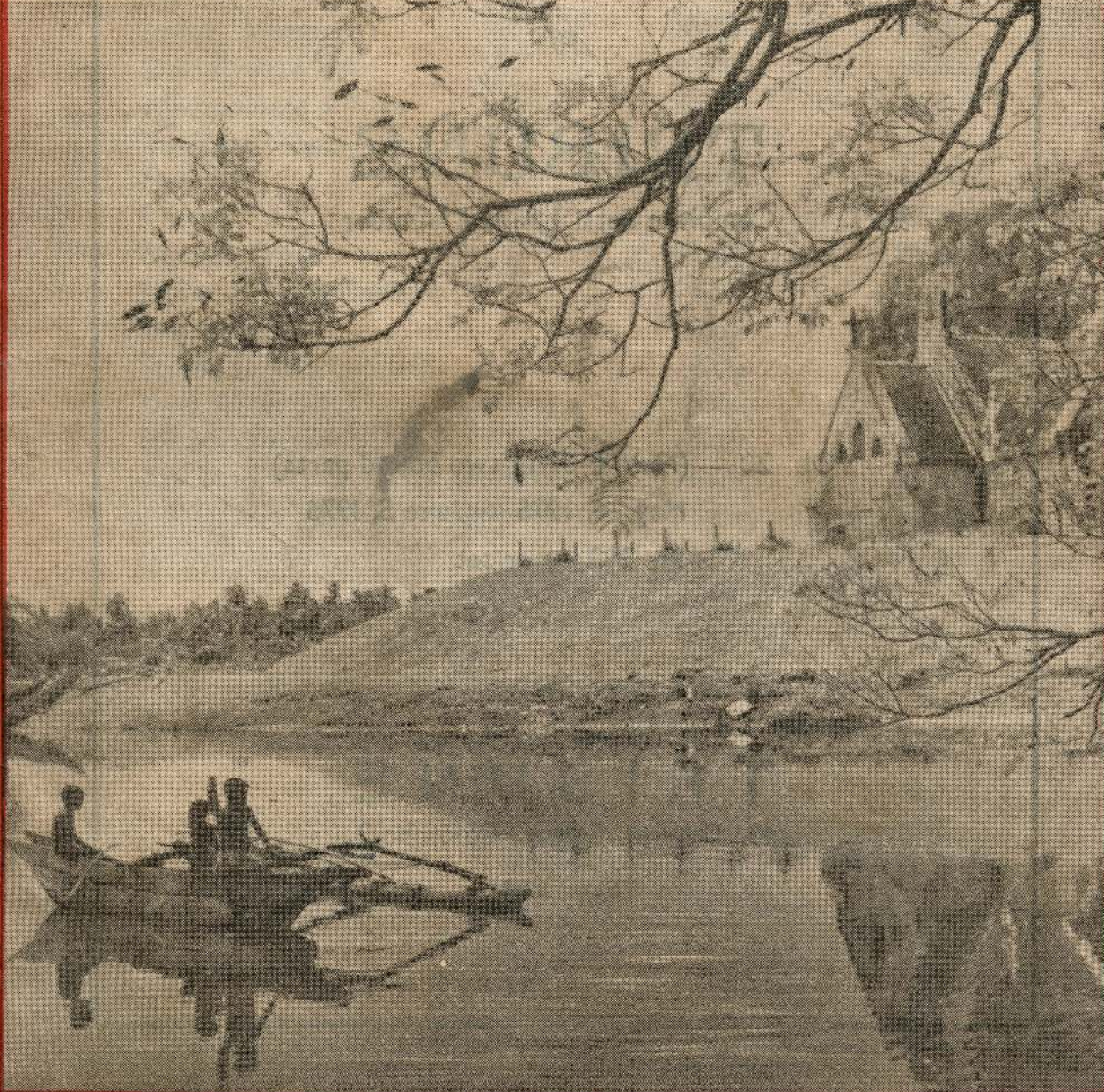


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Letter From The Editor

ALTHOUGH THE DEBATE ON THE BUDGET is nearing completion, and will be finally concluded on December 23, many readers will wonder why *Tribune* continues to linger over the fundamentals underlying the Budget as propounded by the Prime Minister in his address at the Plantation Seminar on November 23. To understand the Budget it is necessary to do this. With this note, however, we hope to round-up the discussion on the theoretical basis on which the Prime Minister has approached the problem of budget-making in the context of the realities of the day and options available to Sri Lanka. As *Tribune* has pointed out, the PM and the government have utilised one option held out by the West, that of borrowing massively to build a free economy that would carry Sri Lanka forward to prosperity. Strings of one kind or another are attached to all loans and credits—economic as well as political—and in his speech at the Plantation Seminar, JR put forward the only excuse for this course of action: "So that was what we were faced with. We then have to ask for foreign aid. I do not like to get aid from anybody. When we joined the World Bank in 1951, the President Mr. Black came to Sri Lanka and asked me 'Do you want any aid?' I said 'No'. Up till 1956 and a little beyond that all our major development works were done without foreign aid. The Galoya and other development work were done without foreign aid. Today we can do no work without foreign aid. But we must stop it. When you ask for foreign aid you cannot dictate to the person who gives you the aid. He is lending money to you. Foreign aid does not mean grants; does not mean gifts. There is a small amount of gifts, especially under the Colombo Plan, but 98 per cent of what are called foreign aid contributions are loans, may be long term loans—30 years to 40 years—with a low interest, but they have to be returned. And the man or the country that gives you, asks you how you are going to return this? What are you going to do with this? We cannot say that we are going to eat the foreign aid the whole time. Somebody must have to put a stop to it. We have decided to put a stop to it. There may be an opposition. I cannot blame those who were defeated in the last election, who were swept out, trying to make capital out of sufferings of those who are hit by this budget." What it amounts to is that some of the conditions imposed by the leaders would "hit" some people. And this is what J. R. Jayawardene said: "I won't deny that there are people who are hit by this budget. That is the only way that we can progress. So we decided that we should remove the subsidy on rice for a certain section of our people, that we should ease the blow by giving them money in rupees. Our difficulty is a question of foreign exchange not rupees. The more you import, the more foreign exchange you have to use. We cannot go on using the foreign exchange and eating it. So we took that step. It was a difficult step to take but it was a necessary step. If we do not do it today we have to do it tomorrow. If we do not do it tomorrow we have to do it the day after tomorrow. We said we will do it today and we took that step. We hope by taking that step and the other consequences this budget has mentioned to try and create development. The money that we save by this method would be used for development." It is a simple argument and if people can be persuaded to accept its logic and work hard, the budget will be a success. But if not, the future is dismal. JR himself has set out the inherent difficulties in implementing this policy: "We hoped to have 2000 million rupees for development. But because of certain measures we took, such as relief for unemployed and more relief to those who have to use essential food that has been reduced; but is sufficient for us to have a development programme in next year's budget. If we do not do that not only we would be unable to import what I said was needed to keep our economy going, but there will be no development.". And this is the argument that has been used by all the leading lights of the UNP right through the Budget Debate. This argument will go on and on until the government is able to break out of the stagnation that has pulled our economy down into a deep morass. Already questions have been raised as to whether the subsidies and social welfare measures have exceeded safe limits—thereby endangering the quantum available for development. Certain opposition leaders have threatened a "hartal" like the 1953 one to topple the government. It is time that the myth that Dudley quit because of the hartal is debunked by historians and knowledgeable political commentators. The hartal provided a good excuse for Dudley to withdraw from a Premier Stakes he won but could not hold. It is a sad and interesting story. However, 1978 is not 1953. Today there is a reserve pool of 1,200,000 unemployed youth—not unionised and not indoctrinated with agitational ideology. This is something to think about.

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EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

• TULF • Global Economic Perspectives

Colombo, December 20.

The Committee stage of the Budget Debate will conclude on Friday, December 23. The debate has evoked a great deal of interest not only in regard to the revelations brought to light about happenings during the last regime but also the matters which backbenchers of the UNP and TULF urgency. The Ministers, as to be expected, promised to rectify mistakes and also to effect changes to lay the foundations for the Dharmista millennium to come. All this has created a new euphoria. Cynics will be tempted to call it a Dharmista euphoria.

The last weekend also saw a new political development: in the UNP-TULF relationship. In a stop press note in the last issue we referred to the fact that the TULF had decided to call off the three-year old boycott of functions organised to fete Ministers and other governmental dignitaries. The new TULF line was set out in an "exclusive" interview in the weekend, 18/12/77, (Iqbal Athas reporting):

This is how the interview under the heading TULF READY TO HOLD NORTH-SOUTH TALKS: FRUITFUL TALKS MAY SHADOW 'EELAM' CRY read: "The Tamil United Liberation Front yesterday offered to hold talks with the Government to find an overall solution to the problems faced by the Tamil speaking people. Outlining what appears to be a major shift in its policy, the TULF leader, Mr. A. Amirthalingam, told *Weekend* in an exclusive interview 'we are prepared for a dialogue if the Prime Minister, Mr. J. R. Jayewardene invites us.' He emphasised that the TULF was not going to put forward any demands. 'However, we will certainly place our case before him and whom-ever else he calls', he declared. The need to place any demands, the TULF leader explained, does not arise as the United National Party's Election Manifesto had held out promises to solve some of the problems facing Tamil speaking people. They included matters relating to language, education, eco-

onomic development and decentralisation, he said. 'If the Government is responsive to the aspirations of the Tamil speaking people, they should formulate their proposals and place it before them. So far nothing has been done. We do not know what the Government is going to do,' he pointed out. Asked whether solutions to the problems enumerated in the UNP Manifesto would portend a change in the TULF's attitude, Mr. Amirthalingam said, 'if we feel a change is necessary, we will have to consider it. It is a matter for the party's policy making body. Thereafter, we would have to seek a fresh mandate from our people. It depends on what the Government does and how far it is able to go.' He cited the situation in Scotland to elucidate his statement. 'In response to Scottish demand for self government, Britain has introduced an Act for devolution of power. They are now placing it before the Scottish people to decide,' he said.

"Mr. Amirthalingam conceded that there had been a major change in TULF attitude towards the Government. 'There is general feeling among those sympathetic to the aspirations of the Tamil speaking people that the Prime Minister and his Government should be given a chance to do whatever they can,' he said. Explaining the causes for the change which surfaced in a TULF announcement that the Front would no longer boycott functions which Cabinet Ministers would attend, Mr. Amirthalingam said, 'The decision to boycott was taken after two and a half years of government by Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike because of their failure to even commence a dialogue with us on our demands concerning the rights of the Tamils. We were left with no option but to start direct action. Various measures of non violence and civil disobedience were carried out. Non co-operation and boycott of Ministers was one aspect of this movement. The situation today is different. The Prime Minister and the government have proclaimed their intention to embody what they feel to be the legitimate grievances of the Tamil speaking people in the Constitution and trying to offer them redress'....."

But, even at this juncture Mr. Amirthalingam could not resist the temptation to

refer to a "struggle" in case things did not work out the way the TULF liked. Why TULF leaders should repeat this parrot-cry about "struggle" at every turn baffles many people, but a political scientist with a psycho-analytical turn of mind will be inclined to say that this unnecessary and bombastic rhetoric about "struggle" stems from a deep sense of insecurity. But that is a matter for deeper analysis that must be undertaken in a proper evaluation of the Tamil problem.

However, in the interview in the *Weekend*, the reference to "struggle" was only an apologetic hangover of the "struggle" cum "liberation" rhetoric indulged in earlier days. "Mr. Amirthalingam warned that the TULF would not hesitate to launch a struggle to achieve its objectives 'if we reach a stage when we feel we cannot expect anything from this government.' Having got this off his chest —no doubt to keep "militants" satisfied—he went on to discuss other matters of interest currently relevant to the Tamil problem:

"...The intransigent attitude of the Bandaranaike Government to the problems of the Tamil speaking people,' he said, aggravated the situation. 'The members of the TULF sought and were elected on a mandate to work for the establishment of a Tamil state. We are aware that a Select Committee of the National State Assembly will not be able to consider this demand. We have no mandate to ask for anything less. That is the reason why we decided to keep out of the Select Committee. But we are anxious to create the atmosphere for all sections of the people in this country and the nations of the world to understand the reasons for and the justice of our demand. We have not yet come to the stage of confrontation and direct action with the present government. That is why we have decided that there is nothing wrong in our parliamentarians meeting ministers and attending conferences and official functions in which the Cabinet Ministers participate.' He said: 'Even as we gave over two years to the last government' before we started direct action to win our

rights, we want to give a chance to this government. We are prepared to wait for sometime and see how far they would go. A change of Government calls for a change of tactics. But a change of tactics does not mean a change in our objectives.'

"Mr. Amirthalingam conceded that there was a lot of agitation among TULF youth, particularly the militants over this move. "We are trying to educate them on what is going on", he said. Asked whether the TULF would continue to refrain from participating in the deliberations of the Parliamentary Select Committee which is to revise the Constitution, Mr. Amirthalingam replied that the solution of problems of Tamil speaking people finds a minor place there. He pointed out that out of the 21 questions published by the Select Committee in the form of a questionnaire, only one related to the minorities. He said the TULF would not make any representations on this questionnaire. However, the Front would make known its views once the Select Committee presents its findings to the National State Assembly. Commenting on the series of hold ups and robberies in the northern areas, Mr. Amirthalingam said 'there is a possibility that some of them have been the actions of politically motivated youth. I am equally satisfied others were for private gain.' he said.."

There is no reason why this attitude should not have been adopted by the TULF earlier—immediately after the elections. The UNP and the JR Government had given the same assurances then that they are giving now. The TULF is now prepared to give the Government a

chance to fulfil its pledges and to make its assurances meaningful, but immediately after July the TULF had thought they could reach out for the moon by tabling an Amendment to the "Throne Speech" demanding Eelam. This puerile exhibitionism of political infantilism gave an excuse to elements, which had pre-planned a communal bloodbath a long time earlier only to create a State of Emergency in which groups which could not hope to gain power through the ballot-box could trigger a situation calculated to subvert law

and order to enable such elements to establish a dictatorial regime under a constitutional facade. Owing to a series of fortuitous circumstances, the chief among which was the fact that the UNP had won 139 seats, the conspiracy failed. Tribune will undertake a more detailed analytical evaluation of this phase of our history only after the Sansoni Commission has completed its investigations and made its findings known.

In the meantime, the new attitude of the TULF is a welcome development. In one sense, it is also a last minute effort to re-establish the "unity" in the TULF. The CWC will once again be able to "function" within the TULF with its new policy—which in G. G. Ponnambalam terminology of the 1948-1952 period (when the FP was formed by the break-aways from the TC) could be described as "responsive co-operation" (in other words, "you scratch my back..I scratch your back.."). Apart from the position of the CWC, the TULF was threatened with dissidence from Eastern Province MPs. If the TULF had adopted its current policy of "responsive co-operation" earlier, it need not have lost one of its members, Canagaratnam, 2nd MP for Pottuvil. The speeches of some of the Wannu TULF MPs (Mannar, Mullaitivu and Vavuniya) in the Budget debate had a totally

different flavour from the Eelam-minded speeches from the Jaffna Peninsula. But even the speeches of most MPs. from the Jaffna area had lost the sharp Eelam sting. There is no doubt also that the TULF did not want any more of its MPs to do a "Pottuvil". Apart from this the Government and its Ministers have adopted a more humane attitude to the Tamils on many matters. Without conceding Eelam, the Government meaningfully showed that it was willing to accord "equality" to the Tamils—something all earlier governments, especially the UF and SLFP from 1970-77, had not done.

Furthermore, the TULF is deeply conscious that District Ministers will be appointed from groups and parties that co-operate with the Government Parliamentary Party, and that JR, as President from February 4, would like to have TULF MPs to function as District Ministers. Further, if an understanding is reached with the UNP there is every possibility that the TULF might be in the new reshuffled Cabinet. These are some of the perspectives that emerge as a result of UNP-TULF "responsive co-operation."

There are political guess-experts who predict that if JR is able to secure the sup-

GREETINGS

CHRISTMAS

THE PICTURE, on the cover, is the church in Negombo by the Dutch Canal immediately after the lagoon. We have used this picture to remind ourselves and our readers that Christmas is once again the symbolic birthday of Jesus Christ. In the heyday of the colonial empires of the christian countries of Western Europe, Christmas was made one of the focal points of the cultural imperialism which had been imposed on the native populations of the subject countries. Christmas was also made the multi-billion business bonanza into which everybody was stampeded into participating—with bon-bons, X'mas cards, wines, cakes, toys, gifts, clothes, crackers, parties, dances and what have you. To make the spending extravagant—to the delight and profit of merchants and traders—the festivities were spread from Christmas Eve to New Year's day. It was the carnival time of cultural imperialism. Today, with imperialism fading away and resurgent nationalism on the march, the colonial type Christmas-New Year extravaganza is no more and has also lost its one-time importance in countries like Sri Lanka. Today, the religious and spiritual aspect of a new Christianity is slowly coming into focus. Neo-colonialism finds it hard to inveigle the older and traditional Churches into its clutches—for instance, the World Council of Churches and important sections of the Catholic Church are, among other things, opposed to Multinational Corporations—and neo-colonialists have to fall back on esoteric cults like Hare Krishna, Living Gospel, Anand Marg and the like to do the dirty for them!

port of the TULF in the Government, it would not be long before a repentant SLFP, after the recent propaganda and polemical bashing it has received in the NSA and every where will be willing to join in a National Government with the UNP and TULF. JR's long-time dream of a National Government may yet come true in 1978 or 1979!

While on a parochial or domestic level, these calculations about the immediate political perspectives have begun to produce anticipatory speculations, there is, unfortunately, a total and complete failure to understand anything of the economic perspectives in the capitalist world. The year 1978 threatens to bring a trade and economic conflict that is likely to usher in the greatest "recession" or "depression" capitalism has ever known, or it might as in the 1938-40 period lead to a global war of a most disastrous nature. With nuclear armaments, the big and powerful nations will do their utmost to avoid a military war, but an acute trade, currency and economic war will be difficult to prevent.

Already in 1977, such a war has broken out in different sectors. The Jap yen is knocking spots out of the US dollar. With IMF-induced "prosperity", UK's Eurosterling has begun to undermine the position of the Eurodollar. Jap exports have stolen a march over the products of most of the advanced capitalist countries of the West. Washington wants Tokyo to cut down exports or increase imports. EEC countries also want Japan to cut its exports.

Japan finds it hard to apply a brake on its manufactures and exports. The result is that the USA and the EEC countries have begun to take refuge behind protective customs barriers and tariffs to reduce imports. Whilst this protectionism is directed primarily at Japan, many third world countries which were encouraged to develop light industries and Free Trade Zone exports (to be able to repay interests and debts of the Skylocks of the developed West) have been already knocked out in 1978. South Korea's trade surpluses have vanished and its balance of trade is now in the red. Taiwan, Hongkong and Singapore face similar problems.

Sri Lanka's garment industry is faced with liquidation because of

the protective trade barriers the EEC have proposed to set up. Three Ministers of the JR Government were rushed to Brussels and Western capitals to save the situation. Minister of Trade Lalith Athulathmudali came back with assurances that Sri Lanka would not suffer. But it is not yet clear how much of the existing garment industry has been saved. There is also no doubt, that if Sri Lanka has been given assurances that she would get her old quotas, it will be at the expense of other Third World countries which have developed similar industries. And if Sri Lanka obtained concessions for 1978, what is the guarantee that she will get them in 1979 and 1980 also?

One thing has become clear that the capitalist world has been compelled to disown *de facto* "free trade" (whilst *de jure* preaching homilies to the Third World about free trade and a free economy). The AFL leader, Meany, in a much publicised speech on December 10, in Washington had declared that "free trade" was already a "myth and joke" and warned President Carter that if he persisted in "free trade", country's economy would be ruined and that unemployment would get worse in the US.

All the classic concomitants of the concepts "free trade" and "free economy" are being modified

and abandoned in the USA and in the EEC countries—because Japan has used free trade to "out-trade" them in every way. Economic experts believe that in 1978, the conflicts inherent in the no longer "free trade" of the capitalist globe will be such as to create major disasters in several countries.

It is in this situation that Sri Lanka has ventured on a free economy and free enterprise experiment under the auspices of the IMF-IBRD, and the financial backing or some of the capitalist countries that are caught up in the vortex of economic crisis. When the crisis overwhelms rich and powerful countries, the burden is usually passed on to the poorer Third World countries.

Has any thought been given to the measures this country must adopt when the oncoming crisis overtakes the capitalist world? In the midst of the current euphoria about a brave new world of free economy, no one in the Government or the Opposition has uttered one word of warning that all the dreams built on this budget might come tumbling down, not because of anything we do or don't do but because of global economic forces over which we have no control. Sri

BOUQUETS

*WATER *NORTH-SOUTH

*MINISTER GAMINI DISSANAYAKE must be congratulated for having moved the Drilling Section from the Irrigation Department to the Water Resources Board. But the Water Resources Board has to start functioning in the way it should. There has been a great deal of talk about sinking wells in the Dry Zone with foreign aid. This must be done. Subsidies for sinking wells will be productive. Such subsidies now an imperative necessity. Other subsidies will not yield the dividends which well sinking will. Money should not be handed out indiscriminately to individuals. Most of them can't get the job done. Wells must be sunk on a planned basis for farmers. The Water Resources Board must also extend the sinking of tube wells from limestone areas to sandy and gravelly soils. A bouquet to Minister Dissanayake for taking the preliminary steps to bring groundwater to the surface. Quick action is essential.

*MINISTER LALITH ATHULATHMUDALI deserves a bouquet for persuading the TULF MPs to participate in the opening of the new building of the Jaifna branch of the Insurance Corporation of Ceylon. Minister Lalith decided to attend this rather insignificant function because he sensed an opening to the TULF. He also did very well to make his speech a record for any Minister of any government since independence. It was the shortest ever. He told the press that the Prime Minister was willing to start a dialogue with the TULF and it seems to be a case of "Barkis Is Willing" so far as the TULF and Tamils are concerned. To Minister Lalith Athulathmudali for setting the ball rolling in the UNP-TULF dialogue a really big bouquet.

Lanka has no say over global forces, and small countries like this island will be one of the most adversely affected by such a crisis.

In the past, when global recession has upset plans of economic development, it has been customary for ministerial spokesmen and the government media to hold up their hands in horror and say "what can we do... reasons beyond our control have thwarted our plans... etc. etc." It would be better to be prepared for such a calamity which is now round the corner. Every effort is being made by the rich countries concerned to minimise the oncoming crisis—protectionism seems to be the favourite way out. But, however much of it may be minimised, the general belief among experts is that it cannot be avoided.

It would be far better to prepare the people for such a global economic crisis especially now that Sri Lanka is fully committed to the capitalist system. Socialist countries have always succeeded in preventing such crisis from taking a toll of the living standards of its people—by the rigidities of centrally planned and controlled economies. By electing the UNP, the people of Sri Lanka have chosen the path of the "free economy" capitalist development and abandoned, for the moment at any rate, the radical path leading to socialist centrally planned development.

In this connection a statement made by the Netherlands Premier, Joop den Uyl in 1975 is pertinent: "...the international economic system is not as free as is often claimed and our choice is not one between a free system based on free enterprises and a fully centrally planned economy. The real choice we have to make is between sticking to our present system, which is largely guided and manipulated for the benefit of the rich countries, and opting for a system directed towards finding solutions to the problems of an equitable division of income and property, of scarcity of natural resources and of despoliation of the environment."

Equitable division about which he speaks is as much a myth as free trade. In the third Report to the Club of Rome entitled *RESHAPING THE INTERNATIONAL ORDER (RIO)*, it is said: "A colonial history had also helped

bestow upon many countries in the Western world access to cheap supplies of other of the Third World's raw materials. Of the nine major minerals (excluding oil) required to sustain an industrial economy, the industrialized market economy countries consumed nearly 70 percent of the world's output. The Third World, economically tied to the industrial machine, was compelled to sell for the price determined by international market mechanisms which worked to the advantage of the industrialised importing countries."

After examining the GNP of (a) Market Economy Rich countries, (b) Centrally Planned Economies and (c) Developing Third World Countries, the Report ventured to say:

"By the early 1970s it had become clear that the cornucopia of economics growth was turning into a Pandora's box. The main props upon which the economic system was resting began to crumble, for the industrialized countries, in uncomfortably quick succession. The world monetary system, agreed upon by the Western powers at Bretton Woods towards the end of the Second World War, had all but collapsed by 1971. Despite the fact that this laid the basis for gigantic financial disruptions, world wide inflation, trade dislocations and for some countries, enormous balance of payments difficulties, the Western powers found it hard to co-operate on international monetary reforms.

"The disruptions contributed to wild movements in the price of most primary products which, because of their unstable markets, were already prone to serious fluctuation. Prices of industrial products had increasingly risen, partly as a consequence of increased demand and partly because of wage claims for surpassing increases in labour productivity. These developments not only jeopardized the growth prospects of the industrialized countries but also resulted in continuous increases in the import bills of most Third World countries.

"The Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade, solemnly adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1970, and reviewed in 1974, had hardly been taken seriously by the larger industrialised countries

and a general feeling of frustration prevailed among the countries of the Third World. A sudden and historically important change took place, however, when in 1973 the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) took the initiative to use their power and raised the price of crude oil—which in real terms had actually declined between 1950 and 1970—to about four times the previous level. This development facilitated by a temporary and perhaps unexpected coincidence of interests between Western oil companies and OPEC nations, caused the industrialized countries considerable distress and brought veiled threats of military retaliation. It did, however, result in a temporary two per cent transfer of the GNP of the industrialised countries to the OPEC nations; it also contributed towards accelerating the recession in economic activity which had started in 1972.

"The world situation was further aggravated by adverse weather conditions which brought disastrous crop failures in many parts of the world, and by the concerted action of the main producers of basic staple foods which enabled them to increase their prices in 1974 to a level some three to four times higher than in 1970. This placed enormous pressure on world reserve stocks of food grains—which dwindled to virtually nothing in 1972 as well as in 1975—and on the importers of staple foods, especially the poorest countries.

"The full impact of all these developments were felt in the industrialized world in 1974 and 1975 when the recession assumed proportions larger than any experienced since the Second World War. Economists struggled to explain 'stagflation', the unique combination of high inflation and industrial recession; Keynesian economics which had helped to steer courses away from impending crises in the past, this time seemed perilously inadequate. Industrial production in many industrialized countries fell in 1975 for the first time since the Second World War. In September of that year, seventeen million people flooded the employment of the richest countries. Nor was it the industrial machine that alone was misfiring; some sectors of Western agriculture, which only a few years earlier

had appeared strong, were in difficulties.

"To many it became increasingly apparent that the economic crisis which plagued the Western world was more than a temporary phenomenon, a pocket of economic turbulence along the route towards even greater riches. They view it as a crisis in the very international structures and mechanisms which the Western world itself has largely created. If the inexorable workings of market forces have helped create the problems, it is clear that they, if left to their own devices, will not be able to solve them. Some economists even warn us that the much heralded "recovery" might prove little more than a brief respite, a lull before an even greater economic storm, not long off, even more damaging.

"Prosperity has brought anxiety to the Western world, a gnawing fear that the good times might well be over, even though aspirations for still greater material benefits remain. If the Western world is to come to grips with this, with its growing list of problems—social as well as economic—it must, in its own long term interests, seek to create new international structures based upon global co-operation."

We have cited this extract in *extenso* from the third report to the Club of Rome because we feel that our readers must have some idea of what is happening in the capitalist world. RIO is a genteel and mild report from bourgeois sources.

The Report, thereafter, sets out why third world countries have wanted a new international economic order. The non-aligned Summit in Colombo in August 1976 paid a great deal of attention to this.

But the First World of capitalism does not, as yet, want to freely co-operate with the Third World in the establishment of such a new international order. The more intransigent the rich and affluent countries become, the more militant will Third World countries become—in spite of the successful and even partial de-stabilisation of countries that vigorously campaign for a proper restructuring of the international economic order.

BUDGET—5

Developments In 1976 And 1977—1

The last section of the first part of the Budget Speech made by Mr. Ronnie de Mel on November 15 were devoted to developments in 1976 and 1977. According to him: "the performance of the Sri Lanka economy suffered a set-back in 1976, with the GNP in real terms increasing only by 3.0 percent compared with an increase of 3.6 percent in the previous year. The lower rate of growth in 1976 was mainly due to the decline in the output of the plantation crops, tea and coconut. Tea production declined from 471 million pounds in 1975, which was low, to 433 million pounds in 1976, the lowest production level recorded since 1959. This was largely due to the chaos and confusion in the tea plantations since the Land Reform. The drought conditions in 1976 and the mismanagement of coconut plantations since Land Reform also resulted in coconut production declining by an estimated 12.7 percent in 1976 to 2,093 million nuts. Rubber production, on the other hand, increased from 329 million pounds in 1975 to 335 million pounds in 1976. The far-sighted replanting programme started by the UNP in 1952 had counter-balanced some of the ill-effects of mismanagement under Land Reform, but production was still low by previous standards. Output of paddy and subsidiary food crops also increased by 8.5 percent and 4.1 percent respectively compared to 1975, although still well below the UNP record in 1969-70.

"Production in the mining and quarrying sector increased significantly in 1976, due to the increased production of gems, graphite and salt. The manufacturing sector recorded a lower level of activity with its output increasing by 1.9 percent as against 7.5 percent in 1975. Production shortfalls in tea and coconut contributed to the poor performance of the manufacturing sector, since the activities of this sector includes the processing of plantation crops. Value added in factory industries increased by 4.8 percent in 1976,

increased production being recorded in food, beverage and non-metallic products. The level of activity in factory industries was influenced to a large extent by the greater availability of raw materials in 1976 than in 1975. Output in cottage industry is also estimated to have increased in 1976. The output of the construction sector is estimated to have increased by 5.5 percent in 1976 arising entirely from the high level of public sector construction.

"The services also showed a significant growth of 5.3 percent. The increase of 3 percent in real GNP took place in the context of an increase of 1.6 percent in population, resulting in real national product per capita increasing by 1.4 percent. Capital formation in the year increased by 7.3 percent, while the rate of domestic savings rose from 11.2 percent of the GNP in 1975 to 14.2 percent in 1976. Real national income rose by 4 percent, due to the improvement of 35 percent in the terms of trade. As in previous years, aggregate demand consisting of private and public consumption and investment exceeded resources made available by domestic production. The gap which was met by the excess of imports over exports was however smaller at Rs. 427 million compared with a gap of Rs. 1,203 million in 1975. The proportion of imports in total resources fell from 19.0 percent in 1975 to 17.9 in 1976, wholly due to lower import prices.

"A significant development in 1976 has been the increased utilisation of resources for capital formation and for exports. Consumption expenditure fell from 72.2 percent of total resources in 1975 to 70.4 percent in 1976, while the share of investment at 13.0 percent remained at the same level as in 1975. Exports of goods and non factor services amounted to 16.5 percent of total resources in 1976 compared with 14.9 percent in 1975. While the fall in the share of consumption in total resources reflects mainly the decline in the import content of consumption expenditure due to the reduction in imports prices, the increases in exports came solely from the rise of 20.1 percent in export prices, the volume of exports having declined by 4.9 percent during the year."

FROM THIS he went on to comment on the situation in the first six months of 1977. There were prospects, he said, "of a higher growth rate of about 4.5 percent for 1977 compared with the average annual rate of 3.0 percent during the period 1970-1976. With the increase in population remaining at 1.6 percent the real product per capita would rise by 2.9 percent. The improved performance expected in 1977 can be attributed mainly to an increase in output of the agricultural sector. Agricultural output which declined by nearly 1 percent in 1976 has been projected to increase by over 9 percent this year. The production of paddy, estimated at 82 million bushels for the cultivation year 1976/77 represents an increase of more than one-third over the previous year's production, and would exceed the highest harvest realised so far of 77.7 million bushels in 1970. The Department of Agriculture has estimated that the last Maha paddy crop has yielded 52 million bushels, favourable weather conditions experienced during the season and the Mahaweli diversion being the main contributory factors.

"Among the three major plantation crops, tea production which declined by 8.1 percent in 1976, is expected to be approximately 480 million pounds in 1977 representing an increase of about 11 percent. The actual production during the first six months of this year was 250 million pounds. Rubber production has been estimated to increase by 4.5 percent in 1977 from a level of 335 million pounds in 1976 to 380 million pounds. Coconut production which fell by 13 percent in 1976 is expected to decline further in 1977 by 6.7 percent. The Coconut Marketing Board's forecast for 1977 is a production level of 1,950 million nuts. Output in the mining and quarrying sector, which has been expanding rapidly in recent years, is expected to decline in 1977. Similarly, output in the construction sector is projected to decline by about 12 percent because of the limited availability of vital building materials. Value added in the manufacturing sectors is expected to increase by 4.4 percent in 1977 which compares with an increase of 1.9 percent last year. The favourable performance of this sector is expected to arise mainly

from an increase in the value added in the processing of agricultural commodities. The contribution to the GDP from factory industries is expected to register a lower increase of 3.2 percent as against 4.8 percent in 1976. Although the output of industrial units in the private sector is expected to increase as a result of higher foreign exchange allocations, the overall growth of factory output is likely to be limited because of the decline in the output of the major industries in the public sector in the first half of the year. These, are the salient developments in 1977, the effect of all of which will be the estimated high growth rate of 4.5 percent."

AFTER THIS MR. DE MEL went on to review the situation in regard to external trade and payments: "Sri Lanka's trade balance which has been continuously in deficit from 1966 and which has registered deficits of over Rs. 1,000 million each in 1974 and 1975, achieved a small surplus of Rs. 127 million in 1976 in terms of provisional Customs data. Adjusted on the basis of information from Government agencies directly involved in trade transactions, however, the trade balance for 1976 turns out to be a deficit of Rs. 105 million, with earnings from exports at Rs. 4,840 million and payments for imports Rs. 4,945 million. Export earnings rose from Rs. 3,968 million in 1975, to Rs. 4,840 million in 1976, despite a fall in the volume of tea, rubber and coconut exports, due to a sharp increase in prices, particularly of tea which rose by about 16 percent and of rubber which rose by 59 percent. The benefits accruing to the country from higher export prices were further strengthened by favourable trends in import prices, resulting in import payments declining from Rs. 5,196 million in 1975 to Rs. 4,945 million in 1976. The consequence of rising export prices and falling import prices was the reversal of the continuous deterioration of the country's terms of trade, which improved by 35 percent from 46 in 1975 to 62 in 1976.

"With the vastly improved trade balance, the persistently large deficit in the current account of the balance of payments, which reached a peak level of Rs. 907 million in 1974, the year when oil prices were quadrupled, dropped to a mere

Rs. 50 million in 1976. The financing of this deficit was relatively simple, as the gross inflow of long-term aid amounted to Rs. 943 million of which Rs. 338 million were commodity aid, Rs. 169 million food aid, Rs. 316 million project aid and Rs. 120 million cash loans. In addition, short-term borrowings in the form of trade credits and Suppliers' Credit amounted to Rs. 1,260 million. Furthermore, a sum of Rs. 273 million was available from the IMF for balance of payments support. When repurchases from the IMF on account of past drawings of Rs. 190 million and service charges were set off, the net contribution available from the IMF was Rs. 85 million. The immediate and visible effect of the inflow of resources

LETTER

Sir,

Tribune

Are you not amused when you find that you are being accused on the one hand by Prof. A. D. P. Jayatilaka of Tamil communalism and on the other by Mr. S. Sivanayagam of having a blind spot when it comes to the TULF?

Carry on the good work, Sir, regardless of these accusations. *Tribune* makes a change from the lies, half-truths and slanted commentaries that abound in most of the other journals and newspapers from Sri Lanka.

Your analytical comments on the matters of the day and impartial analysis without clinging on to dogmatic ideologies that have lost practical value in the present context, provide an insight into the political events of the country to people like me—who have been compelled to seek economic sanctuary in other countries and who live with our feet in these lands but our thoughts hovering in Sri Lanka, awaiting hoping and yearning that things will change for the better someday when reason and sanity would prevail over stupidity and shortsightedness.

A. Siva

24, Ipswich Road,
London SW 17 9 RH,
England.
20.11.77

of such a magnitude was a build-up of external assets to the tune of Rs. 568 million. In the first half of 1977, there was a further improvement in the balance of payments on current account with the trade deficit narrowing down to Rs. 256 million from the level of Rs. 410 million in the corresponding period of 1976.

"Export earnings which were Rs. 2,079 million in the first half of 1976 rose to Rs. 3,008 million in the first half of 1977 mainly due to the increase in the earnings from tea which rose from Rs. 883 million to Rs. 1,548 million. The sharp increase in export earnings from tea was entirely due to better prices, the average f.o.b. price increasing from Rs. 9.39 per kilo in the first half of 1976 to Rs. 16.70 per kilo in the first half of 1977. In fact, the quantity of tea exported in the first half of 1977 was 1.3 million kilogrammes lower than the volume exported in the corresponding period of 1976. Earnings from rubber exports in the first half of 1977 amounted to Rs. 534 million as against Rs. 387 million in the first half of 1976, due to an increase in both the volume exported and prices. While the volume exported rose from 69 million kilogrammes in the first half of 1976 to 79 million kilogrammes in the corresponding period in 1977, f.o.b. prices rose from Rs. 5.55 to Rs. 6.67 per kilo. Export earnings from coconut were stagnant despite an increase in prices because of short-falls in production which resulted in the volume of major coconut exports declining by 59 percent from 402 million nuts to 167 million nuts. Earnings from non-traditional exports on the other hand rose from Rs. 680 million in the first half of 1976 to Rs. 767 million in the corresponding period in 1977.

"Import outlays in the first half of 1977 rose by 31 percent from Rs. 2,488 million in the corresponding period of 1976 to Rs. 3,263 million mainly due to the larger volume of imports, particularly of rice, flour and sugar. The outlay on these three commodities increased nearly two-fold from Rs. 617 million to Rs. 1,203 million. Import payments on investment goods and intermediate goods did not show any significant change in the first half of 1977 as compared with the corresponding period of the previous year.

"Set against the trade deficit of Rs. 256 million, once account is taken of invisible transactions and outright grants, the current account shows a surplus of Rs. 117 million in the first half of 1977 as against a deficit of Rs. 101 million in the first half of 1976. However, the single most important reason for the surplus in the current account in contrast to the deficit of Rs. 256 million in the trade account is the inflow of grants amounting to Rs. 242 million from foreign Governments and international institutions. Approximately, 60 percent of the grants was received in the form of food aid, 29 percent in project aid, and 11 percent in commodity aid. The United Nations Agencies, Canada, the Federal Republic of Germany, the European Economic Community, Australia and Sweden, were the major donors.

"Long-term and short-term official loans (net) provided resources amounting to Rs. 71 million in the first half of 1977. In the light of the surplus in the current account of the balance of payments, these resources spilled over into the external assets causing gross external assets to increase from Rs. 1,402 million at the end of December 1976 to Rs. 1,603 million at the end of June 1977, an increase of Rs. 201 million. The balance of payments projections for 1977 envisage a 65 percent increase in the earnings from tea exports from Rs. 2,100 million in 1976 to Rs. 3,450 million, due mainly to higher prices, the projected average f.o.b. price being Rs. 17.60 per kilo.

"Export earnings from rubber are expected to increase to Rs. 990 million in 1977 from Rs. 890 million in 1976 due to both a higher volume of exports and an increase in prices. Earnings from coconut exports on the other hand are expected to decline by 22 percent to Rs. 300 million due to an estimated decline of 63 percent in the volume of exports. Earnings from coconut exports on the other hand are expected to decline by 22 percent to Rs. 300 million to an estimated decline of 63 percent in the volume of exports. Earnings from minor exports are estimated to increase to Rs. 1,480 million from Rs. 1,328 million in 1976. The projections for 1977 envisage import outlays to increase to Rs. 7,200 million from Rs. 5,417 million in 1976 re-

presenting an increase of 33 percent, mainly on account of the higher volume of imports. The financing of the balance of payments is expected to be somewhat eased during the rest of 1977 in view of the higher export earnings indicated on the one hand and the larger inflow of grants on the other. It is estimated that, set against the trade deficit of Rs. 980 million, invisible transactions and outright grants will reduce the current account deficit Rs. 410 million in 1977. The net inflow of long-term loans is estimated at Rs. 812 million while Suppliers' credits and short-term credits are expected to decline by Rs. 302 million....."

(To be Continued)

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QUIDNUNCS

- 'Varsity Scandal
- People's Bank
- CTB

A QUIDNUNC, according to the Shorter Oxford Dictionary, is "one who is constantly asking 'what now?', 'what news?' hence an inquisitive person, a gossip. The word comes from the Latin, *quid* (what), *nunc* (now)—*what now?*—and is defined in Webster's Dictionary as "one who seeks to know all the latest gossip". Our own era, especially in Sri Lanka, is admittedly the *Quidnuncs'* Golden Age. Gossip is now a marketable commodity. The stories our *Quidnuncs* bring are based on a substratum of truth and *Tribune* publishes them only if the fire from which the smoke has arisen has some kind of reality. Apart from a few kite-flying stories to provoke investigation, most stories in this column are enough for a daily paper to go to town with a banner headline.

*QUIDNUNCS from several Campuses have descended on the *Tribune* with stories about one glaring case of injustice. On the 26th of August three lecturers were suddenly transferred to the

Scandals?

Jaffna Campus. No reasons were provided except to say that they were attached to Jaffna campus. The names of the three lecturers are (1) Seneka Bandaranaike, Lecturer in Archaeology at Vidyalandara Campus, (2) Sunimal Fernando, Acting Head, Department of Sociology, Peradeniya Campus (3) Kumar Rupesinghe, Asst. Lecturer (Sociology) Peradeniya Campus. The transfers were done at the height of communal violence. The Jaffna Campus does not have a department of Sociology or Archaeology. The transfers have affected the departments of Sociology and Archaeology at both Campuses. Under the University Act 1972, the Centre of excellence for Sociology was to be at Peradeniya Campus, whilst Archaeology was to be at Vidyalandara campus. Today the Sociology department is minus two experienced lecturers in Sociology. The Archaeology Department at Vidyalandara is minus a very experienced senior lecturer in archaeology. These transfers have caused much suffering and inconvenience to the students in both departments.

This country has experienced a severe 'brain drain' with regard to lecturers in Sociology. Most of the experienced sociologists have gone abroad and are teaching in various foreign Universities. Sociology is a very important and necessary discipline amongst the Social Sciences and is today the most popular course in Peradeniya. The vacancies in the sociology department has been filled with lecturers from the History department!

Quidnuncs say that there have been many appeals and protests: (1) The students in both the departments have protested strongly to their Campus Presidents. The parents of the students have made representations to the Minister and the Prime Minister; (2) the Student Councils in both campuses have protested, held meetings and have made representations to the University authorities. The students at Vidyalandara have already engaged in a token strike and have given an ultimatum to the University authorities; (3) The Deans in both the campuses have made representations to the Vice Chancellor and the Minister. The deans and dons of both universities have raised this matter at the Senate meetings. Prof. W. S. Karunaratne, Dean of the Vidyalandara Campus, expressed his

sentiments in the strongest terms. He has publicly stated that these transfers are a "gross interference" in the affairs of the university and goes counter to the promises held out in the Manifesto of the UNP; (4) The UTA (the University Teachers Association) has on several occasions made representations to the Vice Chancellor and the Ministers; (5) The lecturers themselves have made representations to the Minister and to the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister gave a specific assurance that these transfers will be inquired into and rectified.

Quidnuncs say that the transfers are a clear case of political victimisation. They go counter to the promises written into the UNP manifesto that "a UNP government will ensure the autonomy of the University." Apart from the transfers of the three lecturers, wholesale transfers of minor staff have been effected. All this has caused great disaffection in all the campuses. All the lecturers and dons in the universities have now been silenced since they feel that a similar fate will befall them if they have or show different views to the government in power. Quidnuncs say that the case of the three lecturers is the top University scandal of the day.

*QUIDNUNCs in the banking world want to know how and why a person with the gloriously long name of MADDUMAVITANACHIGE LANKA SILVA (popularly Lanka Silva) has been appointed as a Director of the People's Bank. He is a qualified pharmacist but with a "record" quidnuncs say, that will not bear investigation. They suggest that the investigations should go back to the time he was a boarder at the Royal College Hostel in the hey-day of Mr. B. C. Anghie and Mr. J. C. A. Corea. A pharmacist, if he is a worthy and suitable person, will probably be a good appointee to the State Pharmaceutical Corporation—unless he has or develops business interests which conflicts with the interests of the SPC. A knowledge of pharmacy is not a disqualification to be a Director of a Bank, but the person concerned should also have other qualifications to enable him to discharge the functions of a Bank Director. Quidnuncs assert that the choice of Lanka Silva to fill a place on the directorate of the People's Bank has brought no credit to the UNP

or the Government. On the other hand it has brought a great of criticism. They say that he will not even be a good ornament. Those who know, fear that appointments such as these will bring embarrassment to the UNP and the Government, sooner or later. This appointment, Quidnuncs say, savours of the past regime—the misdeeds and misdoings of which UNP spokesmen have still not tired of repeating. It is time that some one looks into such appointments as Lanka Silva's. *Tribune* will publish anything in favour of Lanka Silva or his appointment, if the appointing authority or anyone else chooses to defend the appointment. This will be one way of checking on the dossier prepared by some Quidnuncs.

*QUIDNUNCs also want an "investigation"—not a Presidential Commission as yet but the demand for one may arise soon—into the new appointments made in the CTB. It was known that the CTB was over-staffed by several thousand persons. But, once again, appointments galore are being made on "invisible chits" and large number of persons from certain electorates in Colombo town are being sent to CTB's outstation depots. Men or even youths who have never handled a screw-driver in their lives have been sent as foremen of workshops—they get a higher pay—in some outstation depots. Drivers have been appointed to drive buses in Colombo who do not know the way about on routes their buses ply. Hundreds of CTB workers been victimised as supporters of the SLFP and LSSP—they have either been discontinued or sent on leave—and the current excuse for the CTB management is that these "vacancies" are being filled. Quidnuncs say that if such "atrocities" continue to be perpetrated, they will boomerang on the UNP much sooner than many expect. The CTB, under the new UNP management, is a total disgrace. All the sins of commission and omission which were said to have been committed by all past administrations have already manifested themselves in a big way in the CTB. Quidnuncs say that unless some heads at the top roll, the affairs of the CTB will go from bad to worse.

+ +

THE WORLD

From The World Press

● Subsidies Real Help To Poor

by Michael Blenden

BRITAIN

GOVERNMENT subsidies on housing and food provided significant benefits for less well-off families and for retired people in the past few years, according to an article in the latest issue of the Central Statistical Office's *Economic Trends*. The article concludes that there has been a clear expansion in the use made of subsidies. Up to about 1972 they were used mainly to overcome the impact of structural problems in the economy such as the effect of the shift from rail to road as the prime means of transport.

Since then, subsidies have also been used as a means of easing the burden on households of problems such as high rate of inflation and unemployment. As these problems are solved, it is suggested the level of subsidies could fall.

Subsidies which affect prices more or less directly, such as food subsidies and compensation for price restraint in nationalised industries, tend to redistribute income from smaller to larger families, from the economically active population to pensioners, and from high-income to low-income groups.

The article points out that housing subsidies, mainly designed as Government payments to bridge the gap between local authority spending and their recent income, have grown rapidly in the past few years.

Food subsidies on a large scale were introduced as part of the social contract in 1974. These benefits vary more by type of household than by income, and ranged in 1975 from an average of over £50 a year for households with four children to £15 a year for single retired people living alone. In another special article, it is shown that the fastest-growing regional areas in the UK—at current prices—were Scotland, the North and York- and Humberside between 1971 and 1975.

—Financial Times

● Yen's Strength Against Dollar Poses Problem

from K. V. Narain

JAPAN - US

Tokyo, November 26,

Nothing seems to be able to stop the upsurge of the yen which again rose on the foreign exchange market here on Thursday to close the day at another post-war high of 240 flat to the dollar. Mirroring Wednesday's cracking of the 240 barrier on the London and New York foreign exchange markets, the Japanese currency picked up another 1.30 from Tuesday's closing of 241.30. Throughout on Thursday the yen hovered around the 240-mark. The Bank of Japan bought some \$ 622 millions during the day in a desperate effort to keep the yen from going above the 240-mark.

The failure to stop the daily appreciation of the yen is attributed mainly to the Fukuda Government's failure so far to take effective measures to reduce its enormous trade surplus. It is feared here that unless the Government takes swift drastic action to slash its black ink figure, the surging yen would soon pass the 240-mark since there is a limit to the Central Bank's capacity to intervene.

The new high represents a 22 per cent appreciation of the yen since the beginning of the year and 11 per cent since late September when the Japanese currency began climbing fast. (The 240-mark is being regarded by the Fukuda Government as the defence line if serious damage to the economy is to be avoided. The Bank of Japan Governor refused to make known how the Central Bank would act to prevent this defence line being pierced.

Meanwhile, reflecting widespread concern over the yen's unabated rise against the dollar, prices on the Tokyo Stock Exchange fell steeply on Thursday following Tuesday's big plunge to reach the lowest level since last December 6. Selling exceeded buying at the rate of ten to one.

—Hindu, 27/11/77

● US May Impose Curbs On Imports From Japan

From Easwar Sagar

JAPAN - US

Washington, Dec. 3,

The soaring US trade deficit, which could hit a staggering \$27 billions (Rs. 24,300 crores) figure this year, is generating demands by Congress for the imposition of import curbs, especially on goods from countries which while selling more and more in the US market, use a number of indirect devices to restrict the entry of American goods into their own markets.

In American eyes, the villain of the piece right now is Japan, which by itself is contributing to one third of the entire US trade deficit by exporting \$9 billions (Rs. 8,100 crores) more worth of goods than it imports. Until the middle of this year, the Carter Administration was inclined to look at this adverse trade balance with a certain degree of calm because it felt the equilibrium would soon be restored, but this has now turned to alarm, especially as the trade deficit has begun to have an adverse impact on the value of the dollar.

Mr. Carter's special trade representative, Mr. Robert Strauss, told correspondents on Thursday that restrictive legislation against imports from Japan was now "very imminent," if that country did not take steps to reduce its trade surplus and relax restrictions which made it hard for US exporters to sell their products in Japan. One restrictive practice apparently involves an inspection process in Japan, which affected the entry of a wide range of American goods from computers to citrus fruits and candy bars.

Reflecting the growing sentiment in the US for curbs on imports, Congressman Charles Vanik, who is the Chairman of the House International Trade Sub-Committee, has, it appears, told Mr. Strauss of the possibility of invoking an obscure provision of the 1974 Trade Act to slap a 15 per cent surcharge on all Japanese goods. The danger, of course, is that having once tasted blood, an overzealous Congress may go on to extend this restriction to imports from other nations too.

—Hindu, 4/12/77

Dec. 6 — Dec. 11

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—Silmijina; SLD—Sri Lankadipa; JD—Janadina; DP—Dinapathi; SU—Sun; DW—Dawasa; CM—Chinthamani; WK—Weekend; RR—Rivirasa; EN—Eejanadu; IDPR—Information Department Press Release; DK—Dinakara.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 6: The PM told the NSA yesterday that the previous government had issued diplomatic passports to 441 persons some of whom were not eligible to hold such passports; he was answering a question regarding the issue of diplomatic passports raised by the UNP MP for Badulla. The Education Minister said yesterday that students who had already passed the NCGE Examination need have no qualms of securing employment; the recognition given to the people who had passed the GCE 'O' level would be given to them as well. Four Arab countries and the PLO today agreed to establish a mutual security pact and called for a freeze on diplomatic relations with Egypt. A master plan to revamp the plantation industry would soon be introduced said the Minister of Plantation Industries in his inaugural address at the seminar on development for Plantation managers in Colombo yesterday. Onions will be issued to consumers through marketing department stalls at Rs. 2.80 per pound from Wednesday—CDN. News media representatives of 267 Asian countries were told by the Minister of Information and Broadcasting yesterday that the time had come to change the whole concept of reporting only bleak and sensational news from the developing countries. The Minister of Finance yesterday obtained the approval of the NSA for a supplementary estimate of Rs. 35,000,000 for the grant of Rs. 50 salary increase from December 1st to all public servants, corporation employees and pensioners—CDM. The Minister of Foreign Affairs yesterday suggested that an Ombudsman be appointed to hear the grievances of the Police and armed forces. The Fourth Floor office of the CID in the secretariat is to be shifted to a new building to ease the congestion—SU. The government has decided that the rate of customs duty that will be charged on gift parcels will be reduced from 25 to 15%; this decision is effective from today. Urban youths are to be settled in the lands coming under the Mahaweli Diversion Scheme. The price of all imported books, magazines and periodicals will be up from today in accordance with a decision taken by the Bookseller's Association; all imported books will henceforth cost a third more—CO. A sum of Rs. 55 lakhs will be spent on taking over the rice ration books from people—DK The machinery for producing sterilised milk that the Milk Board had imported in 1972, is still lying idle without being fitted up, thereby incurring a loss of 20 lakhs of Rupees—LD. According to reports from senior officials in the Port, many lakhs of Rs. worth of flour and rice are rotting in the Port of Colombo—DM.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 7: The PM said in the NSA yesterday that the government had decided to do what is just and fair by the Tamil-speaking people whether the TULF participated or not in the work of the special committee to revise the constitution. The PM has directed the Ministry of Defence to recruit 4,000 men to the Gemunu watch to combat smuggling activities in Galle and Matara. Over 100,000 government officers will be deployed between December 10 and 14 to conduct a census of householders which will precede the introduction of the new ration scheme. The PM yesterday exhorted government MP's to refrain from interfering in transfers and appointments of police officers and promised the NSA to establish soon a moral and highly disciplined police service. A four member committee has been appointed by the Bar Association of Sri Lanka to recommend amendments to the Law relating to cheques, bills of exchange and commercial law. The government has imported 2,000 tons of gram from Pakistan for the first time after many years—CDN. "I would put the blame of the morale of the police service fairly and squarely on the previous government and the former PM, Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike; she used the police like her private home guard and looked after the country like her coconut estates" so said the PM in the NSA yesterday. The PM disclosed in the NSA yesterday that the government proposes to amend the Public Security Act so that any government which wanted to rule under the provisions of the act beyond a certain period should obtain a two thirds majority of the Assembly. The Chairman of the Sri Lanka Tea Board revealed yesterday that Sri Lanka would lose valuable foreign exchange to the tune of Rs. 1650 million on the sale of tea alone during the next five years, if immediate steps were not taken to embark on a replanting scheme—CDM. The government has decided to appoint a presidential commission of inquiry to conduct a full probe into certain incidents in Jaffna and Puttalam, which took place in 1974 and 1976 respectively. The Minister of Foreign Affairs said yesterday that the situation in West Asia was gathering momentum and any observation at this stage would be premature; but, he said, Sri Lanka welcomed any peace moves which were in conformity with UN resolutions—SU. The deputy Minister of Defence said yesterday in the NSA that in any police station no matter in which part of the country it was, if a complaint was given in Tamil it would be recorded in that language—DP. Four bomb manufacturers and a large number of undesirables were arrested by the city police during the weekend city clean up. Nearly 350,000 candidates will sit the GCE 'O' level examination commencing on December 14th at 2000 centres throughout the island as 'private' candidates—CO.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 8: The Land Reform Commission has launched a major program to make land reform meaningful to the 'tiller and the rural landless'; they will be allocated at least one acre of land each, income from which will sustain them. The government last week decided to implement the proposals by the Salary Anomalies Commission appointed in 1975; the implementation of these proposals will bring a large number of benefits and reliefs to state sector employees including clerical servants and Port Commission employees. The Ministry of Agriculture and Lands and the Ministry of Plantation industry in a

bid to restore law and order into the plantation sector have assigned its management to three organisations; the state Plantations Corporation, Janatha Estates Development Board and the Land Reform Commission. The Chief Justice left for Lahore yesterday morning to participate in the Fourth Pakistan Jurists Conference organised by the Pakistan Bar Council. The government yesterday announced modifications in the implementation of the scheme to revalidate rice ration books. The United Nations Environment Programme is now engaged on a project to set up two rural energy centres in Africa and Asia to serve as demonstration units, with the object of encouraging developing countries to use alternative sources of energy in place of non-renewable fossil fuels; Pattiapola in Sri Lanka is one of them. Dr. Stanley Kalpage, now in Malaysia, has been invited to head the University Grants Commission which is to be set up shortly—CDN. The Government Clerical Service Union has urged the PM to restore some of the rights and privileges of the public servants which were withdrawn by the previous government. Over Rs. 8 lakhs worth of hoarded goods including textiles, coriander, matches, maldive fish and milk foods were flushed out by Price Control men during the past fortnight—CDM. The government has decided to empower members of the NSA to select 1000 unemployed from their respective electorates for employment in public sector institutions at electorate and district levels. The government was prepared to further liberalise laws governing the Press Council, the Minister of Information and Broadcasting told the NSA yesterday. The High Court Judge, Colombo yesterday upheld one of the preliminary objections in the Gampaha election petition and dismissed the petition with costs. Government, in an attempt to provide more employment opportunities for the youth, has decided to allow public servants to retire at the age of 50. The Minister of Local Government etc has launched a major scheme involving the improvement of certain major cities and a number of interior towns. The meeting of experts on the development of new agencies in Asia at the BMICH yesterday proposed that a feasibility study be made on the establishment of an Asian network based on an exchange of news between national agencies. The LSSP is showing great interest in establishing close ties with the TULF; this follows a statement by the Leader of the TULF which stated that they were willing to join any left party which would support and help their aim of a separate state—VK. The Minister of Foreign Affairs said yesterday that mass media people in the countries of the Asian region made a singular contribution to the cause of world peace; he was speaking at a dinner given by him in honour of the UNESCO seminar on the development of news agencies in Asia—IDPR No. 229/77. The High Commissioner for Canada presented three motor vehicles to the Minister of Agriculture in Colombo; they are part of a 200,000 Grant from Canada for the establishment of a been keeping project in Sri Lanka—IDPR. The Ministry of Health has instructed all Superintendents of Health Services and all MOH's to take action to wipe out with the help of the local authorities the Malaria menace which is threatening several Urban areas in the island—IDPR No. 88. The GCE 'O' level examination is scheduled to begin on 14 December and continue for 10 days—IDPR No. 89. The government has decided to permit the Textile manufactures to sell and distribute their finished products as and when they wish—IDPR No. 90. Some people from the South, who were given

employment in the National Lotteries Board were caught in a fraud involving sweep tickets and cloth; they were pardoned and given their posts back—JD. The loss in the Fisheries Corporation in the past 7 years amounts to nearly 70 million; this includes everything from bribe taking to neglect of duty by employees from the lowest to the highest posts—LD. From next January 16 lakhs of school children will be given free milk once a day—DM.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 9: The Speaker of the NSA ruled yesterday that the statement of Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike to the newspapers relating to the discussion in the House of her returns in the Inland Revenue Department and the Land Reform Commission was in order. The PM has ordered the National Youth Service Council to expedite the formulation of the scheme to employ 22,000 unemployed in the 22 districts. Raids conducted by the Flying Squad of the Ministry of Irrigation, Power and Highways during the past three months have made startling revelations of a number of cases of misuse of government funds, materials and manpower in the departments and corporations under the Ministry. The Tambapanni—the oldest cultural institute in the island will shortly set up a culture-based development programme in Kandy. The Army which has been playing an increasingly important role in national development work has been allocated a further 20,000 acres of jungle land to clear for the Mahaweli Development Scheme—CDN. The special committee headed by Mr. M. B. Ariyapala, has decided to recommend the establishment of the Southern Campus of the University at Welimada in the deep South—CDM. The government would appoint a Commission of Inquiry to probe former Premier, Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike's land transactions the PM, told the NSA yesterday. A revolutionary scheme under which workers will be entitled to profits and also become partners in ownership of business undertakings would be introduced by the government the Finance Minister told the NSA yesterday. In a lightning raid on a shop in Barber Street, Pettah yesterday, the Flying Squad seized Rs. 3 million worth of textiles. Mr. M. Karunanidhi, former Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, who was detained in connection with anti-Indira demonstrations was released yesterday—SU. The government of Belgium has decided to appoint Mr. Jacques Craeffe, as Ambassador Extraordinary of Belgium to Sri Lanka with residence in New Delhi—IDPR No. 228/77. The Minister of Local Government Housing and Construction plans to establish daily night fairs throughout the island—IDPR No. 96. The Food Department yesterday bought 30,000 tons of sugar in one of the biggest sugar tenders it had called in recent times; this purchase will ensure adequate supplies following the post-budget changes in the sugar ration and the price of open market sugar. Madras and Colombo airports have been linked by radio tele-typewriter circuit replacing the manually operated radio telegraphic circuit—CO. At the Head office of the National Paper Corporation there has been theft of paper and 40,000/- was missing; no action has so far been taken against the offenders and to top it all, the key to the stores is also lost—JD.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 10: The government yesterday announced the creation of the Agriculture Development Authority, a new statutory body, to handle all developed and undeveloped Agricultural land throughout the country. Over 2,400,000 employees in the government, corporation and private sectors

including pensioners will receive a bigger pay packet this month. Local industrialists who produce sub-standard goods making exorbitant profits will be given three months time to improve quality and reduce prices drastically said the Finance Minister in the House. The Estate Management Services Scheme first pilot project for the improvement of coconut land under the Land Reform Commission (LRC) was opened in the most fertile land of the 'coconut triangle' at Natandiya on Thursday. A labour reserve of trained technical persons will be built up shortly to feed three massive development sectors next year—Mahaweli diversion scheme, the Free Trade Zone and State Plantations; their training will be handled by the National Apprenticeship Board. The Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications is considering the possibility of recruiting 'postwomen' to improve the postal delivery system in the villages. Question papers for university examinations in Sri Lanka were typed by officers who had not taken the oath of secrecy; this is one of the startling disclosures made in the report of the Committee on University Examinations. The Ministry of Plantation Industries is faced with two problems, the shortages of labour on up-country estates and unemployment in mid-country estates. The government has decided that all JPs appointed between May 22, 1970 until May 28 1977—3737 in all-would cease to hold office and fresh appointments made. A Taiwanese fishing trawler with a crew of 15 was taken into custody by the Sri Lanka navy, for allegedly poaching in Sri Lanka waters off Mannar on Thursday. The Government would consider vesting the NSA with more powers to deal with editors found guilty of breach of privileged or contempt of parliament said the PM in the NSA. The loan Boards under the Department of Agriculture have ceased to function for a period of six months.—CDM. The government has set up an Agricultural Development Authority to cover development of all lands in the island, the Minister of Agriculture and Lands announced yesterday. The planned development of four more sacred cities has been proposed by the Minister of Local Government, Housing and Construction—SU. The Minister of Justice assured the members of the NSA that proceedings of the NSA in Vavuniya and Trincomalee will be conducted in Tamil soon—DP. All thinking people will realise that the TULF which came in with the mandate for Eelam cannot participate in the select committee to amend the constitution; there is no point demanding Eelam in such a place, neither do we have the right to demand anything less; said the leader of the Opposition in a press release—EN.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 11: The State Film Corporation and the American cartel KRS have had success negotiations for the import of top class American films into Sri Lanka. The UNESCO sponsored meeting of Asian news agencies ended on Friday with a five member working group appointed to follow a series of recommendations which were accepted. The World Bank has given the green light for the government's decision to telescope the gigantic Mahaweli Development Scheme to 6 years. The Minister of Industries and Scientific Affairs in the NSA yesterday called for an inquiry into how two lands belonging to Mr. Anura Bandaranaike and Mr. J. P. Obeyesekere had been declared sanctuaries—SO. The 241 second-hand cars imported last week-end yielded a revenue of about Rs. 7.2 million by way of customs duties alone; the highest duty paid was Rs. 240,000 for a BMW

limousine imported by a leading local business house. The government has decided to unleash a 'commercial terror'—including the confiscation of properties on all those traders who resort to hoarding and profiteering. Mr. Rohana Wijeweera, leader of the JVP will visit Jaffna tomorrow and address several meetings in the North. Every school boy and school girl will be given a training in agriculture; instructions will be issued to heads of all schools shortly to provide this training compulsorily for at least half a day in the week. The acute shortage of lorries for the expeditious transport of food suppliers, was the chief cause of the big delays in clearing food cargoes consigned to the Food Commissioners Department from Colombo Harbour said the Chairman of the Port Cargo Corporation—ST. Sri Lanka is to call for the formation of an 'Asian company' for development of countries in the region said the Minister of Foreign Affairs. Sri Lankans who entered Britain illegally before January 1973 were given a new amnesty by the Home Secretary; this offer extends to immigrants from other countries as well. A senior executive of the Port (Cargo) Corporation and two clerks were interdicted on Friday following a CID investigation into what is alleged to be a Rs. 200,000 deal—SU. The TULF decided at a parliamentary committee meeting yesterday that they would participate in all the functions connected with the visit of the Minister of Trade to Jaffna—VK. The leader of the Opposition appealed to the government to expedite the work on the development on the Kanakesanturai Harbour; he said that this scheme was inaugurated by Mr. Dudley Senanayake in 1968 and by developing it the cost of cement production will go down by one third—EN. 100 new buses will be put on the road each month; the Minister of Transport has decided, the factory at Ekala is also going to be improved to produce better service—RR.

S. L. B. C.

PERMANENT "RELIEF" ANNOUNCERS?

IS IT NOT TRUE that the quality of "announcing" in the English Service of the SLBC has become so uneven that the good is now increasingly lost in the bad? That there are some excellent announcers whose voice, intonation and manner are welcomed by every listener? That there are others whose voice and style grate on the ears and jar the nerves of listeners? That it may be invidious to mention names but it has become necessary to mention that the less one hears the name "V. Rajendra" the better for one's health? That why this "relief" announcer comes over so often is a mystery—when there are so many other good permanent and "relief" available to the SLBC? That overseas readers have written in to the *Tribune* that this "Rajendra" comes on more often than anyone else on broadcasts beamed abroad? That they turn off when they hear his stilted and pompous voice? That someone outside the SLBC's inner power-echelons should look into the roster and see how relief announcers are allotted time? That what each "relief" earns will be an indication of the racket going on? That it will be cheaper for the SLBC to use permanent announcers than pay "relief" announcers big bonanzas? That in any case, only good "relief" announcers should be kept on and used?

STEVE BIKO—2

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 (the first part appeared in our last issue.) 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 attribute to his memory and it appeared in *The Times*, London, on Wednesday, November 23, 1977.

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

BLACK CONSCIOUSNESS is an attitude of mind and a way of life, the most positive call to emanate from the black world for a long time. Its essence is the realization by the black man of the need to rally together with his brothers around the cause of their oppression—the blackness of their skin—and to operate as a group to rid themselves of the shackles that bind them to perpetual servitude. It is based on a self-examination which has ultimately led them to believe that by seeking to run away

from themselves and emulate the white man, they are insulting the intelligence of whoever created them black. The philosophy of Black Consciousness therefore expresses group pride and the determination of the black to rise and attain the envisaged self. Freedom is the ability to define oneself with one's possibilities held back not by the power of other people over one but only by one's relationship to God and to natural surroundings. On his own, therefore, the Black Man wishes to explore his surroundings and test his possibilities—in other words to make his freedom real by whatever means he deems fit. At the heart of this kind of thinking is the realization by blacks that the most potent weapon in the hands of the oppressor is the mind of the oppressed. If one is free at heart, no man-made chains can bind one to servitude but if one's mind is so manipulated and controlled by the oppressor as to make the oppressed believe that he is a liability to the white man, then there will be nothing the oppressed can do to scare his powerful masters. Hence thinking along lines of Black Consciousness makes the black man see himself as being complete in himself. It makes him less dependent and more free to express his manhood. At the end of it all he cannot tolerate attempts by anybody to dwarf the significance of his manhood.

In order that Black Consciousness can be used to advantage as a philosophy to apply to people in a position like ours, a number of points have to be observed. As people existing in a continuous struggle for truth, we have to examine and question old concepts, values and systems. Having found the right answers we shall then work for consciousness among all people to make it possible for us to proceed towards putting these answers into effect. In this process, we have to evolve our own schemes, forms and strategies to suit the need and situation, always keeping in mind our fundamental beliefs and values.

In all aspects of the black-white relationship, now and in the past, we see a constant tendency by whites to depict blacks as of an inferior status. Our culture, our history and indeed all aspects of the black man's life have been battered nearly out of shape in the

great collision between the indigenous values and the Anglo-Boer culture.

THE FIRST PEPOLE to come and relate to blacks in a human way in South Africa were the missionaries. They were in the vanguard of the colonization movement to "civilize and educate" the savages and introduce the Christian message to them. The religion they brought was quite foreign to the black indigenous people. African religion in its essence was not radically different from Christianity. We also believed in one God, we had our own community of saints through whom we related to our God, and we did not find it compatible with our way of life to worship God in isolation from the various aspects of our lives. Hence worship was not a specialized function that found expression once a week in a secluded building, but rather it featured in our wars, our beer-drinking, our dances and our customs in general. Whatever Africans drank they would first relate to God by giving a token of thanks. When anything went wrong at home they would offer sacrifice to God to appease him and atone for their sins. There was no hell in our religion. We believed in the inherent goodness of man—hence we took it for granted that all people at death joined the community of saints and therefore merited our respect.

It was the missionaries who confused the people with their new religion. They scared our people with stories of hell. They painted their God as a demanding God who wanted worship "or else". People had to discard their clothes and their customs in order to be accepted in this new religion. Knowing how religious the African people were, the missionaries stepped up their terror campaign on the emotions of the people with their detailed accounts of eternal burning, tearing of hair and gnashing of teeth. By some strange and twisted logic, they argued that theirs was a scientific religion and ours a superstition—all this in spite of the biological discrepancy which is at the base of their religion. This cold and cruel religion was strange to the indigenous people and caused frequent strife between the converted and the "pagans", for the former, having imbibed the false values from

Black Consciousness

white society, were taught to ridicule and despise those who defended the truth of their indigenous religion. With the ultimate acceptance of the western religion down went our cultural value!

While I do not wish to question the basic truth at the heart of the Christian message, there is a strong case for a re-examination of Christianity. It has proved a very adaptable religion which does not seek to supplement existing orders but—like any universal truth—to find application within a particular situation. More than anyone else, the missionaries knew that not all they did was essential to the spread of the message. But the basic intention went much further than merely spreading the word. Their arrogance and their monopoly on truth, beauty and moral judgement taught them to despise native customs and traditions and to seek to infuse their own new values into these societies.

Here then we have the case for Black Theology. While not wishing to discuss Black Theology at length, let it suffice to say that it seeks to relate God and Christ once more to the black man and his daily problems. It wants to describe Christ as a fighting god, not a passive god who allows a lie to rest unchallenged. It grapples with existential problems and does not claim to be a theology of absolutes. It seeks to bring back God to the black man and to the truth and reality of his situation. This is an important aspect of Black Consciousness, for quite a large proportion of black people in South Africa are Christians still swimming in a mire of confusion—the aftermath of the missionary approach. It is the duty therefore of all black priests and ministers of religion to save Christianity by adopting Black Theology's approach and thereby once more uniting the black man with his God.

A LONG LOOK should also be taken at the educational system for blacks. The same tense situation was found as long ago as the arrival of the missionaries. Children were taught, under the pretext of hygiene, good manners and other such vague concepts, to despise their mode of upbringing at home and to question the values and customs of their society. The result was the expected one—

children and parents saw life differently and the former lost respect for the latter. Now in African society it is a cardinal sin for a child to lose respect for his parent. Yet how can one prevent the loss of respect between child and parent when the child is taught by his know-all white tutors to disregard his family teachings? Who can resist losing respect for his tradition when in school his whole cultural background is summed up in one word—barbarism?

Thus we can immediately see the logic of placing the missionaries in the forefront of the colonization process. A man who succeeds in making a group of people accept a foreign concept in which he is expert makes them perpetual students whose progress in the particular field can only be evaluated by him; the student must constantly turn to him for guidance and promotion. In being forced to accept the Anglo-Boer culture, the blacks have allowed themselves to be at the mercy of the white man and to have him as their eternal supervisor. Only he can tell us how good our performance is and instinctively each of us is at pains to please this powerful, all-knowing master. This is what Black Consciousness seeks to eradicate.

As one black writer says, colonialism is never satisfied with having the native in its grip but, by some strange logic, it must turn to his past and disfigure and distort it. Hence the history of the black man in this country is most disappointing to read. It is presented merely as a long succession of defeats. The Xhosas were thieves who went to war for stolen property; the Boers never provoked the Xhosas but merely went on "punitive expeditions" to teach the thieves a lesson, Heroes like Makana (early nineteenth-century Xhosa prophet, sentenced to life imprisonment on Robben Island and drowned while escaping in a boat. Refusal by blacks to accept the truth of his death led to the mythical hope of his eventual return) who were essentially revolutionaries are painted as superstitious troublemakers who lied to the people about bullets turning into water. Great nation-builders like Shaka are cruel tyrants who frequently attacked smaller tribes for no reason but for some sadistic purpose. Not only is there no objectivity

in the history taught us but there is frequently an appalling misrepresentation of facts that sicken even the uninformed student.

THUS A LOT OF ATTENTION has to be paid to our history if we as blacks want to aid each other in our coming into consciousness. We have to rewrite our history and produce in it the heroes that formed the core of our resistance to the white invaders. More has to be revealed, and stress has to be laid on the successful nation-building attempts of men such as Shaka, Moshoeshe and Hintsu. (Famous tribal chieftains of, respectively, the Zulus, Basotho and Tswana). These areas call for intense research to provide some sorely needed missing links. We would be too naive to expect our conquerors to write unbiased histories about us but we have to destroy the myth that our history starts in 1652, the year Van Riebeeck landed at the Cape.

Our culture must be defined in concrete terms. We must relate the past to the present and demonstrate a historical evolution of the modern black man. There is a tendency to think of our culture as a static culture that was arrested in 1652 and has never developed since. The "return" to the bush" concept suggests that we have nothing to boast of except lions, sex and drink.

We accept that when colonization sets in it devours the indigenous culture and leaves behind a bastard culture that may thrive at the pace allowed it by the dominant culture. But we also have to realize that the basic tenets of our culture have largely succeeded in withstanding the process of bastardization and that even at this moment we can still demonstrate that we appreciate a man for himself.

Ours is a true man-centred society whose sacred tradition is that of sharing. We must reject, as we have been doing, the individualistic cold approach to life that is the cornerstone of the Anglo-Boer culture. We must seek to restore to the black man the great importance we used to give to human relations, the high regard for people and their property and for life in general; to reduce the triumph of technology over man and the materialistic element that is slowly creeping into our society.

THESE ARE ESSENTIAL FEATURES of our black culture to which we must cling. Black culture above all implies, freedom on our part to innovate without recourse to white values. This innovation is part of the natural development of any culture. A culture is essentially the society's composite answer to the varied problems of life. We are experiencing new problems every day and whatever we do adds to the richness of our cultural heritage as long as it has man as its centre. The adoption of black theatre and drama is one such important innovation which we need to encourage and to develop. We know that our love of music and rhythm has relevance even in this day.

Being part of an exploitative society in which we are often the direct objects of exploitation, we need to evolve a strategy towards our economic situation. We are aware that the blacks are still colonised even within the borders of South Africa. Their cheap labour has helped to make South Africa what it is today. Our money from the townships takes a one-way journey to white shops and white banks, and all we do in our lives is pay the white man either with labour or in coin. Capitalistic exploitative tendencies, coupled with the overt arrogance of white racism, have conspired against us.

Thus in South Africa now it is very expensive to be poor. It is the poor people who stay furthest from town and therefore have to spend more money on transport to come and work for white people; it is the poor people who use uneconomic and inconvenient fuel like paraffin and coal because of the refusal of the white man to install electricity in black areas; it is the poor people who are governed by many ill-defined restrictive laws and therefore have to spend money on fines for "technical" offences; it is the poor people who have no hospitals and are therefore exposed to exorbitant charges by private doctors; it is the poor people who use untarred roads, have to walk long distances, and therefore experience the greatest wear and tear on commodities like shoes; it is the poor people who have to pay for their children's books while whites get them free. It does not need to be said that it is

the black people who are poor.

We therefore need to take another look at how best to use our economic power, little as it may seem to be. We must seriously examine the possibilities of establishing business co-operatives whose interests will be ploughed back into community development programmes. We should think along such lines as the "buy black" campaign once suggested in Johannesburg and establish our own banks for the benefit of the community. Organizational development among blacks has only been low because we have allowed it to be. Now that we know we are on our own, it is an absolute duty for us to fulfil these needs.

The last step in Black Consciousness is to broaden the base of our operation. One of the basic tenets of Black Consciousness is totality of involvement. This means that all blacks must sit as one big unit, and no fragmentation and distraction from the mainstream of events be allowed.

Hence we must resist the attempts by protagonists of the Bantustan theory to fragment our approach. We are oppressed not as individuals, not as Zulus, Xhosas, Vendas or Indians. We are oppressed because we are black. We must use that very concept to unite ourselves and to respond as a cohesive group. We must cling to each other with a tenacity that will shock the perpetrators of evil.

Our preparedness to take upon ourselves the cudgels of the struggle will see us through. We must remove from our vocabulary completely the concept of fear. Truth must ultimately triumph over evil, and the white man has always nourished his greed on this basic fear that shows itself in the black community. Special Branch agents will not turn the lie into truth, and one must ignore them. In a true bid for change we have to take off our coats, be prepared to lose our comfort and security; our jobs and positions of prestige, and our families, for just as it true that "leadership and security are basically incompatible", a struggle without casualties is no struggle. We must realize that prophetic

cry of black students: "Black man you are on your own!"

Some will charge that we are racist but these people are using exactly the values we reject. We do not have the power to subjugate anyone. We are merely responding to provocation in the most realistic possible way. Racism does not only imply exclusion of one race by another—it always presupposes that the exclusion is for the purposes of subjugation.

Blacks have had enough experience as objects of racism not to wish to turn the tables. While it may be relevant now to talk about black in relation to white, we must not make this our pre-occupation, for it can be a negative exercise.

As we proceed further towards the achievement of our goals let us talk more about ourselves and our struggle and less about whites.

We have set out on a quest for true humanity and somewhere on the distant horizon we can see the glittering prize. Let us march forth with courage and determination, drawing strength from our common plight and our brotherhood. In time we shall be in a position to bestow upon South Africa the greatest gift possible — a more human face.

Concluded.

WITHOUT EELAM

The Future Of The Tamils

by NAD

Tribune's columns appear to be attracting much attention to the EELAM question quite often. Quite obviously this is agitating the mind of every thinking citizen. "Finality is not the language of politics" declared Benjamin Disraeli. This should encourage the Leader of the Opposition to shift his position in regard to the demand for EELAM. After all who is the politician who is not ambivalent? Can he survive otherwise? Ambivalence does not mean insincerity or even mental dishonesty where politics is concerned. It merely means, in my view, flexibility. At the negotiating table no fixed position has a chance to survive. President

Leader Of The Opposition

Sadat of Egypt has demonstrated in the most courageous manner that if peace is to be won, compromise is indispensable. No greater example is now needed by our own leaders — Sinhalese or Tamil. Confrontation is of no use. As a Tamil, whose roots in Jaffna are as deep as Mr. Amirthalingam's or anyone else's, I am convinced that so long as the present attitudes remain, EELAM is a mirage and can never be achieved—I am not discussing its viability not its desirability. I am completely opposed to it.

Does Mr. Amirthalingam realise the position he now holds in the NSA? Is he the leader of the Opposition or does he regard himself only as the leader of the TULF hell bent on fighting for EELAM and getting other Tamils assaulted while he has the security of a body guard of his choice given by the government he is condemning? I am sorry to write thus, for he is to the best of my knowledge an honourable man who has sacrificed much. On that there is no question, and all are agreed.

But the moment he agreed to assume the mantle of leader of the opposition, he becomes a national figure. Or else he should not have accepted that responsible post in the NSA. This is what I call ambivalence. I am prepared to forgive him for he has his electorate to nurse and his party to be kept in line. According to your columns, already the Eastern Province component of the TULF has shown an independence which no one knows where it will end. Will Amirthalingam be left only with the peninsula? That would be a tragedy for the TULF.

On the basis that the Leader of the Opposition has accepted that position on a national level, I would quote what Edmund Burke declared to his constituents in Bristol on one occasion:

"Parliament is not a congress of ambassadors from different and hostile interests; which interests each must maintain, as an agent or advocate, against other agents and advocates. Parliament is a deliberative assembly of one nation, with one interest that of the whole; where, not local purposes, local prejudices ought to guide, but the general mood, resulting from the general reason of the whole."

I repeat that the above sentiment would be relevant to Mr. Amirthalingam only because he has accepted the role of leader of the opposition. In as much as the Prime Minister has declared from Paddiruppu and elsewhere that he is NOT the Prime Minister of the UNP but the Prime Minister of the whole country—nation.

Now let us see what role the Opposition should play in Parliament. For this I rely on what Lord Campion has written on the British Government since 1918—

"On the whole it is fair to say that the initiative in criticism which is enjoyed by the Opposition is by far the most important modern element in freedom of debate, and that its preservation is something which the country should value as a guarantee against any form of totalitarianism—as a

real check on the further growth of ministerial autocracy in Parliament".

Is Mr. Amirthalingam fulfilling this role? The government day in and day out boasts of its 5/6 majority. Were it not for the restraining hand of Prime Minister Jayawardene, many fear that the voice of reason may be stifled if the opposition is not alive to its responsibility to the Nation. And, pray why is the SLFP keeping out? Is it annoyed that the Tamil group has the leadership of the opposition? But is that attitude somewhat also not ambivalent, when we recall that shortly before the elections, this same SLFP made overtures to the TULF and with much fanfare conducted parleys within the precincts of the BMICH? It is true that from the point of view of votes polled, the number of members returned on the SLFP ticket

BRICKBATS

MEDIA

*SLBC NEWSCASTS which showed improvement recently, slipped back, very badly, a few days ago. Once again it was Minister M. H. Mohamed who was the cause of SLBC's fall from grace. *Tribune* turned in to the SLBC English news at 9.15 p.m. on Sunday, 18/12/77, and was surprised to hear a two-minute (of the ten minutes newscast) splurge about Mohamed promising to bring the moon down to earth at a small meeting outside Colombo. Next morning, Monday, December 19, the same item was repeated at 6.45 a.m.—thus breaking the new SLBC rule that a news item will not be repeated. (In the bad old days of the SLFP each item was repeated at least three times!) Then, on Monday evening, 19/12/77, at 6.15 p.m. Mohamed was again in the newscast—this time to announce that he was making arrangements to open a new school in his electorate. If it is not anything else, this kind of SLBC favouritism for Mohamed, day in and day out, and week in and week out, is discrimination against the 21 other Ministers of the Cabinet and the 140 odd M.P.s who are not Ministers. It is one thing to report something significant said in the NSA but to report every little triviality, every little action, every little meeting of Minister Mohamed or anyone else, is the surest way for the SLBC to once again lose the credibility it had begun to acquire. (And if every little sneeze of every Minister and every government MP has to be repeated three times in SLBC newscasts and the official newspapers, there will be no time or space for anything else in the media.) Ordinary people in street corners have begun to quip about Mohamed's grip on the media and the laboured effort to make it appear that he is the only Minister who is doing a job of work—when it is common talk that the Ministry of Transport is the Achilles Heel of the J. R. Jayawardene government. This Ministry is the weakest link in the government machine, and for this reason Opposition forces (through commuters) have started taking direct action in the Railways. CTB buses are regularly plunging down precipices. Minister Mohamed, however, has a public relations lobby for his glorification in the *Lake House* and *Davasa* Groups—the *Times* is so far free of this—and the painful attempt to make Mohamed, the Minister of the Year, has begun to eat into the credibility of these newspapers. (The question of Mohamed and the newspaper media will be dealt with in a future issue!) *Brickbats* must be thrown at the SLBC and other "managers" of the official media for discriminating in favour of Minister Mohamed as against other Ministers and MPs. But the point to remember is that Ministers and MPs are not always the most newsworthy items for the media.

is somewhat unrealistic—for this can the TULF be blamed? Why did not the framers of the famous Republican Constitution think of this eventuality that could have happened—when they had the foresight to deprive the Tamil community of its legitimate place in the constitution. To a democratic country, there is no document more sacred than its constitution and this document paid no heed to the pleadings of the Tamils group which was compelled to dissociate itself from this exercise.

Fortunately JR has accepted that the Tamils have a grievance. In this situation should not Amirthalingam pay heed to what Jennings says in his Cabinet Government:

"It follows that a Government, even with an enormous majority, cannot neglect the feeling of the House. (Amirthalingam may say that the feeling is 5/6 against him). The temperature of the party is, in large measure, the temperature of the electorate. A minute Opposition, like Labour Opposition of 1931-1935 uses its opportunities to appeal to public opinion. The House is its platform, the newspapers are its microphones, and the people its audience"

The Tamil community has many supporters among the more enlightened Sinhalese brothers. One of them is the Bishop of Kurunegala who gently admonished the chauvinists from the North and South to stop talking of Dutu Gemunu and Elara and start a dialogue.

I am certainly not saying that the Government of the day has done all that it could have done to allay the fears of the Tamil community. As pointed out in your columns, what has been done about the Tamil officers who were assaulted, murdered and rendered homeless by the persons who worked under their authority? It is a sad story. But it is also understood that, in a number of instances the subordinates took the opportunity of 'teaching a lesson' to the superiors who had been hard on them. The only concrete step so far taken was by Minister Nissanka Wijeyeratne, and that was the scrapping of the curse of standardisation.

PM Jayawardene must tread warily. One false step and

the opponents of reconciliation will do everything in their power to stop it. Some say that the SLFP would have taken some steps to bring harmony, but that erstwhile partners did not permit. My own view is that, the only good thing the LSSP did in 30 years of its sterile existence was to break away from the UF government (or was it booted out) and clear the decks for the government of J. R. Jayawardene. Let the Tamils not be impatient—give JR the chance to fulfil his pledges. He will start acting, I am sure when he takes over office as President in January 1978 with full executive powers he will be the De Gaulle of Sri Lanka. In as much as De Gaulle brought peace to war-torn Algeria, taming the colonels in that country, President Jayawardene will bring peace and harmony into this blighted scene and the Tamil community can find fulfilment. Until then would it not be sensible for the abrasive Amirthalingam to hold his peace and get ready for the negotiating table? If the posts of District Minister are offered to the TULF, will it accept? If not, the country and the EELAM advocates will need an explanation.

Obviously the Prime Minister has not seen my appeal to him to initiate monthly Fireside Chats with the people. It will not take him much time to prepare a talk. We do not want pontifical pronouncements. Let him speak to the people as if he were talking to his friends. What he wants to do for us. Jimmy Carter I believe initiated something called speaking to the President by telephone—any American could do so. Here in Sri Lanka, Ministers are surrounding themselves by sycophants and erecting walls between them and the citizen. It is a grievous mistake. Telephone calls are screened or filtered and only those approved by some minion is passed through. If Ministers lose touch with the citizen, they are in for trouble. Disenchantment is mounting. Let the Prime Minister at least step in and speak to the people on the radio. Most of us own one.

This nation is at present poised like an inverted pyramid balancing perilously on a tiny point—on ONE MAN and that man is J. R. Jayawardene. He is wise enough to know it. And will you Mr-Editor, please take this up editorially—this is an opportunity J. R. should not miss.

Colombo.
28-11-77

SHORT STORY

And, So It Happened

by Vinodini

I had just returned from the great outdoors to the city and too much isolation had just about got me down. I felt like being in the midst of a crowd, to feel again that I was part of humanity not just a being apart. But it seemed I had not chosen the best time to arrive. It was late at night and the city was as dead as a graveyard. So I walked empty streets remembering snatches of a song I had sung years back about empty streets of cobbled stone with silence growing like a cancer. So intent was I on trying to remember the rest of the words that I didn't even look where I was going and nearly got run down by the one car that was passing. The driver shouted at me for being so stupid, I agreed with him and resumed my walk without trying to think of any more songs. There is something to be said for empty streets at night. I could go on and on walking them..... As if in a dream I heard the far off strains of the most divine music—carnatic. Now one doesn't usually hear carnatic music at the dead of night and so, like a moth drawn to a flame I went towards the sound.

Banana trees with ripe bunches stood like sentinels guarding the place. The entrance was decorated with mangol leaves and the tender leaves of the coconut tree. There seemed to be a great hubbub within. I hesitated for a moment but suddenly made up my mind, took a deep breath and entered. A mingled aroma of jasmine and rose, sandalwood and incense wafted to my nostrils. I was sprinkled with rosewater and adorned with sandalwood and kumkum. The wedding was already in progress so I slipped unobtrusively into the back. I

knew I was gatecrashing but I couldn't help myself. The music and my need to be in a crowd had lured me there.

I looked around me in wonder. It seemed I was in a dream world—far from reality. In a world of affluence and plenty, a world which did not know poverty, hunger or want. The ladies flaunting finery that (probably!) reeked of mothballs, and adorned with dazzling jewellery that would have put a Maharani of old to shame! I had no objections to ceremonials nor to celebrations but what disgusted me was the vulgar show of wealth, and the complacent looks on most of the faces. They did not seem to realise that a world in complete contrast to their own existed right outside their doorstep, or if they did, it didn't matter to them in the least. I wondered what could shake them from their apathy. It stank of decadence to say the least. The conversation around me added to this feeling. How one's son had managed to get such a big dowry and how another's daughter had so much jewellery and how a third had so many houses. The purpose for which I went there was entirely defeated for I could not listen to music in such surroundings nor did I want to be part of such a crowd. All my joy evaporated like fizz in a soda bottle. If this is what coming back to humanity meant I preferred to have none of it.

My neighbours were giving me looks, as though I was something the cat had brought in. In that whole crowd of over 500, I think I could have counted on my fingers the number who didn't conform to set a pattern. I do not wish to dwell at length on them, but suffice it to say that only material possessions seemed to matter to them. They were extremely conscious of their own or someone else's. People as people was apparently not their concern.

Thinking that it was not worthwhile wasting any more time on them, I decided to turn my attention on the ceremony. This was by no means the first ceremony I had witnessed, but each time I did, I was moved. The fire was crackling, the priest was chanting mantras as old as time itself and the couple were walking round the fire. I looked at them and wondered what life had in store for them and hoped that it

would treat them kindly and give them happiness, for they had a long way to go on the journey of life. They seemed young and very innocent, as if they hadn't as yet encountered life in the raw—absurdly young and innocent to be getting married. I know it happens every day, young people getting married, but I wished they were a little more worldly wise so that they would know that there were as many hazards in life as there were thorns in a bed of roses. I was philosophising so intently that I was startled when someone tapped me on the shoulder.

I couldn't fort he life of me make out who it was. It transpired that he was a very old friend of mine, Harish. He told me that I hadn't changed a bit, but I found him completely transformed. Time, no doubt changes everything and everybody but how would he know that I had, for apparently outside I hadn't, very much. He was the embodiment of everything I loathed—money, power, position, influence, respectability, fame, name, one could go on and on..... Despite our differences, we were delighted to see each other, for there is a special joy in meeting old friends. Ones gets kind of nostalgic, thinking of times past—

whether good or bad—and a pleasurable kind of pain smites your heart.

He was determined to take me home and I complied. I found it a little hard to believe that we had at one time been such good friends, for once reminiscing was over, conversation was laborious. It was difficult to find common ground on which to tread, for our lives had taken such dissimilar paths. So it was a series of questions and answers plying back and forth for the duration of the journey in his plush car.

By talking to him I was better able to understand him. Wealth and all its other accompaniments were important to him because he had had to struggle very hard to achieve them and why he did it was because he had been denied all these things from childhood. He envied the well-to-do, and envy in turn changed to determination to do well. All that he was denied (and more) he was anxious to give his children. He belonged to that category of those who had achieved 'greatness', if indeed one could call it by that name, for it certainly meant greatness to a large number of people. But this greatness had also changed him. The person I had known was

BOOKS
Sir,

BUDGET & THE BOOK-SELLER

I bought a Lady Bird book from M/s. K. V. G. de Silva & Sons, For entitled "The Princess and the Frog" on 5.12.77 for which I was charged Rs. 5/30 (Receipt No. C. 01880-45 attached).

The following day—i.e. 6.12.77, I bought another Lady Bird book entitled "Puss in Boots". Within a matter of 24 hours KVGs have shown stars to the Finance Minister, since they charged me Rs. 7/25! (Receipt No. C. 01885-3 attached). An increase of 36.8% on previous selling price, without incurring any additional cost! Both titles have been priced at £. 0.24 by the English publisher.

These books were imported before the budget free of FEEC's. A Sterling Pound would have cost KVGs less than Rs. 13/-. I know the profit made by book-sellers on imported books. Sir, I suggest that windfall profit thus made by all traders should be taxed at 100% as was done in the case of tea exports.

TQF

Nawala.
13.12.77

On the original selling price—also excessively high—of Rs. 5.30 for £. 0.24—the windfall profit is 36.8%. This unconscionable levy on knowledge by book-sellers—not this book-seller alone but all booksellers—must be stopped. This, in the long term, is more important than controlling price of shirts and other basic and semi-luxuries. If the present prites of books and magazines continue the island will soon become a cultural desert. Ed.

kind, gentle and unassuming. Now he seemed insufferable, puffed up with his own importance, arrogant, conceited and haughty. But not with me, with me he was his old self. I had glimpsed these qualities by his behaviour at the wedding.

His home was exactly what I had expected it to be—full of the many things that money could buy. I did not have the pleasure of meeting his wife, for she had apparently gone off on a shopping trip to some part of the world, I can't quite remember where. But I saw her pictures and she was extremely beautiful. Nor did I see his children for it was too late. Though he pressed me to stay on, I didn't for I had things to do. But we did have a meal together and enjoyed it thoroughly thereby capturing something of old times. He told me that it was years since he had done something like it and I told him that was how haphazardly I lived, eating when and where I could and living as my fancy took me. After our nocturnal rendezvous I departed.

How very true are Tagore's words—"the lamp of meeting burns long, it goes out in a moment aparting." For once we parted I rarely thought of him. In the beginning a little, but later hardly at all. This is so with most relationships except the very closest I think.

Not long afterwards I happened to go to an art exhibition and was surprised to see five or six portraits of the same woman—Harish's wife. Now there is nothing unusual about seeing people's portraits at exhibitions, but the number and quality really struck me. Whereas the artist's other paintings were nothing spectacular, these were. Each one of them had been done with something far more than academic interest. It was as though he tried to convey his innermost emotions through the brush or charcoal, some personal message and I, an outsider seemed to have stumbled upon it quite by chance. None but the discerning or those who know the persons concerned would see more into them. Seeing his works, made me want to see the man. I built up images of a gaunt individual with sensitive features and a beard, one who wielded his brush with deft fingers to achieve such artistry. But he turned out to be just the opposite—a giant of a

man with huge hands which one could never associate with dexterity. It just proved to me how wrong images conjured up in the mind could be!

I wondered how best I should approach him for I was very anxious to know what connection he had with the woman. I decided against subtlety and thought the direct approach would be the best. His ready response was something I hadn't expected in the least. He told me that he had seen me scrutinising his pictures and had wondered if they were that wonderful to deserve so much attention. I told him that I did not have too much knowledge or proficiency of art but there was something in some of them which touched me deeply—a certain poignancy and appeal, pensiveness, joy and sometimes sadness—various moods he had managed to capture, through one single woman. I am able to empathize with lost souls like that artist. Till I spoke to him properly, I couldn't say for sure that he was lost, but he looked that way to me. And I was proved right. He was certainly a lost soul, searching for happiness and happiness as everybody knows is as elusive as a butterfly.

"It happened years ago but to me it seems like yesterday. It was a question of love at first sight for me. She was the embodiment of my dreams. I was young and struggling then. I am still struggling but no longer young. But she, she is still as beautiful as on that very first day I saw her. I was not an artist, never had been. You could say that she was my inspiration. All my pent up emotions needed an outlet and art is what emerged. I don't claim to be a genius, but my paintings have sold and I have made a living by them. I am looking for happiness, yet I am not as unhappy as you may think. It is a happy kind of unhappiness if you know what that means. For, my dreams have not been shattered, neither have they been fulfilled, so they remain intact, as dreams. In a way I am glad for I can go on dreaming till the end of my life. You may find it difficult to understand, very few do anyway."

But surprisingly enough, understood, perfectly. I could also understand why some of his work lacked a certain amount of depth, for something unfulfilled does not

make a person whole. If one experiences intense joy or intense sorrow or both (which is more likely) or if a person is able realise his dreams at least partially, then there is greater depth in that person. What this man was experiencing was not something solid and real, to me it seemed to me like something in the air somehow.

"There is no long story to tell about my life. But an episode that occurred one day, changed me. I was standing at a lonely bus stop in the hills one morning. It was freezing and misty and I was waiting for a bus that never came. Finally, I could see headlights, so I jumped onto the middle of the road and hailed the vehicle and it stopped. I got into the front seat next to the driver and when I looked back, I saw HER. She was like an angel come down from the clouds. She was very young with an exquisite complexion, pink cheeks, huge black eyes and long lustrous hair. I couldn't take my eyes off her but her father was sitting there with the most forbidding look in his eyes that I dared not say a word. I wished the journey would go on for ever, but how could it?

Since there existed a wide chasm between our stations in life, I could never hope to win her. Besides, she was be-spoken, to use a very old fashioned term. But no one could stop me from admiring her from afar and this is what I did. I used to haunt the places where I knew she could be and her features, her manners, her gestures, everything about her was imprinted on my mind. (I watched while she broke off her first engagement to marry a young and upcoming businessman). She, from what I have observed doesn't have any of the qualities I admire, nor does she hold views that I subscribe to. Yet, I cannot think of any other woman. I have seen many other beautiful ones, but only studied them with academic interest, never got emotionally involved like in this case. I have thought about it a great deal but have found no logical explanation. There it is, and I have to accept it."

To me it seemed incredible, for this was the first time I had seen such a thing. Knowing a person and then being attached or enamoured by them is one thing, but being attached to a dream was quite another. In a dynamic world

where conceptions of love have altered greatly from say a decade or so ago, he was a refreshing change, like a breath of fresh air in a crowded room.

Some years after that, I was pleasantly surprised to receive a letter from Harish. It was a long epistle in which he told me many things and at the end he invited me to his wedding to a follower of the Hare Krishna Movement from the States. It was to be a very simple affair with only select friends present. He was particularly keen that I should attend, for he felt that I would understand his doing what he was. He was giving up all that he had strived for for so long and was leaving the country on a mission soon after he married. I was thoroughly intrigued, so I went and saw a man transformed—gone was the old individual, in his place was a new man clad only in a dhoti with shaved head save for a strand at the top. This wedding was in complete contrast to another one we had both attended and met at after a lapse of many years. The stark simplicity of this one moved me much more than that other one.

I could not desist from asking about his former wife, the artist's ideal. He told me that she had thought it highly 'romantic' to run away with the artist a couple of years back. This intrigued me further for I had imagined him for ever clinging to his dream and going on seeking.....But apparently it was not to be forever.

I was curious to see them, so I did. He seemed dead to me, or at least the part of him that I had known. He was neither lost nor seeking now. He had found something, but certainly not happiness as far as I could see though he claimed to be, very. His eyes, his face, why his whole appearance belied it. He who had been free was now fettered, shackled by his own beautiful dream. I could see all that was aesthetic in him being slowly destroyed, along with the now spluttering and soon to be gutted candle which he had held for so long.

I was rather disappointed at the metamorphosis. He had been something unique, but now he was commonplace, no different from the next man, weighed down with responsibilities and burdens which would not let him grow or expand.....She appeared to be a

formidable personality, managing to keep him completely under her thumb she had effectively killed all his sensitivity and creativity and made a slave of him, a slave without a soul to call his own. The very thing that could have turned his talent into genius, had devoured it, just like a rose bud washed away by life-giving rain. I could not help wishing that his dream had not been shattered, yet it was foolish to expect that, as time no doubt, spares nothing, for like the rose bud a dream will blossom into something beautiful, or be nipped in the bud if it does not wither on the stalk.



EDUCATIONAL IDEAS OF

CONFUCIUS

by P. Chandrasegaram

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ON BEING ASKED, what is wisdom, KUNG FU TSE, who became known as Confucius (551-479 B.C.). China's most famous philosopher, a political theorist and, above all a teacher, replied that, 'to promote right thoughts and feelings among men, and to honour the spirits of the living and the 'dead', is wisdom.' He also said that altruism is wisdom and 'not to do unto others what you would have others do unto you', is wisdom. We see a striking commonality in this regard between Confucius and Jesus Christ, one of the greatest teachers of mankind. Confucius, through his teaching brought about a spiritual regeneration among the people of China—he taught poetry, music history and traditional cultural values of the country. Wisdom, Culture, ethics learning moral perfection and correct deportment, piety and faithfulness were the essence of his teaching.

A scholar's mind should be set on for search of truth. The mark of a scholar should be that he should feel that he could never learn enough, as it is not possible to learn what is needed for good conduct in this life. Here confucius brings out that a scholar should be of humble disposition and that

learning knows no boundary. Wisdom is not the monopoly of an individual; people could become wise by study, and perseverance.

This is a particularly relevant axiomatic principle, for the contemporary society and world. It is still believed that even 'intelligence' not to speak of knowledge and wisdom are preordained, though these theories have been proved unscientific and establishment based.

MERE STUDY without thought is useless, but thought without study is dangerous. Here Confucius, raises the very relevant point that, 'study for the sake of mere study', has no meaning unless it is discussed, clarified and is contingent on philosophical thinking. Thought without it being scientifically studied would remain effete and barren.

When he speaks of the child being obedient at home, he develops the theory, that the children should recognize the wishes of his parents; even after the parent's demise he should while studying their life, should respect their memory. The children should not desert their parents, and even if they are physically away from their parents they should be able to assist them when they are in need of their assistance.

Though this is a universal principle, it is perhaps pronounced in the eastern, particularly in the Asian tradition. If a family is not able to be obedient to and be united it is not possible for it to be united, obedient and loyal to the nation. Loyalty to a nation, which is positive in its ways, is an absolute pre-requisite for the welfare of the individual as well as to the nation.

This simple but an imperative truth, the people are yet to understand and practicalise.

ALL PERSONS should know what they know and what they do not know. This is an acid test of an educated person. False pretention that one has encyclopaedic knowledge cannot be correct and to think so is not the hall mark of an educated person either. Confucius's contention that, 'from the emperor down to the mass of the people, all must consider the cultivation of the person the root of all else' has great educational implications. This was uttered well over two thousand five hundred

years back. 'Cultivation of the person', is the foremost task of education. Confucius here promulgates the very noble, psychological, social and cultured principle that all the people are not only educable, but also educable to the maximum possible extent. Cultivation of the person is the development of the integrated personality of a person.

The teacher should be a person who not only cultivates his old knowledge but also goes on adding new knowledge to the knowledge already possessed. He should be broad-minded and unprejudiced; he should consider what is just; he should be earnest and sincere in what he says. The teacher should not be worried and perplexed of anything, because it is only then he could be brave to fight any injustice against man and society. Confucius would make an exhortation that, the teacher while possessing gentleness, should bear dignity, and be majestic and at the same time should not inculcate fear.

IN CONFUCIUS'S VIEW, poetry builds a man's character. He would say that, 'wake yourself up with poetry build your character on moral discipline which arises out of poetry and round your education with music.' Aesthetics in general occupied an important place in the realm of the philosophers' educational thought, and it is welcome to note that he wandered throughout China, teaching poetry to all the people.

Poetry develops emotional yet social and realistic attitude towards men and society. The philosopher educator was very well aware of this and he envisaged a society based on poetic social morality. He wanted to foster and propogate illustrious virtue, to regenerate the people, and make them live in the highest excellence. Life for him should have an object of pursuit, which should lead to the attainment of perfect calm. That calm will be followed by repose marked by careful deliberation, and that deliberation will be followed by the attainment of the desired goal. To him, heaven has conferred nature, whatever accords with this nature is, called. 'The path of duty', 'the regulation of the path is instruction.'

Trying one's best to teach others, encouraging people to develop a

sense of study mindedness, to pursue the course of action which dictates to the conscience of an individual, are the moral precepts, Confucius, one of the greatest figures in human history would teach us.

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LETTERS

Did The Haj Committee Bungle?

Sir,

The Haj Committee had called for tenders to handle the Haj Pilgrimage this year, and selected a Travel Agent who is charging Rs. 16,000/- (approx.) as the total cost per pilgrim. Another Travel Agency, who handled the Pilgrimage last year, had tendered Rs. 13,475/- and Rs. 14,355/- as the cost by 2 different Airlines. Accordingly, each pilgrim would save Rs. 2,525/- or Rs. 1,645/- depending on the Airlines selected by him, if the Committee had accepted their rates which is much lower. In addition, this rejected tenderer had offered certain free services to the Committee. Yet, despite the lower rate, proven experience and other free services offered by him, his tender has been rejected by the Committee. The accepted rate, which is the highest on record, has had the unfortunate effect of dissuading many persons from fulfilling this fundamental religious obligation on the part of Muslims.

The Haj Committee, therefore, appear to have bungled as, by accepting the higher tender which is contrary to the elementary tender procedure, they have failed to act in the best interests of the pilgrims. Accordingly, as this contract involves about Rs. 3.2 millions on the 200 tickets and as the difference between the higher and the lower rates amounts to as much as Rs. 41/2 lakhs, the public in general and the pilgrims in particular, would desire to get clarification on the following matters:—

(1) On what basis did the Haj Committee fix Rs. 16,000/- as total cost, when there was another tender which was lower by Rs. 2,525/-? (2) What were the special reasons that influenced the Haj Committee to select the higher

rate in preference to the lower rate? Rs. 2,525/- means much to the majority of pilgrims, to whom the Committee should give every possible relief. Further, the higher fare selected by the Committee has given an additional bonanza of over Rs. 41/2 lakhs on the 200 tickets to the Agency, which is quite unwarranted and discriminatory; (3) Airlines issue one ticket free for every 15 tickets sold by any Agent. In this instance, to whom has the Agent issued these? Does he propose to issue these to the Haj Committee Members or members of their family? Dividing the value of these free tickets among the Pilgrims on a pro-rata basis rather than passing this benefit to the Committee members will enable each pilgrim to get a further rebate of 1/15th on the ticket which amounts to about Rs. 500/-; (4) Is any Director of that Agency a Member of the Committee and did he participate in the Meeting that selected the tender? If he did so, it is grossly improper, for as a Director who is interested in the Contract with the Committee, he should have disclosed the nature of his interest and refrained from participating or voting in respect of that Contract; (5) Another anomaly is that the Committee has selected those who have CR Accounts to their credit. As they could well afford to utilise the CR Funds, their selection has deprived many more deserving applicants from being selected for this Pilgrimage.

It is also learnt that the Haj Committee has not followed the accepted tender procedure in the selection of this tender which involves about Rs. 3.2 million. In future, they should not only call for sealed tenders, but these should also be date-stamped, numbered and initialled both by the Chairman and the Wakfs Commissioner, and opened in the presence of all the Tenderers. Late and revised tenders should not be accepted.

It is also suggested that in future the following persons should be precluded from appointment to the Committee, for obvious reasons:— (a) Directors and employees of Travel and Tour Agencies, and the members of their family; (b) Members of Parliament and of Local Authorities, and members of their family; (c) Persons who have previously been involved in any kind of rackets or otherwise found

wanting; (d) The membership should also be reduced, as the present composition of 21 Members is too unwieldy.

A. H. A. Samy

21, Ninth Lane,
Colombo 3.

Brown Sahibry!

Sir,

I cannot conceive of a better forum than *Tribune* for obvious reasons of course, to pose this question, not only to its wide circle of intelligent, broad-minded readers who are not apt to attribute unworthy motives to a writer, but also to those who may have heard of it but have not been fortunate enough to read it, as was my misfortune until last June.

Is there any sense in our justification for calling Kollupitiya, Colpetty, (it is indeed strange that nobody calls its closest 'neighbour' Bambalapitiya. Bamblapetty—one wonders why!), Bentota Bentot, Hambantota Hambantot, Tangalla Tangalle, Kegalla Kaygalle, Kurunegala Kurunigalle, Nuwara Eliya Newraylia, Kotte Cotta, Kalutara Kalchura, Maradana Marandan—to mention just a few names of the many mispronunciation of place names, in our Sri Lanka, which makes one feel queasy.

Three decades have passed since Independence. Isn't it time for Brown Sri Lankans to give up imitating Westerners in everything under the sun, both good and bad. Why dishonour the land of their birth as if they were ashamed of being born here. Why make themselves a laughing stock in the presence of visitors to our shores?

Those of them with the 'Brown Sahib' mentality would do well to remember that in India all place names which were grossly distorted by the Britisher deeply wounding the susceptibilities of Indians thereby, have been restored to the original names by which they have been known from time immemorial. Thus, Cawnpore, Cape Camorin, Trichnopoly and Calcutta—to mention but a few names have reverted to Kanpur, Kanya Kumari, Tiruchirapalli and Kalighat respectively. All honour to the Indians.

Incidentally, I have heard over the years many spectators casting offensive remarks at the cricketers of a certain apparently snobbish club (which debar non-members from entering their 'sacred' pavilion and watching the game during the cricket season, which no other club, it must be said to their credit, had ever done) when the team emerges from the pavilion at the start of a match or after the lunch and tea breaks. This is the type of person who obviously is ashamed of *godayatik* names like Kollupitiya and Hambantota and must superciliously, call them Colpetty and Hambantot in true Western fashion. Who know they may even be ashamed of calling themselves Sri Lankans and feeling deeply sorry that they were not privileged to be born in a Western clime!

C. E. J. Alles

113, Anagarika Dharmapala Mawatha,
Dehiwala.
26.11.77

'Nikang' or 'Summa'

Sir,

The "Nikkang" or "Summa" complex has for long eroded the dignity of Sri Lankans. Free rice, free medicine, free meals, free rail travel, and free burials, have sapped our will to toil. Youth, cushioned by such comforts, and no less parents, found things comfortable.

It calls for courage, to wean the Sri Lankan of this "Nikkang/Summa" complex. The Premier's

courage to withdraw, in part, the issue of 'free rice, is timely and commendable, indeed.

True, Rice has toppled Governments. But Free rice, has verily reduced the image of the Sri Lankan.

The Rs. 50/- "Nikkang/Summa" allowance, should be withdrawn, if the recipients are unwilling to accept Labour-intensive projects, envisaged by the Government. Obviously opposition would be engineered, and the Government would have to ignore it.

John B. Kumarakulasinghe

Batticaloa.

* * *

The Land Acquisition Act (Chapter 460) as Amended By The Land Acquisition (Amendment) Act No. 28 of 1964.

Notice under section 33

Reference No. LA/F/7661

I, Arther Amarasinghe, Acquiring Officer, Hambantota District, hereby give notice in terms of section 33 of the Land Acquisition Act (Chapter 460) as amended by the Land Acquisition (Amendment) Act No. 28 of 1964, that a sum of Rs. 800/00 being compensation and interest payable for the acquisition of the lands described in the schedule below has been deposited to the credit of case No. LA. 298 of the District Court, Tangalle to be drawn by persons entitled thereto.

SCHEDULE

The land called "Virithamulla-wattakebella" depicted as lot No. 292, in Supplement No. 9 of F.V.P. 302, situated in the village of Nakulugamuwa in D.R.O's division of Tangalle in Hambantota District.

Share for which compensation is deposited:

1. Share:- Full share.
2. Compensation:- Rs. 800/00 (Eight Hundred Rupees)
3. Interest:- ...

Arther Amarasinghe
Acquiring Officer,
Hambantota District.

The Kachcheri,
Hambantota.
09 December 1977

Notice under section 7 of the Land Acquisition Act (Chapter 460) as Amended by the Land Acquisition (Amendment) Act No. 28 of 1964.

Ref No. EA/4/155

It is intended to acquire the land described in the schedule below for a public purpose. For further particulars please see the Gazette of the Republic of Sri Lanka, No. 297 (part 3) of 23.12.1977.

S. Panditha
Land Acquiring Officer,
Galle District.

Kachcheri,
Galle.
09th December 1977.

SCHEDULE

Name of Land: Madinagodawatta
Situation: Meepe village in the Grama Sevaka's Division of Happawana in the D.R.O's Division of Talpe Pattu South, Galle District.

Plan and Lot No. — Lot No. 1 in P.P. GAA. 1305.

Confidentially

IMF, UNP & Sri Lanka-4

IS IT NOT TRUE that the fundamental thesis advanced by Esmond Wickremasinghe is that if the UNP wanted to survive as a political party it should not antagonise the common man by a too sudden and too premature withdrawal of welfare benefits especially subsidised food? That the IMF package, it would appear, was granted on the unwritten understanding that only fifty percent of the population would continue to receive partial subsidies for a short time more? That it is known that the IMF kangannies did not want the flour subsidy to be as high as Rs. 700 million? That they wanted wheat flour and bread prices higher? That they also made other various demands, e.g. that part of the standby credit and loan facilities should be kept separately in a Development Fund? That in the course of the Budget debate various revelations were made about the way Sri Lanka had bargained and negotiated with the IMF and got a better deal than at any time before? That, in fact it was a better deal than what any other developing country in the Third World has ever got? That what Esmond Wickremasinghe fears is that an awesome inflation or a revolution would overtake Sri Lanka? That in Britain a Labour Government had undertaken the IMF-financed salvage operation with the concurrence of the trade unions and that it was therefore able to have the necessary wage-freezes and no-strike agreements without industrial strife and strikes? That in Sri Lanka a reputedly right-wing pro-West oriented UNP government, with the bulk of the trade unions, associated with the Left and Opposition parties, ranged against it, is wanting to implement economic policies inspired motivated, and impelled by IMF "ideology" (if IMF strategy can be called an "ideology")? That Esmond Wickremasinghe intuitively fears that unless the IMF policies are sugar coated with adequate welfare, bene-

fits, a disastrous confrontation would become inevitable in Sri Lanka? That much of Esmond's analysis seems to be based on a naive and simple-minded belief that the real top Gods of the IBRD-IMF setup would listen to the UNP's plea for special consideration? That what Esmond Wickremasinghe suggests is that unless the IMF accepts the UNP manifesto in toto, the J. R. Jayewardene government would be faced with an insurgency and worse before long? That Esmond Wickremasinghe has also a naive and simple faith in the efficacy of the UNP manifesto as a panacea for Sri Lanka's current ills? That this may be because he helped to draft it? That he there fore hopes that a sugar-coated IBRD-IMF programme, with ample financial backing from the affluent countries of the West and Japan—such guarantee are said to be forthcoming for a three to five year period—will usher in a UNP-JR millennium in the nearest future? That it is evidently his belief that this first Budget of the JR era will lay the foundation for the Promised Land? That some of the proposals in the Budget taken together with the Gazette notifications liberalising imports and the like have unfortunately hit Esmond on his intellectual solar plexus? That he stresses that in Sri Lanka a "free economy" could not subsist without "controls"? That what Esmond Wickremasinghe asserts is that a classic "free economy" was not feasible in this country at this juncture? That it is true that an IMF "free economy" demanded the total elimination of subsidies and all "free" handouts like rice? That a "free economy" envisaged that social welfare amenities should stem from real affluence and not from the economic regimentation and controls that prevailed in socialist and communist countries? That UNP's Dharmista economy believed that a middle way, combining a free economy and subsidised welfarism, was necessary and possible? That is why Esmond Wickremasinghe is said to have dashed off to see the great IBRD-IMF God McNamara the great White Chief? That after his return, Esmond had written his "thesis" about imbalances and mistakes in the Budget proposals? That with the publication of Esmond's thesis second thoughts in the UNP High Command surfaced into the open? That the

Gang of Six IMF kangannies, posted in Colombo for the duration of the Budget Debate, have also, it is whispered, begun to develop second thoughts? That the rationing scheme may now be modified to keep Pace with increase of employment in Mahaweli and other projects and the rise of per capita income? That under the legitimate excuse that the Declaration Forms should be processed the new scheme can be put off until it is thought prudent to introduce a more sugar-coated scheme? That in his article Esmond Wickremasinghe has also suggested a number of other "proposals" which may well be adopted by gazette regulations or special legislation? That he has detailed a number of remedies which he seems to consider fool-proof not only to find investment capital but also to attract the skills to service the development projects? That what he says has all the trappings of profound economics and clever political strategy but it suffers from the basic weakness inherent the hotch-potch "synthesis" of the UNP Manifesto? That it is a fact that in a poor developing country it is not possible to have a "socialist" system of distribution without a tough system of controls, rationing and queues? That it is a contradiction in terms to think of a "free economy" with "subsidies"? That in a country where poverty, malnutrition and shortages reign supreme, life is difficult without some subsidies? That the IBRD-IMF still foolishly believes that the formulae it has sought to impose on a large number of developing countries will solve the economic (and political) problems of such countries? That the nett result of nearly thirty years of IMF experimentation is that third world poverty has increased with a debt burden conservatively estimated at \$ 300 billion? That the IMF has even promoted military dictatorships to collect its debts? That debt cancellation has now become one of the major issues in the Third World? That Sri Lanka is hoping that the IMF and other western "investors" would lend money without imposing conditions that would bring either a revolution or a fascist dictatorship? That this is the sum and total of Esmond Wickremasinghe's frantic cry for a better deal from the IMF?

Concluded

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