENTCOM and the Rapid Deployment Force, supporting the demand that the Indian Ocean should be a zone of peace, calling for the UN Conference on the IOPZ to be held in Colombo this year, demanding the closing down of Diego Garcia and other imperialist bases in this ocean, asking for a nuclear freeze and supporting the many peace initiatives of the Soviet Union, etc.

Pieter Keuneman addressed the meeting as a special invited speaker.



# Citizenship: Double Standards

Tens of thousands of plantation workers of Indian origin, who are born in Sri Lanka, whose forefathers have lived here for over a century, and who contribute to the nation's wealth by their work for which they receive the lowest wages paid to any section of the organised working class, remain "stateless", without any prospect of being accepted as citizens of the only country they know.

But now Mr. Paul Perera, Director General of the FTZ, tells us (all papers, 3/2) that the government has under active consideration a proposal to grant "distinguished" citizenship to foreign capitalists who will invest in Sri Lanka.

Such investments will not be confined to industry, but will also cover investments in government securities like Central Bank security bills and national savings deposits, as well as other spheres of public investment.

Although the government is especially interested in attracting Chinese capitalists who may want to quit Hong-kong if it rejoins the People's Republic of China once the lease to Britain expires, capitalists of any other hue are also welcome.

If there is any clearer example of double standards, I should like to know what it is.

Percy Karunaratne

Hatton.

## Gratuities Bill

The biggest shortcoming in the long delayed Gratuities Bill is in relation to the plantation workers.

While workers in the industrial sector can get a gratuity under the Bill at least at the rate of half month's wage (*n.b. the unions have demanded one month*) for each year of service calculated on the basis of the last wage drawn, the gratuity for plantation workers under the Bill is based on the wage received in November, 1959.

Also, while workers in the industrial sector are entitled to half month's wage for the ENTIRE period of their service, plantation workers are only entitled to 7 days wages per year for services during the period that the Employees Provident Fund has been in force.

To make confusion worse confounded, the preamble to the present Bill makes it clear that workers on plantations that have been vested or acquired by the state are entitled to a gratuity on the basis of Law No. 34 of 1978, which applies to "Indian repatriates".

Nearly 700,000 plantation workers are, therefore, discriminated against by the present Bill. This is not only a blot on democracy in Sri Lanka, but a violation of both ILO conventions and fundamental rights.

*It is to say the least incongruous that this should happen when Mr. S. Thondaman, who is the President of the Ceylon Workers Congress and claims to be the most representative leader of the plantation workers, is a Minister of the government.*

All trade unions and, indeed, all interested in fair play, equal treatment, and justice should insist that the government should (1) repeal Law No. 34 of 1978, and (2) amend the present Bill to make a uniform gratuity of one month's wages for every year of service on the basis of the last wage drawn, and without any deductions of the employers' contribution to the EPF and the Employees Trust Fund, payable to all workers in both the industrial and the plantation sectors.

S. Nadesan,  
President,  
United Plantation Workers' Union.

123, Union Place,  
Colombo.

## Eggs

I read with interest the report, in all newspapers of January 31, that the biggest issue in the elections in New Delhi was the "price of eggs", which had gone up 16 per cent, i.e. "from 63 cents a dozen to 76 cents".

With the Sri Lanka rupee worth about half an Indian rupee, this would mean that the residents of New Delhi are upset at having to pay about Rs. 1.50 A DOZEN EGGS in our money.

This is very often almost what a SINGLE EGG costs in Colombo. Yet the government tells us that we should not complain because prices here are the cheapest in the world.

Malkanathi de Alwis

Colombo 10.

## 7 Weeks

We have it on the authority of the Minister of Finance that Sri Lanka's external assets to-day are just sufficient to pay for seven weeks of imports.

And the Minister has also told WEEKEND (6/2) that "Sri Lanka ran the risk of a complete political and economic breakdown unless a viable balance of payments situation can be achieved".

But why doesn't he also tell us how Sri Lanka got into this mess after five years of an "open economy" which we were told was the panacea for all our economic ills?

We should ask ourselves what this unusual candour is in aid of. Is the Minister trying to soften us up to accept the harsh measures that the government has in store for us as "inevitable"? Or is he up to the not unfamiliar game of making things seem so bad in advance that, when

the actual harsh measures are announced, we will accept them without protest on the grounds that they "could have been much worse"?

Palitha Ranasinghe

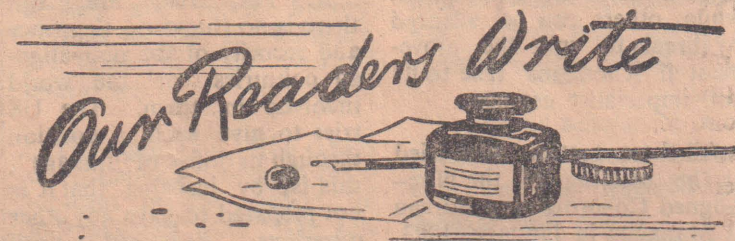
Kalutara.

## Burdens

According to the SUN (7/2), President Jayawardene, addressing the nation from the historic Pattiripuw in Kandy in the manner of the ancient kings, appealed to us to: "Share my burdens".

He will soon spell this out when he asks us to accept the new devaluation of the rupee, the Value Added Tax, and other burdens that the World Bank wants him to ask us to shoulder.

And through the proposed by-elections, he also wants us to share the burden of deciding



which of his MP's are expendable. Share his burdens? No thanks!

T. B. Ram Banda

Katugastota.

## Story

Premier Premadasa told Parliament that no one he had cursed had ever prospered. Maybe he will provide us with a list so that we can check the accuracy of what he says.

A story going the rounds in press circles has it that, when told by Gamini Dissanaike what the PM had told Parliament, President Jayawardene remarked: "That's strange. Nothing has happened to me so far".

Lionel Fonseka

Kotte

## Playing the Clown

So the Chairman of our "Atomic Energy" Authority, Dr. Granville Dharmaratne, has at last come to the conclusion that:

"Our investigations conclusively show that the object that fell at Mawathagama is not part of a satellite or a meteorite. It is only a flare fired in the neighbourhood of Pitiyakande Estate".

But the learned (?) doctor has failed miserably to explain why, in this whole episode, he played the clown rather than behaved as a man of science should.

He now confesses that "the nature and structural materials of Soviet military satellites are not revealed" to him or his team. Apart from the fact that he has produced no evidence that Cosmos 1402 was a "military" satellite, Dr. Dhar-

mawardene does not say why, despite this lack of knowledge, he kept on insisting that the "flaming object" was most likely a part of Cosmos 1402.

For instance, the SUN (25/1) reports: "Dr. Granville Dharmaratne, Chairman of the Atomic Energy Authority, said yesterday that the fiery object that fell at Mawathagama on Saturday could be part of the disabled Soviet satellite Cosmos 1402. A chemical analysis of soil on the spot revealed the presence of magnesium. Cosmos satellites are usually made of magnesium and aluminum, he said".

Many more such opinions by the doctor can be quoted.

Even after the whole world acknowledged that the separated parts of Cosmos 1402 had, as predicted, burnt up on entering earth's atmosphere, Dr. Dharmawardene stuck to his fanciful tale that the Mawathagama object was

authorised the MPs who have to give up their seats to stick on until 1989.

But this does not apparently apply to Ministers like Mr. Ronnie de Mel, even though he fails on all three tests enunciated by the President, as he has been appointed to the Bulathsinhala seat and not made to face the polls once again at Devinuwara.

If the Parliamentary by-elections are to be held on the old electorate-wise system, will the forthcoming local government and DDC polls also be held on this system or on the "PR-List" system once again?

I am so confused.

Sumana Wanigatunge

Kuliyaipitiya.

(So are we—Ed.)

## Poster

Further to your "Last Page" story about the publicity poster of PM-aspirant Gamini Dissanaike appearing throughout the country, no copies of this poster have come up in Colombo Central.

Attempts to put up these posters have been resisted by Prime Minister Premadasa's supporters, who have torn them down.

Mackie Ansary

Colombo 12.

## Slip

In its news telecast on February 6th immediately after announcer Richard de Zoysa told us that we would see President Jayawardene addressing the nation from the Temple of the Tooth at Kandy, ITN flashed a picture of Klaus Barbie, the "butcher of Lyons," on the screen.

The next day, the government's DAILY NEWS told us that Barbie was accused of "crimes against humanity", which were defined as the "persecution of people for their philosophical or political views or their race".

ITN apologised for the slip. But was it a Freudian one?

G. Manickam

Wellawatte

## J. V. P.

After a prolonged silence since losing its deposit at the Presidential polls, the JVP Politburo has decided to boycott the promised elections to 50 local authorities this year, and appealed to other anti-government parties to do the same.

I wonder whether this 180 degrees turn in the policies the JVP has followed since President Jayawardene released its leaders from jail five years back is due to a change of line, a paucity of funds, or a crisis of cadre.

Will the JVP clarify whether its "boycott" policy also extends to the 20 by-elections to Parliament, if and when they take place, and the next round of DDC polls?

Welwyn Dias

Maligawatte.

Kulasiri Rajapakse  
Colombo 3.

## Mixed Up

Can you help me please? I am thoroughly mixed up by government's words and deeds, and don't know which is correct.

For instance, in 1978 we were told that the former system of electorate-wise election of MPs was a "colonial relic" and "unsuitable to Sri Lanka". It was replaced by proportional representation and a "list" system, which were used for the local government and DDC elections. We were told that it would also be used at the Parliamentary general elections in 1983.

Later, we were told that there was no need for a general election in 1983 and that a referendum would do instead. Even though its proposal secured approval from only 38 per cent of the registered voters, the government claimed that the whole country had endorsed the continuation of the whole Parliament until 1989.

Now we are told that, despite this, by-elections should held for about 20 seats only, even though the referendum result presumably



# More Opposition to CENTCOM

Opposition to the setting up of CENTCOM, the US Central Military Command for South West Asia and the Indian Ocean, by the Reagan Administration was expressed by several public organisations of Sri Lanka, and at public meetings and lectures last week.

President of the CEYLON FEDERATION OF TRADE UNIONS, M. G. Mendis, described CENTCOM as an arrogant challenge to the non-aligned states on the eve of the seventh non-aligned summit.

"President Reagan", he said, "is clearly trying by this means to threaten countries of the Indian Ocean region to abandon any independence in their foreign policy and to toe the US line."

"This is the military back-up for the US neo-colonialist

designs to maintain its hold over the region's wealth and resources", he added.

"The CFTU is strongly opposed to this step, which is the latest US attempt to sabotage efforts to make the Indian Ocean a zone of peace. We appeal to all other trade unions in Sri Lanka to oppose this move as well" he says.

PSTUF President, J. A. K. PERERA, said that his trade union organisation fully agreed with the condemnation of CENTCOM made by the WFTU and other trade union organisations, especially those in the Indian Ocean region.

"We call on the US to dismantle this Central Command and its Rapid Deployment Force, to remove its

bases from the Indian Ocean, and to demilitarise this zone," he declared.

The LANKA KANTHA PERAMUNA, in a statement, also condemns the decision to set up CENTCOM as "yet another confirmation of the Reagan Administration's movement towards greater and greater militaristic positions."

In this way, the statement adds, "the US has further demonstrated its hostility to the idea of the Indian Ocean becoming a zone of peace". It "constitutes a direct threat to peace and security in the Indian Ocean."

The Lanka Kantha Peramuna demands that the government of Sri Lanka should express to the US government the opposition of the people of Sri Lanka to the setting up of CENTCOM.

CENTCOM was also condemned at a number of meetings and lectures throughout the country last week, organised by the CPSL and addressed by its leaders like K. P. Silva, Pieter Keuneman, H. G. S. Ratnaweera, A. G. Jayasena and others.

Among the places where such meetings were held were Kesbewa, Angulana, Nelliady, Ja-ela, Wadduwa, 12 places in the Colombo District and 15 places in the Matara district.

The Sri Lanka Peace Council has also condemned CENTCOM in statements issued by President T. B. Subasinghe and General Secretary, L. Ariyawansa.

## G. D. R. SUPPORTS SWEDISH PROPOSAL

Chairman of the State Council of the German Democratic Republic, ERICH HONECKER, has written to Chancellor Helmut Kohl of the FRG on February 4 saying that the GDR accepts the proposal of the Swedish government to create "a zone free of battlefield nuclear weapons extending from central Europe to the outermost northern and southern flanks of the two alliances" (i. e. the Warsaw Pact and NATO) and is ready "to assign its entire territory to such a zone if the principle of equality and equal security is observed".

Inviting the FRG also to support this initiative, Mr. Honescker says that the Swedish proposal "could be a useful move to strengthen peace in Europe and advance detente" and conforms with the "responsibility of both German states for peace and to assist actively in preventing a nuclear catastrophe".

He has asked Chancellor Kohl to notify him of the FRG government's decision on this proposal.

## Delegation from Soviet Turkmenia

A delegation from the USSR-LANKA FRIENDSHIP SOCIETY, led by Mr. Mirat Sodiev, Member of Parliament of the Turkmenian Soviet Socialist Republic, and including Mr. Albert Kobylin, Executive Secretary of the Friendship Society, visited Sri Lanka last week.

The visit was in connection with the 60th anniversary of the formation of the USSR and the 35th anniversary of Sri Lanka's independence.

An exhibition of "Science, Technology, and Economics in the Turkmen SSR" was opened in this connection at the Art Gallery, Colombo on

February 2nd by the Minister for Food and Co-operatives, Mr. S. B. Herath, who said that the exhibition showed vividly the vast developments this constituent republic of the USSR had made in various fields in the past 60 years.

The Director of the Exhibition, Mr. Arpensov, and the Soviet Ambassador in Sri Lanka, Mr. Boris Kirnasovsky, joined the Minister in speaking at a public meeting in the Public Library Hall. The meeting, which was arranged by the Lanka-Soviet Friendship League, was presided over by its President, Mr. T. B. Subasinghe.

A much appreciated concert by a visiting Turkmen cultural troupe followed.

The cultural troupe has also performed in many outstation towns throughout Sri Lanka, where commemorative meetings organised by branches of the Lanka-Soviet Friendship League were also held.

This is the second delegation sent by the Soviet-Lanka Friendship Society of the USSR to Sri Lanka in connection with the 60th anniversary of the foundation of the USSR.

A third delegation, from Moldavia, has now arrived.

## AEROFLOT IS 60

Aeroflot, the well-known Soviet Airline, was 60 years old on February 9.

Founded in response to a directive from V. I. Lenin, Aeroflot, in 1923 only flew the short distance between Moscow and Nizhny Novgorod (now Gorky). To-day, Aeroflot aeroplanes link points within and outside the Soviet Union that cover over one million kilometers.

It connects 3,600 cities and towns in the Soviet Union, and has regular flights to 93 countries. In 1982, it carried 108 million passengers and 2.5 million tons of cargo.

Aeroflot to-day can boast that it is not merely the first but also the biggest airline company in the world.

In addition to transporting passengers and cargo, Aeroflot also maintains many airports, runways, hotels and repair facilities in the USSR and abroad. Its aeroplanes and pilots help the USSR's government and people in agricultural and forestry work over an area of 103 million hectares.

Aeroflot's bi-weekly flights between Colombo and Moscow and points west, to most European cities, is now as one of the most patronised, cheapest and safest available to the people of this country. It also handles a big volume of air cargo.

## Pakistan: U. S. Beach-head against Asia

Pakistan is to become a beach-head for US military operations in the Indian Ocean region, especially for subversion against India and South Yemen, and for suppressing democratic and patriotic movements in Oman and the Gulf states, says the Soviet journal IZVESTIA.

The newspaper says that Pakistan's military government has given the US permission to set up electronic surveillance bases in Peshwar, Gwadar, and Sargodha to provide support for military operations in the Indian Ocean and the Gulf, as well as to gather intelligence information from India, Afghanistan, and South and South West Asia.

The journal also charges that Pakistan has given the US permission to set up bases in its country for its Rapid Deployment Force.

CENTCOM, which at present has its headquarters in McDill Airport base at Tampa, USA, will also shift to Karachi.

TPA reports that one Pakistani Division of about 20,000 men is to be equipped with sophisticated weapons

and organised as part of the RDF. This division can be airlifted to be in any place in the Gulf or West Asia within 24 hours.

Pakistan forms part of a US sponsored "security ring" in the region, which also includes Turkey, Israel, Egypt and some Gulf emirates.

Since mid-1980, and especially in November 1981 and December 1982, the US held military exercises designed to assess the problems that its Rapid Deployment Force may encounter if it has to intervene in Iran or any other country of the region.

The new electronic listening posts in Pakistan will be set up close to the Soviet and Indian borders. The Pentagon will supply technical and intelligence experts to man these posts.

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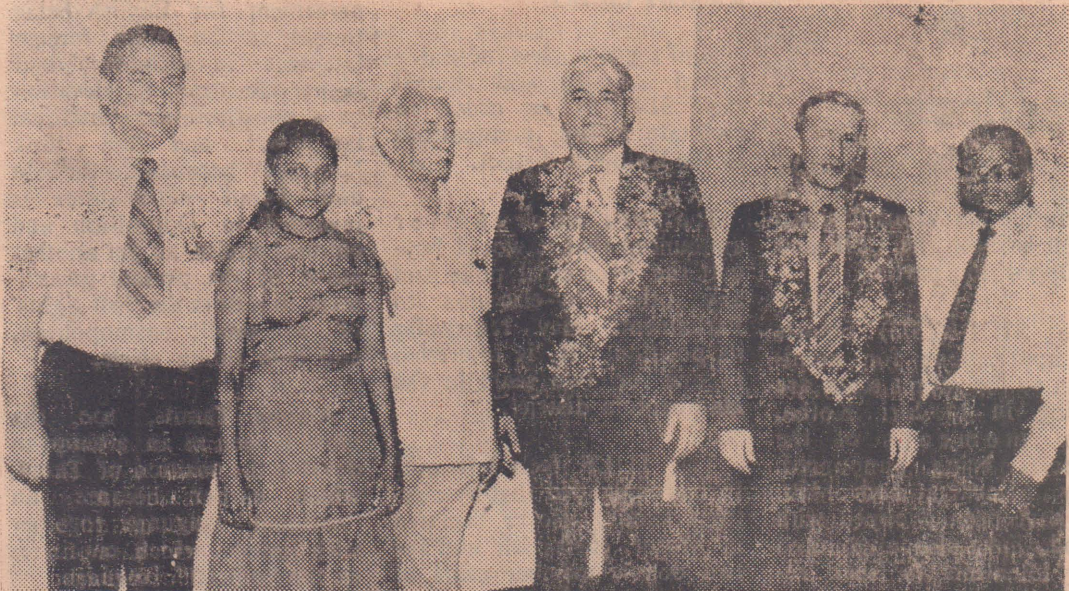
## Many bids for next N-A Chair

Several countries are in the field, trying to become the Chairman of the Non-Aligned Movement at the 8th Summit.

Whichever country is selected by a current non-aligned summit as the venue for the next summit becomes, by consensus, the next chairman of the movement. As India hosts the coming seventh summit, it will take over the chairmanship from Cuba until the 8th Summit meets.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea is one of the contestants for the chairmanship after India. Indonesia, Syria, Libya and Guinea are also in the race.

Iraq, which was to host the seventh summit but had to give it up due to its continuing war with Iran, has also made a claim.



Leaders of the Soviet delegation, Mr. M. Sodiev and Mr. Albert Kobylin (L to R in garlands) with L.S.F.L. leaders T. B. Subasinghe, Peter Jayasekera, and others.



# An Exercise in Total Cynicism

The way in which President Jayawardene has set about giving effect to his desire to hold some by-elections to Parliament is yet another example of his total cynicism in the manipulation of political power.

His repeated promise to probe charges of corrupt or improper conduct against any of his Ministers or MPs was postponed until both the Presidential election and the referendum were over. Then a committee of inquiry was set up by the UNP's Working Committee. But before it could start any serious work, its Chairman, Mr. A. C. Gooneratne Q. C., disappeared on a prolonged "holiday" in Great Britain. Now Mr. Gooneratne himself has been replaced (not for absconding but for not working for the party at the referendum) and the Committee has been rendered temporarily (or maybe permanently) *functus*.

Instead of taking up the question of his errant members in a straight-forward way, President Jayawardene chose a more devious and characteristic manoeuvre.

He decided that by-elections should be held in all UNP seats where sitting MPs had failed to pass a triple test he had carefully devised.

He hoped thereby not merely to divest himself of the direct responsibility for removing unpopular Ministers and MPs, but also to divert the attention of the people and the Opposition parties to a series of elections (Parliamentary by-elections, local government elections and DDC elections) throughout 1983 while he went ahead with giving effect to the harsh economic measures that the World Bank demanded.



## Pre-empt

As his proposal ran into preliminary objection at Cabinet level (the Prime Minister boycotted the meeting demonstratively, while other Ministers demurred), President Jayawardene decided to pre-empt matters.

He selected 17 of the enforced "resignations" he had obtained from his Ministers and MPs, and dispatched them to the Secretary General of Parliament, thus making these seats vacant.

Earlier he had moved to save Minister Ronnie de Mel, who had also failed the President's triple test, from having to resign and face the poll with the others.

The MP for Bulathsinhala, who was warded in intensive care, read in the newspapers (and to his consternation) that his "resignation" had not only been forwarded to the Secretary General, but that the complicated process of filling the vacancy by nomination had been completed in less than 24 hours and Ronnie de Mel appointed in his place.

Unable to believe his eyes, the poor man left the intensive care unit and, helped by his wife, went to Parliament to check up, only to find that the report was correct.

The other 17 MPs, who included Minister Ranjith Atapattu and some Deputy and District Ministers, received similar cavalier treatment. Only the previous day they had joined Prime Minister Premadasa in Parliament in howling down Sarath Muttetuwegama who had quipped that the second 21-gun salute at the inauguration of the new session was not in honour of the President but in farewell to his departing MPs.

The next day, even before Parliament could meet, they were summoned by UNP Party Chairman Panditharatne and told that they had "resigned" and could go home. President J. R. did not even bother to meet them.

Their reactions were, understandably, violent. The MP for Tangalle, who had earlier got his name in the newspapers for halting an official search party on a narcotics raid down south, even broke up furniture and windows at Sravasti. Others were stopped from following suit by the hasty assurance that they were eligible for reconsideration as nominees at the by-elections.



## Working Committee

The UNP Working Committee, which President J. R. had hurriedly summoned to rubber stamp his proposed "fifth amendment" to the Constitution in order to permit such by-elections, did not perform as expected.

The proposal met with tough resistance not merely from the Premadasa-ites but also from such stalwart JR-loyalists as AC ("Bunty") de Zoysa, Esmond Wickremasinghe, Lalith Athulathmudali, and others.

A variety of arguments were raised. Why, it was asked, were only a few electorates selected for by-elections when the government had claimed that the referendum was a re-election of the present Parliament in toto until 1989?

Why was Ronnie allowed to escape, while others were forced to face the people and the music? If his presence was necessary to introduce the budget, why could not the whole exercise be postponed until the Budget debate was over?



## Suicide

Another line of argument was that it would be political suicide to hold these by-elections soon after an unpopular budget and in electorates where the UNP had been defeated in December 1982.

Even though the government's two-third majority was kept intact, why risk the loss of face and image, not to speak of possible loss of confidence among would-be foreign investors, by a number of election victories by Opposition parties?

Although President J. R. appears to have got an OK to go ahead with his "fifth amendment", the oppositionists in the UNP do not think that the last word on the matter has been spoken. Some hope that it will be struck down in the Cabinet, while others believe that it will be dropped if the Supreme Court rules that it needs another referendum before it can be adopted.

President Jayawardene, however, seems determined to go ahead. The proposed fifth amendment will come before Cabinet and Parliament this month, and preparations are already being made for nominations before Sinhala and Tamil New Year in April and for the by-elections in May. The local government and DDC elections are planned for later in the year.

Even the President's supporters don't know what to expect next. "Onlooker" of the SUNDAY TIMES (13/1), a close confidante of the President

nomination for themselves or their wives, although not always for the same seat.

Ex-Minister of Health, Dr. Ranjith Atapattu, is one of them, while the MP for Tangalle is another. Both are tipped to be shifted to different seats, the latter to Devinuwara, vacated by Ronnie de Mel. Deputy Minister Edwin Tillekeratne, dropped at Ratgama, has announced that his wife intends contesting in his place.

Problems are also likely to arise for the UNP if tycoon Upali Wijewardene applies for UNP nomination for Kamburupitiya. One of his arch enemies, Prime Minister Premadasa, who has threatened him in Parliament, is a member of the UNP's nomination board. But he is in a minority as the other members are President Jayawardene and his two strong supporters, Chairman N. G. P. Panditharatne and General Secretary Harsha Abeywardene.

Opposition parties are also likely to make nominations for the vacant seats. Although the SLFP is currently in the midst of a top-level civil war, it may declare a truce until the by-elections are over. Already, the pro-Anura forces want no truck with the Left, while

Batticaloa and Potuvil, where the UNP was trounced in the referendum.

The SLFP (M) is also in a quandry. Unless the UNP agrees to support it at Mahara and maybe elsewhere, it may find itself up the spout.

The main question is whether the anti-UNP parties can work out a no-contest agreement. The fact that the by-elections will be held on the single electorate system and not on PR and the list system will make this easier to achieve. If such an agreement can be worked out, the Opposition can increase its representation in Parliament.



## Trinco again

Now that the Presidential polls and the referendum are over, the government has renewed its efforts for a deal with the USA to provide its ships, including naval ships, with oil at Trincomalee.

On February 3, negotiations took place between the Ceylon Petroleum Corporation and the US oil company, PRI, for the lease of a large number of oil tanks at Trinco for an "oil tank farm".

Unlike the earlier Yankee tenderer, Coastal Corporation, which sells oil to non-US governments as well, PRI's business is mainly with the US government. Anglo-Dutch interests are also backing PRI.

The CPC has decided to lease one or two tanks to India, in the hope that this will defuse its opposition to the grant of facilities to the US Navy at Trinco. It has turned down an offer from the Soviet Union to help the Ceylon Petroleum Corporation to restore the tanks to working condition and to operate them itself.



## English

President Jayawardene's announcement that English will also be made a "national language" in the Constitution is likely to raise sharp controversy.

While there is general agreement for English being taught as the main foreign language in secondary and higher education, its elevation to a constitutional "national language" and the "link language" between the Sinhala and Tamil nationalities is regarded in Opposition and cultural circles as yet another move by the present government to restore the 'lost rights' of a small, cosmopolitan, and elite ruling circle.

Among Tamils, too, the move is seen as an attempt to devalue the position of Tamil, which earlier became an "national" language together with Sinhala, which continues as the "official" language.



who implements his plans for him when not examining other people's family trees, has hinted heavily about the possibility "whether this is merely the first round of resignations and whether more will follow". Others say that they will have to go along to "clean up the President's somewhat tarnished "democratic" image for foreign consumption and the history books". Still others say that it is the only way in which the President can hope to get Maithripala Senanayake to replace the TULF's Amirthalingam as Leader of the Opposition.



## Reactions

Meanwhile, the prospect of several by-elections in the near future has aroused sharp interest in both the UNP and the Opposition parties.

The SUN (13/3) reports that applications for nomination to the vacant seats are pouring in to Siri Kotha, within moments of the vacancies being announced. Many Ministers and MPs, who have been dropped with a thud, have also announced their intention to seek re-

the others favour at least a no-contest arrangement with them.

The CPSL has expressed interest in four seats in the Matara and Galle districts, two of which they held earlier. Vasudeva Nanayakkara has already staked a claim for Eheliyagoda. The LSSP will certainly claim Panadura, although the problem of Dr. Neville Fernando exists here. It will also have problems with the dissident Anil Moonesinghe wing especially in the Kalutara district.

Anil's group has now dissolved itself and joined the SLFP(S) in order to facilitate getting nominations in the Kalutara district.

The JVPs which earlier announced that it would boycott the Municipal polls and any other by-elections to Parliament, may reconsider its position. It is interested in one or two seats in the Hambantota district.

The TULF feels left out. It has demanded that by-elections should also be declared in Mutur, Kalkudah and the two double-member seats of