

25TH YEAR OF PUBLICATION

TRIBUNE



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TRIBUNE

INCREASE OF PRICE

**FROM THE ISSUE OF
TRIBUNE**

Vol. 24, No. 11. e., July 14, 1979, the Price of each copy of **Tribune** at local news-stands will be Rs. 2/50. Costs have increased overwhelmingly and price revision cannot be delayed any longer. Foreign subscriptions will cost a little more.

Until June 30, 1979, local subscriptions will be accepted at the existing rates.

Tribune,
43, Dawson Street,
Colombo 2.
Tel. 33172

Letter From The Editor

IN THE SRI LANKA OF TODAY there are a large number of matters that appear to be insoluble puzzles or sinister mysteries. Take our climate. Sri Lanka has been reputed to be an emerald isle where nature was ever bountiful. Throughout the centuries the country has received rain adequate for all its purposes. Droughts were rare if not unknown and so also floods—until the high montane watersheds of the rivers and the hill country were denuded of trees thereby causing quick flow of rain water eroding our hillsides and penepains. Today, apart from soil erosion and regular floods, we have frequent droughts. Rains have begun to fail us with even greater regularity than the occurrence of floods. At one time poets had acclaimed Lanka as the land of perennial waterfalls. **On our cover** this week, we have a picture of one of our better known waterfalls, but it is no longer perennially full of gushing water. There are times nowadays when it has no more than a sickly trickle. This year, in the year of grace one thousand nine hundred and seventy nine, the once unfailing Southwest Monsoon has not only been delayed but seems to have failed partially. Last year and the year before too, both Monsoons were not what they should have been. Instead we have been visited by terrible cyclones—some missing us by inches (so to say) to hit South India with massive destruction. Does the repeated total or partial failure of the Monsoon year after year denote only a cyclical phenomenon or does it portend something more significant? Dr. Derek Winstanley has, in a paper in the prestigious British scientific magazine, *NATURE*, stated that the failures of the monsoon in India over the last few years was only a part of a world-wide climatic change, the most serious repercussions of this climatic change affecting the monsoon regions. He has asserted that the whole pattern of atmospheric circulation in the northern hemisphere was shifting southward and that the circulation systems which bring monsoons have broken down because the all-important westerly winds and their low pressure troughs have further extended to the south. From Mauritania (West Africa)—where most appalling drought conditions exist—to north-west India, the summer rainfall has decreased steadily by more than half since 1957, he said. Dr. Winstanley's findings are the result of his work on rainfall trends in North Africa, West Asia and north-west India during the past 50 years. The World Meteorological Organisation was perturbed by Dr. Winstanley's research paper which found support from another reputed meteorologist, Prof. Lamb, climatologist of the University of East Anglia, who believes that the world is experiencing what may be the world's greatest sustained shift in its climate since 1700. Questions were asked in the Indian Parliament about the truth of Dr. Winstanley's findings but the Indian meteorologists assured the Government that all was well. They said that there was no fear of shift of the south-west monsoon southwards, converting India into a desert or semi-desert in the years to come. Can we in Sri Lanka be satisfied with this? Sri Lankan meteorologists, like their counterparts in India, seem to be complacently satisfied that all is well. But farmers in the Wannai and other areas where the monsoons have regulated not only the system of agriculture but also the way of life now realise that in last two decades the weather (and especially rain, particularly its volume and monthly and seasonal distribution) have changed drastically in recent years. Our meteorologists seem to go by some statistics on which they pretend to rely but unfortunately the stations from which such statistics come are few and far between. Attention seems to be paid only to furnish airlines with precise data, but farmers do not seem to be on the list of priorities of our meteorologists.

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EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

More On The Press

Colombo, June 26,

The *Ceylon Daily News* has come out very strongly in defence of its right to criticise the CTB or any other government department or undertaking. Readers will recall that this column had last week referred to Minister M. H. Mohamed's intemperate attack on the Press for criticising the Transport Services which were under his tender care. He had especially picked on the *Ceylon Daily News* and accused it of "conspiring" with the enemies of the government, in particular the LSSP, to bring the Government into disrepute by indulging in unfair and incorrect criticism of the CTB. We had in this column published, for the record, Minister Mohamed's outbursts against the Press as reported in the *Ceylon Daily News* and the *Sun*. They make interesting reading because it is a splendid example of an attempt by an inefficient and ineffective Minister to stifle criticism and gag the press by invoking the now anachronistic dodge of raising the anti-communist bogey. How can a government-owned paper criticise a state undertaking is his basic grievance? To silence Lake House he could not think of anything better than shout that the *Daily News* was carrying out the behests of the LSSP.

Apart from the Minister's failure to understand the function of the Press, even a government-owned one, in a democratic country Minister Mohamed's peevish hysterics came as a surprise to many who fondly believed that no Minis-

ter of President J. R. Jayewardene's government would fall back on such an anti-divulion "commies-to-blame" slogan to hide the sad defaults of his Ministry. Minister Mohamed and others of his ilk must realise that such smokescreen are counter-productive and also tend to widen the credibility gap which has already begun to encircle the Jayewardene government.

The *Ceylon Daily News*, however, rose up to the occasion in defence of itself and the Press. In publishing Minister Mohamed's outburst *in extenso*, of the *Ceylon Daily News* called upon its readers to send in their views on the services provided by the CTB. And the *Daily News* published several columnfuls of such letters and finally announced that it was sending the balance of the letters from its readers—for which there was no room in the paper—to the Minister and the Ministry. The *CDN* also published two editorials, one on June 19 and another June 23. Elsewhere in this issue we have published, for the record, the two editorials. We have also published a scintillating piece from the pen of Gamini Navaratne in the *Sun* of June 22, 1978 entitled *A Prophet Without Honour.....* Gamini Navaratne sets out the history of Mohamed's ministry in the last two years and with a superb satiric cynicism says that Mohamed should not be blamed for all that has happened. The two editorials in the *Daily News* and Gamini Navaratne's piece in the *Sun* should make Minister Mohamed (and some other Ministers who seem to think that papers that do not toe the line should be scolded and abused—privately and in public—into subservience) to turn over a new leaf and deal with the Press in the way a Minister should in a democratic country.

We had stated in this column last week that the *Ceylon Daily*

Mirror, which has shown remarkable improvement in the quality of its reporting in recent months, failed to report the Mohamed pyrotechnics. The *Daily Mirror* has recorded some first-rate scoops recently, and it has made a very serious attempt to follow up its stories. It has carried some excellent investigative stories on drugs and on the use (or abuse) of petrol. We were, therefore, surprised that the *CDM* did not either report on Mohamed's speech or comment on its perversity.

In this connection a little piece in Deep Throat's *Behind the Scenes* column in the *Week-end* of June 24 seems pertinent and relevant. Entitled WET 'BLANKETS' it read: "*Transport Minister, Mohamed Haniffa Mohamed last week castigated the Press for what he called pointing a gloomy picture of the country's bus services. One cannot blame Mr. Mohamed. Maybe his topmost advisers in the SLCTB keep telling him all the time that Sri Lanka could not have a better bus service. But what bothered Deep Throat is what one of these top most advisers, a self-appointed expert on bus services did. Hardly had Mr. Mohamed finished his verbal outrage, had this adviser begun phoning newspaper offices: 'Please do not take what Mr. Mohamed has said very seriously. He was only a bit angry', he said. The same adviser has been using the telephone intensely whenever there was a bus crash or a CTB misdemeanour. Who are they trying to fool?'*"

Could it be that the *CDM* was persuaded that Minister Mohamed's outburst should not be taken seriously? Did the *CDM* fall for this plea? Or did it think that its best to let sleeping dogs lie? *CDM*'s columns often carry reports, letters and articles criticising the CTB and CGR and many were surprised when the *CDM* did not react to Mohamed's onslaught on the Press.

Whilst on this matter of functioning of our Press, we must refer to a top-class piece of investigative reporting in the *Ceylon Daily News* of June 23, 1979. It was very appropriately given front-page prominence under the headlines: **CITY ANALYST EXPRESSES CONCERN—ALARMING FOOD ADULTERATION.** The report was by Kris Rezel, a *CDN* staff man, who had done an excellent investigative report some weeks ago on **STOLEN TEA** with one or two follow ups. The report on **FOOD ADULTERATION** is worthy of citation in full: "Tests carried out last year by the City Analyst on pop-sicles which are eaten mostly by children, have revealed that certain varieties were coloured carsenogenic dyes which can lead to cancer when taken over sustained periods, City Analyst, Mrs. J. K. N. L. de Silva said yesterday. In her office at Maligakande, this youthful chemist and mother of two little boys, expressed concern at the volume of food adulteration that was being carried out by unscrupulous traders. A gullible public was being duped by misleading labels under which many of the products were being marketed, she said. Picking some of the items in daily use in households, Mrs. de Silva said; **Bread**—Tests had revealed an excessive moisture content than the permitted 40 per cent; **Local Butter**—was chiefly emulsions of vegetable fats; **Arrow-root**—frequently recommended by doctors for stomach disorders like diarrhoea. Tests showed that in 90 per cent of the samples, there was no trace of the base product. Instead, it comprised wheat, maize or tapioca starch; **Soft Drinks**—Recently a manufacturer was found to be using an excessive amount of saccharine and non-permitted colouring matter in his product; **Bottled Nelli Syrup**—very popular with parents who

hold it to be good for children because of its supposed high content of vitamin C. However samples tested at the department had disclosed that a great percentage of the Nelli Syrup being marketed was merely a sugar solution coloured green with added citric acid to give it an acidic flavour; **Jams**—Another field where much adulteration was being carried out. Citing an example Mrs. de Silva said most Strawberry Jams being sold at high prices were nothing other than pumpkin or melon treated in a manner with added appropriate flavouring so as to deceive people into believing that the product was genuine strawberry; **Condiments**—Most condiments also disclosed a high percentage of adulteration. A recent analysis of packeted coffee powder revealed the product as being a mixture of starch and other vegetable matter. In this case the husks of roasted and powdered ground nuts had provided the base; **Vinegar**—another product where adulteration took place to a great degree. She said there were three different types of vinegar being marketed—artificial, brewed and essence of vinegar. Essence of vinegar was expected to have an acetic content of at least 15 per cent but samples tested invariably revealed the content to be less than the stipulated amount. Samples of brewed vinegar which was supposed to be manufactured from coconut toddy and was preferred by housewives because of its unique flavour also disclosed under tests to be merely artificial vinegar. Although the product was priced at very high rate because of its supposed coconut toddy base, 50 per cent of the samples tested disclosed a diluted solution of acetic acid."

There are a whole lot of other items which must be investigated and the government should be

pressurised to take stern preventive measures to protect the consumers. Certain Ministers have worked overtime to protect the consumer from what is thought to be the greed of the local producer of agricultural foodstuffs—without realising that it is the middleman and the trader man who makes the fancy profits. In this instance, the genuine producer has been penalised, but in the case of producers of processed food they have been given a free hand to make all the money they want by selling adulterated products. Only a few items have been touched upon by Kris' Rezel. This is a question which must be followed up without any delay.

The Land Acquisition Act (Cap. 460) As Amended By The Land Acquisition (Amendment) Act No. 28 of 1964. Notice Under Section 7

R.f. No. 3/62/503
J. 73 E. 1118

It is intended to acquire the land/Lands described in the Schedule below. For further particulars please see the Gazette No. 43 (Part III) of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka of 29-06-1979.

Schedule

Name of Village Etc.:

Beriwewa and Koshena villages in Katugampola Korala North Kuliyapitiya D.R.O.'s Division Kurunegala District.

Name of land:

Koshena watta

Plan & Lot Nos.:

Lot 125 in Supplement

No. 3 in F.V.P. 2195

Lot No. 3 in Supplement

No. 2 in F.V.P. 4508

K. A. Gunasekara

District Land Officer,
Kurunegala District.

The Kachcheri,
Kurunegala, 20-06-1975.

Censorship

Sir,

For the fourth time within one month, the prestigious Madras *Hindu* has once again been detained by the Airport customs for "scrutiny from above", which in ordinary terms means for censoring by the Ministry of Defence. If the customs can do this kind of thing even after the Foreign Minister Mr. A. C. S. Hameed at a press conference recently had categorically stated that there is no press censorship in Sri Lanka and anybody is entitled to read anything he liked including critical comments about the Sri Lankan government, one wonders whether the bureaucracy is trying to sabotage the good intentions of the government.

It has become the practice with the customs to detain the incoming English language newspaper whenever they find a two or three column headline on Sri Lanka, no matter whether the particular news item was an adverse comment on Sri Lanka or not. To give one instance, the *Hindu* dated the 15th May carried a three column headline "EXODUS OF SKILLED HANDS FROM SRI LANKA." and that particular issue was detained not because the news item in question was a controversial one but because it had three column headline!

The same news item had been published in the local newspapers over and over again and it is fact too. What the Customs objected in this news item, God alone knows.

The undersigned in his capacity as the accredited correspondent of the Madras *Hindu* has made series of representations to the

President and in every one of these representations the undersigned has pointed out the government's solemn declaration that there is no censorship in Sri Lanka and the Press is free here. The undersigned had also appealed to His Excellency to abrogate the rules and regulations framed by the discredited Bandaranaike regime which could tolerate no adverse comments on its activities.

In recent letter to the undersigned from the Principal Collector of Customs to whom the President had forwarded the communications for "necessary action", the Customs Chief had stated that he "was compelled to obtain the approval of the authorities concerned whenever there are articles of a controversial nature in newspapers". Whether this is in line with the declared progressive policy of the government headed by His Excellency J. R. Jayewardene or whether he was acting in line with the instructions issued to him by the discredited past regime, it is for him to explain. Also one wonders what was the controversial content of the news item under the headline "Skilled hands are leaving Sri Lanka."

Action of the Customs not only causes serious inconvenience to thousands of readers of the *Hindu* but causes heavy loss to the importer. The funniest aspect of the whole affair is that newspapers detained by the customs for "scrutiny from above" are never banned but released after a few days. Does the Customs believe that delayed reading will cause no effect on the minds of the readers?

It is high time that His Excellency the President steps in and do something about the quixotic behaviour of the Customs officers.

K. V. S. Vas

Colombo.
28th May, 79

Air-conditioned Trains To Jaffna

Sir,

"Abandon Hope all ye that enter here". These words were written in bold characters on the gateway of Dante's *Inferno*. They may well be painted large on the "Jaffna Trains"—the ones that leave Fort for KKS and their counterparts that leave KKS for Colombo.

If you happen to squeeze yourself into one of these, you will find yourself one in a mass of seething, sweating humanity, some standing on one leg, others on no leg at all. There is no danger of falling; there is no place to fall. You have "prop-ortional" support all around you. Children scream and mothers are unable to take them to the toilet. All appeals to run an extra train, at least on week-ends, have fallen on deaf ears.

And now comes the stunning news that air-conditioned trains are to run to Jaffna, costing the would-be passengers a mere Rs. 111 and cents 15! What heights of absurdity can the human mind attain!! Who will benefit from this luxury? Will the inventors of this masterpiece of folly come down the solid earth, and first provide a few more coaches to the already running trains, and run an extra train at least for week-ends? That will be luxury enough for suffering humanity.

S. N. Arul Nesan O.M.I.

Amala-Utpavam,
Colombogam,
Jaffna.
30.5.79

○ ○ ○

Mohamed And The Press

THE TRAVAILS OF TRAVEL

*Daisy, Daisy, give me
your answer, do I*

*I'm half crazy all for the
love of you.*

*It won't be a stylish marriage,
For I can't afford a carriage.*

But you'll look sweet

Upon the seat

Of a bicycle made for two!

This heart warming old favourite will surely earn pride of place in any musical pot-pourri we serve up, to celebrate the reversal from deadlock to wedlock between Lake House and the CTB. For the present, Transport officials, in our view, have plainly been misled into the wrong gear-change—to drive head on at the Press. But then, as the CTB's current record proves, life has its daily disasters. AT Lake House, we have witnessed the spectacle of a heavy lorry mounting our first steps. But never quite a double-decker as yet. Overheating is a frequent failure of CTB vehicles. Ironically, in this instance, boiling-point appears to have been overshoot on the very day the CTB served up to the public a flattering testimonial of itself—through our very own columns. Could our front page pictures, of droves of commuters being suffocated and exposed to worse hazards still, have sparked off this back fire? Our pictures gave the truth—as the camera saw it. We defy anyone in this land to suggest that overcrowding of a worse order does not occur daily on our highways today? Everyday, for that matter.

To meet some of the attacks levelled against the Press, at last week's tamasha, we would very simply say:— (1) That as to the relative merits of the CTB as it was some years ago—and as it functions today—commuters themselves emphatically plead personal experience as their test of the deterioration which both they, and we, have recorded. Take the small-change problem; did it exist earlier? (2) We repudiate the slanderous charge that Lake House is in cahoots with any LSSP group, or any other brand of political conspirators for that matter. It may be pertinent to stress that Lake House, as an institution, has been under State supervision for two years under the UNP Government now. Thus, to suggest today that this establishment has been in the grip of the LSSP or the CIA is to impute some gross insensitivity, at least to those at the uppermost levels of national stewardship. Indeed, any great patriot who has had a title of evidence to suggest sabotage on our part was in duty bound to rush—not per CTB, we might hint—to the proper authorities. Let no one condone any conspiracy of silence. We're not offering alibis either, as some men do when they creep upstairs in the wee hours of the morning. (3) There is no magic in being able to forecast, occasionally, some of the matters that are likely to find publicity in a newspaper. The informant himself could be one source of such prescience. We leave it to humanity to set its own value on such fore-knowledge as evidence of anything—of moonshine or that the cows come home. It is not our fault but a human infirmity, sadly that some people are never more easily deluded than others. (4) If criticism demoralises the employees of the CTB, it is more important to recognise that mischief or bungling on the part of

its operatives can demoralise the very nation itself. The CTB's employees, we trust are not manufactured to be fuelled on flattery. Nor, are we aware that they take priority over the masses they are supposed to serve.

There are, of course, other seductive aspects of the CTB's latest responses to public criticism. Take, for instance, the notion that congestion in buses could be solved if bicycles were cheaply available. Along with raincoats, too, may we add—now that the monsoon has arrived? Indeed, cycling could be good for the health too. No doubt, the CTB has its great discoverers. And, what with cranks already crossing the English Channel on pedalled contraptions, we might ourselves launch off to delirious heights shortly. Daisy, Daisy, indeed! How about going back to buggy carts? It will be "Roll along, covered wagon". Then Roller skates? Rickshaws? Birth control? Or, stay at home altogether? Or even scrap the CTB? We can doubtless move on to philosophies worthy of Doolittle in "My Fair Lady". "Roll up the floor", "Whisk me off it", "Call out the Army", etc. "But get me, get me to the Church on time!" Not by bus, we'd caution, of course—unless the bride is prepared to wait! Only this is a slightly different marriage we're working on. We're here, trying to match a public service to public need. The LSSP will, doubtless, be grateful for the unsolicited tribute, if any such effort identifies its makers with the Party. Meanwhile, we repeat, that any Government which has won a million hearts and more could stand threatened—not by well-founded criticism, but by a lack of it; and today in Sri Lanka, to be specific, a lack of criticism of the overcrowding, of bad driving—in short, of any of the travails of daily bus travel. That truth may be ugly, or bitter,

But it cannot be wished away. It must be effectively met—not merely with promises. Mercifully for Lake House, and its employees, we also know that the Government, in its collective wisdom can, and must, have eyes to see and ears to hear, for itself. There may indeed, be SLFP and LSSP sympathisers in this establishment. But let the CTB set itself to its own manifold repairs before ploughing up our threshold—as it is wont to plough up the human heart in this country today. Is it necessary, we are constrained to ask, to remind our critics that the Press in this country is supposed to be free? And responsible too, we trust? Not merely to the tender vanities of the CTB and its top brass—but to the millions who go to make up our readers, our people as well. We would add that the question of how many pressmen miss buses, of how many buses miss pressmen—is just anyone's guess.

—Editorial, *Ceylon Daily News*,
June 19, 1979



GREEN LINES AND RED HERRINGS

From bright-eyed irrelevancies to harsh truths, our readers have covered every inch of the way laid bare by our call for their views direct on the CTB today. Nine out of ten, or more, almost support our position. We have published a random selection of these elsewhere. Considerations of space, we regret to find, rule out the possibility of accommodating even the greater part of this, correspondence. Serialisation would be impracticable. In saying this we acknowledge the courage of our correspondents from first to last. And their independence, too. Indeed, we have also received a handful of letters peddling praise

for the CTB. Though they are so few, yet precisely because they present an opposite view, we have given them privileged treatment. They are from persons who have seen the rosier side of the CTB. All credit to them, too. For, their very act of writing seems to us to offer some admission—even if unintended—of the substance of a Free Press today. However, that might be, the overwhelming preponderance of the bus travelling public clearly identifies itself with the repeated protests we have made on various aspects of bus travel. But it is not our pride, flattered or tattered, that is in issue. We hold nothing personal against the CTB or any of its officials—whether the latter are over-inflated, or under pressure, paranoid, or deluded in their attacks on us.

So far, the sabre-rattling has not frightened us. The more important objective from the national point of view, we trust, is to ensure that the masses, the poor of this land, its daily workers and its school children, get a better transport service. We affirm without fear that it is the hardships which the people suffer that present the most serious threat to the image of the Government. The CTB, it is to be remembered, touches the lives of the masses at almost every turn. The present Government was elected upon a promise to end queues. This it has largely achieved in most areas—except in the field of transport. That default is so wide and extensive that it could cancel out much of the gains secured elsewhere. Neither green lines, green circles, nor even red herrings can detract from that hard truth. We are prepared to concede that the country needs more buses. Meanwhile, we cannot escape the conviction that there is plainly much misuse, or abuse, of the resources that the CTB is already possessed

of, even today. That is humanity's immediate complaint on this question. If the views of our readers are anything of a guide, then the bogey of a secret LSSP tie-up with Lake House has already been safely laid to rest. It could have been the premature off-spring of some careless counsellor's mind. Of someone, perhaps, in a greater hurry than the CTB, as a rule. There, we leave it for the present. On the larger issue of the nation's future, we would repeat that there is nothing to be lost by being candid. The Government today is one to which the people of Sri Lanka turned for deliverance from hardship and oppression. The salutary caution—often voiced by some of its own leaders—that it is receptivity to public feeling and hard work not wilful blindness or vain excuses, that is going to ensure a better future for all. We have not pursued this issue to satisfy any shallow sense of triumphalism. We have recorded the impatience of those under affliction, in the larger interests of all. May the CTB rev itself to greater efficiency and ensure a clearer view of the road ahead.

—Editorial—*Ceylon Daily News*,
June 23, 1979.



A PROPHET WITHOUT HONOUR.....

Please, please stop criticising Transport Minister Mohamed. In the first place why zero in on him for most of the time when there are 27 other Ministers to pick from? Secondly, are the Transport Board services as bad as the critics—there seem to be so many of them—make out? When the President selected Mr. Mohamed as his Transport Minister, he did so with full confidence that "here is an ideal man to put the public transport

services in order." Most politicians would have quivered if asked to take charge of two of the largest public sector undertakings—the Transport Board and the Railway. Not Mr. Mohamed. He accepted the challenge with gusto, even bravado. He made a number of changes in the Ministry and in the CTB and the CGR. At the Ministry, there was ever-faithful Secretary Mahinda Elayaperuma (Secretary, to the CTB under the previous regime) to guide him; two veterans in the transport business, A. R. P. Wijesekera and B. D. Rampala, were recalled to head the CTB and the CGR respectively. He was now ready for action. To the public, he confidently promised better bus and rail services "within three months."

The three months passed before the Minister could get things moving. But it would have been too much to expect even a man of Mr. Mohamed's calibre to have produced results in so short a time. That is why he asked for more time. More time passed and the Minister realised that there were a number of factors working against him. Both Mr. Wijesekera and Mr. Rampala were only concerned in putting their respective services in order by utilising existing capacity carrying out proper maintenance and enforcing discipline. They failed to realise the complex situation their Minister had to face. First, jobs had to be found for the "boys". What better institutions than the CTB and the CGR to take in large numbers of unemployed people, even though there may be little or no work for most of them? Then there was the Jatika Sevaka Sangamaya breathing down the Minister's neck, asking for the "rectification" of "injustices" done by the previous regime. Appointments, promotions transfers and dismissals had to be carried out as wanted by the JSS.

This sort of thing is not peculiar to the Transport Ministry or this Government. It has happened under every previous regime, so why blame Mr. Mohamed? True, the staff appointments and changes caused some disruptions in the working of the transport services, affected morale and efficiency. But this was a small price to pay compared to what could have happened if Party interests were not sufficiently locked after.

The "dissenting duo"—Mr. Wijesekera and Mr. Rampala—had to go before most of these things could be done. Their biggest mistake was that they opposed what they called was the "import mania" of the Transport Ministry. Large-scale imports of buses, railway engines and coaches was the only way to improve the services, the Ministry believed. This belief was shared by the Government. The "dissenting duo" thought they could manage for the time being with what was already available. It was quite natural that they were displeased.

Now almost two years have elapsed since Mr. Mohamed took over. In the meantime, there has been some decentralisation in both the CTB and the CGR, various improvements have been made and part of the imports have arrived. Still there has been little improvement in the services, say the critics. Among the criticisms made are: Inadequate and irregular services; gross overcrowding; discourteous staff; drunken drivers unclean buses and compartments; which are also ill-lit in the nights; and, in the case of buses, wrong destination boards or no boards at all, and failure by conductors to carry sufficient change money so that they could meet a situation where a commuter presents a Rs. 10 note for a 20 cents fare. Poor

Mr. Mohamed is blamed for all this and more. The Sun and the Weekend too, had occasion to castigate him on this score. But after re-appraisal of the entire situation, we think it is unfair to blame him alone for our poor transport services. The legacy of a "run-down" transport system from the previous regime, as the Minister says, cannot be put right in just two years—even by a person of this calibre. Apart from other problems there are "saboteurs" within the Transport Board and the CGR looking for opportunity to undo whatever improvements are effected. The Minister also finds that he is not getting the co-operation he thinks he deserves from those at the top, especially in the

The Land Acquisition Act (Cap. 460) As Amended By The Land Acquisition (Amendment) Act No. 28 of 1964.

Notice Under Section 7

Ref. No. 3/62/505

J 73 E 1115

It is intended to acquire the land/Lands described in the Schedule below. For further particulars please see the Gazette No. 43 (Part III) of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka of 29.06.79

Schedule

Name of Village Etc.:

Ilippugamuwa village in Katugampola Korale, South, Kuliya-pitiya D.R.O.'s Division, Kurunegala District.

Name of land:

Ambagahawatta

Plan & Lot Nos.:

Lot Nos. 89 and 90 in Supplement No. 2 in Final Village Plan No. 1009.

K. A. Gunasekara
District Land Officer,
Kurunegala District.

The Kachcheri,
Kurunegala, 20-06-1979.

CTB. These non-cooperative bureaucrats claim that the whole trouble is that they are not allowed to do a job of work, that there is too much political interference. This simply cannot be true. On the other hand, we tend to believe the Minister when he says there is a "conspiracy" to discredit him. Remember what happened when he was out of the island recently? "Even the Deputy Minister is not co-operating with me," he lamented on his return, revealing a few more details of the "conspiracy".

Then, there is the rapidly increasing demand for transport, when the services are grossly inadequate. At the beginning of 1978, the bus and rail services had suddenly to begin catering to nearly a 100,000

five year olds and their parents as a result of Education Minister Nissanka Wijeyaratne's fiat that the school going age be reduced from six years to five. Now, there is a proposal to lower this age to four years. Worse, each morning as we get up, we find there have been about another 1,000 new additions to our population. What can Mr. Mohamed do about this? Join the Family Planning Association? Of course, some of the drivers in the Transport Board, aware of his predicament and in full sympathy for him, occasionally take their buses down a precipice; or bring their vehicles in head-on collision with another bus or some other vehicle. But their contribution in this regard has been insufficient. There have been only

about 85 deaths so far caused by Transport Board vehicles in the past two years.

Taking all the circumstances into consideration we think it is unfair to blame Mr. Mohamed for all the ills in our transport services. Few other Ministers work as hard as Mr. Mohamed. But, for some mysterious reason, his contribution to the nation goes unrecognised. It reminds us of the saying that a prophet is without honour in his own country. To Mr. Mohamed, we say: "Don't worry about the critics or their criticism but carry on regardless. We are with you." Bye, Bye— for now.

—Sun, June 22, 1979

The Land Acquisition Act (Cap. 460) As Amended By The Land Acquisition (Amendment) Act, No. 28 Of 1964.

Notice Under Section 7

Ref. No. 3/62/517
J. 74 E. 587

It is intended to acquire the land/Lands described in the Schedule below. For further particulars please see the Gazette No. 43 (Part III) of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka of 29-06-1979.

Schedule

Name of Village Etc.:

Koswatta Village in Kinnyama Korale, Bingiriya D.R.O.'s Division, Kurunegala District.

Name of land:

Godellahena alias Kajugaha Henyaya

Plan & Lot Nos.:

Lot No. 125 in Supplement No. 5 in F.V.P. 1457

K. A. Gunasekara

District Land Officer,
Kurunegala District.

The Kachcheri,

Kurunegala, 20-06-1979.

MORE WITHOUT COMMENT

NOT THE AMBASSADOR

It was not the Colombo-based ambassador of a Non-aligned country who was involved in the incident referred to in our Odd Spot "Bluff and Bluster" of June 12. The Colombo-based ambassador, a genial and popular personality in the diplomatic circuit, always behaves very diplomatically, our sources said.

—Ceylon Daily News, 14.6.79

THAT'S REAL DIPLOMACY !

Tempers frayed to dizzy heights at the Colombo Non-Aligned talks last week when it came to the move to suspend Egypt's membership. Syria's Foreign Minister, Mr. Khaddoumi, could not bear to hear the boorish utterance of a Colombo-based diplomat who accused Sri Lanka of being partisan and threatened to break off diplomatic relations. The guy should be tried in front of your Conference Hall for treachery, he shouted at the top of his voice. The local DPL boy, insiders say, tendered his most humble apologies to a senior official. He was in fact successful in making some quarters believe that he never figured in such an episode. What wonders can't the DPL boys do in Sri Lanka with the fringe benefits!

—Weekend, June 17, 1979

This item from **Deep Throat's** column **Behind The Scenes** appeared of the **Weekend** (16/1/79), but it was pulled out of the Colombo edition and a more ticklish story about a UNP journalist on an Iraqi ship was used instead.

A Town Like Ibadan

by Sita Selvadurai

Bill Woodrow was one who always had an earnest desire for the new and the challenging. But real challenge did not come his way until he was thirty years old.

Bill was then a chartered Civil Engineer, unmarried, with just three years experience, working for a firm of Consulting Engineers in London. Bill was getting a trifle bored with the routine work there. It was then, while he was travelling down to work in the tube, one dull winter morning, that the advertisement in the London Times had caught his eye. "Wanted Civil Engineers for Projects in Nigeria" it said. "Ideal for the self confident man desirous of facing challenge." And Bill had made no hesitation in applying. Within a month he was called for an interview, and then he received a letter a week after to say that he was selected. The matters of visas and passports were soon finalised, and one fine spring day, Bill found himself, with bag and baggage speeding in an aircraft over the Sahara to Nigeria. He was met at Lagos Airport by a representative of the firm, and whisked off in an air-conditioned car to the firm's headquarters, where he spent two weeks acquainting himself with the work that was being done by them in Nigeria. After that Bill was sent interior to the hills in Plateau State to do a road trace.

It was his first challenge. He was provided a furnished house, a car, a steward to cook and clean for him. Food, both locally grown fruits and vegetables, and imported varieties of canned and frozen produce were available in plenty, and Bill settled down comfortably and

adapted himself to his new job and surroundings very quickly. He plunged into his work with all earnestness, sometimes working late into the night. He had two assistant engineers, both Nigerians to help him, but the bulk of the work was done by Bill. He was paid three times their salary, he consoled himself, so he was justified in bearing most of the responsibility. Sunday, the only day he took off work, he spent in the Recreation Club, in the town of Jos, the capital of Plateau State, where many expatriates, English, French, German, Indian and Sri Lankan gathered during the weekends.

Very soon his bosses realised that Bill was not only an efficient engineer, but also a man of no mean calibre. So when the road trace at Jos was completed Bill was put in charge of establishing a new office in Ibadan town, the capital of Oyo state, situated in the south of Nigeria, about 120 kilometres north east of the capital city of Lagos.

Bill met the challenge with great enthusiasm. There were six other Englishmen besides him in the staff of twenty, the rest being Nigerians. Bill was a white man with a difference. He did not subscribe to the popular view that black was inferior to white. On the contrary, he was convinced that the black man was as worthy as any other. He explained away their indulgent attitude to their belonging to the set of happy go lucky mortals. Bill's love for the under dog was also seen in his generosity towards those who worked for him. He always had little gifts for his stewards and chauffeurs and their families at Christmas. Whenever the little urchins selling bananas and mangoes outside the supermarkets spied his red Peugeot 504, they rushed up with beaming smiles,

and stretched out their palms for the kobos he dished out to them to jingle in their ragged pockets. He even refrained from using the Pidgin English adjective 'bush'. For to Bill's sensitive ears it sounded like a derision, which when applied seemed to ridicule the unsophisticated rustic ways of the locals.

In his customary, unobtrusive and methodical way, Bill soon organised the Ibadan office, and it ran as smoothly as if on wheels. Then the oil boom came, and a new town was planned for Ibadan. Bill was made the Chairman of the planning committee. Because of the extra work, new hands had to be recruited, and Bill's hours of work extended far into the night.

One rainy night, while he was returning from work after visiting a work site, some miles away from Ibadan, he felt the car going out of control as it skidded hither and thither on the oily asphalt. Then the headlights of an oncoming vehicle blinded him, and before he realised it, the next thing he knew was that his car had crashed head on to an on coming truck. How long he lay knocked out he did not know, but when he came to, a storm was raging outside with great intensity. As he opened the door and stepped out, the wind nearly swept him off his feet. With an unsteady gait, he managed to stagger up the steps to a house across the road. Immediately he knocked on the door, it was opened by a woman. When she saw him, her soft face took on a surprised air, and she uttered "Oyibo meaning foreigner. Then in English which was only slightly accented with African intonation, she asked, "Are you hurt?" "Small, small," he blurted out in the Pidgin he managed to recall, and sank into one of the three chairs in the dimly lit hall.

When he next woke up he found that he was in hospital. There was a bandage round his head, and a tube was inserted into a vein in his arm, through which saline dripped. Then at five o'clock, which was visitor's hour, he saw her, the same soft face which had opened the door for him that stormy night. She came and stood by his bed. Then with the orange juice she had brought in a bottle, she wet his dry parched lips. After that she came everyday at visitor's hour, and Bill found himself looking forward to five o'clock with eagerness. He learnt by and by, that her name was Linda, and that she was a music teacher, married and with two children. But she never spoke of her husband. One day he had asked her. "He died in a road accident six months ago," she had said, and there were tears in her eyes. After that he refrained from speaking to her about her husband. Then one evening when she came at the usual visitor's hour, she had brought a cassette and played it to him. "It is pure African music." Its authentic", she said, and then in a more subdued voice she added, "It was composed by me, and dedicated to you." Bill was touched beyond words. It was quite a while before he managed to blurt out a whispered "Thank you." After that she never came again.

When Bill was discharged from hospital two weeks later, he had gone to the spot of the accident, but there was no one in the house. "She has gone away to teach in another school" he was told on making inquiries. But Bill never gave up hope. In the shops, in the market places, in fact everywhere he went, he scanned the crowds searchingly in the fervant hope that he would meet her again. But it never happened.

Bill plunged into his work with renewed steadfastness. He set his mind on seeing the comple-

tion of the new town of Ibadan. He built a model to scale to envisage how it would look when completed, and was pleased with the effect.

The shops and bazaar was at the central core, its landmark and highest building being the 24 storeyed Cocoa House. The Ibadan University campus, with the modern resident halls and lecture theatres was in the north-east, and the Agodi Botanical Gardens was situated close to it with a zoo in its wake. The Secretariat, which housed the government offices was south of the University. In the north-east was the residential area with the big bungalows, mowed lawns and flower beds, and along the Ring Road were the middle class flats. A new system of roads was designed to ease the prevailing traffic congestion. Most of the roads were dual carriageways, with service roads and side walks. Elegant flyovers criss-crossed at different levels at the cross roads, helping to streamline it all.

It was a five year plan, and Bill was bent on seeing the project complete, but alas! fate had other plans for him. Two years later, indigenisation of all firms was made mandatory, and a Nigerian was placed at head—though much against the management's wishes. Bill, who all along had never lost sight of the fact that Nigeria belonged to the Nigerians, had no alternative now, but to leave. It was a painful decision. It meant leaving unfulfilled the challenge he had hoped for all his sentient life, and leaving it in the sad knowledge that he will never return to it again. But nevertheless, Bill made the decision. He returned to England and got a job in an engineering firm. Three months later, he met and married Mary, bought a house and settled down to the routine of English life again.

But Bill never forgot the Ibadan of his dreams. He often indulged in day dreaming and fantasised the completed town. The fantasy acted as a marvelous safety valve, and helped him to discharge the feelings of nostalgia that mounted in him from time to time.

Then last night, he had been transported beyond joy to the town of his fantasies. Evening was approaching, and the sky was a magnificent orange and red. Framed against this background the skyline of the completed town looked especially impressive. Sleek limosines raced along the finished roadways, at breath taking speeds. A soft wind whistled through the flowering trees which lined the edges of the road, making the air around cool and comfortable. The general euphoria that prevailed was emphasized by the steady stream of people laughing and talking as they walked along the side walks. They all wore loose fitting robes of splendid colours of which swished and sparkled as they walked, and on their heads were perched little flat skull caps. Bill seemed to be the only foreigner among them and they each greeted him with great solemnity, and shook him by the hand and said "Welcome" very earnestly. Everything around him, the buildings the roads the people, was bright and new, and it seemed as if everything had come alive and was waiting to welcome him. Then all of a sudden, Bill found himself in the spot of his accident—and he saw the house across the road. All that was familiar and a part of him. Even before he realised it, Linda herself, dressed in a frilly white frock which extended just below her knees and with white shoes to match, opened the door. When she saw him her face broke out into a smile, and she stretched out her hand and clasped his. Then the distan-

past rose before him. He recalled how he had staggered up the same steps the first time. How long ago it was, yet how recent it seemed.

The wind blew and tousled his hair. He raised his arm and touched Mary's. "Bill dear," she said, as she bent over him with his bed tea. "You have slept longer than usual. But since it is Sunday I didn't wake you."

Bill sat up in bed. He felt like Rip Van Winkle. Nevertheless, there was a strange sense of elation within him. A joy no words could describe. For even though in a dream, he had re-visited his alien homeland, seen the Ultima Thule of his ambitions realised, and met his erstwhile love, in the completed town of his dreams—a town like Ibadan.



EDUCATION IN SRI LANKA—1

Without A Purpose

by R. Kahawita

THE UNITED FRONT GOVERNMENT and its predecessor "Coalitions" and parties initiated the Educational reforms with the "take over" of the Private Schools. One of the reforms was to delay the school going age to 6 plus. When the present Government took over in 1977 the school going age was put back to five plus again. So the year 1978, started with a record intake of school children—300,000 in the age group of five plus and six plus. A hundred percent increase in the numbers and a hundred percent increase in buildings, equipment, teachers, teacher quarters, school books, transport facilities and other necessities to provide for 150,000 additional children. All these were to be provided and distributed

over the length and breadth of the country just within six weeks. The officers of the Ministry of Education, may be in their ignorance or for some other reasons said that it could be done, and some how or other accommodation would be found. What happened to the children, buildings, teachers etc. no one knows except the parents—they are scattered over the country. So they cannot protest, (en masse), the best they could do is to get along grumbling and complaining. We had commented in the *Tribune* previously what would be the outcome of such an adhoc decision. This was no prophecy. It was the obvious and it has happened.

During the budget analysis of expense estimates of the Ministry of Education, the theme of the argument to buttress poor performance was shortage of buildings, trained teachers, equipment, teaching facilities and a multiplicity of other reasons why the job be done. Debate reporting did not give one suggestion how to overcome these difficulties. So our problems will continue to mount up till the voters make up their mind to take a decision—"These boys are no good so let us try some others."

The *Ceylon Daily News* of 12.12.78 announced the commencement of the General Certificate of Education—(ordinary Level) Examination on the 12th. The number of students appearing for the first public examination in the scheme of primary and secondary education system was 239,000 at 1650 centres. The students in the cyclone stricken areas, numbered another 11,000. They would be examined on a later date. The total number of students appearing for this examination is 250,000. There has been a fall in these numbers—in 1975 it was 563,000, and in 1976,

434,871. Whether these numbers represent the capacity of the Examining body or the number turned out by our schooling machinery, there is no information. However these numbers represent the annual output of work-force into the labour market and for selection for higher Education. From 563,000 in 1975 the numbers have dropped to 250,000 in 1978. We have not been able to find the reason. But it should be of some relief to the Finance Minister who has to find the money to finance the scheme.

AS A PRELIMINARY to the announcement of the D-day for the examination, the same daily paper publicized the subjects a student could offer for the examination. They number forty subjects, ten subjects more than what a student for an equivalent examination could offer in an Advanced Industrialized country. Whether there are teachers and facilities in the country to teach all or some of the 40 subjects does not seem to worry the Education Department at all. We presume that these subjects are listed from International sources as possible subjects for teaching in schools and, the list is reproduced mechanically year in year out without variation. This is the kind of "streamed-line thinking" that has crept into the education administration.

The parents, bulk of whom are not so educated to understand what these subjects are, hope (in vain) that their prodigies will achieve something at the end. So they scrounge every financial resource they have to push the young hopefuls to their goals.

The goals are employment to add something to the family pot, or two years of study to move on to next step—General Certificate of Education—(Advanced Level; thereafter three to five years of higher or professional education. That is

of course if the marking of answer papers is not polluted by the seepage of the communal sewerage. At least, this is what the public gathers from the unarmed battle that was going on in the sectorial divisions in the Ministry of Education, University Dons, and the Ministry of Industries and Scientific Affairs. A lot has been said and done during the unarmed fracas to destroy the faith that has been built up in a "Dharmista Society" to which His Excellency the President is determined to lead us. How he is going to achieve this with some of his generals revolting among themselves is still his problem. It has been a game of throwing brick-bats to and fro between the warring sections and no suggestions have been put forward so far to stop the alleged kind of seepage that seem to undermine the confidence of the students and the examiners alike. So we have to carry these accusations to bed till we awake and decide what to do next.

BUT, IS THERE A FUTURE for the 250,000 students going through the ordeal of remembering what they studied and translating them into words and figures? How many of them will get through the examination? How many of them will acquire the necessary credits to qualify to proceed to the GCE Advanced Level? How many of the failures will opt to have another shy at the examination? How many will take to job orientated studies and training if any are available? And how many will be thrown into the labour market or qualify for the Rs. 50/- a month? These are pertinent and soul-searching questions the people of the country have a right ask.

Higher Education:— A pass with three credits in selected subjects is a prerequisite to get to the Advance Level studies and from there to further studies in seven

higher educational institutions. What they are going to be have been revised and a new setup has been announced in a news item in the *CDN* of 3.1.79. It reports that major changes in the system of Higher Education in Sri Lanka were introduced with effect from 1.1.79. So we start another year also with a "make believe" improvement in the education of our hopefuls. We did this last year with toddlers, this year we start with adults and with the same speed as was done last year. The announcement reached the Public on the third as to what was to be done on the first.

These changes include the establishment of six Independent Universities, a separate University Campus, and a University College. The six Universities are (1) Peradeniya, (2) Colombo, (3) Kelaniya, (4) Moratuwa, (5) Jaffna, (6) Sri Jayewardenapura. The new campus is the Dumbara Campus linked to Peradeniya University. The new University College is the Ruhuna University College linked to several universities—an increase of one over what was on 31.12.78. So there are eight Higher Education Establishments in 1979 instead of the seven we started the year 1978 with.

There are also changes in the location and naming of the seats of Higher Education. But in doing so some down-to-earth establishments have been sacrificed. How prudent this is, only time will disclose. The Polgolla Govt. Teacher Training College is to be handed over to the Dumbara Campus. In Ruhuna, a Govt. Technical College and a Teacher Training College are to be handed over to the Ruhuna University College. We guess that this step has been taken because the Government has, who knows a surfeit of trained teachers and mid-grade technicians in the country. We hope this is true

and not another "make believe" move.

The coverage of subjects is also very interesting. Judging from the weightage given to the subjects of so called "Humanities" we seem to have a surfeit of Technocrats, Doctors, Engineers, Surveyors, Scientists and such other disciplines a developing country needs in numbers. The subjects are Geography, History, Languages, Cultural Studies, Mathematics, Philosophy, Sociology, Economics, Pali, Sanskrit. With some reference to Science and Agriculture. Some consideration has been given to the sciences but they are just names because we learn that equipment and facilities necessary to make the teaching even of the few science subjects are not there. It is a repetition of what was done in January 78'. It is also interesting to note that the number of Departments in each University vary from 48 at Peradeniya Campus to 14 at Jaffna Campus. Some of these Departments may or may not be useful to a developing country like ours. But considering the fact that University Education is free, consideration should be to teach disciplines that can accelerate our over-all development programmes. We spend nearly seventy million rupees or so annually on University Education. How much of this expenditure is wasteful in relation to employment opportunities? Can the country afford to maintain a free liberal education policy at the university level? No one wishes to face the issue. It is not Politic.

This is another example of "a make believe system" in our so called "Educational Reforms". We started the last year on a similar note and now commence another year of reforms in a like manner.

NOW LET US LOOK AT THE NUMBERS that aspire for higher

Education. The total intake for higher studies is in the region of 6000, though none of the Campus are staffed and equipped to take in that number. This is what the authorities involved in teaching have disclosed. But our mania for universities is galloping away like an unbridled horse, while neglecting the supply of trained man-power needs of the country. This is obviously the result of a free Education Policy up to University level without a complementary scheme to divert the 'not-so-able student' to intermediate avenues. This is much more important to the country than graduates in Humanities.

The requirements to enter these "seats of learning" are passes in six subjects at the GCE (O) Level on and the same occasion with not less than three credits. If the 250,000 students now appearing for the GCE (O) Level fulfil these requirements, they have a chance to continue studies and sit for the GCE (A) Level—the qualifying examination for University entrance. Currently 28,000 students are "eligible" for admission to the Universities in 1979 but only 5058 students have been selected for admission to the present six Universities—The man-power wastage is 23,942 at this level of education around age group 18 plus. The country has spent around 24,000,000 rupees on grade 11 and 12 students to lead them to the unemployed pool. Should not these points be given extra weightage in formulating the Educational policies of the country?

The prospect is that about 5058 can find places in the six Universities. Out of this number only about 20% may be the qualified graduates who can get into a job at the end of university education the balance 80% may be considered educational wastage or re-

quires further training before filling them to a job. A pure Arts Graduate does not lend himself even for such Training. Can we not improve this situation, a situation arising from following a classical pattern of subjects for an arts degree? A correction seems necessary to meet the man-power needs of the country.

IN THIS CONTEXT, the need at the moment, is to freeze University Education in Arts and Humanities for some years to come, and increase the intake to Science, Engineering, Medicine and allied subjects needed to carry through the massive development programmes. Instead of handing over some of the Institutions for development of University education, expand, strengthen and multiply Institutions, for Technical Education and job orientated training facilities—These are the grades the country needs and the way the administration can make a sizeable dent into the unemployment problem.

Or another way out, if we may suggest, is to change the subject requirements for an arts degree. Include the following compulsory subjects to obtain a degree in Arts—Mathematics and Physics, or Applied Mathematics or Applied Science, or Chemistry and without practical tests in the relevant science subjects. The effect of this would be to arrest the flow into pure arts courses and those who get through with mathematics and one of the other compulsory subjects can be trained in a variety of mid-grade Technologies and thus increase their employment opportunities. In the design of degree courses the Department of Higher Education need not follow classical patterns. It will have to strike out on new lines to solve national problems. This is the need of the moment.

If we go further into the facts and figures of the Department of Education, there may be about 62,000 students sitting for the GCE Advance Level in 1979. In other words about 188,000 students may be the annual drop-outs, who will be seeking employment, or training to fit them for employment. Out of the numbers who reach the (A) Level and who may be successful to qualify for University entrance may be around 24,000. But the maximum number the Universities can take for degree courses in 1981—after the increased number of campuses may be around 6000, leaving a balance of 18,000.

Other Avenues:— The Law College, Religious Organizations for training in the propagation of their faiths, and Diploma courses in the Government and private Institutions where basic educational requirements for admission are GCE (O) Level or above, may be able to absorb about 2000 annually. Thus out of 62,000 students who sit for the GCE (A) Level around 8,000 students may be able to continue higher level education.

The disappointees in this group will be in the region of 54,000 students—or 87% of the students who appear for the GCE (A) Level examination, to end up in an educational cul-de-sac.

Thus in the final analysis there will be around 235,000 students with varying standards in Secondary Education and in a variety of subjects wanting training, or employment opportunities. What are the employment opportunities available for these in the Public and Private sectors? Can such a number be absorbed annually? Or what proportion of these numbers can be given employment annually? And what about the balance? Answers to these questions will be the magnitude of the problem

facing the country today as result of the Government's Educational Policies. Further to generate this number of disappointed, frustrated and desperate youths the Government spends around nine hundred million rupees annually to bring our children from the age group five plus to age group 18 plus. This expenditure represents an average of 88% of the total appropriation bill of the Ministry of Education.

SIR MUTU COOMARASWAMY—2

In The Legislature

by K. Arumainayagam

SIR MUTU COOMARASWAMY also reiterated once again that James D' Alwis and himself were the true representatives of the native population and if the Government would not accept the petitions and grant relief they may have to adopt other means which may not be acceptable and palatable to the so called paternal government. Whether the officials and the Government in Ceylon accepted the pleadings of Sir Mutu and James D' Alwis made on behalf of their countrymen or not, yet they were very zealous and open about their grievances and forceful in their arguments when the Queen Advocate tried to minimise the importance of the signature of the petitioners as the petition contained certain erases (this was inevitable at this stage as there were many who could not write their names). He queried as to "how then shall we bring home conviction to unwilling minds? Shall we hold monster meetings? Shall there be inflammatory speeches? Must there indeed be commotion and discontent, bloodshed and rebellion before the official minds can be

roused (Hear, hear from Messrs Alwis and Van Langanberg (Ceylon Hansard 1876/77 p. 86). He was obviously drawing on the experience of the rebellion of 1848. These arguments would illustrate Mutu Coomaraswamy's attempt to make the Council a replica of the British House of Commons, and would eventually lead to self Government. In fact he encouraged both the officials and un-officials, especially the native to consider the council as containing the nucleus of self government. (Digby W. *Forty Years in a Crown Colony* Vol. II pp. 164-165). Mutu Coomaraswamy's performances, as an unofficial member merits more than what J. R. Weiman pictures out in chapter three on the unofficials in *Our Legislature*, a work which is considered by many as a vivid description of the status of unofficials in the Legislative Council of the 19th Century.

The arguments advanced by W. Digby of the need for large measure of "Home Rule" and "Ceylon House of Representatives" based on the speeches made by the Ceylonese in the Legislative Council would prove Weiman's view of unofficials to be misleading. It should also be observed that though Mutu Coomaraswamy and James D' Alwis failed in their attempt to have the subsidies discontinued yet had the Governor to vote with them. In fact Governor Gregory himself has briefed Secretary of State against the continuation of the Grant. Besides Mutu Coomaraswamy's speeches, the campaign against disestablishment which commenced with the Public Meeting at Colombo Town Hall in November 1875, and the support extended to the agitation by *Observer* made the issue a serious matter. And when there was a change in the Government in England, Lord Kimberly of the Liberal Ministry was persuaded

to discontinue the subsidies. This was in 1880, a year after the death of Mutu Coomaraswamy. EQUALLY IMPORTANT was Mutu Coomaraswamy's criticism of the administration of the Northern Province. W. C. Twynam, the Government Agent unlike his predecessors, Dyke and Russel, had earned the wrath of Northerners, and this was further aggravated by the famine of 1876 and the outbreak of cholera in 1877. (See *Cholera Commission Report—Sessional Paper III-1877*). The famine was due to severe drought condition and cholera followed in its wake. The improper handling of this situation, (the number of deaths was alarming. Total number of persons attacked by cholera in the Northern Province was 18,891. Of this 9,759 succumbed to the epidemic) and shortage of seed paddy caused severe hardships to the people of the peninsula (*Advances of Paddy to Cultivators Ceylon Hansard 1877 pp. 37-39*).

Sir Mutu Coomaraswamy on the advise of Arumuga Navalar and several others took up the issue in the Council. Though Mutu Coomaraswamy does not mention anywhere that it was Arumuga Navalar who provided him the facts of this case, contemporary evidence shows that Arumuga Navalar was responsible for the agitation for seed paddy (letter by Arumuga Navalar in Tamil in *Lanka Nesan* Vol. I No. 22 under pseudonym Karunai) and the anti Twynam Campaign. (*The Administration of the Northern Province Ceylon Hansard 1877 pp 97-100; 102-103*). In fact Arumuga Navalar has mentioned that Coomaraswamy had performed his duty well by his people and it was largely due to these efforts of Mutu Coomaraswamy that Navalar came to support Ramanathan in his campaign to enter the Legislative Council on the death of Mutu Coomaraswamy.

In fact Ramanathan's nomination to Council was criticised on the same grounds. "How does it stand in the logic of Government that the Navalar who was the real embodiment in flesh and blood of the mal-administration question, is allowed to send his nominee to the Legislative Council? That nominee happening to be the nephew of Sir Coomaraswamy who mooted the mal-administration question in the Legislative Council." *Overland Examiner* June 17, 1879). Though this letter strengthens our case, it should be remarked that Twynam, against whom Sir Mutu brought a motion in the Legislative Council and had later withdrawn, in fact supported Ramanathan's candidature to the Legislative Council. Twynam in his annual report claimed that allegations against him were exaggerated by designing persons.

The Cholera Commissioners quite contrary to the expectation of the people, commended the efforts made by Twynam to contain the situation. But the people were not satisfied with the Commission. Mutu Coomaraswamy's protest did not carry much weight since during this period, it was the Government Agent on the spot and not the nominated unofficial councillors who were considered to be the true representative of the people.

THE ONLY TIME Mutu Coomaraswamy caused any annoyance to his fellow councillors was when he resumed his seat in the Legislative Council after his return from England in 1865. In November of the previous year unofficial members including John Eaton, who was acting for Mutu Coomaraswamy had resigned on bloc over the Military expenditure issue. This had led to the formation of the Ceylon League. Mutu Coomaraswamy was subjected to all manner of ridicule and derision for

not having withdrawn from the Council. This decision to follow an independent path marks an important stage in the incipient constitutional and nationalist movement of Ceylon. The Legislative Council was controlled by British residents in Ceylon and Anglo-Indian up to this period and the leadership was provided by them.

Mutu Coomaraswamy must have seen the futility of boycotting the Legislative Council on the military expenditure issue, for it was mostly a matter that affected the interests of those who engaged in the plantation industry. Secondly, as Michael Roberts observed, Mutu Coomaraswamy appears to have sized up the real nature of the movement. "The Governments contemplates with the unofficial in the Legislative Council and a section of the mercantile sector over military expenditure is 1864, which led to the agitation of the Ceylon league, presented a greater nuisance value; on the other hand, though a few Ceylonese were involved in the agitation, it was essentially a white "settler" movement (*Documents of the Ceylon National Congress and Nationalist Politics in Ceylon 1929-1950*, Vol. p. clxxx).

From now onwards it was Mutu Coomaraswamy and his nephews who could be considered to be the fiercest critics of the Government in the Council and some of Ceylon Leaguers soon changed sides in favour of the government. The private correspondence of some of these personalities bear sufficient testimony to this development. That Mutu Coomaraswamy's objections to issues raised in the Council were considered very seriously could be seen from the semi-official correspondence conducted between the governors of the day and the Queens Advocate Richard Morgan and it is not therefore

surprising that Coomaraswamy's dicta were very much esteemed in Downing Street. It may also be due to the fact that Mutu Coomaraswamy had been the personal friend of some of the high British politicians of the day who occupied Downing Street.

(To be Continued)

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THE TRUTH ABOUT MAHAWELI DIVERSION

And The Myth About Its "Telescoping"

by Satchi Ponnampalam

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THE INVESTIGATIONS into the possibility of diversion of the Mahaweli waters to irrigate the "dry zone" areas of the north and north-central parts of Sri Lanka could be traced to the early years of the present century. The demand for diversion had been agitated by local legislators and its feasibility has been studied by engineers of the Irrigation Department even in colonial times. The first concrete step of diversion, in a limited way, however, was effected with the completion of the Nalanda Reservoir Project by the Irrigation Department in 1957 effecting diversion from the Mahaweli Basin into the Kala Oya Basin. In the 'sixties, with the assistance of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) a comprehensive survey of land, water and power resources of the Mahaweli and the adjacent basins was undertaken and a Preliminary Report and Master Plan for its development was prepared in 1968. According to the UNDP

survey, the total water resources of the Mahaweli were six million acre feet capable of irrigating about 900,000 acres. The Master Plan envisaged the development of this 900,000 acres, which consists of 656,000 acres of new land and 246,000 acres of presently cultivated land and the generation of 507 megawatts of electric power. Of this 900,000 acres, 422,000 acres are in the Mahaweli basin and the balance 478,000 acres in the north-central, eastern and northern areas of the country. The Master Plan, as presented to the Dudley Senanayake's UNP government in 1968 divided the proposed development into 3 separate phases, to be spread over a period of 30 years at an overall estimated cost of Rs. 6,700 million in 1968. Each Phase was further divided into separate Projects and Stages, to allow for separate project planning, financing and construction. Phase I consisted of 3 Projects and Project I consisted of 3 Stages.

Although the UNDP preliminary report and the Master Plan was submitted to the Dudley Senanayake UNP government in 1968, nothing was done about it until on the 11th March, 1970 when the UNP government introduced a Bill in Parliament seeking to establish the Mahaweli Development Board vesting powers on the Board to implement the Mahaweli Diversion Project. This was even after Dudley Senanayake's announcement at a press conference in early March at Dedigama that Parliament would be dissolved on 25th March, 1970. The UNP government further sought to rush through the Bill in Parliament clearly in order to hold out the prospect of Mahaweli diversion as a reason for it to be returned to power at the elections. The opposition parties (SLFP, LSSP, CP), which had organized themselves in high gear for the ensuing elec-

tions were not prepared to concede to such sharp stratagems of the UNP government. In the marathon debate that ensued in Parliament, the opposition attacked certain clauses in the Loan and Credit Agreement entered with the World Bank (IBRD) as impinging on the sovereignty of the country. The debate in Parliament of the Bill created such a storm that one MP was named by the Speaker and had to be physically carried out. Following this, the opposition dramatised by a walk-out and the Bill was passed in all its stages at one sitting without the opposition. Dudley Senanayake and the then UNP accepted the UNDP proposal to phase out the Mahaweli diversion project over 30 years and in fact in the 1970 election campaign, the United Front politicians accused Dudley Senanayake, though unfairly, of wanting to divert the Mahaweli by mortgaging the country to the World Bank till the end of the century.

The Mahaweli diversion programme in Stage I Project I consisted in the diversion of the river at Polgolla, near Kandy by the construction of a 500 feet dam across the river, and carrying the water through a 5 mile long transbasin tunnel so as to discharge a maximum of 2,000 cusec (cubic feet per second) water to Sudu Ganga, a tributary of Amban Ganga. The water thus received by Amban Ganga is to be bifurcated at Bowatenne to divert 700 cusec to the Kalawewa system and the balance 1,300 cusec to the Elahera system in the east.

WHEN THE UF COALITION CAME TO POWER IN THE 1970 elections, the Mahaweli Programme was re-negotiated with the World Bank and the objectionable clauses of the Loan and Credit Agreement were deleted. Construction of stage I of Project I commenced in 1970 and completed by the end of 1976. Stage I of Pro-

ject I was planned to irrigate 134,000 acres, of which 117,000 acres were for the second crop and 18,000 acres of new lands. By the end of 1976, the total committed expenditure on the scheme was Rs. 557 million.

With such high investment in a stage of the scheme which has been completed, it is necessary to know the actual benefits that have accrued, even in the initial, although short space of time. According to the Central Bank of Ceylon, Annual Report, the results are as follows: "This diversion (Stage I) created a potential to double crop 134,000 acres of paddy lands under irrigation tanks. However, it has not been possible to cultivate a greater part of this acreage in yala 1976, largely due to low rainfall in the catchment area of the Mahaweli. In 1976, the asweddumized acreage under the existing irrigation network and the extent newly opened in the Kalawewa area amounted to 20,000 acres. Nearly, 55% of this acreage is for irrigated paddy cultivation while the remainder is for highland crop cultivation. However, owing to the delay of the North-East Monsoon and the low discharge of Mahaweli waters in 1976, farmers were unable to cultivate their maha crops in time and only about 3,000 acres of paddy and 2,000 acres of highland crops have been cultivated in the Kalawewa area during maha 1976-77."

Thus, in the first year of the completion of a specified and important stage of the Project, the results have been disappointing, and that too for lack of water in the catchment area to feed the headworks at Polgolla. Since the monsoonal rainfall pattern in the country, has been very erratic over the years, the very bedrock of the Project to be able firstly to receive the necessary water, and secondly in time to transfer to the Sudu Ganga basin is brought sharply

into question. In the 'seventies itself, there have been severe droughts in 1972, 1973 and 1976 and the waters in the Mahaweli during these years have been no more than a trickle.

WITHOUT BEING OMINOUS, it is necessary to reckon whether a project of such high capital investment is justifiable when the whole of the project is tied to the vagaries of weather. Because of "unexplained change in climate", the river Niger in Central Africa in 1973-74 hardly flowed from its bed, while its flooding was indispensable for the irrigation of crops in the Sahel region comprising Senegal, Mauritania, Gambia, Cape Verde, Mali, Upper Volta, Niger and Chad. Even in regard to the river Nile, it is said that "the behaviour of the Nile, in the irregularity of its supply of water over the years, is something of an enigma" (Tom Little in *High Dam At Aswan*, Methuen, P. 71). Amidst such vagaries of weather, it seems open to doubt whether the project, when all the millions of Rupees had been spent would not be the most prestigious and grandiose scheme undertaken in the country to satisfy the enlarged egos of certain politicians, who today vie with one another for the honour of having initiated, inaugurated or implemented the Mahaweli Scheme!

In the 1977 elections, the UNP made no mention of the Mahaweli Project. The UNP election manifesto said nothing in regard to Mahaweli "telescoping" or "accelerating." It was only after coming to power, suddenly at a meeting of ministers on 12th October, 1977 that the Prime Minister (as he then was) announced the decision to complete all three phases of the Project within

six years—during the time of the UNP government. That decision shocked every right thinking person genuinely interested in the development of Sri Lanka except the present bunch of UNP politicians and the servile bureaucrats, whose eyes are on salaries and not services, and who want to climb the ladder to be close to the powers that be.

The earlier decision to phase the Project over 30 years was taken by Prime Minister Dudley Senanayake in concurrence with the World Bank—IDA. This phasing was retained when the Project was re-negotiated. The chief reason for the phasing of the Project over 30 years was to make the Project self-financing after the initial first Phase of the Project.

This is seen in the following statement made during the time of the United Front government: "The Preliminary Report of the UNDP indicated that the total estimated cost of the Mahaweli Development Project would be in the region of Rs. 6,700 million. This was way back in 1968. Devaluation, the increased cost of capital goods, inflation, higher rates of operation following on the fuel crisis have together contributed to the estimated cost escalating to the region of Rs. 10,000 million. Even the pre-devaluation estimated cost is a measure of immensity of the Project. In view of the magnitude of the Mahaweli Development Project, the Master Plan drawn up for its implementation conceived the construction of the whole project in three separate Phases. Each Phase was further divided into separate Projects to allow for separate project planning, financing and construc-

tion. Each project, though interconnected was planned as a separate, viable unit. It was Government's (United Front) view that each project consisting of several stages, would start paying back shortly after completion; and that within a few years the initial investment would be amortized. The savings generated by the import substitution could then be invested on subsequent stages of the Project. On this basis, the construction span of the whole Mahaweli Development Project was phased over a 30 year period—"vide *The Dawn of the Mahaweli Era*, Department of Information, Ministry of Irrigation, Power and Highways, 1976.

IN VIEW OF THIS OBJECTIVE, the total investment was distributed so that the initial Phases required less and the bulk of the investment kept down for the third Phase. This is indeed a meaningful and laudable economic decision compared to the present UNP government's profligate extravagance in trying to finance the whole of the Project—presently estimated around Rs. 25,000 million, within 6 years; the whole of it including the domestic component by foreign loans and passing this enormous debt burden to the generations still unborn.

The 'telescoping' or 'accelerating' the Mahaweli diversion was simply a political decree handed down off the cuff with no technical or scientific support for its feasibility. It was a political decision, as if the task was monument building just to satisfy the alter egos of those in power. No regard was had to economic justifiability, resources availability or social accountability. The more important questions of social cost benefit in economic terms,

national economic priorities, sociological considerations involved in the establishment of new human settlements, ecological problems arising from the clearing of large tracts of jungle and a host of other matters which require careful monitoring, close analysis and detail study were completely ignored.

What was really sought to be achieved was publicity for a grandiose scheme which will keep the unsuspecting masses enthralled with new visions of an era of plenty and prosperity. What would in reality come out in the end was conveniently left out of reckoning.

Except to hold out that 'telescoping' would "solve" the unemployment problem, no other justification was made out for the decision to 'accelerate' the Mahaweli diversion. At the time the decision was handed down, an extent of 654,000 acres of jungle land remained to be cleared, stumped, levelled and ridged before settlers could be brought in. The 'accelerated' programme meant, doing all this at a rate of about 280 acres per day, throughout the 6 year period. This is not a realistic target, in fact an impossible feat for the Mahaweli Development Board (MDB) or the Special Committee with all the euclids, caterpillar earthmovers, bull dozers "horses and men" at their command.

This however, is not the important part of the task that has been decreed. At the time, the decision to 'telescope' was taken, only Stage 1 of Phase 1 was completed. Even in regard to Stage 1, although the construction projects had been completed and water made available, farmer settlement was behind time. In consequence, the total area cultivated for both seasons in the country in

1977 was only 2,046,000 acres, a mere 8,000 acres more than the 1976 acreage. Stage 2 land development started very slowly. Stage 2 Projects which include the extension of the left Bank channel of Minipe Anicut, the Right Bank Canal from Minipe anicut, the irrigation system to the Central Mahaweli Basin and the construction of the Victoria Falls 250 feet dam had not even been started. Stage 3 of Phase 1 consisting of the Moragahakande Multipurpose works and Phase 2 constructions involving the Randenigala dam, transbasin diversion structure to Maduru Oya and the building of the Channel System and the construction of the Welankudu dam had not even reached the stage of conceptualisation.

IN REGARD TO FEASIBILITY STUDIES AND ENGINEERING DESIGNS, these were available only up to Stage 1 of the Phased 1 Projects. The Stage 2 Projects and the major projects in Phases 2 and 3 had not even been put on the drawing boards. Engineering designs for Stage 1 Projects were done in consultation with Sogreh, a French firm of engineering consultants. Since foreign consultation is a pre-condition for projects financed by World Bank-IDA-"Aid" Consortium countries, engineering designs for the many dams, tunnels, power houses, reservoirs etc. will alone take more than 3 years and therefore the Mahaweli diversion cannot successfully be 'telescoped' within the 6 years.

Even on the basis of employment creation, both productive and parasitic, 'telescoping' bears no justification. On the basis of allocation of a family farm of 3 acres, the 654,000 acres of new land will absorb only 218,000 families, which would mean productive employment for 436,000 persons, on the basis of 2 workers

per family. The employment arising from constructional activities and land clearing would not be much because 'accelerated' completion would mean extensive use of machinery. In this sense, 'accelerated' development really conflicts with employment creation objectives. On a high estimate, the employment opportunities arising from even the successful 'accelerated' completion of the Mahaweli Scheme cannot be more than 500,000. This would mean a job-creation cost of Rs. 50,000 per head!

From the national economic standpoint, the Mahaweli Scheme is to be implemented for the purpose of increasing food production and the principal benefit that is intended to accrue is the resulting saving on foreign exchange that is currently utilised for the import of food items. The present estimated cost of 'telescoping' is Rs.25,000 million. Surprisingly, there are no estimates of the cost/benefit ratios for the Scheme as a whole. The MDB feasibility study for Stage 2 Phase 1 estimated the gross returns from its completion, as a farmgate value of Rs. 236.5 million per year by the tenth year. The total cost of Stage 2 was estimated at Rs. 765.9 million per year and the annual recurrent costs as Rs. 75 million.

Thus, annual recurrent costs for projects of this nature are very high, about 10 years cumulative recurrent costs exceeding the initial investment. In regard to the earlier Gal Oya Scheme the Evaluation Committee headed by B. H. Farmer found that the annual recurrent costs were Rs. 36 million whereas the annual value of production of both paddy and sugar cane was only Rs. 17 million. The Committee calculated an *ex post* cost/benefit ratio as 0.5 In terms of cost/benefit ratio, the Maha-

weli Scheme, according to the present policies for construction is likely to be much more unfavourable.

THE MAHAWELI SCHEME, at the present day high capital cost of imported technology and construction, bears no justification from the standpoint of national economic priorities. Before any resort is made at lumpy, high cost irrigation projects which have a long gestation period to extend the land frontier of cultivable area, national priority demands that maximum productivity be obtained from the existing area under cultivation by removing the inhibiting institutional factors, out-dated cultivation practices and the existing misuse of irrigated water.

The results of high cost reclamation of jungle lands, settlement of population of previously uninhabited areas for irrigated cultivation will have negative results if the existing levels of productivity and farmer performance are to be transplanted in the new areas, as has been the case under all previous colonisation schemes in the country. Self-sufficiency, and even a surplus over that in production in Sri Lanka can conveniently be achieved on the existing area under cultivation by abolition of the antiquated "ande" share-cropping system of land tenure and giving the land to the tillers, and also the "thattumaru" and "kattimaru" system of land ownership practices, redistribution of land over the optimum operational unit and by effective mobilisation of the farmers and the fields.

Land reform, in the sense of breaking up holdings of paddy lands over the optimum size is

vitaly necessary to increase productivity. In regard to paddy land ownership, the land reform exercise of 1972 under the UF government was a big fraud for only 18,407 acres or 1.2% of the total of 1,300,000 acres of the cultivated paddy land in the country came to be vested in the Land Reform Commission by the placing of a high ceiling of 25 acres by the Land Reform Law No. 1 of 1972. According to the 1962 census of Agriculture of the 570,000 holdings only 1% of the holdings were even over 10 acres.

SRI LANKA achieved 73.1% self-sufficiency in rice in 1970 and 73.4% self-sufficiency in 1974 by obtaining only one-third to one-half of the achievable potential of the new high-yielding varieties in use. If transplanting combined with row sowing, renewing of seed paddy every 2-3 years, intensified extension services and most importantly, judicious use of water by farmers and improved water management of the existing irrigation facilities could all be obtained, the national average yield will exceed over 80 bushels per acre and the country will emerge from a deficient to a comfortably surplus producer of rice in one year's time rather than having to spend Rs. 25,000 million of borrowed money over six years to reach the very same target. What is therefore really needed is organisation of farmers and the fields and not a capital intensive, high cost, eye-catching, white elephant, which the Mahaweli Diversion is bound to show out as when all the borrowed millions have been spent.

WE DO NOT NEED GRAND-IOSE SCHEMES AND PRESTIGIOUS PROJECTS AS LIVING MONUMENTS FOR POSTERITY TO REMEMBER THE "GREAT NATIONAL

CONTRIBUTION" OF RULERS. THE AGE OF PYRAMID AND PAGODA BUILDERS ARE ALL LONG OVER. LET US COME DOWN TO EARTH. PLANT OUR FEET ON THE TERRA FIRMA, THINK REALISTICALLY, AND DO THINGS WITHIN OUR OWN MEANS THAN TO SEEK PUBLICITY, FAMILY GLORIES, IMAGE BUILDING, PERSONALITY CULT, ETC WITH THE VAIN DESIRE TO LEAVE FOOTPRINTS ON THE SANDS OF TIME.

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ON LEARNING THE LAW—II

Changes, Personal Laws, Latin & Greek

by R. C. Thavarajah
Retd. Supt. of Police

THE JUXTAPOSITION of the two places I referred to is, by some quirk of coincidence, only physical. It has not been designed to emphasise what is conceptually antithetical.

The frequent changes in the law, both criminal and civils is another difficulty not only to students but also to lecturers, practising lawyers and Magistrates. The previous Government did away with the Criminal Procedure Code enacted in 1899 and revised in 1956. In its place, the Administration of Justice Law No. 44 of 1973 was introduced to achieve simplicity and uniformity in procedure, fairness in administration, the elimination of unjustifiable expense and delay. Some of the radical changes were the abolition of Non-summary proceedings in indictable offences such as murder, rape, and other serious

crime. More powers were given to the Magistrates and the Police in investigation of crime. Some of the sections of the old Criminal Procedure Code reproduced verbatim in the new Law. Whether the objectives were achieved is debatable. The present Government has scrapped the Administration of Justice Law No. 44 of 1973 and has re-introduced the Criminal Procedure Code. The same thing has happened to the Civil Procedure Code which was replaced by the Administration of Justice Law No. 25 of 1975. The present Government has passed the Civil Procedure Code (1978), Chapter 101 incorporating amendments up to 31st December 1977.

Law, which is a living science, is never static. Like everything else, it has to keep changing with the ever-changing world. This means changes and more laws. Even the great essayist who once held the office of Attorney-General during the reign of King James I, Francis Bacon said that he that will not apply new remedies must expect new evils. All this is logical. However, change for the mere sake of change is not a profitable exercise. A recent visitor, Sir Denys Roberts, Chief Justice designate for Hongkong, said that advanced countries like America, England and France never changed their legal structures when and as Governments changed.

A STUDENT IN SRI LANKA has the additional difficulty of mastering the personal laws which are too many. There are the Sinhala Law which consists of indigenous customs, canonical writings, practices and rites of Buddhism, Hindu Laws and customs, Sakyan and Mauryan customs, other Indian customs and the laws and customs which the original Sinhalese brought with them to Ceylon, the Thesawalamai brought to Ceylon by

the Malabar or Tamil immigrants from India and subsequently influenced by Hindu Law administered in the Northern Kingdom of Ceylon at the time of the arrival of the Portuguese in the year 1505, the Muslim Law which the Muslims who came to Ceylon brought and which was a portion of a very great system of jurisprudence known to Muslims the world over and the Laws of the Mukkuwars, the Chetties, the Parsees, and the Paravars. In no other country in the world do you find so many personal laws.

It is most heartening to know that the present Government is studying the feasibility of drafting one personal law amalgamating certain provisions of the Roman Dutch Law, Kandyan Law, Muslim Law, Thesawalamai and other laws relating to custody, legitimacy, and inheritance. The Law Commission recently called for public representations on the feasibility of drafting such a Law. Matters relating to adoption, age of majority, matrimonial methods, succession, are also to be examined.

MOST OF THE ACADEMICIANS who write books and treatises on the Law have a penchant for Latin and French phrases. This is understandable. The genesis of Roman Law, *The Institutes of Justinian* are in Latin. The French phrases survive from the time when French or rather Anglo-Norman was the language of the Courts and French was the language of the upper classes. The Non-English speaking students in Sri Lanka have the added disadvantage of having to get these phrases translated first into English and then into Sinhala and/or Tamil.

Some attempts at translations are not without humour. Dr. Williams refers to an English student, pathetically unfamiliar with Latin, rendering '*Animus Revertendi*' as meaning '*Transmigra-*

tion of Souls'. Not to be outdone by his English counterpart, a local candidate interpreted the maxim '*Ignorantia Juris non Excusat*' as '*Ignorant persons are now excused from jury service.*' I am also reminded of a very colourful personality in an outstation Magistrate's Court who used to do his utmost to impress the Magistrate, the fellow members of the Bar, the Police officers and the public with frequent use of Latin Phrases such as '*Doli incapax*', '*Ultra Vires*', '*Mens Rea*' etc.

One day, after the work was over, the Magistrate, a very cultured and well-read gentleman asked the "learned" lawyer the meaning of the words "*Honi Soit Qui Mal Y Pense*" which were on the Crest of the Royal Coat of Arms and the motto of the Order of the Garter, the highest Order in England founded in 1350 by King Edward III. This Crest used to adorn all Courts and other important State buildings before the Independence. The Lawyer excused himself by saying that he had lost touch with his Latin after passing the London Matriculation. "Your Latin could not have been very good, Mr. R. Those words are in French was the witty reply. A resounding silence ensued. There was no more Latin in Court after that.

Energetic and enterprising products of the University of Sri Lanka who have graduated in Law should be encouraged to prepare a complete glossary of all Latin and French legal phrases with translations in English, Sinhala and Tamil. The glossary should also give briefly the etymological content and relevance of these terms. This will not solely be of academic interest to the students of Law but also of value to the general reader and also those interested in the Law.

Library facilities should be extended to provincial towns where the latest Books on the Law will be made available to the external students. The non-availability of Law Books in Sinhala and Tamil should not deter students from their study of Law. The great Cicero (106-43 B.C.), who was influenced by the study of Jurisprudence chose the Law for his profession. In one of his Treatises "De Legibus" (On the Laws), he wrote: "Knowledge of the Laws of our country is a highly useful, and I almost said, essential part of liberal and polite education."

As the Laws are above Magistrates, so are the Magistrates above the people; and it may truly be said that the Magistrate is a speaking Law and the Law a silent Magistrate. The only snag is that sometimes some Magistrates may not be able to resist the urge to break the "Judicious silence which is always better than TRUTH spoken without CHARITY!"

Concluded.

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COLOMBO N.A. MEETING

Indian Communists Condemn Role Of Indian Delegation

by Bupesh Gupta

IT SEEMS the Minister of External Affairs A. B. Vajpayee led his team at the Colombo co-ordinating bureau meeting of the non-aligned movement to play the bodyguard role of the Egyptians, the Sadat men and not that of an upholder of the principles of the movement. Indeed, rarely before on such occasions has an Indian delegation behaved so spinelessly and sickeningly as at this Colombo meet.

Our foreign policy is supposed to be a "nationally accepted" policy and even the Janata rulers would swear by it. But this is precisely what was forgotten at the bureau meeting.

On the two major issues that dominated it—the issue of Egypt's proposed suspension and that of the Kampuchean representation—the Indian delegation virtually went with those who were bent on blackmailing and bullying the co-ordinating bureau. Some observers have described India's role as a "right rope walk". It was, in fact, worse—a plain capitulation to tactics of the blackmailers and bullies, as well as to the designs of their instigators in Washington and Peking.

None of those who had taken the correct stand on these two issues wanted to break or disrupt the non-aligned movement, neither Socialist Republic of Vietnam nor the Arabs loyal to their cause. Rather, it was because of their concern for preserving the unity of the movement, in the face of the most vicious provocations that the Colombo meeting did not break up. It will therefore not wash for the Indian delegation to make out as if it was guided by its anxiety to safeguard the movement. By its role the Indian delegation has ill-served non-aligned movement and our own country. It may seek kudos elsewhere, not in India.

Even this bullied Colombo meeting has had to admit in its official resolution that the Camp David accord and the so-called Egypt-Israel peace treaty are a violation of the decisions and resolutions of the non-aligned movement and the United Nations. Egypt may not have been named it should have been—but that does not make it any less guilty. That Sadat's Egypt is now unmistakably in a military

gang-up with the Americans and Israel is something which could not be clouded at Colombo. The US imperialists have been condemned by naming. Incidentally, the Colombo meet did not believe in the Carter administration's assurance about not increasing the US military strength in Diego Garcia and in the Indian Ocean as Vajpayee brazenly did when he was in Washington last month. But here in India even as the Colombo deliberations were going on prime minister Morarji Desai went out of his way and acted over the head of the Indian delegation, an unusual practice, to declare: "I have said that Egypt cannot be removed from the non-aligned movement, I have informed that if any attempt is made to do it, I would find it difficult to attend the summit."

IT SHOULD BE NOTED that for some time now the lobbying is going on, inspired by the Americans and their Chinese collaborators, for deflating the status of the forthcoming Havana summit. Morarji Desai's observation has echoed these lobbyists in addition to being a calculated encouragement to the blackmailers at Colombo. Indeed, what he said was in itself a long distance blackmail. Is that how the Prime Minister of India expected to voice our "nationally accepted" policy?

Small wonder, therefore, what the Indian delegation did on the spot. Those who demanded Egypt's suspension from the movement were quite justified. Sadat has not only betrayed the Arab cause but outraged the basic principles of the non-aligned movement and that, too, by directly heightening the tensions in West Asia and abetting the annexationist, expansionist and racist Israel on the one hand and the US imperialist and neo-colonialist drive, accompanied by

an intensified arms race on the other. The Indian delegation chose to pretend as a "mediator" between the betrayers and those who stood against it. For, the Indian prime minister of course this is all a "controversy" of which the wise man in New Delhi would like to "keep very clear". In truth this, however, is nothing but an attempt to get closer to Washington and Peking.

As a compromise the Arabs agreed to "refer" the question of Egypt's suspension to the Havana summit. But even this the Indian delegation did not support in order lest Cairo and its backers and supporters would be annoyed. That there is a vast friendly Arab world in which the sell-out regime of Anwar Sadat stands completely isolated was lost to view. The Indian delegation was seen in the company of Sadat's supporters like those from some African countries like Zaire and those belonging to ASEAN, who do the biddings of the US imperialists and Maoist rulers, not with Vietnam, Afghanistan, Cuba and others who struggled against the non-aligned movement being denigrated, discredited and weakened as a powerful instrument of fight for the cause of peace, national independence, international security and a new international economic order.

IT WAS A DISGRACEFUL SIGHT that Pol Pot's principal henchman Ieng Sary was seated at the Colombo meeting instead of the representatives of the new Kampuchean government headed by Heng Samrin. Here again the Janata Government brought comfort to the US imperialists and Peking rulers by having refused to recognize this government, which alone can lawfully represent Kampuchea. In one voice India had demanded the

recognition of the new government, and on the eve of the Colombo meet, this was repeated in a joint statement by 143 members of Parliament, many from the ruling Janata Party itself. But Vajpayee and his braintrust officials preferred to ignore the spirit of our national stand at Colombo. It remains to be seen how Parliament is going to treat this affront.

The Indian delegation displayed considerable enthusiasm for Pakistan's application for admission into the non-aligned movement. But it was tongue-tied over Islamabad's named intervention in support of the rebels to overthrow the democratic government of Afghanistan. Yet the Pakistan rulers should have been bluntly told to stop here and now this intervention which includes not only the offer of bases to these rebels within Pakistan territories (about 20 such bases are reportedly under the CIA control) but also training as well as equipping them with arms. Here Pakistan is acting as an agent of Washington and Peking like a partner in a multi-lateral military gang-up. Is this not doing what CENTO was expected to do? Even the binding multi-lateral character of the US-Pak military pact was glossed over.

The Indian delegation's ignoble role cannot be covered by the barrage of welcome verbal declarations in the official documents adopted by the bureau meeting. These are unanimous and even the blackmailers and filibusterers on the side of Sadat and Pol Pot have voted for them. For them, however, this is all a camouflage for undermining the basic principles of the non-aligned movement and for weakening it. Vajpayee, his team of high officials and the external affairs ministry must not be allowed to hide behind any such camouflage. They must

be given a dressing down for the part they have played at Colombo. India's stature has been clearly lowered.

Moreover, the stand of prime minister Morarji Desai and his government must be taken as a warning that India and the non-aligned movement may be let down at Havana, too, in this manner by the Janata Government. Between now and the non-aligned summit in September, let the public opinion be roused in this country sufficiently forcefully to prevent any capitulation on the part of the Indian government at Havana.

Parliament's monsoon session can play a valuable part in this regard. There must not be a moment's delay in recognizing the new Kampuchean government.

—New Age 17/6/79

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COLOMBO N.A. MEETING

Hanoi Welcomes Success

Hanoi, June 13, 1979

Nhan Dan, the official organ of the CP of Vietnam, today says the public paid more attention to the Colombo Conference than to any previous meetings of the Non-Aligned countries. The peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America followed the Conference closely because it laid the ground-work for the sixth summit to be held in Cuba.

On the other hand, the paper notes, the concern of the forces of imperialism and international reaction stemming from bad intention. During the Conference and prior to it, a vicious slander campaign was raging against the

Non-Aligned Movement. *Nhan Dan* continues by saying that the Non-Aligned Movement, developing insistently, has become a big force making significant contributions to the common struggle for peace, national independence, democracy and social progress and, for this, has become a target for frenzied attack by imperialism and international reaction who have introduced ambiguous notions into the Movement in an attempt to divert it from its anti-imperialist objectives. *Nhan Dan* says: "Beginning with a 'three world' doctrine which puts the biggest socialist country on a par with the ring leader of imperialism and blurs the line between socialism and capitalism, the reactionary clique in Peking has colluded with US imperialism in a front against the Soviet Union and socialism as a whole. Peking's supporters meanwhile, have tried to separate the Non-Aligned countries from the socialist community while sowing discord among the Movement to weaken it. The main thrust of their attack is aimed at Cuba and Vietnam, staunch anti-imperialist fighters."

Nhan Dan continues: "The enemies hate Cuba for firmly upholding the banner of socialism, for extending all-out support to oppressed nations in Latin America, Africa and Asia, and for firmly denouncing the expansionists in Peking as traitors to Marxism-Leninism and socialism. They have demanded a different venue and a postponement of the Sixth Non-Aligned Summit, and even questioned Cuba's qualification as a member. The enemies have frantically slung mud at Vietnam grossly distorting its friendship and co-operation with the Soviet Union and its support and assistance to the Kampuchean people against Peking's armed intervention and aggression and against the

Pol Pot-Ieng Sary clique. They try to impose on the Non-Aligned Movement the political corpse of the genocidal, fascist regime ousted by the Kampuchean people..

Nhan Dan recalls how the voice of justice resounded at the Colombo Conference, how the truth was made clear by delegates from Vietnam, Laos, Cuba, Afghanistan. The People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, Angola, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Jamaica, Guyana and other countries. "Divisive schemes," the paper says, "were thwarted by the correct stand taken by many delegations including the delegation of Vietnam to settle the Movement's internal affairs by seeking common ground and avoiding any imposition."

Nhan Dan says that this spirit of mutual respect helped bring about "important agreements contained in the final declaration including the decision to hold the Sixth Summit Conference in Havana in September and to settle then the question of Kampuchea's representation. *Nhan Dan* notes that in Colombo no one spoke in defence of the Pol Pot regime, while many countries condemned Peking for its recent aggression against Vietnam, for planning new military adventure against Vietnam and Laos, and for continued intervention in Kampuchea's internal affairs. Many delegates welcomed the close solidarity between the peoples of Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea and acclaimed Vietnam's active contributions to the Movement, the paper adds. *Nhan Dan* says that imperialism and Peking may have more than one trick up their sleeve, but their true colours will be seen through as the enemies of the Non-Aligned Movement. "The Non-Aligned Movement, never losing sight of its anti-imperialist objectives, will make a success of the Sixth Summit Con-

ference in Havana to further the goals of independence, sovereignty and prosperity of nations, and for peace and progress," *Nhan Dan* concludes.

—*Vietnam Bulletin*, 26/6/79

VIETNAM

West's Whipping Boy

by Edward Milner

TV documentary film maker who has recently been in the Far East

IT SEEMS UNFORTUNATE that the extensive reporting and comment on the plight of the "boat-people" from Vietnam concentrates heavily on the symptoms of this tragedy but not on the causes. Perhaps a more positive policy for the world community could be promoted if some of the contributory factors were better known. In 1978 there was an estimated shortfall of 4.3 million tons of grain (mostly rice) in Vietnam out of a total requirement of around 13.5 million tons. This amounts to a deficiency of over 30 per cent in the staple food of the people. At the same time there was a total aid cut by China, Vietnam's erstwhile major aid donor. One superpower which, in preceding years contributed many billions to the systematic devastation of large areas of the country, now contributes no aid—either as war reparations or as reconstruction aid.

Meanwhile thousands of acres of agricultural land and forest are unusable; their drainage patterns damaged by bombing, defoliated or poisoned by chemical warfare. During the Vietnam war, while much of the country-side was rendered uninhabitable, there were

massive migrations of people from the devastated villages into the cities in all the countries of Indo-China—Vietnam, Cambodia (now Kampuchea), and Laos. But while the peasants lost everything many town dwellers (and in Vietnam a large number of these were ethnic Chinese) did well out of the war. In South Vietnam and Laos, at least, the economy was booming. But it was based on imported money, imported luxury goods and trade in two local "products" drugs and girls.

"A main reason why most of them are coming is that they were too successful as capitalists to suit the communist designs of the government of Vietnam." But (perhaps) these people who were "too successful" during the war now pose a threat to a hard-pressed regime that is trying to redistribute what little wealth the country has. Few of the boat people seem to be ordinary Vietnamese peasants or "fishermen". These people are used to "better things". They supported the other side during the war—now they are being asked to tighten their belts in a starving country with no luxury goods.

All this doesn't mean that the Vietnam government's action is to be condoned (particularly the oppression of a racial minority which, though unfortunate, is all too common in countries under severe economic stress—as we know in the West) but the West might have more influence if it swallowed its pride and began seriously to provide funds for a major development programme in Vietnam.

It's probably too much to expect the American to do anything while public opinion still finds acceptable the images of Vietnam in films such as *The Deer Hunter*. Meanwhile "pressure is being applied to the Russian Government." But what about the Western govern-

ments who actively or tacitly assisted the hopelessly corrupt South Vietnamese governments before 1975, even when it became clear that they had little internal support? A number of other countries sent troops to fight, as well as the Americans; Australia for example.

But is there a hidden agenda? Vietnam seems to be the West's whipping boy for all troubles in the Indo-China region. The Tanzanians got rid of a murderous regime that was causing constant border friction, and was applauded. But when Vietnam acted in a strikingly similar way against Kampuchea, the result was widespread condemnation. Could it be that the West has mortgaged some of its principles, while setting up its enormous expansion of trade with China, and now goes out of its way not to offend Peking?

—Guardian, 11/6/79

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CARTER, BREZHNEV

Plan More Summits

by Alexander M. Sullivan

Vienna,

President Carter and President Brezhnev have agreed "to look for an opportunity to exchange visits," White House Press Secretary Jody Powell said on June 18. In a private ninety-minute meeting, the two Presidents "agreed to increase the frequency of their meetings," Powell said, adding that mutual invitations for visits to the United States and the Soviet Union were exchanged. Powell, briefing reporters on the concluding day of the Vienna summit, said Carter recapped the highlights of his private session with Brezhnev at

a plenary session of the two delegations.

Powell said the two leaders had agreed not to wait "for a situation of crisis or some event such as the signing of a treaty", as the occasion for another summit meeting. Additionally, the joint communique issued by the two governments called for increased contacts and visits between lower-ranking Soviet and American officials. Following the plenary session, the two leaders travelled to the Hofburg Palace for the signing of the SALT II agreement, and both left Vienna shortly thereafter. Carter was to report to Congress on the summit proceedings within hours of his return to Washington.

ONE OF THE US AIMS AT THE SUMMIT was to broaden the range of contacts with Soviet Officials, and to arrange meetings of the top leaders on a more regular basis. But Powell told questioners there was no proposal for a specific timetable for future summit sessions, nor was there an attempt to fix a date for the next summit. Carter told the concluding plenary session, Powell reported, that he and Brezhnev had agreed that the two countries, in their relations with third nations, "would refrain from actions that are a threat to peaceful relations" between Moscow and Washington. He said the two leaders had also agreed to continue their private correspondence to lessen the chance of misunderstanding. The President said he and Brezhnev found themselves "in substantial conformity in their general views on the direction of future arms control negotiations," according to Powell. The Press Secretary also said Carter termed his private session with Brezhnev, which took place at the American Embassy, "worthwhile" adding he was "grateful for the progress" achieved there and at the previous plenary meetings

the Carter-Brezhnev session lasted about thirty minutes longer than anticipated, and by agreement, the plenary session was cut short by that amount of time.

THE PLENARY SESSION focussed on Soviet-American bilateral relations, with Brezhnev listing areas of concern to Moscow, and Carter replying that because of the time limitation he would not respond in detail. He agreed to study the Soviet concerns, Powell said, and "when possible" to improve relations "would do so." The President said that when he felt there were things Moscow could do to improve bilateral relations, he would so inform Brezhnev.

Powell could give no details but acknowledged that the human rights issue was discussed in the private Carter-Brezhnev session. Noting there were "no real surprises" at the summit, Powell drew attention to the communique language on the disastrous nature of nuclear war and its declaration that both sides have a responsibility to prevent war and curb strategic arms competition. Powell called that the "seed" for the beginning of a co-operative relationship with Moscow. The communique, he said, is "noteworthy for its frankness." It does not, he said, "attempt to conceal differences on the Middle East and Africa" while reaffirming the necessity of arms control measures and stability. Powell revealed that the issue of the Soviet backfire Bomber, which has been a matter of controversy in the United States, has involved in some last-minute reconsideration by the United States. After an administration official had announced that the SALT II matters before the summit participants had been satisfactorily resolved, an examination of the record of discussions

of the June 16 sessions showed further assurances were needed. Powell said Washington "felt the assurances on the rate of production of the Backfire were not sufficiently specific."

Carter accordingly raised the matter again at the June 17 meetings, and after what Powell termed, "A lively exchange," Brezhnev gave the explicit statement that the production rate was 30 a year. Soviet Assurances on the Backfire, whose range is a matter of difference between the countries, are contained in a written statement given by Brezhnev. In an oral statement, Carter said the United States will regard infractions as a serious matter that could involve withdrawing from the treaty.

THE AGREEMENT provides that encoding of missile test flight data that impedes verification is banned. The terms of the telemetry provisions were agreed to by the negotiating delegations in Geneva and confirmed at the summit. Powell said there were "other discussions in that area" which the United States "believes to be positive in terms of their effect." He said he could not elaborate.

Powell said one of the advantages of having the SALT II documents made public is "that there is no longer any excuse for statements being made that are grossly in error or misleading." He said opponents of the Treaty have claimed that the United States would be dependent on the Soviet Union for providing telemetry data needed for verification. On the contrary, he said, "we know from experience what we need to verify and we will know if that (date) is encrypted" and thus a violation of the accord.

—USICA.

BRITAIN

Thatcher's Cabinet

—Titled Landowners And Boardroom Barons—

THE CHARACTERS assembled in Mrs. Thatcher's cabinet leave no doubt as to whom the Tory government will be representing. The list of ministers is like a roll-call of the rich and powerful. Mrs. Thatcher herself may boast of being grammar-school educated and "self-made"—brushing aside the wealth of her husband, who among other things sold his company to Castrol for a reported £ 500,000 in 1965—but she has certainly made up for any lack of breeding by surrounding herself with Old Etonians, ex-Guards officers, hereditary landowners, and big businessmen.

Only two of Thatcher's new cabinet did not go to "public" (i.e. exclusive private) school. Seventeen went to Oxford and Cambridge, and eight wine and dined in elite army messes (six former Guards, two former Cavalry). Five members of the cabinet come from the profession of the wealthy par excellence, the Bar (i.e., they are barristers, three of them QCs). THERE IS NO SHORTAGE of landed wealth, either. Lord Carrington (Foreign Secretary) inherited big landed estates in the Chilterns and Lincolnshire. Willie Whitelaw (Home Secretary) around Glasgow. Without exception, all Thatcher's ministers are wealthy, some with huge business interests. Some of the richest have bought themselves land: Peter Walker (Agriculture) has 400 acres in Shropshire (having just sold 300 more in Worcester). Heseltine (Environment) 400 near Banbury. Pym (Defence) 400 in Bedfordshire (with perhaps another 2000 spread among other members of his family).

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A brief look at the business interests and life-style of individual Tory ministers immediately shows how many million miles they are removed from working people. Perhaps the most provocative appointment is that of Lord Carrington to the Foreign Office—as a Peer he will not be answerable to the Commons. His own business interests, moreover—among his lucrative directorships have been those in Barclays Bank and Rio Tinto Zinc, two firms which profit enormously from Apartheid—make it extremely likely that he will push for a right-wing foreign policy, especially in areas like Southern Africa. Sir Geoffrey Howe, the new Chancellor, is already preparing his budget hand-outs to the rich. In the 1940s he opposed coal nationalisation, and more recently has been a member of the management council of the country's second largest private medical schemes, Private Patients Plan.

Sir Keith Joseph, Industry, the mad monetarist himself, claims to have once worked on a building site, but daddy founded the big building firm Bowis, and he himself once lived in a suite in Claridges, one of Park Lane's most expensive hotels. Another of Mrs. Thatcher's disciples who shouldn't be left out of this highly select list is Michael Heseltine, at Environment, the golden-haired capitalist hero. Now comfortably a millionaire through his shareholding in Haymarket Press alone, Heseltine previously made another fortune through property deals. Now surprisingly, he is one of the most zealous advocates of selling off council houses.

—The Militant, London.



NICARAGUA

Somoza's End In Sight

by Orestes Valera

THE HEAD of the murderous regime in Nicaragua, Anastasio Somoza, frightened by the military situation in the country resulting from the recent victories of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN), gave free rein to his paranoia and hysteria by launching an attack against everything that did not fit into his bloody plans. *First of all*, he denounced Mexico and the Mexican president, Jose Lopez Portillo, for having broken diplomatic relations with Nicaragua on May 20. *Then* he accused a group of Latin American presidents of "fanning the flames" as he put it. Later he charged the neighboring country of Costa Rica with having invaded Nicaraguan territory.

Somoza's present state of panic led him to call for an urgent meeting of the Organization of American States (OAS), request the implementation of the Inter-American Treaty of Mutual Assistance (IATMA) and call for the forces of the Central American Defence Council (CONDECA) to intervene. But his uncontrollable panic did not stop there. He sent his older son, Lieutenant-Colonel Anastasio Somoza Portocarrero, to Kansas, USA, to acquire arms, principally airplanes, and to recruit Yankee mercenaries.

At the height of his cynicism, the paranoid tyrant declared: "No matter how many pleas for peace and love in Nicaragua the Latin American presidents make, the fact is that there is a group of them that is fanning the flames and then tries to blame my government for being repressive." These charges were directed against the presidents of Colombia, Ecuador, Peru,

Bolivia and Venezuela who had expressed their concern for the dramatic situation in Nicaragua and called for the adoption of collective measures to put an end to the fighting in a joint declaration approved during the summit meeting of the Andean Pact.

MEANWHILE, with hundreds of young people joining the Sandinista forces, the FSLN stepped up its attacks in the northern, central and southern parts of the country, occupying towns and villages and inflicting heavy human and material losses on Somoza's National Guard. Rivas, Leon, Jinotega, Jinotepe, Managua, Masaya, Jigalpa, Matagalpa, Diriamba, El Naranjo, Siuna, Bonanza, Rosita and other Nicaraguan towns were the scenes of successful military operations by the Sandinistas, in what an FSLN communique described as a general offensive against the dictatorship.

Gripped by panic as a result of these events, the tyrants accused Costa Rica of invading Nicaraguan territory; he accused Panama, Venezuela and Colombia of sending arms to the Sandinistas; he accused virtually everyone. The Government of Costa Rica denied the invasion charges. The Costa Rican foreign minister told the press: "I am fed up with hearing such accusations." The ambassador of Costa Rica in Washington stated, "It is funny how the regime headed by General Somoza invents problems with Costa Rica every time there is a crisis in his country."

Frightened by the situation in Nicaragua and the successful operations by the Sandinistas, together with the universal condemnation of his regime, Somoza asked for a meeting of the discredited OAS to look into "foreign interference" in the internal affairs of Nicaragua. Somoza's cynicism knows no bounds. Could it be that the tyrant is going

to admit to the OAS that the present military regime in Nicaragua was spawned by Yankee military intervention in the country?

WILL HE ADMIT to the presence of CONDECA troops in Nicaraguan territory for the last several months, and that new forces are now concentrated along the border with Honduras, ready to fight against the people who are up in arms? Will he admit that to support his dictatorship, planes from El Salvador are unloading war material in Nicaraguan airports? Will he admit that the bloody National Guard is working with Israeli arms and Israeli advisers? Will he admit the presence of a war cruiser, presumably from the United States, shelling the Sandinista positions in the department of Rivas, helping the National Guard to kill the people and destroy their homes? Will the tyrant admit before the OAS, to the hundreds and hundreds of murders that the regime commits, to the fact that the Nicaraguan people have lost almost 100,000 of their best sons and daughters since the United States put the Somoza family in power over 45 years ago?

Swelling the chorus of Somoza's lackeys is the vice-president of the Nicaraguan Congress, Luis Pallais, a relative of the dictator. He said in Washington that "the United States must take action in Nicaragua before it's too late" and that "although Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras are presently maintaining a neutral stand, they are preparing their military forces." Somoza's panic is reaching ridiculous heights. Making a dramatic call to all Nicaraguan citizens to take up arms "in defence of national sovereignty," the tyrant admitted that the country is facing "a critical situation."

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SRI LANKA CHRONICLE

June 17—June 23

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

CDN—Ceylon Daily News; CDM—Ceylon Daily Mirror; CO—Ceylon Observer; ST—Sunday Times; DM—Dinamina; LD—Lankadipa; VK—Virakesari; ATH—Aththa; SM—Sijumina; SLDP—Sri Lankadipa; JD—Janadina; SU—Sun; DV—Dava; DP—Dinapati; CM—Chinthamani; WK—Weekend; RR—Riviresa; DK—Dinakara; EN—Eelanadu; IDPR—Information Dept; Press Release.

SUNDAY, JUNE 17: Despite the radical alteration of the pricing structure of petroleum products last week, the Ceylon Petroleum Corporation will continue to operate at a monthly loss of about Rs. 11 million; while this is a great improvement on the loss of Rs. 98 million per month the CPC was carrying, informed sources said that it was imperative that the corporation presents itself to the international financial community as a viable entity to obtain the necessary funding for the giant hydro-cracker project. A cross-section of Sri Lanka's eminent scientific personnel will meet the President, Mr. J. R. Jayewardene today with the two visiting Sri Lanka scientists Dr. Cyril Ponnampuruma and Prof. Asoka Mendis for final discussions on the proposal to establish an Institute of Fundamental Research in Sri Lanka. Customs authorities who bared a seven million rupee textile racket recently where forged documents, alleged to be from a foreign embassy in Sri Lanka had been used to claim diplomatic immunity, are now investigating possible foreign connections in the case—SO.

A dramatic decline in the incidence of malaria has been observed last year, according to the Superintendent of the Anti-Malaria campaign; in his administration report for 1978 he states that in 1977 out of 954,756 blood films examined 252,460 cases were positive; in 1978 out of 968,327 blood films examined 69,685 cases were positive. Mystery surrounds the import of 14 super-luxury cars that arrived in Colombo Port last week; these vehicles are of the latest Peugeot 604 model, which was introduced in 1976, it is not known to whom these vehicles were consigned and how they could have been purchased as they were far above the 1500 cc capacity permitted to be imported—ST. Colombo is likely to be the venue of a meeting of Asian Foreign Ministers to map out the lines on which a representative Asian grouping should be established; with several Asian nations responding favourably to a Sri Lankan proposal for such a grouping, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has initiated diplomatic contacts with the governments of these countries. Non-aligned countries are to formulate a programme to strengthen co-operation in the field of tourism amongst members as well as with other developing countries—WK. The Government has decided that in future all complaints made to any police stations will have to be entered in the language in which the complaint is made—VK. Alcohol oil will be introduced to the local market shortly; 20% of the country's petrol requirements could be saved by introducing Alcohol oil—SLDP. The Government is considering increasing the bus and train fares. A research federation consisting doctors, rebirth researchers, demonologists etc., are to do research to see whether one could make dead people live again—RR.

As thousands of skilled and trained workers leave the Middle East the possibility of government ban or a restriction, has increased as there is a great shortage of skilled labour in the country to complete development projects—SM.

MONDAY, JUNE 18: Delay by the Tea Commissioner's Department to meet the Government's subsidy under the guaranteed price scheme for purchase of bought leaf could lead to a crisis because of the serious problems it has caused private factory owners, trade sources said. The LSSP Leader Dr. N. M. Perera flies to London tomorrow, for medical attention; he will be accompanied by his physician, Dr. U. T. Vitharana. President J. R. Jayewardene yesterday told a group of eminent scientists that the proposed Institute of Fundamental Research in Sri Lanka would not harm any of the existing research Institutes or Universities. A meeting of the Government Medical Officers' Association yesterday decided to appeal to President J. R. Jayewardene to help prevent assaults on doctors while on duty; this is a sequel to several incidents of assault on, intimidation of and threats to doctors which had occurred in the past few weeks—CDN. The Sri Lanka Central Transport Board loses seventy cents on every kilometre that its buses run following last week's price hike of auto-diesel and other petroleum products; a top SLCTB official said that the Board operated 1.5 million kilometres a day and suffered a loss of Rs. 1 million a day. There has been a sharp decline in the export of gems in the last few months; according to Customs Intelligence reports there has been a big spurt in the volume of quality gems smuggled out of the island—CDM. The proposed closure of petrol filling stations continuously for two

days—Saturdays and Sundays—will affect some key sectors of the economy and the life of the community; among the areas mainly affected are the tourist sector, transport of food items and the operation of taxis; many in these sectors felt that the closure should be for one day only. Recent interrogation by the Police of suspected terrorists who operate in the north has revealed that the activities of a major terrorist organisation in the area have been disrupted by the arrest of an individual, who is believed to be the "brains" behind many of the operations. About 1000 volunteers observed a hunger-strike satyagraha at Kaithady junction yesterday; the hunger-strike satyagraha was organised by the Hindu Youth League and Chavakachcheri Hindu Organisation as a mark of protest against caste-discrimination in the north—SU. Talented Sri Lankan scientists, inventors and those with proven ingenuity will be recognised by the state and presented with Presidential Awards soon; these awards will be made possible under the Sri Lanka Inventors and Incentives Law, the draft of which was approved by the government last week—CO. A proposal is being considered to instal a Radio signal scheme to prevent bank robberies; this proposal was discussed at a high level conference last Thursday with a view to giving protection to state and commercial banks in the country—DP. Police is to launch a scheme to give prospective bus drivers a good training in bus driving before they are recruited. Sri Lanka customs has set up a separate unit to detect drug smuggling in to the country—DM. The Sri Lanka army is taking steps to give all Army personnel a commando training. New laws to give lashing to pick pockets are to be announced shortly—LD. The government is

considering increasing price of kerosene oil; a rationing scheme will be introduced for kerosene oil—DK. The CTB is to give permission to transport people using any kind of vehicle on any route; this was another step by the government to hand over the transport system to bus mudalalis—ATH.

THURSDAY, JUNE 19: The Family Planning program in Sri Lanka had so far not reached the rural people who really needed it; Dr. Ranjit Attapattu Minister for Colombo Hospitals told a seminar on population for medical personnel and University staff yesterday. President J. R. Jayewardene told a public meeting at the Paramananda Purana Temple premises, Kotahena, that to his mind, the Buddha was the greatest being who came upon this earth and, thanks to the doctrine he gave and which Sri Lanka had accepted for 2,500 years now, this country was the most peaceful and happy place to live in. The country's cobbler population, many of whom have the skills to turn out exquisite leather products will be adopted by the Ceylon Leather Products Corporation under a special scheme. The Prime Minister, Mr. R. Premadasa, will preside over a people's Rally of re-dedication to the service of man on June 24 at the model village Sucharitagama in Pothupitigama, Anuradhapura—CDN. The Cabinet has decided to introduce work norms in all government offices at the level of clerical and allied grades in order to ensure a reasonable output of work continuously; the work norm for each officer will be determined through consultation between him and his staff officer in a manner acceptable to both—CDM. The Ministry of State is examining the possibility of commissioning an international public relations agency to counter anti-Sri Lanka propa-

ganda abroad Minister de Alwis said yesterday; the main area of concern for the Government, it is learnt, is the current campaign launched by sympathisers of the Tamil United Liberation Front in some world capitals. Commodore Asoka de Silva has been appointed Chief of Staff of the Sri Lanka Navy; he will assume duties on July 1. The United States of America, Britain and India have agreed to provide Lankans with post-graduate training facilities once the Institute of Fundamental Research is established here—SU. The City Police will work out a strategy to combat burglaries in the city which have reached alarming proportions during recent months, especially during the past three weeks—CO. Students of the Jaffna Campus staged an unauthorised protest march against casteism through the streets of Jaffna; even professors participated—VK. A one day fast was held in Kaithady to protest against the casteism prevalent there—DP. The Ministry of Public Administration and Home Affairs has decided to set limit on overtime allowances of government department drivers. Sri Lanka space scientists Cyril Ponnampereuma said that 10 moons not known to us before have been found by US spacecrafts. The Sri Lanka cricket team recorded a historic win when they beat India by 47 runs in a Presidential Cup cricket match—DV. A proposal has been put forward to the Colombo Municipal Council to open a cart service to transport people and a hand cart and bullock cart service to transport goods to save oil; this proposal has been put forward by the Chief Organiser of the SLFP in the Colombo Municipal Council—DK. The Ministry of Agriculture etc., has requested permission from the government to increase fertiliser prices by 65% if fertiliser is to be lifted and if not lifted to increase prices by 15%.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 20: Norwegian scientists who have just completed a two-month study of Sri Lanka's fishery resources say that Sri Lanka must concentrate on exploiting resources closer to the shoreline and at the bottom of the sea rather than use large trawlers going far out to the sea. Mr. H. R. Fernando President, Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry who has just returned from Seoul said yesterday that industrialists and business entrepreneurs in Korea were interested in industrial ventures in Sri Lanka. The current 9 Sri series for motor vehicles has reached the 5,500 mark within three months since it began in late March this year. Threats of devastation by cyclone, are sounded so often that the Insurance Corporation of Sri Lanka has introduced a new insurance coverage against cyclones; called the Cyclone Storm, Tempest and Flood Insurance, this new type of Insurance is an extension of ICSL's present fire coverage—CDN. Recommendations that will put conservation of energy on a national emergency footing have been made by the special Energy Study Committee headed by Mr. James H. Lanerolle, Secretary, Ministry of Power and Highways on conservation of electrical and petroleum energy. The government has decided to allocate nearly Rs. 320 million annually on the development of State-owned tea industry. A high-yielding coconut species that can produce 800 nuts a year compared with the normal 40 nuts, has been developed by an amateur researcher into coconut plants, Mr. Claude Perera—CDM. A big clampdown on oil consumption in the state sector is in the offing; it is to come in the form of drastic cutbacks on transport operations and other activities which consume fuel. President J. R. Jayewardene called on Dr. N. M. Perera once again last

night, a few hours before the latter was scheduled to leave the island for medical treatment in the United Kingdom. All students awaiting results of GCE ordinary and advanced level examinations will have to do compulsory national service during that period in the future. President J. R. Jayewardene is to make a personal appeal to Britain's new Premier Margaret Thatcher to allow landing rights at Heathrow Airport for the new international carrier Air Lanka—SU. More new students will be selected for admission to Universities at the end of this year; in accordance with this, all approved universities will be opened in October—VK. Five ships carrying 484 vehicles to Sri Lanka are expected to arrive in the Colombo harbour shortly. Japan has agreed to provide Rs. 300 million grant to Sri Lanka for setting up the national TV Net work—DV. The President has ordered the Minister of Education to an investigation in to the transfers of teachers; a four member committee has been appointed for this purpose. The CID team investigating a recent fire that destroyed the Welisara Milk factory suspects that this was sabotage by a group of people to disrupt the government. The SLFP is threatened with destruction as two groups of senior members of the party disagree on a recent proposal that SLFP should unite with left wing parties according to SLFP sources, a former top Cabinet minister said the party could divide on this problem in the future as it has not been solved yet—LD. The Ministry of Higher Education is taking steps to provide students who pass the GCE(A/L) but are not selected to the University with facilities to continue their higher studies. Selected degree courses will be introduced in public and private schools that have facilities for higher studies; the costs of

holding these courses will be met by the Ministry—DM. Although the government mass media announced that millions of rupees worth of aid has been received for the Mahaveli Project from foreign countries, the Mahaveli Development Ministry statistics reveal that only Rs. 530 million was received up to the 31st of last month. The expenditure for the accelerated Mahaveli project was initially calculated at Rs. 15 billion by the Government but now with the oil price increase it has been calculated that the project would cost Rs. 20 billion—ATH.

THURSDAY, JUNE 21: A Ministerial sub-committee which examined the problems of private non-fee levying schools has recommended that these institutions be given State assistance; these schools will receive a State grant of about 70 per cent of the funds needed to maintain them if the government accepts a recommendation made by the seven-member sub-committee chaired by the Education Minister, Dr. Nissanka Wijeyeratne. The demand for push bicycles has increased following the oil price hike last week but dealers do not have the two-wheelers to meet it; assembly lines maintained by some reputed firms in Colombo where they turn out the bicycles from components imported mainly from India and Britain are idle. The Indian High Commissioner in Sri Lanka Mr. Thomas Abraham will present a Buddha Image of the Gupta period to the Mahabodhi Society of Sri Lanka at 5 p.m. on Wednesday June 27. Taxi drivers claim the recent oil price increase has pushed taxis off the roads; since petrol shot up from Rs. 20 to Rs. 30 a gallon and taxi fares were correspondingly adjusted from Rs. 6 to Rs. 6.50 per mile, taxi drivers say it is now no longer possible for them to drive around in search

of hires—CDN. Property developers who undertake largescale building operations on Colombo City sites selected by the Urban Development Authority will soon enjoy major tax concessions on their investments similar to those given the hotel industry. The Government will soon impose a ceiling on mileage on the use of official cars by its employees for private purposes—CDN. There will be no closure of petrol filling stations during week-ends from July 1; the Cabinet yesterday rescinded its earlier decision to this effect. Agricultural Development and Research Minister E. L. Senanayake has accepted an offer of West German financial assistance to settle 100 families for the exclusive growing of spices. Government is likely to set up a public cum private sector company to manage the affairs of the Independent Television Network—SU. The government has decided not to increase bus and rail fares immediately although the price of diesel and petrol have gone up—VK. A Fisheries harbour will be completed in Myliddy before the end of the year according to the head of the Fisheries Harbours Corporation. A large number of imported cars are lying in Private commercial establishments without being sold—DP. The police has found out that the new group which terrorised the north has spread its activities to the eastern part of the country as well; a top leader of this group was taken in to custody by the police recently—DM. Disagreements between members of the TULF has surfaced because some members allege that the TULF is attempting to form the Tamil Eelam with the aid of the top castes only and ignoring the low castes. The World Bank will give aid to Sri Lanka to buy 3000 bus chassis—LD. A Swedish firm has said that factories set up

by most of the foreign firms in the FTZ are constructed in a way where they could be dismantled and shifted to another country if necessary; this is because they fear that if there is a government change the new government could change its policies regarding the FTZ which could affect the companies operating in the FTZ—DV.

FRIDAY, JUNE 22: Principles of private non-fee levying schools yesterday hailed the government's decision to give state assistance to their schools. There has been a 50 per cent drop in application to import motor vehicles in the last few days following the oil price increase, the Department of Import Control said yesterday. President J. R. Jayewardene said yesterday that very soon elections to rural bodies would be held after which government would take steps to decentralise the local government system by the formation of development councils under the democratic process; President Jayewardene was addressing a gathering at the Sri Lanka Foundation Institute in connection with the handling over of the directorship of the Foundation to a Sri Lankan Dr. D. Wesumperuma. The first National Film festival for the President's Awards will be held on July 27 at the Bandaranaike Memorial International Conference Hall, under the patronage of President, J. R. Jayewardene who will personally present the awards—CDN. The idea of establishing an Asian Group of nations as conceived by Foreign Minister A. C. S. Hameed, is not merely to gain economic advantage but also to ensure security and stability to all countries in the region; according to diplomatic sources, the Sri Lanka-sponsored move has wider ramifications than the concept of the formation of an economic grouping to bargain from a position of strength with the Western powers.

The Manila based Asian Development Bank today approved a supplementary loan of three million US dollars from its special funds resources to the Urea Fertilizer project at Sapugasganda in Sri Lanka—CDM. The Cabinet last week gave approval for the introduction of a tough new law to deal with terrorism and separatist movements; with the introduction of the new law, the Government is to repeal the Proscribing of Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam and similar Organisations Amendment Bill. The Government Business Undertaking of Independent Television Network will be run with 51 per cent State participation and 49 per cent private sector participation, government decided yesterday—SU. The land problem is a national problem in the country and we will grant land to the 80,000 landless people as well as help people to utilise and develop agricultural land, this is the policy of the government said the Minister of Land, Land Development and Mahaveli Development, Mr. Gamini Dissanayake in Parliament yesterday—VK. The prices of all medicines have been increased by 40% from yesterday—ATH. The Human Rights Society has protested to the government for extending the bill to prosecute the Tamil tigers and similar Organisations from 1 year to two years—JD. The government is considering increasing the price of oil once again; the decision will be taken after the OPEC meeting this month—DK. Criminals found guilty by courts of bank robbery, and other robberies will be sentenced to 14 years imprisonment and 24 lashes; this will come into effect from the 2nd—LD. The government is taking steps to increase the fixed price for paddy by Rs. 15 to Rs. 20 before the yala season—DV.

SATURDAY, JUNE 23: The first post graduate Medical Institute of Sri Lanka housed in a special building constructed at a cost of Rs. 1.5 million at the Colombo Medical Faculty premises will be opened on June 30 by the Minister of Health, Mr. Gamani Jayasuriya. The Rev. Mathew Peiris, former Vicar of St. Paul's Church, Kynsey Road, Colombo who was produced from the remand prison yesterday before Mr. Leslie Abeysekera, Chief Magistrate, Colombo was further remanded until July 3. Former Indian Premier, Indira Gandhi said in New Delhi on Friday the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) was responsible for toppling governments in Bangladesh, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. The Narcotics Bureau yesterday seized 48,700,000 grains of ganja hidden on top of a ceiling in a house in Pugoda—CDM. Large Scale mechanised mining of precious and semi-precious stones in the Mahaveli development areas is likely to begin shortly following the allocation of land to eight foreign mining firms. The Government has directed two Ministers to counter the smear campaign of the Tamil United Liberation Front; while Foreign Minister, A. C. S. Hameed will be in charge of the Government's propaganda campaign overseas, Minister of State Anandatissa de Alwis will handle it locally—SU. The government has decided to set aside Rs. 300 lakhs for the development of Tamil areas; the treasury has agreed to grant this in 1980 in addition to the usual allocation for the districts. Action has been taken to hold classes in schools on the evils of bribery and the punishment accruing from it; the Bribery Commissioner's Department, Police and Educa-

tion Ministry will work for this together—DP. The Ceramics Corporation has increased the price of ceramics for the fourth time by 70% blaming higher oil prices for increase in cost of production—ATH. The Minister of Youth Affairs and Unemployment has informed the National Apprentice Board not to take into consideration letters given by MPs and to recruit new members on merit—LD. A member of the Political Bureau of the JVP Mr. K. A. Sarmaratne said that the JVP does not receive Russian rubles as some quarters allege but they would welcome it if they are given Russian rubles—DK. The Ministry of Power and Highways is taking steps to accelerate the repairing and broadening and constructing new roads; the world bank has provided a loan of Rs. 247 million for this purpose and a team of experts are due to arrive in the country shortly to advise on this project where modern techniques and equipment will be used—DM. The Ministry of Agricultural Development and Research, is taking steps to reduce the prices of fertilizer used for Tea, rubber and coconut cultivation; this will be done by increasing the present fertilizer subsidies from 65% to 80%. Rs. 150 million worth of foreign textiles will be sold by Salusala at a fair price shortly. 350 new buses will be put into service shortly—DV.

NEXT WEEK

- FROM THE TRIBUNE
—25 Years Ago
 - A SCIENCE POLICY
—For Sri Lanka
 - SINHALA MUSIC
—Classical
 - COLOMBO MEETING
—More Comments
-

Confidentially

On Investigative Journalism

IS IT NOT TRUE that the Government-owned *Ceylon Daily News* has, at last, realised that the best way of helping the Government to sustain its credibility is to publish all the news—specially those which administrators, bureaucrats and most politicians like to hide? That it is better to hang out the linen no sooner it gets dirty than keep it hidden until its stink brings disrepute to the Government? That on June 18, the *Ceylon Daily News* had a small boxed item on its front-page entitled OFFICIAL SACKED? That it read: "A senior official has been sacked and six others interdicted following alleged large-scale frauds, abuse of power and unauthorised conduct in the Sri Lanka State Trading (Tractor) Corporation; the alleged malpractices are being investigated by the Frauds Bureau, Corporation Division, informed sources said yesterday?" That what is important is that this story should be followed up? That in these days most daily newspapers seem to have forgotten that the real value of a story is when it is followed up to its logical conclusion? That in this case, the *CDN* should put its hounds to carry out a full investigation as to why this "senior official has been sacked" and why "six others (were) interdicted?" That the description "alleged large-scale frauds, abuse of power and unauthorised conduct" savours of euphemistic evasion in order to save the hides of those who should be drawn and quartered? That it is not enough to say that the "malpractices" were being "investigated by the Frauds

Bureau (Corporation Division)?" That even if it is premature to mention names, it is never too early to mention the allegations in specific terms, the nature of the malpractices in detail, the instances of the abuse of power and unauthorised conduct in concrete terms? That it is not enough to leave matters in the hands of the Frauds Bureau? That the Bureau has to be prodded into constant activity? That public vigilance should be alerted to ensure that the matter was not hushed up? That the sacked officer—if he was a catcher of a VIP—would be appointed to a post in another Corporation unless his name and crime in this case are exposed? That the six "interdicted officers" may be reinstated (with full back pay) and promoted after being kept in hibernation for a time because they may be in a position to tell tales about higher-ups who did not fall into the net this time? That what is essential is that the whole corrupt exercise should be thoroughly investigated by the Press and exposed to the public gaze? That the Frauds Bureau works in secret and silence and by the time the few policemen in that Section get round to investigating the particular crime, the evidence will be dead cold and everybody would have lost interest in the matter? That for this reason a heavy burden is cast on the press to investigate the matter in the way a newspaper is entitled to do and publish all the news fit to print within the law? That the reading public looks to the *Daily News* to investigate the malpractices, abuse of power and unauthorised conduct in the Tractor Corporation? That readers will remember that many months ago *Tribune* had raised some queries about the purchasing policies of this Corporation? That the administration had resorted to quibbles and took shelter behind a "smoke-

screen" (consumer preference) to stifle an investigation? That fears are being expressed in knowledgeable quarters that the "sacking" of one senior official and "interdicting" six others is only another way of evading a full and thorough investigation of the affairs of the Corporation by serving out to the public seven sacrificial scapegoats?

That there are many other matters in this country which must be investigated by the Press? That one public sector that cries aloud for investigation is the plantation industry? That stories of corruption, malpractices, abuse of power and unauthorised conduct are so numerous in the JEDB, (Janatha Estate Development Board) for instance, that *Tribune's* mail is overburdened with reports of instances of such corrupt practices? That under the heading "Appointment of Junior Superintendents to Senior Posts overlooking Senior Superintendents", *Tribune* has a formidable list where favouritism and nepotism have brought discontent and disaffection among the managerial staff? That it is premature, at this stage, to mention names of superintendents (senior and junior) and the names of their patrons? That no sooner the respective trade unions take up the matter and publicise concrete instances, then it will be time enough for the newspapers to give a hand? That in the meantime the managerial staff in the JEDB and the SPC (State Plantations Corporation) are girding their loins to fight a big battle about the contracts they have been called upon to sign and the terms and conditions of employment being imposed on them? That this was a matter that had gone up to the President and it is now alleged that bureaucrats were subverting the President's ruling?



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