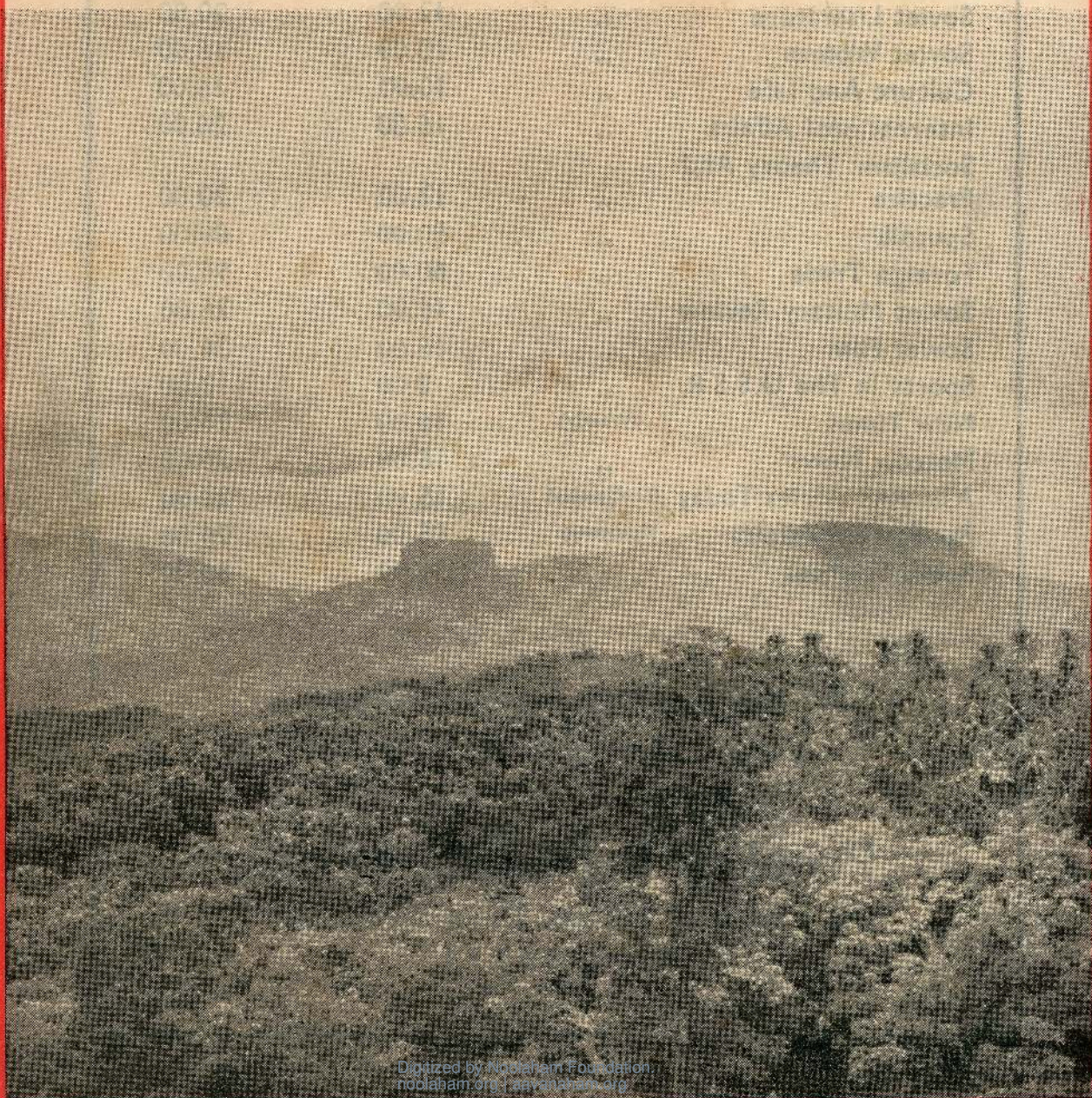


TRIBUNE



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Letter From The Editor

THE PRIME MINISTER in his speeches at the Plantation Seminar, in the NSA and elsewhere has persistently stressed that Sri Lanka had a bedrock of "socialism" and that the present UNP Government had no intention of changing this "socialism". He also does not miss any opportunity to point out that Sri Lanka owing to its democratic traditions had one thing which other "socialist" countries did not have viz., 'an Opposition'. "At the same time, I would like to ask not only you but in Parliament when I speak, tell me any country in the world which is completely socialist that has an Opposition, except in this country. I need not mention names of these countries. We have as far as means of production, distribution and exchange are concerned no private ownership, the State owns them. Being Prime Minister of the country, I should not mention names of countries, but you can, thinking yourself, tell me any country which is socialist either in the East or in the West which has an Opposition or a Leader of the Opposition." And into this he cleverly wove an indirect answer to the charge that his Budget had discarded "socialism" in favour of private enterprise. "Some say that by this budget we are trying to revive the private sector. I would like to ask them that if we did change this budget and introduced a purely socialist budget and took over everything would there be an Opposition? Would there be a Leader of the Opposition? Would there be a leader of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party? Give me one example in the world where a socialist country has an Opposition I will follow that. There is none." But one of Mr. Jayawardene's main contentions in defence of the Budget was purely apologetic rhetoric. "So we have to travel on our own path. That is why this budget was introduced in this way. It may not contain all what we think it should contain, but I would ask you what else could we have done?" And then he proceeded to explain: "We could have introduced a budget like the Sirimavo Bandaranaike government and then we would not have been able to import a single bus, to put our bus service in order. We need 200 new buses. We would not have been able to import a single new bus. We would not have been able to improve our railway. We need hundreds of wagons and engines. We would not import that. We could not import a single lorry in order to bring vegetables from the upcountry and the surrounding areas and sell them cheap. We need a big transport organisation. We could not import a single lorry. We could not allow machinery for import to a single industrialist. We could not allow spare-parts and we could not allow machinery, in other words, the entire working of this society in Sri Lanka, the State and the Private Sectors would have grounded to a halt. Another Sirima Bandaranaike government budget would have accelerated that process. Not only as the Finance Minister said we would not have been able to pay government servants their salaries, but where will he get foreign exchange to import rice and flour. The quantity that we want is problematical and would depend on the efficient management of the Estates that you are looking after." From this point, he went to say why his government had to seek and obtain foreign aid. He made it very clear that those willing to lend to Ceylon wanted the aid to be used for development work and not consumption and that for this reason the subsidies had to be cut. Before we go on to examine the mechanics of the foreign aid the UNP has received and the consequent cutting of the subsidies, it is necessary to examine the claim that there is "socialism" in this country? It is true that SLFP has shouted from the house tops that it had introduced socialism to Sri Lanka through parliamentary democracy? Even the LSSP, which should have known better, had claimed that socialism had been introduced by the so-called "radical" reforms it had stampeded the UF government to adopt. The LSSP had gone so far as to assert that as long as it was part of the United Front, the government could be considered "socialist" and that the moment the LSSP was thrown out by the SLFP, the government ceased to be "socialist" in spite of the lingering presence of the CP. The question is whether what is popularly called "socialism" in Sri Lanka is "socialism" in the sense Marxists understand it. There is no doubt that a true Marxist—be he of the Moscow, Peking, Yugoslav or even Albanian vintage—will not regard the public sector enterprises in Sri Lanka as "socialist". To him, what we have in this island in only "state capitalism" with the state apparatus still firmly in the hands of the feudalists, imperialists and the bourgeoisie which manipulates the government through a facade of parliamentary democracy and the illusion of human freedoms. This confusion about what is and what is not "socialism" is often deliberately promoted by interested persons and parties. But, the time has come to call a spade a spade—if we are to have a proper understanding of the situation in the island.

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CONTENTS

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK	
—IMF's Kanganies	p. 2
BUDGET—4	
—Bandaranaike Socialism	p. 5
BETWEEN THE LINES	
—Police & Public - 2	p. 7
BOUQUETS	
—Including E.L. Senanayake	p. 8
QUIDNUNCS	
—Mixed Grill	p. 10
SRI LANKA CHRONICLE	
—Dec. 1—5	p. 11
STEVE BIKO	
—On Black Consciousness	p. 14
MAHAWELI	
—Can It Be Done?	p. 16
DR. NOEL BARTHOLOMEUS	
—Remembered	p. 18
RANDOM THOUGHTS	
—Communal Disturbances	p. 19
GRAMA SASTRA - 3	
—Death & Peasantry	p. 21
LETTERS	
—From Our Readers	p. 22
LEFT ELIMINATED	
—Sucker Punch	p. 23
CONFIDENTIALLY	
—IMF & Sri Lanka — 3	p. 24

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

UNP, IMF And Its Kanganies (six) In Colombo

Colombo, December 12.

The day after the Second Reading of the Budget was concluded on 2nd December 1977, the Local Government Election Amendment Bill was adopted unanimously in the NSA. The Bill introduced the principle of direct elections of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor of Municipal Councils and Chairmen and Vice Chairmen of other local government bodies. Elections would be on the basis of proportional representation on party lists. One significant innovation is that the Bill confers for the first time in 40 years the legitimate right of the plantation workers to exercise their franchise in local government elections. Mr. Thondaman, who rushed back early from the ILO Conference at Manila to participate in this meeting, was elected Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee—this is the first time that a person of Indian origin has been elected to this high office. Another significant aspect of the debate on the Bill was that the Government (again for the first time) agreed, in principle, to publish the electoral registers in Tamil also throughout the island. When Mr. Thondaman moved an amendment to this effect, the Prime Minister intervened to say that the Government was accepting the amendment. It will be recalled that the UF and SLFP governments did not hold any local government elections for nearly 7 years.

It is also necessary to place on record that the Prime Minister, Mr. J. R. Jayawardene, gave a categorical assurance to the Tamils that their legitimate rights would be recognised and given every statutory safeguard: "Speaking at the end of the debate on the Budget, the Prime Minister, facing the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Amirthalingam, asked what rights there were for the minorities in the socialist countries with a federal form of government which he (Mr. Amirthalingam) had cited as models for Sri Lanka and whether the Opposition Leader would agree that there was no Opposi-

tion party in any socialist country. Mr. Amirthalingam agreed that there was no Opposition in the socialist countries. But the rights of the minorities, including the one to self-determination, had been guaranteed there. 'It is not so in Sri Lanka.' Mr. Jayawardene replied that there would be full guarantee for the rights of the minorities in the new Constitution. Mr. Amirthalingam said he was happy to have that assurance from the Prime Minister."

Further, speaking on the debate in the NSA on December 6 in regard to his own Ministry, the Prime Minister had elaborated: "I feel that the Tamil speaking people have a right to conduct their business in their own language. No one should be made to suffer because he does not know the official language. I am going to suggest this to the Committee appointed to look into the Constitution." Mr. Jayawardene said the Government had decided to do what was just and fair by the Tamil people, whether TULF participated or not in the work of the Parliamentary Select Committee to revise the Constitution. "Personally I have no racial or communal feeling. It does not matter to me one bit if a person is a Sinhalese, Tamil, Muslim or a Burgher. I have treated and will treat all persons as equals and nothing will change this." The Premier, however, said that the Sinhala Only Act had gone into the Constitution and therefore it would not be possible to change that particular piece of legislation. Referring to TULF's fears of non-Tamils settling in the traditional Tamil areas, Mr. Jayawardene said he could not agree with their interpretation of what constituted the traditional Tamil areas and added that it must be realised that we could not geographically divide this country into Sinhala, Tamil, Muslim and Burgher areas. On the question of workers of Indian origin in the plantation sector, the Prime Minister said he would show more attention to these unfortunate Tamil people than the Tamil people of the North and East. These people who were brought here as slaves continued to live in conditions far worse than other citizens of this country, he said. He intended to introduce legislation by which workers would not be workers through their lives but would be

able to become shareholders of estate and other business in which they had been toiling.

The highlight of the last stages of the Budget debate, however, was that Mrs. Bandaranaike, the leader of the SLFP, did not speak on the Budget as she was scheduled to do on the last day, December 1. On November 30 Minister of Agriculture & Lands, Mr. E. L. Senanayake, had dropped a bombshell by stating that Mrs. Bandaranaike had inflated her claims for compensation to the Land Reform by adding a "nought" to Rs. 69,000/- to make it Rs. 690,000. E. L. had asserted that he had the documents to prove what he said. On December 1, Mr. Maithripala Senanayake had stated that Mrs. Bandaranaike would not participate in the Budget debate because she was preparing a statement in regard to Mr. E. L. Senanayake's charge. On December 2, Mrs. Bandaranaike made a statement denying the allegation and also suggested that all her claims in this regard had been handled by her lawyers.

Mr. Senanayake was afforded an opportunity to reply to the statement of Mrs. Bandaranaike and he cited extracts from what purported to be the files relating to Mrs. Bandaranaike's claims under the Land Reform and the returns to the Income Tax Department. What he revealed, if true, constituted a mini-Watergate, and he demanded a Presidential Commission to present the information available to him. Mrs. Bandaranaike, interrupted him with denials stating that all E.L. said were "lies", and also demanded a Presidential Commission to prove that the charges against her on this matter were false.

On December 7, the SLFP daily *Dinakar* published a statement by her refuting the charges made by E. L. Senanayake: that apart from artificially inflating the value of her lands taken over by the Land Reform Commission, she had not declared the correct income from certain rubber and coconut lands. The main thrust of her argument was that she had declared her crop returns "per acre" whilst E.L. had read them out as for the whole extent. She had also made a point in the NSA statement on December 2 that there was no instance where she had claimed Rs. 690,000/- as the value of any

estate, but E.L. had subsequently admitted that there was an error and that the property which before 1971 was valued at Rs. 69,000/- was subsequently after the take-over, valued at Rs. 800,000/-.

Tribune will publish, in coming issues, the relevant statements by Mr. Senanayake and Mrs. Bandaranaike "for the record". But in the jungle of figures, statements, counter-statements, allegations and counter-allegations, it is not possible to know what is true and what is false. A Presidential Commission alone can go into this and find the answers to the many mysteries that seems to surround the whole matter.

The *Dinakara*, *Aththa* and the *Janadina* published Mrs. Bandaranaike's last statement, but it was only after the Speaker had ruled that the statement *per se* did not constitute a breach of privilege that the papers of the *Lake House Times* and *Dawasa* groups published it. The *Dinakara*, however, had slipped up and had committed breach of privilege in respect of two matters for which it was called upon to apologise. In the first case, in reporting the debate on the Local Government Amendment Bill, the *Dinakara* had attributed to Minister Premadasa a statement he did not make—that proportional representation would deprive all non-UNP parties of any chance of winning the elections. The second slip-up was to include a comment of its own in the statement of Mrs. Bandaranaike.

Whilst the appointment of a Presidential Commission is awaited, more and more instances where the Bandaranaike family are alleged to have violated the spirit and even the letter of the Land Reform Law were mentioned in the *NSA*. All this and more had been the subject of comment and gossip since 1972/73, but with the Emergency everything had been bottled up. Now, that the Horogolla volcano has burst—the possible repercussions are limitless. **WHILST THE COMMITTEE STAGE** of the Budget goes on, the most important under-current of significance revolves around the food subsidies and the rationing scheme. Esmond Wickremasinghe's article syndicated in all daily papers on November 27 of the *Lake House, Times* and *Dawasa* groups was a clear indication that important sections of the UNP had developed

second thoughts on the drastic cuts imposed on subsidies because of IMF stipulation in the "package." It is known that Esmond Wickremasinghe had rushed immediately after Budget Day to Washington and met McNamara, the World Bank and IMF chief, and it was on his return that this article was written and published. There is no doubt that the article had the blessings of important sections of the UNP and the Government.

Tribune, in its *Confidentially* column, has presented the logic of this article and the point and purpose of Esmond Wickremasinghe's somewhat naive thesis would be summed up, on the ideological level, in a final piece next week. In the meantime, certain important developments which have arisen on the question of subsidies and the rationing scheme make it necessary for us to examine the problem from a different angle (from that of the *Confidentially* column).

There has been wide publicity in recent days, that an army of enumerators would descend on all households in the island from December 10 onwards to assess the incomes of different families. Then, without any explanation, this "invasion" into privacy was called off and householders were called upon to collect forms at the Co-ops and fill them and return them within a week. But on Sunday December 11, a news item in the *Sunday Times* hinted that the rationing scheme proposed by the Finance Minister, as from January 1, has been postponed *sine die*. Obviously there is more to it than meets the eye.

There is of course the difficulty of processing the forms relating to 14,000,000 people in the island. But, the Government must have also become aware—if not, the CID and ISD should be sacked—that there was a movement, prompted by Opposition parties of the United Front, to ask people to refuse to co-operate in this form filling business and not to participate in the new exercise about IMF-okayed "rations."

The Government must be aware that though the off-ration price of rice was being held at Rs. 2.80 a measure, prices of all other food items—meat, fish, vegetables, dry fish, edible oils etc.—are still very

high and are daily going up. Devaluation has also given an opportunity to local industrialists, importers and other traders to jack up prices still further—and pay little heed to the reduction in the BTT, Customs Duty, etc.

In the meantime, it is also known that after Esmond Wickremasinghe's visit to Washington and his article, even the team of six IMF kanganes, stationed in Colombo, have been persuaded to review the position along the lines suggested by Esmond Wickremasinghe. It is pointless going into the question whether the earlier "surrender" to the IMF arose purely from the susceptibilities of Sri Lankan bureaucrats or whether Minister Ronnie de Mel too had been carried away by his new found enthusiasm for a "free economy". There is no doubt that "subsidies" have no meaning in a "free economy"—though it will be argued that even the allegedly "free economy" of the affluent West has begun to collapse in parts because of the protective tariffs (and other forms of protectionism) that have been recently imposed by the richest ten of the capitalist apex.

The UNP's Dharmista Economy seeks to synthesise (a) a just distribution of goods and services without controls (b) a free economy where private initiative would generate greater production and productivity and (c) a democratic society based on a free parliamentary system. The synthesis is to secure a happy society that will combine the social justice of "socialism" with "freedoms" of a "free economy" based on capitalist private enterprise. Sri Lanka is not the only country that has sought to attain this El Dorado with the help of the IMF. Most, if not all the other countries, which tried such an experiment, have got into major economic difficulties and disabilities. *Tribune* has, in the past, referred to happenings in Peru, Zaire, Mexico and Egypt (among others) and will do so again in the context of developments in Sri Lanka.

The simple position, as we see it, is that in a developing country with a poor economy, a just distribution of goods and services cannot be implemented without drastic controls. Secondly, such a just distribution cannot be achieved without food and other subsidies. Thirdly, under all circumstances a free economy

cannot subsist either with controls or subsidies. The objectives of a Dharmista Society thus revolve around self-contradictory concepts.

Marxists and socialists have tried to evolve a controlled economy to take developing countries on the path of rapid socialist economic development, but these experiments have not met with much success. The capitalist world through IMF packages has tried to push the "free economy" concept, but the massive devaluation coupled with the near-total withdrawal of subsidies have brought ruin to many countries, notably Egypt in recent times. And, in this process, the IMF has earned a well-deserved reputation as a Shylockian interest and debt-collector and that it was not interested in the growth and development of backward countries.

When the Ronnie de Mel Budget was announced on November 15 *Tribune* had characterised it as a **gamble**. It still is and always will be. But unlike Peru and Egypt, however, Sri Lanka has a chance of pulling off the gamble because (a) Sri Lanka has the potential of becoming a major producer of agricultural commodities—if the people will work; (b) Sri Lanka has a diversity of traditional and non-traditional exports—wanted in the world market. If Sri Lanka produces its own food, the drain of foreign exchange for importing food will disappear, and if Sri Lanka's production and productivity increases, it will take the path to prosperity. The world is short of food and Sri Lanka can become rich selling food produce.

But to get Sri Lanka's economy on to the rails of a free economy, stern measures of an economic nature have to be "enforced", and one among them is that subsidies must be quickly, if not immediately, withdrawn. The Budget speech originally envisaged rather drastic implementation of the IMF "free economy" formula, but political considerations regarding the immediate and future "stability" of the UNP seems to have made the Government want a further modification on the question of cutting down subsidies immediately.

If gossip in elitist circles is to be believed, McNamara, it would appear, was sympathetic to submissions made by Esmond Wickremasinghe about the danger to the UNP stability if the stern IMF measures are fully implemented.

It is known that a few measures originally insisted upon by the IMF kanganies were rejected by the Finance Minister. One such item was an IMF demand that the price of imported wheat flour should be increased so that the "subsidy" in the price of flour was reduced. It is even whispered that the IMF kanganies had threatened to cut down the quantum of the stand-by guarantee to "free" and "float" the Sri Lanka—rupee proportionate to the non-acceptance of the original IMF package. It will be interesting to see how the IMF high command will now "modify" its package as a result of UNP's second thoughts and Esmond Wickremasinghe's intercession with McNamara. With the bashing the IMF has received in many countries, there is a fair chance that the IMF will climb down so far as Sri Lanka is concerned.

There is also a general confidence in governmental and UNP circles that wishes of Sri Lanka will prevail over the narrow *diktats* of the IMF kanganies. This is probably because there is a belief that the leaders of the big Western Powers will help the J. R. Jayawardene government to stabilise itself in power. If McNamara does not oblige, it is likely that Sri Lanka will appeal over his head to the rich governments that control the IMF and the IBRD. But McNamara probably knows the way the winds are blowing. Furthermore, the IMF and IBRD have to justify their existence. Their in famous role as interest and debt collectors has brought disrepute to capitalism and the idea of debt cancellation and debt moratoria have gained ground among third world nations. McNamara and the IMF have now to show that in addition to debt-collection they would be able to help countries to register real growth along capitalist lines. Sri Lanka will probably be able to capitalise in the dilemma confronting the IMF.

Whatever the IMF does, there is no doubt that the UNP budget is a gamble. The devaluation will impose price increases of the most massive nature. Further, loan expenditure on an even more massive scale on the Mahaveli and other projects may provide employment to many, but unless there is a proportionate increase in production of goods and services for

consumption, the country will face a galloping inflationary upsurge of a kind that brought countries like Egypt to the brink of economic collapse. Finally, any cut in the subsidies will be resented and may provoke popular demonstrations, as in Egypt and other countries, unless the government is able to generate production inside the country, to meet the food and consumerist demands of the people.

In the ultimate analysis, an IMF package of the orthodox kind for a developing country can be implemented only by a ruthless military dictatorship. On the other hand, a socialist regime can also be enforced only by a dictatorship of the proletariat. So far as the common man is concerned, he has little choice in the matter.

Many interesting questions arise at this stage. How will the subsidy-cutting programme the IMF has imposed on Sri Lanka be modified to prevent any oppositional trends towards a "hartal"? Will such modifications buckle the IMF castles-in-the-air dreams of a "free economy" for a Sri Lanka that wants a just and democratic "socialist" set up? Where will the government find investment capital for development if the IMF stand-by is eaten up by consumerist imports and subsidies—this is a question that troubles Esmond Wickremasinghe? Can the Mahaveli project be really done in five or six years? Do people realise that it means 44 big, medium and small dams, 30 odd power stations, and also irrigation channels to serve a million acres of new lands? Does the government realise that unless there is simultaneous settlement of farmers in the Mahaveli area who will immediately produce "goods" and generate "services", the expenditure on Mahaveli will trigger an inflation that will overwhelm the country?

It is difficult in the circumstances, not to be pessimistic. The PM has argued: what else could we have done but to accept the terms laid down by the creditors? If the PM's gamble does not work, then it is anarchy. The real crux of the problem is to induce people to work—to produce goods and services. Can the UNP with its Dharmista philosophy and slogans succeed in doing this?

BUDGET — 4

Bandaranaike
Socialism

—On Printing Money—

IN EXAMINING THE EXTERNAL TRADE AND PAYMENTS during the period 1970-76, the Minister of Finance and Planning, referred to the drop in the production of tea, rubber and coconut and then went on to say: "Despite the poor production performance, boom export prices for the three products enabled the country to increase its total export earnings from Rs. 1,931 million in 1971, to Rs. 4,707 million in 1976. It is a matter for regret, however, that the country has not been able to derive the full benefit of the improvement in export prices due to the large short-falls in production. If production of tea, rubber and coconut had only been maintained at the optimum levels reached by us in the past, the country could have earned another Rs. 800 million in 1976 and Rs. 1,400 million in 1977 on the average prices fetched by these commodities in these years. This is inexcusable by any standards and the Sirima Bandaranaike Government is largely responsible for this, due to its corrupt and inept management of the plantation sector after Land Reform."

Then he set out the position in regard to imports: "In the period under review, the volume of imports declined by 20 percent; imports of food, textiles, intermediate goods and capital goods all fell drastically. The value of imports, on the other hand, rose by nearly 145 percent under the impact of oil price increases and general world inflation, the import price index rising by about 155 percent between 1971 and 1978. The terms of trade declined steadily from 78 in 1971 to 46 in 1975 under the impact of sharply rising import prices but improved significantly to 62 in 1976 with a decline in import prices on the one hand and an increase in export prices particularly of tea, on the other."

This led to trade deficits: "These developments in the external trade sector resulted in heavy trade deficits, especially in 1974

and 1975 when they amounted to Rs. 1,263 million and Rs. 1,421 million respectively, the highest ever recorded in Sri Lanka. The deficits on current account in the balance of payments also remained high because of the trade deficits and high levels of debt service payments on foreign loans. Capital repayments on foreign loans alone rose from Rs. 96 million in 1971 to Rs. 233 million in 1976. All these factors contributed to a large external resource gap during the seven-year period."

The manner in which the deficits were financed showed that "The pattern of financing the external resource gap has undergone some changes in the period. The country's reliance on relatively more expensive external sources of financing such as suppliers' credits and short-term credits has increased, the former from Rs. 282 million in 1970 to Rs. 910 million in 1976 and the latter from Rs. 800 million to Rs. 356 million during the same period. There has also been a substantial increase in bilateral and multi-lateral aid from the traditional sources. Aid commitments from the Sri Lanka Aid Group countries increased from Rs. 470 million in 1971 to Rs. 1,412 million in 1976, while multi-lateral aid rose from Rs. 213 million to Rs. 824 million in 1975 declining, however, to Rs. 273 million in 1976."

Then, Mr. de Mel went on to examine the most disturbing aspect of the economic developments—monetary policies. "The seven-year period ended December 1976 witnessed an unprecedented increase in the money supply, its level rising by over 120 percent from Rs. 1,883 million to Rs. 4,166 million. The increase in the previous seven years, by way of contrast, amounted to only Rs. 540 million or 40 percent. The impact of the sharp increase in the money supply can be discerned, though to a very limited extent, in the increase of 54 percent in the cost of living index which compares with an increase of 22.8 percent in the previous seven years. The real increase in the cost of living is of course much greater and assumed astronomical proportions particularly in the last two years of the last Government."

Mr. de Mel pointed out: "More than 50 percent of the increase in

the money supply took place in the last two years of the period under review. It would therefore, be interesting to examine the developments in the last two years separately. In the first five years, the money supply rose by Rs. 1,063 million, the major expansionary factor being an increase of Rs. 750 million in net bank credit to the private sector (which includes Government corporations and the co-operatives). External assets (net) of the banking system also rose by Rs. 451 million. These two expansionary forces were, however, offset significantly by a decline of Rs. 204 million in Government's net borrowing from the banking system. Budgetary operations in the first five years as a whole, thus, had the effect of mitigating the monetary expansion that arose from the operations of the private sector and the external sector.

REFERRING TO THE CHANGE in the Ministry of Finance in 1975, Mr. de Mel stated: "The year, 1975, Mr. Speaker, witnessed a change in the Ministry of Finance. The country saw the commencement of a mix of financial, economic and monetary policies which, if I may be permitted an understatement, could only be called reckless, irresponsible and insane. A fantastic theory of money was propounded in the Budgets of 1976 and particularly of 1977, a theory that, if successful, should have won for its proponent, and not for Milton Friedman, the Nobel Prize for Economics as I stated in my speech during the Second Reading Debate of the last Budget on 18th November 1976. It was, in short, a policy which was calculated to win the elections for himself, for Mrs. Bandaranaike and for the SLFP without the slightest considerations of the cost to the country, its people and their future well-being. 'Hieta Marunath Hithata Sepai, Chandiya Dinala'. That was the theme song. But the result was just the opposite. The Radalayas always think that the people are fools. The people of this country are not fools—they proved this once and for all to the Radalayas. When Aristotle said that man is a political animal, he was not only thinking of the Athenians of the 5th Century B.C. but the Sri Lankans of the 20th Century A.D. The politically conscious people of Sri Lanka rejected these reckless and

irresponsible policies and promises and defeated their author and his party."

He also referred to the "printing of notes" indulged in by Mr. Felix R. Dias Bandaranaike. "In the two years 1975 and 1976, Government expenditure exceeded original estimates by substantial margins and the SLFP Government sought the easy way out of financing the increased expenditure by, to put it in common parlance, 'printing money.' The Sirima Bandaranaike Government probably felt that the only instrument necessary was a printing press and all financial and economic problems will vanish. In the two years together they borrowed, on a net basis, Rs. 813 million from the banking system, a substantial part of it, incidentally, in a devious manner by issuing Government bonds directly to the two State banks, a practice not normally followed but was resorted to in this instance because the Treasury Bill limit sanctioned by the National State Assembly had been exhausted. The expansionary forces emanating from the operations of the private sector and the external sector amounted to only Rs. 201 million and Rs. 256 million respectively. The resultant increase in the money supply in the two years was Rs. 1,220 million as against the increase of Rs. 1,063 million in the previous five years."

Mr. de Mel could not resist the temptation, at this point, to have a swipe at the SLFP: "This was the ruinous road to Dompe socialism or to put it more precisely Bandaranaike socialism! The country has stated quite clearly and emphatically that they have had enough of Bandaranaike socialism and that they will now look forward with courage and determination in the Jayawathata Jayawardene socialism. Mr. Speaker, I need hardly enter into a scholarly discourse on the effects of an excessive increase in the money supply. Suffice it to say that the unprecedented monetary expansion in the past seven years has eaten very much into the value of the Rupee, imposing in the process intolerable burdens on the common man. '*Rupiyale age adu vela thiyana tharama ada Rupiyale kelivath nehe.*' (The value of the Rupee has declined so much that the Rupee is now in tatters). The money supply has continued to increase rapidly upto the time the present

government took office and our own efforts to ease the burdens of the people will be rendered that much more difficult in the coming months because increases in the money supply react on prices with a time lag. The Monetary Board, which has been statutorily charged with the responsibility of maintaining monetary stability in the country has, I find, repeatedly warned the previous Government of the dangers inherent in the policies followed by them but such well-meaning advice has fallen on deaf ears. The Sirima Bandaranaike Government has always operated on the principle, '*I am Sir Oracle, and when I open my lips, let no dog bark!*' In my view the actions of the former government aimed at securing short-term political benefits at the expense of the long-term welfare of the people is an economic offence of the highest order, which is inexcusable in any government which calls itself responsible to the people."

THE FINANCE MINISTER dwelt at length in surveying the fiscal trends for the period under review: "The major fiscal trends in the last seven years have been the continuous and fast growth of recurrent expenditure and the failure to increase Government revenue so as to generate a substantial surplus on current account to support the capital expenditure of the government. The recurrent expenditure (including advance accounts) of the Government rose from 2,860 million in 1969/70 to Rs. 5,635 million in 1976, while revenue rose from 2,736 million to Rs. 5,750 million in the same period. The increase in recurrent expenditure arose from the Government's commitment to provide a large amount of resources for welfare expenditure, which in the main consisted of resources that were committed on the food subsidy and on the provision of free health and educational services."

On the question of revenues, he said: "While the expenditure policies of the government have to take a fair share of the blame for the present plight of the country, the problem was further compounded by the fact that the revenue system of the country lacked the elasticity that would have yielded adequate revenues. The lack of growth in the economy has ensured that revenues did not

grow commensurately with expenditures. Equally important is the fact that our tax system continues to be heavily dependent on the foreign trade sector. This is true, whether you take what are directly foreign trade based taxes like export, import duties or FEECs or whether one looks at the taxes like income taxes and BTT which are supposedly domestically based. With the poor performance of the export sector, no doubt aided in a large measure by incorrect policies, and a largely curtailed import programme consequent to a rise in import price particularly since 1973, revenues have hardly been adequate by and large to meet even the recurrent expenditure of the government. While the capital expenditure of the Government rose from 1,026 million in 1969/70 to Rs. 3,363 million in 1976, an increasing proportion of it was given in the form of capital contributions to public corporations. Such capital contributions at the end of 1975 stood at nearly Rs. 4,600 million but the contributions of these corporations to the Consolidated Fund in 1976 amounted to only Rs. 162 million or about 3 percent. Indeed, these contributions were offset to a considerable degree by current transfers to corporations which had sustained losses. As I have already mentioned, these were the consequences of mismanagement and unrealistic pricing policies and a virtual negative return on such a huge volume of investment was bound to create serious budgetary problems, as indeed it has done in the period under review. The public sector in Sri Lanka has proved both corrupt and inept and was a virtual millstone round the necks of the people of our land during the last seven years, adding to their burdens."

The failure of the public sector in which so much capital had been invested to rise up to expectations increased the debt burden: "The entirety of the capital expenditure, indeed even a part of the recurrent expenditure, had to be financed in the absence of Government saving, by internal and external borrowings. The resource mobilisation effort of the Government through rupee loans, where most of the investments come from non-bank sources, has indeed been an impressive one

but these funds were being raised at a substantial cost of 9 percent per annum. The net result was that the Government has been saddled with a progressively increasing interest bill on domestic borrowing, that has increased from Rs. 206 million in 1969/70 to Rs. 661 million or 12 percent of the total recurrent expenditure of the Government in 1976. The dependence on foreign finance both commodity as well as project aid has also grown in the period under review to support the investment programme of the Government, with its consequent debt servicing problems. The culmination of the trend starting with the paucity of Government savings and the inadequacy of the already substantial domestic and foreign borrowings can be readily observed in the budgetary position reached in 1976 when the Government had to have recourse to the banking system to an unprecedented level of Rs. 639 million to finance its expenditures. What better illustration can there be for the sorry economic plight in which the country finds itself today?"

In the next part of the Budget Speech, Finance Minister, Mr. Ronnie de Mel, examined more closely the developments in 1976 and 1977—no doubt because many factors will have an intimate bearing on the Budget for 1978.

(To be Continued)

BETWEEN THE LINES

BY SERENDIB

Police And The Public—2

*POLICE. The debate in the NSA on the votes for the Ministry of Defence brought forth criticisms about the police from all quarters, mainly UNP backbenchers and the TULF. Many UNP-front benchers voiced criticisms about the police during the last regime and also referred to some hangers on, but UNP backbenchers complained that the Police had still not changed: that many police officers continued to act in the same old way and that many officers who should

have been sacked were being promoted over the heads of more efficient officers with good records. The PM undertook to effect many changes in the Police and emphasised that what was essential was a change in the entire make-up of the Force and the thinking that motivated the officers. He said that the Police Force had deteriorated owing to the undue political influence of MPs and Ministers including the Prime Minister of the last regime. Mr. Jayawardene said that the present government would not ask a police officer to break the law—that had been done by the last Prime Minister "*i would put the blame of the breakdown of the morale of the police service fairly and squarely on the previous government and the former Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike. She used the police like her private home-guard and looked after the country like her coconut estates.....*"

Even before the debate on the police vote (the army did not come in for any criticism—only praise), Minister Montague Jayawickrema's exposure last week about an ISD report about himself by an officer P. S. P. Fernando had triggered a whole series of changes. But mere changes in the top rungs are not enough. The debate in the NSA revealed the depth and sweep of distrust and animosity against the Police.

But police die-hardism will not end so easily. The Week-end of Sunday, December 4, had a blood-curdling headline ANTI-SUBVERSION. SINGAPORE STYLE: NEW LAWS TO CURB INSURGENCY. The report by P. Balasuriya stated:—"Sri Lanka will soon have an Internal Security Law to deal with a variety of matters including subversive and anti-national activities. Draft legislation is now being prepared by the Legal Draftsmen's Office for this purpose. It is understood that it is being modelled on the lines of the Internal Security Act of Singapore. One of the significant features of this law will be the conferring of wider powers to the Police. The introduction of this new law, according to legal circles, is being done on the advice of the Police who is of the view that a law of this nature was essential to maintain law and order of a high order. Among other matters, this law contemplates giving the Police powers to detain a

person without producing him before a magistrate for a period of thirty days for offences falling within the ambit of the law. At present the detention is confined to 24 hours and the Police are required to produce anyone arrested before a Magistrate if further remanding is necessary." The Sun of December 12 modified its earlier story by saying, "According to informed sources, the new Act will be modelled on the Singapore Internal Security Act, but there will be no harsh punishments as provided in the Singapore Act."

This story is obviously, a police-inspired leak though attributed to "legal circles". Under the cover of fighting "subversion" and "insurgency", the Police want wide powers of arrest and detention. They want the Singapore model. It will be a travesty of Dharmista Society and Dharmista Justice to fall back on the ante-diluvian and anti-human rights legislation of Singapore where no Opposition is tolerated. All the leading Opposition leaders are held in detention without trial, some for over 10 years, under the pretext of fighting "subversion". What Amnesty International has to say about Singapore should be a warning to the UNP. The Weekend (Sun-Dawasa) kite-flying about anti-subversion laws—similar to South Africa's anti-communism laws—seems a little far-fetched at this juncture, although old-world policemen know only one way to contain political opposition: that is by draconian "anti-subversion" laws.

The PM, in the NSA during the debate on the police vote, however, had stated: (vide Daily Mirror, 7/12/77): "...the Government proposes to amend the Public Security Act so that any Government which wanted to rule under the provision of the Act beyond a certain period should obtain a two-thirds majority of the Assembly. They also propose to amend the Act so that any declaration under the Act should be debated and passed by the Assembly. At present the Assembly was notified of the invoking of the provisions of the Act only after its provisions came into force. He said under the previous Government which ruled under emergency for several years they tried to get a debate on the emergency but without success."

It is interesting to recall that our CID, ISD and other Intelli-

gence outfits of the Police have a dismal record. The much-publicised high-powered Internal Security Department of Sir John Kotelawela failed to spot the trend of public opinion which reduced the UNP to a caucus of 6 in the April 1956 elections. The so-called Mi-5 of Sir John Kotelawela had only a large number of bogus reports about politicians opposed to the UNP and Sir John. Many of these files were destroyed when the UNP lost and the few that fell into the hands of S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike in administration had shown how bogus the "confidential" reports were. The large-hearted S. W. R. D. forgave the police, made a few changes at the top and relied on them to maintain law and order with the help of a new Public Security Act.

But the Police and the CID failed to save his life. They were ignorant of the assassins who were out to murder him. Once again, in 1962 the CID did not have any idea that a Coup was round the corner—and only because one of the conspirators had got cold feet or a bout of conscience that the truth came out. Then in 1956, the Police failed to keep track of the anti-government conspiracy and once again it was from other sources that the government learnt what was afoot. But the biggest failure of the police was in 1971. The Police indulged in petty attacks on rebellious youth, but failed to realise that its barbarous harassment of the youth laid the foundation for April 5, 1971—which very nearly brought Police Raj tumbling down.

What the Government and the Police must realise is that stern and barbarous laws of the Singapore model will not contain "insurgency": that extra-wide powers to the Police, more often than not, induce insurgency as a defensive counter-action on the part of dissidents against Police cruelty. *Insurgency and political subversion can be effectively contained only by political action and not police barbarity, if the price line of essentials is kept down and if unemployment is reduced—subversion will be minimised. Otherwise no number of Singapore type laws will be of help.*

But strict laws and even a Public Security Act are needed to keep in check criminal elements which often use a political cover for robberies or anti-social actions; or

to curb political elements which adopt criminal methods to achieve their limited ends. What this country needs is a Public Security Act suitable for Sri Lanka—and not the barbarous anti-human right laws from Singapore.

The government will do well not to follow the advice of the Police on these matters. Mr. J. R. Jayawardene and the UNP will have another insurgency on their hands if they follow the advice of our police-diehards in regard to anti-subversion laws—and also if it follows the IMF blindly.

BOUQUETS

● Amunugama ● Premadasa ● Marasinghe ● Jayawardene ● E. L. Senanayake

*A MARVELOUS TRANSFORMATION has come over the English Service of the SLBC. Listeners say that a similar change has become discernible in the Sinhala and Tamil services too. The English Service was the most neglected in the last 10 to 15 years. It had received the most step-motherly treatment from the powers-that-be. Under the excuse of "de-thup-pahai-ing" allegedly Bambalawatte-tainted programmes, the English Services were debased into becoming horrendous caricatures of what they should be. Low calibre programmes were put on the air—to satisfy half-educated persons in the Palace Establishment who fancied themselves as patrons of art and culture or bureaucrats who developed illusions that they could teach Goebbels a thing or two. After the change of Government, last July, there was progressive improvement under the guardianship of Dharmasiri Peries. Now, under the "acting" Chairman and Director-General Sarath Amunugama, Secretary to the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, there has been a qualitative change which has become the talk of the town. In the NSA, during the Committee Stage, well-deserved compliments were paid to the SLBC. Even the diehard tendency of using over sixty percent of news-time to elaborate on self-congratulatory

Ministerial speeches has ended. No more, we hope, will listeners be compelled to listen to lengthy effusions of Ministers like M. H. Mohamed promising to build new railway lines to the moon—or, at least, for a start, a branch line from Beruwela to Ratnapura no sooner than the Matara-Katarama and Batticaloa-Kalmunai lines are built by him.

News broadcasts now have more "news", including foreign news with a long overdue emphasis on regional news. There is a myth in the SLBC that news should not be more than 10 minutes—a BBC hangover—but in a country where few can afford to buy all the papers (and only a few papers publish foreign news with a sense of awareness), a 15 minute news broadcast will not tire or bore listeners. The new feature detailing the highlights of the day's programme immediately after the news is an excellent innovation. The programmes on Channel 1 and 2, too, have improved in quality. Good programmes are being taken over from the BBC, COA, AIR, Radio Australia, Radio Netherlands and Radios from all the capitals of the world. Nimal Karunatilake's lobby notes at 9.45 p.m. everyday the NSA sits is awaited by all discerning listeners, but Nimal must learn to put a little more punch into his voice (there is a ponderous drowsiness in his intonation, he must avoid). The programmes have improved so much that many listeners are looking forward to acquiring pocket receiving sets in order to tune in wherever they are. A very big bouquet to Sarath Amunugama. How he has succeeded in getting the sleepy-heads at the SLBC to spring into action is a mystery—a new eighth wonder of the world!

*MINISTER PREMADASA hit the nail on the head when he stated in the NSA that newspapers, radio and the Government Film Unit should stop carrying pictures of Ministers and MPs of this Government: "What they should do is to contribute to better administration and better government. If there were shortcomings where this government's Ministers, MPs and particularly policies are concerned the mass media had the responsibility to bring to the notice of the government what were their shortcomings. We are not pleased to see pictures of our-

selves in the newspapers and in films wearing garlands. This will not help us to govern properly. We do not want to make the same mistakes the last government made by bloating their egos through the kept mass media." A bouquet to Minister Premadasa for wanting to emancipate the media, especially the official media, from the stranglehold politicians have imposed on it.

***THE CHAIRMAN OF THE FILM CORPORATION**, Upasena Marasinghe must be congratulated for laying down the rule that there will be no more film-purchasing jaunts abroad by State Film Corporation (SFC) officials; that all films—American, Western, Indian etc.—would be purchased in Colombo. It will be recalled that during the last regime SFC officials made innumerable trips abroad to buy films—and the whole business began to stink. And films were purchased to suit the whims and fancies of a few Corporation officials. In future, trade representatives in foreign embassies and company agents would be asked to furnish copies of films available for sale to SFC for exhibition at local panels to make their decisions. A bouquet must be handed out to Chairman Marasinghe for ending an atrocious racket and also establishing a rational system to enable the Corporation to provide a better variety and quality of films at the cinemas.

***THE PRIME MINISTER** continues to do and say things every day that earn for him bouquets by the hundreds. It is difficult to keep track of the right actions he takes and the profoundly correct words he utters. To pick on a few at random: (a) The PM has ruled that Cabinet Ministers will be allowed the use of helicopters only for journeys of more than 100 miles; that such trips should be approved by the PM himself; that payment for such trips should be met from the votes of the respective Ministries and not from Departments, Boards or Corporations; (b) the PM has appointed a chief Co-ordinating Authority and a Deputy to supervise the importation and distribution of essential goods, especially foodstuffs; that no better persons than G. V. P. Samarasinghe and General Attygalle could have been selected for the job; (c) the PM issued a decree to the top brass in the administration, the

gist of which was "talk less and work more;" this was a sequel to some Secretaries of Ministries airing views on policy matters outside the purview of their authority; that policy statements on any subject should be made only by the Ministers concerned; that Secretaries should only implement policies; (d) the PM has told the Police to make the city of Colombo—presently in the throes of gang warfare, armed robberies, and Kappan extortions—safe for all citizens; that he had told the Police that the streets of the principal city in the island should be made safe for all people, irrespective of caste, creed or religion; that the nation must not be held to ransom by thugs, hooligans and organised gangs of professional criminals and thrive on Kappan (protection) money. For all these and more, a handful of bouquets to the PM.

MINISTER E. L. SENANAYAKE deserves the thanks of the nation for triggering an inquiry into a matter which has been the subject of gossip and whisper for a long time: viz, the pre-and-post-Land Reform

transactions of the Bandaranaike family. Whether he read the Income Tax Returns of Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike correctly or whether he failed to see that the returns were only "per acre"—a strange way to make returns anyway—is immaterial. He has had the guts and the gumption to bring everything into the open. It will be recalled that the sacrosanct "secrecy" attached to Income Tax Returns and files was removed by an amendment moved by the United Front Government (SLFP, LSSP and CP). Against the advice of even dis-interested persons of standing and impartiality, the amending legislation was rushed through Parliament and Income Tax files were made available to the Exchange Control, to the Police and other concerned government departments. Retribution has over-

Other governmental departments which were given access to Income Tax files were expected to maintain "secrecy." *Tribune*, however, is aware that during the last regime certain policemen and politicians who had access to Income Tax files, directly or indirectly, did not maintain

COVER

BIBLE ROCK

ON THE COVER we have a distant view of what is popularly known as Bible Rock. The photograph was taken from a point near Kaduganawa Rock on the car road to Kandy. Many readers may wonder why we have used this picture this week. We had thought of Christmas and this was the only picture in our collection which had any connection with the Christian festive day. Every year, for many years now, *Tribune* has skipped one issue in the Christmas-New year period because there was a general shutdown of all activity in Colombo and the country. This year, *Tribune* will have no such holiday, and it will appear on December 24, December 31 and thereafter regularly from January 7, 1978. So much is happening these days that *Tribune*, which is already unable to cope up with the march of events with its 24 pages will get hopelessly out of date if one issue is missed. *Tribune* now finds itself inundated with so much sent to us for publication which we are not able to use. We have a very large number of articles of topical interest and also an even larger number of interesting letters-to-the-editor—that readers will find useful and thought-provoking. *Quidnuncs* have already flooded our editorial sanctum with so many inside stories and startling revelations that it will be a pity if these exposes do not see the light of day. Readers, staff-writers and regular contributors have filed so many *Bouquets and Brickbats* that must be published in the public interest. The only way in which *Tribune* can publish all this material together with comments and interpretative analysis is on the upsurge of politico-economic significance is to increase our pages. And this can be done by getting increased advertising. With every full page advertising we can publish two pages extra—and this will also help us to cover the backlog of arrears we have accumulated. We do not have an Advertising Promotion Department nor can we afford one at this stage. We therefore appeal to our readers to canvas advertising for us. We have now been placed on the list of papers in which Government places advertising and those who had inhibitions about advertising in papers not favoured by the Establishment need have no fears. With the New Year we hope to make some headway in this direction.

such "secrecy". Whilst earlier violators had dealt in whispers for quiet intimidation or blackmail, E. L. had roared from the house-tops to purge his aggrieved heart. A bouquet to E.L. for drawing attention to the urgent need, once again, to make Income Tax files sacrosanct and secret even to other departments including the Police. Whether it is courage or foolhardiness, E. L. took a big risk in referring to information in tax files that should have been kept "secret." If he proves his allegations before a Presidential Commission, Mrs. Bandaranaike must resign and spend the rest of her days in disgrace. If he fails to prove his allegations, or even if it be shown that he had only "misunderstood" what the files had contained, he has no alternative but to wear a Crown of Thorns and resign his Ministership and his Membership of the NSA. The allegations he made are serious and he must pay the price if he fails to prove them. And if he fails to substantiate the terrible charges he has made, and Mrs. Bandaranaike is able to vindicate herself, then E.L. will have succeeded in placing the halo of a martyr on Mrs. Bandaranaike and launched her on the road to a political comeback.

QUIDNUNCUS

● Appointments

● C.T.B. Spares ● Police

*QUIDNUNCUS report that it took the Chairman of a large State Corporation nearly two hours, many years ago, to pilot the appointment of a particular ministerial protegee to a key post in the Corporation. The Board favoured a choice between two efficient officials but the protegee was a relative of a Minister's buddy. This particular protegee survived and prospered with co-operation from colleagues in his erstwhile profession. The more the winning and dining and manipulating in the organisation, the stronger became his position therein and the weaker its service to the public. Came the Deluge and the important relative met another ministerial buddy. The protegee has now reached great heights where his advice will soon turn the wheels at a rapidly increasing rate. Quidnuncus want to know when the days of lick-spittles and favourites will end: when efficient officials and executives—and merit—

will be recognised: and when political appointees will no longer be able to change colours with every change of administration. Quidnuncus say that the persons who operate the system of favouritism and political skulduggery in appointments must know that all these hole and corner doings will soon be exposed to the full glare of publicity.

*QUIDNUNCUS say that it would be a crying shame if the bid of a man closely associated with a foreign firm succeeds in the quest for chairmanship of a major corporation. This firm has been the largest supplier of equipment and spares to the corporation and has had its interests represented locally throughout by a family which has moved politically with the times. To make the contender chairman would amount to a family lease on the corporation's activities. Quidnuncus are watching the situation carefully. They say that many mini-Watergates are in the offing—with UNP stalwarts after commissions, cuts and easy money.

*QUIDNUNCUS have also reported that over the years the practice has been for CTB spares to be ordered from the suppliers of bus chassis or from their original equipment suppliers, and that it has been virtually impossible for other manufacturers to break into the market. This state of affairs is changing fast. Orders for cylinder liners are being placed on a backyard manufacturer who is virtually unknown in India. Another Indian firm has succeeded in obtaining an order for filters. All this is well and good, say *Tribune's* Quidnuncus, on the basis of cheaper price. But what is going to happen to the bus services and the travelling public? Defective cylinder liners manufactured without dimensional control from improper materials and filters which do not remove dirt will ruin CTB engines. Wirewoven brakeliners, from sources which were black-listed, can cause a striking increase in brakedrum replacements. Orders for leaf-springs are being placed without sufficient precautions against supplies of poor quality. Will the safety of the bus passengers be endangered in this manner?

Quidnuncus ask why all this is being done now. Is someone deliberately opening floodgates to spurious products? Why has *The Source*

of Supplies Committee been rendered ineffective? Quidnuncus assert that an immediate and thorough investigation into recent activities in the commercial division of the CTB is essential. This should highlight the various dodges adopted by interested parties to manipulate the channeling of orders to their favourites. For example, say our Quidnuncus, that if inquiries are to be called from five registered suppliers and five letters are typed, only three reach their destinations. Two are lost in the post within the office. Ultimately quotations are scheduled showing two suppliers as not replying. An order goes to a favourite. Nobody cares to point out that it is strange that well-known suppliers should fail to quote repeatedly. There is no check at this end as to whether inquiries have reached destinations. This is an allegation which must be investigated carefully. If true it amounts to a gigantic and well-planned fraud.

Quidnuncus say that the search for frauds should include a check as to how an automotive spares supplier in the UK was given an order for seven and a half lakhs worth of spares on the basis that that Indian vehicle manufacturer did not quote on the inquiry.

NOTICE UNDER SECTION 7 OF THE LAND ACQUISITION ACT (CR. 460) AS AMENDED BY THE LAND ACQUISITION (AMENDMENT) ACT, NO. 28 OF 1964.

Reference No. ATH 3/570

It is intended to acquire the land described in the schedule below. For further particulars please see the Gazette of the Republic of Sri Lanka No. 295 (Part III) of 09/12/1977.

SCHEDULE

D.R.O's Division: Hewagam
Korale West
Situation : — —
Village : Battaramulla
Name of Land : Part of Assmt
No.125 Kaduwela Road,
Lot. No. : 1
Plan No.P.P.Co. : 4537

D. W. Abeywickrema
District Land Officer of
Colombo District

The Kachcheri
Colombo.
28.11.1977.

What happened to the Indian manufacturer's quotation of four lakhs. A letter to the Indian manufacturer will confirm that he did in fact quote. Who misplaced the quotation at this end? Is secrecy a cloak for large and rapidly increasing malpractices in the CTB? *Quidnuncs* say that the CTB will prove the Achilles heel of the UNP—if corrective action is not taken immediately.

***QUIDNUNCs** say that there is a great deal of whispering in police circles as to how police inspector P. S. P. Fernando, who filed a report that Montague Jayawickrema was involved with the insurgents, was able to secure a promotion as ASP. It is said that his boss, Cyril Herat, SP head of the ISD, did not recommend his promotion. *Quidnuncs* say that a new power-factor in the UNP had persuaded the final authority in making these appointments to include P. S. P. Fernando in the ASP's list. It was probably because of this "promotion" under political influence that the report filed by P. S. P. Fernando (S23)—vide *Tribune* 10/12/77—was leaked to Minister Monty J. Who leaked it is a question that is going

the rounds, but is of little consequence. The promotions of former ISD agent, S23, P. S. P. Fernando, and also a number of other police officers has generated serious misgivings in the Police Force that political influence is still the most important factor in the appointments in the higher echelons. *Quidnuncs* have promised to come with the other instances soon—apart from those referred to in the NSA during the Committee Stage.

Monty's expose gave the PM an opportunity to effect some quick changes in the Force. Cyril Herat who has been head of the ISD for years was sent down to be in charge of Police Transport. B. Gunawardene, who once headed Dudley Senanayake's body-guard, has been placed in charge of the ISD. The awe-inspiring commisar of the CID, Tyrell Conetilleke, has also been moved out—and Navaratnam has taken his place (he has promised that the Fourth floor will no longer be used as a place for Third Degree cruelty in interrogation). These are only a few of the changes. There are more DIGs and the Force is being restructured. *Quidnuncs* say that it is necessary "to wait" to see

what these changes will bring to the Police Force.

In the meantime, *Quidnuncs* report that P.S.P. Fernando, soon after his inglorious report on Montague Jayawickrema in 1971, was selected for a pseudo-diplomatic appointment—he was posted as an "intelligence" attache in the (CEYLON) Sri Lanka High Commission in Madras. For two years, he had filed reports from Madras—that the DMK and that the Dravidians were planning an invasion of the island using the FP, TUF and later the TULF as a fifth column. Readers will recall the scare headlines about anti-Sri Lanka activities in Tamil Nadu in our local papers and *Quidnuncs* assert that these news papers stories were inspired police leaks based on Fernando's "reports". His reports from Madras could not have been very different from his report on Monty J. as regards veracity! And the newspaper stories at that time and deputy ministerial innuendos based on these reports were as far from truth and reality as Monty was from the Insurgents! *Quidnuncs* say that Fernando's reports from Madras should be released for publication!

SRI LANKA CHRONICLE

Dec. 1 — Dec. 5

DIARY OF EVENTS IN SRI LANKA AND THE WORLD
COMPILED FROM DAILY NEWSPAPERS
PUBLISHED IN COLOMBO.

CDN—Ceylon Daily News; CDM—Ceylon Daily Mirror; CO—Ceylon Observer; ST—Sunday Times; DM—Dinamina; LD—Lankadipa; VK—Virakesari; ATH—Aththa; SM—Sijumina; SLD—Sri Lankadipa; JD—Janadina; DP—Dinapathi; SU—Sun; DW—Dawasa; CM—Chinthamani; WK—Weekend; RR—Rivirasa; EN—Eelanadu; IDPR—Information Department Press Release; DK—Dinakara.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 1: A University Grants Commission and the University Services Commission will be set up soon; in addition a full-fledged Teachers Home Economics College will be set up, the Minister of Education said in a statement issued yesterday. Sri Lanka and Czechoslovakia signed an Air Service Agreement in Colombo yesterday. The Butchers Association of Sri Lanka has assured the Minister of Trade that a reduction of 25 cents in the market price of beef will be made with effect from today. The PM has expressed his great concern over the incidence of gang warfare and armed robberies in the city of Colombo and has told the Police that all necessary measures must be taken to make the city safe for the public. The

PM said that action would be taken to register Assistant Medical practitioners after 15 years of service. India and Sri Lanka signed a cultural agreement in New Delhi on Tuesday; it envisages the promotion and development of cultural relations and understanding in every possible manner—CDN. The Minister of Agriculture accused the former PM, Mrs. Bandaranaike of having changed the wealth declaration returns of 69,000 into 690,000 in the claims for compensation. The JVP leader at a propaganda rally said that under a JVP government education facilities would be made available for all those under 16 years of age while those over 16 would be given a two year military training. The Police will be on full alert on Saturdays and Sundays in future. The distribution of certain items of synthetic textiles will be taken over from private traders and given over to the Salu Sala, CWE and Co-operatives from today—CDM. The Presidential Commission probing into the activities of Air Ceylon has directed the Department of Immigration and Emigration not to permit several persons who are connected with the inquiry to leave Sri Lanka. The SLFP's General Secretary yesterday denied that the party had decided to seek unity with the left parties. The petition challenging the election of Mr. Ananda Dissanaike of the SLFP to the Kotmale seat in the NSA was dismissed with costs yesterday by the High Court Judge of Kandy. One million rupees worth of milk foods have been declared unfit for human consumption—SU. Just as the TULF participated in the budget debate, they should also join in the select Committees to amend the constitution, said Mr. K. W. Devanayagam, Minister of Justice. The Left United Front has appealed to the government

today to restore the rice and sugar subsidies which have been taken away from the poor people—VK. A strict order has gone from the government that all government servants who were affected by the August disturbances in the country should be paid the three month salary allowance before the December 15—DP. If more than 50% of the population are affected by the Rs. 300 income limit at which the rice and sugar subsidies have been abolished the government will have to review the measure, said the Minister of Trade in the NSA yesterday. The first shipment of 500 tons of Bombay onions is now expected to arrive in the island on Sunday. Most travel starved Sri Lankans are jumping at the opportunity provided by the government's liberalised exchange control laws to go abroad. The Department of Examinations has decided to permit candidates who have sat for public examinations to apply for re-scrutiny of their answer papers, an official spokesman said—CO. The Minister of Finance has decided to levy a tax of 60/- on all exporters of copra—DW. American companies reported to have offered prices ranging upon Rs. 25-35 per pound of processed prawns from Sri Lanka—DM. Schools which have not enough furniture and equipment will be given time till the end of January and some even till the end of March to accommodate the 5 year olds—LD.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 2: The first budget of the UNP government was passed last night with loud acclaim in the NSA by a majority of 107 votes; the TULF member for Pottuvil sprang the day's only surprise when he voted with the government when division was called by name. Mr. R. Premadasa yesterday in the course of his speech on the budget levelled 28 charges against the former PM, Mrs. Bandaranaike. The government is now exploring the feasibility of holding the London GCE (A) level examination in Sri Lanka. The Minister of Local Government etc said that newspapers, radio and the Government Film Unit should stop carrying pictures of Ministers and MPs of this government. The Marketing Department has launched a crash program to bring down the price of vegetables and grains in an effort to bring down the cost of living. Train services on the main line came to a complete standstill beyond Gampaha yesterday morning owing to the track being damaged by a group of commuters of a down train from Veyangoda which had got inordinately delayed near Gampaha owing to engine trouble—CDN. Those families in the Rs. 300 to Rs. 700 per month income group need not fear of losing all their rice ration books; these families with three or more children will be able to retain a certain number of ration books depending on the size of the family. The Minister of Finance said last night in the NSA that he was thinking of printing a Rs. 25 note because the Rs. 10 note did not go far. Sri Lanka's tea and rubber export earnings showed a favourable increase in comparison to the corresponding months of the previous year while earnings from coconut products, the other major export commodity, decreased by Rs. 28.4 million, according to a Central Bank report—SU. Mr. R. Premadasa said that since the administrative machinery in this country was not running smoothly, a certain section of the population was dissatisfied; the government hopes to remedy this by appointing district ministers and the TULF should co-operate with the government—VK. A one man committee of inquiry has been appointed to probe the violence that occurred after the elections of 1970 and 1977; the ministry of Public Administration and Home

Affairs will conduct the investigations—CO. An exchange of letters took place at the Ministry of Finance and Planning today, under which the government of Japan undertakes to provide the government of Sri Lanka with a loan of 1,940,000 Yen for the economic development of Sri Lanka—IDPR No. 74.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 3: The Minister of Agriculture and Lands revealed certain land transactions of the former PM and present MP for Attanagalla, Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike in the NSA yesterday; in the course of his speech the minister said that the moral turpitude of Richard Nixon was nothing compared to the crime committed by her; the Minister revealed these transactions following a statement by Mrs. Bandaranaike in which she alleged that the Minister had deliberately and maliciously used his speech in the budget debate to damage her political image in the country; Mrs. Bandaranaike requested the PM to appoint a commission to go into these allegations. The TULF yesterday suspended Mr. M. Canagaratnam, second MP for Pottuvil from the party for voting with the government on the budget debate on Thursday. Ten thousand delegates from 160 electorates in the island converge at Colombo for the 23rd anniversary of the UNP today. The commercial laws of the country are to be revised and for the first time in the history of law making in Sri Lanka a law defining 'hoarding' will be drawn up, the Minister of Trade said yesterday. The Political Victimisation Unit set up by the Minister of Public Administration and Home Affairs has discovered that over 6,000 public officers were victimised during the last regime—CDN. The former MP for Bandaragama was arrested yesterday by the CID and produced before the Chief Magistrate, Colombo in connection with a misappropriation of 10,000 yards of white cambric cloth. The PM said at a special meeting of the Jathika Sevaka Sangamaya yesterday that the government would take firm action against unions which struck work without prior notice—CDM. The prices of all school text books from grades 1 to 10 will be reduced by 15% with immediate effect, the State Printing Corporation announced yesterday. Nearly 2,000 public servants of all grades will be transferred with effect from January 1 next year according to a plan drawn up by the Minister of Public Administration and Home Affairs to revitalise the state services—SU.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 4: The PM will in all probability assume the Presidentship on February 4 next year; preparations are now under way to mark the event. The possibility of setting up a Central Asian News Agency which may be located in Sri Lanka will be discussed at the UNESCO sponsored seminar on the development of Asian News Agencies which opens in Colombo tomorrow. 'Lanka Puwath' the national news agency, got off the ground last week; this agency which will provide national news to the news media in this country is being worked by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and the Press Trust of Ceylon—SO. The PM said emphatically in his address yesterday at the 23rd annual conference of the UNP that full employment would be found for the 1,200,000 jobless within the next six years, under a well planned economic policy. Over 2.8 million letters and other postal articles were lying for nearly eight days at the Central Mail Exchange without being delivered to their addresses—ST. Sri Lanka will soon have an internal security law to deal with a variety of matters including

subversive and other anti national activities. Colour TV will soon be a reality in Sri Lanka; the government has approved this scheme and has now directed the External Resources division of the Ministry of Finance to negotiate with countries who are experts in the field of television. The Minister of Finance has released exchange to import 400 lorries with a view to bringing down transport charges. For the first time after a period of six years the government has restored the function of recruiting legal personnel to the Attorney General and his senior officials. A Bulgarian airliner carrying 165 pilgrims on a flight from Mecca to Tripoli crashed at the Libyan town of Qarnada tonight, killing 56 and injuring 46—SU. Speaking at a meeting of the All Ceylon government office worker's union held in Jaffna last Friday, Mr. Vasudeva Nanayakkara said that the government should support self-determination to the Tamils, but they should give up the idea of establishing a separate state—VK. Rs. 1 lakh and 26,000 has been lost from a co-operative in Polonnaruwa; 2 people have already been caught and investigations are continuing—RR.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 5: The PM yesterday called for the dedication of 1978 for development and the resolution of the unemployment issue; from the government's standpoint, he said, several development projects would be launched and every endeavour would be made to provide jobs for the unemployed; these would be the government's priorities. Appropriate measures to be adopted for bringing about an expansion in the exchange of news and features among the Asian countries will be the main theme of a meeting of experts on development of news agencies in Asia which begins today. A Malaysian airliner hijacked by Japanese red army guerillas crashed into the sea off the West coast of Singapore tonight; it was carrying 93 passengers and 7 crew. City consumers can look forward to a further reduction in the price of beef when the Sri Lanka Meat Association has a second round of talks with the Trade Minister, on December 19th. With the reduction in the BTI and the price of sugar, many hoteliers and bakers are still rather reluctant to pass the relief to consumers; in some places although the price of tea has been reduced a little, so has the size of the cup—CDN. There was a lack of consistency in the marking of degree examination scripts at the six campuses of the University of Sri Lanka, states a report of the Committee on University Examinations, headed by the Director of the External Services Agency of the University. Sweeping changes in the top administration of the police will be implemented shortly. Superintendents of estates will in future be called upon to participate actively in the social activities not only of the workers under them but also of villagers in the neighbouring areas. An all-time record of 241 second-hand motor cars ordered prior to 1977 were unloaded in the Port of Colombo from about five cargo ships over the weekend—CDM. All diplomatic passports issued by the previous government are to be withdrawn immediately. Government approval has been given for the implementation of the recommendations of the salaries Anomalies Committee in respect of port Corporation employees. A day bazaar, the first of its kind to be held in Sri Lanka, was inaugurated yesterday morning at Main Street in the Pettah. The Ceylon Mercantile Union has decided to call a one-day nation wide strike in a protest against the government decision to restrict the food rationing

scheme—SU. Legislation is soon to be brought in the NSA against demanding sepeation of the country, being involved in separatist activities, causing rebellions and attempting to overthrow a government elected by democratic means. The TULF MP for Pottuvil, who voted with the government for the budget is being besieged by telegrams from all over the country; he even has had telegrams from TULF branch office secretaries congratulating him and welcoming his action—DP. The government will soon appoint a committee to investigate and report on the disturbances and loss of life during the Tamil conference in Jaffna in 1974 and the 1976 trouble in Puttalam—VK. All diplomatic passports issued before July 1977 will be withdrawn immediately; this decision was recently taken by the government at the highest level—CO. The Government of Korea has appointed Dr. Young Kyo Yoon as the first Ambassador to Sri Lanka—ILPR No. 226/77. The Minister of Food and Cooperatives has said that flying squads will soon be sent out to co-operatives to check on malpractices—LD. A consignment of 500 tons of B. Onions has arrived in the Port—DM. The PM speaking at Kolonnawa said that if by 1983 the government does not fulfill all their promises, the people could "kick them out". The EEC is giving aid of Rs.2 million 50 lakhs worth of fertiliser, and 40 lakhs worth of milk powder for schools; this was revealed to the Minister of Agriculture when he visited Rome—DW. The UNP is eagerly waiting to see what the next step of the former PM Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike's will be after the exposure in the NSA—JD. The Minister of Shipping sent an oil tanker "Thammanna" to Singapore for a period of 7 days to have the crew trained and they incurred a loss of 3 lakhs worth of foreign exchange—DK.

STOP PRESS

* T. U. L. F. * FELIX & FOWZIE

AS WE GO TO PRESS, news is to hand that the TULF High Command has arrived at a welcome decision: namely, not to boycott functions attended by Cabinet Ministers in Tamil speaking areas. The communique states that this decision was arrived at because the JR government has promised to solve the various problems of the Tamils in a just and equitable manner. The full statement is not yet to hand, but this development is something we had anticipated for sometime—and this is something we had hoped would happen immediately after the elections. *THE G. P. A. SILVA COMMISSION in an interim report on the investigations in to the affairs of the Colombo Municipal Commission has passed serious structures on ex-Mayor Fowzie, ex-Minister Felix Dias Bandaranaike and three others. The Commission has found that Fowzie has been guilty of serious irregularities and that Felix Bandaranaike has abetted him. What is even more astounding is that the Commission has found that both Fowzie and Felix Bandaranaike had given false evidence. The Commission has Commended Municipal Commissioner B. A. Jayasinghe and two others. It would be interesting to see what action the government takes on this Report.

FROM APARTHEID LAND

Steve Biko On The Quest For A True Humanity

IN SOUTH AFRICA, white voters have once again endorsed *apartheid* more overwhelmingly than ever. A friend in London sent us a clipping of Steve Biko's essay which had appeared in the *Times* on November 23, 1977. We are publishing this essay in two parts. It will show that Steve Biko was an intellectual of no mean calibre, and Vorster's regime consider men like Biko a danger. That is why they are killed while in prison custody.

This essay by Steve Biko, the South African black consciousness leader, who died while in police hands under interrogation on September 12, has been re-produced by the Christian Institute Trustees in London, as a tribute to his memory and it appeared in *The Times*, London, on Wednesday, November 23, 1977.

This essay was first published in a book of essays entitled *Black Theology: the South African Voice*, edited by Basil Moore and published by C. Hust, London.

IT IS PERHAPS FITTING to start by examining why it is necessary for us to think collectively about a problem we never created. In doing so, I do not wish to concern myself unnecessarily with the white people of South Africa, but to get to the right answers we must ask the right questions; we have to find out what went wrong—where and when; and we have to find out whether our position is a deliberate creation of God

or an artificial fabrication of the truth by power-hungry people whose motive is authority, security, wealth and comfort. In other words, the "Black Consciousness" approach would be irrelevant in a colourless and non-exploitative egalitarian society. It is relevant here because we believe that an anomalous situation is a deliberate creation of man.

There is no doubt that the colour question in South African politics was originally introduced for economic reasons. The leaders of the white community had to create some kind of barrier between blacks and whites so that the whites could enjoy privileges at the expense of blacks and still feel free to give a moral justification for the obvious exploitation that pricked even the hardest of white consciences. However, tradition has it that whenever a group of people has tasted the lovely fruits of wealth, security and prestige it begins to find it more comfortable to believe in the obvious lie and to accept it as normal that it alone is entitled to privilege.

In order to believe this seriously, it needs to convince itself of all the arguments that support the lie. It is not surprising, therefore, that in South Africa, after generations of exploitation, white people on the whole have come to believe in the inferiority of the black man, so much that while the race problem started as an offshoot of the economic greed exhibited by white people, it has now become a serious problem on its own. White people now despise black people, not because they need to reinforce their attitude and so justify their position of privilege but simply because they actually believe that black is inferior and bad. This is the basis upon which whites are working in South Africa, and it is what makes South African society racist.

The racism we meet does not only exist on an individual basis—it is also institutionalized to make it look like the South African way of life. Although of late there has been a feeble attempt to gloss over the overt racist elements in the system, it is still true that the system derives its nourishment from the existence of anti-black attitudes in society. To make the lie live even longer, blacks have to be denied any chance

of accidentally proving their equality with white men. For this reason there is job reservation, lack of training in skilled work, and a tight orbit around professional possibilities for blacks. Stupidly enough, the system turns back to say that blacks are inferior because they have no economists, no engineers, etc, although it is made impossible for blacks to acquire these skills.

TO GIVE AUTHENTICITY to their lie and to show the righteousness of their claim, whites have further worked out detailed schemes to "solve" the racial situation in this country. Thus, a pseudo-parliament has been created for "Coloureds", and several "Bantu states" are in the process of being set up. So independent and fortunate are they that they do not have to spend a cent on their defence because they have nothing to fear from white South Africa which will always come to their assistance in times of need. One does not, of course, fail to see the arrogance of whites and their contempt for blacks, even in their well-considered modern schemes for subjugation. The overall success of the white power structure has been in managing to bind the whites together in defence of the *status quo*. By skilfully playing on that imaginary bogey—*swart gevaar* (Black peril)—they have managed to convince even diehard liberals that there is something to fear in the idea of the black man assuming his rightful place at the helm of the South African ship. Thus after years of silence we are able to hear the familiar voice of Alan Paton saying as far away as London: "Perhaps apartheid is worth a try". "At whose expense, Dr. Paton?" asks an intelligent black journalist. Hence whites in general reinforce each other even though they allow some moderate disagreements on the details of subjugation schemes. There is no doubt that they do not question the validity of white values. They see nothing anomalous in the fact that they alone are arguing about the future of 17 million blacks—in a land which is the natural backyard of the black people. Any proposals for change emanating from the black world are viewed with great indignation. Even the so-called Opposition, the United Party, has the nerve to tell the Coloured people that they are

asking for too much. A journalist from a liberal newspaper like *The Sunday Times* of Johannesburg describes a black student—who is only telling the truth—as a militant, impatient young man.

It is not enough for whites to be on the offensive. So immersed are they in prejudice that they do not believe that blacks can formulate their thoughts without white guidance and trusteeship. Thus, even those whites who see much wrong with the system make it their business to control the response of the blacks to the provocation. No one is suggesting that it is not the business of liberal whites to oppose what is wrong. However, it appears to us as too much of a coincidence that liberals—few as they are—should not only be determining the *modus operandi* of those blacks who oppose the system, but also leading it, in spite of their involvement in the system.

To us it seems that their role spells out the totality of the white power structure—the fact that though whites are our problem, it is still other whites who want to tell us how to deal with that problem. They do so by dragging all sorts of red herrings across our paths. They tell us that the situation is a class struggle rather than a racial one. Let them go to van Tonder (Derogatory reference to the average Afrikaans-speaking farmer) in the Free State and tell him this. We believe we know what the problem is, and we will stick by our findings.

I want to go a little deeper in this discussion because it is time we killed this false political coalition between blacks and whites as long as it is set up on a wrong analysis of our situation. I want to kill it for another reason—namely that it forms at present the greatest stumbling block to our unity. It dangles before freedom-hungry blacks promises of a great future for which no one in these groups seems to be working particularly hard.

The basic problem in South Africa has been analysed by liberal whites as being apartheid. They argue that in order to oppose it we have to form non-racial groups. Between these two extremes, they claim, lies the land of milk and honey for which we are working. The *thesis*, the *antithesis* and the *synthesis* have been mentioned by some great philosophers as the

cardinal points around which any social revolution revolves. For the *liberals*, the *thesis* is apartheid, the *antithesis* is non-racialism, but the *synthesis* is very feebly defined. They want to tell the blacks that they see integration as the ideal solution. Black Consciousness defines the situation differently. The *thesis* is in fact a strong white racism and therefore, the *antithesis* to this must, *ipso facto*, be a strong solidarity among the blacks on whom this white racism seeks to prey. Out of these two situations we can therefore hope to reach some kind of balance—a true humanity where power politics will have no place. This analysis spells out the difference between the old and new approaches. The failure of the liberals is in the fact that their *antithesis* is already a watered-down version of the truth whose close proximity to the *thesis* will nullify the purported balance. This accounts for the failure of the Sprocas commissions (Study Project on Authority in an Apartheid Society. Set up by South African Council of Churches and Christian Institute in 1968) to make any real headway, for they are already looking for an "alternative" acceptable to the white man. Everybody in the commissions knows what is right but all are looking for the most seemly way of dodging the responsibility of saying what is right.

It is much more important for blacks to see this difference than it is for whites. We must learn to accept that no group, however benevolent, can ever hand power to the vanquished on a plate. We must accept that the limits of tyrants are prescribed by the endurance of those whom they oppress. As long as we go to Whitey begging cap in hand for our own emancipation, we are giving him further sanction to continue with his racist and oppressive system. We must realize that our situation is not a mistake on the part of whites but a deliberate act, and that no amount of moral lecturing will persuade the white man to "correct" the situation. The system concedes nothing without demand, for it formulates its very method of operation on the basis that the ignorant will learn to know, the child will grow into an adult and therefore demands will begin to be made. It gears itself to resist demands in whatever way it sees fit. When you refuse to make these

demands and choose to come to a round table to beg for your deliverance, you are asking for the contempt of those who have power over you. This is why we must reject the beggar tactics that are being forced on us by those who wish to appease our cruel masters. This is where the SASO message and cry "Black man, you are on your own!" becomes relevant.

The concept of integration, whose virtues are often extolled in white liberal circles, is full of unquestioned assumptions that embrace white values. It is a concept long defined by whites and never examined by blacks. It is based on the assumption that all is well with the system apart from some degree of mismanagement by irrational conservatives at the top. Even the people who argue for integration often forget to veil it in its supposedly beautiful covering. They tell each other that, were it not for job reservation, there would be a beautiful market to exploit. They forget they are talking about people. They see blacks as additional levers to some complicated industrial machines. This is white man's integration — an integration based on exploitative values. It is an integration in which black will compete with black, using each other as rungs up a step ladder leading them to white values. It is an integration in which the black man will have to prove himself in terms of these values before meriting acceptance and ultimate assimilation, and in which the poor will grow poorer and the rich richer in a country where the poor have always been black. We do not want to be reminded that it is we, the indigenous people, who are poor and exploited in the land of our birth. These are concepts which the Black Consciousness approach wishes to eradicate from the black man's mind before our society is driven to chaos by irresponsible people from Coc-copa and hamburger cultural backgrounds.

(To be Concluded)

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TOP PRIORITY

Mahaweli Water

by R. Kahawita

Though we received this article in the middle of November, we could not publish it owing to the exigencies of space. There is so much being said and done in Sri Lanka today that *Tribune* finds it difficult to comment on all of them in the limited space available. This article on the Mahaweli is of topical importance in view of the plan to complete the 30-year scheme in 5 years.

MAHAWELI GANGA, the largest river in Sri Lanka, has a master-plan to develop its water resources over a period of thirty years, estimated to cost thousands of million rupees. I am putting the cost in vague terms because it is anybody's guess as to what the value of the rupee would be in the future. The figures indicate only the magnitude of the expenditure relative to the value of the rupee in 1969—the year the master-plan in skeletal form was enunciated and accepted by the Government.

The plan is in several phases and steps. The present programme is to implement phase I—step 1. It covers Engineering, Agricultural developments, Research, Settlement and re-habitation of the old farming and new farming units for better production. Mahaweli water is derived from both the monsoons—South West and North East. The South West flow season is May to July when the catchment area just above Teldeniya is visited by the S. W. monsoons. The North East monsoon flow is in October to December when the entire catchment has the benefit of N.E. monsoon with the greater intensities of rainfall being in the catchment below Teldeniya. Both the maximum discharges and high residual flows are registered during the N.E. monsoon season. The river discharges, at any point varies from a trickle to many thousand cubic feet per second, which the Engineers have abbreviated to "Cusec".

TODAY, waters of Mahaweli are used at three points in the main river coming up the river from Trincomalee. The first point is at Verugal to divert water to Allai tank. The headworks at this point were modernized about 20 years ago. The second point is at Minipe. This is an ancient irrigation scheme which was restored in 1935/38 and the Left Bank channel extended in stages to take the Mahaweli Water towards Angamedilla anicut which diverts the Ambanganga water to Parakrama Samudra. After the restoration of Minipe anicut, Engineering Surveys were done to construct a Right Bank channel to take water to "Buitenne area". This scheme was aborted when the Transbasin Diversion at Polgolla became politically important.

The third point is at Katugastota what is now called Polgolla Diversion. The headworks and the ancillary works to transfer some of the Mahaweli water to the adjoining catchment was started in 1970 and completed a few years ago. It is the progress and development of water and land resources at the third point that interest us today. The headworks at Polgolla is capable of passing a maximum discharge of 2000 cusec to the adjoining basin through a six mile-long tunnel.

The river flow at Polgolla varies from a trickle during off season to a possible 208,000 cusec during the flood season. A flood discharge of 208,000 cusec is what the Engineers call a 1000 year flood—a flood that many occur once in 1000 years. Nevertheless that flood may be tomorrow.

Out of these floods a maximum discharge of 2000 cusec can be diverted to Suduganga—a tributary of Ambanganga. In turn this is a tributary of Mahaweli joining the parent river at Dastota. So the 2000 cusec if not used for irrigation will flow back to Mahaweli. Due to the vagaries of river discharged at Polgolla the rate discharge through the Transbasin tunnel varies from nothing to a maximum of 2000 cusec. Nothing—because when the discharge in Mahaweli drops to 200 cusec, all this discharge has to be released to maintain the sanitation of the river below Polgolla. This happens quite often.

The transfer of a maximum of 2000 cusec to Suduganga basin is the life blood of all the develop-

ment activities covered by what is called Phase I—Step 1 of Mahaweli project. It is this water, together with what flows in the Ambanganga, that are to be managed to increase the irrigable acreage in the NCP and to provide supplementary irrigation water to the fields in the region now irrigated with their own water resources and storage.

Issue of irrigation water cannot be designed or planned to utilize a varying discharge with a maximum of 2000 cusec. Such a discharge must be stored to enable the engineers to regulate issues according to irrigation needs, for irrigation there must be a near constant flow in the channels. This is a pre-requisite to water management for irrigation. Hence storage of excess water is an absolute necessity to guarantee a regular issue to the fields and also to protect the farmer against frequent crop failures. Failures are inevitable in river diversion without storage.

A COUPLE OF WEEKS AGO, the Prime Minister, Mr. Jayawardene, ordered the officials at a conference to complete the Mahaweli development in five years. It is no doubt a very tall order with superlatives to describe every phase of activity in the development process to achieve this deadline. The officials acquiesced to this order. It is now for the officials to plan the operations and execute it. What they have accepted to execute is Phase I—Step 1 of the UNDP development programme. The various projects coming within the Step 1 are:—

(A) The Barrage across Mahaweli—that is headworks at Polgolla, together with the 18 ft. diameter tunnel and a hydropower unit with an installed capacity of 35.8 M.W.

(B) Improvement to Suduganga River channel, to accommodate its own flood and a maximum discharge of 2000 cusec from Mahaweli.

(C) Bowtenne bifurcation structure to divert water to Kala Oya system and to Elchhera system, together with a hydroplant of installed capacity of 3.7 M.W. The draw off to Kalawewa stayem is 700 cusec and balance 1300 cusec to Elchhera system.

(D) Improvements to the upper section of Elchhera channel to convey the Mahaweli water to Minneriya and onwards.

(E) Development of Irrigation facilities in the Kaudulla area (region D) and Elaheera below the existing fields. This is the area that was reserved as the water spread of once proposed Sudukanda Gap Reservoir. The total irrigable area in these two systems is 44,400 Acs. of new lands and 56,000 Acs. of existing fields to be provided with supplementary irrigation water. (These lands are in the Minneriya Electorate and it explains why the original priorities were amended). This exigency is not there now. Therefore to make Step 1 of Phase I effective, productive and give the farmers a 90 to 95% of success, the construction of Moragahakande Reservoir must be brought forward to be priority No. 1 in 1977-78 programme. This is urgent but not included in the PM's order.

(F) The total irrigable area in the Kalawewa system is 103,000 Acs. but of which 46,200 Acs. are old fields and the balance 56,800 Acs. are new lands but only 40,000 Acs. are included in Step 1 due to giving Moragahakande Reservoir a low priority under the revised programme, to accommodate the exigency of taking Mahaweli water to Minneriya System.

The above projects cover the Phase I—Step 1 to be completed in five years as ordered by the PM. The world Bank has also released 42 million rupees for the works. When Step 1 is completed the country will have two hydro-power stations with an installed capacity of 39.5 M.V. and a firm power out-put of 23.2 M.W; provide additional water to 102,200 Acs and 84,500 Acs. of new lands.

If Moragahakande is given its original priority—which in my opinion is a must to justify the expenditure on Step 1, the new irrigable area would be 121,400 Acs. This additional lands for settlement should be a great relief to find additional employment opportunities in agriculture, during the five year programme of settlement.

According to experience in water-management in Sri Lanka, storage and diversion must go side by side. There is no alternative to it. The Engineers of yore realised this and their ingenuity is monumentalized in Elaheera-Minneriya system, Kalawewa-Yodi Ela system, Angamedilla-Parakrama Samudra system. They

became wiser by their experience and the fruits of their wisdom we enjoy today. Present day Engineers seem to be foolhardy not to learn by their experience.

The need to construct Moragahakande in a revised 1977/78 priority can be put in a nutshell. Moragahakande Reservoir will place 1.03 million acre feet of water with a 90-95% frequency, in the hands of the Engineers to cultivate 233,600 Acs. per season or 467,200 Acs. for a crop year. And on the power side, there will be 79.5 M.W. of installed capacity and 39.5 M.W. of fine power. Without Moragahakande there is an element of uncertainty, whether these targets could be achieved or not. Because the engineers will have only 400,000 Ac. ft. to manage compared to 1.03 million Ac. ft. with Moragahakande.

The difference between the firm power out-put and the average demand for power will have to be met by thermal generation. This is inevitable in hydro-power depending on rain fed rivers. Estimation of power demands and design of Thermal power stations have also to be given a high priority if power requirements are over and above the guaranteed firm power out put of Phase I-Step 1.

Now, coming to the completion of development of Step 1 there are two aspects of development in projects like Mahaweli, Technical and Socio-Economic. The technical works cover headworks, channels, roads etc., which are purely engineering. There are no problems in this sphere if men, machinery and finances are available to the Engineers. Technical work can be developed to a time schedule and if there were to be a time lag in construction work, with all other factors being equal, then the shortcomings are managerial, organisational and execution. In every major Irrigation project undertaken in Sri Lanka, whether restoration or new projects, the technical aspects have been completed to schedules and programmes set to the engineers. This has been the experience at Gal Oya, Uda Walawe and so on. What the administration has failed to achieve all along is the second aspect: social and economic. The failure has been due to a lack of understanding of the problems involved in settle-

ment. They are human, so it covers social psychological, financial and environmental problems. Tackling each of these problems to satisfy the needs of each individual settler is time consuming; needs tact and understanding on the part of everyone who gets involved in settlement work. So the country has lagged behind in settling the "Tools for Production." That is the farmer.

The present concept of settlement is to uproot the would-be farmer from his environment, and plant him in a new area with a block of jungle land as his holding to start a new life. He fails to hit "our targets" for obvious reasons. Each farmer becomes a lonely soul in a crowd. He is isolated and his first thoughts are to get back to where he came from. This has been the major problem in all the new settlement schemes started in Sri Lanka and the way we are going about development work in Mahaweli, it would not be different. There is the most recent example of Uda Walawe—completed in 1968 and the only progress made so far, as highlighted by the local press, is to produce pregnant women settlers. This is mentioned here not to ridicule but to illustrate the lack of understanding of the social and very human problems of settlement aspects.

The order of the Prime Minister to the official to complete the Mahaweli project in five years includes the development of 84,500 Acres of new irrigable land and to increase the productivity of 102,200 acres of fields already developed and under cultivation. This is a superman task—and I can confidently assert that this is not possible with the organisation, the Mahaweli Board has, and the consequent level of thinking). There has to be a completely different approach to the problem; strategy must be quite different to what was adopted at Gal Oya and Uda Walawe if the Prime Minister's order is to get (at least) into average production the 84,500 acres of new lands plus 102,200 acres of purana fields within five years—i.e., in simple arithmetic 37,000 acres per annum in average production. Production is the only target of Mahaweli Exercise. Millions of rupees are being spent mainly to achieve this target. To put it more dramatically: every day in the year 100

acres must be put into production and better production than today. At the same time settle the farmers permanently on the 100 acres. Maybe 20 to 25 farmer family units a day. This is the significance of the Prime Ministerial order. Settlement is the more difficult of the two exercises—to get the settler to work and take anchorage in his new environment and way of life.

If the officers are to honour that order, the whole organisation, if there is any in the Mahaweli Board now must be galvanised into action. Development of irrigation facilities, roads, social and commercial infrastructure, land clearing and preparation, Agricultural experimentation, and introduction of new crops, constructions of villages, service centres and a host of other facilities to provide for the needs of the existing settlers and may be 150,000 new settlers on the land. With such an influx of population there will be a multitude of special problems, that will require a separate organisation to handle them, which the Board has not given any thought yet.

The objective is to give fixity to each farming family its new habitat and see that he uses the resources created for production and be a national asset in the shortest possible time. The target is five years. This magic figure of five is because, in five years hence, the Presidential election is due. Only a contented farmer will vote again for the party that gave him a place in the sun and a full life. This is what every party hoped to achieve in every settlement scheme but never realized as shown at the polls. Thus it may prove a political disaster. To make it otherwise the planning and settlement must be such that the venture is not only a socio-economic success but also a political achievement never before realised. "To create a happy and prosperous farming family in five years to use the Mahaweli waters for his benefit."

I do not say that this is an impossible task. It can be achieved provided the Mahaweli Board sets up an organisation for direct action. This aspect of development is not an operation that can be given on contract or supervised from a distance, like constructing a road.

There should be direct involvement with the settler and his family, of the officers, of the Workers, and of the advisers of the Board. They have to be with the settler day in day out to see that the settler gets what he wants till he is able to move on under his own steam. That is, he gets a comfortable income from his farm to maintain himself and his family.

The investment in Mahaweli is too great to allow settlement and development work to take its own course as we have experienced in other settlement schemes. There must be a change in attitudes and achievements in the settlement programmes, bearing in mind that the final result of the operations is to have a prosperous and contented farmer using the Mahaweli waters to his advantage and that of his country. Construction of channels, roads etc., is not the end. They are only a means to create a contented and prosperous farmer.

This is what has to be achieved in five years.

* * *

AN APPRECIATION

BY A FRIEND

Dr. Noel Bartholomeusz

Dr. Noel Bartholomeusz began his surgical career in Avissawella and thereafter continued in Badulla. His simplicity, charm and skill became so widespread that people flocked to the hospitals where he worked and made numerous representations whenever he was transferred. His unassuming nature made him all the more loved by the people with whom he came in contact.

He became a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons (England) in 1949 and was appointed Surgeon in the General Hospital, Colombo, in 1950. The fields in which he excelled were cancer surgery, surgery of the thyroid and of the prostate gland; he also designed his own operation for ventral hernia. He was prepared at any time to teach and train young surgeons. He was happy in the midst of

young surgeons who were eager to sit at the feet of one of the most successful surgeons that Sri Lanka has produced. He took a delight in being a universal consultant for all surgeons and gynaecologists.

Dr. Bartholomeusz's surgery was almost faultless. Perfection in anything that he touched or did was the standard which he set for himself and demanded the same from his assistants and anaesthetists. He kept pace with modern advances in surgery and selected all surgical instruments that were necessary for perfect surgical procedures. Without question, he was one of our most eminent surgeons.

Shy, unpretentious and seldom ruffled, he came straight on the task immediately on hand and that, he performed with superlative skill and care. When he walked into a room or a surgical theatre one became aware of a presence which was humane, thoughtful and compassionate. He possessed a relaxed dignity and a calm stoicism which radiated the warmth of his personality. Bestowed with an ironic sense of fun and a delight in life's absurdities, trivialities and triumphs, he was always a retiring man—a rather quiescent personality—but with friends he was always a marvellous companion. He possessed abundant charm, a wry wit and a way of generally savouring some amusing remark or an odd event that was wholly endearing. He was generous in the unobtrusive help he gave to his comrades and younger aspirants. His advice and guidance was sought on matters not purely in the surgical fields; his humanity, his kindness and his generosity will live with those with whom he came in touch. His fondness of music and flowers formed part of his avocations. His healing hands have now been removed from the ministrations from which so many benefited, not least those who were more disadvantaged. An inscription which would be apt in the pursuit of his profession and in his daily life was "To cure often; to relieve sometimes and to comfort always." We mourn his death, but we recall with intense gratitude the privilege and joy of his friendship.

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RANDOM THOUGHTS

On The Communal Disturbance

by A Middle-Aged Tamil

BRIEFLY SUMMARISED from what has been published in the daily press, party journals, independent journals, speeches made in the National State Assembly as reported in the press and personal observations and experience of the author of this article, the recent communal conflagration which burnt down the multi-linguistic edifice that is Sri Lanka to scrap of ashes, variously described as "EXODUS 77", "Black Fortnight", "Carnival to Carage" etc., was the work of a combination of forces—both identifiable and unidentifiable (for the present of course).

The proposed Commission may throw some light on the matter as official records and communications are still unavailable to writers on the subject. But all had one common ground—merciless attack on the Tamils. Identifiable forces in the order of priority being the Police, University Students, Hoodlums, Sex-maniacs and those harbouring personal vendettas. Unidentifiable forces being the forces that gave strength and credibility to rumour-mongers and seized the opportunity to give the lead to the savages on the rampage; the effect of the speeches made in the National State Assembly and this will not exclude Prime Minister's speech on "War and Peace" and the role of certain section of the press, especially the *Dawasa* Group.

It is also important and pertinent to consider the pattern of attack. This gives lie to the claim that it was an unorganised affair. In every previous communal incident there were immediate provocations in the form of political agitation against Sinhala Only Bill, Anti-Sri Campaign, Satyagraha and issue of Stamps etc. In the recent case there was no such agitation—the demand for "Eelam" has not even got off the pedestal.

If one takes the NCP as a test case it will bring in many matters worth investigating. NCP is in the immediate neighbourhood of the Tamils of the North and East. This had been the happy

meeting place of Vanni Tamils and Sinhalese till it was disturbed by the planned colonisation of Padvi-Sripura took place. In their van also come "colonists" from down south. The transplantation of NCP with down south colonists has always been a source of portent danger not only to the residents of the NCP but also to the others in the neighbourhood. The cock-eyed, shall we say, "colonial policy" of the successive governments had therefore led to worsening of the situation in normal times. When "colonies" are started, we do not know whether the psychological and sociological aspects of the colonists are gone into, but they need plenty of adjustments in the new place and with new neighbours. There was competition for land, aggrandisement and trade. In places like Anuradhapura, Kekirawa, Nochchiyagama, the bulk of the trade was in the hands of the Tamils. Besides the Government offices were also manned by Tamils from Jaffna, to the envy of the local population, who did not have any opportunities for alternative employment. We are personally aware, many Tamils thought of taking up permanent residence in Anuradhapura, especially after the diversion of Mahaweli. This was not to the liking of the local population.

Apart from the above reasons, Anuradhapura being the chief centre of Buddhism and Buddhist tradition, Buddhists would not have been willing to accommodate the existence of Hindu population amongst their midst. As an illustration one may even point to the Buddhist Statue (standing) erected on the Jayanthi Mawatha, dwarfing the adjoining Katiresan Temple.

One may even go further and say that NCP also had a fear, that in the event of the formation of a Tamil Eelam, claims may be made, as Hitler claimed Germans in the neighbouring countries, to the NCP.

Eye witness reports from this area confirms our view that it was no particular party that was instrumental in attacking the Tamils. A suggestion was made that it was because all the Tamils supported a particular party that they were attacked. In this instance it was not so. If not for the timely action of the Army there would have been a mass scale murder

with the connivance of the *pandours* misnamed in Sri Lanka as Police.

At a certain stage of the trouble, living in Jaffna was found to be very unsafe—this is not to speak of the "borderland" of Vavuniya, where residents were forced flee for safety. Thus unlike previous attacks this time the "battle" had been carried into the door step of the Tamils, whether at Trincomalee, or Batticaloa or in other places.

ANOTHER INTERESTING OBSERVATION is that every party journal has tried to defend its own position—this shows on the other hand, that everybody felt guilty about the disturbances. Bureaucratic bungling, undoubtedly led to the whole holocaust. Bureaucracy, whether it is the civil or security service, is badly in need of a re-orientation. The behaviour of the coxwains of civil and police administration in Jaffna, Vavuniya and Anuradhapura, cannot be allowed to escape the notice of the Government and it should be pointed out as a lesson to others. Of course, some of them may even be elevated to the position of martyrs later, but the verdict of history will not certainly be on their side.

The merciless attack on the Indians and intimidation aimed at them reached peak-high during the disturbances. They were subjected to an ordeal which they escaped in '58. Even when the open attacks subsided, it is reported that classes were conducted by certain persons with the sole idea of compelling them to leave the up country. Whether Thondaman is in the TULF or not is immaterial for those who spread anti-indian slogans in the up-country. Much has been made of the fact the office held by Thondaman in the TULF was embarrassing to the interest of the up-country Tamils. This cannot be so in view of the fact that CWC considers the interest of the upcountry Tamils as separate from the Tamils of the North and East. Viewed from this perspective, there is nothing to disturb the continuation of Thondaman in the TULF. In fact *The Independent* in its issue of 7th October 77 stated that Thondaman had no difference of opinion with the TULF."

People were led to believe that the actual culprits will not be

anything more than three or four thousands. Some of the attacks took place in the working places itself—attackers were in most cases the subordinates of the victims. So far, to our knowledge no union, has issued an ultimatum, nay suggestion, to the Government to bring the culprits to book. Strikes were organised on flimsy grounds earlier. We do not wish that unions should rush to strike and paralyse the country. But it is a wonder how the comrades at arm otherwise were able to munch this naked violation of workers' right—is it because the victims belonged to a different community? Or the feeling that these comrades are still in preponderance in the services? Silence on this issue makes one to feel that the acts of violence had a tacit consent of these comrades of course we are aware that some unions promised earth and moon to compel the displaced officers to return to their offices. GOOD SAMARITANS in the guise of Lord Bishops, academics with their statistical analyses, mushroom mercy organisations and others suddenly awakened to the hard realities made their trips to Jaffna to offer solace and comfort and convince the Tamils of their good intentions. They made newspaper headlines of course. But the solutions offered by them are not permanent ones. Actually, all the preaching should be done in the southern parts of the Island. And it should commence at the grass root level.

Amirthalingam has been blamed for his lop-sided view of history. Amirthalingam is only a politician; he is no historian. What did our academicians at the campuses do? To date we have had no one to better the performance of Mahanama of Mahavamsa. Mahavamsa had been compiled for the serene joy and emotion of the pious. It built up a historical tradition in which Buddhism and Buddhist-Sinhala tradition alone will be the predominant theme. An obscure incident of a war between Gemunu and Elara to the author of Dipavamsa, an earlier work than Mahavamsa, had been given an "epic" importance by Mahanama. That tradition continues to prevail even today and even modern historians have not fared better.

In a recent publication, the University historians have not given sufficient space or importance to the history of Tamils. The role

played by the Tamils in the nineteenth and early twentieth century history had been either suppressed or neglected. It is not that we are defending Amirthalingam's history of the Tamils. We are only trying to drive home that history of the Tamils and their contribution to the history of Sri Lanka has not been presented to the present and future generations in the correct perspective. A case in point is the *University of Ceylon, History of Ceylon*, Volume III: from the beginning of the 19th century to 1948. This volume which overflows with the condensed Ph.D. theses of many a University don has omitted very important aspects of the history of the Island. Reviewing this book for the "Modern Ceylon Studies, a Journal of Social Services" Volume 5 No. 1 Dr. S. Arasaratnam had this advice to give: "One has only to see the paucity of information on the Tamils of the north and of the east, and on the Muslims of the South-west and East, to see how much our understanding of parts of the whole has yet to proceed." However it is heartening to find that dons like Dr. C. R. de Silva are realising the impact of their historical writings (vide *Tribune*, "History of Tamil Eelam").

History should point towards the future and not to the past. It is incorrect to assume that Tamils who voted for the TULF were not unaware of the economic viability of Eelam or the political consequences that would follow vivisection of the Island. Even military-wise North and East cannot undertake long drawn warfare. It should be said to the credit of the TULF leadership that they were mindful of their course, and were taking all precautions not to tread on dangerous lines. The attempts made by the Government and mass media to shift the blame on to the TULF shows that they were only trying to minimise the horrors and consequences of the carnage and compel TULF to become minimalists. Various robberies that took place in the peninsula in the wake of disturbances were highly exaggerated and people were given the impression that all the booty was to finance the movement. Police reports to date had not been able to show anything to substantiate that view. However, the traditional fears linger on.

Smuggling in the north has no comparison to what takes place in and around the Colombo harbour and south-western sea-board. The 1961 Satyagraha brought in a permanent occupation of the Peninsula by the Sri Lanka Army. Police atrocities of 1977 has added the Air Force. Every one knows the motive behind the installation of Army, Navy and Air Force bases in the North. A possible link up with South India, if not with India and this has now become almost a panophobia with the governments and those who back the governments. But only a person who had been in Jaffna during the height of the trouble will be able to vouch for the utter despondency and exasperation that prevailed in Jaffna during that period. Not a single gun, nay stick was raised against the government forces by the so-called separatist regiments, if there had been one as imagined and feared by many.

This is not to absolve the TULF for its strategies. Their vain rhetorical bullets have not so far hit the target; it has, however, boomeranged on them.

To an impartial observer it also appears that the recent disturbances had given the anti-TULF forces an occasion to strike it hard, little realising that the disturbances had only justified their fears. Dubious attempts are also being made to split the hard-earned unity of the Tamils of the various parts of the Island. One cannot rush into hasty conclusions using the data collected from "prominent Tamils" of Colombo and other Tamils who have vested interest in Southern parts of the Island. In fact one or two of the signatories to the famous bulletins issued from Colombo themselves were part of the movement—though of course not directly. In fact one of them had been giving a historical base (modern) for the movement. Besides, there had always been a feeling among the Tamils, that a reasonable solution to the problem had been prolonged to safeguard the interests of the Colombo Tamils, additional factor was that leadership of the Tamils, till recently had always been Colombo based.

PERSONAL OPINIONS cannot be reduced to statistics and no satisfactory solution to social problems could be extracted from statistics. Various statistics quoted

and misquoted may provide enough fodder for academic exercises and they are not fool-proof on social problems. The statistics prepared by Fr. Tissa Balasuriya and July issue of the *Economic Review*, had one purpose in view—not to yield to the TULF claim that they and they alone represent the Tamils. We may not like the bifurcation of Sri Lanka but research and conclusions should not proceed from set targets.

It is also difficult to believe that a consensus that voted TULF only a month before the occurrence of the disturbances would have changed its stance overnight on an issue which had affected them most. One can understand and accept such conclusions, if the government had attempted to do anything substantial to appease the Tamils. On the other hand, disturbances are a warning not only to Tamils but also for the entire minority groups found in Sri Lanka.

There is no instance in the history of the world where a "nation" had been formed on the strength of mere verbal rhetoric. Way back in the sixties, when we ourselves formed a part of the youth, we suggested to these lawyer politicians that you can always convince the mass of voters to your views, because you possess such a rhetorical skill and a personality cult but that is not the thing that is expected of a leadership.

If you want to achieve something for yourself you must prepare the ground for it—Open up Vanni—not at platforms. Persuade the Government to finance wells and free issue of water-pumps, to all those who wish to settle in these virgin forests; organise more and more co-operatives to industrialise and find employment within the peninsula or in North and East. Hence our pressure on the southerner will not be felt. Even if the government were to take over such ventures, still many youths will find employment.

These suggestions never impressed them. They were too busy demanding Federalism, but condescending to accept District Councils provisionally. The outflow of educated youths to African and Western countries, relaxed their nerves for some time. Now it is the middle-east, where every grade finds suitable employment. The problem will become more acute when these openings are closed for ever.

Another glaring defect in the movement was the absence of any intellectual backing. This is in contrast to any other liberation movement—whether in Sri Lanka or elsewhere.

Granting that no movement of this magnitude can succeed within the span of three decades it is also pertinent to question the leadership regarding the strategies it had adopted so far. Available evidence does not in any way convince us that the movement had got off the pedestal. Their rhetorical bullets had not hit the target. It is too immature for matured politicians and veterans of many a battle to think that any government will give in to their demands without any semblance of threat to their position. We may perhaps be unaware of the strategies. But the history of the Tamil Freedom Movement of the last three decades has convinced us that they have not made any inroads into the "enemy territory."

Having arraigned the TULF it is also worth noting whether any other party has a solution to the problems. The SLFP controlled *Nation* repeated the oft blamed colonial past and said the "UNP reactionaries and the TULF opportunists are far too bankrupt to be able to provide solutions to the problems" (Vide, *The Nation* of 1.10.77. *The Recent Communal Violence and After: Some Thoughts*). The *Socialist Nation* commentator, Amali, blamed all but the left parties. But he of course admitted that "no one could call upon the Tamils to renounce the TULF so that their grievances could be redressed. Nor could anyone admonish the TULF to raise only such demands as could be granted by the government without any difficulty (Vide *The Socialist Nation*, 30.9.77. *Tamil Separatism and Sinhala Chauvinism*.)"

As it is, the problem is now in the court of the Sinhalese politicians. It is their problem and not of the minorities. Whether they will allow party politics to plunge this country asunder or not, depends on the strategies and tactical steps to be adopted by them. They are only too aware of the next step of the TULF might adopt.

Will the presidential system of government offer any hope?

* * *

Gramma Sastra-3

Intha Sri, Death And Peasantry

by Gamiya

Rudolf Strahm gave a table of the suffering peasantry in his book of tables on the world situation: while one peasant in the USA feeds 20 persons, and 1 European peasant feeds 10, one Indian peasant can feed only 4 persons (from Myrdal, *The Challenge of the poor world*, Paris 1972, and Strahm: *Pays industr, Pays sous-devel*, 1974 p. 69). Rene Dumont, the French agronomist of repute, wrote a book that said much about the peasantry in Sri Lanka, Tunis and Senegal, *Peasantry at Bay*. Peasants are still in the news:

Thai peasants have had no say in the running of Thailand (former Siam from which comes our Siam Nikaya of monks). In Nov. 1974, Thai peasants formed the PFT (Peasants' Federation of Thailand). *Intha Sriboonruang* was president of the northern region of the PFT. He said that "the laying on of electricity and water to his village was useless to the large number of the people who couldn't afford to use these facilities." Much of the money used in such projects goes to local traders (what we call *mudalalis* in Sri Lanka), and businessmen supplying materials, and in corruption resulting in short supply of goods. That means they have no money (the peasants) to buy PVC pipes or lead piping or faucets or taps or T-joints, or switches and plugs. A bit like in Sri Lanka, our peasants will say.

I forgot to tell you that *Intha Sriboonruang* was shot a few weeks after he agitated for priorities. He was one of 22 peasant leaders, mainly PFT, assassinated from April to August 1975. The "gap between rich and poor has grown, in Thailand, with unemployment growing faster than GDP (Gross Domestic Product), more than one million unemployed; 13,000 murders per annum, 45,000 infant deaths per annum, and 500,000 drug addicts. Today, the Thai Farmers peasants' federation is declared ille-

gal. Siegel (I hope he won't be the next one picked up and killed for trying to repeat the Monroe Doctrine) in his book, *Tying Down Thailand*, says "The failure of 'democracy' in Thailand has performed a function in dividing the country more clearly and disposing of the pretence of political freedom camouflaging the growing conflict between the corrupt elite with its foreign friends and the poor majority of the population" (see *Retrieval*, June-July 1977, pp. 29-32).

Now, there is a seizure of power, military rule in Thailand from Oct. 6th '76. Jan Austen and Banning Garrett in *International Bulletin* have said—what one could say for most countries of Asia, especially the smaller ones so easily gulped by the big ones: "seizure of power backed by Thailand's extreme right-wing military and police leaders, backed by elements in Thai society that have been carefully cultivated by the CIA and the Pentagon" (*Retrieval*, p. 24, n. 1458).

May our peasantry in Sri Lanka be saved from the all-too-willing jaws of those named in the above paragraph, whose activities are underground, subtle, whose god is their belly, whose whole life is *tanha* (greed).

Go round to Etimole and other colonization schemes in the island and see how the colonists, the overflow of many of our villages, are doing what they can, to get back to a working equilibrium after the recent upheavals prior to July. See how many of them are non-plussed about the use of fertilizer and pesticides, and of how the more knowledgeable farmers would desire their own pace of progress but dare not get off from the apparently cosy pad of unhealthy rivalry in the use of fertilizer: what is good for RM is good for WM or TM, that's DM. So, I'll pay or pawn what I have and get that fertilizer. Get that?

(RM—Ratnayake Mudiyansele)

(DM—Dissanayake Mudiyansele)

LETTERS

The Writing On The Wall

Sir,

Whilst a great feast was in progress in the palace of the King of Babylon about 3,500 years ago the fingers of a man's hand were seen to trace certain words on the wall of the banqueting hall. On seeing them the king's countenance changed and his feet smote one against the other. Not one of his learned clergy, astrologers, magicians or soothsayers was able to read or interpret the strange writing. A youthful Jewish prisoner in chains was then brought out of the dungeons and commanded to interpret the cryptic words which he read as "Mene, Mene, Tekel, Uphary in" and interpreted.

That same night King Belshazzar of the Chaldeans was slain by Davius the Median who took over the former's kingdom as foretold in the writing on the wall.

The writing on the wall is now appearing in Sri Lanka. The first two words are already visible. The first word is "Matara".

The new government's manifesto made no mention whatsoever of new campuses but as soon as it felt itself firmly in the saddle it has spelt out 24 new campuses commencing with Batticaloa and Matara.

Batticaloa is undisputed by the people. It is the regional capital and in population and schools the densest and accordingly this siting is in accord with the siting of the existing campuses.

Matara is not the regional capital, its population and schools not the densest, it is not the easiest accessible, is deficient in amenities and capacity for accommodation, and it is less historic and historical than Moneragala, Tissamaharama and Galle the present regional capital.

If the sovereignty of the people is no joke, the people of Sri Lanka should have been consulted before this extraordinary and partial decision was made unilaterally with not even the remaining campuses phased out giving the nation the impression that these 22 will not materialise during the current regime or never.

According to a recent announcement by the Leader of the House the people will be invariably consulted by the government, even by a referendum, in regard to secular matters of national importance without the government taking unilateral decisions.

Every existing campus is representative of all communities, castes and creeds which constitute our nation which ill advised Matara campus will never be as "one can lead a donkey to the water but cannot make it drink."

It is suggested that even now further proceeding on proposed Matara campus be stayed and an islandwide referendum held in respect of Matara campus.

The second letter of the writing on the wall appears in the editorial of a morning paper of 5.11.77.

R. W. Wikramanayake.

5, De Alwis Avenue,
Mount Lavinia.
5.11.77

Problems Of Minorities

Sir,

Though it is very usual for the problems of minorities to be highlighted immediately after a communal holocaust and to be put into cold storage shortly thereafter till another violence breaks out, it is very heartening to note a very lively discussion being entertained in your esteemed journal.

Of the articles published so far, Mr. R. Kahawita has to be congratulated for putting forward a very fair and practical solution which must merit serious consideration by all, especially the government. Likewise Dr. Arthur Weerakoon had used his best talents to educate us that to consider the Sinhalese and Tamils as two separate races is a misconception. It is a pity that the national dailies and the SLBC have not thought about giving wide publicity to articles of this nature in both the Sinhala and Tamil streams. As Mr. Gamini Edirisinghe had pointed out the continued use of the word 'Race' in Government publications and notifications help only to perpetuate the communal discord by making people 'race' conscious. Mr. Q. T. F. from Nawala had very comprehensively listed the reasons

why the Sinhalese hate the Tamils. It is trusted that the Hon. Minister of Education will look into the aspect of how the Dutugemunu-Elara confrontation has been distorted in the Sinhala literary works and take the necessary corrective action. He was also very correct in pointing out that with the segregation of both communities media-wise in all educational institutions the communication gap continues to widen. It is a must that this should be narrowed by educational tours, socials, other functions etc.

Though all the above disclosures in your journal is very commendable one should seriously think whether by educating an English educated microscopic minority, the present problems can be resolved. Is it not necessary for the vast majority who are still outside to be brought into this discussion? To do so everyone in society should take a positive role. Let me explain this:—

1. *Intellectuals* in society must organise seminars, group discussions etc, to focus attention to this problem.
2. *National Dailies* must govern themselves by a code of conduct and taboo all news items and articles which could fan communal discord. They must encourage articles on National Unity.
3. *Local Authorities* must also help in finding a solution by passing practical solutions. They must also be given wider powers to ensure wider participation by the people and a committee should be set up to make necessary recommendations.
4. *Parent Associations* should discuss the desirability of teaching Sinhala and Tamil in all schools throughout the island and advise the Government.
5. *The TULF* should think about National problems as well and must play its role as the main Opposition Party in the NSA in such a manner to win the confidence of the majority community.
6. *The Government* should prevail upon its members in the Govt. Parliamentary Group to stress on the need for National Unity on public platforms.

It must broadcast elementary lessons in Sinhala and Tamil for the mutual benefit of both communities and must provide postal tuition through official Languages Department.

It must implement fully the existing laws on the use of the Tamil language and punish all offi-

cial who violate government instructions.

A twenty-point programme was submitted to the earlier government by members of the Tamil community from all walks of life, and this government may give consideration to it.

In conclusion it must be said that no one denies the fact that the Premier has already taken a few steps in the correct direction despite political pressure, but he can still march forward taking the vast majority of the Sinhalese and Tamils who are behind him.

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15/4, Murugesar Lane,
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Jaffna.
4.10.77

REVIEW

Sucker Punch

Jayantha Somasundaram

Nobody seems to want to give Mrs. Bandaranaike credit for anything these days. That's unfair. If anybody must be congratulated for the parliamentary debacle that the LSSP and CP encountered on July 21st, it is she. It was she who provided the rope with which the leaders of the LSSP and CP hung themselves.

The defeat that the SLFP suffered at the polls must not be exaggerated. It is a defeat that could, if the UNP fails to deliver the goods and if the Parliamentary system remains intact, be made good by the SLFP.

The need to neutralise the LSSP and CP leadership appeared on the agenda in the early sixties. Mrs. Bandaranaike's government found survival tough going in the face of the strikes that they fomented. When the LSSP, CP and MEP closed ranks in 1963 to form the first United Left Front, the Left became an intolerable threat.

Baiting the trap with the prospect of a coalition, the SLFP approached the ULF from both extremists. Utilising and exacerbating the differences within the Front, overtures were simultaneously made to the LSSP and the MEP.

Then she sprang the trap. The ULF broke up. And the outcome was even better than expected.

The fallout led the LSSP into a popular front coalition with the SLFP; and the MEP into an alliance with the UNP and extreme Rightists like Dahanayake, Konara Rajaratne and C. P. de Silva. Leaving the CP holding the remnants of the first ULF.

The election of the UNP in 1965 and the elevation of Philip Gunawardena to the Cabinet set the fuse to the bomb that would extinguish the MEP in Parliament. In 1970 it blew up. So much for the MEP.

Now for the LSSP and CP. Nineteen seventy. The hands of the clock were moved back; seven years to destruction.

The SLFP played its game astutely; the UNP complemented it at every turn. The LSSP portfolios were deliberately picked. N. M. Perera was given Finance, but control of public service appointments carefully moved to nephew Felix Dias. Colvin R. de Silva was given plantations, a heads you win, tails I loose portfolio. It cemented the LSSP's alienation from the plantation workers. And finally for Leslie Goonewardena, the most likely troublemaker, Transport. Let him sit on his own inferno, give him a Ministry which oversees the militant trade unions that he and his friends have built for thirty years, and then sit back and watch the fun.

The UNP on the sidelines assisted the SLFP, as they used the LSSP and CP as an alibi for everything from military atrocities to rising prices.

Seven years to destruction. Then, July 21st seventy-seven, the Left wiped out of Parliament.

Everything in life has its price. The cost of eliminating the Left from Parliament after 47 years, involved the defeat of Mrs. Bandaranaike's own party. She must have known that the SLFP could never win in a three cornered fight, not even in the best of times. We are not suggesting that a no-contest-pact with the Left would have ensured her return, but it would have cushioned the blow of defeat.

Those who see the seventy-seven election as decisive because it eliminated the Left from Parliament, must realise that it is Mrs. Bandaranaike who delivered the knock-out punch. And the Left walked right into it—into the Sucker Punch.

Confidentially

IMF, UNP & Sri Lanka-3

IS IT SURPRISING that a large number of people, especially those familiar with undercurrents in our political life in Sri Lanka, have commented on the fact that Esmond Wickremasinghe should have written what he did in his article (published in all Sunday papers on November 27) on the budget and about the bungling of the negotiations with the IMF by Treasury and other officials? That it is for this reason that *Tribune* has spotlighted this article for two weeks in this column by publishing relevant extracts from it? That this week, too, we shall refer to a few points he made and that in the concluding article next week we shall sum up Esmond's arguments and offer some comments of our own? That, incidentally, many of our readers have written to ask us "who is Esmond Wickremasinghe?" That this shows that the new generations which have emerged in Sri Lanka are not aware of the top personalities of the fifties and sixties? That *Tribune* will answer this question when the appropriate occasion arises but it would appear that Esmond Wickremasinghe has undergone a transformation as much as many others of the same generation? That it may be a trite saying that life is flux and change (it was Engel's constant theme in analysing nature) but it is a fact that changes have overtaken nearly everyone of consequence in this country?

THAT IT WILL BE RECALLED that in the last article we had concluded with an extract from Wickremasinghe's article that ended thus: "...a better prescription for political suicide for the UNP could not have been found!" That Esmond Wickremasinghe made it clear that something drastic had to be done to save the situation? That it was necessary to persuade the IMF that the basics of the UNP Manifesto should be honoured and that the bungling of officials should not be allowed to perpetuate a dangerous error? "This is not the policy of the UNP,

is not what the UNP wants, nor is it what the Finance Minister stated in his Budget speech. The officials have again bungled. I do not wish to rush in and shout 'sabotage' as many do. I think the fault is that conclusions of international economic arrangements were handled solely by officials who may be very competent in their own fields, but they speak only in economic terms and not in political terms. Their training does not permit them to do otherwise. Officials do not think of the political dimensions of a problem. They look at problems in terms of economic parameters. The implications on political stability of any measures suggested by any money-lending organisation must first be examined and nothing should be agreed to which would imperil our stability. For instance, the political implications of measures in question where mass unemployment could be the result should have been explained clearly to the IMF?" That he was hopeful that the IMF would be agreeable to review the position and he suggested what should be done? "I cannot conceive of the IMF agreeing to any measures which would have created mass unemployment and strikes and fuel insurgency. The government must take immediate action to suspend the gazettes, re-examine them at the highest level and then work out the move towards a free economy, both over a period of time and in a manner which permits the creation of a small number of small and medium-scale owners of the means of production in all sectors. The Janata Party in India has just taken some measures on these lines. A classic free economy is not possible in Sri Lanka. It is not UNP policy as declared between 1973 and 1977. A free economy subject to regulation to create a large number of owners of the means of production and to permit full employment is its objective?" That apart from denouncing the officials for bungling the negotiations with the IMF, Esmond Wickremasinghe made other points of great validity (for the future stability of the UNP)? "This Budget inflicted the minimum of pain to generate this estimated surplus when it made changes in the subsidies namely, the withdrawal of subsidised rice for those with a monthly income of about Rs. 399/- and the withdrawal

of the subsidised sugar for all except children under 12 years. But for the first time it made a revolutionary advance when it provided a payment of Rs. 50/- a month for every single person unemployed. This is a most advanced catering to basic human needs, recognising the obligation of society to provide every single human being with some income till it can provide him or her with the opportunity of work. But even this surplus of two hundred million appears to be deceptive because the current and capital expenditure in foreign exchange had been calculated at the old parity rate by the officials! With the changes in the parities introduced by the budget about double the same amount of rupees would be needed for this foreign exchange expenditure. In view of the lack of sufficient detail in the Budgetary figures, it is not possible to quantify the precise implications of this lapse, but it looks as if much of the two thousand million has been wiped out. So we are perhaps at square one again, and have to raise money for development from almost scratch?" That from this Esmond argued: "The government has, however, continued various subsidies as indicated by the Finance Minister, amounting in all to Rs. 3,225 million in 1978, in addition, to the amount of the subsidy of the Rs. 50/- to all unemployed persons. Our people live on such a low level that Sri Lanka is classified among the poorest of the poor countries. Cutting subsidies any further is inconceivable and would perhaps even convert the vast majority of voters, the UNP had at the polls, into a minority. Once real annual incomes rise to about 250 dollars per capita (it is now about 130 dollars) then it may be possible to work out some forms of gradual elimination of the subsidies, coupled with the raising of incomes, so that purchases could be made at market prices. But if we cut them any further now, we will go back to the Bandaranaike days, when human beings and dogs ransacked dustbins in the early mornings in search of food. Then where is the money for development to come from?" That the question he has raised "where is the money for development to come from?" is one that must haunt every thinking person?

(To be Concluded)

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