

Kandyan Peasants

Rehabilitated

The Nation

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HEY, YOU OUT THERE — SCRAM!



HOTELS SANS HOTELIERS

(By Our Staff Commentator)

"The growth of the Tourist Industry in Ceylon is an important element in the Plan," says the Planning Ministry's Five Year Plan. The Plan envisages a 450% increase in tourist arrivals by 1976 and calls for an investment of Rs. 368.7 million in the intervening years. All over Colombo, and out in the provinces as well, gigantic tourist hotels are reaching out for the clouds. It all looks good, it even sounds so good—but is it all an illusion? Can we talk seriously of an industry which may soon have few if any qualified Ceylonese left, to man it.

The Ministry of Tourism admits that a fair outturn of the graduates of the Ceylon Hotel School, run by the Hotels Corporation at taxpayers expense, are going overseas. The School was set up because Lanka did not have adequately qualified personnel to man our hotels. Even today foreigners serve in our hotels. How many people know that behind the scenes, in kitchen, Europeans are at work in our hotels? What is more, the Hotel School itself is staffed by foreigners!

A spokesman of the Ministry told us that in a year or two, at the most, when the present wave of Hotels come into operation, there will be jobs and to spare. Even today there can be little doubt that there are satisfactory avenues of employment for the Graduates of our Hotel School. Due to the dearth of Hotel Managers in this country, many youngsters, in their twenties in fact, are rising to posts of responsibility in our hotels.

Dealing With Foreigners

The Spokesman of the Ministry added that the very nature of their jobs, namely, dealing with foreigners, opened up for our hoteliers, a number of opportunities to work abroad. In addition the Government itself awards scholarships to foreign countries, particularly West Germany and Canada. Most of these scholars are never seen again!

The Ministry of Tourism is understandably perturbed by this problem and is contemplating the institution of some kind of restrictive measures in the path of the Hotel School Graduates. As to whether such restrictions would serve as adequate deterrents remains to be seen. Such deterrents have had little if any effects on members of other professions. The problem as always is a problem of values. If we teach our youth to worship inanimate objects, be they cars, airconditioners, or battery operated back scratchers; it will always be a struggle to keep them within our shores.

The Bach-mai hospital attacked at 10hrs June 27, 1972. The paediatric, surgical and physiotherapy sections wrecked. A medic and another medical staffer killed.



Thondaman Fears Land Reform

(By A Special Correspondent)

Thondaman's mouth piece—the *Congress News*—of 1st October 1972 refers to an "estate grab by Land Ministry" which is causing "fears of displacing 20,000 workers". This concerns the establishment of the Udarate Co-operative Estates Development Board (UCEDB) by the Minister of Agriculture and Lands on 15th September.

The Board has been set up to manage and operate 13 up-country estates acquired by the Government, as Co-operatives. The estates have been selected on the basis of the proximity to areas where landless Kandyan peasants are concentrated. The finance is provided by the Government and the Bank of Ceylon, and the Government's plan is not only to raise the level of productivity of these estates by intensive land use and diversification, but also to alleviate the acute problem of landlessness and low incomes of Kandyan Peasants.

It also seeks to demonstrate the feasibility of adopting cooperative and collective principles in raising agricultural productivity—a principle which is now enshrined in the New Constitution.

No one today is unaware of the misery of the Kandyan peasant who has been deprived of a means of adequate livelihood by the expansion of the octopus-like tentacles of British Imperialism in the plantation sector. To pacify the legitimate aspirations of the peasant, previous Governments have through the awkwardly named 'Kandyan Peasantry Commission' tried to build a few roads and bridges there. The PWD Overseers had only fattened themselves out of this largesse, while the lot of the peasant went from bad to worse. On the other hand, there has been a growth in the non-Ceylonese estate labour force and estate companies had got over their obligations by giving them reduced work. Thus, a combination of Government intransigence and capitalist exploitation has only contributed to

further impoverish the Kandyan peasant and Indian worker.

Land Hunger

In this context, the Agriculture Minister's bold decision to nationalise thirteen estates within Kandyan areas is a decision, which can be taken as the first meaningful step by any Government to rehabilitate the Kandyan peasant. It is impossible to appease land-hunger in Sri Lanka. Hence, the co-operative principle. The farmers will collectively own these estates. They will decide, with the UCEDB on how to raise productivity. This is fundamental because, it is only by raising productivity that the non-Ceylonese labour earn a decent wage income and the farmer-owners, a decent return for their toil. To the private Capitalist, the productivity of the estate was the last concern. Faced with the Socialist tide, he was only interested in extracting the maximum surplus from the property, which he put elsewhere and wasted on conspicuous consumption.

Hence, there would be no major problem of displacing a large work-force, as feared by Thondaman and his band. In fact, it is the view of the government that, properly managed, these estates would provide more gainful employment to a larger workforce. Moreover, Thondaman knows very well that there are no armies of Kandyan peasants in total unemployment who are waiting to march into estates to displace resident labour. This so-called "surplus labour" was never there. What is there is Seasonal unemployment, especially during times when the farmer has no sowing and harvesting activity.

Hence one has to look at the term "land grab" (used by him) to rationalize Thondaman's thinking. This term indicates his own dislike of land reforms and his own anti-socialist views. Apparently he dislikes the "grab" more than the alleged "displacement" of workers. After all, it is well known that Mr. Thondaman and his crowd do own estates.

There is no gain denying that certain estates do have surplus resident labour, as evident by the short-hours of work they are given. This is a legacy of our colonial past. It was only recently that the *Seers Misson* commented adversely on the lack of mobility of Indian labour. There are some areas where labour is scarce and others where it is surplus. It might be possible, in this exercise, to effect some desired mobility of labour from surplus to deficit areas. Moreover, with the implementation of the Srma-Shastri Pact, it is time that the farmers of Sri Lanka learnt how to maintain and operate these estates efficiently.

The emergence of new multi-polar balance in the Far East

The Manoeuvring Has Just Begun

Mr. Heath has taken up a long-standing invitation to British Prime Ministers to visit Japan at a time when both countries are moving on to a new political stage. Britain is about to join the EEC, while Japan, whose entry into East Asian politics has been frequently forecast, is indeed now beginning to chart her own course.

In one sense the talks between Mr. Heath and Mr. Kakuei Tanaka, the Japanese Prime Minister, will be akin to a chat between two people on the down and up escalators as they pass at the midway point. Japan's economic power no doubt already outweighs Britain's remaining badges of world status, such as nuclear weapons and its place on the Security Council.

What is perhaps more relevant is that neither Britain nor Western Europe as a whole any longer has more than a marginal role in the Far East. So in a way Mr. Heath and Mr. Tanaka will not have a great deal which is "substantive" to talk about.

This is particularly the case because Mr. Heath, who is not yet a Common Market Prime Minister, cannot talk more than generally about commercial relations between Japan and the EEC, a subject about which the Japanese are greatly worried. The common experience of dependence on overseas supplies of raw materials inclines both Governments to a free trade view, but that is about as far as it goes.

Success

What Mr. Heath will have is the opportunity to assess at first hand the new direction of Japanese foreign policy, although it would be wrong to suggest that Mr. Tanaka's trip to Peking represents any kind of turnabout. Even under United States tutelage Japan insisted as early as 1951 on writing qualifying clauses into its peace treaty with Taiwan that left half open the possibility of improved relations with Peking and similarly tried not to close the North Korean option in its 1965 treaty with South Korea. The astonishing success of Peking's campaign to wean Japanese firms away from Taiwan over the past two years has been proof of the way Japanese policy was moving.

The other man continuing element in Japanese foreign policy remains the obsessive concern with economic considerations. The constant worrying about raw materials supplies on the one hand and markets on the other shows itself at every turn. The most important Japanese financial newspaper for instance recently commented that "sales competition" for the China market may be said to have begun with Nixon's trip to Peking. Similarly, in talking about the prospects for Japanese-Soviet economic cooperation in Siberia, Japanese officials express the fear that the United States may slip in ahead of Japan.

Cautious Optimism

For the moment, a cautious optimism prevails. The Japanese, who appear to have the feeling that they are on a lucky streak, hope to succeed by "equal distance" diplomacy in

retaining the US alliance, while throwing off much US influence; in achieving close relations with Peking while not losing economic links with Taiwan; and, possibly, in getting an economic and political deal from the Soviet Union without alienating either China or the United States.

If Japan is forced into choices, the most agonising would not be that between Peking and Taipei—that decision has already in effect been taken—but that between good relations with Peking and a good political and economic arrangement with the Soviet Union, with whom talks on a peace treaty are due to begin before the end of the year.

The problem is that while rapprochement with China is enormously popular in Japan—witness the rash of Chinese language course on television and other manifestations of general interest—the economic prospects of rapprochement with the Soviet Union are so much better. Russia has both raw materials in quantity, and a market ripe for Japanese consumer goods. China has none of these, and the vision of the mainland sprinkled with Sino-Japanese friendship factories is a long way off.

A Cautious Approach

The new multi-power balance in the Pacific is not going in any obvious direction. The game has only just begun. What is clear is that there are numerous ways in which it could go badly wrong.

A Soviet-American tie-up would arouse both Chinese and Japanese hostility, while a US-Soviet-Japanese entente would encircle China. A Sino-Japanese entente, with all its "yellow peril" connotations, could equally lead to a crisis situation. Japan's actions will be only one element in the developing equation.

To use a favourite Japanese word, a consensus has already emerged on the main characteristics of a stable balance of power in the Far East which would be unlikely to break down and lead to local or general war.

This posits a cautious approach by the four major powers in which US interest in Japan, the Philippines, and Australia is recognised, as is Soviet interest in South Asia, while Southeast Asia is left as an arena of competition—but not to the knife. As far as Japan is concerned this assumes no sudden and mercurial decision to move out of the Western system into an exclusive relationship with China or the Soviet Union, nor, obviously, a decision to go nuclear.

None of this clashes directly with the "Nixon doctrine," which proposes a further reduction of the American pres-

ence and the encouragement of a stable balance. But British and European observers of US policy are nevertheless worried that the American emphasis on Japan "playing a bigger role" in Asia could have unfortunate consequences.

Only a few days ago, Mr. Melvin Laird spoke of a possible Japanese maritime presence in the Indian Ocean, a suggestion that was promptly knocked down in Japan. One European diplomat commented: "The Americans don't know what a 'bigger role' really means, but keep defining it in terms of a big expansion of Japanese military capacity. Capacity for what?" Such an expansion would not add to Japan's security, but it would seriously upset the regional balance.

Many Suitors

The Japanese have their worries about the future but



the breakthrough in East Asian politics which followed Nixon's trip to China has exhilarated and excited them. After initial depression, they now see themselves, as one official put it, as a "maiden wooed by many suitors."

In other moods they may see themselves rather as a lone figure surrounded by many potential antagonists. There is a certain oscillation between these extremes. But the more sanguine view is certainly in the ascendant now. In all this, Britain and Europe are on the sidelines, having only indirect influence on the eventual outcome.

But it is obviously in Europe's interest, in the whole world's interest, that a stable system should emerge from the just-begun manoeuvrings of

the new "Big Four" of the Pacific region. When last the balance of power broke down in the Far East, with tragic consequences, Britain and Europe bore their share of the blame for the collapse, and the war which followed. Now Britain and Europe can offer not a great deal more than good wishes to all the protagonists, particularly Japan.

"Japan is now in the position that Great Britain was in with regard to France and Germany before the First World War," one Japanese official said, putting forward a rather strained but not wholly irrelevant parallel. "We hope that we will do better than Britain did." It is a hope that everybody should share.

—GUARDIAN

Why American Teenagers run away from Home

During six months last year the Washington police received 1,671 calls from parents whose children had disappeared from their homes. In Boston, 493 girls and 413 boys run away from home during the same period. In New York their number was 4,989. In Madison, in the state of Wisconsin, the number of runaways was 481. Runaway children had flooded the resorts and particularly Miami Beach and Ocean City. There are many thousands of them all over the country. While colonies of runaways can be found in all the large cities of America.

The life of these wanderers is not a bed of roses. They lead a half-starved existence and suffer from such diseases as tuberculosis and hepatitis. They are in constant fear of being discovered by the police, as their position is illegal; but despite that, they prefer to suffer hardships rather than live comfortably at home.

"Each of them has a reason of his own," said Sig Sanchez, a police sergeant, and added: "There are as many reasons, as there are people." The sergeant is quite right. But, nevertheless, in spite of the fact that they are different, the reasons form a common background. Some specialists like to talk about the scientific and technological revolution and the impetuous rates of development which, according to them, are responsible for the gap between the "adult" intellect of modern children and their childish disposition.

But while specialists let their thoughts go wool-gathering, teenagers run away from their parents.

If each family were to relate its story, one would see that they all resemble one another like drops of water. Standardisation and conformism rule in these families where everything is subordinated to the acquisition of things. If there is an argument in such a home, it is about the colour of a new car, and if there is disappointment—it is only because the Johnsons have a television set with a colour screen, while they have only a black and white one. Passions rage in such families only during the reckoning of the family budget. All these worries, anxieties and arguments reek of middle-class

conventionality. One is stricken by the abundance of things, on the one hand, and the poverty of mind, on the other.

In Search of an Identity

Children observing this suffocating adult world feel more and more that they must differ in some way from their parents, writes Dr. Spock in his book entitled "The Proper and the Improper". What can be more nonsensical than the reduction of all the diversity of the world to one of consumption? In a society where everything is bought and sold they have learnt to value only such things that cannot be bought—fresh clean air, pure rivers, peace, kindness and frankness.

To follow in their parents' footsteps means for these children to become, in a few years' time, similar small screws in the system of monopolies, humble and obedient televisioners, slaves of advertising and avid consumers. Numerous investigations prove that the ideals shared by adults do not elevate children, but on the contrary, humiliate them. Dreaming of the high purport of life and striving to protect their inner world from self-interest, hypocrisy and spiritual emptiness, these girls and boys withdraw into themselves, and a wall of estrangement and lack of understanding arises between them and their parents.

The children are worried by the undoubtedly romantic idea that everything around is but an annoying misunderstanding, and that somewhere away from home there is a better purer and kinder life. With this idea in mind there is nothing else left for them but to run away from home, which they do, striving to be among others like them.

They run away in search of an identity which, to their mind, is a treasure one cannot do without.

Bourgeois Society

Both the society and the family as a unit of the society have been considerably undermined by the war waged by America in Indo-China. The inhumanity and cruelty of this conflict are particularly remote from the humanistic ideals which these young people strive to attain. The war too has been forced upon them by adults. Naturally, thousands of young men who have been called up for service have found refuge in Canada.

The bitter paradox of the phenomenon described in this article lies in the fact that for many runaways their striving for freedom ends in imprisonment. Most of them are sent to children's homes which have won for themselves notoriety of the worst type. Many runaways tired and broken, return home to their families. Others get lost among drug addicts. Still others settle down in the colonies of the hippies.

This rebellion of the young arises actually out of their conflict with society, as critically-minded and thinking young people regard all the values of bourgeois society with great scepticism.

This society is responsible for the war in Vietnam, for the orgy of racial discrimination and for the existence of unemployment. These problems affect teenagers most of all, the same as the crisis suffered by the American family. So some teenagers see the only way out in running away from home.

The politically conscious section of the American youth is more concerned not with its personal freedom, but with the search for ideals that are opposed to bourgeois society. They may err, they may be misguided, and they may even grow tired; but they will not stop their search.

—A. P. N.

Aspects of U.S. Aggression in Viet Nam — I

Cruellest War in Human History

by S. W. Walpita

For over two and a half decades the people of Vietnam have been at war. This is a war not of their seeking but one imposed on them by foreign aggression. At first the French, in their effort to reconquer their former colony, started an aggression which ended disastrously for them at Dien Bien Phu. After the Geneva Conference, they withdrew from Vietnam. But the U.S. Imperialists thought that they should step in and fill a so-called vacuum in Asia and reimpose a new colonisation on the unfortunate Vietnamese people. Though the Geneva Conference of 1954 was expected to settle the Vietnam problem and allow the Vietnamese people the right of self-determination, they were deceived; the new U.S. policy prevented that. The result has been a war which has gone on ever since with U.S. involvement increasing every day. There is no end in sight yet. When the people of Vietnam will be able to know what peace is, when they will be free from fear and horror of modern war, may not be for a long time. But they will never submit or be cowed down under the heel of an aggressor or his puppets.

The Vietnamese are a small people, like ourselves, occupying a land with similar climate and vegetation as ours. But they also have a long tradition of struggle for freedom and independence — a tradition going back to over two thousand years. The Vietnamese people, imbued with an ardent patriotism, a high sense of national unity and sovereignty and an indomitable spirit of resistance have fought off foreign aggressors for many centuries. The entire people have been mobilised in the wars of liberation. There is a tradition among them of 'the whole country going forces' against foreign aggression. 'Every citizen is a soldier' and 'when the enemy comes, even the women must fight'. How true this is of Vietnam today. This is the worst colonial war in the history of mankind. Few people in history have put up such a never-ending struggle for independence and freedom as the Vietnamese.

In the early years of the U.S.'s direct involvement in this Vietnam War, under President Johnson, we in this country and elsewhere took greater interest in the Vietnam War. But this war has gone on for so long that we have tended to take it for granted. It has slipped out of the headlines in newspapers and less notice is taken of it. That is the danger. Because that is how the aggressor wants it regarded: to make it the forgotten war in order that the worst crimes may be committed in Vietnam without much protest from the world public. If imperialistic aggressors can get away with what they are doing in Vietnam today, none of the newly independent ex-colonial countries will be safe. We may have regained our independence, but we may lose it easily, if we are not vigilant enough and do not give our support and express our solidarity with the Vietnamese people in their struggle for

freedom and national independence.

President Johnson introduced over 1/2 million U.S. troops in order to settle the Vietnam War, win a victory in the South and instal a puppet regime in Saigon. But this was a failure. He started bombing North Vietnam, hoping thereby to cripple the North and put an end to the will to resist of the Vietnamese people. This too failed. The war was becoming unpopular with the American people, especially because the young men called upon to fight this war in Vietnam were unwilling to make any sacrifice for a cause which they did not regard as their own and was in any event hopeless. President Johnson's policy was so unpopular, that he stopped the bombing of the North and was compelled to withdraw from seeking reelection as President in 1968.

The new President Nixon did not promise to allow the Vietnamese to settle their differences among themselves. But as he found that the use of American ground forces was the one reason for the unpopularity of the war in America, he promised to withdraw in stages the commitment of American troops in this disastrous theatre of war.

A new policy was adopted. What is called the "Vietnamization" policy. That is train and arm the Vietnamese to fight the Vietnamese and give every support to the 'puppet' administration in Saigon to continue the war. The 'puppet'

area, will not only be trained, armed, fed and clothed by the U.S., but strong naval and air support will be provided them that the War can be continued indefinitely and the Vietnamese people's misery with it. In keeping with this new policy, American troops have been steadily withdrawn and actual combat troops are very few today. But that does not mean the War is over. Far from it. The war has really expanded, extended to the whole of Indo-China, Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia are now involved and the intensity of the war increased. This policy was supposed to be most successful with the 'puppet' administration centalling 95% of the villages in S. Vietnam, a 'puppet' army considerably strengthened, re-equipped and full of spirit and the enemy exhausted. "Vietnamisation" had been a tremendous success, such was the picture presented to the world by the U.S. administrative spokesmen. But a few weeks offensive this

year by the Liberation Forces has been enough to scatter all illusions. Quang Tri province wholly liberated; vast areas of Binh Dinh, the Central Highlands and North-Western Nam Bo freed from 'puppet' control; fortifications strengthened for years and thought to be impregnable, captured; the best units of the 'puppet' army thrown into confusion and fleeing in panic, some deserting to the patriotic forces with all their equipment and almost everywhere in the country, local para-military forces, the backbone of 'pacification' disintegrating under the blows of the revolutionary forces. The policy of 'Vietnamisation' had been a total failure. There was no alternative now except to intervene massively with aircraft and ships, in an effort to ward off disaster coming down on both the Nguyen Van Thieu troops and administration. But the multiplication of B-52 raids and the fury of the 7th Fleet bombarding a narrow strip of land failed to prevent the rout of the Saigon forces. The Liberation army had brilliantly proved its superiority.

Kremlin's old fear is revived

China's entry into European politics, which Moscow has been viewing with some anxiety as a prospect for the future, has suddenly become an immediate and alarming reality for the Kremlin. The fancied notion of an anti-Soviet alliance between China and West Germany, which is one of the Kremlin's recurring nightmares, has now become an issue in the manoeuvres leading up to the West German general election in December.

It is not an open issue, because no responsible politician in West Germany now advocates anything as adventurous as that. The public debate in Germany is centred on whether diplomatic relations should be established with China immediately, as the Christian Democratic opposition party, the CDU, is urging, or whether this should be left until after the election, as Herr Willy Brandt's Government would prefer to do, in order not to upset the Kremlin.

It is the Kremlin's own fears and dark suspicions which have transformed the issue of diplomatic recognition into the threat of an alliance between Russia's most powerful neighbours and, as some Soviet leaders believe, potential enemies. It was the Kremlin which elevated last month's visit to Peking by Gerhard Schroeder, the former German Foreign Minister, to the status of an opening move in the CDU's supposed plans, if it wins the December election, to enter into an alliance with China.

Strong Card

Perhaps the Kremlin only wanted to warn the West Germans against playing with any such dangerous ideas. But in showing its fears so emphatically it has also persuaded many West German leaders that they still hold a strong Chinese card which they could play against the Soviet Union.

Certainly the new treaties negotiated by the Brandt Government with the Soviet Union and its allies are not accepted at face value by strong forces in the West German Opposition. They argue that Brandt has given too much to the Russians, and they would like to get some of it back if the Christian Democrats form a Government.

Common Interests

They know that Bonn cannot on its own make the Communist world disgorge East Germany or make the Kremlin heed other West German desires, but they believe that West Germany and China have a common interest in checking the power of their common neighbour, and that they should therefore coordinate their policies accordingly.

Izvestia concluded that Schroeder's visit showed that the CDU was willing to go along with Peking's anti-Soviet designs, and recalled that the Christian Democrats had long nursed the idea of "playing the Chinese trump card" against the Russians. The East German party paper, *Neue Deutschland*, said that Schroeder was working for a "partnership with Peking" in which "he smells the chances of realising an ancient Bonn dream."

The Brandt Government's Foreign Minister, Walter Scheel, sought to reassure the Russians. When questioned in an interview about the Opposition's advocacy of contacts "as a means of exerting pressure on Russia" and as an alternative to West Germany's present foreign policy of far-reaching cooperation with the Soviet Union, he answered: "It is naive to think that the Federal Republic could enter into an alliance with China against other great world Powers."

Is the West German Opposition naive, or the Kremlin? If viewed in terms of the old balance of power based on military might, the notion of Germany and China squeezing Russia between them is certainly naive. But what the Kremlin fears is the role which a Chinese-German arrangement might come to play in the new diplomatic balance of power which is gradually replacing the old.

—GUARDIAN

Counterfeit Money To Fight Vietnam War

The finance emissars of the western states bumped their heads at the 28th session of the international monetary fund in Washington, but it was the chiefs of the American Intelligence Service that got the headache. They suddenly realised that there was a most favourable field for subversion and sabotage close at hand: the national monetary systems. They can be torpedoed without explosives with the same banknotes which the CIA usually pays its agents.

Moreover they are counterfeit banknotes. The mint at the CIA headquarters in Langley started working at full load and its output soon appeared in... North Vietnam. A large series of counterfeit *Dongs*—local banknotes—was withdrawn from circulation on DRV markets.

The CIA counterfeiters could not be unaware of the fact that the forging of notes of national banks and the more so the smuggling thereof into a sovereign country is qualified as an international crime. Back on April 20, 1929 an international convention on the reciprocal protection of national monetary units was signed on the basis of multi-lateral agreements between police bodies. Of course the document applied to struggle against gangs of criminals but not against government services of the CIA type. But in the forty years since then the knights of the cloak and dagger managed to change both their vestments and weapons.

However this has not made finance banditism a less grave crime. Analysing in the *Hanoi Nhan dan* the legal aspects of this monetary subversion,

lawyers Do Xuang Sang and Pham Thanh Vinh emphasise that the violation of international laws and moral safeguards here is not only in circulating counterfeit money. It is a new element of the total war which Washington has unleashed against the civilian population of the DRV, and which may be added to the genocide, biocide and oecocide policy long tested by the aggressor on Vietnam soil.

Painstakingly copying the watermarks of the *Dong* the American Intelligence Service did not realise that it gave world public opinion a sign of the complete failure of its intervention in Indochina, including its most important ideological component—the "Vietnamisation" doctrine. While the Pentagon officially admitted that its bombers dropped throughout the past seven years a million tons of explosive annually upon the heads of peaceful Asians the counterfeit banknotes of the CIA stand for another admission. They mean that the avalanche of bombs failed to break down the staunchness of the Vietnamese patriots. And where real demolition bombs are powerless the counterfeit money is still more so.

Buy Chaos

Unsuccessfully trying to buy chaos to the north of the 17th parallel the CIA has been found to have paid the same money in the south too. According to *Newsweek* the American Intelligence Service is taking extremely strange measures to stop in one way or another the corruption that is corroding the puppet regime.

In the first place the Saigon embezzlers of public money with ministerial titles have been found to have kept the embezzled money in a reliable place—the strongboxes of Swiss banks. Ex-Minister of Defence Nguyen Van Vi for instance prior to his forced retirement managed to steal and transfer to Switzerland almost the entire fund of soldiers' grants.

In order to intimidate the remaining part of the Saigon Cabinet who intended to follow in Vi's footsteps the "quiet Americans" engineered an operation which may be coded as nothing but "robbing the robber". CIA men with forged cheques with counterfeit signatures exempted a few days ago the deposits of a number of Saigon leaders from Swiss banks. In one of these cases, according to *Newsweek*, the Intelligence Services pushed its counterfeit money in the north and forged cheques in the south... but they can buy neither victory in the war nor prestige for the Saigon puppet regime.

—APN.

The Art of Being a Bureaucrat

The professional bureaucrat is, above all things, a person dedicated to the optimization of the status quo. He has accepted the principle of dynamic inaction as a life style.

Professional bureaucrats employ committee processes, use clearance mechanisms and apply the principles of vigorous inertia to postpone decisions and avoid confrontations.

They are normally characterized by skill in mumbling, pondering and delegating. The professional bureaucrat knows that in any well-organized bureaucracy, the theme of communication is less important than the *artistry* with which words, charts and other communication tools are used.

Bureaucrats who wish to communicate their concepts of non-responsiveness to others should practise their translation skills at every opportunity. When reading the morning paper, for example, the bureaucrat can practise translating the headlines into professional terminology. Even writing the grocery list can provide an opportunity to practise. Instead of writing "potatoes" the aspiring bureaucrat can note: "If appropriately compatible to the taste spectrum as relates to the optimal state of maturity, one sack of potatoes." Men and women who devote time and effort to expressing thoughts in professional terms will rise in their institutional hierarchy. They will also find great satisfaction in attaining the status of a recognized profundicator.

In perfecting the spoken word, articulate mumbling is an effective tool. A careful study of artistic mumblers reveals that there are basically two approaches to this form of communication: linear and vertical. Linear mumbling is characterized more by tones than words. Occasional words, with linking prepositions and articles, may emerge from the total base of the speaker.

Vertical mumbling consists of stringing words together, as in: "Without wishing to restructure a delphic projection apart from experimentation in the cross-impact matrix methodology, one should stand ready to adjust one's differentiated and totally interrelated concepts of the environment until the opinion convergence can be harmonized with the various self-structures."

Vertical mumbling is greatly enhanced by deep voice projection of roundly sounded vowels. And eye-to-eye contact and facial expressions that reflect knowledgeability and sincerity are the essential companions of successful mumbling.

For example, when presenting a paper, it should be designed primarily for platform performance and only secondarily for the content. Many beginning bureaucrats devote too much time to developing the substance of their messages and insufficient time to the more important factors of resonant tonal projections, rhetorical integrity and body language.

When the professional bureaucrat strides to the speaker's stand, he should do so with a facial expression that broad-

casts that he has something to say and welcomes the opportunity to say it. From the stand, he should survey the people in the room and make as much eye-to-eye contact as possible. Such a sweep of the audience will help gain the attention of potential listeners and will reflect the professional bureaucrat's self-confidence. Self-confidence and resonant tones are associated in the minds of the audience with expertise.

The accomplished bureaucratic orator often interrupts his pattern of presentation by leaning forward over the speaker's lectern, removing his glasses and speaking in what appears to be an off-hand manner. If the bureaucrat does not wear glasses, he can buy an inexpensive pair with plain glass lenses; he should not purchase the style with gold frames but with horn rims.

The projection of intimacy and sincerity can also be strengthened if the bureaucrat removes the glasses and places them in his breast pocket or glasses case during the final minutes of the presentation. This also encourages the audience to prepare for appropriate applause, because it signals the fact that the end of the paper is at hand.

The budding bureaucrat should also study the body language of the more experienced practitioners for other occasions. When the bureaucrat is asked a question about a matter on which he either knows nothing or wishes to avoid taking a position, he may use a wide variety of non-committal techniques.

The bureaucrat may furrow his brow while gazing intently at some imagined heavenly

body in a far corner of the room. He may slowly pucker his lips or count the number of his teeth with his tongue, or he may thoughtfully stroke his chin while reclining in his chair. He may choose to softly tap his fingers on the desk or perhaps stroke his second chin with his thumb and index finger.

If the bureaucrat is a pipe smoker, he has a special advantage, because the image of the pipe smoker includes the inherent elements of solid character and great wisdom. Not only may the pipe smoker slowly exhale the aromatic smoke in tiny patterns of motivational grey but also he may pensively pause to refill the pipe or tap the ashes. In certain instances of great stress, he may even carefully disassemble the pipe to give it a thorough expurgation with a pipe cleaner. And he may squint his eyes and continue to furrow his brow.

The first words that a professional bureaucrat may utter at a conference may be accented by shrugging the shoulders, lifting and dropping a hand, palm upward, and popping the tongue as an added first syllable of the first word. "Very good question," he may say. Then steadily looking directly into the eyes of the questioner or the most troublesome person in the meeting, the bureaucrat in charge may ask: "What is your recommendation?" With four words he has proven his deep concern and established his authority.

The developing bureaucrat should practise daily before a mirror to perfect the wide range of body skills of the successful ponderer. In this manner he can better prepare himself for that day when he may be called upon to chair a meeting or orchestrate an entire bureau or department in a

symphony of non-committal expressions.

The bureaucrat in charge need not necessarily accept the risks of leadership. He can preside over well-structured staff meetings. He can appoint and co-ordinate the collaborative efforts of study committees, blue ribbon commissions and special task forces.

Study committees are the bureaucrat's best instrument to avoid decisions that may add additional work, be embarrassing or be otherwise undesirable. When issues are charged with great emotion and danger for the bureaucracy, the bureaucratic leadership can simply refer the matter to a study committee.

After study committee reports are reviewed by review committees, and review committee reports are surveyed by survey committees, the survey committee reports should be co-ordinated by co-ordinating committees. The full thrust of orchestrated committees can keep an awkward problem suspended in harmless inactivity almost indefinitely.

As the bureaucrat moves through the system of his chosen bureaucracy, he should constantly strive to improve his skill in making simple things more complex and to increase the range of his non-committal mumbling and writing.

(Acknowledgments — James H. Boren's "When in Doubt Mumble; a Bureaucrat's Hand Book").

REFLECTIONS ON BY-ELECTIONS

*The voter is a simple man
Endowed with common sense,
He's heard much of the Five Year Plan,
Of debt, despair, Defence.*

*His karma may explain his lot
But will not satisfy
For all the things he hasn't got
He knows the reason why.*

*He knows his free and secret vote
May well his fate decide,
He'll change his colour or his coat,
None may his choice deride.*

*The problems that beset his life
Are rising living cost,
The scarce essentials for his wife
And children uppermost.*

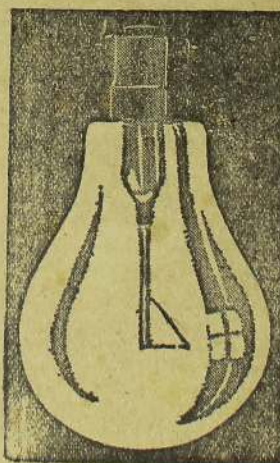
*Privation, hardship he'll endure
To reach the distant goal,
If only he could be quite sure
The politician's bowl--*

*Was Just as empty as his own,
His belt was just as tight,
He'll work his fingers to the bone
And heave with all his might.*

—Mervyn Casie Chetty.

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WORKER PARTICIPATION IN MANAGEMENT — VII

The Worker's Ability to Participate

It was amidst such feelings and misgivings that workers elected their representatives to participate in management, with the result that some work places returned either the outstanding anti-management elements or workers with longstanding grievances with the management. The aggressive nature displayed by some worker representatives, and even entire councils, in their dealings with the management too should be viewed against the same background. In some places where the managements were tolerant and understanding, this aggressiveness did not continue for long; it rather gave way to cordiality and active co-operation.

To be elected as a representative of people, however small the electorate be, is a sign of being given power to act! This feeling, which is evident in people's representatives at various levels, including the M.P. who went to the extent of interfering in the work of a surgeon about to operate on a patient, could be seen, though somewhat rarely, in the case of representatives elected to Employees' Councils.

One could thus come across councillors abandoning their usual work in order to keep an eye on the officers coming late to work. Some even went to the extent of calling upon these officers to explain the reasons for late attendance!

One-Sided Emphasis

This type of instance was an indicator of the lack of unders-

tanding and appreciation of the management set-up in each place, on the one hand; and, on the other hand, it depicts the greater emphasis (perhaps much more than was necessary or anticipated) and bias shown to one particular aspect in the operation of Employees Councils, viz. to point out waste, corruption, undue delay in the transaction of public business etc. This over-emphasis on many occasions had turned these councils into mere fault-finding operations directed against the management in general or against selected individuals in the management. While giving due credit to Employees' Councils and Councillors who went about their business without considering the individuals concerned, one cannot overlook the fact that, as is usual in any activity

by
D. B. Kuruppu

where people are involved, personal prejudices, jealousies and animosities did influence the thinking, suggestions and investigations of some Councils.

Again, the general charge that is made against some established trade union leaders in certain Corporations, viz. that they act more often than not, for their personal gain, becomes applicable to even a small minority of worker representatives, who perhaps inherited this social evil from outside their work place. This, however, is a reflection of the society in which worker participation has to be practised; and does not arise as a result of its operation!

Experimental Stage

The initial period in the operation of Employees' Councils, which is rightly called the experimental stage, could also be referred to as a period of transition in management patterns; a transition from negotiation to consultation. In this transition,

for timber extraction, it has been agreed that one thousand acres will be left untouched for the naturalists to do their research.

Lastly, it is a great pity that this controversy should have started after the project was approved by the Government after consulting specialists here and abroad. Mr. Hoffman is aware of the vast sums of money already invested in the Kosgama project and ancillary services. Already a percentage of personnel have been recruited and are waiting to start work.

To my mind the weakest argument put forward by Mr. Hoffman is that he is aware that the Kosgama complex will not be able to function at full capacity without extraction from Sinharaja forest, but goes on to say "after all it would not be the first and only undertaking of this nature working below capacity, and in this instance any voluntary restriction would be for a very valid reason."

That we have made many mistakes in the past is correct, but can we afford to repeat such waste in the present context? This project was started after due consideration and should we abandon it now? Most people are under the incorrect belief that the forest which acts as an essential wind-belt will be raped like the forests in the dry zone, for which there is no excuse. That even after timber extraction it will remain one of our largest expanses of forest for many more centuries is what has to be borne in mind. That there will be some changes in the undergrowth and in animal life cannot be avoided.

On the other hand, my fear is that if in our national undertakings we allow sentiment and other interests to dominate, the Sinharaja forest will not only abound in rare species of flora and fauna but also a new species of inhabitants—insurgents seeking a place in the sun.

—A Rationalist

however, one cannot forget the fact that both the manager and the worker have been brought up in the tradition of negotiation. To be more precise, both parties have been accustomed to negotiations of a trade union nature, with the customary paraphernalia of demands, protests, threats and strike-action etc. Neither this atmosphere nor the attitudes of the worker and the manager in their dealings with each other could change overnight. At least, in the case of some managers and quite a number of Employees' Council representatives, the expected change has needed (or still needs) a long time to take place. This transformation was perhaps more difficult for the worker; for a good many of the workers' representatives elected to Councils were themselves active trade unionists. While some adapted themselves to the dual role of agitator for workers' rights and partner in management (though in a limited sense), yet others continued to be more union activists than Employees' Councillors. The Unionist was further handicapped in this by the prospect of his being looked down upon by his colleagues as a yesman of the management when he attempted to extend his co-operation to the manager.

It was due to this historical factor that, in the actual operation of Employees' Councils, one notices the Councils making various demands of the management. At the same time, although the protests of the Employees' Council would be meaningless or goes contrary to the spirit of its operation, some Councils and Councillors still resorted to the erstwhile practice of lodging a strong protest against even a routine change done by the management.

Naive Expertise

The worker has been almost totally unaware of the principles of decision-making, which hitherto remained the exclusive right of the managers. This ignorance again was the cause for bitterness against the management when it came to the implementation of decisions of the Councils. The Council members do consider various issues to the best of their ability and knowledge, and quite correctly expect the management to implement their considered decisions. They very often fail to appreciate that what they consider important and imperative either takes a secondary place on the basis of priorities which the management is in a better position to decide, or is not practicable, taking into consideration the implications of its implementation on the whole organisation. The manager on his part does not feel obliged to offer any explanation. It is not his business to teach management to a set of ordinary workers who are trying to arrogate power to themselves.

The abundance of experts and expertise in the country, noticeable in any place where a few persons gather, has also had its effect on the operation of Employees' Councils. Apart from making available to the

management the fruits of his experience and skill gathered in the actual performance of his work, the worker's representative, like the ordinary commuter waiting in the bus queue, sometimes tends to be an expert on everything in his Corporation. It may become difficult at times, even for the indulgent manager, to enlighten him on things which he really does not understand!

The Constitution for Employees' Councils provided for committees of inquiry consisting of members of Councils to investigate the working of any section of a Corporation. It would be interesting to find out how far such committees of inquiry have proved successful or useful. There are instances of such committees winding up operations halfway. Some committees failed for the simple reason that the managers concerned knew their game better; or because the management procedures and practices such committees set before themselves to investigate, were not familiar to them. A significant change in the revised constitution for Employees' Councils in the C.T.B., whereby provision is made for a Council to appoint on such a Committee of Inquiry any officer in the organisation, is one that has been made by ardent advocates of worker participation in management. They would sometimes even go further and call for the take-over of management by workers.

Preparation Necessary

However much one would wish for this quick change, one must not ignore the potential of the workers to manage. A physical takeover of management, subsequent to the forced exit of some managers, took place in the C.T.B. immediately after the General Election in May 1970. Action Committees of workers took over the running of the organisation (or at least the running of the buses). There was greater enthusiasm among the workers to start with! Why did these Action Committees fail to deliver the goods? Isn't it the lack of management know-how and skill on the part of the workers, that led to their failure?

Another instance, though not similar, was seen at the Textile Mills at Veyangoda (under the National Textile Corporation), where workers elected one of their colleagues as Mill Manager around the same time. The newly elected Mill Manager was apparently assured of the support of the sectional Heads, who responded to the former's call and attended a meeting of sectional heads to issue instructions regarding operations under the new management. In spite of all the support forthcoming from his staff and workers the new Mill Manager decided to suspend operations within a matter of a few hours! Did he himself discover that the worker in Sri Lanka had to go a long way (at least as at that day) to actual Managers?

What clearly stands out from the two instances given above, is that some preparatory work was necessary, in the form of training, experience and education in the sphere of management, for the worker to play a responsible role in the management of factories or Corporations.

Communications

Sinharaja

I am no expert on the flora and fauna of this country like Mr. Hoffman, President W.N.P.S., or on forestry like Dr. C. R. Ghosh of India, who hold widely divergent views on timber extraction from our Sinharaja forest.

As a layman I enjoy the flora and fauna of our country and hate to see a large tree felled or an animal destroyed if it could be saved. But at the same time I am no sentimentalist who cannot see the realities of the age we live in.

Our population is increasing every year. The needs of the people are changing and the youth are demanding more and more of the good things of life.

It is in this light that we have to view our national ventures like the Kosgama complex and decide on our priorities. In Mr. Hoffman's reply to Mr. Ghosh which appeared in the *Ceylon Daily News* of 3.10.72 he says "the time has come for us to think deeply about the kind of progress we want. Should we not recast our priorities and ask ourselves what facilities are worth the price for us or our future generations." But I cannot agree with Mr. Hoffman's conclusions that in the best interest of the future generations a vast acreage like Sinharaja should be kept untouched forever. If Mr. Hoffman's arguments are carried to its logical conclusion we should cry halt to all our industrial ventures. It could be argued that, however well planned they may be in centuries to come, they will lead to air pollution and water pollution.

Mr. Ghosh is an expert on forestry. After making a study of our forests, he maintains that timber extraction will not destroy the Sinharaja forest. By that we can conclude that the natural potentialities of the forest will not come to an abrupt end like Mr. Hoffman fears. It is also wrong to conclude that Sinharaja will only yield a ten year supply of timber. As Mr. Hoffman is aware, what is planned is not indiscriminate felling of the forest but scientific and controlled forestry, which implies a rotation in felling which will keep the complex supplied for a long period.

Not so long ago a party of us visited the timber complex in Kaneliya and saw timber being felled in a part of the forest which had already been exploited twice before during a period of time. To a layman like me it looked as much a thick forest as any other. We learnt that only trees of a girth over five feet were permitted to be felled. We witnessed that when a large tree was felled, it did destroy a few trees that lay in its path but there were virtually hundreds of other trees of varying sizes waiting to take its place and reach for the sun. We also learnt that, once a section of the forest was felled, they did not return to the same area for well over ten years, when other trees were ready for felling.

I do not wish to talk of the rare species of flora and fauna of which I have no knowledge. But Mr. Hoffman says there is bound to be rare types that have been still undiscovered and we should leave it to the generations to come to discover them if they are so inclined. But what is the guarantee that, through the natural process of evolution, some of these rare species are not dead or dying like the prehistoric animals that once roamed the world?

I have information that, even if Sinharaja is to be used

BOOK REVIEW

Welcome and Long Overdue

"The Rise of the Labour Movement in Ceylon": Visakha Kumari Jayawardena. Duke University Press. 1972, Hard Cover.

While Portuguese and Dutch rule may have lasted a hundred and fifty years each, it was British colonialism that really transformed this country. It was as a by product of British rule that the traditional self-sufficient communities were disrupted; native industry destroyed; private property in land introduced; the modern money economy imposed; the relations of wage labour and capital created; the modern plantation economy formed; a new class structure and new elite groups created; and Ceylon integrated into the world market. British rule carried out irreversible and thorough going change and modern Ceylon, like modern India, is perhaps above all else a product of British rule.

The plantations and the ancillary service formations such as the railways, the engineering works, the port of Colombo, the commercial and business houses and the banking establishments are the points at which capitalist economic forms and capitalist relations of production (wage labour and capital) first put down their roots in Ceylon. The working class movement naturally arose in the plantations and in the ancillary formations that were concentrated in the City of Colombo. Because of the backwardness of the plantation workers and the conditions of thralldom in

which they were held, the emergence of the labour movement as such in this sector was delayed until the late 1920's. In Colombo however working class activity of a spontaneous nature probably commenced as early as the 1850's, the first trade union was formed in 1893 in the midst of the first recorded strike, that of the Printers.

Kumari Jayawardena's book is a welcome history of the rise of the working class movement in Ceylon during the period 1880-1933, that is from its earliest stages to just prior to the rise of the Sama Samaja movement. It fills a gap in our history and a work of this type has been long overdue, as up to now every interested student has been compelled either to search after original source material, or to confine himself to a few magazine articles. The book makes no pretense of profound or analytical depth but follows a simple, readable and enjoyable, narrative style. She divides these years into two distinct periods of time, the first up to 1915 when the working class remained under the influence of resurgent religious and middle class leaders. The 1915 riots and no doubt the profound changes that swept across the world after the War was the midwife of a more radical and independent movement that culminated in the

great working class struggles of the early 1920's. The Economic Depression of world Imperialism from 1929-33 was a period of defeat and steady decline in the urban working class movement, a trend that was finally stemmed by the Sama Samajists.

Economic Boom

Extensive coffee plantations were opened in 1830 but as a result of the blight of 1880 the upcountry areas were converted to tea plantations, later on rubber and coconut plantations also came to occupy a prominent place. Taken overall the second half of the last century and especially its last twenty years was a period of immense economic boom in the colony. Under the umbrella of this boom a class of traders, arrack renters, small landowners and well educated professionals came to prosperity and began to differentiate themselves from the rural mass, a middle class was crystallising. This class must not be confused either with the great feudal lords of Kandyan origin who were in shambles nor with the mainly Christianised and Westernised upper classes of the low country and of the Tamils who were closely integrated with the British Administration as Maha-Mudaliyars and so on. This newly emerging middle class found that both the British Raj and the Christianised upper class wedded to the Raj, were capable of frustrating

their further advancement and could wield the bureaucratic machine in a manner that restrained their fullest development. Kumari Jayawardena quaintly describes this as: the middle class found that in proportion to their new economic stature their political influence was very small.

Since a direct political onslaught would not have been permitted at this early time the reaction of the middle class took the form of a religious movement inspired by Buddhism, violently anti-Christian, determined to restore the former glory of Buddhism and prove by debate and intellect the superiority of Buddhism over Christianity. The attack though couched in religious terms was aimed in essence at the British Raj and its Westernised coteries, it was political in essence but middle-class-political. The leading protagonists of this current were Anagarika Dharmapala, Bikkhu Nigettuwatte Gunananda, Bikkhu Hikkaduwe Sri Sumanagala, Thomas de Silva Amarasuriya, C. H. Hewavitarene, Mrs. Cecilia Dias Illangakoon, A. E. Bultjens, and many others. A parallel movement in Jaffna was lead by Arumuga Navalar. The early working class movement came to be thus radicalised; indeed it was a by product of the influence of the middle class on the very considerable hardships under which workers lived at this time. The middle class presenting the image of the champions of a broader, more national patriotic leadership successfully hitched the working class to their own bandwagon.

One of the weaknesses of these early chapters of Kumari Jayawardena's book is that it fails to explore adequately these economic motivations and ideological and political limitations of this middle class recrudescence. This movement had much in it which was intrinsically reactionary. In Europe, Marx was already dead, the Paris Commune was ten years past, scientific and rational thinking was established but the one foreign association this movement formed was a union with a sect of mystic queers called the Theosophists.

Printers Strike

The first trade union, the Printers Union, was formed out of this mixed parentage and its architects, A. E. Bultjens a Cambridge educated Burgher turned Buddhist and Dr. Lisboa Pinto a radical of Goan origin turned renegade on the Catholic Church. It was appropriate and natural that these first trade unionists should be both non-conformists and racial outsiders. Influenced by foreign ideas and moved by the plight of about 1,000 printers, both skilled and semi-skilled, they attempted to unionise them and precipitated a strike. The strike was defeated and the union gradually faded away over the years but the working class movement had come to stay, and the name of William one of the workers "ring leaders" had become history. 1896 saw the next strike, that of the laundrymen which too cannot be considered a victory, but workers leaders like Haramanis were schooled in these dramatic

events. The first victorious strike was the famous carters' strike of ten years later, 1906, aimed at certain regulations about the driving of carts on the road. The author recounts the events of these times with vividness and a fine sense of narrative.

From then onward and up to 1915 the scene is one of rapidly rising militancy and strengthening. 1912 marks a high point, the Railway Strike, which represents what can be called the first case of serious industrial unrest. The strikers showed a high sense of solidarity and a degree of independence of the middle class nationalists who fluttered around them, they were partially successful in winning their demands. In the 1915 riots much pent up frustration was let loose and many Colombo workers, especially from the railway workshop participated —their main objective however was the Merchandise not the Moors.

In the next few years the complexion of the labour movement was to change drastically and its leadership was to pass over into the hands of a new group of radicals. A. E. Gunasinghe, Armand de Souza, Victor Corea, C. H. Z. Fernando, Valentine Perera are some of the best known names of the period when this independent leadership finally wrested the workers away from the moderates, which events culminated in the formation of the Ceylon Labour Union in 1922 and the general strike of 1923. In the meantime the Ceylon National Congress had been formed in 1919 and had become the rallying ground of the conservatives like Sir James Peiris, D. B. Jayatileke, F. R. Senanayake, and E. W. Perera. Though a trade union affiliated to the CNC was formed it never succeeded in attracting a following because of the timid, conservative and pro-British tendencies of the CNC. The figure of P. Arunachalam alone stand out, more radical and far seeing, head and shoulders above the others.

Ceylon Labour Party

The 1923 General Strike was a historic event, under Goonesinghe's leadership, sparked off by the grievances of the Railway workers, the strike was to have great political importance. In the first place it represented public discontent at the time as judged from ovations, cheers and sometimes active assistance the strikers received from the townspeople of Colombo. The first attempts at legislation to deal with trade unionism also stems from the immediate aftermath of the strike, as also does the first constructive efforts of employers to deal with the trade unions on an equal footing of negotiations instead of calling them mad-dogs.

The Ceylon Labour Party and the All-Ceylon Trades Union Congress were formed by Goonesinghe under the influence of their British counterparts in 1928. The book also casts interesting light on the firm stand of the Ceylon Labour Party in favour of universal suffrage in opposition to the Ceylon National Congress and Legislative Assembly, and the circumstances in which this right

(Continued on page 8)



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SAVINGS HOUSE — KOLLUPITIYA

Biggest Bore

By Aravinda

When Old Mother Hubbard went to her cupboard she found it bare, just as in the nursery rhyme, except for a saucer of sour milk. And the little doggy was yapping his head off in hunger. So what did the old lady do? She gave the sour milk to poor doggy, horrid old woman that she was. How the doggy would have growled, Grr Grr!

That was not a little story for your Grade I child. This parody of the popular nursery rhyme has been prompted by the loathsome behaviour of the 'Ceylon Observer'. Like Old Mother Hubbard who had nothing to give her little pet for breakfast, the 'Ceylon Observer Magazine Edition' too, finds its cupboards empty. So what does it do? It serves its readers with sour milk every Sunday for breakfast.

Is the Sunday *Observer* (with one of the largest circulations of any English weekly), so incapable of finding anything better, with which to treat their readers on a holiday, than its Page 3 'Pick Your Caption' competition? They might as well have called it 'Air Your Grievance'. For this so-called weekly competition is no more than a forum for the more noisy readers of the 'Observer'

to trot out their pet grievances, thinly disguised as humour. It is more half-wit than wit.

A basic requirement for you to win a prize in this competition is to do one of these things.

- make a disparaging remark about the Government;
- complain of a shortage or scarcity;
- endorse the 'Observer' editorial policy.

Mention that chillies are scarce to get or moan over the non-availability of 'Pol' and by Tilak! You will find the 'Observer' rewarding you or highly commending you for your prowess as a wit. If that

is the hallmark of a wit, according to the chaps at Lake House, then we may safely conclude that their sense of humour must be lying somewhere in the murky depths of the Beira Lake!

So the 'Observer' readers are destined to be served with sour milk for ever. It is positively nauseating to see this kind of sick humour being dished up by a so-called national newspaper. An observant reader may even discern a sinister pattern in all this. Is this part of a Lake House campaign to discredit the Government by repeatedly emphasising the existence of shortages and scarcities in the country? Or else why is prominence given every week to comments which harp on such scarcities as that

of sugar and chillies? It would be asking too much from Lake House to explain the reasons for these shortages—rising prices in the world market, a shrinking foreign exchange reserve and the bankrupt legacy of the U.N.P. But it can at least desist from peddling shortages on a Sunday.

It is high time that the 'Observer' stopped these sick jokes. It should find no difficulty in doing so, for most readers I am sure, are fed up by now with the 'Observer' idea of a holiday treat.

But meanwhile the 'Observer' is becoming the Biggest Bore in town.

Communications

Whither the Bank Strike?

Are the Bank strikers being led up the garden path? Amidst the maze of statements that have been made by the Bank Employees Union, their sympathisers and spokesman for the government, this is something that needs a closer look. A few months before the Bank men launched their strike, they threw out their old leadership on the ground of their apparent reluctance to struggle for better conditions. The younger members who spearheaded this manoeuvre were clearly amateurs at this strike game. They believed that the moment a strike call was answered by all member of a Union their demands were as good as won. Something like the visions of a one day revolution by the insurgents of April 1971.

But they did not consider, again like their insurgent counterparts, the political background and the conditions under which they would have to struggle. The Bankmen, having close links with the upper middle class and nursing similar aspirations were fooled by newspaper stories of a Government that was running riot with the economy of the country, a government that would not hesitate to dish out any bribe to the people to remain in power, so that they may globe-trot, buy 6 Sri cars and feather their own nests. It was this kind of propaganda, which the news writers and cartoonists of our National Dailies, are ever willing to provide that warped the minds of these people. And we must not forget the whispering campaign of slander and vilification of prominent government personalities, unleashed by the sour-grape (and apple?) U.N.P.'ers. It is now clear that the Bankmen were vulnerable targets. They thought that their strike would trigger off a reaction of strikers against an unpopular government. And the government, bent on staying in power, would give in to any demand in order to cushion the heightened cost of living (? visions of free rice).

What they did not care to observe was that here was a government, elected by a massive landslide majority. A government that successfully withstood one of the most powerful armed insurrections in Ceylonese history. A government that despite its snail's pace progress and the patent inefficiency of some Ministers and their hand-picked officials, still has an almost identical mass backing as in 1970, as proved by the recent by-election voting patterns.

A government that has taken many radical steps in an attempt to develop the country, and improve the standards of living of the under privileged people. A government that shows a willingness to share power and responsibility with the people. It is also well known that this government has to battle with the worst financial crisis in recent history. A crisis, which has not been created by this government, but has been a legacy of the colonial part of this country.

At a time like this, when the vast majority of the working class has held back Trade Union action on economic demands, is it prudent for the comparatively well off Bank employees to embark on a struggle for Rupees and Cents? It is a pity that these men have fallen a prey to the mischievous propaganda of a discredited political party, which unfortunately still holds sway over our National Press.

Now that the last word for the government has been spoken by the Prime Minister, with a return to work call and a promise of looking into any justifiable demands, is it not suicidal for the Bankmen to continue their folly any longer?

—Spectator

Tamils in Sri Lanka

References are being made in the Press to the D.M.K. movement in South India via-a-vis the Tamils in Sri Lanka. It would be very useful in this context to remember that the D.M.K., which originally wanted an Independent Tamil State, subsequently revised its policy and objective and accepted the ideal of a United

India, with Tamil Nadu forming a unit therein. In fact, recently a South Indian Tamil Leader belonging to the D.M.K. (if my memory is not incorrect, the Chief Minister, Mr. Karunanidhi himself) stated that if the rest of India wanted to isolate and separate Tamil Nadu, the latter (Tamil Nadu) would strenuously oppose such attempts at separation.

Admirers in Sri Lanka of the D.M.K. claim that they are following the D.M.K. If so, it would be logical for them to insist on the North and East Provinces continuing to remain inseparably part and parcel of Sri Lanka for all times.

As is well known, there are some internal differences in the D.M.K. just now. Efforts are being made to compose such differences. Asked whether there was prospect of success in such attempts at reconciliation, one of the leaders Mr. Manoharan is said to have remarked as follows:

"No time limit can be set for solving any political issue".

Mr. Manoharan must be having in mind the infallible adage that Politics is the art of achieving the best possible result under the circumstances.

It is trusted that Tamil leaders in Ceylon would act in the spirit of this wise statement, even as Sinhalese and Muslim leaders would do likewise, and that efforts at settlement would be continued till success is achieved.

A decisive factor in the settlement of diverse issues will be the Honourable Prime Minister, the first lady Prime Minister in the world. When she put forward the Colombo proposals during the period of the India - China conflict, she was universally acclaimed as a great peace-maker. Lord Bertrand Russell declared that Mrs. Bandaranaike had performed invaluable services in the cause of international peace. Sinhalese - Tamil differences in Sri Lanka, are susceptible of easier solution. A patriot who had striven consistently for Sinhalese - Tamil unity and who to the great regret of thousands of his country men has fallen ill, namely Mr. Wilmot Perera once mentioned that Mrs. Bandaranaike was the best person to bring about a final understanding between the two communities, and whatever is done,

could and should be done during her regime and under her leadership.

Years have elapsed since Lord Bertrand Russell declared his opinion; and years have also passed since Mr. Wilmot Perera expressed his opinion. Since then, our distinguished leader and Prime Minister has, if I may say so with deference, grown very much in strength and stature both in and out of Sri Lanka and the obligations on her have also correspondingly become heavier.

—S. Sivasubramaniam.

Childish Exercise

Mr. S. J. V. Chelvanayakam, the leader of the Federal Party, has resigned his seat in the National State Assembly to contest it in a by-election in order to disprove the Government Party claim that a sizable section of the Tamil people accept the present Constitution.

This is a most childlike exercise on the part of a senior politician of the calibre of Mr. Chelvanayakam; the repertory of his political chicanery seems to be already exhausted. Desperation in politics often tends to produce strangely irrational aims.

In the event of his being re-elected (which is quite likely in the prevailing political scene) will Mr. Chelvanayakam repeat his action, if the opinion he is now bent on debunking revives itself again some time after his re-election? Isn't public opinion the most capricious consensus in politics?

Politics is not a matter of personal whims and fancies of

political leaders; it is the art of the possible, the art that has to inevitably deal with a complex of questions arising from hard facts both of experience, and resultant impressions deep seated in the mind of a nation. This position is all the more relevant when one considers the kind of issues the Federal Party has chosen as the basis of its politics.

Political problems are also largely social, economic and cultural problems, and today no country could deal with them as if they exist in isolation from those of the rest of the world. These problems have their local genesis no doubt, but they daily acquire other dimensions, making themselves part of the current ferment of world politics.

Therefore, it is only in an atmosphere of honest understanding of their particular social content in the context of the international politics in general that they could be correctly and meaningfully solved.

Towards that end, appropriate changes in social intercourse, both among the individuals and the communities concerned, are essential prerequisites. The role of the politician in bringing about the necessary orientation in this direction is better imagined than described.

Empirically speaking and in light of present realities, any disregard for the above mentioned perspectives would certainly spell disaster pushing the solutions further away from our grasp into still worse complications and difficulties which would be insurmountable for several decades to come. This is unthinkable. Let sanity prevail.

—P. Vincent de Silva

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Notes & Comments

The Howling Deafens!

If the Press Council Bill needed any justification, this has been amply provided by the campaign that is being waged in concert against it by the Mudalali newspapers. It is, in the first place, a campaign that is distinguished by pure and simple howling, which aims to make up by sheer volume for its lack of any shades of meaning. Secondly, it is a campaign of lying and misrepresentation that is paralleled only by earlier performances of these same newspapers. Thirdly, its resort to camouflage has not succeeded in concealing the campaign's main aim of mobilising hatred against the Government among all sections of the people. Fourthly, it has modelled its tactics on the earlier campaign against the Coalition Government of 1964, which the Lake House Commission exposed as the illicit use of company funds for enrolling priests, lawyers, politicians, men of more doubtful occupations and paper-organisations of varying ostensible purposes in the cause of the so-called freedom of the press.

The Government's communique on the newspaper campaign against this Press Council Bill has already told the story of the false charges made against the Bill. The Government has made it clear that the principal criticisms of the Bill have no validity in its text. It would almost appear that the hacks of the newspaper offices concerned discharge their functions in imitable style, writing what they are paid to produce in perfect freedom—which means even without a single glance at the Bill's gazetted clauses. As for the Buddhist monks and Christian priests whose opinions have been rushed from their pirlvenas and pulpits to fill the front-page columns waiting for them, we are certain that the overwhelming majority have never seen the text of the Press Council Bill. They know little more than what the lying newspapers and the hacks who have interviewed them have told them. So much for the "freedom of the press."

The Majority of the Mudalali newspapers, guided by the legal brains sheltering behind

a bogus organisation calling itself a Civil Rights Movement, aim their main darts at Government's frank admission that the task of the projected Press Council is to execute Government policy. This is apparently the most incredible blasphemy that could have been uttered by any believer in journalistic decency. So a mighty howl has gone up on all sides for an "independent" Press Council. But it immediately becomes apparent that what the mudalalis desire is that the Council should be independent only of Government control. On whom, then, do they wish the Council to "depend"? Or do they wish that it should dangle in mid-air without any point of support? The mudalalis would perhaps not mind the latter. But what they would prefer is that the Council should depend on themselves. That would, undoubtedly, generate the most ideal conditions for "freedom of the press."

It is plain what the newspapers and their proprietors are engaged in fighting against. They have gone into battle against the United Front Government. What they are fighting for is hardly a matter of consequence for them. You may call it "freedom of the press", or "freedom of the crooks" or, if you are inclined to plain speaking, the downfall of the Government. They are not particularly moved by the way in which you see it. What matters is that the fight conducted against the United Front Government, and they

will see that all their employees are made to exert themselves to the utmost in the interests of the fight. Nor should it be thought for a moment that it is a new fight that they are conducting. It has, on the contrary, a long history going back to the earliest years of the Left movement in our country. The mode of fighting may have changed from time to time and its intensity occasionally moderated. That has depended on the circumstances of the fight.

Today the battle of the newspaper mudalalis has erupted into an unbridled free-for-all in which no rules obtain, no scruples matter and allies are chosen without any kind of selectiveness. Only one thought lingers: the bringing down of the Government. Unfortunately for them, this is not as easy a task as it proved to be in 1964. The Government has an overwhelming majority in the National State Assembly. The reactionary classes are much weaker than they used to be, as a result of the powerful blows that the masses have dealt them. The people have learned from their earlier experiences and cannot be easily led into the traps that were earlier laid for them. For this reason, despite the cunning with which the mudalalis have patched up alliances with all the Government's opponents and have coordinated the assault from all sides on it, the Government has the strength to beat back and annihilate the mudalali forces.

But the mudalalis and their allies hope that the Government can be misled into misjudgement of the situation and thereby taken by surprise. There are without doubt naive or foolish people in the Government's ranks who are capable of being surprised in this way. But it is too much to expect that the lessons of so many years will fail to awaken the overwhelming majority of Government leaders to the plot that thickens around them. If any Government desists from using the power in its hands to crush those who conspire against it, that power will be turned against itself by the conspirators. Nobody can play games with power!

Welcome and Long Overdue

(Continued from page 6)

came to be granted by a Labour Government (Ramsay MacDonald) in Britain. Universal suffrage was obtained, and in the first State Council elections of 1931, A. E. Goonesinghe (who had been defeated in the Colombo Municipal Elections of 1925 by a young man called S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike) was returned as member for Colombo Central.

The Economic Depression of 1929-33 spelt the end of Goonesinghe and the Labour Party and the decline of working class power. The repeated defeats of the Lake House strike (D. R. Wijewardene was a vicious anti-Trade Union employer), the Times of Ceylon strike and the Galle Face Hotel strike spelt its doom. The Ceylon Labour Party and Goonesinghe had also declined to trashy communal politics forcing K. Natesa Aiyar to form independently the first Plantation Workers trade union in 1931.

—A. K. D.

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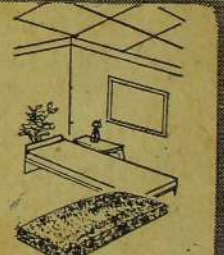
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