

# The SEARCHLIGHT

Price -/25

VOL 39 NO. 16

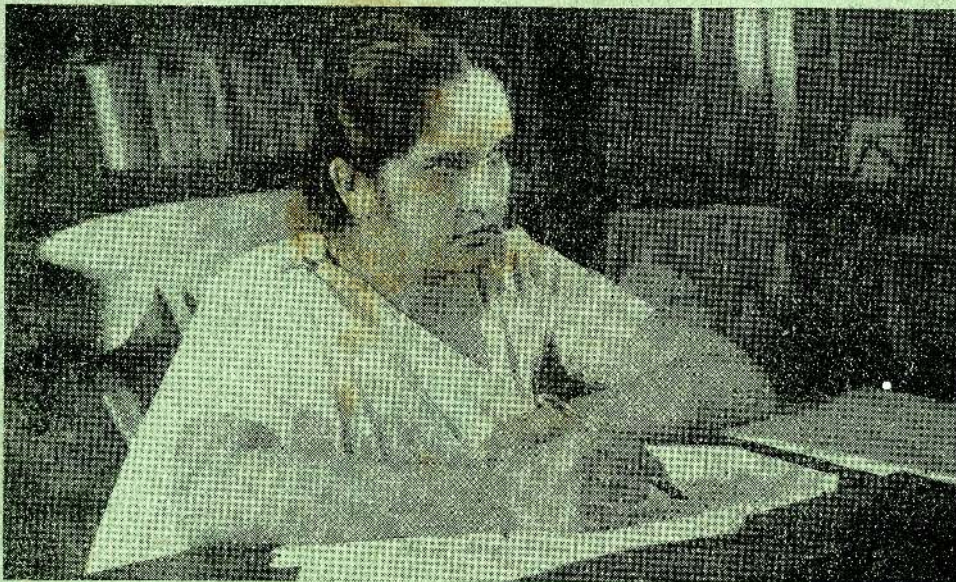
COLOMBO

AUGUST 31st 1960

## ON YOUR MARK ! GET SET.

### MRS. BANDARANAIKE

BY HERBERT VITHANAGE



SENATOR  
MRS. SIRIMAVO BANDARANAIKE  
Prime Minister of Ceylon

THE no contest pact entered into by the SLFP has paid dividends. It has on the one hand installed a stable one party Government after a period of serious instability and on the other hand forced the Marxists into virtual oblivion. The most diehard critics of the S L F P, in the pre-election period are all unanimous of the view that their attacks were made more poignant mostly out of fear of a continuation of the instability it might have resulted in, had the SLFP led at the the polls by a narrow margin over the UNP, as did the UNP at the March elections this year.

It need not be stressed that had the SLFP been forced to continue the election pact into the field of forming a coalition Government with the Marxists—as most keen observers envisaged—it would only have meant the speedy enthronement of international communism in this time-tested sacred land. The voters have all been wide awake to that grave problem and their forthright decision to give a mandate to the SLFP to go it alone presents quite some relief,

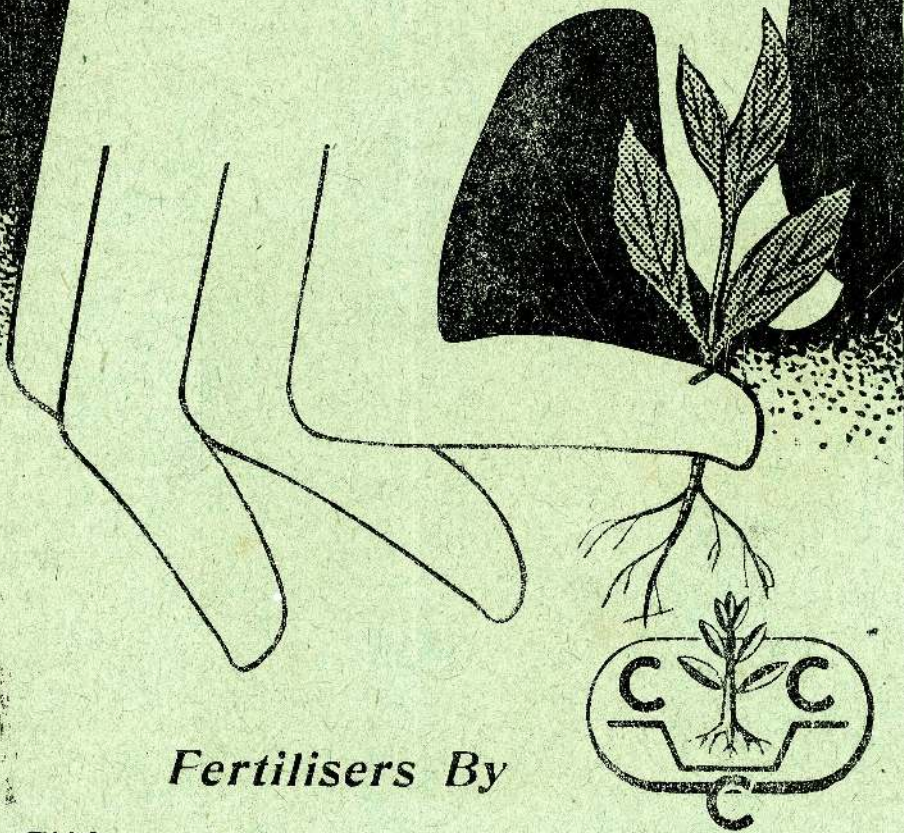
### THE TAKE-OVERS

In its appeal to sentiment however, the SLFP did not hesitate to make promises that were capable of arresting mass emotional interest amongst its followers. The taking over of the Press, the Schools, the Estates, the Banks and Insurance companies, can provide a great deal of thrill to the masses who will not dare

foresee the resultant implications on the country's economic set up. Such thrill can be compared to a child who would long to see the sight of a house on fire, not realising for a moment the consequent misery that is bound to befall its inmates.

(Continued on page 12)

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VOL 39 NO. 16

COLOMBO

AUGUST 31st 1960

## Double Seven Strikes Again in Viet Nam

BY J. F. SAMARANAYAKE

**L**UCKY, indivisible and indestructable as seven is to the numerologist, double seven to the people of South Viet Nam is more a day of dedication and hope, a day for looking back on promises fulfilled, of renewing pledges than of celebration. Double Seven commemorates the coming to power of President Ngo Dinh Diem, when Viet Nam's history entered a new phase of rebuilding a war-worn country, improving a desperate people's living standards, edifying the economic independence and development of a nation on a principle of personalism, never before tried with so much success since Aristotle preached his doctrine of the philosopher king.

Double Seven brings to Viet Nam the undoubted realisation of cherished objectives under the wisdom of one man and in the union of heart and spirit of an entire people.

Viet Nam, endowed with a new political and social substructure, is progressing toward a brilliant future. She has overcome many difficulties during the past six years in her struggle for the liberation of the country and of the Vietnamese citizen. For six years now Viet Nam has been heaping progress, to the extent that the progress by itself is a sufficient guar-

antee of success for the tremendous work that still lies ahead.

In six years, these are some of the achievements: The armed sects have been destroyed or disbanded. Most of the Communist nests have been wiped out. The nearly one million refugees have been resettled and are earning their living.

More than 52,000 people have been moved into the previously almost empty plateau area where they make Communist Viet Minh infil-

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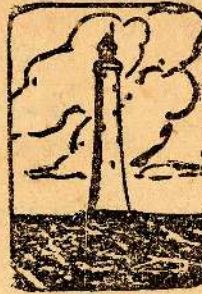
tration more difficult and produce new fibre crops. The second largest land reform of Free Asia, involving the conversion of 300,000 former tenants into small landowners, is now nearly complete. A nationwide agricultural credit system is operating. Rail lines and bridges have been repaired, and new highways are being built. Rice exports have been resumed and production reached to pre-war level. Rubber exports have been resumed too and risen. New higher yielding trees are being planted. Schools and other social services have been expanded. 700,000 Chinese are being assimilated into the national life.

Viet Nam has risen during these six years in stature not only in the eyes of Asian people but the entire Free World. When once hardly a single government had the courage to mention the name of South Viet Nam without a smile, today more than fifty countries of the world maintain diplomatic relations with the Republic. From East and West, dignitaries come, day in and day out, to court Saigon's friendship.

It is therefore pardonable that South Viet Nam should look on 7th July 1954 through eventful years between with pride, years that proved that when a people had no illusions, and the masks had been removed, a new path of a just and noble cause was possible.

When President Ngo Dinh Diem assumed office on July 7, 1964, the legal authority of his country did not have command of its army.

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The Chief of Staff was an officer of the French Army. Even this army had been welded together by armed bands, misnamed religious sects, some of which had no other concern than that of setting themselves up as feudal powers.



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The security services of Viet Nam, the police force on whom depend law and order of any regime, were in the hands of the Binh Zuyen, which had a monopoly on the most gigantic gambling and brothel organisation in all Asia.

President Ngo Dinh Diem himself, looking back on the conditions in which he assumed power, said in 1955: "It was obviously not under such conditions that a government responsible for the fate of millions of non communist Vietnamese was going to face Communism. Such was not either what hundreds of thousands of refugees... have abandoned North Viet Nam for. Such was not the independence which the Viet Nameese desired...."

The situation was desperate. The most optimistic observers of the time did not give the new republic more than six months. Some prophesied that it would require ten years to complete the pacification of a country infested by three armed bands refusing to co-operate with government and well trained Communist soldiers that had only recently defeated France's best equipped army in open battle. This Communist poised army was in the North, awaiting the slightest opportunity to pour South.

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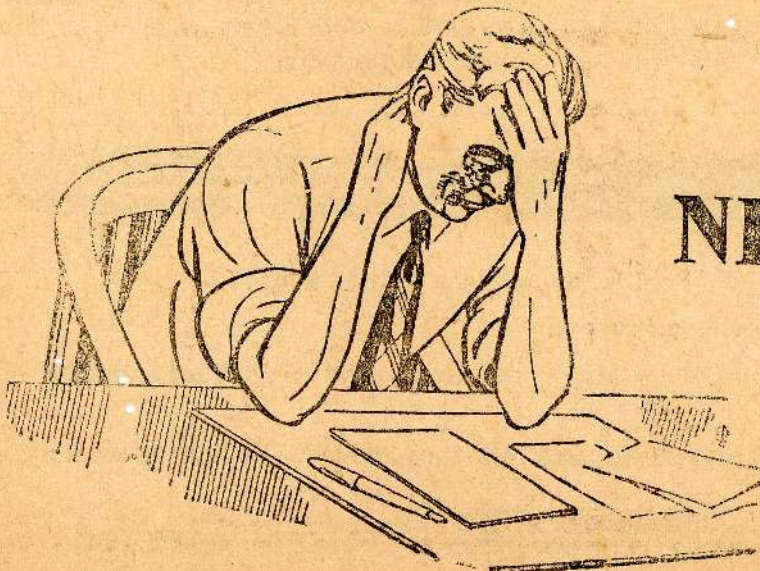
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But gradually, before even a year was out the picture changed. During this first year Viet Nam recovered internal and external sovereignty, thus fulfilling the basic conditions for proceeding to the second phase, that of freeing the people from the feudal yoke and restoring order and security. Viet Nam's valient army, bolstered by the administrative services and supported by the people, had by its brilliant successes, annihilated the last hide-outs of the rebels thereby restoring secu-

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But the military situation was not the only problem that Viet Nam had to tackle. In the economic field, things were equally desperate. The power to issue money was in the hands of the Bank of Indo-China; the production of rice, the people's vital resource, was disastrously slowed down because of the insecurity reigning over the Western Province. In the cities, Saigon, Dalat, Hue, Can Tho, dishonest businessmen and smugglers, in connivance with feudal authorities, were still exploiting the masses.

It was to counter this difficult situation that President Ngo Dinh Diem brought his determination to wage an "all out revolution" to eliminate "all oppression and vestiges of the past regime."

It was with the firm resolution to strive until final victory to save the country from disaster that President Ngo Dinh Diem formed his first government on the historic seventh day of the seventh month, the double seven of 1954.

So great has been the impact of President Ngo Dinh Diem's government on the ordinary people of Viet Nam, that they have, often with no other equipment than a pair of robust arms, built hundreds of kilometres of canals, repaired over 2,000 kilometres of roads, constructed more than fifteen bridges and built thousands of kilometres of dykes and dams. These people have cultivated some 569,838 hectares of land just through personal efforts.

After six years of administration the Ngo Dinh Diem government has changed the

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Writing in the *Christian Science Monitor* last year, U.S. Lt. General O'Daniel (ret.) noted: "In these five short years the world had watched incredulously while a country given up as lost by most political observers, a country torn by internal strife and the chaotic aftermath of freedom in a crucial part of the world. ...."

"Today, in spite of the tragic division of the country Viet Nam has confounded the experts by forging a new and dynamic regime. Its people enjoy one of the highest living standards in South-East Asia in a climate of continual progress."



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**E**VEN before beer was first taxed every town and village in England appointed its ale-conner to see that only "good ale and wholesome" was sold alike for the children's breakfast and for father's noble thirst. London had four ale conners, who under the Lord Mayor (especially Dick Whittington) had to drink hard for their living.

At Cambridge this Lord of the Tap was resplendent in scarlet coat betasselled with spigots and faucets, though to Chaucer the official's nose was sign enough that "wel he knewe" good beer.

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## THE MERRY-GO-ROUND

By MARMADUKE

**T**HE late S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike is stated to have told a relation of his that he frankly did not like the wording or the tune of the **Namo Namu Matha** "I don't claim to be an authority on prosody and much less of music," he is reported to have said, "but I have a feeling that the tune of the National Anthem is somewhat weird."

Several people have written letters to the press, before the death of D. S. Senanayake that the national anthem was not happily worded and hence there will be eternal trouble for Ceylon. They clamoured for a change in the wording and the music of the anthem.

We have arrived at the truth at last. For the Venerable Dr. Dehigaspe Pannasara, Nayaka Thero of the Vidyodaya Pirivena, has stated that the National Anthem had many mistakes and defects in composition and that these defects have **EVIL EFFECTS ON THE PEOPLE AND THE COUNTRY.**"

Perhaps an early change in the National Anthem will help to end the trouble and misfortune that continue to persist. The National Anthem 'Namo Namu Matha' seems certainly unlucky!

### THE SCHOOLS TAKE OVER

**W**HAT is a National System of Education—who coined this phrase and what does it connote?

Will Mr. Badiuddin Mahmud, or any proponent of the Schools Take-over, explain?

Is it suggested that the system of education imparted in our schools (denominational or private) at the present, or in the immediate past, is not national or is anti-national?

### COURTESY AND SPEECH

**P**ERTAIN remarks made by Dr. N. M. Perera in his speech referring to His Excellency the Governor-General when the Throne Speech was on debate was unbecoming and coarse. Perhaps the M.P. for Yatiyantota knows as well as anybody else that the Governor General is above party politics. Still Dr. Perera behaved towards His Excellency in an offensive manner and over-reached himself on that occasion.

(Continued over)

We do not presume to teach Dr. N. M. Perera how he should conduct himself in debate But the following from Cardinal Newman should prove of some interest to him. Here it is:

"The true gentleman in like manner carefully avoids whatever may cause a jar or a jolt in the minds of those with whom he is cast:— all clashing of opinion, or collision of feeling, all restraint, or suspicion, or gloom, or resentment; his great concern being to make every one at their ease and at home. He has his eyes on all his company; he is tender towards the bashful, gentle towards the distant, and merciful towards the absurd; he can recollect to whom he is speaking; he guards against unseasonable allusion, or topics which may irritate.

"He never speaks of himself except when compelled, never defends himself by a mere retort, he has no ears for slander or gossip, is scrupulous in imputing motives to those who interfere with him, and interprets everything for the best. He is never mean or little in his disputes, never takes unfair advantage, never mistakes personalities or sharp sayings for arguments, or insinuates evil which he dare not say out. From a longsighted prudence, he observes the maxim of the ancient sage, that we should ever conduct ourselves towards our enemy as if he were one day to be our friend."

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## The Size of the Negro Population in U.S.A.

The Negro population today number about 18,000,000 of ten per cent of the total population. In 1790, the first U.S. census estimated the Negro population to be 757,000.

Negroes have been steadily moving northwards and westwards in recent years, following the general population trend and the growth of industry. Though some 10,000,000 Negroes were still living in the South at the time of the 1950 census, within the decade there had been a 200 per cent increase in the Negro population of the Western States.

There are only a handful of all-Negro villages and small towns in the United States. Their total population is less than 25,000. New York City has the largest urban Negro population, approximately 10 per cent of the 8,000,000 inhabitants of the metropolis.

### Negroes Buying their Own Homes

Approximately one third of American Negroes own their own homes. Negroes also own more than 30 savings and loan associations with assets of more than \$60,000,000 and fourteen banks with assets of \$40,000,000.

The Negro's status in American society has greatly improved. The U.S. Government has sought to assure Negroes the full equality granted them legally under the American Constitution. The U.S. Secretary of Labor recently noted that the American Negro has made greater progress in the last 15 years in education, political participation and economic well-being than in the previous 75 years.



# The U. N. P. Nominee for the Wellawatte South Seat (Bye-Election)

AFTER the glorious victory the United National Party registered over the Colombo South Seat at the General Election last July, when Mr. J. R. Jayawardene defeated four of his rivals, who had even to forfeit their deposits, it looks as if history is going to repeat itself. This time in connection with the bye-election for Wellawatte South Seat in the Colombo Municipal Council, rendered vacant by the death of T. Rudra, who represented the Ward for over fifteen years.

## THE CANDIDATES

There are three candidates in the field standing for Election. They are Mrs. A. E. B. Kiriella, nominee of the U. N. P., Mr. M. M. Goonetilleke, who comes forward as an independent candidate. Mr. Goonetilleke has since been expelled from the U. N. P. for



Mrs. A. E. B. Kiriella

violating party principles. And Mr. Goonetilleke's expulsion was made absolute by a special Resolution brought up by the Working Committee. The meeting was presided over by Mr. Dudley Senanayake and Mr. J. R. Jayawardene, the Mayor of Colombo and all members of the Working Committee being present and the resolution was unanimously passed. Here is the Resolution:

"In view of the fact that Mr. M. M. Goonetilleke, a member of the Party, has come forward as a candidate for the Wellawatte Bye-Election in spite of the fact that the Party had nominated Mrs. N. Kiriella to contest this Bye-Election as the Party candidate, it was resolved to expel Mr. M. M. Goonetilleke from the Party."

And the third candidate is Mr. D. C. Devapura, who represents the Sama Samaja Party (LSSP.) Both Messrs. Goonetilleke and Devapura have sought election to this seat before and were rejected by the ratepayers of the ward.

Mr. Devapura is a Marxist. He is the nominee of the LSSP. Now the recent elections have proved that Marxists and their ideology are not in favour with the people of Wellawatte South or for a matter of that even the Colombo South Electorate. It is, as well therefore that Mr. Devapura should know that the more sober-minded residents of Wellawatte will have no truck with those of the Left Wing.

And now we come to Mrs. A. E. B. Kiriella whom Wellawatte South welcomes as the candidate of their choice. Thanks to a wise decision of the U. N. P. to whose colours she has always remained loyal and steadfast, the good lady need have not the slightest doubt about the reception that awaits her at the hands of the enlightened constituents of the ward. They propose going all out to have her elected as their Member.

A little over five years ago when Mrs. Kiriella made her debut in civic politics and offered herself for election to the Wellawatte North Seat—a pronounced leftist stronghold she gave a splendid fight to a Samasamajist stalwart in Mr. Osmund Jayaratne. True she lost on that occasion by a couple of hundred votes, but that hardly dampened her enthusiasm or cooled her ardour for service. Nothing deterred, she continued to render abundant service to that Ward and showed that her interest in the people never ceased.

Mrs. Kiriella's tender feelings towards the poor and the less enlightened has been always genuine. On several occasions she was respon-

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sible in going to the assistance of the thousands of workers of the Wellawatte Spinning & Weaving Mills and by her tactful handling of their disputes with the employers, was successful in preventing strikes and adjusting differences when the Marxists were insistent in forming strikes. Nor is that all one has to say about her.

Fully equipped mentally and equally well balanced with complete knowledge of what a Municipal Council Member is expected to know and possess to fit her for civic usefulness, her infinite tact and sound judgment for weighing the pros and cons of any matter, should stand Mrs. Kiriella in good stead. She is eminently competent for leadership, and there is no denying that she can be depended upon to acquit herself well in the duties involved in the office of a City Councillor. The Wellawatte South voters have faith in Mrs. Kiriella's ability to serve them without distinction of race, caste or community, and stand steadfastly by both rich and poor.

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## From Our Readers

# Things that Matter

## The Ceylon Savings Bank

READ 'The Searchlight' article about the wide powers enjoyed by the Secretary of this Bank in considering applications for loans on the mortgage of house property. I had occasion sometime back of raising a similar loan on the mortgage of my property. I got the loan alright but after some difficulty and delay. I am happy to say that I have since paid off my mortgage. However, what I cannot understand is why brokers are allowed to come in between an applicant for a loan and the Bank. Or rather why brokers should foist themselves on applicants. I see no need for any of them. If anybody wants a loan all one has to do is to apply direct, or through his or her lawyer and there the matter ends one way or the other. I cannot really understand how brokers come to know about these applications for loans. From where could the information be leaking? Not from the applicants themselves, I am sure.

Hill Street, VARATHAM  
Colombo, 1st September.

## Valuers of Property

IS there a panel of valuers or valuers officially appointed from among whom a particular valuer is requested to value a property on which a loan is sought from the Ceylon Savings Bank? If so are these valuers Government servants or are they recognised valuers licensed by the District Court? What are the qualifications for such valuers to get on the panel if there is such a panel and who appoints these valuers for the Savings Bank? Is there any way by which those of no status as valuers in Colombo can get on to such a panel?

Hulfsdorp PRIMARY MORTGAGEE  
4th Sept

## This Poison Spreading Business

HAVE followed with interest the agitation carried on by your journal against the indiscriminate use of insecticides in this country.

I am aware that one or two Sanitary Inspectors who were first charged with the handling of DDT spraying was effected during the first ever spraying undertaken in Ceylon in the early nineteen forties. Death due to haphazard handling of these poisons may go unnoticed while only the cases of suicide are spotlighted in the daily newspapers. It is time that the present Government initiated action to introduce legislation to control the use of insecticides out here.

Gampola  
3rd September

R. S. ABHEYKOONE

## Shopping Centre for Ceylonese

**T**HE Sinhalese Merchants Chamber (the Sinhala Velanda Mandalaya) as it is called, after long agitation obtained from Government the Factory Site in Norris Road, Pettah on which a three, storeyed structure of shops were to be erected. The money for the Project was to have been found by the sale of debentures. And also a part of the money from a local bank. These shops were to constitute an Exclusive Shopping Centre to be run by Ceylonese. The idea under-



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lying this project was to divert the business that is now passing to Indian hands into the hands of the nationals of this country. What has happened to the proposal upon which Mr. Albert Perera, the estimable President of the Mandalaya, put so much of store? Has any money come in? If not why not, or has the project on which great hopes were built, fallen through?

Pettah

CEYLONESE MERCHANT

5th Sept.

## Timber from Crown Forests

**V**ERY large quantities of timber of all kinds illicitly felled from Crown Forests are brought down to Colombo and sold at the various Timber Depots in Grandpass, Armour Street and elsewhere. This timber of course do not show any trace that they are from Crown forests or that they had been licitly felled from private property. Since Government is losing on an average of a Million Rupees of timber a month if not more, should not the Government devise ways and means to put a stop to this illicit traffic. The only way to do it in my opinion is to introduce a system of issuing licences for the transport of timber either by cart, lorry or by waterways. These permits should only be issued by the Superintendent of Police for the Province. This will enable the Police to intercept any timber that is being carted and which cannot be proved as coming from a duly recognised source and authorised. I would also suggest Government to issue licences and to get Timber Depot Keepers to register themselves with the Government Agents of the various Provinces and such a list be made available to

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Pannipitiya.  
2nd Sept.

**A Clipping from Robert Rodale's  
"Organic World" Column**

—x—

**E**VERY month when I sit down to write this Department I dig into a stack of news clippings about a foot high that has accumulated during the month. I sort them into piles. The pile covering deaths and injuries from sprays always has about a dozen clippings in it, and I pick out just one or two to print. If I weren't selective, this column would sound like an obituary department. I am giving you this build-up because the spraying accident for this month concerns a very useful man. His name is Campbell Dickson, aged 54, a professional writer, a former College Dean, U. S. Army Major and winner of the French Croix de Guerre. Last August he was travelling around the country with one suitcase, a typewriter and a book of Shakespeare. When he got to Wenatchee, Washington, he took a job at an orchard. Five days later he was dead of PARATHION POISONING "

# Taking the Bull by the Horns

**T**HE Hon Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike, Minister of Finance added quite a touch of honesty of purpose when he held the floor as a seasoned politician to reply to criticism of the Government by the Leader of the Opposition speaking on the resolution calling for a Select Committee to go into the question of car purchases on the eve of the introduction of the new duties.

He was indeed forthright to a point of gross carelessness and right through his discourse in an eminently legal flair, instilled into the House and the depleted galleries, the need to make an early and more comprehensive investigation into the whole affair. If he made an effort to defend the members of the Cabinet who had allegedly taken undue advantage on knowledge of things to come, even then he was gloriously sincere. He was in complete agreement with the Member for Nallur who remarked that "the leakage, if any, could have been from "the same old holes." He placed before the House a mass of information regarding purchases ranging from cars to electric kettles, electioneering and accidents and throughout the theme he virtually admitted that he welcomed the appointment of the proposed Select

(Continued on page 12)

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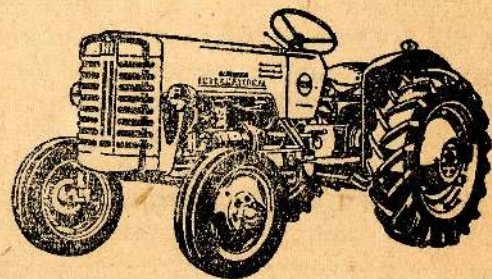
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Committee to cover not only Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries, but also Members of Parliament and or their spouses, friends and relations. Listing some of those who fell into that latter categories also as having purchased motor cars about this same period, he made much of it to show that members of the Opposition, notably of the UNP, also had made such purchases but conveniently avoided reference to the day on which the Cabinet decision to make this change in duty was taken.

The Leader of the Opposition moving his motion was also following the highest traditions of Parliamentary conduct. He was not prepared to come out with names of dealers or purchasers, which he said should be reserved for the proposed Select Committee and right through the debate he was most alert and up to the point in intelligent interruption. The whole debate presented a sense of high debating standards and a very welcome honesty of purpose on the part of the Government, for the future.

## ON YOUR MARK! GET SET. MRS. BANDARANA- NAIKE

Continued from cover page

Ever since the advent of the Leftist movement to Ceylon a quarter of a century ago, the masses of this country have been made to feel that NATIONALISATION would be the panacea for all the country's ills. No leader from this movement was outspoken enough to have analysed the colossal failures of State ownership, even though there was a glorious example provided by the state-owned Railway. Presently however, whether we like it or not, nationalisation has been extended to other fields as well in recent times with the only effect of draining the available financial resources of the Exchequer.

### HANDS OF ESTATES NATIONALISATION

It is a happy augury to note that the SLFP has made it quite clear that the nationalisation of estates will not be taken up during their present term of office. This is a pointer to the fact the SLFP feels that on an unbiased analysis of the economic implications, nationalisation spells complete economic ruin in the present set up. It will be interesting to note that what actually goes out of the land from economically run foreign-owned estates is only a mere 5% of their capital investment. Who

else except the Marxists would blame anyone for taking unto himself a mere 5% after providing employment for the people, revenue to Government and contributing to the general development of the country?

The decision to keep its hands off the nationalisation of large estates is indeed a sensible move. This can be made a perfect platform for the SLFP to lead masses of this country out of the abyss the Marxists have been leading them on to, by explaining the finer points of nationalisation—hitherto kept away from them by their Marxist gossippers. The sooner this is done the chances of the SLFP consolidating its position as the peoples' favourites would be speeded up and the Marxists shown up in their true colours. Premier Mrs. Bandaranaike can safely give the lead to such a move which is bound to bring her more and better support in the country.

### THE SHEEP AND THE GOATS

She would find no difficulty even to go back on some of her election pledges—which can be construed as Marxist ideals—if she makes up her mind to educate the masses on the true aspects of the problem of nationalisation and state ownership in the light of the desired economic freedom for Ceylon.

It is with no little interest we have followed the firmness with which you are leading your Cabinet just now. It is a good thing indeed you are determined to review the position in six months time and separate, if necessary, the sheep from the goats, and settle down to an honest job of work. So on that mark, get set  
.....Mrs. Bandaranaike.



## No Public Conscience About Bribery

**T**HE letter under the above caption and published in the 'Searchlight' of 15.8.1960 was quite outspoken and straight from the shoulder though it does not throw new light on the conscience of the people of Sri Lanka.

That ugly word **BRIBERY** is a recent term in the history of the people of Ceylon whose guiding principle was that the labourer was worthy of his hire. Working on that maxim, it was not unusual to give a **PRESENT** to one in authority in order to get something done. Such a **PRESENT** was never termed a bribe by the giver or the receiver. If it was a sum of money the amount depended on the status of the parties and the nature of the service.

The ordinary citizen never worried his head over the definition of the term "bribery" in our penal laws. In the olden days it was considered bad form to meet empty-handed an official high, middling or however low in the scheme of things. Those "presents" often took odd forms such as a pingo of vegetables or keuns, a leg of pork or a seer from the nearest fish market, a few measly chickens and in the case of V. T. Presidents of the good old days, a pot of curd or a hare.

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Please understand, Sir, that I am not defending bribery as understood in this enlightened age; I am just stating how this practice arose from bygone ages perhaps through the saying of some Rishis of ancient India. One of those pundits who had a weakness for giving advice unasked, had stated in **Pratya Satakaya**, a standard reader in Pansala Schools of Ceylon, as follows:—

When visiting Devas, Rajas, Gurus, Prostitutes, Physicians and Astrologers do not go empty handed. If you do so, the object of your visit would be defeated. Following this advice some devotees at Devalas put garlands or gold chains round the neck of the image of the Deity and generally give cash presents to the officiating Kapurala to pray loud and long. Poor devotees generally offer a "Wattiya" containing a few coconuts, raw rice, fruits in season and a rupee or two to the Kapurala as peace-offerings. The Rajas referred to include the King or the head of the government to the headman lowest in rank. The other four do not require explanations as their respective vocations imply payment. The members of the fraternity mentioned last live by their wits or the lack of that commodity in their clientele.

With regard to that vocation I would also like to quote a couplet from "**Nakkhatta Jataka**" which describes the mentality of those who consult them:—

"When the star-gazing fool is waiting for luck, the luck goes by;

The star of luck is luck and not any star in the sky."

Wellawatte.

D. L. WELIKALA.

## THE LATE DAVID GORDON

BY C. A. L. GOMES

**W**ITH the passing of the late David Gordon, founder member and one time Chairman of the Board of Directors of Messrs. Hunter & Co. Ltd, a valuable link in the chain of British Merchants in Ceylon during the last half century, has been removed. It was only a short time ago that Mr. Gordon, accompanied by Mrs. Gordon, came to Ceylon on a brief visit. There was hardly any change in this pleasant looking business head, on retirement, but his comely appearance and captivating smile presented the touch of a bonnie Scotsman enjoying his holiday, whether in the cold climes of his native heath or the brilliant sunshine of Ceylon.

The writer had the pleasure of meeting him for a few moments and exchanged courtesies and was, indeed, happy to once again set eyes on a friend of Ceylon and a business man who made good by his perseverance, indomitable pluck and high sense of duty. But it was not for very long. That deceptive look brought back a note of poignant sorrow when the news was flashed from Scotland that David Gordon was no more! It was so sudden and yet so sad that in the midst of joy and happiness of a recent meeting the pall of sorrow should have overtaken the writer.

The late David Gordon came to Ceylon in 1906 in connection with Messrs. Walker Sons & Co., and later at Colombo Stores. With experience gained and knowledge garnered, he, together with the late William Hunter, John Hannah and Robert Wilson, started the firm of Messrs. Hunter & Co., in Norris Road, opposite the Pettah Railway Station, in 1911. From then onwards, notwithstanding all the shocks that the young enterprise had to encounter, Hunter & Co. made steady headway and gradually began to expand its activities in the Hardware Trade, specialising in Estate Supplies.

With the shifting of the business to the present venue, somewhere in 1913, the firm's future was assured. The War Clouds that were hanging over then gave a fresh impetus and, eventually when the first World War came, the outlook was decidedly brighter and better.

It was at this stage that there was witnessed a great agricultural expansion and development in Ceylon and with the setting up of



The Late David Gordon

various manufacturing industries, the late William Hunter harnessed his acquaintanceship with the leaders of the various industries, both European and Ceylonese, to good account. From then onwards it was good going for success. For the popularity of the firm had spread in all directions when the captains of local industry began to draw on the experience and knowledge of William Hunter who was to them a guide, philosopher and friend.

I first came to know Mr. David Gordon 18 years ago at the office of the late M. Y. M. Munsoor in the Pettah, where he very regularly called in for a chat. Mr. Munsoor was a great admirer and stout friend of Mr. Gordon and had implicit trust and confidence in him. What struck me forcibly was his candour; sturdy independence and good nature. He was hard and unrelenting, yet he was human and kind. He has moulded the character of many young men



working under him and they will all remember with pride his sense of justice and fairplay. Kind and courteous he bore the stamp of genuineness right through.

In 1936 he was elected President of the Caledonian Society, and as a result of his good and loyal efforts towards the promotion of the affairs of the society to a higher degree of success, he was re-elected in 1937. St. Andrews Scots Kirk and other religious and social service institutions always received his unstinted support. It can truly be said that the late David Gordon was thorough in whatever he did and by his death he has left his footprints which his illustrious son, the present head of the firm, will assuredly follow. That he will carry on the great traditions created by his respected sire and in so doing maintain the pre-eminent position Messrs Hunter & Co., Ltd enjoys today. Mr. George Gordon has already attained a distinguished place in the business life of Colombo where his abilities as a man of outstanding intellect has come to be recognised both in political and business spheres.

Gordon Buildings at Bankshall Street, stands as a monument to his forethought. Our sincere condolences go out to Mrs. David Gordon and the members of his family and to Hunter & Co Ltd., on the loss sustained by his death.

May the turf grow gently over his grave!

## Federation of Nigeria



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The Federation of Nigeria, the largest of the United Kingdom dependencies and accounting for about half their total population, becomes a fully independent member of the Commonwealth on October 1. Within less than half a century the country has climbed out of a medley of small principalities to become a modern State. Since 1947, Nigeria will be the sixth British dependency to become a full member of the Commonwealth—the others being India, Pakistan, Ceylon, Ghana and Malaya. The establishment of public libraries throughout Nigeria follows and stimulates the raising of the standard of education. Schemes for providing free-universal primary education were introduced in the Western Region in 1955 and in the Eastern Region in 1957. This picture shows the children's section of the Public Library, Port Harcourt, Eastern Region.

A Significant Newspaper Editorial:-

## "The Poison Spreading Business"

Here, published without comment, is the leading Editorial of **The Boston Herald** of August 25, 1960.

**O**NE of the growing businesses today is spreading poison. It is done by planes and helicopters. It is done by big spraying and dusting machines spewing forth great clouds drifting with the winds. No one knows if the many millions of pounds of poisons cast upon the land are doing more harm than good. And no regulations, beyond those restricting spray residues in food, control this mass poisoning.

May be the killing of mosquitoes, Gypsy Moths, Spruce Bud Worms, Fire Ants and other Pests outweigh the damage done by these poisons but no one knows what the damage may be. We know fish and birds are often killed. We know that the pests themselves develop immunity to the poisons, again forcing the use of larger quantities.

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## Federation of Nigeria

The Federation of Nigeria, the largest of the United Kingdom dependencies and accounting for about half their total population, becomes a fully independent member of the Commonwealth on October 1. The Hon. Alhaji Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, C.B.E. Prime Minister of the Federation of Nigeria.



"But we do not have the slightest knowledge of whether these poisons are building up year after year in the soil, in our wild life, in our domestic animals and in ourselves, to present us sometime with a catastrophe we did not foresee.

"This is inexcusable public ignorance, to permit the mass spreading of poison with no calculation of dangers.

"Last year 50 planes spread 1,500 tons of DDT and Fuel Oil over three million acres of public and private lands in Pennsylvania, New Jersey and New York. In woods and swamps it killed a variety of wild life, from fishes to damsel-flies and frogs. It fell on gardens to contaminate food. It introduced an unwelcome substance to those 'organic' farms operated on the theory that crops and animals should be raised without "Chemicals." It left DDT in milk.

"This year 20 million acres in the south are being sprayed with Dieldrin to control the Fire Ant with the same lack of adequate understanding of the possible side effects.

"In Massachusetts we have several agencies spraying and dusting without any correlation, so that areas dusted for mosquito

control may be again dusted for Gypsy Moth or Greenhead Fly.

'All this should be stopped until we know what we are about. We should know all the effects of the poisons on the pests we are attacking. We should not rest there either but go on to develop methods of concentrating our attack so that only the pest suffers.

"Francis W. Sargent, the State Natural Resources Commissioner, has recognized the problem, and has called on Senators Saltonstall and Kennedy to

Press for a Federal Research. Mr. Sargent also urges State Legislation to Control and regulate all spraying and dusting, both public and private, and plans a meeting this fall of all interested persons to consider such a measure.

"We need such a public awakening to the problem.

(Supplied by the All-Ceylon Agricultural Congress from the 'Organic Gardening and Farming published monthly by Rodale Press Emmaus, Pennsylvania)

## Is'nt This Racketeering? Who's Fooling Whom? (COMMUNICATED)

**A** GREAT deal of indecent hurry is said to be indulged in by certain top Departmental Officials in the matter of giving out building contracts on large building schemes. There is the case of the buildings for the University of Ceylon Engineering Faculty in which a curious practice has been followed on the ground of urgency.

It would appear that tenders were called for this project for which the estimate was Rs. 21, lacs and that too from a list of five selected contractors. This process made it possible to exclude all Ceylonese contractors. Out of the five select ones too only two firms applied. When tenders were called for this the normal procedure of gazetting which would have enabled a larger field of contractors to tender was dispensed with. Treasury sanction was obtained, it is alleged, purely on the grounds of urgency of the work. Construction firms tell us that even if they had gazetted the tender call, the delay would only have been that of a fortnight at the most. It is hard to conceive why such haste is exercised when the only result is keeping out Ceylonese contractors who have handled major building contracts even for amounts greater than this particular job. It is understood that similar action is being contemplated in the case of quite a number of other projects as well.

Another aspect of this sinister goings on is for the more favourite "top grade contractors to refrain from tendering for such projects but invite their colleagues abroad to tender. In the event of the foreigners being successful—as it normally is bound to be in the absence of local tenderers—those contractors

who inspired such foreign tenderers actually handle the job as sub-contractors.

This system enables a larger profit range to go out of the island. It is said that the Central Bank Building will take in more than 2 million rupees as cost of material for metal doors and windows which will have to be imported. Ceylonese builders question as to why timber found in the island could not be used for this purpose, thus providing employment for local carpenters and the retention of profits in the island. Who is fooling whom? Will the Minister of Transport and Works give this matter intelligent attention?

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# The Searchlight

(ESTABLISHED 1921)

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 For the cause that needs assistance  
 For the future in the distance  
 For the good that we can do.

31st August 1960

## Is it a Building Racket?

**E**LSEWHERE in this issue we publish a communicated article with the arresting headline: "IS'NT THIS RACKETEERING? —WHO'SFOOLING WHOM?" The article refers to certain contracts involving a colossal sum of money which the Government proposes expending on the construction of buildings for the Faculty of Engineering of the University of Ceylon. It must here be stated that the entire construction work for the University at Peradeniya was carried out by local contractors, individuals or firms, such work being entrusted to them after the calling of Tenders. This being the prevailing system governing Government construction programmes that had to be carried out. In fact building work running into scores of millions of rupees worth have been executed by contractors on the Tender system. These contractors are registered with the P. W. D. as able and competent people to undertake the kind of work.

### THE PLEA OF URGENCY AND NOT CALLING FOR TENDERS

**I**T IS, therefore, understandable why the usual system of calling for tenders for the Engineering Faculty of the Ceylon University, was dispensed with. Could it be because an unusual sum of money was involved so that an extraordinary procedure was had recourse to by the authorities concerned? Anyway the system adopted appears to be open to question and even to suspicion. Why were only five contracting firms selected excluding all other Ceylonese Contractors, and of the former only TWO

firms responded? Further, it is understood, that Treasury Sanction was obtained to give out this contract on the plea of URGENCY. Where the urgency came in, it is difficult to comprehend? A fortnight's or even a month's delay in calling for tenders from all building contractors and considering their tenders should have been advantageous to Government as then the lowest tenderer could have been selected and entrusted the work. Why was this not done?

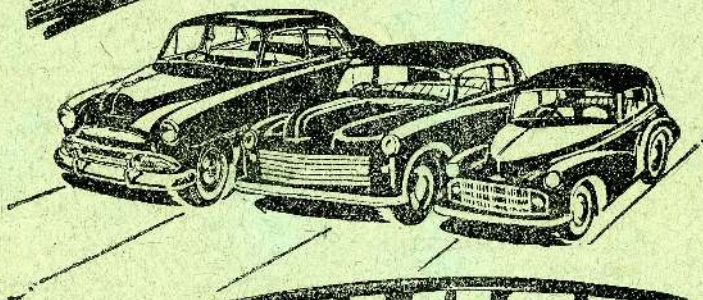
## Keeping out Tenderers

**I**T would be as well to ascertain the precise reason for keeping out Ceylonese Contractors from tendering for the proposed job connected with the Faculty of Engineering at the Ceylon University. These contractors have handled construction works running into many million rupees and why, therefore, should they have not been given an opportunity to tender. Is it not the policy of the present Government that Ceylonese nationals should enjoy preference over non-nationals on the grounds of political and economic expediency. Why then were Ceylonese Contractors shut out from applying for and securing Government patronage for Building Constructions so long as their competence and ability to carry out such work is not doubted.

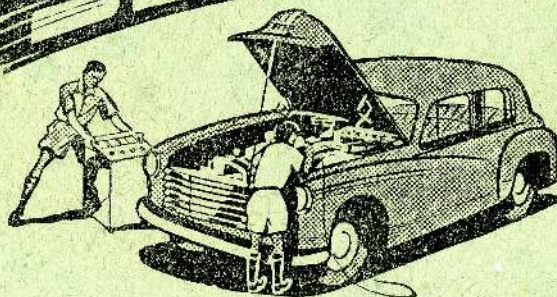
All things considered there appears to be something quite extraordinary. (or shall we say something fishy?) somewhere. Hence the question should immediately be looked into by the Ceylonese Builders Association since the matter as manoeuvred appears to be surrounded with features suggestive of, what looks like, a downright jobbery.

Brave therefore of spirit would be that member of the Ceylonese Builders Association who would stand up to remind his colleagues that it is more often than not they themselves who are responsible for Ceylonese Builders being slighted and attempts made to do them out of their legitimate rights in searching for greater economic opportunities and objecting to non-nationals encroaching on their preserves.

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Printed & Published for the administrator of the Estate of Lilian M. Gomes by  
 Auton Bertram Gomes residing at 71/1 37th lane, Wellawatte at the  
 The Searchlight Press Wellawatte on August 31st 1960