

Forward

THE VIEW FROM THE LEFT

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We Say.....

Water & Light

Apart from the dubious distinction of having elevated the export of housemaids and babies to the position of our second foreign exchange earner after tea, the present UNP government will go down in history as having raised the cost of human basics such as food, clothing, houses, transport and medicines to the highest point known in this century.

Not content with this, it is now trying to make the people also pay through the nose for water and lights.

The installation of water meters has started in various towns, despite the protest of their residents that they are being asked to pay for the same water TWICE—once as part of the consolidated rate and again as a special water tax on the meter reading.

The main need of supplying townfolk with a continuous and pure supply of water for domestic use has been forgotten in the rush to squeeze the consumers dry!

This government also bears a direct responsibility for the fact that the cost of electricity to domestic users is the highest in the region. The all-island grid and rural electrification have made electricity the main source of light and heat in a large number of homes throughout the country. Its further use has been encouraged by the government allowing the import of a vast new range of electrical appliances under its "open economy"

Yet little or nothing has been done to expand the production of hydro-power to keep up with the growing demand. The Samanawewa scheme, which could have helped to fill the gap, was jettisoned in favour of an "accelerated" Mahaveli scheme that limps fitfully along. As a result, expensive new stop-gap, oil-burning power stations have had to be installed.

Government's plea that the rising costs of oil imports have compelled it to put up electricity prices is only half the story. For one of the main reasons for the high unit rate and the penal 110 per cent "fuel adjustment" surcharge is the government's desire to screw as much money as it can out of the consumer in order to repay the loan from World Bank in time.

A public outcry, in which UNP supporters also joined, has just compelled the President to postpone the announced further increase in the surcharge from 110 to 185 per cent from June 1. The official reasons given for this last-minute retreat—namely, that consumption has started to decline—shows how artificial and cynical was the decision to up the surcharge still further.

Opposition to the installation of water meters has compelled the government to go slow in this matter, too. As in the case of the electricity surcharge, its temporary postponement is clearly due to political cold feet and pre-election jitters. But, as the example of the Trinco oil tank farm and the White Paper on Education show, government's retreats on such matters are usually merely tactical and they start again as soon as the agitation dies down.

The fight for cheap water and power must therefore be added to the many other struggles of the people to prevent the government from passing on to them the costs of its folly.



Absurd

It is absurd for the government to think it has solved the problem of A. Vimalarajah, the Jaffna campus student it has kept in Army custody for over a year, by allowing him to study and sit for his exam while behind bars.

How can any young person be expected to study under such conditions?

We fully support the demand of his fellow students throughout Sri Lanka that Vimalarajah should be either charged-or released immediately.

C.P.S.L: Act Now to Get Fair Polls

An appeal for united action by all non-government political parties to ensure that the forthcoming general and Presidential elections are free and fair has been issued by the Communist Party of Sri Lanka.

The text of the appeal, issued to the press by the CPSL's General Secretary, K. P. Silva, reads as follows:

"The need for joint action by all non-government parties to ensure that the coming general and Presidential elections are free and fair has become imperative.

"A series of actions by the government indicate that it has already begun to abuse its powers in order to rig these elections in favour of the UNP.

"Attempts have already been made to interfere with the independence of the office of the Commissioner of Elections. Political opponents have been deprived of their civic

rights by majority vote in Parliament. A so-called "cut-off point", the highest in the world, has been introduced into the electoral process in order to discriminate against smaller political parties and some minorities.

"The setting up of a so-called "Home Guard", most of whose members will be nominees of UNP MPs, is another cause for concern.

"The bitter experiences of the gross misuse of official power at the DDC elections in Jaffna last year has also

naturally aroused anxiety lest such anti-democratic practices are repeated.

APPEAL

"The Communist Party of Sri Lanka, therefore, appeals to all non-government political parties to act and campaign unitedly to ensure that the coming elections are free and fair. It suggests that such united action should be conducted on demands such as:

(1) Government interference in the office of the Commissioner of Elections should stop. A committee of representatives of all recognised political parties should be set up to satisfy itself that all arrangements made for the conduct of these elections are without partisan bias.

(2) The cut-off point should be abolished.

(3) All persons deprived of their civic rights other than by a competent court should have these rights restored. The announced legislation to impose even further penalties on such persons should not be proceeded with.

(4) All recognised political parties should be ensured opportunities to explain their policies and programmes in the mass media owned or controlled by the state.

(5) The "Home Guard" scheme should not be implemented until the elections are over.

"It should be open to all non-government parties to suggest any other matters that they consider should be jointly urged.

"Whatever their symbol, programme, alliance or political stance, it is in the interest of all non-government parties to see that the coming elections are free and fair. This common interest in no way contradicts or limits their independence or choice of action in other matters.

"Our party therefore sincerely hopes that all other non-government parties will seriously consider and respond positively to this appeal".

INDIA'S MINI-POLLS SHOW NEW TRENDS

Preliminary analysis of the results of India's May 19 general elections to four state Assemblies and by-elections to seven Lok Sabha and 10 Assembly seats elsewhere show trends that are now being widely discussed.

The most important is the decline in the influence of the Congress(I) and the personal standing of its leader, Mrs. Indira Gandhi.

In elections where over 65 per cent of the electors voted, Congress(I) won only one-fourth of the 592 Assembly seats in the four states.

Although Mrs. Gandhi personally led her party's campaign in all four states and made the mini-election a vote of confidence in her leadership, and although acclaim for her foreign policy was widespread, her personal popularity, authority and charisma were unable to swing the votes the way she wanted, as happened in 1980.

What was significant was that, unlike in 1977, the anti-Congress(I) swing took place this time without mass resentment at the excesses of a state of emergency and of Sanjiv Gandhi being uppermost in voters' minds.

As a commentator in the PATRIOT put it: "Charisma

works in politics only if supplemented by performance and good government". These were clearly missing.

In WEST BENGAL, Congress(I) was badly defeated by the Left Democratic Front based on the two communist parties. The LDC has formed a government for the second time.

In KERALA, although the Congress(I) was able to win a narrow majority over the LDF as a result of an alliance with 9 communal and caste-based parties, many of these victories were by slender majorities of 1,500 votes or less. Congress(I) itself won much less seats than the two CPs combined. The new Kerala government is unstable and unlikely to last long.

In Haryana and Himachal Pradesh, where the Left is still relatively weak, the Congress(I) emerged almost equal with the rich-peasant LOK DAL and the racist B. J. P.

Misusing its powers, the Congress (I) nevertheless got the Governor of Haryana to invite it to form a government even though it did not command a clear majority.

A heartening feature of the mini-election was the good beating that the communalist B. J. P. received in West Bengal, Kerala and Haryana.

RACISM IN ANTI-U.N.P. GUISE

Although blacked out by the state-owned mass media, the motorcade staged by the "SINHALA BALAMANDALAYA" on March 22, "National Heroes Day", the receptions it received en route, and the large meetings it conducted at Anuradhapura and Kandy have been closely followed in political circles.

The movement that the Balamandalaya has initiated under the slogan of "Save the Sinhala Race" has attracted diverse personalities and trends.

There are well-known Buddhist monks like Madihe Pannaseeha Thera and Maduluwewa Sobitha Thera, prominent public personalities like Mr. Siri Perera Q.C. and Professor T. B. Kanagahaarachchi, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Sri Jayawardhanapura, and a large number of Buddhist clergy and laymen who are genuinely disturbed and angered at the crude permissiveness and blatant consumerism fostered by the UNP government and its "open economy".

But there is also a hard core of racists and communalists, some of whom have their roots in the early BJP of Mettananda and Rajaratne. These forces are more and more taking the upper hand in the movement, and seeking to develop it along anti-Tamil and openly racist lines.

These reactionary forces are strengthened by the support given to the movement by several mudalalis and businessmen, by the open support

of the Upali newspapers, and the barely disguised support of the Gunasena press.

DISTURBED

There are signs that the UNP government, and especially President Jayawardene, are more than somewhat disturbed by this movement, especially as several of its prominent figures were supporters of the UNP in the past.

The governmental orders to blackout the movement from the radio, TV and state-owned newspapers have been followed by a sudden enthusiasm by President Jayawardene and his Ministers to have their presence at Buddhist functions given maximum publicity, and by a number of speeches and articles by them on Buddhist themes.

The President's speech at Grandpass last week also showed that he is wary of where this movement will lead.

The CID has also been instructed to keep close tabs on movement, especially as to whether it has any connection with the SLFP (S), the Senanayake family, or open and concealed dissidents with in the UNP itself.

In this connection, a special look-out is being kept on any connections of the movement with ex-MP Dr. Neville Fernando, the "Mathew" faction, or certain Premadasa loyalists.

BACKLASH

President Jayawardene is understandably upset at the re-appearance of such a racist movement—especially in "election year".

Particularly, when it is precisely the UNP that has, in the past, mostly initiated and used such movements for its own advantage.

In this connection, President Jayawardene's notorious "March to Kandy" against the Bandaranaike-Chelvanayagam agreement of the mid-1950s is still remembered.

In recent times, the UNP's dominance in such movements has been somewhat eroded. They no longer have Sir Cyril de Zoysa, through whom they exercised a tight rein on the capitalism-oriented "Buddhist" movements and

ensured that these movements did not go beyond the limits that suited the UNP's political needs.

Even the attempt to build Mr. Cyril Mathew as a replacement has founded. The hard core of the movement has realised that, when it came to the crunch, Mr. Mathew is ready to tone down his open racism if the political interests of the UNP demanded this.

In a way, the UNP is itself responsible for the re-emergence of such a movement at the current time. For it is a backlash against the "closed door" negotiations that the UNP High Command is currently conducting with the TULF leaders.

When the UNP leaders abandon their 1977 election promise to convene an All-

Parties Conference on minority rights and, instead, indulge in secret bilateral negotiations with the TULF, which openly demands separation, they can hardly be surprised that suspicions are aroused.

INHIBITED

Leaders of the main capitalist parties among the Sinhalese people (namely, the UNP and the SLFP) have, in the past, not been reluctant to sponsor and use racist movements to their political advantage.

But the new electoral process (especially when it

when 74 per cent of the population follow that religion.?

Another major demand of the movement is that employment in the public sector and access to higher education should be on the basis of racial quotas—with admissions being reserved by law for different communities according to their percentage of the total population.

Equally, the Tamils are more and more being shown by spokesmen of the movement as the 'main impediment' to the progress of the Sinhalese.

CAUTION

Progressive forces among the Sinhalese should be cautious and vigilant lest they are misled by the seemingly anti-UNP image that some sections of the movement seek to project.

They should never forget the lessons of history which have shown that such racist movements tend to divide and disorient progressive movements and often lead to communal riots, which the ruling class uses to impose even more draconian restrictions on the working class and the democratic forces.

Those who think that these movements can be used to come into power and then discarded should never forget what happened to the late S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike, who was destroyed by the very forces he hoped to manipulate in order to defeat the UNP.

It is also becoming clear that forces in the UNP associated with President Jayawardene are already working within the movement to direct it towards the realisation of his long-cherished aim of a "National" (i.e. united capitalist) government in the event that the negotiations with the TULF leaders are aborted.

An indication of this is given in the ISLAND's report (24/5) of Mr. Siri Perera's remark while addressing the rally at Anuradhapura that: "If the Sinhalese united, it was possible to form a Sinhala government..." For "Sinhala" read "National".

Left and democratic forces should, therefore, always keep in mind that racism is no ally or instrument of their cause, even though it may sometimes seem to adopt an anti-UNP guise for the time being.

PRAVDA'S CALL TO NORMALISE SINO-SOVIET RELATIONS

Pursuing its policy of all-round detente, the Soviet Union, through an authoritative article in PRAVDA by its high-placed official commentator 'I. ALEXANDROV', has once again called for improvement of relations with China "without any preliminary conditions" and "without any detriment to third countries".

Importance is attached by international political commentators to this article as it comes at a time when a prominent emissary from Moscow, the eminent Sinologist KAPITSA, is visiting BEIJING and when Soviet trade and sports delegations are in China.

The article elaborates on the section of the speech made by

LEONID BREZHNEV at Tashkent on March 24 in which he called for the normalisation and improvement of Sino-Soviet relations, saying that the USSR "never considered the state of hostility and alienation between our two countries to be a normal phenomenon."

It states that a "real possibility" now exists to improve bilateral ties and says that it would contradict the interests of both peoples and the world if this opportunity is missed or deliberately by-passed.

Assuring China that the Soviet position is based on principle and not on an opportunist attempt to cash in on current difficulties between China and the United States, the article reminds China that

the imperialists "have never been, are not, and will never be friends of socialism." It points out that, although the Soviet Union criticises China's foreign policy, it does not interfere in its internal affairs, has no territorial claims on it, and has never supported the "two China" theory.

It expresses Soviet readiness "at any time" to resume talks on border questions and to take concrete steps towards the normalisation of bilateral state relations at all levels.

But it makes clear that the "preliminary conditions" for the resumption of talks put forward by China are "obviously unacceptable". Among these conditions are that the USSR should end its support and aid to Mongolia, the Indo-Chinese states and Afghanistan, recognise China's territorial claims to vast areas of the Soviet Union, and withdraw Soviet troops from the Sino-Soviet borders.

Pointing out that Mongolia, the Indo-Chinese states and Afghanistan have also expressed a desire to normalise and improve their bilateral relations with China, the PRAVDA article asks China to resume talks without insisting to these unacceptable pre-conditions that cast doubts on its willingness to normalise relations.

RACIST

The potentially theocratic and racist nature of the movement can be seen in the slogans that it is more and more pushing to the fore.

The concept of a secular state, free from official identification with any religion, has up to now been common to all the main political parties. But the Balamandalaya has revived the slogans that the Constitution should be amended to (a) make Buddhism the state religion, and (b) provide that both the President and the Prime Minister should be Sinhalese and Buddhists.

In support of this demand, leaders of the movement like Mr. Siri Perera argue that, if there is an Islamic government in Malaysia where people of the Islamic faith constitute only 55 per cent of the population, why cannot Sri Lanka be a Buddhist state

TAKE BACK SACKED STRIKERS IN PRIVATE FIRMS

Labour Minister Captain C. P. J. Seneviratne has been asked by the General Secretary of the Industrial & General Workers Union, (CFTU), W. L. FERNANDO, to take meaningful action to get private sector employers, who dismissed their workers for taking part in the July 1980 general strike, to reinstate them.

In his letter dated May 25, W. L. Fernando draws attention

to the fact that, as a result of domestic and international agitation, the government has been compelled to take back a number of its own strikers whom it had dismissed.

But this had not been followed in the private sector, where several hundreds of workers were dismissed, or compulsorily retrenched without even a gratuity, as a result of joining the general strike.

Dimitrov Jubilee Committee

Representatives of several trade unions and organisations of women, cultural workers, youth and students, as well as progressive social and political organisations, met on May 13 in Colombo and set up a Jubilee Committee to celebrate the 100th birth anniversary of Georgi Dimitrov.

The Jubilee Committee decided on a programme of public meetings, seminars and exhibitions in different parts

of Sri Lanka to celebrate this event. A book on Dimitrov's life will be published and special articles prepared for newspapers and magazines. Radio and TV time would also be sought.

On June 10, a seminar on "Dimitrov and Today" will be held at 5 p. m. at the Moors Islamic Cultural House, Fort, Colombo. The main speakers will be Pieter Keuneman and Prop. Leslie Gunawardena.

Towards the Dimitrov Centenary

BEFORE THE FASCIST COURT

(*GEORGI DIMITROV'S* conduct before the Nazi fascist court, where he was arraigned in 1933 on a trumped-up charge of attempting to set fire to the German Reichstag (Parliament), is a classic and world-renowned example of how revolutionaries should behave in front of bourgeois courts. Conducting his own defence, he turned from accused to an accuser of the fascist regime, laid bare its monstrous character before world opinion, and contributed greatly to alerting mankind to the danger that fascism presented. His courageous defence of himself and his communist ideals, supported by an international campaign, won his discharge.

We publish some highlights of this trial as set out by DIMITROV himself in his diaries and letters from prison, in his speeches during the trial, and in his comments on it thereafter—ED)

"I learnt about the Reichstag fire from the newspaper on the morning of February 28, in the train from Munich to Berlin, like all the other passengers in that train..."

* * *

"As a Communist, as a member of the Bulgarian Communist Party and the Communist International, I am in principle against all individual trials, against all senseless fires, because these actions are incompatible with Communist principles and methods of mass work, and because they can only be harmful to the liberation movement of the proletariat, to the communist cause.

"According to my profound conviction, the Reichstag fire must be the work of madmen or the worst enemies of communism, who thereby wanted to create an atmosphere conducive to the crushing of the labour movement and the Communist Party of Germany. I am, however, neither mad, nor an enemy of communism.

"I am now more inclined to assume that the burning of the Reichstag—this anti-communist venture—is the result of a double alliance between political provocation and political madness."

Why?

"I consider it very important to elucidate the political situation in Germany at the time of the Reichstag trial....

"Germany is the first European country affected by the worst economic crisis which started in the 30s. Production declined. Unemployment increased. The number of unemployed at the time of the crisis rose to nearly 8 million. The condition of the middle classes deteriorated rapidly. The enormous burden of reparations further intensified the crisis. The working masses began to turn their eyes to the Communist Party. Hitherto politically neutral strata of the urban petty-bourgeoisie became politically conscious during the crisis. The peasantry began to stir....

"The political situation at that time was governed by two chief factors: the first was the endeavour of the National Socialists to gain sole power, the second, running counter to it, was the activity of the Communist Party, aimed at the establishment of a united working class front....

"The National Socialists needed something which would both divert the attention of the people from the difficulties within the nationalist camp and frustrate the united front of the working class....

"The setting of fire to the Reichstag was to serve and in fact served as a signal for a terrorist onslaught of German fascism against the revolutionary movement of the proletariat. The fascist provocation of February 27, 1933, has to be the signal for the "annihilation" of Marxism, implying by Marxism the revolutionary movement of the German proletariat."

In Prison

"I am trying, as far as possible, to make good use of my time in prison. For the past few months, I have been busy, making a detailed study of German history.... Personally, I do not have an easy time, of course. I often feel like a tied bird which has wings, but cannot use them.

"One can judge the attitude towards me by the following facts: (a) my personal money has been confiscated and I have been practically left without a penny, so that quite often I am unable to pay my postal expenses; (b) I receive no newspapers; (c) a whole month has elapsed and I still do not have a defence counsel; (d) no one is admitted to me; (e) even my eye-glasses have been taken away....

"It is to be regretted that the full text of the indictment has not yet been published so far. Its publication would undoubtedly be the best and most interesting proof of my innocence. There can hardly be a more serious violation of my revolutionary, political and personal honour than to suspect and accuse me of having participated in this crime against the people and against communism" (*Letter to his mother*)

* * *

"The trial was prepared on an exceptionally large scale. The fascists had set foot all means at their disposal. The whole police and judicial apparatus was mobilized, as well as the central apparatus of the National Socialist Supreme Administration, and the huge and extensive apparatus of the Ministry of Propaganda. All this was set into motion not only in order to fabricate the indictment, but mainly in order to find,

at all cost, "suitable" witnesses. About half a year elapsed in this feverish and desperate search for witnesses."

In the Courtroom

"Before the court a proletarian revolutionary does not think about the danger threatening him, he does not think about his own head; what counts for him are the interests of his class. He acts like a soldier of the revolution, true to the banner of Marx, Engels and Lenin... The whole line of my conduct was directed to this end.

"The dock is a fighting post. Before the police and the investigating judge various manoeuvres are permissible, but in a political trial there is no room for manoeuvres, there is only a political battle. My stand was never to be on the retreat, never to rely on anyone else's defence, not to be a stickler for paragraphs, but to defend myself as a communist and thus uphold the cause of communism. I pursued this line from the very first interrogation.

"It is not enough to have a revolutionary temperament—you must also be able to master the weapon of revolutionary theory. It is not enough to know theory—you must also develop a firm Bolshevik character and Bolshevik intransigence. It is not enough to know what to do—you must also have the pluck to carry it out. You must be ready at all costs to do all that really serves the interests of the working class. You must be able entirely to subordinate your personal life to the interests of the proletariat. Mankind needs tried revolutionaries in order to save it from fascist barbarism."

"...It is true, as stated in the indictment, that I am a Bolshevik, a proletarian revolutionary... As a member of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party and as a member of the Executive Committee of the Communist International, I am a responsible and, so to say, leading Communist. And I am ready to accept full responsibility for all the decisions, documents and actions of my Bulgarian Communist Party and of the Communist International. But for this reason, I am not a terrorist adventurer. I am not a conspirator, nor an air-monger. It is perfectly

true that I am in favour of the proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat, because I am convinced that this is the only way out of the economic crisis and the disaster of war..."

Harsh

"I admit that I speak in a sharp and harsh language. The struggle and my life too have been sharp and harsh. But my language is frank and sincere. I am used to calling a spade a spade. I am not a lawyer whose duty it is to defend his client. I am defending myself as an accused Communist. I am defending my own Communist honour as a revolutionary. I am defending my ideas, my communist convictions. I am defending the meaning of my life. That is why every sentence uttered by me before this court is, so to speak, bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh. Every word is an expression of my deep indignation against the unjust accusation, against the fact that this anti-communist crime is being attributed to the communists."

* * *

Savage

"I have been called "a suspicious character from the Balkans" and a "savage Bulgarian". I cannot allow such things to pass in silence. It is true that Bulgarian fascism is savage and barbarous. But the Bulgarian workers and peasants, the Bulgarian people's intelligentsia, are by no means savage and barbarous. It is true that the standard of life is not so high in the Balkans as elsewhere in Europe, but intellectually our people are not on a lower scale than the masses in other European countries. Our political struggle, the political aspirations in our country, are no less lofty than those of other peoples.

"A people who lived for five hundred years under a foreign yoke without losing its language and its nationality, our working class and peasantry who have fought and are fighting against Bulgarian fascism and for communism—a people of this kind is not savage and barbarous.

"Long before the German Emperor Karl V said that he spoke German only to his horses, while the German nobility and educated people wrote only in Latin and were ashamed of the German language, in "barbarous" Bulgaria the apostles Cyril and Methodius invented the old-Bulgarian script."

After Discharge

(*During the course of the trial, DIMITROV tore the Nazi case to shreds, established beyond doubt that it was a concocted fabrication and reduced leading Nazis like Ministers Goering and Goebbels, who appeared as prosecution witnesses against him, to spluttering rage. So much so that the Nazis were unable to proceed with their indictment. But they nevertheless retained DIMITROV in prison. When*

they attempted to deport him to Bulgaria, the fascist government there repudiated him, saying he was "not a Bulgarian citizen". He was released after the Soviet Union granted him citizenship. We publish some of his observations on the success and meaning of his trial—ED)

"As to the grandiose world-wide campaign for our liberation, I am deeply convinced that it has not only saved the lives of us, the three Bulgarians and Torgler, but it has also paralysed the provocation of German fascism which was designed to destroy many thousands of proletarians. This campaign deprived the fascists of the possibility of resorting to a new provocation, in order to destroy the leading cadres of the revolutionary proletariat in Germany."

* * *

"The trial was a provocation, just as was the burning of the Reichstag. This trial was to conceal the real incendiaries... But according to the laws of dialectics and the laws of the class struggle, the trial turned into its opposite. The anti-communist trial became a powerful anti-fascist demonstration, an ignominious fiasco for fascism."

* * *

"The fascists failed to put up a single witness they needed from among the workers, the active participants in the proletarian movement in Germany, or the responsible communist functionaries. This was the Achilles' heel of the indictment"

* * *

"The grandiose international solidarity of the proletariat was the most significant factor for our liberation."

* * *

"Workers in all capitalist countries begin to realise ever more clearly the necessity of restoring their disunited forces and of supporting ever more strongly the initiative of the communist parties for the establishment of a united front. The question of a united proletarian front becomes the central issue and a prime task of the workers' movement in all countries.

"Millions of workers and working people... ask the question: how are we to prevent fascism from coming to power and how are we to overthrow triumphant fascism? The first thing that has to be done and which we must start with is the setting up of a United Front, the establishment of workers' unity at every enterprise, in every country, in the whole world. United action by the proletariat on a national and international scale—that is the powerful weapon which makes the working class capable not only of successful defence, but also of a successful counterattack against fascism, against the class enemy."

Brezhnev Proposes N-Arms Freeze

(We publish the main part of Leonid Brezhnev's speech to the Soviet Komsomol Congress on May 18th.

This speech re-states the many peace initiatives made by the U.S.S.R. and makes yet another specific proposal—for a freeze on nuclear weapons.

This new initiative in the Soviet Union's dynamic policy of peace has been widely welcomed and acclaimed throughout the world, including in the U. S. A.)

"What is in store for the peoples—peaceful creation, difficult but lofty work to ensure happy and worthy conditions of life, or the madness and nightmare of nuclear destruction?"

"The policy of the most aggressive forces of imperialism in our time compels us to raise the question precisely in this way. And the reply to it depends on how active and consistent will be the policy of the peace-loving countries, how vigorously and unitedly the multi-million masses of peoples are coming out against the policy of the incendiaries of another world war, in defence of peace on earth.

"A session of the United Nations General Assembly is opening in New York within three weeks, a special session, entirely devoted to disarmament problems. The Soviet Union, on its part, will do its utmost for the success of the session.

"It is not enough to speak about peace. Specific and practical matters are needed.

"The key task today in this respect is to lower the nuclear confrontation in Europe, which has reached dangerous ceilings, to end the further stockpiling of nuclear potentials here.

"It must not be tolerated that a real threat of the outbreak of a world nuclear holocaust can be created at any moment in Europe where world wars have begun already twice before.

"Another round of the talks on the limitation of nuclear arms in Europe will be opened between the USSR and the United States in Geneva within the next few days.

"Let us watch how the Americans will conduct themselves. Will they mark time once again, preparing for the

deployment of missiles, or will they show a desire to reach agreement?"

SOVIET PROPOSALS

"The Soviet proposals on this problem are well known. We have come out in favour of the full liquidation of all medium-range nuclear systems in Europe; the West objected that this would go much too far.

"We proposed that such systems be reduced by more than two thirds; we are told that this is too little. Well, let us search for mutually-acceptable figures. We are also prepared for bigger reductions, of course, on a mutual basis.

"To facilitate matters the Soviet Union unilaterally discontinued recently a further deployment of medium-range missiles in the European part of the USSR and decided to reduce a certain number of them. I can report that we are already effecting the reduction of a considerable number of such missiles.

"These concrete peaceful actions of our country are regarded approvingly in the world. Some people in the West, however, try to question their importance, too.

ASSERTIONS

It is being asserted, for example, that the decision adopted by the Soviet Union will not prevent us from continuing to deploy our missiles so as to secure that they, let it be from beyond the Urals, could "reach" West European countries.

"I can say in all definiteness: no medium-range missiles will be additionally deployed in places from which both the FRG and other countries of Western Europe could be within their reach.

A question is also being asked whether the decision adopted by us also envisages a unilateral freeze on the termination of preparation for the deployment of missiles. Yes, it does envisage this, including an end to the construction of launching positions for such missiles.

One more remark. The government of the USA presses for securing that the USSR freeze, and eliminate altogether, such missiles deployed in the eastern part of our country.

"This is truly an absurd claim. It is possible to handle questions of missiles—their limitation and reduction. But only through negotiation with those in whose hands are the nuclear means which are opposed by our missiles. And

again, of course, on the basis of reciprocity. We do not object to such negotiation. But, understandably, this is a separate question.

"The destinies of war and peace in many respects depend on whether or not a Soviet-US accord is reached on limiting



L. I. BREZHNEV

and reducing strategic arms, an honest and fair accord, with no detriment to anyone's interests.

NO STRINGS

"As for the Soviet Union, it has invariably come out for such an understanding without delay and without any strings attached. This is our position which has been, both in public and through diplomatic channels, made known to the American side.

"President Reagan, on his part, has now declared that the United States is ready for the resumption of the talks. In our opinion, this is a step in the right direction. It is however, important that the talks should begin immediately in the right key.

"In the same speech the President said that the United States at the talks would be in favour of substantial reductions of strategic arms. There is no need to persuade us in this respect.

"But if one looks at the essence of the ideas voiced by the United States President on such reductions, one notes unfortunately that the American position is absolutely unilateral in nature. Above all, because the United States would like in general to exclude from the talks the strategic arms it is now most intensively developing.

"It is not without reason that competent people inside the United States immediately stated that this was an unrealistic position, cut off from life and perhaps simply an insincere position. It is directly prejudicing the secu-

city of the USSR and, at the same time, leaves Washington a free hand in the implementation of American programs of stockpiling strategic arms.

"One can hardly avoid drawing the conclusion that the position stated by the US President is oriented not to searching for an agreement but to providing conditions for the continuation of Washington's attempts to achieve military superiority over the Soviet Union.

NEEDED

"What is needed for the talks to proceed successfully and to bring about an agreement?"

"To put it briefly, this requires, first, that the talks should actually pursue the aim of limiting and reducing strategic armaments rather than be a cover for the continued arms race and the breakdown of the existing parity.

"Second, it is necessary that both sides should conduct them with due regard for each other's legitimate security interests and strictly in accordance with the principle of equality and equal security.

"Lastly, it is necessary to preserve everything positive that has been achieved earlier. The talks do not start from scratch but a good deal of far from useless work has been done. This should not be overlooked.

"We are convinced that only with this approach there can be any hope for reaching agreement on concrete measures to

substantially reduce the strategic armaments of both sides.

"It is likewise very important to effectively block all the channels for the continuation of the strategic arms race in any form. This means that the development of new types of strategic weapons should be either banned or restricted to the utmost by agreed upon characteristics.

FREEZE

"We also have the following proposal.

"We would be prepared to reach agreement that the strategic armaments of the USSR and the US are frozen already now, as soon as the talks begin. Frozen quantitatively. And that their modernization is limited to the utmost.

"It is also necessary that neither the USA nor the Soviet Union take such actions which would lead to an upsetting of the strategic situation. Such a freeze, an important thing by itself, would facilitate both headway and a radical limitation and reduction of strategic arms.

"Such is, in brief, our position on the question of strategic weapons.

"Peace is not a gift from the skies. The preservation and strengthening of peace requires everyday and difficult struggle. It is your, young people's, fortune to grow up and live in the conditions of peace, without having to experience the hardships of war. One should value this and preserve this precious asset.

Fight Imperialist News Propaganda

An important step forward in the fight for a new information order, which will breach the monopoly of the imperialist news agencies that enables them to disseminate slanted and often false news and disinformation, was taken at a three-day plenary session of the non-aligned News Agencies Pool Coordinating Committee which ended in PYONGYANG on May 15.

A document setting out concrete measures whereby these news agencies could strengthen co-operation between them was adopted.

Representatives from around 50 news agencies took part in the sessions.

Korea's President KIM IL SUNG called on the sessions to strengthen their co-operation in the fight against "imperialist propaganda". He urged them to take steps that would make it possible for them to handle information more efficiently, disseminate it throughout the world more

quickly, and prevent distorted imperialist propaganda.

GUSTAVO ROBRENO, head of the delegation from PRENSA LATINA, the Cuban news agency, called on the non-aligned countries to develop their own news services and communications networks, to perfect the distribution of accurate information among themselves, and to work towards a viable new international information order.

Among the other agencies that spoke at the conference were the Organisation of Asia-Pacific News Agencies (OANA), the Islamic Republic News Agency of Iran (IRNA), India's PTI, the Associated Press of Pakistan (APP), the Pan-African News Agency, and representatives from Information Ministries of several non-aligned states.

Sri Lanka was among the countries represented. Others included India, Nigeria, Senegal, Togo, Tunisia, Zambia, Cuba, Vietnam, Bangladesh, Jamaica, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru and Yugoslavia.

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WHO IS GOING WHOSE WAY?

"Castro is going JR's way" is the latest slogan of President Jayawardene.

This insolent and imbecilic quip has been repeated in a big way by the government-owned mass media and even cited in an official briefing to the press by the Minister of State on what transpired at the Cabinet.

The Upali newspapers have also followed suit, using both editorial comment and cartoons for the purpose.

And the reason for this exultation? One of our newspapers has republished a comment in the London ECONOMIST that Cuba has recently passed a law to allow the setting up of certain joint companies with foreign investors!

Of course, our newspapers went even further than the ECONOMIST and announced that Cuba was even thinking setting up a Free Trade Zone. From where they got this "information", other than from their own imaginations, is best known to themselves.

LIMITED

What these newspapers did not explain is that such joint ventures in certain strictly limited fields like tourism is nothing new in socialist countries.

In order to let people from the capitalist countries see for themselves the real state of

affairs in the socialist world, as well as to earn foreign exchange which they need to buy certain raw materials and technology from the western countries, some socialist countries have entered into agreements with western hotel chains to allow them, under strictly defined conditions, to build and operate hotels to accommodate the tourists they bring.

These socialist countries think that the money that they would have otherwise to invest on such hotels could be more usefully and better spent on developing industry, agriculture and social services.

Of course, such arrangements are strictly business ones.

The foreign investors are allowed a reasonable profit on their investment, which they can remit to their own countries. But they must obey the country's laws, pay their employees the legally stipulated wages, and respect and work with the trade unions. They cannot invest their profits in other ventures or sections of economy. Nor can they exploit the people of the country or dictate how its social and political system should function.

THE 'JRJ' WAY

But this is, of course, quite different from what happens "the JRJ way".

Even in the field of Sri Lanka tourism, the buildings have mainly to be put up by the state or the private sector or, more recently, from the sale of shares to the public. The foreign concerns merely provide the management services and charge exorbitantly for them. As the Galle Face Hotel case showed, even local private operators who try to act independently are soon shown where they can get off by the multi-national hotel concerns.

The "JRJ way" of attracting foreign investment also involves devaluing our currency,

by

Stanley Ranasinghe

abolishing economic controls, dismantling the public sector, driving any competitive local enterprise to the wall, turning a blind eye to economic crimes, and bowing and scraping (and, where possible, making a corrupt buck) before the foreign investors and contractors.

It means running our economy and political system the way the foreign investors and the World Bank want.

F. T. Z.

The "Free Trade Zones" of the JRJ-type, which are un-

known in socialist countries, involve constitutional guarantees to foreign investors against nationalisation; freedom to pay the lowest wages in the region, oppose trade unions and exploit our labour and resources at will; flout the labour laws with impunity; enjoy prolonged "tax holidays" and set up secret bank accounts that our Inland Revenue Department cannot scrutinise; and compete unfairly with national industry from protected "positions of strength".

This is certainly not the "Castro way", or the socialist way.

CANARDS

The tendentious canards about Cuba are only one of many recent examples of the government's propaganda machine trying to counteract left-wing criticism of its neo-colonialist and capitalist policies by falsely alleging that they are only doing what the socialist countries do.

It only shows how sensitive the government is to such criticism, especially in an "election year"!

For instance, when the Communist Party criticised the lavish expenditure on the new Parliamentary complex in defiance of all economic priorities, the government's answer was to say that the Soviet government functions in the even more splendiferous Kremlin!

Of course the fact that the Kremlin was built by the Tsars and not by the Soviet government, while our government has built a three-billion rupee Parliament in a country where 60 per cent of the population have a monthly family income of less than Rs. 300, does not bother the government propagandists one bit!

Equally, the government's answer to charges that it allows corruption to flourish is to say that corruption can also be found even in socialist countries. Of course, the fact that corrupt persons, however high placed, are punished with the full severity of the law in socialist countries, while in "dharmista" Sri Lanka they are transferred to new spheres of operation, or the matter is hushed up, is quite another question.

The latest effort in this propaganda ploy is the report in the Lake House newspapers (as well as the "independent" capitalist press) that the Soviet Union has "shown interest" in the new tender that the CPC has called for its proposed "oil tank farm" in Trincomalee.

By spreading this story, the government no doubt hopes to give the Americans the jitters and obtain better terms. And, domestically, it no doubt hopes to "disprove" the combined Opposition charge that its "tank farm" is only a ruse to cover up its real intention to supply an oil facility to the US Navy in the Indian Ocean.

But what is the real substance of this story?

On his recent visit to the USSR, Foreign Minister A. C. S. Hameed mentioned to his Soviet counterpart that such a tender had been called for and asked whether the Soviet Union would be "interested". His counterpart told him that he knew nothing about such a tender (which was not surprising as it is known that information about it was not sent to our embassy in Moscow, as was done in the case of certain western embassies) but, if our Minister wished, the USSR would "study the matter".

Accordingly, the Soviet economic organisations in Sri Lanka asked the CPC for details about the tender proposals.

As all this happened less than two weeks before the closing date for tenders (May 31), Minister Hameed's proposal can hardly be considered as seriously intended, but as one designed to supply a propaganda point for use locally against the Opposition here.

President Jayawardene, his Ministers and his news-men, including the new "disinformation committee" the government has set up under Mr. Wickrema Weerasuriya, obviously have a very low opinion of the intelligence of the average Sri Lankan if they hope to get away with rubbish of this type.

They did not do so when they called their state the "Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka," even though both democracy and socialism are conspicuously missing here. Their latest ploy that socialist countries are now accepting capitalism and "going the JRJ way" is also headed for fiasco and doom!

TRIBUTES TO COLVIN ON 50TH ANNIVERSARY

A large and representative audience, drawn from many walks of life, took part in a public symposium held on May 22 to pay tribute to LSSP leader, DR. COLVIN R. DE SILVA, on the completion of 50 years in political life.

The symposium was held at the NAVARANGHALA, the venue of the adoption of Sri Lanka's first Republican Constitution, over whose drafting Dr. de Silva had presided.

Among those present, in addition to the Central Committee and leaders of the LSSP, were members of several other political parties.

They included members of the Political Bureau of the CPSL such as K. P. Silva, Pieter Keuneman, M. G. Mendis, H. G. S. Ratnaweera, D. E. W. Gunasekera, D. W.

Subasinghe and Sarath Muttetuwegama. The TULF was represented by Messrs A. Amirthalingam, M. Sivasinghamperam and several other M. Ps. Vasudeva Nanayakkara of the NSSP, Mr. T. B. Illangaratne of the SLFP (S), President of the Sri Lanka Peace Council Mr. T. B. Subasinghe, UNP M. P. Mr. M. D. H. Jayawardene, and several other prominent public figures were also present.

There was also a large turnout of the Buddhist clergy, the legal profession, and leaders of various trade unions, youth leagues and women's organisations.

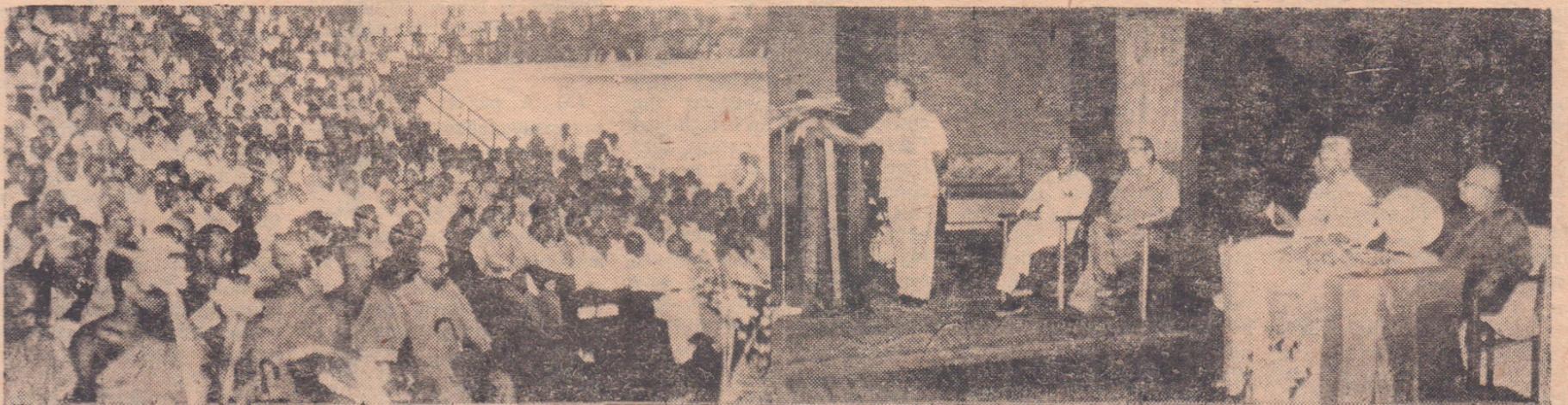
Professor Dr. the Rev. Henpitigedera Gnanawasa Thera presided. The other speakers included Leader of the Opposition Mr. A. Amirthalingam, well-known author Mr. Gunadasa Amerasekera, Professor Sirisena Tilleke-

ratne, Professor Colvin Gooneratne, Mr. Walter Jayawardene Q. C., LSSP General Secretary BERNARD SOYSA, and Mr. Mervyn Casie Chetty.

The speakers dealt with different facets of Dr. Colvin R. de Silva's activities such as his contributions as a historian, lawyer, political leader, and Minister of both Plantations and Constitutional Affairs in the United Front government.

Dr. de Silva thanked all those who had attended the function and extended their affection and goodwill towards him on that occasion.

Sri Lanka's Bar also gave a dinner to Dr. Colvin R. de Silva, one of the most senior and eminent of Sri Lanka's counsel, on the 50th anniversary of his enrolment as a member of the Bar.



Reception to Colvin: View of audience and platform.

J. R.'s ROLE IN E. L. AFFAIR

The main casualty of the sordid E. L. (Mr. Tender) Senanayake affair has been President J. R. (Mr. Dharmista) Jayawardene.

As his unofficial mouthpiece and apologist, MIGARA of the WEEKEND, ruefully admitted in his column of May 16, "criticism was being directed right to the top and the pristine image of the UNP leader himself was being tarnished..."

Since Minister E. L. Senanayake's resignation, belated attempts are being made in the pro-government media to portray this action as a direct result of the stern "anti-corruption" drive launched by the President.

But this is clearly not so. For let us not forget that it was a Cabinet sub-committee of inquiry, chaired by the President personally, that said that there were neither any charges nor evidence of corruption in this matter! They cannot now say that E. L.'s resignation was part of the the President's anti-corruption drive.

Then again, after transferring Mr. Senanayake to the portfolio of Health, President J. R. personally provided him (and the new Minister of Agricultural Research, Mr. Gamini Jayasuriya) with a special helicopter to go the Kataragama apparently to square matters with the deities there! Such was the President's personal concern with E. L.

MIGARA's column under reference gives chapter and verse (obviously supplied from the Presidential Secretariat and the pro-J. R. Cabinet Ministers whom Prime Minister Premadasa has publicly accused of being Migara's informants) to show that, far from acting decisively to demand E. L.'s resignation, President J. R. was pressurised to give in to this position as a result of massive pressure.

MIGARA speaks of a "stream of visitors, almost all UNP loyalists, invading the President's home to express their "disillusionment." Some were talking of retiring from politics. UNP voters were saying that they will not vote at the next elections. Almost all of them felt let down..." The main names of these visitors were also given.

As a result, says Migara, the President, after a week's deliberation, decided to reverse his earlier stand and to ask E. L. to submit his resignation as Minister of Health "pronto".

The assertion that J. R. asked E. L. to quit is repeated twice in Migara's column. But it is significant that E. L., in an attributed statement to the ISLAND (16/5) - unlike the unattributed assertion by Migara - flatly denies that anyone had asked him to resign.

"I resigned as a Cabinet Minister and I did it on my own. No one asked me to resign", he said categorically. His letter of resignation, published by the ISLAND of

the same date, also gives no indication that he had been asked to resign.

It is clear, and confirmed by Migara, that what made the President act was nothing to do with "fighting corruption" but displeasure at a speech made by E. L. in Parliament. Although Migara makes out that what upset the President was E. L. calling his Cabinet Secretary G. V. P. Samarasinghe a "fossil", there is evidence that there much more involved.

E. L.'s speech was on an Bill to indemnify Ministers, Deputy Ministers and public officials for illegal or extra-legal actions done by them during the communal riots of 1977. The Bill was clearly intended to let E. L. off the hook in respect of a number of actions for damages filed against him in the courts by prominent Kandy citizens in respect of their detention and "house arrest" on the basis of illegal orders given to the Police by E. L.

E. L. not only denied that he had asked for the Bill but asserted that he had issued these clearly illegal orders on behalf of Mr. J. R. Jayawardene, then Prime Minister. This was apparently too much for President J. R. to stomach, and therefore E. L. had to go.

So "fighting corruption" had nothing to do with it.

Dayananda Premaratne

Kandy

"Experts"

I strongly support the protest made by the Sri Lanka Association for the Advancement of Science at the proposal to engage expatriate Sri Lankan scientists domiciled abroad as "experts" to work in this country in place of the foreign "experts" whose value and cost to us are now under serious question.

This proposal was apparently the result of a study prepared by an number of connected Ministries, under the aegis of the Ministry of Plan Implementation. This study analysed the costs and benefits of obtaining foreign "experts" from abroad and, not surprisingly, found the benefits to our country negligible and recommended the termination of the services of such foreign "experts".

In order to counteract this, a new proposal has apparently germinated in fertile UNDP minds to substitute expatriate "experts" of Sri Lankan origin for those of foreign extraction.

Generally speaking, Sri Lankan scientists working abroad and whom the new UNDP scheme seeks to bring home as "experts" fall into two categories. The first are those who left Sri Lanka very early in search of better prospects, putting their own interests above those of their country which had helped them to gain expertise through free education, etc., even though their country needed their

services. The second are those who went abroad after retirement, but who were never regarded as "experts" while serving in Sri Lanka.

Why should such persons be given special status and salaries for short-term assignments to their native land? Are they likely to contribute more than the scientists who remained behind and are now giving their best to the land of their birth? What is the special "expertise" that they can contribute towards the solution of our problems that our own scientists, who encounter these problems every day, cannot provide?

Apart from this, other socio-political dangers arise. With a few significant exceptions, most these "prodigal sons" have, when abroad, formed connections with powerful groups of vested interests in the advanced countries and would, therefore, be interested in pushing the interests of these western multi-national and other concerns, both scientific and commercial, rather than helping us. With ready access to governmental politicians, they can effectively influence the direction of policies and programmes which accord with the interests of the lands of their adoption rather than those of the abandoned land of their birth. And, as people who left the country in search of a good



life for themselves abroad, they are likely, on returning home, to have as their first consideration the need to secure and perpetuate similar conditions for themselves here rather than service to the country.

In this connection, I would like to draw attention to a little-known FAO bureau called the Industry Co-operative Programme (ICP). 25 per cent of its membership are US firms, one-third Common Market agribusinesses, and the rest from Japan and Switzerland. Each firm pays 7,500 US dollars as membership fee a year. This institution tried to penetrate and influence the FAO in its selection of "experts" to be sent abroad, especially to Third World countries, to such an extent that the Director General of FAO, Dr. Saouma, was forced to order it to get out of the FAO offices. But it and similar agencies still function and influence the entire system of UN technical "aid" in such a way that transnational corporations and commercial banks can be sure that most "experts" who go abroad will "advise" developing countries to which they are accredited that the best way they can develop is the way these neo-colonial institutions want.

Instead of trying to bribe back and buy back those who deserted the country in search

of more profitable pastures for themselves or because they found the new socio-political changes associated with political independence and national re-awakening distasteful, we should pay our patriotic scientists well and give them all the help they need - but often do not get - to use their knowledge and expertise to help their motherland.

"Science Wallah"

Colombo.

Human Rights

So the government has agreed to host in Colombo an international meeting on human rights!

Let's hope that it will organise an exhibition on the state of human rights in our dharmista land for the occasion.

I suggest the following exhibits:-

(1) Pictures and names of the thousands of workers whom the government sacked for taking part in a general strike in 1980 for higher pay. Prominence should be given to the sacked strikers who com-

mitted suicide because they could not support their destitute families and to those who live by begging on the streets.

(2) A photograph of trade unionist Somapala, who was killed for exercising his legal right to picket.

(3) The 700 blind weavers who are compelled to demonstrate (and be chased and assaulted by the Police) because the government closed down their weaving centres, denied them the right to work, and has not even paid them the compensation it promised.

(4) The large numbers who, every morning, forage in dustbins to find something in order to sustain their human right to eat.

(5) A picture of Jaffna university student A. Vimalarajah who has been detained for over a year, without being either charged or released, on suspicion of "terrorist" activities.

(6) A photo-montage of events during the DDC elections in Jaffna last year, where whole ballot boxes were spirited away and six are still missing.

(7) Symbolic pictures of those denied entry to universities, public institutions and temples due to their language, race or caste.

(8) Copies of the laws like the "Prevention of Terrorism Act", the "Public Security Act" and others that deny rights asserted in the UN Declaration of Fundamental Human Rights and also make emergency provisions part of the ordinary law of the land.

(9) Photographs of Mrs. B. and others deprived of civic rights.

No doubt your readers can suggest many more items for such an exhibition. Will our Human Rights Chief, Presidential younger brother Harry Jayawardene, Q.C., please note?

V. Thambiah

Kokuvil.

Elections Chief

When Sarath Muttetuwagama MP raised in Parliament several pertinent questions about the impropriety of an Assistant Secretary to the President being appointed as Elections Commissioner while continuing to function as an official under the President, the government hurriedly announced that another person had been appointed that very day in his place.

I do not know very much about the new appointee, except that, as an Additional Secretary to Minister Gamini Dissanayake, he accompanied his Minister to Jaffna at the time of the DDC elections and was appointed as an elections officer in the sudden switch of election staff that took place when the appointed Returning Officer began to get the jitters over the flagrant rigging and other anti-democratic practices that was planned took place at this election under the direct supervision of certain Cabinet Ministers.

I write this to protest against this government's unceasing attempts to meddle in the affairs of the Department of Elections and to undermine its independence, which has been maintained until now.

In order to ensure that the Elections Commissioner is acceptable to Parliament as a whole (and not merely to the government of the day), I suggest that appointees to this post should, before confirmation, appear before the special all-party Parliamentary Committee that screens other appointments to high office outside the state administration.

Asoka Wimalaratne

Panadure.

WHERE COLONIALISM CONTINUES

The Malvinas (Falklands) Islands are not the only colonial territory that Britain still retains, despite the UN insistence on decolonisation.

In fact, according to a list prepared by the United Nations of still-existing colonial territories at the start of the 1980s, Britain still retained 11 main colonial territories.

These colonies occupy a total area of 19,229 sq. kilometres and have a population of 402,100.

The Malvinas Islands are Britain's largest remaining colony (11,961 sq. kilometres), with the second smallest population (1,800).

The other British colonies, which are to be found in all parts of the world, are:

In ASIA. Brunei (5,765 sq. kms and 190,000 population).

In the CARIBBEAN & ATLANTIC OCEAN. Bermuda Islands (53 sq. kms and 60,000 population). British Virgin Islands (153 sq. kms and 12,000 population). Cayman Islands (250 sq. kms and 14,000 population). St. Helena Island (122 sq. km and 5,000 population). Montserrat (98 sq. km and 12,000 population). The St. Kitts-Nevia-Anguilla Islands (357 sq. km and 70,000 population). Turks and Caicos Islands (430 sq. km and 7,000 population). Malvinas (Falkland) Islands (11,961 sq. km and 1,800 population).

In EUROPE. Gibraltar (6 sq. kms and 30,000 population).

In the PACIFIC and INDIAN OCEANS. Pitcairn Islands (5 sq. km and 160 population).

"TRUST"

Britain, in fact, still continues to own the biggest number of the colonial and trust territories that still remained in 1981, after the national liberation movement had liberated over 140 million people living in a total area of over 10 million sq. kilometres. This residue of 6 million constitutes 0.3 per

cent of the world's population and occupies 1 per cent of its territory.

Britain also controls Diego Garcia Island (leased to the US as a naval base) and the Chagos Archipelago in the Indian Ocean.

The United States continues to exercise colonial domination over the US Virgin Islands, (344 sq. km and 100,000 population), Puerto Rico (8,896 sq. km and 3,300,000 population), American Samoa (197,000 sq. km and 28,000 population), Guam (549 sq. km and 100,000 population), and Micronesia (the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, 1,779 sq. km in extent and with a population of 115,000).

France continues to have the following "departments"—Guadeloupe (pop. 325,000), Martinique (pop. 325,000), French Guiana (pop. 500,000), St. Pierre and Miquelon Islands (pop. 5,800) and Reunion (pop. 500,000), as well as the following "overseas territories"—New Caledonia (pop. 140,000), French Polynesia (pop. 140,000) and the Wallis and Fortuna Islands (pop. 10,000).

New Zealand has the Associated Territories and Cook Islands (pop. 21,000) and Niue Island (pop. 6,000). The Netherlands still controls the administration of the Antilles (pop. 240,000). Spain still controls the towns of Ceuta and Melilla in northern Morocco, with a population of 130,000.

Remnants of colonialism (British and Portuguese) still remain on Chinese territory in Hong Kong and Macao. Namibia continues to be unlawfully governed by South Africa.

NEW NAMES

The imperialist powers continue their colonial rule in altered forms and under different names in various parts of the world.

Thus the USA declared Puerto Rico a state "freely associated" with it in 1952,

although the UN continues to support Puerto Rico's demand for freedom and independence.

Britain, France, the USA and Holland continue to administer about 15 dominantly insular countries and territories in the western hemisphere alone under the labels of "overseas possessions", "overseas departments", and "associated territories".

In Oceania, the USA, Britain, France and other countries also administer about 15 archipelagos and islands. In Micronesia, the US continues to hold about 2,000 small islands and atolls as "trust" territory.

CPSL CONGRATULATES JANOS KADAR

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of Sri Lanka has sent a telegram of warm congratulations to the First Secretary of the Hungarian Socialist Workers Party and President of the Hungarian People's Republic, JANOS KADAR, on his 70th birthday.

The text of the telegram is as follows:

"The Central Committee of the Communist Party of Sri Lanka sends its heartiest congratulations and best wishes to First Secretary of the Hungarian Socialist Workers Party, Comrade JANOS KADAR, on his seventieth birth anniversary.

"The Communists of Sri Lanka highly appreciate Comrade Kadar's contribution to detente, peace and socialism and to the cause of the international communist movement.

"We wish him long life, good health, and personal happiness".

MALVINAS: C.F.T.U. CALLS FOR CEASE FIRE

Condemnation of Britain's colonial war against Argentina, especially its recent aggressive military actions, and a call for a cease fire and a negotiated settlement is made by the Ceylon Federation of Trade Unions, in a statement issued by its President, M. G. MENDIS.

The statement is as follows:

"The Ceylon Federation of Trade Unions expresses its grave concern over, and condemns, the aggressive colonial war and military adventure of the British Government against Argentina in its dispute with that country over the Malvinas (Falkland) Islands, which are 12,000 kilometres away from Great Britain.

Tough Time for Farmers

Farmers in the Vavuniya district are having a tough time.

Large numbers of them have not been able to start cultivation as irrigation tanks breached in the major floods last year have still not repaired.

The government says it cannot help them as it has run out of funds.

Even the meagre assistance they received earlier under the "Freedom from Hunger" campaign is not currently available.

Even where water is available, farmers find it difficult to plough their fields owing to a shortage of buffaloes. Large numbers of which perished in an epidemic.

The farmers say that they cannot afford to hire tractors as their funds are low and tractor hire very expensive.

In addition, the withdrawal of subsidies has also made artificial fertilisers very costly. As tractor ploughing involves a big use of such fertilisers, this has become another reason why cultivation is at a standstill.

Several Vavuniya peasants have appealed to the SRI LANKA PEASANTS FEDERATION to help them.

"In defiance of the UN resolution on decolonisation, Britain has over a prolonged period resisted the claims of Argentina to these islands—claims which have received wide support in the international community, the non-aligned movement, and among other states in the South Atlantic.

"Armed with nuclear weapons, a major British armada has started aggressive and piratical military operations on a large scale. The CFTU shares the anxiety of the world community over the grave threat to peace in the South Atlantic caused by Britain's aggression—a threat that can well be internationalised into one against world peace itself as a result of the support given by the US government and some other NATO states to Britain's aggression.

"The CFTU is of opinion that any dispute that Britain may have with Argentina over this issue should be settled by peaceful negotiations in terms of the UN Charter and UN decisions relating to decolonisation.

"It therefore joins its voice with the world-wide demand for an immediate cease fire and the resumption of negotiations.

"It calls on the government of Sri Lanka to associate itself with the efforts of other non-aligned states to bring about a cease fire and a return to negotiations, as well as to insist that the just claims of Argentina, a fellow member of the non-aligned movement, in regard to the Malvinas Islands are respected".

Foreign Debt Tops Rs. 29 billion

Sri Lanka's outstanding foreign debt at the end of February, 1982, was Rs. 29,047 million, according to the Central Bank Bulletin for March, 1982.

The bulletin also discloses that a further sum of Rs. 148 million was borrowed in February 1982.

'Pravda' is 70

"Pravda" the famous newspaper founded by V. I. Lenin, celebrated its 70th anniversary at the beginning of May.

May 5, the day on which "Pravda" was begun 70 years ago, is annually observed as "Soviet Press Day" in the USSR.

"Pravda" has a daily circulation of 10.6 million copies in the Soviet Union. Every year it receives about 500,600 letters from its readers, the great part of which is published.

Overseas editions of "Pravda" go to 153 other countries, including Sri Lanka.

While alive, Lenin was one of the most active contributors to "Pravda", writing 838 articles for it.

As an authoritative but yet a mass and popular newspaper, "Pravda" not only expresses the views of the Soviet Communist Party, whose newspaper it is, but also those of the mass of workers and collective farmers in the USSR. Centred in Moscow, it is daily published simultaneously in all the capitals of the Soviet Republics as well.

On its anniversary, "Pravda's" editor-in-chief, VICTOR AFANASYEV, said that it "tells the truth about the Soviet land, and about the situation in the world". He stated the main characteristics of the newspaper to be "truthfulness, scientific character, objectiveness, democracy, and availability."

Facts About Our Workers

80 per cent of Sri Lanka's workers are between the ages of 20 to 59.

This is revealed in an official socio-economic survey of the labour force in 1981/2.

66.8 per cent of the work force were males, 25.8 per cent were females, and the rest children.

The highest participation of females in the labour force was in the plantation and agricultural sectors.

The survey also discloses that 857,168 persons were unemployed.

This amounts to over 15 per cent of the population and over one-quarter of the work force.

The percentage of unemployed among females was greater than among men.

This was also so in the case of educated unemployment.

8.6 per cent of the unemployed females had passed their GCE (Advanced Level) as compared with 3.4 per cent for males.

As for those who had passed higher examinations, 5 per cent of the female unemployed were in this category, as compared with 0.9 per cent of unemployed males.

No More "Soft" Loans from I.M.F.

Finance Minister Ronnie de Mel has not disguised his disappointment and distress at the outcome of the recent Helsinki meeting of the World Bank and the IMF.

He had, apparently, continued to entertain high expectations from this meeting, despite the powerful signals to the contrary that had been building up.

Now Minister Ronnie and others like him have been flatly and brutally told by the Finance Ministers of the ten developed capitalist countries that provide the main lending capital for these institutions that, notwithstanding Cancun and talk about a new international economic order, concessionary loans to them from these institutions, and especially from their "soft-loan window" the IDA, are going to decline still further.

This comes as no surprise to those who have observed how the "Big Ten" of the capitalist world have already reneged on their undertakings to the UN to spend at least 0.7 per cent of their GNP per year throughout the 1970s on assistance to the developing countries.

At the Venice Summit meeting in 1980, the "Big Ten" said that this failure was due to an unexpected economic recession in their own countries. But this is hardly convincing, as these states have experienced no difficulty in finding vast sums for an arms build-up.

The real reason why the "Big Ten" have begun to reduce their financial contributions to these institutions, and to cut back on "concessional" and relatively low-interest loans through the IDA, lies elsewhere,

They feel that, especially in the last decade, the balance of forces within the World Bank and the IMF has begun to change to their disadvantage.

As many non-aligned and Third World states have joined these institutions in the search for soft loans, the "Big Ten", led by the USA, feel that they can no longer count on a dependable voting majority to ensure that the lending policies of these institutions follow the lines they want.

On the basis that he who pays the piper must also call the tune, these states have now said flatly that they are no longer ready to supply funds to be disposed of by others on lines they do not approve.



U. S. Leads

As usual, the USA gave the lead in this reactionary shift.

Before and at Cancun, President Reagan personally signalled the new change of policy.

He told the Third World that the US would drastically cut back its contributions to these international financial agencies. He therefore asked

them not to depend on these institutions for future aid, but instead they should seek funds for economic development either through loans from the big commercial banks or on investments in their economies from the TNCs and other foreign capitalist firms.

This position has now been endorsed by the rest of the "Big Ten" at the Helsinki meeting.

In doing so, the US-led "Big Ten" hope to continue to dictate the main lines, the rates of interest and other conditions of loans to developing countries, as well as to export part of their crisis to the developing world and to make it easier for the TNCs and other foreign capitalist monopolies to penetrate the economies of the Third World.

Some of the developing countries have reacted to these moves by seeking greater cooperation among themselves on a regional or global basis. Others have sought a way out by developing economic cooperation with the crisis-free socialist countries, whose aid to the Third World is disinterested and without strings.

But a large number of developing countries are so dependent externally on world capitalist economy and so committed to capitalist development domestically, that they prefer, out of narrow class interests, to submit to, and go along with, what the "Big Ten" decide is best for them. The UNP government of Sri Lanka is prominent among this category.



Dilemma

Nevertheless, the Helsinki decision has put our government into a major dilemma—both politically and economically.

Politically, it has sharpened the debate within the government on whether to advance the dates of the general and Presidential elections or not.

Those who want early elections argue that it is best to get them over before things get worse economically. But others—and these apparently include President Jayawardene—prefer to act more cautiously. They feel that it would be foolish to rush into elections before some finality is reached in the negotiations with the TULF leadership and with capitalist groups and parties in the south. Economically, they adopt a Micawberish attitude and hope that "something will turn up."



Liquidity

The government's economic dilemma is even more formidable.

Its much-vaunted "development" projects have been reduced by inflation, mismanagement and swindling to a seriously under-financed state.

Unless foreign funds sufficient to make up the difference are immediately available, even further cutbacks will become inevitable.

The government's own "liquidity" problem remains acute and the attempt to meet it through a seemingly endless increase in Treasury Bills is proving counter-productive.

On top of this, the tight credit squeeze of the banks, that the government has been compelled to introduce and continue, has adversely affected its proclaimed "open economy" policy, and dried up imports while leaving domestic markets chock-a-block with unsaleable luxury and semi-luxury consumer goods that even the "duty free" shoppers from India cannot mop up.

Where, then, is the government to find the extra money it needs to keep up its efforts—at least until the general elections are held?

There is, of course, some "aid" negotiated earlier that is still in the pipe-line. But this is comparatively negligible, compared with what the government needs. And although the Minister of Finance speaks airily of borrowing from the commercial

loans (or even "hard" ones) from the IBRD, the IMF or the IDA, the government has come up with a new attempt. The CPC has been instructed to call for "world-wide" tenders to lease its proposed "oil tank farm" at Trincomalee.

In order to cover up its real intention of giving the lease to the US or one of its proxies, the government has started a disinformation campaign that the USSR and India are also "interested" in tendering for this oil farm. Apart from local propaganda, this disinformation is intended also to "raise the price" with the US.

Political circles also expect that the Helsinki setback will result in further cutbacks in social services and welfare expenditure.



Bronx Cheer

University students, who last week gave Prime Minister Premadasa and Opposition Leader Amirthalingam what the ISLAND called a "Bronx Cheer", others a "raspberry", and most people a "prolonged hoot", have shown—albeit



banks, it is obvious that this is said more in bravado than in earnest.

The "main hope", as it were, is that the Reagan administration has included Sri Lanka among the four or five countries to which it is prepared to continue economic and concessionary aid on a bilateral basis.

Of course, this must be done on a *quid pro quo* basis.

In giving Sri Lanka such a "favoured" position, the US administration mentioned specifically its gratitude to the UNP government for allowing the VOA to establish a transmitter here and for agreeing to service US naval vessels in our ports.

The government's attempt to get more from the US led it to try to set up an "oil tank farm" at Trincomalee to provide the US Seventh Fleet with a permanent oil facility in the Indian Ocean. In the face of opposition both at home and abroad, the government was compelled to retreat and give up the agreement it had already negotiated with the US Coastal Corporation for this purpose.

Now, after the setback at Helsinki and the prospect that there will be no more "soft"

inelegantly—what they feel about the policies of the government and the TULF that is now negotiating with it.

Most significant, perhaps, is the treatment that Mr Amirthalingam and some of his colleagues received from students at the Jaffna Campus who had demonstrated, and were later hunger-striking, in protest against the fact that a fellow student A. VIMALA-RAJAH, had been kept in army custody, without being either released or charged, for over a year.

This protest from students, who were once a main striking force of the TULF and, in particular, of Mr. Amirthalingam, is symptomatic of the general and growing disillusion among radical opinion and Tamil youth at the opportunist policies that the TULF leadership now follows in regard to the UNP government.

It is also a sign of the times that students in campuses in South Sri Lanka have also demonstrated their support for the protest action of their fellow students in Jaffna. At the present moment, when reactionary attempts to raise racist cries in order to divide and disorient progressive for-

ces are on the increase, this solidarity action shows a healthy rejection by our young people of the communal virus.



Flour Power

When the Singapore-based PRIMA Corporation was allowed to set up a flour milling complex near Trincomalee, this move was denounced as part of a "take-over bid" by Singapore of Sri Lanka's more profitable public sector enterprises.

It was classed alongside another such "take over" encouraged by our government—namely, the handing over of AIR LANKA to Singapore Air Lines. This is now being followed by a move to wind up the Airports authority and hand it over to a "private" company.

The circumstances surrounding the PRIMA deal were highly suspicious. Opposition sources have stated that they will undoubtedly become the subject of investigation by a future Presidential Commission.

The PRIMA mill has continued to make big profits for its Singapore promoters (not to mention its local agents) over the past four years. This took place the expense of the state-owned Flour Milling Corporation, set up with a Soviet aid under the last government.

Now comes the news that the Flour Milling Corporation is to be handed over to PRIMA, in association with a foreign company, as part of the government's policy of dismantling public sector enterprises and handing them over to the private sector.

All Opposition forces should unitedly oppose this move which hands a viable public sector industrial enterprise to a foreign private company.



Love-Hate

Glancing through the latest issue of NIYAMUWA, the JVP's official newspaper, this column could not help noticing once again the curious love-hate attitude that the JVP has for the socialist countries.

It contains articles on the familiar JVP theme that, after the death of Lenin, all communist parties and socialist countries have become "reformist". The implication is that this is why history had to produce Wijeweera (and, incidentally, the JVP) to rescue Marxism from the Marxists, both here and abroad!

Also, strange to say, the same issue carries the text of a resolution passed at the JVP May Day rally. This resolution reproaches the very same "reformist" socialist countries for failing to "recognise" the JVP as the standard-bearer of revolution in Sri Lanka and appealing to them to do so!