

Rural development key to future of tiny Ceylon

Applications are now being accepted for Canadian Crossroads International and their 1975 overseas volunteer program. Applications can be picked up at the Business Administration Office - third floor Tilley - Room 307 and further information can be obtained from Alan Archibald at 454-0269 after 6 p.m.

CEYLON, the pearl of the Orient lies off the south-east tip of INDIA. While it is no larger than Nova Scotia, one is immediately struck by the diversity and contrasts framed within its sea-bound borders.

The geographical and climate differences quickly become evident with only the minimum of

travel on the country's excellent rail and bus systems.

A half-day's journey from the steamy, humid heat of the seaport capital of Colombo can place you amidst temperate, highland slopes, green with tea estates.

Enter the tea-growing centre of Nuwara Eliya, altitude 6,000 feet and one finds drizzling rain, umbrellas, tweed caps, double-breasted overcoats and the reason why they call it "Little England".

Another half-day's journey northward finds one seeking shelter from the scorching mid-day heat of the dry zone, where agriculture depends on sufficient irrigation.

In similarity to Canada, the country features two major ethnic groups, the SINHALESE and the less populous TAMILS. Many of the close to two million Tamils had been brought from South India to work on the coffee, tea, and rubber plantations. They are HINDUS, set apart by religion and language from the Sinhalese, the island's BUDDHIST majority. A sprinkling of Muslims, Europeans, and descendants from the early colonizations of the Portuguese and Dutch, further contribute to this ethnic diversity.

Life styles, too, vary.

The modern city of Colombo features an urban way of life not unlike any western commercial city, with its 9 to 5 work force and its western-style dress.

Eighty per cent of Ceylon's 13 million inhabitants, however, live in the rural areas where living styles have remained relatively unchanged for centuries.

Although modern change and technology are creeping into this rural society, Ceylon is not experiencing the gradual population shifts to the urban towns and cities that are evident in industrialized nations. Industry is not widespread in an economy that has been traditionally supported by the export of tea, rubber and coconuts.

Ceylon is not with out the common problems of a "developing" nation. The world-wide problems of inflation and resource shortages in recent years have created further difficulties which make those of rich, developed Canada seem small in comparison.

We talk in Canada of our spiraling inflation and unemployment problems which many feel are leading us on a path of grave economic crisis and breakdown. Let's look at the economic situation in Ceylon.

The unemployment level in Ceylon is upwards of 14 per cent, roughly twice the current Cana-

dian level. With those under 25 comprising 60 per cent of the island's highly literate population, many of those unemployed are the products of Ceylon's free government sponsored high school and college education systems.

It was these frustrated unemployed graduates who spearheaded an unsuccessful attempt to overthrow the government on 1970. Compare our problems of inflation to those in an economy where the price of gasoline jumped from rupees 2.7 per gallon to rupees 12.50 per gallon in less than a year and a half.

Other commodities in short supply, especially foodstuffs, have likewise experienced 3 and 4-fold price increases over a similar time period. The food crisis is such that bread, rice, sugar, flour, dried fish and spices are rationed in order to keep the prices in reach of the consumer.

One only has to see the line-ups for the meagre daily bread ration, or to personally experience the frustration of not being able to obtain something you need, and one quickly becomes more appreciative of the tremendous freedom and range of choice we enjoy as Canadian consumers. One is not so quick to criticize the evils a drawing backs of our so-called "consumer society" either!

Ceylon's dependence on the production of tea, rubber and coconut for export had meant the neglect of domestic food production in past years. Until recently, staple foodstuffs like rice and flour had been imported but rising prices of these imports has led to corrective steps being taken. The import of food has been restricted, and the growing of rice paddy,

vegetables and fruit has been stimulated in an effort to achieve self-sufficiency in food production.

One of the more successful organizations which has been encouraging rural development for many years is the SARVODAYA SHRAMADANA movement. A private, non-government agency, the movement has been encouraging villagers of Ceylon to overcome the problems of their own social and economic development by tackling them on their own.

The movement features a philosophy based on non-violent action as taught by the great Indian leader, Mahatma Gandhi. It further stresses cooperation, sharing and equality as the basis for all its development work. The SARVODAYA program attempts to "awaken" the villagers to realize their own potential for development and to further initiate in them a spirit of self-reliance.

It endeavours to help the people understand that they can make and carry out their own development plans to meet their needs. They need not be dependent on the plans handed down to them by often ineffective government agencies.

From its humble beginnings 16 years ago, it has now grown to embrace over 500 villages in Ceylon and led to the establishment of a similar development program in various Asian and European countries. A SARVODAYA movement is soon to be initiated in Canada aimed at the problems of under-development in our rural areas including the Indian reserves. Four other young Canadians and I enjoyed the opportunity of voluntarily working within the movement this summer.

CHIMO help centre getting fewer drug calls

By SUSAN MACINNIS

"Chimo" is an Eskimo greeting meaning "I am your friend" and that is exactly what the CHIMO Help Center really is. They are not just a crisis center operated by youth for youth, but are a service offering information and referral for a variety of things - anything from talking down a kid high on drugs to assisting a weary traveller in finding accommodation.

The calls received by the center, which fall into approximately 30 classifications, are handled by a total staff of about 250-300 workers, 100 of which man the phones. The 150-200 are involved in practical aid and resource. Practical aid involves the provision of emergency transportation and baby sitting, etc. in times when they are otherwise unavailable. Those involved in resource are professionals in the city, such as doctors, lawyers, who provide their services when there is no established agency in the area or the existing ones have closed.

A survey, done this past summer by the UNB counselling department, showed that the number of calls concerning drugs had diminished. The reason for this seems to be that most people prefer to go to their friends or to

other services such as the Rap Room to discuss their drug problems. The highest rate of drug calls is at the beginning of the summer when school lets out. Students in grades 9, 10, and 11, who are unemployable, become bored and turn to drugs. The number of calls decreases once school starts again. In October of this year the Fredericton branch only received two calls concerning drugs.

Due to the diminishing number of drug calls, the drug crisis center Insight dissolved their operation about one year ago. The CHIMO center, however, reports no increase in the number of calls they receive.

The RCMP have a new service whereby parents can submit any suspicious-looking drugs to CHIMO, who in turn pass them on to the RCMP for free analysis. The CHIMO people encourage this type of service as it may prevent unnecessary hassles between parents and their children.

The CHIMO Help Center, which is this week starting its fourth year of operation, can be reached between 9 a.m. and 1 a.m. seven days a week by phoning 455-9464, if you need help, information or just need a friend.

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New lecturer in Economics.

President John M. Anderson of the University of New Brunswick has announced the appointment of Vaughan Dickson as lecturer in the department of economics.

A native of Campbellton, New Brunswick, Mr. Dickson received his B.A. from UNB in 1971 and then studied at the University of Western Ontario for a masters in economics. He is simultaneously working towards a Ph.d. while teaching at UNB.

Mr. Dickson received four awards during his undergraduate years. He was given the Steel Company of Canada Bursary and the Sir George E. Foster Scholarship between 1966 and 1970 and was also awarded the W.S. Carter Memorial Scholarship as the outstanding student in first year English, and the Edwin Botsford Busted Memorial Scholarship as the student having the highest standing in third year economics.

When he attended the University of Western Ontario, Mr. Dickson was granted a graduate fellowship.