The Baily Star



might it due course be seen to

have taken over China - and

munism behind in a quite dif-

ferent way from what had hap-

pened in the Soviet Union.

The trappings of communism

remained in place, just as

many of the old systems of

government from the days of

place after the communist rev-

olution of 1949. Now capital-

ism was moving in fast under

markedly in the provinces of

China up and down the coast

from Hong Kong. Much of the

investment and expertise was

coming from the energetic in-

dustrialists of the British

colony. In the days of the

Cultural Revolution the wily

Deng was labeled a "capitalist-

roader." Twenty years later it

could be said that those who

accused him at that time knew

in 1992 when the British put a

different type of governor into

Hong Kong for the last years to

transition. Chris Patten, a lest-

of-centre Conservative minis-

ter, had lost his seat in the

April election. Prime Minister

John Major retired career

diplomat Lord Wilson and put

icy, although the British de-

nied it. Till then Britain had

tended to go along with what-

ever demands China made for

the preparations leading up to

democracy in Hong Kong, and

China wanted to keep it that

way. Patten came along with

plans for 1995 elections that

could involve 2.5 million peo

ple instead of a handful of elec-

China was furious, threaten-

ing to scrap the handover

agreement made by Margaret

Thatcher in 1985, and rela-

tions between China and

Britain turned frosty. Patten

had embarked on a high-risk

policy, but it may have been a

shrewd one. Behind the

Chinese anger was probably

fear that moves towards more

democracy in Hong Kong

might infect politically China

itself at a time when economic

infection was already taking

place. And - who knows? -

the public position might not

conform with Deng's real in-

most peaceful part of the

world. There were pockets of

serious violence, notably

Afghanistan. Tamil Tigers and

government continued the vi-

cious war in Shri Lanka and

seemingly endless civil conflict

plagued Burma, but the fragile

guerillas finally toppled the

regime of President Najibullah.

As always, there were many

factions and sporadic fighting

continued throughout the year.

An Islamic state was pro-

claimed and a fragile peace

was restored in Kabul under an

Thailand faced political

uphcaval after inconclusive

elections in March.

Demonstrations brought a mili-

tary crackdown. Fifty died. The

King intervened and General

Suchinda Kraprayoon resigned

as prime minister. New elec-

tions were again indecisive and

Chuan Leekpai became prime

minister — the first with no

military background since the

was restricted to communal

strife. The worst outbreak

came in India in December

when Hindu fanatics destroyed

a historic mosque at Ayodhya

in Uttar Pradesh and set off

unrest all over the country.

causing nearly 1,000 deaths. It

was an ominous event in a

world of increasing fundamen-

talism, but despite this out-

burst Asia overall seemed more

stable than it had been for the

whole of the 20th Century.

Elsewhere in Asia violence

1970s.

interim government.

In Afghanistan mujaheddin

peace held in Cambodia

Asia was now, relatively, the

There had never been any

It marked a big shift in pol-

Patten in his place.

1997

The stakes were high, then,

a thing or two.

This was happening most

cover of communism.

the emperors had remained in

For China was leaving com-

not the other way around.

OOK around the world as the year ends and the conclusion is incscapable: leaders of international stature are conspicuously absent. The faces of 1992 were the faces of 1991 and they were all floundering.

In Europe Mitterrand and Kohl were yesterday's men and Major was not measuring up. In Africa only Mandela stood out. In Asia the almost invisible, undeniably brilliant Denge controlled China still at 88, but he was at the end of his reign. Yeltsin was too embroiled domestically and had yet to prove himself internationally. Bush in the United States was a busted

In November came Clinton. Whether he is Fortinbras from the last scene of Hamet, a shining new world leader, no one could tell.

He was 46 and people began murmuring about Kennedy and a new Camelot and then remembered that the image of the legendary president and his court was now badly tarnished. Even in 1992, three decades after Dallas, his political bones were still being picked over.

Lack of leadership was the single stark feature of 1992. The vacuum meant governments were less than ever in control of events. Events were controlling them. No one seemed to know where they were heading.

Party the world was suffering a gigantic hangover after the end of the Cold War Although that event must prove enormously beneficial in the long term, it had led to a crisis of expectation and instead of bringing people better and more peaceful lives it had brought in its wake agonising new difficulties.

Had capitalism and the West really won the Cold War? It did not look that way to the skeleton people of Somalia or even to British teenagers secping in cardboard boxes in London's Strand.

It certainly had not looked that way to the shot-up people of Sarajevo lying in their hundreds in the hospitals or to the Turkish migrants blown to bits by Fascist bombs in Schleswig-Hostein. Uniformed militants strutting about in the newly united Germany sent shudders around Europe.

The recession that had begun at the end of the 1980s was biting ever deeper in the so-called North-Europe, North America and even now Japan. Europe's strongest economy Germany, was finding reunification tougher than it expected.

Yet in much of Asia the story was quite different. South Asia was affected by the recession. In Southeast Asia and China the trend was in another direction.

Growth rates in countries like Malaysia, Singapore Taiwan, South Korea, and Indonesia as we as in China itself were remarkable. In Guandong province it was reaching 15 per cent every year and in Malaysia eight per cent had become the norm Such was Malaysia's success it was able to announce the launching in Kuala Lumpur of the biggest urban development in the world.

Some developing countries had moved into the developed category to the point where the six countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations could say they were no longer interested in aid, only

in trade. The growing importance of this region and the countries of the Pacific Rim showed that the shift of economic power away from Europe and North America, so long forecast by the futurologists, was begin-

ning to manifest itself. Hong Kong was a key piece in this economic jigsaw and as the handover to China in 1997 began to seem just around the corner it looked as if, economically speaking. Hong Kong

2=the Year the World Floundered

Africa was a very different story. The Cold War had left bitter legacies - none more so than in southern Somalia, once wooed as strategically vital by the superpowers, stacked with arms by both and now left in turmoil. Warring factions remaining after President Mohammed Siyad Barre had

fed in 1991 went on fighting

and in their thousands the

people died, mostly from star-

vation. For much of the year the world took little notice. Overstretched aid organisations struggled helplessly as rabble armics looted the food shipments and children panted to death. Belatedly the UN sent a small contingent

which could not cope either. Then, in the last weeks of his presidency, George Bush decided to commit 28,000 troops to do what he called God's work." With a small number from 12 other countries, the US went in under the UN flag. Some called it a return to imperialism and its

timing was baffling. Much of the rest of Africa was plagued by drought and a continuation of old wars. High hopes of peace in Angola had faded by December. Fighting between the UNITA rebels of Jonas Savimbi and the Luanda government had stopped for a time and multiparty elections were held surprisingly peace-

The result was indecisive and Savimbi rejected it, despite the observers' verdict that it had been fair. He would not wait for the required second round of polling and UNITA swiftly occupied more areas of the country.

In Mozambique, too, the agony went on. It was now wracked by drought as well as war and the rebel Renamo movement was slow to make peace. Agreement between Renamo and the Maputo government was finally signed in Rome on October 4. After 16 years of war fingers were crossed that peace would at last come. UN observers moved in and Zimbabwe began to withdraw the 5,000 troops had committed Mozambique to protect communications to the coast.

The civil war in Liberia showed no signs of ending and now spilled into Sierra Leone. The Nigerian-led West African peacekeeping force, exasperated by attempts by Chares Taylor's National Patriotic Front to capture Monrovia, found itself battling to defend

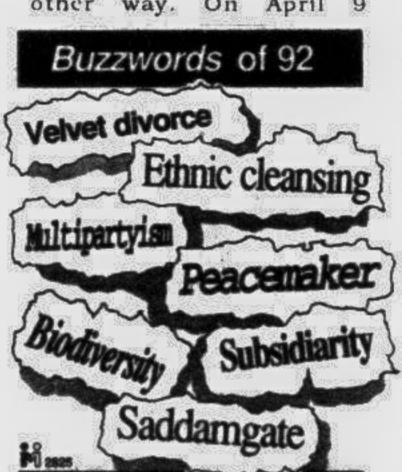
by Derek Ingram Editor, Gemini News Service

southern Africa for the second year devastated agriculture in southern Zimbabwe, Malawi, parts of Zambia, South Africa and neighbouring countries. Crops shrivelled to dust and huge numbers of wildlife died. Bulawayo was almost down to its last drops of water when rains at last brought relief.

Yet all was not gloom in Africa: despite economic stress as donor countries, the Word Bank and IMF pressed structural adjustment and political reform, large areas remained stable. Almost every other country held multiparty elec-

Following Zambia in 1991, Syccheles, Cameroon, Kenya, and Tanzania set out on the multiparty road. Ghana and Lesotho began to move from military to civilian rule and Nigeria struggled along the same path.

Only Sierra Leone went the other way. On April 9



President Joseph Momoh, who had agreed to multiparty politics after a referendum, was ousted by young army captain Valentine Strasser.

In Seychelles ex-president Sir James Mancham returned from a 15-year exile to fight a multiparty election to choose a constitutional commission. It resulted in victory for the man who had ousted Mancham President Albert Rene., Then the commission's draft was rejected in a referendum and it was back to the drawing board.

Multipartyism in some places made a bad start. In Cameroon President Pau Biya narrowly won an October pres idential poll. The opposition alleged irregularities, riots broke out and an emergency was declared. In the Central

multipartyism, called an election for December 9, then was forced by the courts to postpone it till December 29. His forecast that parties would follow tribal lines looked like being fulfilled as his main opponents, led by veteran Oginga Odinga, split.

In Lesotho return to civilian rule with multiparty elections was planned for early 1993. Extled Moshoeshoe II was allowed home, but his son remained King.

In Nigeria the year was peppered with preliminary polls that were supposed to lead to presidential elections on December 9. Parliamentary elections went satisfactorily but two attempts to hold presidential primaries failed miserably because of fraud and bribery. All 26 candidates and the leaders of the two political parties were disqualified by President Ibrahim Babangida. A new timetable was set for

1993. At year's end even the Life President of Malawi, Dr Kumuzu Banda, announced a referendum to decide whether to adopt multiparty rule news that coincided with the death after 12 years in jail of his political rival Orton Chirwa.

In Algeria President Chadli sendjedid suddenly resigned after Islamic fundamentalists won elections. A second round polling was canceled. A council of state was set up. Rioting was followed by a state of emergency. Independence hero Mohamed Boudiaf was brought from 27 years in exile in France and made President. Five months later he was dead assassinated by a man in a police uniform.

The year promised well in South Africa. In March President de Klerk held a referendum asking the five million whites whether they agreed to continuation of his reform process - and they voted Yes.

After that the process stalled. Violence grew alarm ingly. Relations between Nelson Mandela and de Klerk cooled, mainly because the African National Congress (ANC) was convinced a third force was fuelling the violence, particularly between the ANC and Chief Gatsha Buthelezi's Inkata Freedom Party.

Although de Klerk repeatedly denied the existence of such a force, it gradually

political parties. The Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA) did not sit after Boipatong. Yet much talking still went on behindscenes and in November de Klerk suddenly announced that an interim government should be put in place by April 1994. The ANC said this was too far off and pointed out that the country's economy was bleed-

In December a three-day meeting between ANC and the government raised hopes of an interim government by May 1993. Ominously Buthelezi announced plans to turn Natal and his KwaZulu homeland into an autonomous state.

In 1992 for the first time South Africa accepted the presence of international monitoring groups. A small number of observers were sent by the UN, the Commonwealth and the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) to suggest ways of reducing the level of violence.

An encouraging feature of 1992 was the growth of international monitoring and peacekeeping operations. Mainly this was happening through the UN, but the Commonwealth, the European Community and even such bodies as the OAU and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) were playing a role.

Election monitoring was becoming increasingly acceptable. The Commonwealth found an important new role in helping with election preparations, constitutional drafting, improved parliamentary practice and observing the polls. The Americans were also increasingly active through the Carter centre to promote democracy.

Under its new Secretary-General, Boutros Boutros-Ghai, the UN found itself involved in a record number of operations and it was increasingly stretched. Boutros-Ghali, less smooth than his over-diplomatic predecessor Perez de Cuellar, ruffled the West by suggesting it was showing more concern for Yugoslavia than for Somalia. Third World countries worried that since the Gulf War the UN was beginning to be run by the US and its Western allies on the Security Council.

At the Non-Aligned Movement summit in Jakarta. Prime Minister Mohamad Mahathir of Malaysia spoke for many countries when he said that "recent history must convince us that a unipolar world



"...now no one seemed to know which way to turn next. The world was walking blindfold into 1993'

of change still seemed remote and certainly it was not something the US was going to favour. But the problem would not go away.

The area causing most concern by the end of 1992 was the Balkans. Throughout the year war raged in the central part of what was Yugoslavia, mainly in Bosnia-Herzegovina, which found itself being carved up by the Serbs and the Croats.

No faction was blameless, but as the year wore on it became increasingly clear that attempts were underway to create a greater Serbia Soon the Serbs held two-thirds of Bosnia.

The suffering was immense. For the whole year Sarajevo, a city for ever associated with the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand which precipitated World War One, was under siege.

The ugly term ethnic cleansing suddenly came into use as whole communities were uprooted and thousands held in detention. In a year which had seen fascism emerging again in Germany the concentration camp came back into existence, and Europe once more saw thousands of refugees fleeing from political and religious persecu-

The European Community had come into existence with the aim of preventing situations like this ever arising again in Europe, but it seemed unable to cope. Pushed along by Germany, it complicated the problem by recognising Croatia and Slovenia as sovereign states.

No EC country wanted to get militarily involved in the historically turbulent Balkans. The concentration was on mediation and ceasefire negotiations. British Prime Minister John Major convened a conference of all the parties in London. Most made promises they promptly broke as soon as they got home.

Lord Owen, for the EC, and Cyrus Vance, for the UN, shuttled around Europe and had some success — for example, in securing with UN help a withdrawal of Serbians from the peninsula overlooking the damaged historic city of Dubrovník and making it a demilitarised zone

The UN became increasingly involved, so that by December it had 23,000 troops policing enclaves in Croatia and ferrying food across Bosnia-Herzegovina Airlifts helped build supplies

in Sarajevo for the winter. Ethnic cleansing was being directed at the Muslim communities of Bosnia, and many Muslim countries became rest less over the West's apparent lack of concern for these communities. Middle East countries threatened to flout the UN arms embargo and give the Bosnian Muslims funds to buy weapons to defend them-

As the year closed, pressure grew for the UN to move from its passive policing role to one of peace enforcement. Western countries were determined to keep their troops out of the fighting, but no one really knew what to do and fears of major war in the Balkans were higher than at any time since the trouble started. Again,

things on its mind. The Maastricht Treaty, for instance. At the end of 1991 the 12 countries had left Maastricht happy with an agreement that would bring them closer to economic and political union. The British had opted out of parts of it and helped water down references to federation and a common

currency A year later the landscape had changed. Denmark voted by referendum against the treaty and France voted Yes by only a whisker. The British iprevaricated on ratification Anti-EC forces welled up again and Prime Minister Major was forced to go slow. Then came Black Wednesday — the day, September 16, when pressure on sterling cost Britain £2 billion in foreign reserves and forced tt to leave the European Exchange Rate Mechanism (ERM). Pressure on the lira forced Italy to guit it as well.

The pound floated down by 20 per cent only days after Major had pledged it would not be devalued, further fuelling anti-EC feeling in Britain all at a time when Britain was holding the six-month presidency of the EC.

In December, at the end of the presidency, Major at last had some luck. He chaired a final summit in Edinburgh that restored some harmony among the 12 leaders. It made a pact on financing, agreed to Danish opt-outs on Maastricht like those given to the British and paved the vay for enlargement of the Community.

Major was having an extraordinary year of triumph and tragedy. The man who had succeeded Thatcher in 1990 waited almost to the end of the Conservative Party's five-year term in office in the hope that recession was ending, then called an election for April 9.

The opinion polls showed the Labour Party set to end 13 years of Tory rule. They were wrong. Major the man critics labelled grey, won by 21 seats. It was only one fifth the size of Thatcher's majority, but he was now able to claim to be Premier in his own right.

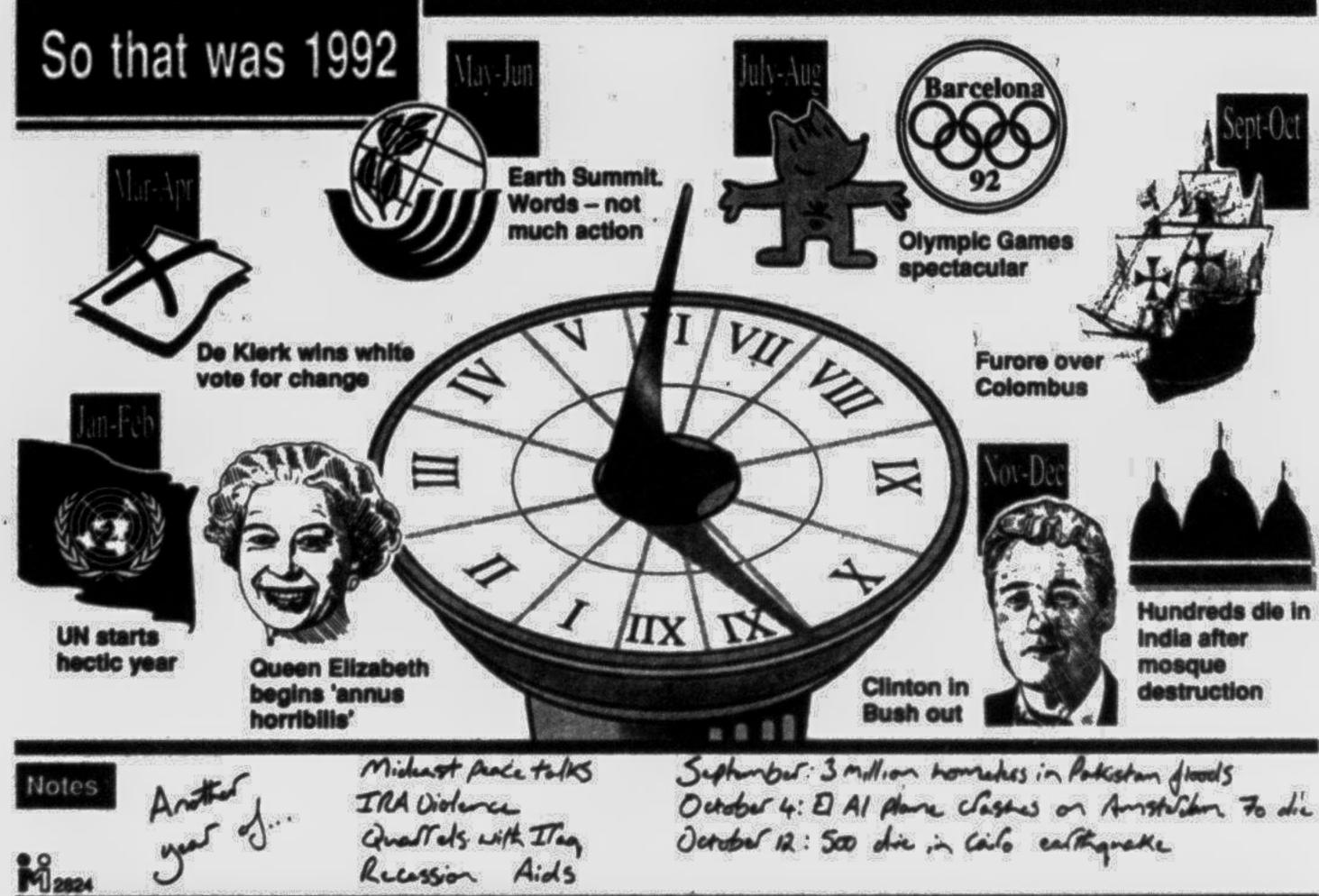
After the election nothing went his way. The recession deepened, his ministers went from blunder to blunder, scandals abounded, and then came Black Friday. Rarely had there been such a quick political fall. On top of this, came the plight of the world's most pub-

licised monarchy

In the 40th year of her reign Queen Elizabeth met what she called in the saddest speech of her reign her "annus horribilis." For months the tabloid press had been digging away at the anties of the royal relatives. Although much press behaviour was scandalous, there was substance in the stories. All was not well in the

House of Windsor.

The marriages of all the Queen's children (Prince Edward being unmarried) had fallen, or were falling apart. Princess Anne divorced her husband and remarried in December, the Duke of York was separated from his wife, Sarah, and then the Prince of Wales and Princess Diana separated. All this fuelled criticism of the fact that, under a deal done by her father in 1937,



the capital. Fighting was the

heaviest for two years. The fourth area of major conflict remained south Sudan. where the almost totally unreported war intensified as the Islamic fundamentalist government made new efforts to break the rebels. Towns were captured and peace talks were opened and adjourned in Abuja, Nigeria. But fighting went on. UN aid was blocked.

and the plight of refugees became ever more serious. Failure of the rains in

African Republic elections on October 28 were canceled by the Supreme Court three days later because of irregularities And in Togo transition was stalled when President Etienne Eyadema refused to step down.

Kecussian

Aids

In Chana military ruler Jerry Rawlings donned a civilian suit, fought a multiparty presidential election and won. Parliamentary elections were to follow on December 29. In Kenya, President Daniel arap Moi, a reluctant convert to

emerged that elements of the army and police were stirring trouble, and that de Klerk must have been privy to it. His integrity had become suspect. In one of the worst inci-

dents IFP followers were accused of killing 45 people in Boipatong township near Johanesburg: In another, ANC supporters marching a the Ciscki homeland were mown down by troops and 29 died.

For much of the year little formal negotiation took place between government and the

is every bit as threatening as a bipolar world." A new world order could not be determined by the few and forced on the many. He warned: "Without the option to defect to the other side, we can expect less wooing but more threats."

Pressure was growing from developed and developing countries for reform of the UN system, with enlargement of the Security Council to include more permanent members such as India, Indonesia, Japan and Germany. The likelihood

leadership was missing. The EC had many other

the Queen paid no income tax

Continued on page 1,1