

Military option, foreign connections and
Delhi's warning — Mervyn de Silva

LANKA

GUARDIAN

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ISRAEL: THE GREAT DEBATE

Anura Bandaranaike

A. C. S. Hameed

Lakshman Jayakody

Haleem Ishak

Dew Gunasekera

**The Sapugaskanda fiasco and the
role of advisers — S. N. de S. Seneviratne**

How Jaffna's economy works — Paul Seabright

Also: Human rights and the Pulsara case,
The Muslim initiative **and**
Referendum bombshell, Manila truce

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NO STOOGES OR SYCOPHANT

Why did the Commissioner of Elections and his officials take almost four years to prepare a report on the December 1982 referendum and why did they decide to release this report, which is in many ways a damning indictment, at this particular moment? UNP'ers are stunned; the SLFP and the other opposition parties are overjoyed but remain puzzled. The U.N.P. reaction can only be described in the phrase now closely associated with National Security Minister Lalith Athulathmudali as a "deafening silence". The long delay is explained by the Commissioner who points out the difference between 4 petitions filed against an election in a single constituency and against a referendum.

Whatever the reason, it took courage, and Commissioner Chandrananda de Silva and his staff have dealt a well-timed blow to the widespread popular belief that the independence and integrity of Sri Lanka's public service was a relic of the past. The publication of the report had a pleasing touch of irony, too.

Earlier in the week Finance Minister Ronnie de Mel, for many years an able civil servant himself, had lamented the conspicuous absence of independent, analytical minds in a country which he said was full of stooges and sycophants.

At a conference sponsored by the new Institute of Policy Studies he recounted a personal experience. "My efforts in 1978 to set up a think-tank did not materialise. I got together a set of well-known people to undertake this task. I told them what I expected of them was an independent opinion and a second look at development issues. I did not want sycophants and stooges. They met a few times and probably got cold feet. Probably they did not expect this government to last this long — clear evidence of poor judgment!"

ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

Mr. Ranil Wickremasinghe wears two hats — Education and

Youth Affairs — but he wasn't talking through either when he spoke at the Thurstan College prize-giving where he was the chief guest. Between 1977 and 1984, there were about a million jobless youth. The government and the private sector had together offered sufficient job opportunities to meet the needs of most job-seekers.

The strains on the economy after July 1983, the ethnic conflict and the 'war', had seriously impaired the government's efforts to cope with unemployment, he said. To emphasise the magnitude of the problem the government faced, the Education Minister said that some three million young men and women will leave school next year and look for jobs.

MEDIUM AND THE MESSAGE

Ah! Another Commission of Inquiry. Not quite. Just a Committee of two to investigate and report on the state of affairs of the Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation. On its credibility as the major communications medium (4,000,000 receiving sets) or on programme-content? On its 'Education' service to schools? On its news coverage of national events? On how much time it gives to the long-winded perorations of politicians, and their hurrah-boys? On the island-wide tamashas organised by political

(Continued on page 28)

TRENDS
+
LETTERS

C. R. D: A CLARIFICATION

The CRD wishes to clarify one aspect of its statement published in the Guardian of 1st December, 1986. The Oxford dictionary defines "majority" as either "the greater number" or "More than half of a set of people or things". The CRD in its statement defined "Tamil majority areas" using the first definition (ie. areas where Tamils are the largest single group). It is in that context that we suggested that a contiguous zone may be drawn to evolve a Tamil Ethnic Region using AGA divisions (according to the 1981 census). This clarification has been sought from the CRD by many groups interested in the article which appeared.

Reggie Siriwardene
(for C. R. D.)

REDS UNDER THE AMNESTY BED

Your journal gives lot of prominence to a body called Amnesty International. You

(Continued on page 5)

LANKA

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CONTENTS

News Background	3
Human Rights	6
Referendum Report	8
National Development Through Agriculture	9
In Parliament	11
Foreign News	26
Jaffna's War-time Economy — IV	28

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FOREIGN POLICY TO THE FORE

NEWS
BACKGROUND

Mervyn de Silva

After July 1983, Sri Lanka's ethnic issue, which always had an external aspect, was dramatically externalised—Tamilnadu and India, the Tamil diaspora and the pro-Eelam propaganda drive, the Aid-Group, World Bank and IMF, the world press, the NGO's and the Human Rights groups; U.S., U.K., Pakistan and Israel and other sources of security assistance and arms supplies.

Muslims/Tamils

(Mr. Haleem Ishak)

I feel that after the Israelis went into the Eastern Province they created the rift between the Muslims and the Tamils there. They will not only create a rift between the Muslims and the Tamils, I assure this House today, Sir, but they will create rifts even between the Sinhalese and the Muslims living in the same villages all over the country.

(A Member)

Is that your opinion or the opinion of the party?

(Mr. Anura Bandaranaike)

That is the opinion of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party.

(A Member)

Utterly irresponsible statement.

(Mr. Anura Bandaranaike)

That is your view. I gave the view of the SLFP. Irresponsible? Never had the Muslims fought the Tamils before.

(Mr. M. Haleem Ishak)

Never had the Muslims fought the Tamils before.

(Mr. Anura Bandaranaike)

For the first time this happened.

(Mr. M. Haleem Ishak)

The Muslims disagree with Tamils on one question, the division of this country.

(Mr. Anura Bandaranaike)

Never had they fought before:

What we have witnessed in the past weeks is the emergence of the external or foreign policy factor as an equally important, if not the dominant, factor in the Sri Lankan equation. Who else could see this sudden change so clearly but the Minister of Foreign Affairs, a Muslim? "You seized the two situations because you need some ammunition you had to use (interruption) Yes. So you made use of the situation... why did you say its my bad time... It is my good time". Mr. Hameed told the Opposition, concluding his speech on the Foreign Ministry vote during the budget debate. (Nov. 28).

In a clever but essentially defensive manoeuvre, he said that these two situations—the Herzog visit and the Sri Lankan vote on the Falklands at the UN—were the only two 'issues' which the Opposition could pick as debating points. Falklands was indeed ammunition for the Opposition because the UNP's foreign policy had placed Sri Lanka in the humble company of Belize and Oman by voting with Britain and against Argentina, backed by over 100 members, including Britain's closest allies. But the Falklands shot was hardly a wounding blow. Mr. Bandaranaike, the Opposition Leader, made maximum use of it but only to ridicule the government.

It was the other situation that mattered, and Mr. Hameed, a seasoned politician knew this. He is reported to have told a colleague "shrewd move"—meaning Mr. Bandaranaike's use of the Herzog visit to win over for an SLFP, whose position on the ethnic issue had alienated the island's biggest minority—the Tamils, the other important minority, the Muslims. Not only the Muslims, however. There was the external con-

sideration—India most of all where bridges damaged during the Chidambaram visit had to be repaired; the Arabs and the non-aligned; specially the nonaligned radicals with whom the SLFP has always had much warmer ties than the UNP. Indeed the UNP, on the Herzog visit, found itself in the company of its one-time idol and mentor, Lee Kwan Yew's Singapore. And Singapore in turn had roused the ire of its two Muslim neighbours, Malaysia and Indonesia. (See Herzog visit draws wrath...)

Since the whole of Hulftsdorp knows about it, the much better informed Mr. Bandaranaike must have been privy to the tough talking that Mr. Natwar Singh did when Mr. Rajiv Gandhi's two Ministers of State (the other was Mr. P. Chidambaram) met President J.R., Messrs Athulathmudali, Gamini Dissanayake and Hameed, and the government's top legal advisers. The tough 'hope-you-are-prepared-to-take-the-consequences' passage had nothing to do with devolution, corridors, or even the Tamils. It was exclusively confined to Sri Lanka's foreign relations, particularly Israel and Pakistan, and its implications for Indian regional policy and national security concerns.

The only other equally strong exchange was over 'the military option.'

Despite the respectful clasped hands in oriental salutation to the wise, experienced, senior statesman of S.A.A.R.C., the Sri Lankan President, Mr. Natwar Singh's words conveyed nothing less than the clearest warning that Delhi has yet given to Colombo on the latter's foreign policy course.

And this mind you was before the Gorbachev visit which was

described by *INDIA TODAY* as 'The Second Honeymoon'. There isn't the slightest doubt that the firm foundations of Indo-Soviet friendship were not only reinforced but that the Soviet leader fully endorsed India's nonalignment and backed Indian regional policy to the hilt, just as much as India expressed its full support to the Soviet view on the fundamental problems of war, peace and disarmament. With that very special relationship strengthened, Indian foreign policy in the area will speak with an even more self-confident and assertive voice. Almost the exact opposite is true of the Reagan administration, a lame duck presidency now a dead duck as a US columnist noted.

The weakness currently evident in the US administration will not only affect the projection of US power but is bound to affect US allies in the region, notably Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

When Mr. Bandaranaike chose to make Israel the main thrust

of his anti-UNP onslaught, he was thus exploiting perceived UNP weakness both external and internal.

The appeal to the Muslim community comes at a time when the situation in the eastern province and Muslim interests in that region, in the context of the government's proposal for three provincial councils and the Tamil demand for north-east linkage, are the subject of intense debate among Muslims. It is in this perspective that the advent of a new "independent" political party, the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress, should be viewed, bearing very much in mind that the SLMC leadership is obviously more representative of the Tamil-speaking Muslims of the east than of the Sinhala-speaking business-oriented Muslim political elite of the western seaboard. It is a total rejection of the traditional Muslim plea for participation in 'main-stream politics'. (See *MUSLIM CONGRESS*). The SLMC president, Mr. Ashraff has now called for a

separate Muslim P. C., and for Tamil to be made an official language, and both Sinhala and Tamil to be made compulsory.

While the position of the Tamil-speaking Muslims of the east has been a special problem, the pressure of the physical situation in the province (the armed conflict) and the pressure of the all-important Government-Tamil negotiations on the future of that province, have combined to make the challenge facing this community especially urgent. But there's yet another issue which has surfaced recently to cause agitated concern within the entire Muslim community and in fact to put the Muslim elite on a confrontation course with the government. I refer of course to the government-appointed Committee on "Personal Laws". (See *Muslims Defend Sharia*, L. G. Nov. 15). Although the government is not talking about it, and the press has almost ignored the issue, the Muslim community is quite disturbed.

Muslim Congress on Padlocked Mouths

It is the mischief makers who are trying to mis-read the true intentions behind the formation of a separate political party for the Muslims.

A separate political party is only a manifestation of the fundamental rights of a group of persons. It does not necessarily mean that the people who subscribe to such a notion are intending to get away from the main-stream of politics. After all what do the advocates of the theory that the minorities should remain within the main-stream of politics mean? Do they mean that whatever the national political parties do in the name of main-stream politics the minority communities should condone however harmful it could be to them?

We the Muslims want to declare that we are part of this soil. We are entitled to be respected as a national minority, our aspirations be honoured and fulfilled. Let us not be taken for granted.

We are very keen to preserve the territorial integrity and unity of our country. We do not want separation. We want equality treatment, justice and fair play. Do not discriminate against us. Please consult us in the determination of national affairs.

When our mouths are padlocked within the national political parties, we have no alternative but to get out of these parties and assert ourselves until our voice is heard as equal partners. We wish to emphasize unity and friendly relations among all communities while recognizing the diversity among them.

We wish to be friendly with the Sinhalese as well as the Tamils. We will serve as the ambassadors of peace between the Sinhalese and the Tamils. Let the Sinhalese or Tamils not make use of the Muslim community to achieve their own ends. We as an impartial community wish to maintain the balance.

The national ethnic crisis is a serious problem, which gravely affects the future of the Muslim community in the Eastern Province. We will not accept a solution which will jeopardize the political strength of the Eastern Province Muslims.

The Indian Government should realize that only a proposal which will have the blessings or co-operation of the Muslim community will provide a lasting solution to restore peace in our country. Hence the Indian Government, the Sri Lankan

Government and the Tamil militant and extremist leaders must realize the strategic importance of making the Eastern Province Muslims also a necessary party to the negotiations.

The root of the ethnic crisis is the language problem. It is high time that we evolve a Sri Lankan identity among all communities while recognizing and respecting the diversifying and distinguishing factors.

The quickest and only way of bringing about this Sri Lankan identity is by declaring Tamil also an official language, and the study of both languages Sinhalese and Tamil being made compulsory.

The basis of the identity of the Muslim community is the divine sense which is found in the Holy Quran and the Teachings of the Prophet, whereas the other two communities are identified linguistically. Hence we should realize the importance of preserving this identifying factor namely the Shariat Law. It is our fundamental right to manifest our religious beliefs. If this all important foundation of the Muslim community is tampered with we should realize that the Muslim community would soon lose its identity.

Herzog visit draws wrath of Singapore's neighbours

Greer Fay Cashman

Jerusalem Post Correspondent

SINGAPORE

Malaysia will review its ties with Singapore following public protests over the visit here by President Chaim Herzog, the Singapore newspaper *The Straits Times* reported yesterday. Malaysia has officially informed Singapore of its deep regret over the republic's "provocative" action in extending an invitation to Herzog.

Herzog, who arrived here on Tuesday for a three-day visit, rebuked Malaysia and Indonesia yesterday for attacking Singapore, saying that they were out of date. He advised them not to interfere in a matter that did not concern them.

Kuala Lumpur and Jakarta have assailed Singapore's alleged lack of sensitivity towards its Moslem neighbours, terming Singapore's action provocative.

Approximately 200 demonstrators under the banner of the People's Action Committee representing 30 political parties and social organizations gathered in front of the Singapore High Commission in Kuala Lumpur to protest against the Herzog visit. The demonstrators accused Singapore's Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew of being a Zionist agent.

Indonesia recalled her ambassador on the day of Herzog's arrival.

Herzog told a press conference that the visit of a head of state of one sovereign country to another was "the business of those countries and those countries exclusively."

He stressed there was no conflict between Jews and Moslems. Visits by Israeli leaders to Arab countries such as Morocco and Egypt had caused no such fuss in the Middle East, he said, and added: "Frankly, I'm at a loss. . . I have a feeling that some people are out of date in this part of the world."

Malaysia and Indonesia said the visit could disrupt the unity of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (Asean), an economic and political alliance comprising Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, the Philippines, Singapore and Brunei.

Hundreds of Malaysians on Tuesday tried to stop a "peace run" across the causeway linking Singapore and Malaysia in protest against Herzog's visit.

Herzog was originally due to visit the Philippines before travelling to Singapore, but his trip was cancelled at the last moment because of the current unrest in Manila.

Singapore tightened security to an extent that surprised even Herzog's entourage, used to intensive security measures. Members of Herzog's party are searched at all the Herzog functions they attend. Special identity tags afford no immunity. A special female bodyguard has been assigned to Mrs. Herzog.

Herzog told the press that he has been tremendously impressed by Singapore's economic development. Israel has much to learn from this island republic, he said.

The most significant example which Singapore has set for Israel is the cutting of bureaucratic red tape for potential overseas investors, who instead of being shunted from office to office as they are in Israel, deal only with one person.

Herzog was reluctant to comment on his talks with Lee Kuan Yew. He said that he had no objections to his host divulging the nature of their discussions, "but I don't feel free to reveal what took part."

Herzog, who described Lee Kuan Yew as "the Ben-Gurion of Singapore" found him to be extremely well-informed about Israel. The premier told Herzog that he had

learned a lot from Israel and in the building up of Singapore, had not repeated Israel's development errors.

Herzog heads for home today and is due to arrive early tomorrow morning.

In Jerusalem it was reported yesterday that MK Pinhas Goldstein wants the Knesset to debate all the arrangements surrounding the president's visit to the Far East. What happened in Singapore and the last-minute cancellation of the visit to the Philippines does not rebound to the credit of the office of the presidency or the state, Goldstein told *The Jerusalem Post* last night.

Goldstein, a Likud-Liberal, scored the way the president's visit was organized. "It's a matter of timing and location. Perhaps he shouldn't have gone to the countries chosen just at this time. The treatment meted out to him shames him and us," Goldstein said.

Letters. . .

(Continued from page 1)

should also give your readers some inkling as to the composition of this body locally and internationally. For twenty years the London Director of this society was one Mr. Roebuch who was an important member of the Australian Communist Party, the President of which Mr. Sean McBride was crowned with the Lenin Prize — Lenin, that great "democrat" who annihilated two and a half million of his compatriots only to be equalled by Pol Pot — another great "democrat" — in recent times. No wonder that the Amnesty International wants to be the guardian of potential Pol Pots of Sri Lanka.

B. A. Aryatilake
Matale.

Note: A little Lenin is a dangerous thing! For further information on Pol Pot etc please contact your nearest Media Centre or District Development Minister — Ed.

HUMAN RIGHTS

(Dec. 10th was Human Rights Day)

President appoints 10 member commission

While Amnesty International keeps complaining that there has been no government response to its request to send a U. N. Study Group to Sri Lanka to inquire into widespread allegations, here and abroad, of prolonged detentions, dissappearances and torture, the National Security Minister Lalith Athulathmudali has left for the States to present the government's case on public platforms and radio. The latest expression of concern comes from an all-party Australian parliamentary delegation.

Meanwhile the government has appointed Mr. Sirilal Wijewardene, Director of Human Rights Commission. He was District Judge of Badulla till last month. He is also a founder-member of the 'Organisation for the Promotion of Human Rights through Law Enforcement Agencies.' Mr. Wijewardene who has participated in many international conferences on 'Human Rights' recently prepared a paper on the subject of "Human Rights Law and the Enforcement Agencies".

Meanwhile President Jayewardene has appointed a ten-member Human Rights Commission with wide powers to examine complaints of human rights violations.

Australian MP's call for independant inquiry

The Parliamentary Group of Amnesty International is composed of a large number of parliamentarians drawn from both the Senate and the House of Representatives in Australia who are members of all the political parties represented within the Parliament.

All members share a deep personal concern for the human and political rights of peoples throughout the world, and as fellow Parliamentarians, especially as democratically elected colleagues of ours within the Commonwealth, we know that you share these concerns.

We are thus deeply concerned to learn from Amnesty International, and from other independent and reliable sources that it seems that many people in Sri Lanka have

disappeared without trace, innocent victims of the terrible civil strife besetting your country at this time.

We do not wish to interfere in your domestic affairs in any way, and we extend to you our deepest sympathy at the troubles as your country; nevertheless we join with others in calling upon you to establish an independent inquiry to investigate these cases of alleged disappearance supported by the establishment of a central, up to date register from which relatives and lawyers connected with the individuals concerned could immediately obtain reliable information about the status of arrested persons.

In keeping with Amnesty's principles, we express our complete

opposition to the use of violence from whatever source or quarter. The use of violence cannot be justified. In free societies disputes and differences, no matter what their origins, should be capable of being solved through peaceful and democratic means.

We as a Parliamentary Group have already written to your President to make our views known to him, and we now appeal to you to use your good offices and influence to bring a speedy and peaceful resolution to this matter which is causing so much international concern.

We extend to you our personal best wishes and our hopes for the return of peace to your beautiful country.

ROBERT TICKNER, MP
CHAIRMAN

SENATOR CHRIS PUPLOCK
SECRETARY

L. G. S. U. appeals to President

The Gen. Secretary of Lanka General Services Union, Mr. J. Maliyagoda has sent the following letter to the Minister of National Security, with a copy to President Jayewardene:

We learn that Miss. Pulsara Liyanage Asst. Lecturer Vidyarlankara Campus had been arrested and detained from 1. 11.86 without adducing any charges.

The Lanka General Services Union having reasons to believe that this a chain of arrests of those political opponents which act is a challenge to the fundamental rights of the people and a ferocious attack on the freedom and democracy of the Country.

Whilst expressing our strong protest against the arrest and detaining of Miss. Pulsara Liyanage and urge immediate steps to release her.

Activist's Detention

The Indian press and Indian academics have taken up the case of Ms. Pulsara Liyanage, the Kelaniya Univ. lecturer in western classics who was detained under the P. T. A. on Nov. 1st and is still being held in a Colombo police station. Two dailies, the mass circulation *Indian Express* and the new Madras daily "Newsday" have published reports on the case, and a large number of Indian academics, attached to wellknown universities and institutes including the prestigious Nehru Univ. in Delhi have sent a letter to the Sri Lankan government via the High Commission in Delhi. The letter states:

'We, the concerned citizens, demand the immediate release of Ms. Pulsara Liyanage, who was

arrested on Nov. 1 under the PTA in Colombo.

Ms. Pulsara is a lecturer at the Vidyalkara Univ. and a human rights activist of M. I. R. G. E. Ms Pulsara was picked up from her home where she was recovering from a major surgical operation and was on leave from the university. We note with concern the deteriorating condition of human rights in Sri Lanka. Not only are Tamil people subjected to state violence but Sinhalese intellectuals like Ms. Pulsara who have the courage to speak out on behalf of their Tamil compatriots are under threat of illegal detention and torture".

The following reports are from the Indian press.

Woman Lecturer Held

Ms. Pulsara Nayanie Liyanaga (26), a woman lecturer of Kelaniya University here, the seat of Buddhist learning in Sri Lanka, has been arrested under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA).

Political parties, woman's groups and human rights organisations here have already appealed to president J. R. Jayewardene and National Security Minister Lalith Athulathmudali to order the release of Ms. Liyanage on humanitarian grounds, considering her state of health.

Ms. Liyanage is still recovering from a major surgical operation and was on leave from the university when she was taken into custody from her house on Nov. 1.

In a letter to the President, Mr. M. Sellasamy, general secretary of the Ceylon Worker's Congress, a partner in the government, has

appealed for his personal intervention in Ms. Liyanage's case and for her release on humanitarian grounds.

University circles alleged that Ms. Liyanage was being held 'hostage' for a visiting lecturer at Colombo University and a leftist Sinhalese intellectual, who went underground after over 50 Sinhalese Marxists, sympathetic to the Tamil cause, were arrested a few months ago.

Ms. Liyanage is an activist of the women's movement 'Women for Peace', which had held street demonstrations in Colombo demanding a negotiated settlement of the ethnic problem.

Informed sources here said Ms. Liyanage was interrogated for 12 hours daily by intelligence officials trained by 'Mossad', Israeli intelligence agency.

(*Indian Express*)

(See page 10)

The Political Prisoner

Spend no tears
Say no prayers
for the man in
the concrete cage
True, no glimmer
of light beckons
at the end of
the long corridor
of his "future"
Even a whisper
of a trial never
reaches his ear
True, no visitor
calls at his moss-
lined cell to tell
him the time and
integer of year
Only the gaoler
bringing his meagre
ration of mildewed
biscuits and piss-
like tea that start
up painfully again
his festering ulcer
Still, say no prayer
Spend no tears
for this comrade in
the concrete cage
He has his honour
But for you and I
who daily stroll
under the sun with
fear-locked tongues
You and I who have
doubly pawned
our lives for lies
You and I
who bicker at
the government
yet pay our taxes
rant against
the censor yet
subscribe to the
national newspaper
For you and I, mister
who walk these
city's barren streets
in a midday stupor
save your prayers
and shed your tears
for you and I
walk without honour

— Cecil Rajendra
(Malaysia)

Polls Commissioner's Bombshell

With ill-concealed glee, the pro-SLFP fortnightly *FORUM*, which is not usually a bomb-scaremonger yelled "Dynamite"! It was indeed a bombshell, and the Member for Agalawatte Mr. Anil Moonesinghe handled it with care, to plant it cleverly amidst government benches. And now it's ticking away.

How the SLFP and the Opposition is going to use this report, a serious criticism on the conduct of the 1982 Referendum, the first such exercise at a national level, and the very first poll to be held under emergency regulations, time will show. Already however it is clear that Mrs. Bandaranaike, the SLFP leader, has realised its enormous potential for anti-government propaganda here and abroad.

The potential is all the greater because the international community is already in a state of maximum alert on the question of human rights in Sri Lanka. What the Commissioner is really saying is that this particular poll does not in fact represent the free and fair exercise of the franchise as we Sri Lankans have known it since independence. In fact the phrase "scandalous situation" is used at one point. (In the Sinhala version, which obviously is the original in the official language, the word used is "ninditha").

There is a certain moral rightness in Mrs. Bandaranaike's decision to take up the issue as a fundamental question of democracy. By the referendum, the Sri Lankan voter was deprived of his right to elect MP's to parliament just as effectively as the SLFP leader was deprived of her civic rights for the same period of 6 years.

Mrs. Bandaranaike has appointed a top party committee to report on how to make maximum use of this report. Letters are to be sent to all heads of State and government, and Mr. Anura Bandaranaike, in his capacity of Opposition leader, will write to

the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, the I.P.U., the Speakers of all parliaments in the world. The SLFP, with the full support of the Opposition, is also considering a resolution in our own parliament which will result in a full-scale debate. **Excerpts:**

He adds: "The most important feature of a free and fair election is the equal opportunity provided to the elector to cast his vote to the candidate of his choice. The displaying of marked ballot papers of this nature had no precedence.

Some One's Command

"...The continuous and mass displaying of marked ballot papers at some polling stations could not have happened by accident... If it could not be ignorance or conspiracy to display them, one other possible reason would have

CRISIS IN CONFIDENCE

"The cumulative effect of such unattended grievances, unattended amongst other reasons due to lack of satisfactory procedure, or because some people mistakenly believe that they are best left to be forgotten but are seldom so forgotten, may otherwise lead to a crisis in confidence. Election violence at times may not be altogether unrelated to such left overs."

"In some of the polling stations voters were displaying the marked ballot papers in a continuous manner... The displaying of marked ballot papers in this manner surprised and shocked every one, because in the elections held in the post 1947 period no one had witnessed such a scandalous situation... When the secrecy of the vote has been so sacrificed, serious doubts will continue to remain whether the voter exercised the degree of freedom of voting as stipulated in the law"

been the subjugation to someone's command."

"...The secrecy of the vote is for the very important reason that the core and substance of an elected body to claim to be truly representative of the people's wish lies in the fact the choice exercised by the voter is in fact a free choice."

"... If the marking on ballot papers were so exposed, one cannot escape the conclusion that the validity of such votes as equal votes — equal as freely marked votes — remain in doubt".

"Secrecy of the vote being the most important ingredient of a free and fair election, its diminution leaves a grievance in the electorate regarding the validity of such votes."

Representations were received on the previous day, says the Commissioner, that Polling Observers appointed to some polling stations were being instructed to keep off from polling stations on the day of the poll for fear of safety.

"It is not wrong to conclude that the right of some Polling Observers to be in attendance at a polling station to observe the conduct of the poll had been disturbed."

Allegations had been made about the disturbances at the close of the polls, including instances where, through violent means, the close of the poll had been held up."

Says the Commissioner: "It is regrettable to note that the traditional co-operation between the public and the staff including the police who manned the polling stations was not available or effective in some places."

The Commissioner poses a question: "Why did 12 percent of the voters who voted only two months before at the Presidential Election, abstain from voting at the Referendum?" One of the reasons he lists as a possibility is: "the atmosphere of disturbance that prevailed."

(Continued on page 27)

National Development Through Agriculture

S. N. de S. Seneviratne

On the outskirts of Colombo, at Supugaskanda, the urea plant which cost over Rs. 27,000 million has ceased production — a million an oil dependant plant, its days were numbered even as the project was launched. In the far south, a ten million rupee ginnery stands idle — the Hambantota District does not produce the cotton to feed it. Sinharaja was raped for logging and the Horton Plains mutilated to produce seed potatoes — both activities, fortunately, have now been stopped although the damage done is great. An International Winged Bean (Dambala) Institute was established, actively promoted by certain influential professors. It has since lost its international image and become a liability. Self-sufficiency in various agricultural commodities was promised — seed and consumption potatoes by the end of 1961; wheat, according to an announcement in 1982, soon! These promises remain unfulfilled. In so many of our national misadventures and distorting developments, the fate that would befall them, the damage that would be done, and the projected goals that would not be achieved were predictable on a sober appraisal of relevant aspects. Knowledgeable persons were conscious of the pitfalls — some did not speak because it was prudent to remain silent, and the voices that cried out were not heeded. Suspect schemes and projects have powerful backers who wield great influence. Advisers and promoters include eminent, qualified persons with their own private ambitions to achieve. Agricultural projects foreign aided schemes, collaborative ventures (with foreign aided foreign institutions of course), development programmes, seminars and workshops, all make news. A succession of "missions" from foreign agencies and institutions and representatives of foreign entrepreneurs come and go, to be quickly followed in the reverse direction by local elites and other

miscellaneous beneficiaries. Good and honourable individuals, whose decisions determine the fate of this country, are often deceived by those on whom they rely for advice including bureaucrats, academics and scientists. Sri Lanka, born as independent Ceylon, was the inheritor of abundant natural assets. A country which had the promise of a bright future is now in travail. The scientific landscape is bleak; dark clouds gather on the agricultural horizon.

Meanwhile, the course of research, relevant in the Sri Lankan context, has not been clearly chartered; the functions of institutions and the assignments of researchers are variable, dependant on the fancies of those "in power". Research facilities are established at great cost, only to be dismantled or run down. "Centres" are opened, still born. Researchers are trained; after they secure specialised qualifications, they cease to deliver in their areas of specialisation. Research institutions are being drained of their vitality and institutions of agricultural education warped to produce crippled minds. They are being exploited to serve the interests of an unscrupulous tribe of "fringe dwellers" who luxuriate on perks and privileges. Those regarded as obstacles, those unwilling to lend support to schemes perceived as flawed, as manoeuvred to advantage individuals or groups with vested interests are victimised; some have abandoned their posts for positions elsewhere to escape from suffocating working environments and the danger of intellectual atrophy; others are harassed and obstructed and denied opportunities for creative work. Appointments, promotions, scholarships, all these are manoeuvred to benefit a select company. An impartial tribunal before which aggrieved scientists could plead is wanting.

Can these trends be reversed? Can the power of misleading advisers and aggressive groups with vested interests, who do immeasurable harm to national development, be curtailed? Can some objectivity be brought into processes of decision making so necessary in matters governing the resources of this country, the foreign debts she incurs in the attempt to develop her condition, and the

changes that are made which affect the lives of millions of people of the present generation and of those generations yet unborn? The ministerial elites, the bureaucrats and the technocrats all seek their zones of influence; they must be princes in their own enclaves, subject to no interference in their decisions. A means must be found so that decision makers will be correctly and adequately informed about all aspects relevant to a particular issue, before firm decisions are made, will draw on the best possible technical opinion in formulation of policies, and will be responsive to reasoned criticisms. The science constituency must be cleansed of intrigue. Structures that could inspire confidence and ensure justice are a dire need.

Indeed, the National Science and Technology Policy of Sri Lanka enunciated by President J. R. Jayewardena on 4th December 1978 promised "to involve scientists in the formulation of policy and in decision making at the highest level." In India, when a giant hydro-electric project was conceived for damming the Kuntipuzha river, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi set up a committee of scientists to study the effects of the proposed project. They reported that the project, if implemented, would destroy India's only surviving tropical rain forest called the Silent Valley. Their concerns were respected; their views heeded. The plan was dropped. Perhaps, a similar assessment of our Mahaweli Development Project may have spared Patha Dumbara from submergence; the troubles at Kotmale may have been averted. In one unique instance, the intention to release Mahaweli land to the UK-based Guthrie Corporation to grow oil palm was fortunately abandoned, a report prepared by a group of competent local scientists having shed much light on aspects which had required serious consideration but which had not received adequate attention.

National development is not the monopoly of politicians or bureaucrats or scientists — or any other group. It is a co-operative effort,

(Continued on page 10)

* The writer is Plant Pathologist of the Central Agricultural Research Institute at Peradeniya and a Fellow of the National Academy of Sciences of Sri Lanka.

MIRGE Activist as "hostage"

The arrest of Ms. Pulsara Nayanie Liyanage a woman lecturer and an activist, of the women's movement 'women for peace' under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) has sent shock waves through political parties, women's groups and human rights organisations here.

Several of these organisations have already appealed to President J. R. Jayewardene and National Security Minister Lalith Athulathmudali for the release of 26 years old Ms. Pulsara Nayanie Liyanage on humanitarian grounds, considering her state of health.

Ms. Liyanage is still recovering from a major surgical operation and was on leave from the University when she was taken into custody from her house 1 November.

Issue raised in Parliament

The arrest of Ms. Liyanage, who taught western classics and is a member of the Movement for Inter-Racial Justice and Equality (MIRJE), has its echo in parliament, too. When Communist member Dew Gunasekara, calling for her release, pointed out that she was the first educated Sinhala

woman to be taken into custody for alleged subversive activities.

He said she was being held in custody at the CID headquarters (where third degree methods are allegedly used to extract confessions) and her relations had been told that she would not be released until she, "broke down" or confessed.

Dinesh Gunawardene of the Mahajana Eksath Peramuna said that there were several people who had been arrested on suspicion kept in custody for a long time without being brought before the court of law.

The National Security Minister strongly denied that there were any "political prisoners" in Sri Lanka. It would be wrong to call "terrorists" by that term Ms. Liyanage, he said, had been arrested on "reasonable suspicion" but he would look into the question of her release since she was a university lecturer and might not try to get away.

In a letter to the President, M. S. Sellasamy, General Secretary of the Ceylon Worker's Congress, a partner in the government, asked for her release on humanitarian grounds. He said Ms. Liya-

nage's parents were deeply concerned that her detention by the CID would cause a serious relapse in her medical condition.

Women's organisations pledge

Several women's organisations, at a meeting here Friday resolved to appeal to the government for the lecturer's release.

The *Island* newspaper reported that Ms. Liyanage is detained at the slave island police station in the city from where she was taken to the CID headquarters daily for 12 hours of interrogation.

Informed sources here said the interrogation was conducted by intelligence officials trained by the Israeli "Mossad" intelligence agency.

University circles alleged that Ms. Liyanage was being held as a "hostage" for a visiting lecturer at Colombo University and a Leftist Sinhalese intellectual who went underground after over 50 Sinhalese marxists, sympathetic to the Tamils' cause were arrested a few months ago. Ms. Liyanage is an activist of the women's movement "women for peace", which had held street demonstrations in Colombo, demanding a negotiated settlement of the ethnic problem. The demonstration was broken up by the police.

— (News Day)

National Development . . .

(Continued from page 9)

requiring many insights and diverse skills.

This paper was prepared when suggestions aimed at improving national development were sought by His Excellency the President. The proposals it contains are an attempt to utilise the skills of different types of persons and harmonise the activities of different agencies, involved in the agricultural sector, for an improved national effort in agricultural development.

1. The predicament — impoverishment of our human stock and a moral degradation affecting the residue.

We are facing today the consequences of our failure since independence to give a strong impetus to the development of our nation's self-reliant scientific capa-

bility, and of the failure to give the conditions necessary to attract competent and honourable men to serve our country's cause. So our institutions are crowded with individuals for whom these institutions are convenient operational bases for advancing their private interests and for deriving "fringe benefits". In such a situation science wilts. As Professor Karl Eric Knutsson remarked, the need is not for men with a mind only, but for men with a mind and a heart as well. Such men, regretably, are a rare species in our institutions.

Even now, we might heed the view expressed by a lone dissenter of the Salaries and Cadres Commission, 1974:

"The Scientists have a pre-eminent role to play in the development of a country. I wish in this connection to endorse the views expressed in his Dissenting Report by Mr.

N. S. Perera, member of the Wilmot Perera Commission. We cannot hope to attract into the ranks of Scientists men of the highest calibre unless their salaries and cadre ratios are at least as attractive as those of the Administrative Service. Many of our problems including those relating to rice and other produce would have been solved long ago if only we had the foresight to give a proper place in the salary structure to the Scientists."

Foresight has been an attribute almost alien to the Administrators of Independent Sri Lanka in comprehending problems such as "those relating to rice and other produce." So the research ship is sinking. There are pirates and smugglers on board. Can it be rescued? This surely must be the challenge before the proposed Agricultural Research Council.

(To be continued)

In Parliament

TAMIL - MUSLIM RIFT AND THE ISRAELI PRESENCE

(Mr. Anura Bandaranaike —
Leader of the Opposition)

I am proposing this token cut of Rs. 10 from the Budgetary Estimates for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with a certain sense of sorrow on the one hand and a certain sense of delight on the other. My sorrow, is because the affable, genial, extremely charming and tactful Hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs has over the last ten years smiled his way through from one crisis to another. Whatever I am going to say about the foreign policy of the Government, I would like to assure the Hon. Minister, is nothing personal against him. I am moving the cut with a certain sense of delight because the foreign policy of the Government, the UNP administration, as I will go on to demonstrate, has taken a completely unprecedented turn-about. It has in fact gone back to the foreign policy that existed in this country prior to 1956, probably even worse.

Now, Sir, from 1956 until about 1978-79 the foreign policy of the United National Party and the foreign policy of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party were not very different. I think the cornerstone of the foreign policy was, and still remains I hope, non-alignment, close friendship with the Third World nations and of course a very warm personal understanding with our nearest neighbour, India. This I think broadly sums up the essence of the foreign policy commitments of the UNP and of the SLFP. But, Sir, that period falls between 1956 and about 1978-79.

May I, Sir, with your permission, go back very briefly to the foreign policy that existed in this country, before 1956. It was a foreign policy suited and designed to please, quite unnecessarily our former colonial masters. It was

such a strange foreign policy for a nation that after nearly 350 years of colonial rule had achieved independence. We still continued to dance to the tune of our former colonial masters, so much so that the Government of Sri Lanka between 1948 and 1956 even refused to exchange ambassadors with the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China. Not only were Ambassadors not exchanged, even the scientist and sportsmen were not permitted to come to this country fearing the evil influence of Communists. That was, Sir, the perfect foreign policy for an extremely pro-Western, pro-British, pro-American country. But 1956 changed all that. As the Hon. Minister will agree, for the first time we moved out from this colonial straight-jacket. We fearlessly established relations with the Soviet Union and our first Ambassador was the distinguished Dr. G. P. Malalasekera. We also established relations with the People's Republic of China. We opened our doors to the Socialist world — to Yugoslavia, to the German Democratic Republic and a number of other Socialist countries. But, Sir, that did not mean that we were going to sacrifice our commitments to our Western friends. We maintained our friendship with the United Kingdom on an even keel. In fact the late Mr. Bandaranaike was at Oxford together with the then Prime Minister of England, Sir Anthony Eden, and I think he was one of the most vociferous critics of Sir Anthony Eden and the blunder which cost him his premiership — the invasion of the Suez Canal.

Now, Sir, this was, I believe, the continuation of our foreign policy. The closeness we had with the Arab World, the bold stand we took on behalf of Egypt, a nation struggling to be born, struggling to be independent, struggling to shake off its colo-

The annual Foreign Affairs debate, usually a tame, aimless exchange, was not only high-spirited but centred on a single issue, ISRAEL, with the local 'Muslim factor' much in evidence. Since ISRAEL is also a cause for Indian concern, the debate spotlighted the domestic-external aspects of the current crisis — Ed.

nial shackles. We backed them fully. We backed them from the bottom of our hearts because we felt that their cause was just. But yet we maintained our close relations with the United Kingdom. At no time did the Sri Lanka Freedom Party's relations with the United Kingdom Government, even though we had taken a stand against their Suez policy, ever sour. They appreciated the fact that we were a Third World Nation, that we were just recovering from 350 years of colonialism and that our place was rightfully amongst the struggling developing Third World Nations.

Sir, then we began to take a important and positive role in Non-Alignment. As the late Mr. Bandaranaike said, Non-Alignment does not mean that we stand on the fence. It means that there is a commitment, and a commitment to the hilt, on matters which we think are right. A lot of people, Sir, have, as the Hon. Minister knows very well, rather strange notions on what Non-Alignment should be. Non-Alignment does mean that you never take a side, that you sit on the fence that you play up to both sides and get the best from both sides. That, Sir, is not Non-Alignment. Non-Alignment is a policy which was enunciated by great Third World leaders like N'Krumah, Sukarno, Jawaharlal Nehru, Marshal Tito and people like that who have won independence for their country. They felt that it was the best policy because we could not in a struggle which does not concern us between the two major super-powers, take sides, but we will pool our resources together, mostly verbally, of course — this is half the problem now with the Non-Aligned nations — and we take a common stand on a number of issues.

Now, Sir this was roughly the major corner stone of Sri Lanka's foreign policy, and also, as I mentioned earlier, was our very close and extremely personal relations with India. State to State relations are between a Government and another but with the closeness of India geographically, politically and in every other sense, I believe, that the closeness of the Heads of State, two Prime Ministers, went a long way in ironing out a number of what seemed irreconcilable differences on a number of occasions on a personal basis. That, Sir, was roughly the corner-stone of Sri Lanka's foreign policy which the United National Party maintained on a fairly even keel though there were slight side movements sometimes in various directions till about the years 1978 and 1979.

Why do I stop at the years 1978 and 1979? That is because to my mind and to the mind of the Opposition and to those who follow Sri Lanka's foreign policy closely there had been a dramatic turn around in our foreign policy. I can not say that the foreign policy between 1979 and 1986 was the same foreign policy that the United National Party followed when they were in office between 1965 and 1970 and between 1977 and 1979. Why do I say this? I will show you in two or three major areas where we have digressed, diverted and taken a course from which Sri Lanka will have to change sooner or later.

First take the question of our relations with the Middle East. The closeness of our relations with the Arab countries cannot be exaggerated. Not only are we a part of the Third World, not only are we victims of similar colonial rule, we are also struggling to develop our economies with the limited resources we have. Eight per cent of the Muslim population in Sri Lanka has had a long and very close relationship with the Arab world. The Arabs have stood by us when we were in great difficulty and we have stood by the Arabs at every possible turn. On every possible key issue Sri Lanka was in the forefront, though we are

a small nation with only 15 million people and of only 25,000 square miles in size, and Sri Lanka's voice was respected in the world. Sri Lanka's voice was heard in the world though we were small and insignificant in population and in size. Sri Lanka's voice was not measured either by its population or its geographical size. It was measured by the firmness of our conviction and the sincerity of our purpose. Therefore, we have established a very close and long relationship. And when the Hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs was selected to hold the portfolio, I personally felt happy because he understands the Arab problem very well. He understands the Palestinian problem very well. Of course, I have no doubt that being a Muslim naturally his feelings must be sympathetic to the cause of the Palestinians and the Arabs.

But look at the policy that the Government has followed. You have invited the Israeli Government — I do not know whether they came by choice; that is not relevant to me — to establish an Interests Section, first of all in the United States Embassy and now they are functioning as a separate entity. The decision to bring the Israelis here becomes important not only in the context of antagonizing our Arab friends, it becomes also a much bigger problem. Our total turn around in our foreign policy where we have decided to morally, whatever you may say on platforms and at the United Nations or on the Floor of his House, break the umbilical cord with the Arabs and also break the umbilical cord with the Third World. Apart from the most disgusting policy of Zionism of the Israelis, where they consider Arabs to be of a lesser race and of a more inferior race, I can only compare Zionism with the equally disgraceful concept of Zionism and apartheid practised by the Government of South Africa.

Let us not go into the question of Zionism because that is not quite, strictly speaking, relevant to what I am going to say. When we asked you time and time again from this side of the House as to

why the Government changed their foreign policy and decided to embrace Israel to its bossom we were told that it was for security reasons. We were told that we must seek aid and assistance from anybody in the world because we were facing a terrorist threat. Though we did not accept that explanation — we accept it less now — we believe that that was fundamentally your purpose. But, Sir, now that the Israelis have been here I think for over three years and they will be going into the fourth year — I am not sure of the time period, but any way it is over three years — in what way have the Israelis helped you to combat terrorism? How will the Israelis be able to help the Government of Sri Lanka and the people of this country to combat terrorism? They are supposed to have sent secret service agents here and they are supposed to have given you advice on counter-terrorism and counter-insurgency. When they are the bigger terrorists and the biggest insurgents in the world stage you have gone and sought advice from them. There are rumours that you have bought arms from them. Leave all that aside. But what is the impact you have been able to make on the terrorist front by your closeness to Israel?

Sir, we all know that two army personnel were kidnapped in Jaffna and they are still held in a close proximity of less than a mile from the Jaffna Fort; they are holding them in the Jaffna hospital less than a mile from Jaffna Fort. So, with all the advice you have received from Israel, with all the counter-insurgency strategy that Israel has brain-fed you, you have not been able to rescue these two army Lieutenants. When Israelis moved 5,000 miles in less than 11/2 days from Tel Aviv to Kampala, Uganda, to rescue the hijacked Israeli citizens who were held at the Entebbe Airport — we all know what happened at the Entebbe Airport — it was one of the swiftest operations in modern times. When from one continent they move to another in the cover of darkness and rescued their citizens which we as citizens of the world have nothing against, we applauded. But why have you,

with the Israelis who were able to rescue their citizens, having moved a distance of five thousand miles, not been able, with their assistance to rescue these two hapless army Lieutenants who are less than a mile away from the Jaffna Fort?

So, Sir, this argument that Israelis have been brought here to combat terrorism does not hold ground. It does not hold water for the simple reason that their presence here has not made the slightest impact on the combating of terrorism and insurrection.

On the other hand, their presence here has caused a great deal of consternation, not only among the Muslims of this country but also among the Indian Government, among the Arab friends and the socialist block countries, as the Hon. Minister well knows.

Now, Sir, the whole relationship with Israel is shrouded in mystery and secrecy. It is like an Agatha Christie or a P. D. James novel: one does not know who is going to get murdered in the next chapter: you have to wait holding your breath till the last page to find out who did it. So, our relationship with Israel is very much like that.

The Hon. Minister, I think, met his counterpart at that time the Foreign Minister of Israel Mr. Yitzhak Shamir who is now the Prime Minister, in New York, and this was not reported in the Sri Lankan press. I quite understand the Hon. Minister's predicament. With the vast amount of Muslim voters in Harispattuwa he could not possibly announce in the local press that he had met the Israeli Foreign Minister, Mr. Yitzhak Shamir. It was kept secret until the world press gave publicity to it and that was publicly known.

The second such meeting which also shrouded in the same kind of mystery was the meeting between our President and the then Prime Minister of Israel Mr. Shimon Peres who is now the Foreign Minister. We were told that they met in Paris. We were also told quite naively that they were both

booked into the same hotel and it so happened that they accidentally bumped into each other in the corridors.

Now, Sir, as the Hon. Minister knows well, such meetings between Heads of State do not occur in hotel lobbies or in hotel restaurants. If I am told that it is all accidental, it is something, which I quite respectfully do not believe for a single second. It was all arranged, all pre-planned. I do not know who pre-planned it, may be the French Government. But certainly that meeting was not accidental.

Now the third, the most serious and most important of these meetings shrouded in mystery was the arrival here of the Israel President, Chaim Herzog, who came to Sri Lanka barely a week ago. When President Herzog came to Sri Lanka, the Hon. Member for Attanagalla raised this matter at adjournment time in this House. The Hon. Minister was not in the Island nor was the Deputy and the answer was given by the Hon. Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Sports. He said that the Minister was out of the Island and so was the Deputy Minister and therefore he was not in a position to answer the Question—

(A Member)

He said he does not know.

(Mr. Anura Bandaranaike)

He said he does not know, I do not blame him and that a full and comprehensive answer would be given on the arrival of the Hon. Minister. The Hon. Minister will give it today. But that is not my point. An immediate answer should have been given on the arrival of the Minister to Sri Lanka from India which I believe was about 8 or 9 days ago. A comprehensive statement should have been made in this House because it has caused a tremendous amount of consternation in Sri Lanka, among the Muslim nations of South East Asia like Malaysia and Indonesia and even the Philippines — I will refer to all that later — where they all totally opposed the visit of President Herzog.

Let me first show you the extent of the hospitality that we offered when President Herzog came here. I am quoting from the "Sun" newspaper of 21.11.1986. It says:

"Israeli President Chaim Herzog held an unannounced luncheon meeting with President J. R. Jayewardene during a brief stop-over in Colombo yesterday.

A special Israeli jet carrying the Israeli President and senior officials from his office and the Israeli Foreign Minister touched down at the Colombo International Airport, Katunayake around noon. There was no official ceremony for Mr. Herzog who was returning home from a 19 day state tour of Asia and the South Pacific.

He was met at the airport by National Security Minister Lalith Athulathmudali, Mrs. Athulathmudali and officials of the Israeli Interests Section in Colombo."

Now I would like to know why the Hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs did not receive him. He is the person who really speaking, protocol-wise, should have been at the Airport to receive the President of a now-very-friendly country with you. But, of course, Sir, the Hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs being a very astute and and a very shrewd politician has always his eye screwed back to Harispattuwa and the Muslim vote in the Kandy district. So I do not blame him, for if he had been photographed with President Herzog, we would have produced it at the next election. So he very shrewdly avoided a meeting with Mr. Herzog, and Mr. Athulathmudali who has hardly a Muslim vote in Ratmalana was sent to receive the Israeli President. To continue:

"At Katunayake, the Israeli President and party boarded an airforce helicopter which brought them to the army headquarters in Colombo. Amidst tight security the visitors were driven to the President's House for a luncheon meeting with President Jayewardena.

The two leaders discussed about matters of bilateral interest "in general terms", Haim Devon, head of the Israeli Interests Section told 'SUN' after the meeting.

"It was a very useful visit". Mr. Devon said.

Now, Sir, this is what we would like to know; how useful was it? For whom was it useful? If it was useful for Sri Lanka I

would like the Hon. Minister to tell us today in the course of his speech in what way it was useful to Sri Lanka.

Mr. Herzog is a very distinguished Israeli, a great intellectual himself, a very liberal man, a leading member of the Israeli Labour Party, for whom I have a great admiration as a person — not as an Israeli — as an individual. What was he able to give you? Did he tell you about the Labour Party of Israel? Or did he discuss about the growing of Daffodils and Chrysanthemums? Or did he discuss something much more important which concerns all of us, our security and our relation with the rest of the world? I think the Hon. Minister must inform us what this very useful discussion was.

"He said some business of mutual importance was discussed but did not elaborate."

Which I am sure the Hon. Minister will do today. The article states further :

"After the luncheon, the Israeli President and entourage were taken on a brief sightseeing tour of Colombo. It included the Parliamentary Complex in Sri Jaywardenepura and the BMICH. The visitors also visited the Asokarama Temple in Timbirigasyaya. President Jaywardene's red Daimler was on loan for the visiting President."

"President Jaywardene's red Daimler was on loan for the visiting President."

The Israeli President boarded his blue and white Boeing 707 at 5.35 p.m. yesterday and left for Tel Aviv. 'He left with good feelings and was very impressed with Sri Lanka' Mr. Devon said."

I would like to ask the Hon. Foreign Minister what caused these good feelings? What were the commitments you made to Israel or what were the commitments Israel made to you which made them feel good? What were the good impressions he had? Was it the Japanese-built Parliament that impressed him or the Asokarama Temple in Timbirigasyaya which impressed him or the Chinese-built BMICH which impressed him? Or, was it something more substantial which impressed him? Was it some commitment you had given that impressed him or was it some commitment that he had

given you and which you accepted so gladly which impressed him. Sir, when the Israelis use words like 'impressed by', 'very useful visit', 'very impressed' and 'good feelings', they do not use them arbitrarily like we do. There is a purpose behind every word they use, like in everything else they do. The article goes on to say —

"It was first visit to Sri Lanka by an Israeli head of state since the Israeli Interests Section was established in Colombo in 1984."

I do not think that is quite correct. I do not think there has ever been a visit by any Israeli head of state. Since we gained Independence I do not think any Israeli head of state has visited Sri Lanka. Certainly no Israeli Prime Minister — I may be wrong on that — but I do not think any Israeli Prime Minister has come here. This was the only visit to Sri Lanka since 1948 by any leading official of the Israeli Government. The article continues—

Foreign Ministry officials remained tight lipped about the visit and what transpired during it.

Speculation over the visit mounted on Wednesday when Attanagalla MP Lakshman Jayakody asked at adjournment whether the government would hold talks with the Israeli Leader. His question was not answered since Foreign Minister A. C. S. Hammed and his Deputy Tyrone Fernando were not in the country at the time.

Since the opening of the Israeli Interests Section in Colombo, Tel Aviv has provided Sri Lanka with assistance in the form of military training equipment for the security forces, and in the field of agriculture.

Meanwhile, a Reuter report from Tel Aviv adds, Israeli President Chaim Herzog made an unexpected stop in Sri Lanka today at the end of a 19-day tour of Asia and the South Pacific in the first official Israeli visit to that country, state radio reported.

Sri Lanka broke diplomatic ties with Israel in 1970 three years after the 1967 Middle East war.

That was the report in the newspaper of 21st November, 1986 I am sure the Hon. Minister will explain. The story appeared on the front page and continued on page three. This visit not only caused consternation here. He left a trail of consternation on the whole tour.

I would also like to quote from the "Sun" of 18th November, 1986. The article reads—

"Moslem sensitivity hits Israeli President's Asian tour Israeli President Chaim Herzog's Asia Pacific tour has run into problems on the home stretch because of Moslem sensitivity at his presence in South East Asia, diplomats said here today.

A visit to the Philippines was cancelled at the last moment and his scheduled three-day visit to Singapore from tomorrow is under fire from Malaysia which recalled for consultations its High Commissioner (Ambassador) to Singapore."

Malaysia and Singapore are even closer than India and Sri Lanka, both geographically and in every sense of the word. I think this was the first time that the Malaysia Government recalled its High Commissioner in protest at the visit of a foreign head of state to Singapore.

"Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohammad said the recall of the envoy, who left for home today, would not affect ties with Singapore. But newspapers in Kuala Lumpur said it was a protest against Herzog's visit to the island State.

Cardinal Jaime Sin, religious leader of the predominantly Roman Catholic Philippines, denied Manila cancelled Herzog's visit because of pressure . . ."

It continues—

"Press reports from Manila said the Foreign Ministry opposed Herzog's visit at a time when the Government was involved in sensitive peace talks with Moslem rebels in the Southern Philippines.

Herzog is on the last leg of his 19-day tour . . ."

The "Island" of Monday 17th November, 1986 also gave a detailed account of the recall of Malaysia's High Commissioner from Singapore in protest at Mr. Herzog's visit. It goes on to say the same thing, Sir. But this shows very clearly that the Malaysian Government, in protest against Herzog's visit, recalled its ambassador. It is very unusual for a country like Malaysia.

Another country which protested Herzog's visit, another predominantly Muslim country, was Indonesia. I am quoting from the "Island" newspaper of Thursday, 20th November 1986. "Singapore, November 19 (Reuter)" — "Malaysia and Indonesia rebuked by Herzog".

Israeli President Chaim Herzog today rebuked Malaysia and Indonesia for opposing his visit to Singapore, said they were out of date and told them not to interfere in a matter which did not concern them."

Surely, Sir, as the Hon. Minister knows, I think about 90 per cent or 80 per cent of Malaysia is Muslim, and about 90 per cent of Indonesia is Muslim. When the perpetrator of all the barbaric acts against the Arabs and the Palestinians arrives in a friendly country next to their country, surely the Muslims of both Malaysia and Indonesia have every right to protest? But what does Herzog say? He says it is none of their business! Look at the arrogance.

"Herzog, who arrived yesterday for a three-day visit was commenting on protests from Kuala Lumpur and Jakarta over Singapore's alleged lack of sensitivity towards its Moslem neighbours for inviting him.

He said visits by Israeli leaders to Arab countries such as Morocco and Egypt caused no fuss in the Middle East and added: "Frankly I'm at a loss... I have a feeling that some people are out of date in this part of the world."

He has not only embarrassed the Muslims of Malaysia and Indonesia, he has also tread on their corns by saying that he has a feeling that they are out of date. The feelings of all Muslims not only Muslims but all other people as well like myself—on the question of Palestine cannot be out of date. It is the very presence of Israel and occupied Palestinian territories which is very much to date, which has caused this protest. But the Israeli President turns a Nelsonian eye and calls all those who protested out of date.

That is the reaction also of the Phillipines, which is now engaged in a very sensitive process of negotiating with the Muslim rebels in the South of the Phillipines. President Aquino's government thought it very prudent not to invite the Israeli President at this point of time. That is because in those countries like the Phillipines the interests of the country come first. As Lord Palmerston, one of the most effective Foreign Secretaries England ever had, said, Britain has

no permanent friends, it has only permanent interests. I will deal with that matter later.

Similarly, in any country, whether developed or developing country, the fundamental objective of the foreign policy must be its permanent interests. It should not be done in fits and starts. It cannot be done inconsistently and incoherently. You cannot blow hot and cold—a phrase from my good Friend the Hon. Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs. He said that this Government has a policy of blowing hot and blowing cold with India. I will come to that later. But you cannot do that in foreign policy.

The most important reaction as far as we are concerned is not the reaction of Malaysia, Indonesia or the Phillipines, although of course we respect their views. But India's reaction is very important to us, for the simple reason that India is today extremely and thoroughly involved with the ongoing peace process. In fact, you are completely beholden to Indian goodwill. As to how good the will is I do not know, but anyway you are completely beholden to India. You are depending so much on India. Let us not go into the pros and cons of that; I have my personal views on that matter; they are not relevant to this debate. Whatever one thinks of India's role, whatever the contradictions with India vis-a-vis Sri Lanka—and there are many of them; I do not want to elaborate on them—you all know that India has been playing a completely incomprehensible role as far as the terrorists are concerned and we are concerned. What they are doing no neighbour has done to another, I think, since the beginning of time. Leave all that a side. But if you are placing your foreign policy—not only your foreign policy but even the very existence of this country as a unitary State—on the goodwill of India, you must, at this very sensitive point of time, not antagonize India on a foreign policy issue. The Indians are very sensitive, as the Hon. Minister knows. Frankly, if you ask me whether

India has a right to comment on the visit of a foreign Head of State, I will tell you personally my answer to that. But, Sir, on the Floor of this House I would say that India's reactions are in fact important to us, and very important to us at this point of time. We should not do anything at this stage to antagonize India because India is, after all, the only saviour of the UNP Government.

Now, India has protested at Mr. Chaim Herzog's visit. You have it reported in the "Island" of 24.11.86.

"India Worried over Herzog visit

India has complained to Sri Lanka about Israeli President Chaim Herzog's stopover in Colombo last week, High Commissioner Jyotindra Dixit said today.

"We are concerned about the visit and have expressed our unhappiness to President Junius Jayewardene", Dixit told Reuters without elaborating.

Dixit met Jayewardene last night for talks on New Delhi's peace plan to end the ethnic conflict between majority Sinhalese and minority Tamils on the island.

Sri Lankan and Israeli officials said Herzog's surprise six-hour visit on Thursday at the end of a 19-day tour of Asia and the Pacific was private.

A National Security Ministry spokesman said Herzog met Jayewardene over lunch but denied widespread speculation that the two Presidents had negotiated an arms deal."

Now, this is what is worrying India, obviously.

"It was the first to Sri Lanka by an Israeli head of state."

This was tucked away, I believe, in the "Islands" at the bottom of the first page. The moral that we learn from this lesson is that at a time when the Filipino President, President Aquino, refused even to entertain Mr. Herzog because it might upset her delicate negotiations with the Muslim rebels, we are in a similar situation. We are facing here an equally difficult problem as Mrs. Aquino is facing in the Phillipines, with rebels and insurgents and terrorists occupying one-third of our land.

Now, India is paramount in these negotiations. You have made India paramount, and having made

India paramount, I cannot understand why you invite Chaim Herzog to visit you. God alone knows what results it has brought you, but it has certainly antagonized India, so much so that the Indian High Commissioner here was asked to protest by the Indian Government to President Jayewardene about Mr. Herzog's visit.

While all this is going on, how do you expect the world to take you seriously? How do you expect your Arab friends to take you seriously? It was reported in the "Veerakeseri" of this morning that the Ambassador of Iraq, the Ambassador of the PLO and the Ambassador of Libya have interviewed the Foreign Ministry or the Minister and expressed their concern over the visit of President Chaim Herzog. The Ambassador or the Charge d' Affairs of Iran has also, I believe, protested about this visit.

Now, with all these things happening, how do you expect your Arab friends to take you seriously? How do you expect India to take you seriously? India obviously is concerned about his very presence here. They are also concerned about an arms deal and a number of other matters. That is why I want the Hon. Minister to come out clean and make a statement, a full statement, as to what the dealings you have with the Israeli Government are. That is something important. Leave aside India, leave aside the Arabs, but take the Sri Lankans. We have a right to know why this complete turn-about in our foreign policy has taken place; what results has it brought us; what discussions have been held with Israel; are there arms negotiations; if so, what are the negotiations and so on and so forth? I am sure the Hon. Minister, with an eye on Harispattuwa, no doubt, would give a full account of what has taken place. — (Interruption). No. You are the darling of Harispattuwa!

Sir, the Government, as I said, cannot be taken seriously because, whilst you are openly flirting with the Israeli Government, your

stand on international forums is something quite different. Now look at this. I am quoting from the "Daily News" of 17th November 1986, page 3: "Sri Lanka reaffirms recognition of PLO". Sir, there is a limit to tomfoolery. There is a limit to playing the fool with the world. Sir, look at what this says:

"United Nations — Sri Lanka has consistently upheld the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people in their just struggle for self-determination and the territorial integrity of their lands which have been under illegal occupation since 1967."

Who is the illegal occupier? The President of the country whom you gave your Red Daimler to and took around showing him Colombo and also saying that everything is fine, tickety-boo! He went away very happy. Everybody was pleased with what happened. This is the Government of the man whom you entertained which has illegally occupied Palestinian territory from 1967.

"Speaking before the UN's Third Committee, Amanual Farouque, reaffirmed that Sri Lanka has recognised, and continues to recognise the Palestine Liberation Organisation as the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and has accorded diplomatic recognition to its mission in Sri Lanka."

This is the stated position of the Government, and I have no doubt the Hon. Minister would in his reply reaffirm our commitment to the PLO. All that is OK. But how do you expect the world to take you seriously? Whilst on the one hand you are reaffirming your faith and your commitment to the Palestine Liberation Organisation and the Arabs, on the other hand you are openly flirting without the slightest sense of shame, without the slightest sense of embarrassment, with the very perpetrator of all the barbaric acts in the occupied Arab territory.

How do you equate the two; even if you can, with all your diplomatic charm and affability, Hon. Minister? I am sure you can present both points of view, both to the Arabs as well as to Mr. Herzog. But how do you

expect the world to take you seriously at that given point of time? You can speak well, you have been Minister of Foreign Affairs for nine years and you have held the office even against your own conscience. You have held office with a certain amount of dignity, there is no doubt about that. But the Hon. Minister, however charming he may be, however persuasive he may be on the world forum—(Interruption). If you are Muslim, if you are Islamic by faith, you cannot have another conscience. Your people are being butchered by the Israelis, their land is occupied by the Israelis.

(Mr. A. C. S. Hameed—Minister of Foreign Affairs)

I will reply you, I do not want to disturb you.

(Mr. Anura Bandaranaike)

Thank you very much, I appreciate that. Your people are being butchered, your relations are being butchered, the land from which your religion came is being attacked by them. So how can you obviously have a conscience and support Israel? You possibly cannot. But, Sir, that is not the point. The point, is, however convincing your argument is, how do you expect the world to take you seriously when there is a stark contradiction in principle?

Now, the Indians have the same commitment to the PLO as we have got. They have the same commitment to the Arabs that we have got. But they have never flirted with the Israelis in the same way we have done. We have been told about some consular section that is operating in Bombay. We have been told by the Indians time and time again—the matter came up before the House a couple of years ago—that that is entirely a consular operation to issue visas to the travelling Jews. I believe there is a fair amount of Jews in Maharashtra, whose capital is Bombay.

Now, Sir, we cannot accept that argument. I do not want to use the word hypocrisy on the Hon. Minister because I know he is not a hypocrite, but the hypocrisy points at the UNP Government. It is something we find in

our foolishness very difficult to understand. I hope the Arabs with their wisdom can understand you better.

Now, Mr. Chairman, may I reiterate the policy of the Sri Lanka Freedom party on this question. We have always stood, and stood very sincerely, as the Arabs will know, on their side. We have not changed our position at all. We have taken a stand against Israel on a matter of moral principle and not for temporary gain or for some imaginary benefit. We stick by that, and if the Government ever changed, the first thing we would do is to break relations with Israel within 24 hours. I would like to inform our Arab friends and the Muslims of this country that we will re-do what we have done in 1970. Whatever temporary benefits we have from the Israelis is not going to cover our decision. We have stood by the Arabs in their hour of need as much as they stood by us in our hour of need and we intend to stand on the side of the Arabs without flinching and without giving an inch and we will do so once again breaking all relations with Israel.

Having said that, let me not go at length into the local Muslim reactions to all this because the Hon. Minister knows very well that at the time the Israeli Interests Section was formed in this country there were a number of prayer meetings in a number of leading mosques all over the country, a number of protests in mosques, and I believe there was also a case of the police opening fire and one young Muslim, I think, was shot at though he did not die. So the Muslims, obviously, in this country feel about this. The Hon. Minister knows very well much more than I do, and my good friend, the Third member for Colombo Central, also knows much more than I do what affinity the Muslims have to the Arab world. So obviously, their sensitivities have been hurt and I think the Government has shown not the slightest interest in the sensitivities of the Muslim People of this country.

(Mr. M. Haleem Ishak — Third Colombo Central)

Mr. Chairman, the Hon. Leader of the Opposition covered practically all aspects of the visit of the President of Israel and the present connection the Government of Sri Lanka has with Israel. Sir, I happen to be the only Muslim member of Parliament in the Opposition. As the Hon. Leader of the Opposition quite correctly said, I know that the task and the responsibility of the Hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs is also a very difficult one. I know his concern about Muslim matters locally and internationally. I know the amount of interest he takes in these matters because he feels it is his duty to give leadership. But today, very unfortunately, a difficult task which he would not agree with, I know, in his own mind, he has to handle.

Sir, there are a few matters that I would like to raise. The first matter is one which I have been raising on the Floor of this House many a time and the Hon. Minister has given assurances on those occasions. That is regarding the opening of a Saudi Embassy in our country. If I remember right, year before last when the hon. Second Member for Beruwala raised this matter the Hon. Minister gave an assurance to this House that an Embassy would not be opened but a Consulate would be opened. You are aware that though thousands of workers are being retrenched and sent back, yet there are thousands of others who have to obtain visas before they go to Saudi Arabia. Every year Muslims, at least a thousand or more, go to Mecca to fulfil Haj. Today if a person is travelling alone to Saudi he has to send somebody to New Delhi to get a visa. Till today, though the Minister has given that assurance to this House, even a Consulate has not been opened.

I would like to ask the Hon. Minister whether this has any bearing, your decision not to open a Consulate in the country, on the presence of the Israelis here? I would like the Hon. Minister to answer that question.

The second matter I would like to raise is about the US \$ 500,000 loan for the Madura Oya Project. You are aware that the Government of Saudi Arabia has been our friend for many years. Not only Saudi Arabia, even the other Arab countries promised us a loan of Rs. 50 million for the Madura Oya Project. Why have we not got this loan? I would like to ask the Hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs whether this loan was not given to us or whether they are not prepared to give it to us because of the presence of the Israelis in this country? I am sure the position is going to be worse now, especially after the visit of the President of Israel to our country. As correctly mentioned by the Hon. Leader of the Opposition, this is the first time, if I remember right, that a Head of State from Israel has come to our country.

Now, the hon. Leader of the Opposition mentioned about Indonesia and Malaysia. They are countries which are members in the ASEAN. You are aware that ASEAN is definitely very close to America and also Israel is propped up by America, it is a stooge of America. So if Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia have protested about the visit of Israeli President to Singapore I am sure we should protest in a much more effective way about his visit here. So without taking a stand of that nature, you allow the Israeli President to come here and you tell the country that he was here on a technical visit that the plane arrived here on a technical visit. I would like to ask the Hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs — firstly he was not present at the airport nor were his officials available for comment — if it was a technical visit why was he here for five and a half hours? He was hosted to lunch by the Head of State, His Excellency the President of Sri Lanka, and also his red Daimler was given to him for use. Then he visited the Parliament and the BMICH also.

I would like to ask the Government whether these things were not planned or scheduled? I think this type of irresponsible statements that are being made to the

nation are not taken very seriously. As far as the Muslims of this country are concerned, I think the President made it fairly clear when he held the Working Committee meeting of the United National Party at the John de Silva Memorial Hall. He told the Muslim members of the United National Party. "If you disagree with my decision to open an Israeli Interests Section in this country, you can leave my party." — (Interruption). Why not? This is what he told the Muslim members of the United National Party. So, as far as the United National Party is concerned, where their foreign policy is concerned, they are out to establish even stronger and closer links with Israel.

The other question that I like to pose is whether at the discussion held with the President it was agreed to open an embassy in this country. If that is so, I think we are entitled, the country is entitled, to know what your policy is where that particular matter is concerned.

Sir, today the "Virakesari" reports that the Ambassadors for Iraq, Libya and the PLO had interviewed the Hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs. They also had expressed concern about the visit of the Israeli President to our country. I would like to know what transpired and what replies were given. I think we are entitled to know. This is not a private matter. It is not a matter between two individuals. It is a matter between the Government of Sri Lanka and the government of Iraq, Libya and the PLO. I am also informed reliably that the Iranian Charge d'affairs in this country also had seen you last Friday, protesting or even expressing concern about the Israeli President's visit to our country. You are aware, Sir, that the Hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs who has been a Minister for ten years, who has attended quite a number of international conferences, who has negotiated on behalf of us, on behalf of our country, knows the feelings of the Arabs on this question. He knows the massacre of the Palestinians. He knows that their homeland has been

taken away. Today, they are being killed like cats and dogs. Sir, today we expect aid from Arab countries, we expect trade with Arab countries especially in the export of tea. Iraq is our biggest buyer of tea. Even Iran buys quite a lot of tea. So do you expect these countries to co-operate with us? Do you expect these countries to help us in our trade? Already our tea prices have gone down. Our rubber prices have gone down. Our coconut prices have gone down. In general all produce prices have gone down by your actions, by the actions of this Government. Do you think the Arab countries are going to assist us in any way? Let us not forget that Sri Lanka is not the only country where tea is available. There are so many new countries that are having tea plantations now and they are our competitors. It is our duty to protect the tea trade. It is our duty to protect our trade in such a manner that we do not antagonize the Arabs all over the world. The Hon. Minister, as a Muslim would accept that Israelis have done enough damage to the Muslim community all over the world. We are a very small community in our country. We are just eight per cent in this country. Take the countries where even today there are massacres practically every day and certain imperialist countries like Britain and America are taking certain steps to antagonize the entire Arab World. They are not concerned about the dignity and independence of the Arab World. Why are we taking this step?

Thanks to Mrs. Bandaranaike, immediately she came into power the United Front Government took a decision to kick out the Israelis within 24 hours. We thought they were a menace not only to us.

Now, let us take the local position. The Hon. Minister of National Security and Deputy Minister of Defence told this House that the Israelis are not advising us on security matters but if I remember right when His Excellency the President was interviewed by a Hong Kong paper, he told them that

Israelis were advising us on defence. You will remember Sir, and the Hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs will also remember a few years ago there was enough trouble in the Eastern Province. And who was responsible for this? I feel that after the Israelis went into the Eastern Province they created the rift between the Muslims and Tamils there. They will not only create a rift between the Muslims and the Tamils, I assure this House today, Sir, but they will create rifts even between the Sinhalese and the Muslims living in the same villages all over the country.

(A Member)

Is that your opinion or the opinion of the party?

(Mr. Anura Bandaranaike)

That is the opinion of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party.

(A Member)

Utterly irresponsible statement.

(Mr. Anura Bandaranaike)

That is your view. I gave the view of the SLFP. Irresponsible? Never had the Muslims fought the Tamils before.

(Mr. M. Haleem Ishak)

Never had the Muslims fought the Tamils before.

(Mr. Anura Bandaranaike)

For the first time this happened.

(Mr. M. Haleem Ishak)

The Muslims disagree with Tamils on one question, the division of this country.

(Mr. Anura Bandaranaike)

Never had they fought before!

(Mr. M. Haleem Ishak)

Never! What has happened to the Muslims? Even today there is a boy called Aliyar in the Pottuvil electorate who is 16 years who will never be able to get up again. He was shot by the Police because he protested against the Israeli presence in this country. That was in the month of Ramzan. He was coming after evening prayers. I feel all these things are being done by the Israelis.

(Mr. Anura Bandaranaike)

How many Muslims were slaughtered in Kalmunai?

(Mr. M. Haleem Ishak)

How many Muslims were killed in Kalmunai? Who is responsible for this? It is the Israeli presence in this country. I appeal to you, Sir, in the name of God to advise this Government to send the Israelis away from this country. The more they stay in this country, the more it is going to affect not only the Muslims, but it is going to affect every community in this country. It has been proved beyond doubt that they are the biggest destructors in the whole world. Now I remember that the Hon. Minister of Finance on the Floor House called them "international pariahs." The Finance Minister is historian he is a person who knows these things. —(Interruption)—I repeat that again, Sir, and I endorse what the Hon. Minister of Finance said. He called them international pariahs. You are tolerating them here when there is a division in your own cabinet.—Interruption.

(Mr. Anura Bandaranaike)

Sir, with all respect to the Hon. Member, I must say that in his condition of health it is not for him to get excited like this

(Mr. Yasapala Herath)

I am not getting excited but you have made a glorified statement.

(Mr. Anura Bandaranaike)

Glorified what? Can be slightly more coherent because I cannot hear him?

(Mr. Yasapala Herath)

I respect your dynamic leadership but not the Party.

(Mr. Anura Bandaranaike)

You were a person who asked for SLFP nomination for Kalawewa. How can you talk against the SLFP now? And you were not given nomination. You were rejected.

(Mr. M. Haleem Ishak)

Correct. I know as I was there.

(Mr. Yasapala Herath)

You asked me to contest on the Independent ticket and I contested.

(The Chairman)

Order, please! What has this got to do with the Budget?

(Mr. M. Haleem Ishak)

I would like to ask the Hon. Member for Anuradhapura (East) whether the Israelis have offered him rehabilitation in one of their hospitals in Israel?

(Mr. Anura Bandaranaike)

He is going to Tel Aviv.

(Mr. M. Haleem Ishak)

He is grateful to them. Let us wish him all the best. We would like to see him fit when he comes back again.

Today you are sending troops or Indian personnel to the rehabilitation camps in Israel. They are not doing it free. You are spending large sums of money. You have spent large sums of money. Have these people been properly treated? I would like to tell you that there are countries like Egypt who have got extremely good rehabilitation camps and hospitals. They are extremely friendly with us.

(Mr. Anura Bastian)

Even the Egyptians went to Israel for their treatment.

(Mr. M. Haleem Ishak)

Do not make an irresponsible statement like that.

(A Member)

They have relationships. What are you talking?

(Mr. M. Haleem Ishak)

Do not make irresponsible statements. I am making a very responsible statement after speaking to some of the diplomats at the Egyptian Embassy. I am prepared to confess that.

(Mr. Anura Bastian)

That is completely incorrect.

(Mr. M. Haleem Ishak)

You are irresponsible. You are calling yourself a Deputy Minister and making such irresponsible statements on security in this House.

(Mr. Anura Bastian)

Sir, it is a fact.

(Mr. M. Haleem Ishak)

Egypt is a country with experience. They have faced so many wars. They have extremely good hospitals and rehabilitation camps. Egypt is one of our friends. They are one of our buyers of tea. Why cannot the Government send these armed troops who have been injured to a country like Egypt? I would like to ask whether Egypt has rejected.

(Mr. Anura Bastian)

Why do you not make some arrangements?

(Mr. M. Haleem Ishak)

Certainly. You kindly contact the Egyptian Embassy. They will make the arrangements.—Interruption. You are paying large, fat bills to the Israelis.

(Mr. Anura Bastian)

We will pay any price to anybody to help us.

(Mr. M. Haleem Ishak)

You have already paid the price of international antagonism. We are all paying the price. Whilst being in the opposition also, we are paying the price. Day by day the connection between Israel and Sri Lanka is getting strengthened.

I would like to pose another question to the Hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs. I posed a question earlier also. I would like to have a definite reply as to whether the Government has agreed to open an Israeli Embassy in Sri Lanka. This is a serious matter. I hope you will take note of what I have asked and give me a reply tomorrow.

Then, Sir, recently the Muslims of our country have had discussions at various levels. They are concerned not only about the present position but about the incidents that took place in the Eastern Province. The Muslims are seriously considering whether this is done not only to antagonize the Muslims of our country but to antagonize the Arabs of the world.

Where the Arab Embassy is concerned, even in a country like the Philippines, where the Muslims minority is small — I think in South of Manila — they have protested about this. They have protested about the President going to Singapore, and also the visit of the President to the Philippines had been postponed. So it countries of the ASEAN region who are very close to the United States could take positive steps and make declarations of this nature, what is the great hurry for us to entertain and have the President of Israel as the host of our Government? What is the necessity? How has the ethnic position improved after the Israelis came here? I would say it only aggravated the situation. According to the statement made by His Excellency the Indian High Commissioner in Sri Lanka, they are very concerned about the situation. As the Hon. Leader of the Opposition very correctly mentioned, you are depending on India for solution. Depending on India for a solution, the President goes makes appealing speeches at SAARC. I listened to his speech made over the television and the radio. He even spoke of the connections he had with Jawaharlal Nehru; Mrs. Gandhi, the Late Mahatma Gandhi and so many other leaders and tried to tell India that we are their friends. But what are you doing today? By inviting the President of Israel are you not antagonizing India? India is concerned. Do you think that Mr. Dixit made this statement without consulting the Foreign Ministry? He must have been instructed by the Government of India. So I appeal to the Hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Government to reconsider this matter. It is not too late even now to ask these people to get away.

(Mr. Anura Bastian)

The relations between India and Sri Lanka, between this Government and Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, are so close that in fact Mr. Gandhi said he will only negotiate with the Govern-

ment of Sri Lanka and not with Mrs. Bandaranaike.

(Mr. M. Haleem Ishak)

Absolutely correct.

(Mr. Anura Badaranaike)

Absolutely correct. There is nothing wrong in that. Of course, we endorse that. It is perfectly correct. We know who got that question planned. It was your Government that planted the question to embarrass the SLFP.

(Mr. Anura Bastian)

It was asked by the "Island" newspaper. That is not our paper.

(Mr. Lakshman Jayakody)

We endorse that hundred per cent.

(Mr. M. Haleem Ishak)

It is only a fool who will expect the Government of India to negotiate with a third party. Sir, how can we give any assurance on behalf of the Government? How can Madam Bandaranaike or the Leader of the Opposition give an assurance on behalf of the Government of Sri Lanka? (Interruption). Definitely, when she comes to power.

(Mr. Anura Bandaranaike)

I would like to remind the hon. Deputy Minister that it was the same Prime Minister of India — not his mother — who called this Government a gutless, spineless, dithering Government just two months ago. You are saying that they are very close to you. He called you all a gutless, dithering Government. That is on record. How can you talk of close relationships?

(Mr. M. Haleem Ishak)

The cold climate there must have made them very close! Sir, this is what the "Island" reports on 24.11.86:

"India has complained to Sri Lanka about Israeli President Chaim Herzog's stopover in Colombo last week, High Commissioner Jyotindra Dixit said today.

"We are concerned about the visit and have expressed our unhappiness to President Junius Jayewardene", Dixit told Reuters without elaborating.

Dixit met Jayewardene last night for talks on New Delhi's peace plan to end the ethnic conflict between majority Sinhalese and minority Tamils on the island.

Sir Lankan and Israeli officials said Herzog's surprise six-hour visit on Thursday at the end of a 19-day tour of Asia and the Pacific was private.

A National Security Ministry spokesman said Herzog met Jayewardene over lunch but denied widespread speculation that the two Presidents had negotiated an arms deal.

It was the first visit to Sri Lanka by an Israeli head of state.

That is what India says. You say that India is very close to you and they endorse everything you do. This is what India says, that they are very concerned about the invitation you extended to the President of Israel. You treated him a VIP, gave the President's Daimler car for his use, brought him to Parliament, took him to the BMICH.

(Mr. Anura Bastian)

What is wrong in that?

(Mr. M. Haleem Ishak)

Then after lunch the Israeli President boarded on the blue and white Boeing 707 at 5.35 p.m. yesterday and left for Tel Aviv. He left with good feelings. What are these feelings? I would like to know what these feelings are. What were the feelings of the President of Israel? Let the Deputy Minister reply to me. He was interrupting me all this while. The newspaper report says:

"He left with good feelings and was very impressed with Sri Lanka, Mr. Devon said."

What was the impression? How was he impressed? What are the assurances you gave them? Did you say that you were agreeable to the opening of an Embassy in this country? Did you say that you were going to get aid from them? Did you say that you were going to get arms from them? Did you assure them of all these things? Are those the reasons why they were impressed with the visit and also with the meeting that the Israeli President had with our President?

(A Member)

Hospitality.

(Mr. M. Haleem Ishak)

Hospitality? The "Sun" newspaper continues to say:

"It was a very useful visit, Mr. Devon said. He said some business of mutual importance was discussed, but did not elaborate"

I would like to know — we are entitled to know and the country is entitled to know — what this useful business was that the President of Israel and His Excellency the President of Sri Lanka discussed. Do you not think that we are entitled as Members of Parliament, and through us the country, to know what this useful business — (Interruption). We are entitled to that. You have been doing this private thinking and private negotiations right along. You have been carrying on regardless. You are not concerned about public opinion. You are not concerned about world opinion. You are not concerned about antagonizing our friends. You are not concerned about our trade. You are not concerned about the economy of this country. You are not concerned about the Muslims although the majority of the Muslims voted for you.

(A Member)

They are with us.

(Mr. Anura Bandaranaike)

That is what you think.

(Mr. M. Haleem Ishak)

The majority of the Muslims voted for you at the last General Election. I say this as a Muslim. What did your President say at the John de Silva Memorial Hall? He said, "If you disagree with me about bringing the Israelis here and opening up an Israeli Interests Section here, you can leave the United National Party." That is what he told the Muslims of this country through the Working Committee of the United National Party. I do not think you have any right to go before the Muslims and tell them —

(A Member)

This is the discipline we have in our party — (Interruption).

(Mr. M. Haleem Ishak)

That is the discipline you have? I think all these years the letters of discipline were in the pocket?

I do not wish to take any more time, Sir, I would like to appeal to the Government, and especially to the Hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs, in the name of God chase these Israelis away. You have antagonized the entire Arab world. They have brought disaster to our country and they will bring about more divisions and rifts amongst the communities in our country — let it be between the Sinhalese and the Muslims or even the Tamils and the Muslims. We have been living in harmony with all the communities. They will create more trouble for us, and our country will be affected very badly.

Thank you, Sir.

(Mr. Lakshman Jayakody)

Mr. Chairman, I am extremely sorry that the Hon. Member for Kaduwela had got the whole concept mixed up. China has nothing to do in this equation, the hon. Member for Gampaha is not on our side. To my mind it is a speech that has been made here without any coherence. Therefore, I do not like to deal with that because I will lose a lot of my time on what I have got to say on the subject itself.

As you are aware, the hon. Leader of the Opposition has quite correctly laid down very strongly the policy of the Sri Lanka Freedom party, namely, that if the Sri Lanka Freedom Party comes to power, within twenty four hours, they will ask the Israel is to leave this country. This, is a pronouncement which would be carried out to the very letter. Prior to the Herzog-Jayawardene discussion, Sir, we were aware that certain discussions did take place between leaders of Israel and some of the leading lights of our government. There was originally General Avido who had discussions with General Attygalle; there was another occasion where Abraham Prims came to the Foreign Office and had discussion here; Mr. Shamir had discussions with Mr. Hameed in New York and he has not yet explained as to why he did it and what transpired at that discussion. And to cap it all, we have now found the

Head of State of Israel meeting the Head of State of Sri Lanka. I do not know why all these things are kept secret this is one question that everyone is baffled about it.

I am made to understand that even the Foreign office perhaps did not know the date, time and the occasion and the place of the discussions between Mr. Herzog and our President. Everything was kept secret. If it was kept a secret for security reasons I can understand, but to my mind it seems that they kept secret all the discussions that took place in this country. The first reaction as a result was this: An angry India. The second reaction was that the Middle East started questioning about the purchase of tea; and the third reaction was that the Middle East was considering whether they were going take our workers or not. Even the question of remittance of money from the Middle East will be questioned and it may come up on a later date. They say that they were having the discussions for the benefit of Sri Lanka and for the benefit of the people of this country.

Let us assume that the war is over. If the war is over, I would like to know what role the Israelis have got to play in this country? Are they here to help us in the war, to give us intelligence, to give us help in all the other activities? What is the role that they have got to play here?

Recently, you will remember, there was a map of the Eastern Province where there is a strong Muslim population. I am made to understand that it is the Israelis who wanted this part of the Eastern Province divided into racist areas called Sinhala, Muslim and Tamil areas. I would like the Hon. Minister to check up on that because it is not going to be racist only, but it is going to be religious provincial councils that are going to be set up. It is not linguistic. So, this is the first time that the idea of religion is going into this whole question. Obviously, because when you divide between —

(Mr. A. C. S. Hameed)

It is not linguistic, but would you support a linguistic division?

(Mr. Lakshman Jayakody)

We will consider everything when we come into power. Not only that when I saw the equation of what you want to say: when it comes to Muslims, it is religious; where Tamils are concerned it is not religious, it can be Hindu, it can be Christian. Where Sinhalese are concerned it is not religious; it can be Catholic, it can be Christian and it can be Buddhist. Therefore, I cannot see the equation of breaking it up. I am made to understand that this is a theory that has been propounded by Israelis, not only in this country but throughout the world.

Sir, you can remember that there was a Jewish Group called "Terror vs. Terror" which was the hit squad against Muslims of the world. They were famous for blowing up Islamic places of worship — (Interruption). Yes, including Palestine refugee camps. Then there was also another group where Israelis used, Al Dawa, which was against the Shi'a Muslim grouping, which was a 100 per cent Shi'a Muslim Organisation. Then there was another group called Amal, the hope group. There was also a group called Hizballa group. In Iraq there was another group which was supported by Israelis called the Iraqi Islamic Revolution opposing Saddam Hussain. Now, there are the Shi'a groups that have been supported by Israel. There are also other Sunni groups that are being supported by Israel to bring about Shia-Sunni conformation. There is also this Thousand Group of the Sunni grouping, where the Islamic Unification Movement is very strongly represented. They are the people who are propagating fundamentalism in all parts of the world.

Looking into the whole problem of division of this country, we are made to understand that this country has been divided into two, in the name of devolutionists and anti-devolutionists. Who are the devolutionists? Who want devolution to be given in this country?

You take India. They want us to devolve power through PLOT, then from PLOT to the Government of Sri Lanka. That is one format of the devolutionists. The other form of devolutionists is there in the country. You get the Western bloc. You get MGR under that. Then you get the whole lot of LTTE, EROS, EPRLF and others. Then you get the CWC. Then you get the ICFTU, the International confederation of Free Trade Unions. They all want to divide this country: first to devolve power and then subsequently to divide.

Sir, there are countries in the world who do not wish us to be divided. China do not want us to be divided. Pakistan, I must say, do not want Sri Lanka to be divided. There are certain non-aligned countries who do not want Sri Lanka to be divided or any devolution to be given. There are African, Third World countries — (Interruption). I am talking of devolution. I have placed India where it should be placed. Therefore, we have to think in terms that once a division takes place, a separation, any format of demarcation, it means that you will never join up again. It has happened to India when they divided and created Pakistan. It happened to Pakistan, to Germany, to Korea, to Cyprus. It will happen to all. The only exemption I can see is Vietnam. Therefore, we must find out whether those who profess this idea of devolution rather than centralization are doing that in a good faith or not — (Interruption). There is a big difference. Sir, we had centralization in this country. I do not want to go through the whole aspect of centralization. We had in our country during the time of our Government a system of centralization. Whatever we wanted to devolve, we devolved through the Local Government Authorities, Municipalities, Urban Councils, Town Councils and Village Councils. Through that set-up, devolve anything what the Tamils want in this country — (Interruption). It is not Provincial Councils. The Cabinet of Ministers must give you authority. That is one format of devolution.

(Mr. A. C. S. Hameed)

The Provincial Councils are also local authorities.

(Mr. Lakshman Jayakody)

They are not. This is the point, Sir. What we say is that the day you give the Provincial Councils, it will be the first step for the break-up of this country. This is the difference. Already you gave the District Development Councils and that became the first step for fighting in his country. What happened at the DDC elections?

(Mr. A. C. S. Hameed)

You contested the elections.

(Mr. Lakshman Jayakody)

We did not contest because we knew that the first step would be the fight. We knew that if we participated there would be a problem there.

(Mr. A. C. S. Hameed)

Two candidates were late for the nominations.

(Mr. Lakshman Jayakody)

We withdrew everyone, Sir. Our position was very clear. Ultimately, what happened in Jaffna, in the North? It is a no-go area now. No one can go to that place. The same thing will happen in the Eastern Province. I know it is going to happen very soon. The idea of unification is only lip service. It is only a word. This idea of a united Sri Lanka or a unitary Sri Lanka will be confined only to the Constitution. In operation it will never happen. Therefore I feel that one has to be extra careful whether we are going to have in this country wars by proxy. That is what I feel. There will be the Tamil sector, the Sinhalese sector and the Muslim sector. Once divided, the Tamil sector will be supported perhaps by Singapore, Britain, South India, Mauritius, Fiji and so on. Then the Muslim sector may be supported by Iran, Libiya, Nigeria, Syria Iraq—

(The Deputy Chairman of Committees)

Order, please! The Sitting is suspended till 1.30 p.m.

Sitting accordingly suspended till 1.30 p.m. and then resumed. MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER (MR. NORMAN WAIDYARATNE) in the Chair.

D. E. W. Gunasekera (Kalawana)

Then, Sir, coming to the specific question that surfaced in the course of the Debate, on behalf of the Communist Party of Sri Lanka and also on behalf of the entire left movement, I must express—*(Interruption)*. The entire left movement including the SLMP, the LSSP and all other left forces. I must say that we strongly condemn the attitude the Government has taken in regard to Israel. A number of Hon. Members from the Government side tried to make out that our country had relations with Israel in the 1960s. But, Sir, I wish to point out that hon. Members have forgotten the fact that there had been three wars as far as Israel was concerned in the years 1963–64, 1967–68 and 1973–74. The Middle East question came to a crisis, a climax, after the 1967 war, and as a result most of the countries — not only our country but practically all the socialist countries, the entire Third World countries and the entire Non-Aligned countries — broke relations with Israel — *(Interruption)*. In due course I will answer that. I knew that you would take it up. The Soviet Union does not have any diplomatic relations with Israel.

(A Member)

All right, have the discussions.

(Mr. Dew Gunasekara)

Have discussions for what? This is the question.—*(Interruption)*. Today the Middle East question cannot be solved without the participation of the United States and the USSR. The two countries will have to be there. Therefore, for that purpose, to satisfy the requirement of the Palestinian people, certain negotiative processes have to take place. To that extent they take part. In fact the Soviet Union, I will remind the hon. Member, recognized Israel as early as 1948, and they said the right of existence for Israel should be given. That was as 1948 — *(Interruption)*. That is another question. You will have to accept the realities that exist now. The entire Third World, the Non-Aligned Movement, all the countries are against Israel because you cannot forget the fact that the Palestinian

people for the last 40 odd years are without a home. The Hon. Minister of foreign Affairs knows that better than anyone else. Their present generation is a generation of refugees. Therefore, it is our duty not only to look after our own domestic policies. It is our national duty to see that those who have been living in refugee camps for the last 40 odd years have their homes restored. That is why that principled position in foreign policy was taken by the United Front Government as early as early as 1970, and that is a correct position. And that position has been vindicated even now, and you have taken a complete 180 degrees right turn.—*(Interruption)*.

(Mr. Deputy Speaker)

Order, please! Without interrupting him, allow him to wind up.

(A Member)

There are Israeli refugees also.

(Mr. Dew Gunasekara)

If you do not know the history, learn it from my speech.—*(Interruption)*. The other question is worse than the Israel question. I think I must correct even the Leader of the Opposition. Even the United States of America, France, and I think the entire Common Weath voted for the Resolution, and Sri Lanka, Belize and Oman are the three countries which backed the Thatcher Government on this question just two days back. It is a disgrace and insult to humanity. It is an insult to civilization, an insult to the Sri Lanka people who have been espousing—*(Interruption)*. When we fight, on the one hand, for the self-determination of the backward people in Latin America, in Africa, on the Asian continent, when we want to fight for them and help them and extend out solidarity for self-determination, here we join the imperialist powers. It is an insult, it is a shame and it is a disgrace that we should have joined the Thatcher Government against Argentina which belongs to the group of six fighting, one of the formidable members of the Non-aligned Movement which overthrew three dictators at once. Some time back all back Colonels of the military

dictatorship were overthrown by the democratic people there and today democracy is thriving and it is springing up in the Argentina soil. And when such a country, is trying to take back the Falklands which had been taken by force by the British imperialist, our Government had the audacity to go and join these blood-thirsty imperialists and support the Thatcher Government as against the Third World Argentina government. It is an insult, it is a disgrace, and you will have to accept it that it is a disgrace and an insult.

(Mr. Deputy Speaker)

Order, please! How much more time will you need?

(A Member)

Communist people, are they not blood-thirsty?

(Mr. Dew Gunasekara)

Finally I must say that even a British imperialist writer comments that he saw a big diplomatic victory for Argentina over Britain. 116 countries voted for the Resolution and there were 34 abstentions. Today I think Sri Lanka's role, it's despicable role, will have to be vehemently condemned on the Floor of this House. Sir, I wind up with that.

(Mr. A. C. S. Hameed — Minister of Foreign Affairs)

Mr. Deputy Chairman, first of all I wish to thank all hon. Members who participated in this Debate. In fact, I agree to the Hon. District Minister for Galle being given more time in the hope that the hon. Leader of the Opposition would by then be here. I am happy to see him here because since he opened the Debate and presented his case with his usual charm, I thought it would be good if he was here to listen to me.

On the Debate itself, I was wondering how the Debate would have gone if not for two developments. Both developments took place this week. One was the visit of the Israeli President to Sri Lanka on the 20th of this month, and the other was the vote on the Falklands which took place on the 26th of this month. Really, within a week these two

developments took place. If not for these two developments, I was wondering what the Debate would have been like because the Debate has concentrated on these two specific issues, one, the visit of the Israeli President and the other the vote on the Falklands. Except for the hon. Member for Matugama (Mr. Anil Moonesinghe) who touched marginally on the question of publicity, these were the two issues. If these two events had not taken place there would hardly have been a debate.

(Mr. Lakshman Jayakody)

There would not have been even a cut.

(Mr. A. C. S. Hameed)

There would have hardly been a debate because these things did not take place I cannot see how the Debate would have developed.

The hon. Leader of the Opposition made sweeping statement. He said that there has been an about-turn in the foreign policy of this country. I say it is a sweeping statement because to assess and pass judgment or a verdict on whether there has been an about-turn in the foreign policy of this country you have to look at our track record for the last ten years. You have to look at the bilateral relation; you have to look at the voting pattern of the government in the United Nations, at the Non-Aligned Meetings and in various other international forums, and it is only then that you can come to a decision or assessment and say whether there has been an about-turn in the foreign policy of a country.

The Hon. Leader of the Opposition certainly spoke with conviction — I respect his conviction. But at the same time he spoke with an eye to the next election. He was conscious of the fact that there is a substantial Muslim voting population in this country and that they have predominantly, or I think a majority of them have been voting for the government. So, I think, the very shrewd, calculating, far thinking politician he is, he had his eye on the next election, perhaps, within the next two years. I do not

in any way under-estimate his strategy; he was like a sportsman, who knows that it is not correct or appropriate to have a direct shot at his target on a windy day. So he timed it, looked two years ahead two years. He thought: "Suppose I shoot straight on a windy day the animal will not be there because of the wind." Therefore, he took it two years' time and then he placed his strategy.

Now, Sir, diplomatic relations with Israel were established in I think, 1956 and since then there had been, I remember a visit of an Israeli Prime Minister in 1956-57. And I remember his being taken around by the late Mr. C. P. de Silva. Anyway, after the war in 1967, when the Sri Lanka Freedom Party won the elections in 1970 they suspended diplomatic relations with Israel. The Sri Lanka Freedom Party did not sever diplomatic ties. This is a very important thing to the rest of the argument in trying to understand the position of the government. The SLFP government of 1970, Mrs. Bandaranaike's government, did not sever diplomatic ties: it only suspended them. It only suspended diplomatic ties! It was not a complete lack of contact. In fact from 1970 to 1977 during the SLFP time, there were contacts between Sri Lanka and Israel. There was trade between the two private sectors. Israelis came to this country as tourists; Israelis came here in fact in 1976 for an international consensus on tourism. So what happened in 1970 was a suspension of diplomatic ties between Sri Lanka and Israel. Now what happened was that we had the President of Israel coming to Sri Lanka. If we had diplomatic ties and if we had a Head of State visiting us then there are certain formalities that we had to follow. We have the arrival ceremony, guard of honour, the departure ceremony and issue of a communique at the end of the visit. All what we did was this. Here is the President of a country who is passing through Sri Lanka and he wants to come here. Let us forget the technical staff.

Let us say he wants to come here and we could not say no because we have only suspended diplomatic ties and then he came. The common courtesy is that a Minister meets him. He had an unofficial lunch with His Excellency the President. It was not a banquet as such. Then he goes off and there is no communique. Now, the point that I want to make is, if diplomatic ties were severed in 1970 and if we had agreed to the visit of the Israeli President even on a low key note, then you could have said that it is wrong. Then the contention of the speech of the Hon. Leader of the Opposition would have been relevant and appropriate and correct. But we had not severed diplomatic ties. We had only suspended the diplomatic ties. Then the hon. Leader of the Opposition read from the "Sun" paper and the "Island", the comments given. They had quoted some official from the Israeli Interest Section. That is not a Government Communique. People are free to say whether they are satisfied or not satisfied, they are happy or unhappy. They could say all that, but the point is that when he left there was on Government Communique. We were quite conscious of the fact at what level this visit should be placed, what limitation should apply to this visit. We were quite conscious of all that. So, that is how this visit took place.

Now, Sir, the argument went very much further. He said that this is an about-turn in our policy and this about-turn policy was the basis of the two arguments. One was the visit of the President of Israel and the other was the vote on the Falklands issue. When the Israel President came here I said that we treated it on the footing that it is not a State visit. We were asked, "You met the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Israel. What did he talk?"

Now, Sir, I want to remind the House that there are many things that are happening in the world today. Diplomacy and approach to diplomacy is something that keeps changing and fits into the time it is being practised. Lots of people are talking today, many countries

are talking to one another, countries who are not friends, countries who have opposing views, countries who are at a confrontationist level, they are talking, may not be openly, they are talking secretly. There are many countries helping in this process to see whether issues can be solved. Say, for example, a place like Morocco, King Hassan received the last Prime Minister Shimon Peres. They have no diplomatic ties. Or take President Mubarak. He continues to talk. They have established diplomatic ties. The Soviet Union is talking to Israel. I know about what they are talking too. I do not want to say it on the Floor of this House. Therefore you cannot say that the Soviet Union or Morocco or Egypt—these are important Arab countries—have sold the Palestinian cause down the river Nile. You cannot say that—(Interruption). But that is a different matter. But in your own speeches a lot of complimentary adjectives were used regarding Egypt. Let us not talk of individual countries. But the fact remains that people are talking. The Soviet Union has, and the Socialist countries have registered their solidarity to the Palestinian cause. Now, Sir, what I want to say is we have not thrown overboard our commitment to the Arab cause. Our commitment to the cause of the Palestinian people remains unchanged. The crux of the question is, is Sri Lanka going to re-establish diplomatic ties with Israel? And I say that Sri Lanka is not going to re-establish diplomatic ties with Israel. If we had re-established diplomatic ties with Israel, I would say again that all what the Leader of the Opposition said this morning is correct, apt and precise. But we have not established diplomatic ties. Over and over again, since the establishment of the Israel Interests section, there have been a number of occasions when I had to speak at various international forums and we have reiterated our support, our commitment to the Palestinian people. Therefore, people cannot have one yardstick for Moscow and one yardstick for Sri Lanka. The same yardstick that applies for Moscow also applies

to Sri Lanka. It is true that these are certain inner compulsions to talk to Israel, and we do that. But this does not mean that our position towards the Palestinian cause has changed. Let me assure you, Sir, that nobody in this country can claim to have the sole monopoly in solidarizing with the cause of the Palestinian people. I know the Sri Lanka Freedom Party's commitment and so are we committed.

(Mr. Anura Bandaranaike)

How come that you were isolated from the rest of the world?

(Mr. A. C. S. Hameed)

No, no, that is a decision we have to take. We have stood for the application of the principle of self-determination in the context of decolonization and this year if we abstained then you would have asked, why did you vote last year? There was an amendment last year but this year there was no amendment. If there was an amendment this year we could have supported the amendment and abstained on the resolution. So it was absolutely logical.

Now you say our decision is prompted by various other actions. You said it was because of Maduru-Oya, it was because of Victoria and you are trying to get something. Look, national considerations too are also important. This whole morning—(Mr. Anura Bandaranaike)

I do not want to interrupt you because you are extremely courteous to me but there is one question which I fail to understand. It is the position of the Sri Lanka Government that you are for self-determination for the people of Falklands Island?

(Mr. A. C. S. Hameed)

Yes. Not only for them, in the context of de-colonization.

(Mr. Anura Bandaranaike)

So if somebody passed a resolution that the Tamils in the North should have the right to self-determination, then you are entitled to support that as well?

(Mr. A. C. S. Hameed)

But I said, "in the context of de-colonization."

(Mr. Anura Bandaranaike)

How are you going to differentiate that?

(Mr. A. C. S. Hameed)

No, because it is on the same principle that we supported Zimbabwe, it is on the same principle that we support Namibia today, it is the same principle we apply in supporting the Palestinian people. Because of the same principle we support the people in New Caledonia. It is nothing new.

(Mr. Lakshman Jayakody)

This is for small people but not for the big people.

(Mr. A. C. S. Hameed)

It is the application of a principle that we feel we should stand by. Now your argument is right, because you say this decision was taken because of national considerations. The Leader of the Opposition this morning maintained over and over that a country has no permanent friends but only permanent interests. Now look at what happened during your time. Take one or two examples.

Now let us take 1975. East Timor—what happened? In the Committee in November you voted for the Resolution. The Hon. Prime Minister then, Mrs. Bandaranaike, your distinguished mother, was going to Indonesia in January. Having voted for in Committee in the United Nations in November, in December you abstained. You say we took one year to adjust. You adjusted within a month!—(Interruption). I do not blame you for that. There are certain situations that develop and the Government must be flexible in the application of its foreign policy. I do not blame you for that.

Now take what happened in 1956, when there was the Soviet intervention in Hungary. A Committee was appointed by the International Commission of jurists and Sri Lanka was one of the members. The report came out and the report was absolutely critical of the Soviet Union. In 1956 in November the then distinguished Prime Minister of this country, Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike, your distinguished father, went to the United Nations; and what happened in the vote?

Aquino signs truce

Keith B. Richburg

(Washington Post)

FOREIGN
NEWS

MANILA

President Corazon C. Aquino's government signed a truce agreement with Communist insurgents Thursday.

Government negotiators and representatives of the Communist Party of the Philippines and its military wing, the New People's Army, appeared together in public for the first time to sign two separate documents covering immunity guarantees for the rebel negotiators and outlining details of the 60-day cease-fire.

The cease-fire in the 17-year guerrilla war is set to begin Dec. 10 and last through Feb. 2, the scheduled date of the plebiscite on a Philippine constitution. It may be extended after that if both sides agree.

After the signing, Agriculture Minister Ramon Mitra, who led



A triumphant Satur Ocampo with President Aquino's negotiator Ramon Mitra, Agriculture Minister.

the government team, exchanged hugs with Saturnino Ocampo, the chief spokesman for the outlawed Communist Party.

"Our mutual hope, as we sign this document, is that both sides can make it work and that it will lead to a concrete and lasting peace," said Mr. Mitra.

"It gives our people a respite from the fratricidal war that has gone on for 17 years," he said. "It builds up the beginning of mutual trust between the opposing sides, and gives them the chance of talking, instead of fighting."

Mr. Ocampo called the truce a first step toward "peace based on justice, freedom and democracy."

Mr. Mitra said Mrs. Aquino entered into the cease-fire talks "at no little political cost to her."

Her policy of pursuing a ceasefire and peace talks to end the insurgency had seemed imperiled by continuing rebel ambushes, skepticism from U. S. officials in Washington and criticisms from within her own restive military.

Mrs. Aquino did not attend the signing ceremony. In a statement later Mrs. Aquino said, "Our final aim is a lasting and honorable

When the L. G. was ahead of the news

Dismembering Peradeniya — Sri Kotha's Secret War

Next Round in Phillipines — Interview with Satur Ocampo

The titles above are from the cover of the March 1st issue of the **Lanka Guardian** which published an exclusive interview with the Filipino journalist Satur Ocampo. It was the first interview given by this prominent pre-Martial Law journalist after his escape from jail. He had been under detention for 9 years. He was allowed to attend the annual conference of the Philippines Journalist Association held at the National Press Club on May 5 1985. The interviewer was a free-lance American photo-journalist Charles Steiner who contacted him in a small provincial town many miles from Manila in late Nov. 1985.

peace wherein a nation united and free can work for its progress."

The cease-fire accord has been widely viewed as a major political victory for Mrs. Aquino.

While both sides hailed the peace accord as a major victory, the enthusiasm was muted by the knowledge that the next phase of the talks — the substantive negotiations to find a peaceful end to the guerrilla war — would be far more difficult.

Under the terms of the truce, the talks will begin within 30 days.

"I have no doubt that the succeeding phase of the negotiations will be even more difficult," Mr. Mitra said, "but on substantive issues, we might have some common ground."

Mr. Ocampo agreed the later talks "will be more difficult" but added that he was optimistic.

Both sides enter the ensuing peace talks with opposing positions that at this early stage seem

virtually irreconcilable. The Communists are expected to want at least some share of government power as the price for laying down their arms, something Mrs. Aquino has categorically ruled out.

The Communists are also expected to press their longstanding demand for the dismantling of the American military bases, a concession the Aquino government is unlikely to make.

Mr. Ocampo had said previously that the rebels would demand as part of a cease-fire that the government grant Communist forces territorial control of certain areas of the country.

But the truce agreement skirted over that and other sticking points, indicating that the rebel side has made significant concessions over the last several weeks in order to gain a truce.

For example, the five-page truce agreement makes no mention of a previous rebel demand that the military dismantle "notorious"

units of the paramilitary Civilian Home Defense Force. The army has relied on those units, which are basically armed civilian militias, to bolster troop strength in key villages. But the largely untrained troops have also been widely cited for abusing human rights.

The truce document says that during the period of a cease-fire, the army shall "disarm and punish abusive members and units in the field, including abusive CHDF." In return, according to the truce document, the Communists agree to disarm and punish their abusive members and units.

The military is also allowed to continue its patrols in areas under nominal "control" of the communist guerrillas.

The pact calls for the establishment of a five-member National Cease-Fire Committee to monitor the truce and investigate complaints of violations by either side. That panel will also set up local or regional cease-fire committees in areas of heavy fighting.

Polls Commissioner's . . .

(Continued from page 9)

In the words of the Elections Commissioner, "one of the issues which created a continuous furor was the liberal display of Referendum symbols in gross violation of Section 50 (1) of the Referendum Act." He calls this a "very unpleasant" feature at the Referendum. To permit them to continue the display, he says, "was an affront to the law".

Unclean Hands

"Apprehension of persons responsible for the displaying of symbols was few. Why were detections difficult? The display of symbols was illegal. Everyone admitted it. Law enforcement authorities could have simply removed them and if anyone objected it was not difficult to have resisted such objections and even prosecuted them, because those with unclean hands have no justice to seek. In fact the Commissioner advised the police to do so. Question remains as to why this

simple course of action was not taken."

Crude Consistency

Law abiding citizens, says the Commissioner, are baffled by the fact that after nearly twenty two years of compliance within the framework of the law it came to be violated with such "crude consistency."

The law abiding citizen "may see it as a callous disregard of the law. It is bad enough. But does he also see it as a calculated disregard to observe the law on the part of wrong doers convinced that the authorities would not take action."

"...The proposal to extend the life of Parliament was made by the Government. Does he see it as an instance when the law enforcement authorities, who knew the stand of the Government on this issue, entertained any fear that they would be misunderstood as individual officers and therefore refrained from taking action to remove the Symbols?"

Blatant Violation

"The blame", says the Commissioner, "has to be borne by those who blatantly violated it in an induced climate of the near inaction on the part of the law enforcement authorities. . . The wrong doer has to be condemned for the wrong done".

Commissioner de Silva records the allegations that Polling Observers who managed to reach the polling stations found it imprudent to stay. He says: "All the precautions taken prior to a poll can be negated, if within the crucial nine hour period of the poll the freedom of the voter is qualified or denied.

"Allegations were made that certain Polling Observers were not either able to reach their polling stations in time, or having arrived at their polling stations discovered after some time that it was not prudent to continue to stay"

To the extent that grievances remain without effective redress,

(Continued on Page 28)

Jaffna's War-time Economy

Paul Seabright

Until recently the labour surplus has been due entirely to a fall in demand, but in flows of refugees from Vavuniya and the Eastern province in recent months (unlike the post-1983 influx which consisted primarily of those engaged in urban occupations) may add to labour supply unless resettlement is possible at an early date. It is symptomatic of the pervasiveness of economic disruption in conditions of physical insecurity that while only two members of the RLU are reported to have been killed by the security forces, the remainder of the membership has seen its real earnings so heavily reduced. While there may be some exaggeration in the figures reported to me, their general level is certainly not implausible in the light of what is known about the decline in cultivation area. In the face of these changes farmers and labourers have few resources to fall back upon. New bank credit has effectively ceased in Jaffna, and banks have ceased making cash payments (due to the high incidence of bank robberies in 1983 and 1984). Informal credit markets do not appear to have compensated for this: despite a rise in reported 'normal' interest rates from 3 per cent per month to 5 per cent per month, amounts of credit advanced are said to have declined⁵². This is of course an impressionistic judgment, but it accords with what one might expect given the diminished availability of cash and the unpredictability of the borrower risks involved. If accurate, such a finding contrasts with the common tendency of informal credit markets to increase the volume of credit at lean times of the agricultural year, a discrepancy that prompts the following hypothesis about the discontinuity between 'normal' and 'abnormal' conditions: (a) in 'normal' time when borrower risk is relatively well known to the lender, credit volume is demand-determined along a rising supply curve, with higher demand raising both volume and interest rates

(the latter typically in spite of lower opportunity cost to the lender in the lean season, and due no doubt to a monopoly position as well as to some increase in default risk); (b) in 'abnormal' times when risk to borrowers and lenders are either unusually high or unpredictable or both, higher demand in the informal sector leads to higher interest rates⁵³, but the supply curve bends backwards and credit rationing ensues. In the latter cases the normal informational advantages possessed by informal over formal sector lenders tend to disappear. More mundanely, it may also be true that in conditions of insecurity, private moneylending, as an activity combining high visibility with often low popular good will, is no longer so attractive to potential lenders. I have no estimates of the incidence of land mortgage or distress sale, but anecdotal information suggests the land market to be very stagnant⁵⁴. Land can function as a security in distress only when adverse circumstances strike the economy unevenly leaving certain groups in a position to demand the land that others need to sell; in conditions such as those in Jaffna where the agricultural economy has suffered very widespread stress, land is of little use. The cases of distress land transfer reported to me concern mortgage contracts made in the past, of which the repayment conditions have become suddenly burdensome due to recent circumstances, such as a family's loss of breadwinner. Concerning livestock how ever, the rise in price of mutton and chicken (both mainly local products) suggests that increased domestic consumption and sale in 1984 (motivated both by family needs and by the shortage of fodder and grain for consumption) may have resulted in a reduction in current stock. When economic distress is widely enough diffused (and economic risks sufficiently closely correlated), assets that can be costlessly consumed are more useful than those that

have to be transferred or that yield consumption benefits only at cost.

(To be continued)

Notes

52 *ibid.*

53 Known locally as the "meter" rate of interest — it keeps on rising.

54 *as corrected.*

Polls Commissioner's . . .

(Continued from page 27)

says the Commissioner, "the establishment is exposed to criticism".

In Remand

In addition to the violations of the law and the climate of fear, the Commissioner of Elections also records the fact that the Secretary of a recognised political party was held in remand during the conduct of the Referendum.

A State of Emergency was also continued during the conduct of the poll.

Among the Commissioner's other observations are these:

"However divergent the interpretations could be yet it becomes rather difficult in these circumstances to deny the allegation that the failure to maintain the expended levels of law and order in general, and more specifically on the day of the poll, partly at least would have been the reason for the failure of some Polling Observers to assert their rights and be present at the Polling stations".

"In fact the very right to vote is at times claimed to have been affected by threats, intimidation, forcible taking away of polling cards etc, outside the purview of polling stations A disenchantment with the very process of election can develop because the elector may experience a gap in the right to vote and its effective exercise.

TRENDS

(Continued from page 1)

aspirants with time, money and energy spent on the post-J.R. 'succession stakes'? No. The Committee consisting of a former Permanent Secretary, and a former Director of the Film Corporation will report on 'tender procedures, and contracts connected with the construction of an aerial mast, a transport yard and a boundary wall, and many other allied activities of Sri Lanka's "Great Communicator": This is the Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation... and that is the News....



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