



Letter From The Editor

WITH THIS ISSUE, *Tribune* begins its twenty-sixth year of publication, the first issue having appeared on May 1, 1954. The price has also been raised to Rs. 3 a copy from Rs. 2.50. Originally *Tribune* had been priced at —/25 cts. a copy and the price today is only a reflection of the inflation that has overtaken this country. For many years the people of this country were able to meet the challenge of global and world inflation without too much difficulty owing to the increase of salaries granted from time to time and the abundant subsidies the government infused into the economy through the prices of essential foodstuffs and utility services. With the new policies adopted by the UNP Government from 1977, nearly all subsidies have been eliminated. The removal of subsidies has coincided with the greatest global inflation of all times—made worse by OPEC price hike to punish developed Western countries for their exploitative greed (but which has wrought greater havoc in the economies of poor Third World countries). But what has caused even greater distress to ordinary people in Sri Lanka is the fact that internal inflation has grown even faster than the global inflation owing to the serious decrease in the production of all our major agricultural produce (except marginally paddy). Instead of concentrating on achieving increased production, the administration seems to have lost itself in the wilderness of tamashas and carnivals. The picture on the cover this week is only to remind ourselves and our readers that fun and games, even under the trappings of Kandyan or local cultural colours, still remain unproductive as well as diversionary. The country continues, as in the past, to go on from one tamasha to another—and from one crisis to another. There is a crisis on at present and this stems from a rail strike. From all accounts the strike was triggered by the interdiction of 12 or 13 railway workers who are allegedly militants in the JTUAC and who had played an important activist role in the June 5 protest. This is well known in political and trade union circles. The Minister of Transport has done nothing but plead ignorance of the cause of the strike and has called for negotiations without preconditions. This magnanimity has brought no response from the strikers. But even with the iron curtain round the strike, it is known that the original demand of the strikers was the reinstatement of the interdicted or dismissed workers on grounds of victimisation and that subsequently a demand for an all-round increase of Rs. 300 a month for each railway employee was tagged on for good measure. The official media, has, as usual, kept the public in a state of misinformation. They have reported that "several" long distance and mail trains (on a body count these constitute about ten to fifteen percent of all the scheduled trains) have started out—much is made of this but not of the fact that each of the long distance trains are seven to twelve hours late in getting to their destinations, and everybody knows this. Naturally the credibility of the Government has hit a new low.

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Makaral

Colombo, July 15,

A few days ago, on Saturday July 12 to be exact, *Tribune* had a long-distance call from Nuwara Eliya from an old reader of the paper, Mr. Lincoln Perera. He has farming interests in Nuwara Eliya as well as in the Kurunegala area.

"Did you see today's *Ceylon Daily News*—on page seven—the vegetable prices according to the Consumer Advisory Service?"

We said that we had not read that particular item, but quickly we had the page before us.

"Just take one item.....Makaral is 90 cents per 500 grams (1.1 lb)."

Then he went on to unfold a story that should make the Government sit up. "I was at the Hettipola Pola on June 28 and July 5. This fair is held on Saturdays and peasant farmers and market gardeners from four electorates viz., Paruwasmuwara, Wariyapola, Nikaweratiya and Bingiriya bring their produce there. On Wednesdays a similar pola is held at Kobelgama. At the Hettipola fair, on June 28 and July 5 when I was present, producers got only rock bottom prices (or no price at all) for their vegetables. Let us take Makaral (long beans). On June 28, traders and the Marketing Department were purchasing it at —/05 cents a lb. (the pola has not yet gone metric). On July 5, there were no buyers for Makaral at 05 cents farmers who had brought makaral to the pola threw them away—and stray cattle ate some of them, and the balance was left to rot.....".

Mr. Lincoln Perera, on the phone for a good fifteen minutes, raised some important queries. Is there an unholy alliance between the traders and the Marketing Department (MD) purchases? Why did the MD not purchase the Makaral on July 5 and help to bring down the price in Colombo? Even the Makaral bought on June 28 for —/05 cts. was sold at 90 cents?

Tribune has very often raised the question about the vegetable purchasing strategies and methods of the MD. If the price in Colombo was 90 cents, could the MD not have offered the producers 15 cents or 20 cents a lb.—that would allow an adequate margin for transport, perishability, risk, profit, overheads etc. etc.

Why does the MD trail behind the private trader who wants maximum profit with the minimum of produce? If an extra 1000 lbs. of Makaral had come to the Colombo the price would have dropped to say 50 cents or 60 cents, but the profit ratio would have dropped? So the Makaral is thrown away—and this will discourage producers further. Already, according to an ARTI survey, last year vegetable production had dropped by 4000 tons (the drop is probably double that!) and if the producer fails to get even 05 cents for something for which the consumer pays 90 cents—then prospects are grim.

Only July 12, according to the Consumer Advisory Service, Red pumpkin were Rs. 1.15 per 500 grms. and Ladies Fingers Rs. 1/20. Producers in the Vavuniya district could get only —/40 cents a lb. for red pumpkin and 20 cents for Ladies Fingers (the perishability is high!) Brinjals which could not find wholesale buyers even at 30 or 40 cents a lb. were used as cattle feed. We have published stories of this kind for the last ten years with little or no result.

Each time, in the past, we made a complaint of this kind, we were asked to produce "evidence", affidavits and what not to prove our charge. This time, Mr. Lincoln Perera, is willing to testify from his personal knowledge. The Ministry of Trade and the Marketing Commissioner should ask the MD purchasers at Hettipola pola on June 28 why they did not offer producers more than 05 cents a lb. for Makaral and why they refused to buy on July 5.

We can set out here and now, the explanations that will be trotted out (we have heard them over the years)—but this kind of bureaucratic bungling, ineptitude and corruption (in collaboration with private mudalalis) goes on for ever. Mr. Lincoln Perera is not difficult to find. We will help if necessary

to trace him, but the UNP Headquarters should have no difficulty in finding him—his brother, if we are not mistaken, is the District Minister for Kurunegala.

It is time that something more than talk must be done. The Government should not rule out the possibilities of a revolt of the farmers—when their demands for better prices for their produce are not met. Vegetable mudalals and MD purchases are sowing the seeds of an unprecedented peasant-farmer upheaval. What is the use of Mahaweli if the producer cannot get 05 cents for makara! when consumers pay 90 cents—just 60 or 70 miles away!



TO INCREASE PRODUCTION

What Must Be Done

by R. Kahawita

So it is the State Organisation that must respond to the Finance Minister's war cry and fire the first shot, and march forward. The Private sector can only be swept by the production whirlwind of the State sector, not that they do not contribute today. They do. They are there to skin off the surplus cash due to lack of basic goods. But this is not what the Finance Minister meant when he said *Put production on a war footing*. And for the State Sector to do this, he says "Re-order our priorities". We wish the Finance Minister said this three years ago. . . . Fortunately we have another three years to re-phase some parts of our development programmes. Will the Development Ministers, Spending Ministers and the production Ministers, take heed of the plea and do a little bit of thinking to save our skins in 1983?

LET US SEE WHAT the picture should be like if we accommodate the request of the Finance Minister (i. e. to rephase part of our development programme) — "to re-order our priorities" Our thinking is on the basis that we have at least some part of the money to physically handle and count and re-count as a Jew would do. Let us take the projects listed by the Finance Minister and curtail expenditure on them by ten percent of the

first forecast. We would be collecting in the region of Rs. 6160 millions, and if we spread over three years we would have Rs. 2080 millions per year for three years" to put production on war footing."

We selected ten percent because that is our estimate of wastage in the rush to complete the projects according to the present programmes. This wastage is due to (a) Lack of physical planning (b) lack of materials (c) lack of an organisation to service, maintain and repair during construction and development (d) Sub-standard quality of workmanship, materials and fixtures, (e) lack of experienced artisans and tradesmen to maintain standards (e) Lack of trained and experienced middle level work groups (g) Lack of a desire to serve the country irrespective of how much can be extracted from the country without giving anything in return to the country at all levels from the top to bottom (e) Bad planning in the purchases, use and maximizing output of Heavy equipment, transport vehicles and construction gear and lastly (f) robbing, corruption and criminal neglect—this last is inevitable in any scheme, during any regime if unrealistic and impractical targets are chosen—just to say "we did it." How we did it will be decided by the voter. They are the Judge and the jury; not the cabinet, not the ministers, not the bureaucrats! All of us can howl from the roof tops—"what good boys are we? Even that kind of howling will be assessed by the voters.

If we can gather Rs. 2080 millions annually to increase production for the next three years where can we spend this and on what "quick yielding, short-gestation projects"?—The first choice will be tea plantations, where every thing is there for increased production except correct direction, purposeful policy decisions to remove all road blocks imposed on the Industry, after Land Reforms and the State became the owners. With this change there disappeared the vigorous drive in the areas of production, quality control—replanting and replacement of machinery. The irony of the situation is that after the takeover, every thing possible, was done to destroy the major source of foreign exchange earnings. Various devices were adopted and practised to run the industry down.

We will illustrate our accusation with an example of a 3000 Ac. tea estate which

we ran into recently. This estate was taken over under the L.R.C. Act 2. The company employees left the estate leaving everything as was and as it is. We were not able to find out how and why they abandoned, a fully equipped factory, which would cost over five million rupees to construct, a first class cut stone structure of bungalow in a beautiful setting which may cost around two million Rupees to construct, various other quarters to support the factory organisation. All these were abandoned seven years ago, including the 3000 Ac. plantation. There may be neglected, over-grown, eroded tea bushes here and there. When we took over the running of the country, all the damage had been done. This estate together with the plantations, buildings and all the infra structure necessary to grow and manufacture tea had been destroyed. But why are we lending a helping hand to continue with that destruction? It is still in that condition today.

From the national point of view, we will be producing around 3.5 million lbs. of tea less annually and we are losing an annual foreign exchange income of over 10.5 million rupees. Today we beg for it unashamedly. The present plans for this property, a national asset worth over 50 million rupees, is Gullbertian in concept and in thinking of a doomed Marie Antoinette "if you have no bread eat Cakes."

Finally to save the plantations it has become a "Presidential Ministry." Today more money is being spent on building activities than on Agricultural aspects to increase production; The explanation of the Planting community for the change is "There can be no opening and handing over ceremonies for a building where all the V.I.P.P. can be invited. Where is the glamour in planting a tea seedling and waiting for four years to organize a plucking ceremony?" We will be plucked out before that." So the building trades also flourish in the Plantation industries. IN THE OLDEN DAYS, each Estate worked to programme, targets of production, set cost of production per pound, plans for Agricultural development, Renovation of buildings, estimates for new buildings, and finally an audited balance sheet at the end of the year

is published. With the change of ownership these seemed to have been given up as irksome and not necessary as in other Public Institutions. Lack of working to targets may be the reason for the Plan Implementation Ministry to criticise the Performance of Plantation Industries during the year 1979. Time has come to take stock of the situation which is serious; and order a change of attitudes to increase production at least by 15% annually. Our Planters can do this, if they were given the responsibility and the authority to get work moving in their charge without unnecessary interference as was the rule before the state take over. Agriculture cannot be worked to office or Industry time schedules. The day's work must be completed irrespective of the time schedule.

"Rubber growing Industry" also suffers from the same ills as the Tea. Diagnosis is the same and the treatment is also the same. Here also the Agricultural side has been neglected and to save the useless, there is a talk of 'co-op diversification on rubber plantations also. So the money that should go to improve Latex Production is going into diversification projects. First let us get back to production of latex which is the primary product for which we have all the know-how and the infrastructure to push a head. And most of all we need the export earnings immediately. Co-op diversification can follow if we survive 1983.

Since we came into power we have also been thinking on the same lines as the previous regime. Their thinking and actions were designed to destroy; the Industry. They succeeded in this and we seemed to continue along the same path. If not there is no reason for the Central Bank researchers to bemoan the plight of the Industry. Since we did some original thinking and got down to the task of "reviving the sick Industry." Changing at administration levels is like changing the Pillow for a headache. In this area quick action is necessary because we have all the opportunities to earn good foreign exchange.

The other export crop where we earned a sizeable income is coconuts. After the Land Reforms coconut is a complete write off. It has become a National liability and a heavy contributor to increase the Cost of living index—both for man and beast.

THE ROAD TO RECOVERY in the coconut growing industry is long and tedious. Apart from what the L.R.C. did coconut properties have suffered the heaviest to the building and industrialization plans of the government and private sector alike. We do not think that the coconut properties will ever recover at any rate not during this generation. There is no more suitable land for growing coconuts, even if we resort to hair brain schemes like irrigation for coconut etc. The whole industry is suffering due to short sighted Policies, lack of planning, lack of correct directives, lack of proper management and a tragic void in thinking.

The Government has not understood the problems of the coconut growing industry yet. What we say is best illustrated by another example of what the Government is doing to destroy the coconut plantations. This example is similar to the fate of the tea estate quoted above.

Two weeks back we ran into one of the few large coconut estates in the country. When the owners managed it, it was a top rate estate. Since the State became the owner seven years ago, it has been fragmented and distributed to peasants, some sections were given over to a local industry to put up a factory and what is left has been neglected. Since the ownership changed, One of the old residents we met had this to say. "Since the estate was taken over, the land has not been manured, there is no programme of underplanting, the trees are as old as our grandparents"—our informant is no chicken, he was born and brought up on the estate from the good old days—"the crops have dropped so low that the Government will have to find other avenues of income to pay us." "Half the nuts of the estate are robbed only the balance is left to the estate."

There is no need to say that the situation is grave—every body is aware of it except the Government because the coconut and coconut oil, essentials in our food, cost from Rs. 2/- to Rs. 2/50 a nut, an Rs. 8/- a bottle of oil, this is unprecedented. The government is in blissful ignorance and so far done nothing to arrest the decay, except to advise the people to change their dietary habits, not to eat or drink "Kurumba", not to use Gokkota for decorations, irrigate coconut palms for greater production."

"If you do not accept our advice then brew in your own juice is the sort of attitude of the Government. We will speak about other crops etc. to support the Finance Minister's plea for production—the only road to salvation to the people and to our Party.

Concluded.

FILM FOCUS

Third Week

This column being a weekly, finds it a trifle difficult at times to keep pace with the rapid releases of English films on its trilingual trot and hopes *Tribune* readers will bear up, when reviews appear a little later than they should. It is a one man's job—and a part time one at that—yet the column will endeavour to bring in all reviews in fairly good time. Speaking from experience, I would hold out a word of advice to picturegoers, in that the best period to see a popular film is on its third week's run, when all the dust of the rush and the jostle, have settled down, to enable one to sit back calmly and ruminate the fare provided. Normally it is the three week marker that evaluates the quality of a film, and as a rule it can be safely accepted, that if an English film survives a twenty one days run, it is certainly above average fare. If this is kept in mind, the hard cash you pay for your cinema relaxation would not be wasted. The Sinhala and South Indian Tamil films on the other hand, run on like Tennyson's book, till a new release cuts short their course. It is no secret that where some Sinhala films are concerned, the respective producers themselves purchase the tickets to give a booster to the Box Office returns and also retain the continuity of weakening films at popular circuits.

AARIL IRUNTHU ARUVATHU VARAI (From Six to Sixty) Tamil: In recent years when the steady flow of South Indian Tamil releases to Sri Lanka were reduced to a trickle, a handful of young actors in that country had been arraying themselves to challenge the supremacy of better known stars like Sivaji Ganeshan, M. G. Ramachandran (now out of films), Muthuraman and a few others, on

whom age was catching up slowly and surely. Among these fledgelings headed by Kamalahasan, some of them shed their amateur talents gradually and their growing charisma, crept to Sri Lanka shores by the free flow of film literature, that went on uninterrupted, bringing them a name and fame in this country. Actor Rajani Kanth of whom we had glimpses in the film "Moonru Mudichchu" (Three Knots) was one such actor and his absence since on the local screens, created a vacuum that is filling up with this recent release—absence making the heart grow fonder, perhaps.

With a story spun cleverly by Panchu Arunachalam, tuned to the music of Ilayarajah, under the direction of S. P. Muthuraman—all big names in their respective fields—this coloured film however takes a tumble like Humpty Dumpty and misses even in parts to make the grade. The story although sprinkled with all the ingredients, loses its corresponding depth, in tying the sequences together, to mention class and continuity, with the strict formula line cutting into the story. Ingratitude is the theme, on which, the story revolves, where Rajani Kanth as the elder of an orphaned family, refuses a certain amount of self respect, higher education, and stature, at great personal sacrifice to those dependent on him. He flounders eventually into tragic penury as the "birds he nurtured and sheltered lovingly, sprout wings and leave him behind tied to the stake of poverty, as they fly away. Kanth who pursues that familiar histrionic stance taken by that well known actor A.V.M. Rajan, moved into his role well, but only displayed a part of his talent and reputed talents that were not tapped fully. Actress (Padda Padd) Jayalakshmi is Kanth's dutiful wife, Jaya as his ungrateful sister, with Cho as his friend in distress, kept the film on an even keel. In spite of its patent technical lapses, this film is worth a family visit for the lessons it has set out to preach to a parasitic and heartless generation that is growing up all around us. There is chance that the tragic ending of the film might waken their senses to a better way of life. The up and coming comedian Surulirajan who 'plants' the laughs amidst the tragic plot does so with a philosophic pinch of conviction.

SASARAKA PETHUM (Sinhalese): Director H. D. Premaratne of the Tashkent Festival

"Parithyaga" fame has handled this film too, which disappoints. Getting off in the first few moments with a 'bang' of promises, with better things to come, the film nose dives suddenly to peter out with a whimper. Shanti Lekha and the youthful Ajit Jinadasa of "Madol Duwa" fame, as an impoverished mother and promising son respectively, wallowing in poverty give a good head start to the story as they keep shoeing the wolf from the door, while living in the shadow of extravagance nearby. With the eclipse of both as the story moves on, and with their replacement by the more experienced actors Tony Ranasinghe and Suwineetha Kangahage (watch her infectious smile), the story hugs the formula line and sags painfully to tie up a far fetched plot that tapers tamely, with sentimentality, smuggling, and a touch of incest, that grinds the film thankfully to a timely halt. Actor Robin Fernando is one to watch in his rugged role and deserves better opportunities. Director Premaratne, I am sure has now grown out of churning such insipid stuff—how else can one explain his versatility in placing Sinhala cinema on the Asian map, with his "Parithyaga". Keep an eye on his future efforts, forgiving him this particular release.

LUST FOR A VAMPIRE (English): This is the latest in this horror series of creepy films, hit with a difference in that it is a seductive female—the daughter of Dracula—who prowls about enticing men with her destructive charms. And when she is at it, several other females of a finishing school follow suit, making overtures that come easy on the eye with their "exposures". This film is a mixture of horror and sex—as to which of it is more, I invite Dracula drawn adults to find out.

JAMES N. BENEDICT

NGUVU—4

Sanjay, Indira, & Paul

by Bwana Rafiki

When a member of the family told me last night that Sanjay was dead, just as the 9.15 p.m. news was about to start, I thought instinctively that Sanjay would be Sanjay Gandhi, and my instant reaction was the

opposite of what I felt when I heard that Lord Louis Mountbatten, Earl Mountbatten as he was at his death, had died. Mountbatten's death had saddened me. There was nothing controversial about his life, a man who stood so much for life. The famous Englishman and actor Robert Spraight writes that in the whole world he had yet to meet a person who could not recall the exact circumstances in which he came to hear of President John Kennedy's death, and Kennedy too, stood so much for life. I have yet to hear of anyone equating sterilization with life and not with death, and Sanjay Gandhi was its great protagonist. Now he will be seeing the stark truths about that and perhaps his mother will be a wiser woman. None of the Prime Ministers of the Interregnum learnt that lesson.

However, how ever much one may dislike Mrs. Gandhi yet, her devotion to her family, the way she stood by them, and her own courage cannot but evoke the greatest admiration. The way she refused to be intimidated by the State and the police would have put many a man to shame, and time has vindicated her because every one of the charges has been withdrawn. Certainly she is a very brave woman how ever many the mistakes she may have made. Political arrogance and political courage are two very different things and they may exist in large measure in the same persons. Another woman who has courage is our own Mrs. Bandaranaike. The kind of courage I am thinking of seems to be a woman's forte. All the women I know of seem to have it. It seem to be a long way from the subject matter of this series, but taking the title alone, *Nguvu*, it does after all mean strength, and even life, albeit the sort of strength that is life, and the kind of life that denotes strength, as I said.

When I went round the cattle last evening I found that my buffalo, Paul, had a wire string through his nose. It was rather late in the day to have it removed, and I thought it would cause Paul less discomfort to leave it on him for the night, uncomfortable and terrified as he must have been, for whoever heard of wire through a buffalo's nose? than to try to remove it at that hour, for Paul is a very nervous animal, and to try to do anything with him is always quite a performance. Actually, he is not too bad with other people; he cannot

stand the sight of me. He is a Sinhalese buffalo on both sides of his family tree and I think his obstreperousness with me might come from his father, for his mother was quite good with me. In fact I should think it would be truer to say it gives a clue as to who his father was for there were two male buffaloes running around at the time. The other one we still have with us, and Paul works with him in the cart. Paul has been kicking off his meagre nose strings, hence someone's bright idea about the wire. It takes an owner to see beyond a problem.

Anyway we got the wire off Paul's nose and put in a thicker nose string than any he had before. I am trying to write this in the small hours of the morning. I was feeling just too tired to do it earlier and lay down for a snooze, which needless to say lasted hours. When I woke up I first turned over in bed for another forty winks, which turned out to be another two hours. Eventually I just had to get up if there was to be any pretence that I had done my stint of writing on the correct day. My whole body was in a torpor, my head heavy with sleep. Thinking was out of the question. I could only write about what was immediately perceptible to my senses, which is what I am doing just now. The worst if it is that as last morning so this morning I still have to be up at 5.30 a.m. to go somewhere before breakfast. When I got back last morning from my jaunt I first fell into a deep sleep. I learnt later that others had done so, too, more unashamedly than I and with more excuse.

Writing for publication what amounts to a journal can become a real bind if only because mental fatigue takes it more out of a person than physical fatigue. Yet I can remember when I was twice really overwhelmed by physical fatigue, the occasions being once when I was cramming to get into Oxford, and the second occasion being after I got there, albeit in my first term, the Michelmas of my first year there—the first was occasioned by swimming, which left me so tired that I just could not study, and it was caused I think by the chlorine fumes in the swimming bath where I used to swim, so that I had to cut swimming right out. Swimming was the only exercise I could have at that time, and cutting it out so that I virtually cut out all exercises

meant that in the course of the next two months I got really fat. The second was occasioned by rigger, so that I gave up rigger and stuck only to rowing for the Michelmas Hilary terms. Rowing certainly made one very tired, but the after effects of each outing were much less.

So we come to the final day for this week's article. A nation's character comes out in the way it takes to sport. I suppose India can be said to comprise many nations, and the ones we are chiefly concerned with here are Tamilnad and our own Ceylon. I would say that the Tamils are perfectionists, certainly as regards the equipment they use. They want everything to be perfect, so that they can go out on the water, for instance, and try their hardest knowing that their efforts will receive no resistance from matter in the material sphere, so that a hundred per cent muscular effort will show itself in a hundred per cent response and not in ninety so that ten per cent goes waste. We in Ceylon seem to think that effort is all that is necessary, good will that will carry us through, the material conforming to our wishes, moulded to our thoughts, immaterial for all practical purposes. The result is, I suppose, that a hundred per cent muscular effort on the part of limb and wind achieves a result of only ten percent of the hundred per cent expended, and we are losers almost before we start. The Indian way reduces to mechanical dimensions what I think should really be an art.

—X— —X—

LETTER

Foreign Aid

Sir

Perhaps His Excellency the Ambassador of the FRG would not have rushed into print to correct what he claims is an error of my researcher with regard to the interest rate (and repayment and grace periods, which were not even mentioned in my article) of FRG Government loans to India, if he had read the second instalment of my article appearing on the 28th June issue of *Tribune*,

which, *inter alia*, referred to a statement by the West German Minister of Economic Co-operation.

His Excellency's letter does not fundamentally challenge the main thrust of my article, which clearly stated in thick print that the terms of Western aid have progressively deteriorated, since the private loans and credits have now reached 70.7 per cent of all transfers. Even if a relatively small quantum of Government loans are given on IDA terms, the bulk of loans are not favourable to the recipients and are on "tied" terms. Let me assure His Excellency that it was not my intention to imply that his country was more exacting in this respect than other western industrialised nations. The most important factor to bear in mind is the NET EFFECT of Aid and not the quantum of Aid. If it turns out that Western countries give larger quantities of "AID" than the Socialist countries-only to ensure that most of it reverses back into the donor countries, and that, "Aid" for Socialist countries does not carry this disadvantage, the quantitative comparison does not hold water. THE SOCIALIST COUNTRIES HAVE NOT SUBJECTED THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES TO OVER TWO CENTURIES OF UNEQUAL EXCHANGE. (ref. Article by Prometheus on "Rich and poor Nations" in recent issue of *Tribune*.)

I would suggest that His Excellency studies a very relevant article-namely, "Tied Credit-A quantitative analysis" by the Director of the World Bank's Research Department, Dr. Mahbub Ul Haq, printed in CAPITAL MOVEMENTS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, Proceedings of the International Economic Association, John Adler, ed. (NY: Macmillan, 1967).

Prometheus

Colombo.
July 7th.

University Teachers Salaries

60 PER CENT PAY RISE

The University Grants Commission (UGC) has been directed by Cabinet to arrive at a decision regarding a salary increase for university staff in consultation with the General Treasury, INSIGHT found. This move follows recent demands for a 60 per cent wage increase by university teachers associations of four major universities. Treasury sources indicated that the UGC and Treasury had arrived at a settlement but the salary increase would reach nowhere as high as 60 per cent. A spokesman for the Colombo University Teachers' Association said that he believes, a wage increase in the region of around 15 per cent for junior staff going down to a very much smaller percentage for the senior staff, was being proposed by the UGC. Describing this rise as a "facade" he said that the resignations from administrative and other special functions, submitted by the senior staff of the University would stand.

—Weekend, (6/7/80)

We publish below extracts from newspaper reports in the Weekend (6/7/80), the Ceylon Daily News (8/7/80) and also from a statement circulated by the Sri Jayewardenapura University Teachers' Association. These extracts speak for themselves:

FROM THE WEEKEND, front page under headline SEATS OF LEARNING CRUMBLE...
.....MASS RESIGNATION OF INTELLECTUALS.....PRIVATE EDUCATIONISTS CASH IN ON CRISIS:

"Sri Lanka's once internationally respected educational standards are today on the verge of rapid decline as the education system buckles under the drain of intellect and the poor input of facilities, an INSIGHT investigation has revealed. The country's vaunted free education system may soon be turning out youth equipped with diminishing standards of learning as universities and schools suffer from the outflow of poorly

paid teachers and the lack of facilities. The crisis in learning is already looming in the seats of higher education—the universities—which are today faced with the mass resignation of teachers from administrative posts in protest against their conditions of service. While the Universities are slowly being starved of highly qualified teaching staff to maintain academic standards which are today recognised the world over, educationists are expressing concern over the falling standards and lack of facilities in the high schools the INSIGHT team learnt.

"INSIGHT examined the situation in the universities, high schools teacher training institutions, heard the views of parents, teachers and administrators, and came up with a bleak picture. Teachers in both the universities and high schools complained of poor remuneration and referred to the much higher emoluments of personnel with the same capabilities and qualifications in industry, commerce, state departments, and other sectors. While on one hand the more able and qualified teaching staff is moving out to more lucrative fields, the authorities are going ahead with plans to establish even more higher educational institutions with little talent to draw from. Meanwhile, enterprising private educationists are cashing in on the students lack of confidence in the formal educational institutions and are thriving on numerous private "tutories" and "classes" which charge high fees, INSIGHT learnt. Educationists and parents complained to INSIGHT not only about the poor inputs and facilities and equipment but also about the disproportionate distribution of these resources among the vast number of schools serving rural masses and the few select 'elite' schools in the cities.

ON PAGE 6 OF THE WEEKEND (6/7/80) an article under the headline CRISIS STRIKES UNIVERSITIES stated:

"The crisis has already struck at Sri Lanka's six universities, with three of them now minus most senior staff at the top administrative level and advisory posts. The dissatisfaction of the academia over their terms and conditions of employment has reached its climax with the mass resignation of seven deans of faculties and 67 other senior staff members from their administrative and ad-

visory capacities during the past few weeks in the Colombo, Kelaniya and Sri Jayawardhanapura Universities. This staff is however, continuing with their teaching duties. A spokesman for a university teachers' association told INSIGHT that even a 40 per cent salary increase which had been recommended for university staff by the University Grants Commission last year had not been implemented and explained that the mass resignation was a trade union action taken by the staff as a last resort.

"In the University of Colombo the deans of the arts, law and education faculties, and all heads of academic departments of these faculties, as well as other senior staffers in administrative and advisory positions numbering 22 in all have resigned from these posts. In the University of Sri Jayawardhanapura a total of 30 senior staff members have resigned from their administrative posts including the deans of the science, humanities and management studies faculties, and 18 heads of departments. In the University of Kelaniya there have been 22 resignations by all heads of departments of the science faculty, the dean of the arts faculty and 15 heads of departments under this faculty.

"A senior university lecturer who preferred not to be identified told INSIGHT, 'Today a number of the science departments in the universities are facing shortages of staff especially at the highly qualified senior level as senior teachers leaving to take up far more lucrative posts in other sectors both here and abroad. Ironically they also are going to much better paid posts in universities in other developing countries such as Nigeria where our standard of teaching is very respected. In a number of departments vacancies have been filled by assistant lecturers who although less qualified and with little experience, are performing most of a lecturer's work. This means that teaching standards, and consequently students' educational standards are bound to go down. At present only those with first class or upper second class degrees are taken onto the teaching staff, but the shortage of teachers and the better pay elsewhere for those with such qualifications may mean that those with lesser qualifications may be taken on as University staff. Recently, when the recruiting team came from Nigeria,

dozens of very senior lecturers applied to it for employment in that country. If they all go it will mean a serious depletion of qualified staff here. The university staff is frustrated academically as well. For the past two years none of the science libraries on the campuses has purchased a single book. Only a few books were received as donations. No research journals have been purchased by the Colombo University library during the past five years. How are teachers expected to keep in touch with the latest world educational trends and developments in scientific knowledge without such facilities. What they are passing onto the students may soon be obsolete."

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ON JULY 8, THE CEYLON DAILY NEWS under headline: TEN THOUSAND BENEFIT.... ...HIGHER SALARIES FOR UNIVERSITY STAFF stated: "All University staff numbering over 10,000 (both academic and non-academic) will receive higher salaries, with retrospective effect from January 1 this year, Prof. Stanley Kalpage, Chairman University Grants Commission and Secretary, Ministry of Higher Education announced yesterday. The new salary scales for University staff follow a recommendation by the UGC which has been accepted by the government. The salary revision will cost the government an additional Rs. 10 million. "According to the revised salary scales a University Professor or a Registrar now receiving a monthly initial salary of Rs. 1750 (basic) will get Rs. 2,200/-. An assistant Lecturer now receiving a monthly basic of Rs. 800 will get Rs. 820. In the non-academic grades (clerical hands and library assistants) now receiving an initial monthly basic of Rs. 275 will receive Rs. 340. In addition to the new salaries, the UGC yesterday morning decided to extend the payment of special allowances now paid to University specialists in the Science-based faculties to those in the Arts, Education, Law, Commerce and Management Faculties if they have the Ph.D. The amount would vary from Rs. 200 to 500.

"Prof. Kalpage said that owing to the implementation of the revised salary scales, certain anomalies were likely to arise with

regard to the schemes of recruitment. The Commission would in due course revise the existing schemes of recruitments so as to remove such anomalies. Until such time, where an anomaly in the scheme of recruitment prescribed for any post had arisen such post should not be advertised and/or filled without the prior permission of the Commission. He said that consequent upon the implementation of the revised salary scales, some revisions would have to be effected in regard to the salary payable to the various categories

of casual/temporary employees. A further directive on that matter would be issued in due course, he said. He said that any anomalies resulting from conversion to the new salary scales should be brought to the notice of the Commission on or before August 15, 1980."

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FROM A STATEMENT OF THE SRI JAYEWARDANAPURA UNIVERSITY TEACHERS ASSOCIATION, circulated among its members the following extracts are revealing:

EFFECT OF THE REVISED SALARY SCALES OF UNIVERSITY STAFF

(Ref. U.G.C. Circular No. 84 of 02.07.1980)

Grade of Teachers	present salary scale	Revised scale
English Ins. Gr. II	660 — 8 x 30 — 820	725 — 6 x 25 — 875
English Ins. Gr. I	760 — 6 x 25 — 910	905 — 3 x 30 — 1025
Asst. Lecturer	800 — 7 x 30 — 1010	920 — 6 x 40 — 1160
Lecturer Gr. II	1100 — 5 x 40 — 1300	1300 — 5 x 40 — 1500
Senior Lecturer	1350 — 8 x 50 — 1750	1550 — 4 x 50, 4 x 60 — 1990
Associate Professor	1500 — 7 x 50 — 1850	1750 — 6 x 60, 2 x 75 — 2200
Professor	1750 — 4 x 50, 3 x 75 — 2175	2200 — 4 x 75 — 2500

The statement further examines the impact of this suggested revised salary scale as follows:

REVISED SALARY SCALES

A. Overall increases

Grade of Teachers	Increase at the initial		Increase at the maximum		Lowest Increase	
	Rs.	%	Rs.	%	Rs.	%
Professor	450	25.5	325	14.9	100	4.6
Associate Professor	250	16.7	350	19.0	60	3.3
Senior Lecturer	200	14.8	240	13.7	50	2.9
Lecturer Gr. II	200	18.0	200	15.4	40	3.1
Asst. Lecturer	120	15.0	150	14.9	40	4.3
English Instructor I	145	19.0	115	12.6	45	5.2
English Instructor II	65	9.8	55	6.7	25	3.1

B. Increments

(i) The rates of increments for English Instructors Gr. I, Gr. II and Assistant Lecturers which were Rs. 20, Rs. 25 and Rs. 30 respectively have increased to Rs. 25, 30 and 40. But the benefit of this has almost been nullified by the reduction of the number of increments. That is why there is a fall in the percentage increase at the maximum of these scales.

The rate of increment for Associate Professors has been increased from Rs. 50 to Rs. 60 and Rs. 75.

(ii) The number of increments in the Professors' scale which was 7 has been reduced to 4 thereby increasing the stagnation period at the maximum of that scale.

C. Conversion

(i) The conversion tables have been pre-

pared to reduce benefits to senior members to the minimum. This is illustrated by the following example: An Associate Professor who is now on Rs. 1700 is placed on Rs. 1810 giving him a benefit of Rs. 110 when there is a step at Rs. 1750. An Associate Professor who is one year senior and is on Rs. 1750 is also placed on Rs. 1810 giving him a benefit of Rs. 60 only. He could have been placed on Rs. 1870 providing a benefit of Rs. 120. If it was necessary to provide the more junior member a higher monetary benefit, one cannot understand why the more senior member should not be so benefitted.

(ii) Senior Lecturers now receiving salaries between Rs. 1550 and Rs. 1750 will receive only Rs. 50 when by a simple adjustment one more increment could have been given.

(iii) Lecturers, Gr. II drawing Rs. 1300 could have been placed on Rs. 1400. It would also have been in keeping with what has been done in the case of Associate Professors on Rs. 1700.

(iv) Assistant Lecturers drawing Rs. 950 could have been converted to Rs. 1040.

(v) English Instructors drawing Rs. 700 could have been converted to Rs. 750 and the consequent changes made for the next steps.

(vi) These would not have violated the "sacrosanct" F.R. 1120 and would not be point to point conversion.

D. Except for a few members of the academic staff who would be at the lower levels in their salary scales, it would have been very much better for the majority to have been given a 10% salary increase, as was done in 1979 by Cabinet decision dated 10.01.1979. That at least would have benefitted everyone equally."

The statement thereafter works out the conversions for each category, but this is of little consequence at the moment because the Sri Jayawardhenapura University Teachers Association has rejected this proposed salary scale.

THE FOLLOWING IS THE LETTER sent by the Sri Jayawardhenapura University Teachers' Association on July 4, 1980 to the Chairman, University Grants Commission, 18, Ward Place, Colombo 7.

Dear Sir,

SALARY REVISION OF STAFF OF THE UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION AND THE HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Reference the Commission's Circular No. 84 of 2nd July 1980.

I have been directed by the Association to inform you that the revised salaries as conveyed to the Universities by your Circular under reference are **totally unacceptable** to us since they do not meet our demands and are not even in keeping with the salary scales to which wide publicity was given by the Commission in January 1980.

Since it is the opinion of this Association that the revised salary structure as a whole is an anomaly no useful purpose will be served by pointing out individual anomalies.

Yours faithfully,

SGD: A. Ekanayake
Hony. Secretary.

SGD: W. B. Dorakumbura.
President.



AFGHANISTAN

Need For Negotiation

Washington, June 27,

A US view on the need for negotiations to end the Afghanistan crisis is expressed in the following commentary: Leonid Brezhnev has told western leaders he wants a political settlement of the Afghan crisis. And, it should be noted, there is no dearth of proposals for such a settlement. The problem is that there are wide gaps between the plan Moscow currently favours and the call by many other nations for the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghan territory. Not only is this gap a wide one, but there are no talks going on in any formal sense to close the gap.

President Carter offered one of the first suggestions for resolving the crisis in mid-February—less than two months after the massive Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. He proposed a Soviet troop withdrawal, with an interim peace-keeping force, possibly from other Muslim nations and possibly under UN auspices. He also called for recognition of

Afghanistan as a neutral nation, as well as establishing an Afghan government acceptable to its people.

Subsequently the nine European Common Market nations developed a peace plan with similar elements. And Islamic nations after two meetings in Islamabad, set up a committee, composed of the Foreign Ministers of Iran and Pakistan and the Islamic Conference's Secretary General, to seek a solution based on a Soviet troop withdrawal and recognition of Afghanistan's non-aligned status.

Soviet spokesmen have ignored or criticised these proposals, falling back on Brezhnev's contention that Soviet troops would be withdrawn when no longer needed. Recently, Moscow has linked any troop withdrawal with a plan announced by the Soviet-backed Kabul government in mid-May. This plan calls for agreements between Kabul and Iran and Pakistan to stop the infiltration of Afghan rebels, as well as guarantees of non-intervention by the United States. In the US view, the plan appears to provide for a political settlement first, to be followed by talk about troop withdrawal—talk that might well leave the actual withdrawal entirely in Soviet hands.

President Carter, during his visit to Yugoslavia, suggested a "transitional arrangement"—which a senior US official said might include Carter's original proposal that an Islamic peace-keeping force be used to prevent violence as Soviet troops leave. The US still insists on a complete Soviet troop withdrawal. Two other elements are seen as necessary for a satisfactory accommodation. One is recognition that the Soviet Union has a legitimate security interest in seeing that Afghanistan is not transformed into a hostile, anti-Soviet outpost on its borders. The other is that Afghanistan be restored to its status as a truly non-aligned and independent nation. What is needed now is negotiations toward these ends.

—USICA



INDIA

SANJAY

by R. K. Karanjia

Bombay, June 28,

SANJAY GANDHI was an extraordinary phenomenon, as extravagantly deified by his followers as he was derided by his foes and there was the inevitability of a Greek tragedy about his dramatic end in a plane crash. Was it premonition of a life doomed to be cut down at its climatic moment that drove him forward at a desperate speed which jumped the Doon School, an apprenticeship at the Rolls factory, the Maruti project, his first aborted stewardship of the Emergency, the crashback to power and de-facto leadership of the nation—and finally, Life itself, in his last self-destructive fight to death? And perhaps, it was a similar premonition of his mother, the Prime Minister that made him her favourite to whom she gave abounding love and faith, which was returned in a thousand fold measure, to an extent that Sanjay rose to be her most trusted political collaborator.

With Nehru's death had ended an era in India. His successors, torn between conflicting loyalties, were unable to chart out a precise path of national advance. Followed the Congress split, the value of which proved to be shortlived. By 1973, Mrs. Gandhi was all set to go on her own way and was desperately looking for a helping hand—young, dynamic and purposeful. And there he was—SANJAY, an archetype of the new youth, unconnected with the freedom movement, unenamoured of the ideals and ideology of Gandhi, Nehru and the older generation.

This great mother son partnership, again widely lauded by admirers and repudiated by detractors, was established during the Emergency, the first months of which were full of promise and performance. Indira's unshakable confidence in the young man was finally established when she came a cropper in the 1977 elections which she had ordered against his advice. This mutual confidence evolved into a splendid action-oriented partnership when both mother and son were hurled into political wilderness and persecution by a

vengeful regime of professional anti-Nehruites. It was during those 28 agonising months that she found him emerging as a super-political strategist, a natural mixture of Chanakya and Machiavelli, who quietly masterminded the downfall of their tormentors.

Not many people in this country had noted the cryptic remark by Sanjay made in Gurdaspur on January 2, 1979, that "the days of the Morarji Government are numbered." Six months later, his words proved prophetic. He knew what was coming because he was both the architect and engineer of the brilliant strategy which pulled down the Morarji and Charan Singh governments, forcing the latter to toll its own doom with this year's midpoll. The Indra Congress' landslide victory in both the Central and subsequent State elections in which Sanjay played the decisive role, laid the ground for the transfer of political power to the younger generation under his command. Sanjay became the messiah of the young set that bulked large in the newly elected Lok Sabha and Vidhan Sabhas.

THIS NEW GENERATION, however controversial and questionable be its class structure or past record, is impatient with the slow pace of economic growth, bureaucratic hurdles and political scuttles. In such a setting, Sanjay had become the natural and inevitable choice as the next Prime Minister of India to his proud mother no less than his victorious party. What will be the judgement of posterity and history on this controversial young man whose career has so tragically and prematurely been cut down? Today even his severest critic, the Editor of the *Indian Express* concedes that "he produced an impressive impact on slum clearance in Delhi and on the birth control movement in India" (the two most controversial performances hitherto cited against Sanjay Gandhi), to add, "he would not accept that because things had been done in a certain way they must always be done in that way. He was a prophet of changes." So he was. Never mind the direction in which he sought to take it, the action needed movement, and Sanjay provided the dynamics necessary to put it back on the wheels. He represented in his own brash, adventurist style the new post-independence generation of

the go-get type, action-oriented, unassailed by consideration of any ideology or philosophy.

He came flashing like a meteor into the Indian political scenario straight from the auto-workshop for a daring rescue operation on behalf of his mother who, after being caught in the deadly coils of an adverse judicial verdict in mid-1975, had virtually been deserted by her colleagues in the organisation as well as friends outside. And having performed this rescue operation with dazzling success, the meteor burnt itself out. Thus died a youth of tremendous if controversial possibilities and a potential Prime Minister. Sanjay died as he had lived in the only way he would have wished—as a daredevil, practising aerobatics in midair on board an untested stunt aircraft, in defiance of advice from indulgent elders. He always had a passion to go along the unbeaten track. In his burning desire to rush ahead, come what may, he side-stepped rules, regulations and protocol. This he did in Maruti down on this earth and apparently repeated it on Pittsaerobatics looping high in the air which proved fatal to himself, to his mother and to this nation.

In some ways he was like the "real unlimited seagull" of Richard Bach's allegory, **JONATHAN LIVINGSTON SEAGULL**. He believed that "Perfect speed is being there. To fly as fast as thought to anywhere that is, you must begin by knowing that you have already arrived....." That was how Sanjay approached every undertaking of his shortlived career. He had failures aplenty, but succeeded in making his last political achievement worthy of the "Great Gull" himself. And then, of course, the Gull had to take his most exciting, daredevil, death-defying flight—to death itself.

The impact of this tragedy on Indra Gandhi must have been terrible and terrifying indeed. For this heroic lady, it amounts to a holocaust, her whole world blown up. Her only consolation rests in the fact that the nation to its last man and woman share her bereavement. While offering the Prime Minister, Menaka Gandhi and the family our very sincere condolences and deepest sympathies, we suggest that this is the moment for a national consensus which alone can tackle

the stupendous problems facing her government.

In this context the late President V. V. Giri's call for a national government on the eve of his death, which assumes the significance of his last will and testament, becomes relevant to today's situation. We call all leaders of different parties and political groups beginning with the Congress factions to rise to the occasion with the offer of such a national consensus, at least on issues like Assam challenging the nation's integrity and independence

—In Blitz

MORE ABOUT

The Sanjay Crash

New Delhi, June 28,

SANJAY loved to live dangerously. It was his passion for daring which ultimately killed him in the aircrash on Monday. Although no less a person than a former Air Chief, Arjan-Singh has been quoted as saying that he heard a sound akin to an explosion, preliminary inquiries rule out any sabotage. Responsible sources of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation say that if there had been an explosion, the debris from the aircraft would have been scattered over an area of five kms. In this case, the debris is well within 20 metres.

As we write the Air Safety Wing of the DGGA is still carrying on preliminary inquiries. Every small bit of the dismembered aircraft is being shifted to a hangar in the Safdarjang Airport to be "re-assembled". This will give some idea of the possible cause of the crash, if it was through structural failure, which claimed the lives of Sanjay Gandhi and Capt. Subhash C. Saxena, a former Chief Instructor of the Delhi Flying Club, and an expert flier himself. The Pitts S-2A aircraft is a two-seater version of the Pitts Special. The seats are one behind the other. When flown solo, the pilot takes the rear seat. According to Jane's "All the World's Aircraft", the increased size and power coupled with aerodynamic changes, give the two-seater improved aerobatic and landing characteristics

and make it extremely stable in rough air conditions.

THEN WHAT WENT WRONG?

On Monday morning, Sanjay Gandhi, occupying the rear seat with Captain Saxena in front, took off at 7.50 a.m. He did some loops over the Control Tower of the Safdarjang Airport, now used only by the Flying Club and the Gliding Club and then went towards the Ashoka Hotel. All the time, the aircraft was in full view of the Control Tower. The conjecture is that he could have tried inverted flying may have stalled, and then hit the neem tree on the side of the big nullah behind 14, Willingdon Crescent, before crashing. Such was the force of the impact that several branches of the tree were slashed clean.

The Control Tower saw the aircraft disappear behind the Ashoka Hotel. People in the Tower were almost sure the aircraft had crashed. Immediately, a reconnaissance plane was sent up to locate the aircraft. It radioed the position of the mishap and crash and rescue tenders were rushed to the scene.

WITHIN MINUTES, Mrs. Gandhi also arrived at the site. Seeing the mangled body of her son, who had literally lit her comeback trail in national politics, she fainted. That was the mother in her. All physical manifestations of the emotional trauma were soon obliterated and she regained composure. Sanjay, his skull split, was still strapped to his seat. Capt. Saxena in the front seat, was in a worse condition. The rescue squad had to hack its way through the wreckage to reach the bodies. With their heads bashed up, death must have been instantaneous. After the bodies were extracted and removed to the hospital, Sanjay's chappals were still lying in the rear seat, identifying the person who occupied it. It is a miracle that the plane did not catch fire after the impact. It is made of steel tubes, fabric and wood, and would have been reduced to ashes within minutes.

Pitts is a purely sporting aircraft, meant only for aerobatics. Measuring 4.71 mtrs in length and 1192 mtrs in height, it had won several world championships. In fact, the name of the manufactureres itself is "Pitts Aerobatics". What was such an aircraft doing in a

Flying Club which normally imparts training for straight and level flying? Thereby hangs a tale.

It was bought (price around Rs. 3 lakhs by Thomas Mouget (India) Ltd., a Calcutta-based firm, and imported in 1977. Meanwhile the elections changed the political scene of the country. It was lying in Bombay till May this year, when it was cleared from the Customs. Imported in a knocked down condition, it was brought to Delhi and assembled here. The certificate of airworthiness was given by the DGGGA on June 19.

The first person to take it up, after it was test-flown by Capt. Kaminder Singh, Aviation Adviser to the Punjab Government, was Sanjay Gandhi. And he proved to be the last too. That was on June 21. The passenger in the front seat was Maneka. On Sunday evening, he persuaded a reluctant Dharendra Brahmachari to occupy the front seat. The Brahmachari, though himself a flier, was unwilling to expose himself to aerobatics. But Sanjay loved it. He did some inside loops, said to be a difficult manoeuvre, on Sunday. This probably gave him confidence to attempt inverted flying, which probably resulted in the crash.

"He was a damn good flier," said a senior DGGGA official of Sanjay who, after completing over 600 hours had not only secured his commercial licence but had an open rating. He was an official instructor in the Delhi Flying Club. He loved flying and was simply ecstatic about aerobatics. Ultimately, his ecstasy ended up in agony for his mother and wife.

—Blitz Delhi Bureau

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New Delhi, July 5.

There is more than meets the eye in the reasons which prompted the Government to withdraw the order appointing a formal enquiry into the Pitts S-2A crash which caused the death of Sanjay Gandhi and Capt. Subbash Saxena on June 23. Besides the loss of two valuable lives, the Pitts aircraft could have been the direct cause of adversely affecting the careers of two senior officials. While the unceremonious removal of Air Vice-Marshal Zaheer from the post of the Director-General of Civil Aviation has now been directly linked

with the letter which he wrote to Minister of Civil Aviation, J. B. Patnaik, pointing out the violation by Sanjay Gandhi of safety regulations, a possible cause which added to the latter's anger could have been the DGGGA's reluctance to issue a certificate of airworthiness to this aircraft.

Blitz understands the other official to come under the evil shadow of the Pitts is G. S. Sahwney, member, Customs, in the Central Board of Excise and Customs. It is being said that a cushy UN assignment was literally snatched away from him when it became known that it was at his instance that the Customs refused to clear it at Bombay when it landed in crates. In January 1977, and that he also came in the way of its subsequent release. He was assured by a majority (88 member-Governments) of the UN backing to him for the post of Director in the Customs Co-operation Council, it is a UN job carrying attractive perks. His name was cleared by the Finance Ministry, and he left for Geneva on June 10. Two days before the election his name was withdrawn by the Government of India.

Kozarek gifted planes like perfumes. Though these allegations have no direct bearing on the crash, they would have haunted the proceedings in an open enquiry as initially ordered. Strictly stipulated norms, whether in its import or for flying the aircraft, were thrown overboard without fear or compunction.

An Inspector of the DGCA who is conducting the inquiry, may be able to give his conclusions on the structural failure if any, or in the alternative, a possible human error, which led to the crash. But the numerous other questions crying for an answer, on how the aircraft came to be assembled on the hangars of the Delhi Flying Club. Although its ownership has been claimed by a Calcutta-based company, Thomas Mouget (India) Pvt. Ltd., which in turn is owned by the Apeejay group, or the reasons why Joe Kozarek gifted this aircraft to it, cannot come within the limited scope of a DGCA investigation.

From the speeches of members, made in the course of the debate on a calling attention motion in the Rajya Sabha, it appears that this Kozarek, an American Jew of Polish

(origin, had been gifting aircraft like perfumes. J. P. Mathur said he was black-listed in 1970 when he tried to bribe an Indian Airlines official for pushing the wares of Douglas Aircraft Company). But he continued to operate as if nothing had happened.

Three more crashes of gift planes.

Three out of four aircraft gifted by him have crashed. A Bonanza crashed in UP and then came the crash near Bhanatpur of the Twin Beechcraft while it was on its way to Jaipur, killing three persons including the pilot, a serving officer in the Indian Air Force. Sanjay and a few of his friends had a close brush with death in the same Beechcraft about two months back. They were going to Srinagar and the aircraft was grossly overloaded. Because of the load the aircraft could not take-off, and just about the end of the runway the take-off was abandoned. The plane swung to one side damaging the under-carriage. The matter was, however, not pursued by the DGCA for reasons which are not far to seek.

J. P. Mathur told the Rajya Sabha that the Pitts was meant to be a bribe for the sale to Indian Airlines of another Aircraft A-9. Members also expressed surprise over the strange procedure of the DGCA issuing a certificate of airworthiness to the Pitts on the basis of inspection by the Chief Aviation Adviser to the Government of the Punjab. The certificate was issued on June 21 and the aircraft crashed on June 23.

Director General or Sycophant? One single agency responsible for the crash is the DGCA, which turned the Nelson eye on the wholesale violation of safety rules by Sanjay. None, barring AVM Zaheer, had the guts to pull him up for this. The officiating Director General of Civil Aviation, Kathpalia was present at Safdarjang Airport on the day of the crash. In fact, according to reports, he used to be present whenever Sanjay chose to fly. He did the loops and other aerobatic stunts in the former's presence with impunity. Yet another basic precaution ignored, when Sanjay took off in the Pitts along with Capt. Subbash Saxena, was the non-removal of the pin which secures the joy-stick in the cockpit occupied by the latter.

DGCA affairs under scrutiny. Capt. Saxena was medically grounded because of the hernia operation he was to undergo. He

was, no doubt, an experienced flier and an able one at that, but he was no stunt pilot. Suddenly, caught in the aerobatics, and finding the aircraft coming below the safety height, he may have tried to take 'corrective' action, which means reversing the process initiated by the pilot, thus jamming the controls. It is not our contention that this led to the crash, but experts do not rule this out. Any action on the part of Capt. Saxena would have been an involuntary one. This possibility is under investigation.

Meanwhile, the DGCA affairs are under scrutiny. Both the Supreme Court as well as the Delhi High Court have looked askance at the appointment of Arjun Dass, a scooter mechanic-turned-politician, who was a close associate of Sanjay Gandhi, as receiver of the Club during the pendency of a disputer raised by the former President, B. R. Chopra, incidentally, Arjun Dass had also tried his hand at flying. And the guru in his case, also was Capt. Subbash Saxena.

—Joga Rao, Blitz

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ASSAM

Century-Old Distrust

by J. N. Barman

THE NINE - MONTH OLD Assam movement on the foreign nationals issue has entered a very critical stage after the expiry of the date of ultimatum given to the Centre by the leaders of the movement. They have now decided to identify and deport foreigners with the help of their volunteers. On the other hand several lakhs of people belonging to the minority communities have paraded the streets of the main towns of the four lower Assam districts in response to the call of the newly born Minority Students Union. They have submitted a memorandum to the Government demanding protection to their life and properties and supporting 1971 as the cut-off year for identification and deportation of foreigners.

Students and others belonging to the minority communities participated in the movement in a massive way from the beginning

till the end of 1979, though with lot of distrust. But after the north Kamrup incidents most of them have lost their faith in the leadership of the movement and its avowed aim. Now they have second thoughts.

Leaders and supporters of the movement left no stone unturned to snuff the first phase of the minority communities movement, but in vain. Clashes took place between the supporters of the movement and the supporters of the minority community students Union at several places as a result of which 45 people have lost their lives, 16 of them in police firing. Now the movement of the minority communities has been branded as the movement of the "so called foreign nationals backed by Congress I and some left political parties" with the "connivance of the Government, holding Mrs. Gandhi responsible for it. They also threatened that no such movement will be allowed to grow in future and it will be crushed at any cost.

In the first week of January this year, more than 100 innocent people were killed by the rioters in different parts of north Kamrup. Some of their names and addresses appeared in three local weeklies, namely, *Mujahid*, *Kalakhar* and *Nagarik*. Among them a prominent CPI worker of Nalbari area was burnt alive. 25 immigrant Muslims were killed in broad day light in Chaul Khowa village near Mukalmua, 17 Bengali Hindus were killed in Polokhata village near Dhamdhoma and others lost their lives in different villages at the hands of the rioters. Fifteen thousand people, coming from the riot-affected areas to the refugees camps established in Nalbari, Mukalmua, Ranghapali and some Sarthebari areas, were called "Bangladeshis" by the movement leaders and their supporting papers.

THE ASSAMESE PEOPLE'S complex of Bengali domination goes back to the late thirties of the nineteenth century when Assamese language lost its rightful place to Bengali in the local schools and courts in 1837. That fear disappeared for a very short period when Assamese was recognized for use in courts and schools of Assam proper under a Bengal Government order of 19 April 1873. Fears were again aroused when the British Government decided on 12 September 1874, to incorporate the populous Sylhet district (17,200,000 population) into Assam which was historically

and ethnically an integral part of Bengal. Since then the Assamese began also to fear that the Muslims also will dominate them. These fears have gained expression at different times in history.

Since 1915, Bengali Hindus and Muslims began to enter Assam in large numbers and as a result the population of Assam proper increased to 70 lakhs in 1920 (40 per cent increase between 1900-1 and 1920-21). This alarming growth of population due to influx from the undivided Bengal and other parts of India agitated the minds of even late Chandra Nath Sharma who was known to be a radical Congressman. He wrote in a private letter to a friend of his on 7 May 1920 "My honest and sincere opinion is that if I cannot go to the reformed Council much harm will be done to Assam. Something has to be done by the Government regarding the foreign settlers (large-scale influx from Bengal). Otherwise Assam will have to face very bad days and miserable situations our national identity will disappear....."

THOUGH IMMIGRATION WAS A WELCOME phenomenon for labour-short land-abundant Assam from the economic point of view, the Line System was adopted in 1920 in order to settle immigrants in segregated areas to prevent further influx of them. But line or no line, the natural law of competition was in full operation. Whatever feeble attempts were made to set up lines in Goalpara district, these were found self-defeating. Local people could not be stopped from selling their lands in even "lined" villages to immigrants at higher prices.

The Karachi resolution of the Indian National Congress (literally interpreted) gave the immigrants every right to acquire landed property anywhere and everywhere they liked. Expressing reaction to that resolution, late G. N. Bordoloi wrote to Dr. Rajendra Prasad in November 1937, "Our people feel that adequate reservation must be there. Short of a rigid line system, the linguistic problem would arise in the coming years." Nilmani Phukan and Ambikagiri Roy Choudhary presented to Nehru at the same time, "Bengali Mussalman immigrants were willing to identify themselves with the Assamese people in the matter of language and culture, but were

now being persuaded to read Bengali." In course of discussion they pointed out "As a means of saving the Assamese race from extinction, a considerable section of the Assamese intelligentsia has even expressed their minds in favour of secession of Assam from India." In the memorandum submitted by them, they demanded separation of Sylhet and Cachar plains from Assam and a halt to the mass immigration into the Brahmaputra valley.

Nehru agreed on the desirability of separation of Sylhet from Assam. But he argued "sparsely populated and land-rich Assam could no longer continue to remain so with an overcrowded province flanking it. Immigration was, therefore, bound to take place as an economic necessity. No amount of sentiment, not even law, would stop it." Even from the economic point of view of developing Assam and making it a wealthier province, "immigration is desirable", he wrote to the then president of the APCC. Thus though not in favour of total abolition of the Line System, Nehru wanted relaxation of the same.

Thereafter, a Government resolution of 21 June 1940, put a ban on the settlement of wastelands with any immigrants entering Assam after 1st January 1938. But to appease the Muslim public an assurance was given that the line in respect of non-tribal and non-backward people would soon be done away with. In the 1940s the demand for the abolition of the Line System had converged on the demand for a six-province Pakistan that would include Assam. In January 1946, the province's Muslim electorate stood in a massive way behind these demands under the banner of the Muslim League.

ON THE OTHER SIDE, the Bordoloi government took strong and effective measures to evict thousands of immigrants from Assam and that looked like a countermeasure to the demand for Pakistan. But ultimately Bordoloi wisely decided to go slow with his policy of eviction and thus kept the province free from communal riots.

Till the time of independence, the Brahmaputra Valley had Hindu majority and the Surma Valley Muslim majority. In the whole province, the Muslims constituted almost one-third of the total population. But the Bengali-speaking people continued to outnumber the Assamese

well until the partition of Assam in 1947. The transfer of Sylhet from Assam under the partition plan substantially reduced the number of Muslims and the Bengali-speaking people as a result of which the percentage of Assamese speaking people rose to 51 per cent in 1951 and thus the Assamese-speaking people became a majority and its fear of being swamped by the Bengalis was gone for some years. As a result of immigrant Muslims identifying themselves with the Assamese language and culture during the 1950s, the number of Assamese-speaking people rose to 61 per cent in the whole province in the 1961 census and that continued in the 1971 census also.

Now the same fears of being overwhelmed and losing identity have appeared in an unprecedented dimension in the minds of the Assamese people because of the allegedly "silent and secret invasion" made by the foreigners from one-time East Pakistan and now Bangladesh, and Nepal. It is alleged that some 40 to 50 lakhs foreigners are living in Assam and they have threatened the future existence of the Assamese people.

In support of the figures of foreigners quoted above, it is argued (1) the number of voters increased by 12 lakh during 1957 and 1971. In sharp contrast, the number of voters increased between 1971 and 1979 by some 28 lakh i.e., more than 3.5 lakh a year, (2) A spokesman of the BSF reportedly stated that 11 lakh Bangladeshis had stayed back in India after 1971 liberation war. (This was, however, later contradicted by the BSF); (3) Population of Assam has increased by 34 percent from 1951 to 1971 and it is most likely to increase more after the end of the next decade when the estimated population of Assam will be 188 lakh in 1979-80.

THE NINE - MONTH - OLD MOVEMENT of Assam people has caused immense harm to the people of India in general and the people of Assam in particular. One academic year has been lost by the students of Assam. Unprecedented economic hardships have come to the people, particularly to its weaker sections, and mental anxiety has made life miserable. So, people want the earliest solution of the problem within the four walls of the Constitution and the Citizenship Act, Inter-

national pact and understanding made under it. Leaders of the movement are also showing full respect to the Constitution in unequivocal terms and they want a solution of the problem under it. The Government is bound to work under the Constitution and so no solution of the foreign nationals problem can be imposed by it on the people of Assam which is not legal and constitutional. But the Constitution is not what one likes to call it. It has a meaning and spirit of its own. It cannot be interpreted at the cost of the nation and its people.

The foreign nationals problem of Assam is a national problem. It has to be solved by the national Government. By denouncing the all-India political parties, attacking their leaders and workers and calling them "traitors and abettors of the foreign nationals", the problem cannot be solved. Yellow journalism and suppression of facts cannot help it either. It is a human problem. A human approach must be made. Any solution devoid of humanitarian consideration cannot stand and last. The political parties have to assert though it is late, and prove their relevance in the present stir-ridden Assam political situation.

—Patriot



IRAQ

First Steps To Limited Democracy

by Varuna Karunatileke

(Tribune representative in a group of Sri Lankan journalists who were invited to witness the June 20 elections in Iraq).

IRAQ took what could be the first step towards a form of limited democracy when the ruling Baath Socialist Party held countrywide elections to elect 250 members to the National Assembly.

The newly formed National Assembly will function as a consultative body rather than a legislative or an executive body. The executive powers will remain with the Revolutionary Command Council led by President Saddam Hussein. President Hussein or mem-

bers of the Revolutionary Command Council were not required to stand for elections.

The election process had many unique features. The country was divided into 56 constituencies and number of candidates elected from each constituency varied according to the population of such electorate, each elected candidate represented 50,000 people.

Voters of different constituencies had different number of votes. For example if 5 members were to be elected from one constituency each voter of that constituency had 5 votes. But a voter cannot cast all 5 votes for one candidate.

There were a number of restrictions on candidates. Only Baath Socialist Party nominees and independents who accepted and supported the Baath party policies and ideology were entitled to stand for elections. Therefore the party policies cannot be discussed or criticised by the candidates.

The Communist Party of Iraq which is unofficially banned and Anti-Baath Party dissidents were not entitled to stand the elections. Therefore the elections were not fought on different policies or ideologies of candidates. But on who was more popular and better known among the voters.

Out of 840 candidates the voters had to elect 250 candidates for the National Assembly. The election campaign of all candidates were financed by the state and all means of campaigning were allowed except house to house campaigning. But with all these restrictions on candidates voting was relatively free. VOTERS in large numbers a majority of them being women were seen at polling stations in and around Baghdad. This being the first general elections held for more than two decades and the first time in the recent history of Iraq women were allowed to vote. A majority of voters were casting their votes for the first time in their life. A large number of voters specially women, seemed to be uncertain and sometimes unable to decide on whom to cast their votes. Some voters were seen consulting others in deciding on whom to vote.

It certainly was not a general ballot. According to the English daily news paper Baghdad Observer, 6.5 million voters, 85% of the eligible voters had cast the votes in the general elections.

Even with these restrictions and limitations having any kind of elections in a country where the ruling Party is in complete control is a good sign. If the General Election is the beginning towards a more democratic form of government in Iraq, well and good. But if the election was a eye wash and was held simply for propaganda purposes the whole exercise is meaningless.

X X X

MALAYSIA

Where Racialist Policies Subvert Health Care

by Ian Grant

World Medicine, February 23, 1980,

MANY DOCTORS IN MALAYSIA including politically uncommitted Malays, are unhappy about the way racial discrimination is damaging Malaysian medicine. But any mention of discrimination would expose them to a charge of sedition. Non-Malay doctors complain that colleagues abroad know nothing of their plight and wonder why it has not received the publicity given to conflicts between doctors and government elsewhere.

To a British visiting professor of medicine in Kuala Lumpur there was always something idyllic, on returning home after a busy day, in taking a leisurely stroll in the balcony evening air along an avenue lined by fragrant frangipani trees. Life was indeed pleasant, with a comfortable house, an air-conditioned car and a multitude of friends. In some other Asian countries such a gracious life-style might have evoked feelings of guilt, but with Malaysia's abundant natural resources, the vast majority of the population is living well above the poverty line. Why then, you may wonder, did someone like myself, who had relished the challenge of developing a new university department of medicine, resign from his post after completing only one year of a two-year assignment, and exchange the delights of that delectable land for the bleak British winter of snow and ice and industrial discontent in January 1970?

I had paid a brief visit to Kuala Lumpur in 1973, when the National University of

Malaysia was admitting its first medical students. I received a friendly welcome from all the people I met, and admired the energy and initiative of the first dean of the new faculty of medicine. I spent a week at the order established University of Malaysia Medical School, which had produced its first graduates in 1969, and was immensely impressed by the superb design and construction of the combined University Hospital and Medical School, which in these respects must still rival the best in the world. The then dean, Professor T. J. Danaraj, was a man of seemingly unlimited energy and imagination. His forceful personality and singleness of purpose, at times earned him a measure of unpopularity, but also enabled him to create a first class medical school and to produce graduates as well trained as those from most British universities.

PERHAPS, INEVITABLY, dynamic and powerful personalities who create a new and highly efficient organisation through the exercise of firm authority begin to lose their influence and support when their brain-child is safely weaned. So I was not altogether surprised when I returned to Kuala Lumpur five years later to hear that Professor Danaraj was no longer dean of the faculty of medicine, having gone to Saudi Arabia to found a new medical school. Yet when I arrived at Kuala Lumpur in January 1978, the heritage of firm academic discipline and sound classical teaching he had left behind was still one of the dominant influences in Malaysian medicine, and the University Medical School continued to produce excellent graduates.

However, even in 1973, I was conscious of three serious defects in the Malaysian medical services. First there were too few doctors in Malaysia, particularly in the rural areas. Second, there was a predominance (approaching 90 per cent) of Chinese and Indian medical graduates from the University of Malaya (although these races constituted rather less than 50 per cent of the total population). And third, a very high proportion of doctors, left the government or university hospitals as soon as they were entitled to do so, to pursue vastly more lucrative careers in private practice.

The obvious solutions were to increase the total number of medical graduates while

maintaining existing standards; to ensure that more Malays were afforded the opportunity of medical training, and to increase the salaries of all state-employed doctors (including university staff) to a level at which the temptation to enter private practice would be significantly reduced. When I heard that the new medical school being established at the National University of Malaysia was to give preference to Malay applicants, I had no doubt that this was a move in the right direction, and was delighted when I was invited to become its first professor of medicine.

I TOOK UP MY APPOINTMENT In January 1978 with high expectations, but I soon realised that something was seriously amiss. Because of the shortage of experienced Malay doctors, it was obvious that the teaching staff of the faculty of medicine in general, and of the department of medicine in particular, would have to be multi-racial. I naturally assumed that appointments would be made only on grounds of academic merit and that all members of staff, whether Malay, Chinese or Indian, would receive equal treatment in respect of salaries and promotion prospects.

This proved not to be the case. There was considerable reluctance to appoint non-Malay lecturers, even if they were of higher calibre than their Malay competitors. Furthermore, discriminatory steps—like imposing a difficult examination in the Malay language on subjects totally unrelated to medicine—were taken to prevent the salaries of non-Malay members of staff from rising above a relatively low point in their salary scale. Often, a very able non-Malay doctor would receive a lower salary than a more junior and less competent Malay. Malays were also preferred for their headships of departments to non-Malays who had superior qualifications and experience. Discrimination even extended to academic discipline, and I was finally forced to resign because the university resolutely declined to take disciplinary action against a Malay lecturer who had refused to undertake his academic duties.

The same policy—a form of academic racial discrimination—is now being imposed on the University of Malay-Medical School. A large number of able Chinese and Indian professors and lecturers have already resigned either to

emigrate from Malaysia or to enter private practice.

ANOTHER AND PERHAPS MORE COMPELLING reason for these resignations has been that children of non-Malay citizens have little chance of obtaining a university education in Malaysia under the present regime. Although ethnic Chinese constitute almost 40 percent of the total population, they are now allocated little more than 10 percent of university places. Most non-Malay doctors in Malaysia can obtain a university education for their children only by sending them overseas and, to do so, they require the financial rewards which can accrue only from private practice. I have recently discovered that Malaysian applicants for places in most British medical schools are accorded very low priority on the grounds that there are adequate training opportunities in Malaysia. Thus Chinese and Indian medical training are doubly disadvantaged, because they are denied a chance of obtaining places in both Malaysian and British medical schools.

These policies have had a crippling effect on the health services of Malaysia. The country has lost hundreds of its most skilled doctors by emigration and as none of the large number of experienced specialists who have entered private practice is permitted to work in government or university hospitals, the standard of medical care in all these hospitals is steadily declining. Even Malay doctors are leaving government and university posts to enter private practice because their salaries are so low that they cannot maintain an adequate standard of living. This is the result of the policy inherited from, but now abandoned by, the British, whereby even the highest paid state employed doctors, with very few exceptions, are paid on a lower scale than senior civil servants.

The Malaysian government could rectify the whole unhappy situation simply by abandoning racial discrimination in the staffing of its medical schools and hospitals, increasing the salaries of all its doctors to a level which would discourage them from entering private practice, and offering part time contracts to those who decided to do so. Instead, it plans an explosive increase

in the number of medical graduates, by more than doubling the intake of students to the existing two medical schools, and opening a third school in a remote part of Malaysia. Now that a high proportion of non-Malay clinical staff, most of very high calibre, have either emigrated or entered private practice, there is no prospect of finding enough competent doctors to staff three medical schools, and a dramatic decline in the previously high standard of Malaysian medical graduates is inevitable.

I record these observations with profound sadness, because I have a warm affection for the Malaysian people of all races, and was able during my short stay in Kuala Lumpur to achieve a close rapport with my medical students. It was clear to me, however, that the Malay-dominated government was more interested in pursuing its racialist policies than in promoting the health and welfare of its people. There is wealth enough in Malaysia to provide a full and happy life for all its citizens, and it will be little short of tragic if the health services, in particular, are reduced to mediocrity, or worse, as a result of misguided political attitudes, for which all three races must bear some degree of responsibility.

I have many happy memories of Malaysia, but I am still haunted by the specie of potentially prosperous country failing to grasp a golden opportunity to set an example to the world on the humane and just operation of a multiracial society, particularly in matters concerning health care.

—Courtesy: *World Medicine* February 23, 1980

AN APPEAL

For Justice And Development

by Pio Clampa S.J.

(Estate People's Services, Kahawatta, has sponsored 57 volunteer Teachers in 49 Estate Schools, thanks o a donation from NOVIB, Holland).

JUSTICE AND GRATITUDE demand that past mistakes be Not repeated. Long ago, at Rye Estate, Balangoda, there was a Rubber Division. An old Rubber Factory, with an iron structure and corrugated sheets was situated along the main road. The British planter had al-

most decided to demolish it when local people, Buddhist monks included, approached him and suggested that the old Rubber Factory instead of being demolished be transformed into an Estate School. No expenditure was involved and so the planter agreed to it. Believing that, as a good planter, he had to look after tea and had no time to.....waste after school problems, very progressively, he had the Rye Estate School Taken Over by the Government as far back as 1953. In the same year, some other British Planters did the same and so the Doloswela, Colombogama, Dela, Kiribaghagalla Estate Schools were the first to become G. H. T. Schools (i.e., Government Tamil Mixed Schools).

From 1953 to 1980 all these Tamil Government Schools have remained as they were, plus the deterioration and decay brought by the passing of the years. In 27 years, Governments of different colours and shaded came and went. In one thing they followed the same policy; all of them did Not Care for the Estate Schools. In 27 years, there has been no improvement and Not One Single Building Has Been Added To The Old Decaying Ones Taken Over Then. This was very clearly stated by no other than the District Minister, Mr. L. M. L. Aboosally, at the opening of the new building at the Rye School, Balangoda in March 1980. Soon after his victory at the elections of 1977, Mr. Aboosally, who speaks Tamil and who knows well the plight of the plantation workers because he himself has been a plantation owner and a social worker involved in many social activities, promised to the Principal of the Rye School that he would give the necessary funds to put up a new building to the old....."Rubber Factory-turned into a school." At the opening ceremony, Mr. Aboosally said that new building would be the first of many others, because he dreams of giving a new one like that to every Estate School (may his dream become a reality soon!) The present Government committed to "build up a *dharmista samaja*" is bound to treat the plantation workers with more justice and gratitude.

THE PLANTATION WORKERS have a very sad experience of the last Take Over in 1977. In a hurry, or a political move, just to fulfil

a promise left too long a time unfulfilled, and in the hope of getting the decisive Tamil vote, the previous Government, in April 1977 took over some 400 Estate Schools.

The Board in front of the School had a very minor alteration: Only an "E" was removed and "E-state School" became..... "State School". Then the new Government came in; with the good intention of improving the educational standards, school teachers were sent to the Training College, without replacement and so many (E) "State Schools" were closed down.

Tamil plantation workers were badly disappointed. Their decisive new votes had contributed to the victory of the UNP in the 8 electorates of the Ratnapura district. Because of that; here and there, they were assaulted, and few of the Tamil schools were burnt down (more than a racial trouble, the August 11, in the Ratnapura district was a political 'trouble' and 'vendetta'—revenge). On the walls of one of the Estate Tamil Schools burnt down one read in big letters: "We will come back in 1983". Tamil plantation workers therefore had hoped that the new Government so sincerely committed to "build up a just society" in racial harmony, would have expressed its gratitude and improve the schools for their children. That did Not take place. They felt betrayed and the "just society" became still loss visible.

Last May Day, I was invited to take part in a shramadana work organized by the Parent-Teachers' Development Society to put up a temporary new building for the two overcrowded GTM (Government Tamil Mixed) School at Colombogama (one of those taken over as far back as 1953). The Principal with sadness showed the frequent letters written to the Department to ask for an extension of the school. She regretted to state that her letters had Not Even been acknowledged.

Last year 1979, according to the Government reports, there has been the ever highest profit in foreign exchange thanks to Tea And Rubber (workers): Rs. 7,650,000 (read: seven billion and hundred and fifty million; or, if you prefer: Seven Thousand 650 million). That's surely "Big Cash" (Sun headline). That "Big Cash" has been gained by the

sweat, sufferings and deaths of Plantation Workers. Have they Not A Right that at least a tiny share of that "Big Cash" be used to improve the schools where their children study?

NO ONE CAN DENY IT: from 1953 every Government Did Not Care For Them. Figures prove It too evidently:

	Plantations	Urban	Rural
No Schooling	38.9%	11.4%	15.8%
Reached Middle School	8.8%	37.9%	31.7%
Illiterate Women	51.8%	15.7%	21.2%

(Socio-Economy Survey 1969-70, quoted by G. Gnanamuttu in THE CHILD IN THE PLANTATIONS, P.3). That's a scientific proof of the neglect of the Estate Schools and children.

When one remembers the ever highest (in more than 100 years of tea and rubber) foreign exchange obtained by the Government in 1979, one is compelled to appeal for Justice, Gratitude And Development of the Estate Schools. To treat the Estate Schools as they have been treated so far is surely An Injustice, An Ingratitude and A Betrayal of the best traditions of "Maitri, Karunawa and Mudhita" (Wesak and Posen Messages).

ANOTHER SCIENTIFIC PROOF of such injustice and ingratitude is given by the statistics of Estate Schools: all policy of a "Slow Killing" has been followed:

ESTATE SCHOOLS

1968—968 with 51,431 pupils
 1955—891 (less 77) with 67,110 pupils
 1972—779 (less 112) with 100,000 pupils
 1977—639 (the government took over 390 and reduced them to 250, thanks to a so-called policy of "centralized schools", with one clear consequence; many more plantation children remained without schooling (ib.p.9).

The story is a very sad and pathetic one: schools were reduced in number while the number of children increased, as well as the over-crowding which makes education in such "school-rooms" (the written law required from the planter only a "school-room" often with one teacher for 5 classes) a blasphemy against the Plantation child and worker.

In June 1980 some 350 schools will be taken over. One would like to hope that such "a

date with destiny" will offer to the "Dharmista Government" a golden opportunity to repair the mistakes of the past, eliminating Injustice and Ingratitude. The TAKE OVER must mean an Uplift and Development of such Estate Schools to the standards of Government Schools. The Plantation Workers see the adjoining and village schools and the Maha Vidyalaya of the area expanding and adding new buildings, while their (E)State schools even 27 years after having been taken over, remain as they were (plus the decay and deterioration of old age). The Dharmista Samaja Cannot allow such an unequal, undemocratic and anti-socialist situation to continue.

Hence this appeal for justice to and development of the (E)State schools. The "big cash" of Rs. 7,560 million in 1979 could easily become the source from where to take the necessary capital for the upliftment and development of these schools. The "No Money" refrain is a lie which cannot be tolerated any longer: Plantation Workers now know the other refrain of Rs. 7,650 million in 1979. June 1980, three years after the elections of 1977 and three years before those of 1983, is an auspicious date to remove such an "adharmista" situation, in the light of the Wesak message. New Teachers, new buildings, new play grounds, should be given immediately to make the take over meaningful.

The promise made by the District Minister L. M. L. Aboosally, at Rye School, Balangoda, last March 1980 should become a reality with the united efforts of the other M.Ps of the District and the officials of both the Education and Plantation authorities. Red tape bureaucrats should be substituted by persons invested with delegated powers to take all necessary steps to ensure a quick and efficient take over which must mean uplift and development, in justice, gratitude and maitri.

"May all beings—Plantation Children and Workers included—be well" and be treated well.

In three years' time, their decisive votes will pay back the treatment they will receive NOW.

Yes, June 1980, is "A DATE WITH DESTINY".

* * *

BOOKS

The Coomaraswamys

1. THE POEMS OF TAYUMANAVAR

Translated from the Tamil by Sir Mutu Coomaraswamy 1977. p. 89

2. A UNIVERSITY COURSE ON INDIAN

ART by Ananda K. Coomaraswamy 1978 pp. 103

3. THE WISDOM OF ANANDA COO-

MARASWAMY by S. Durai Raja Singam 1979 pp. 130.

All these books were edited and published by S. Durai Raja Singam, Petaling Jaya, Malaysia.

Sir Mutu Coomaraswamy and his son Dr. Ananda Coomaraswamy belong to the category of rare souls who have tried to explain the philosophy behind the eastern life to western audiences and bring harmony between East and West. In this field Ananda Coomaraswamy outshone his father and almost everybody while the father married himself to Western civilization his son born out of the wedlock of Eastern and Western civilization was a real personification of the synthesis of both cultures. Besides the books and articles that were published during their life time, there were a number of unpublished manuscripts. These have become the subject of scholarly research in recent times and it is in this context one has to measure the services rendered by S. Durai Raja Singam to the study and understanding of Ananda Coomaraswamy.

THE POEMS OF TAYUMANAVAR, a Hindu Saint, rendered into English by Sir Mutu Coomaraswamy as far back as 1873, had remained unpublished. There had been nearly nineteen or so English translations of various stanzas of Tayumanavar but the editor claims that Sir Mutu's was the earliest. The book is divided into 17 chapters and contains translation of 150 stanzas. The books would be of immense value to those who want to understand the philosophic mind of that Hindu Saint who was steeped in Saiva siddhanta philosophy. Incorporated in their books are appendices of a brief life sketch of Sir Mutu, English translations of various authors, and book reviews of editor's book on the Life and Writings of Sir Mutu Coomaraswamy.

A UNIVERSITY COURSE ON INDIAN ART contains the notes of lectures delivered to students at the Metropolitan Museum, New York in 1933. The editor obtained these notes from those students who attended Ananda Coomaraswamy's lectures. Dr. Marguerite Beck Block, who herself had been a student and admirer of Ananda Coomaraswamy lent the notes to the editor, which was improved with the notes given by another Mrs. Margaret Marcus.

Though the lectures were meant for the American audiences it has a universal application today. In his lectures Ananda Coomaraswamy has tried to explode the myth surrounding the superiority and inferiority of the various cultures of the world. To him "culture is consciousness, primarily an unprejudiced comprehension of one's own civilization. This is only possible when we have some ideas of its relation to other cultures—likeness and differences. A capacity for making subtle distinctions must be cultivated; actually current ideas about the Orient are still excessively crude, that is, either romantic, or intolerant, this is a provincial rather than a cultural condition. To make fine distinctions the students must adopt an entirely disinterested attitude, laying aside notions of "this is higher" or "best";"

This book virtually summarises all that should be said on Indian art, religion, ethnology language and literature. Sanjva Dev who wrote an Introduction to this book described it to be a "mini-miniature encyclopaedia". Besides the lecture notes, he has also appended notes taken from the Gallery Books of the Department of Asiatic Art, Museum of Fine Arts which were written by Ananda Coomaraswamy for the benefit of visitors. A guide to pronunciation of Indian languages, principal deities and a chronology of Indian art is also included.

THE WISDOM OF ANANDA COOMARASWAMY is actually a compendium of his thoughts selected from an array of his publications and speeches. This will be an ideal reference book for writers who want to quote from Ananda Coomaraswamy even if they have not heard of him or read any of his books-Subj ct

in this compendium ranges from Uday Shankar to Jawaharlal Nehru and Mahatma Gandhi; Folk Arts to Swedshi; political philosophy to religious philosophy. If anyone wishes to start studying Ananda Coomaraswamy and his works as a subject of a course he would be well advised to commence his course with this compendium.

K. Arūmainayagam

Colombo.
11-07-1980



POEM

Stroke

Rain shrouds our journey, drips
from coconut fronds, flattens
the paddy fields lining the path
that leads to the house. Lights
have not been lit, it is dark inside and
the room has only one small window. She
is lying on the floor, white hair
spread over the soiled pillow,
her gaunt shape
wrapped in an old cotton cloth. But
both her legs are exposed
and the one that is paralysed
drops oddly to one side, already
it is bloated. Under the thin covering
her good hand fingers
the useless one. Her eyes
wide open yet sightless, swivel
from face to face, and
small bubbles of spittle
slide from her wrinkled mouth
as she strains to communicate
the dark horror
of her final loneliness.

And so she will lie on the packed earth floor,
occasionally they will feed her sips of water;
rain will cease and the sun rise gold an like honey
fires will be lit and rice must be cooked for lunch

Anne Ranasinghe.

June 26—July 4

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

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

THURSDAY, JUNE 26: The two Thai rain-makers have recommended to the Sri Lanka Government that the country should have a permanent rain-making team and that the Air Force here is most suited to handle this project; Dr. Metha Rajatapiti, Director of the Royal Rain-making Research and Development Institute, Thailand, and his assistant Lt. Col. Tyamnoon Singhaton met Prime Minister Ranasinghe Premadasa at Temple Trees yesterday and submitted their recommendations after their nine day mission here. Government has entered into an agreement with the firm Nestle of Switzerland for a dairy development project in Sri Lanka, Cabinet spokesman, Minister of State, Anandātissa de Alwis said yesterday—CDN. The Cabinet yesterday decided to abolish the duty free import of invalid foods. A Bench of five Judges of the Supreme Court in a unanimous judgement yesterday discharged Mr. S. Nidesan Q.C., in the breach of Parliamentary privileges case against him. Taxmen have been asked to make surprise checks on the income tax returns of new rich businessmen; tax evasion, according to an official of the Inland Revenue Department, had become a big problem and according to intelligence reports there are thousands of these businessmen who had become wealthy overnight who were evading the payment of taxes. A Consumer Protection Fund will be set up shortly; the object of this fund to be set up by the Minister of Trade and Shipping Lalith Achūlathmudali is to inform the public about the merits and demerits

of the products offered to them—CDM. Government yesterday moved to boost the country's fledgling packeted tea and tea bag export industry by granting relief on export duties—SU. The leader of the LSSP, Dr. Colvin R. de Silva addressing a rally at Hyde Park yesterday said that the LSSP would force the government to give back the subsidies they withdrew—JD.

FRIDAY, JUNE 27: Thousands of devotees have flocked to Anuradhapura and Mihintale for the Poson festival today; mass sil campaign and other religious ceremonies have been organised in this connection throughout the country. An agreement was signed with the United States of America yesterday for a loan of US \$ 10 million to finalise the design, construction and supervision of the main canal and its major branches in system B of the Mahaweli Development Scheme. The Sri Lanka Cashew Corporation will plant 800,000 quality cashew seedling in 2000 acres of land during this year; these will include 815 acres at Anamadūwa in the Puttalam district, 200 acres in Jaffna, 350 acres in Hambantota and the rest in the Mannar district—CDN. Local manufacturers and Importers will soon be banned from marketing consumer goods without prior government sanction; a special research unit will be set up under the Ministry of Trade and Shipping to test all consumer goods for quality. The Political Victimisation Committee which examined a large number of applications for redress of the employees of the Sri Lanka Central Transport Board and the Regional Transport Boards on the ground of alleged political victimisation, has recommended that 726 persons be granted redress in the form of reinstatement, promotions and payment of back wages. Personnel in private security organisations will be debarred from wearing Khaki uniforms while on duty—CDM. The piling up of over 100 million rupees worth of exportable garments and the retrenchment of up to 5,000 workers could be expected in the next few weeks as local non-IPZ garment manufacturers announced plans to shut down in the face of suddenly-narrowed access to the large American market. Two Sri Lankans died and several others were injured when Afghan border guards opened fire as they were trying to cross the tense Afghan-Pakistan border on

Tuesday, well informed diplomatic sources revealed yesterday—SU. Much foreign aid is lying stagnant without being put to proper use according to statistics worked out by the Plan Implementation Ministry; over 600 million rupees remain like this and these monies have been received many years ago—DP. The CID has remanded a top official of the Hotel Ceylon International Colombo for charges of interfering in to internal politics of this country—JD.

SATURDAY, JUNE 28; Government has decided to set up a rain-making project as in Thailand, Prime Minister Premadasa's Secretary, Bradman Weerakoon said yesterday. Agreements will be signed within the next few days between the State Gem Cor-

Govt.



Notices

Notice Under Section 7 Of The Land Acquisition Act (Chap. 460) As Amended By The Land Acquisition (Amendment) Act, No. 28 Of 1964.

Reference No. ATH 17/376

It is intended to acquire the land described in the schedule below. For further particulars please see the Gazette of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka No. 98 (Part III) of 18-07-80.

D.R.O.'s Division: Nugegoda

Situation: Ward No. 6, Pitakotte within the U.C. limits of Kotte.

Village: Pitakotte

Name of Land: Kuda Walawwatte alias Kongahawatte premises bearing Assmt. Nos. 24/1, 24/2, and 24/3, of 4th Lane.

Lot No.: 1

Plan No. P.P. Co: 5242

H. C. Gunawardene
District Land Officer of Colombo District.
The Kacheheri,
Colombo.

Date:— 16 June, 1980

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

Notice Under Section 7.

Ref. No. 3/64/240/J 69/70 L 745 (V.E.)

It is intended to acquire the Land/Lands described in the Schedule below. For further particulars please see the Gazette of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, No. 98 (Part III) of 18-07-1980.

Schedule

Name of village etc.:—

Pahalagama in Hatalispaha West Korale, Galgamua D.R.O.'s Division, Kurunegala District, North Western Province.

Name of Land:— Pahalagama Kumbura

Pan and Lot No.:— Lot No. 53 in Supplement No. 1 to F.V.P. 3260

H. M. W. Chandraratne

District Land Officer,
Kurunegala District.

for A.G.A. Kurunegala

The Kacheheri, Kurunegala.

4th June 1980.

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

Reference No. 3/2/6/12/517

It is intended to acquire the land described in the schedule below. For further particulars, please see the Gazette of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka No. 98 (Part III) of 18-07-1980.

Schedule

A.G.A.'s Division : Kelaniya
Village : Hunupitiya
Situation : Ward No. 3 Iriyawetiya
: Ward No. 6
: Warakanatta
: Ward No. 7 Dalugama
P. Plan No. P.P. Co. : Gam 35, 37 and C0.5187

A. L. S. Malwenna

District Land Officer of Gampaha District.
The Kacheheri,
Gampaha.

Date:— 25 June 1980

poration and eight foreign mining companies of international repute for large-scale mechanised mining for gems in the Accelerated Mahaweli Project area, Corporation Chairman T. G. Punchiappahamy said yesterday—CDN. A direct cash allowance to lower income groups is likely to replace the Government's Food Stamp scheme; according to a Government move, an estimated four to five million people belonging to the lower income bracket in the country are expected to benefit by this new welfare scheme. Foreign Minister A. C. S. Hameed has called for a full report from Sri Lanka's Ambassador in Pakistan on the incident where two Sri Lankans were shot dead by sentries at a military road-block in Afghanistan, the Minister said yesterday—SU. Opposition parties and Trade Unions are planning to launch an island-wide hartal to protest against increasing cost of living, withdrawing the food subsidies ration system for the distribution of food stuffs, dictatorship on workers and other such measures of the government—VK. There is unrest in the Armed Forces after the salary increase given to police officials on a special order from the President—DK. The Government is Planning to invite the American Peace Corps back in to the country; the Peace Corps was deported by India and Sri Lanka alleging that they were spying for the CIA and disclosing information endangering the internal security of the country—JD.

SUNDAY, JUNE 29: Cost escalation of big public and private sector building projects now on the drawing boards is placing tremendous pressure on the liquidity of the banking sector raising questions on whether speedy implementation of such projects would be possible before further cost overruns hit them—SO. Eighteen Deans and heads of departments of the University of Sri Jayewardenapura have resigned from their administrative posts in protest against the delay in increasing university staff salaries—ST. While the authorities plan to compel parents to immunise their children, the facilities provided by the country's health system by no means fully meet the demands of the thousands of people who want to immunise their young against the deadly disease of polio. A new commercial radio service that will be beamed to the entire country from Sri Jayewardenapura, Kotte will

be established by the Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation by the beginning of next year. Last week's announcement in the Indian Parliament of the discovery of oil in the Bay of Bengal is expected to provide further impetus to Sri Lanka's own search for indigenous deposits of crude oil—WK. A leading American company will be spending close upon US \$ 1.65 million in prospecting for oil in Jaffna, Trincomalee, Mannar and Puttalam areas—CM. The number of employees going to Middle East from India and Sri Lanka have reduced considerably mainly because the Arab countries have slowed down their development programmes and have restricted foreign employees entering their country as a policy—SM. West German government has started investigations into false allegations spread in Germany by members of the TULF against the Sri Lanka Government—SLDP.

MONDAY, JUNE 30: The Trade and Shipping Ministry's Cost of Living committee will evolve a new scheme to ensure better distribution of kerosene in collaboration with the Ceylon Petroleum Corporation and cooperative societies official sources said yesterday. The Nepalese Foreign Secretary, Jagadish S. J. B. Rana, will have discussions today with Foreign Minister, A. C. S. Hameed on international affairs and bilateral relations; Mr. Rana arrived here on Saturday on a four day visit—CDN. The government has obtained foreign aid for the development of the Open University which will begin functioning on July 22—the third anniversary of the government; the Open University of the United Kingdom, the Sewdsh International Development Agency and UNESCO have pledged aid—CDM. A disciplinary code for all students, indicating their rights and duties within school, and a programme to make children aware of their constitutional rights is planned by the Law Commission. A tuna secretariat to control and monitor deep sea fishing in the entire Indian and Pacific Oceans will be set up by the United Nations in Colombo later this year. The bodies of the two Sri Lankans who died in the Afghanistan frontier tragedy were taken to Jaffna yesterday by their relatives—SU. A new scheme will be brought whereby CTB employees will be given an opportunity to work in their own areas; this is with the

Intention of improving the island's bus service—DP. The *New Civil Engineer International* a magazine published in Britain in a series of articles have pointed out that the accelerated Mahaweli project was too much for Sri Lanka; the magazine points out that statistically this project would be a challenge to any country in the world and to attempt to complete it in 6 years would make the project a complete allure—DK. Government has decided to allocate Rs. 250 million to stop students in the rural and urban areas from leaving school in the junior grades; the government will provide the necessary facilities for these students to continue their education—DV.

TUESDAY, JULY 1: The government would soon take action to curb adulteration of food articles by prescribing standards for all food items, Additional Government Analyst T. Kandasamy said yesterday. Television would be used from next year to meet the growing demand for science education in rural areas. State Minister Anandathissa de Alwis said yesterday; inaugurating the ninth annual session of the Institute of Chemistry, Ceylon at the SLAAS Auditorium the Minister said the rural sector was protesting that the English-educated urban minority was now being favoured—CDN. Yugoslavia and Sri Lanka are likely to enter into an agreement for co-operation in the field of nuclear energy; this is expected to take place at a meeting of the non-aligned nations summoned by Yugoslavia to discuss co-operation in the field of peaceful uses of nuclear energy—SU. The Education Ministry is launching a programme by which estate schools will conduct classes up to the GCE (O/L)—DP. Thousands of labourers of the department of Highways will lose their jobs when the maintenance of Highways will be given to school children; this new scheme will come in to effect from today in the Kurunegala district—DK.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 2: The five-hour power cut now in force will continue until there is substantial rainfall in the catchment areas, Power and Energy Ministry's Secretary James Lanerolle said yesterday; the total energy in storage in the two reservoirs of Castlereagh and Mousakelle on Monday was 46.7 million units of electricity (GWH); "This is the lowest ever recorded; the daily average demand is

4.9 million GWH—the highest ever", he said. Twenty seven revolvers belonging to the Excise Department were reported missing from a strongbox in the department's headquarters in Colombo Fort yesterday. A Mahaweli Economic Organisation responsible for providing all facilities for settlers in areas covered by the Mahaweli programme will be set up shortly. Sri Lanka is of the view that the International community should reconsider changes in the United Nations Charter if the world political situation is to be improved.—SU. A Joint Committee of opposition trade unions is preparing to launch strikes to ask for a 300 rupee wage increase for all employees—VK. Rs. 290 million is to be spent to bring the Gal Oya project back to life; the US Development Institute has already granted Rs. 50 million for this project—DM. The World Bank says that Sri Lanka government has to withdraw more subsidies to qualify for more aid; this was disclosed in a top secret report of recommendations sent to the member countries of the aid Consortium—ATH. The Paddy Marketing Board has decided to increase the price of all kinds of rice from the 7th of this month; the price of a measure of rice will be increased by 15 cents—JD.

THURSDAY, JULY 3: The five state-owned textile mills are to be run in collaboration with internationally reputed textile organisations to up-date technology, management and marketing skills, informed sources said yesterday; the Indian firms Lakshmi Textiles, Star Textiles and Bombay Dyeing and Manufacturing Co., Ltd. and the British firm Tootals International are the collaborators. Government yesterday approved a proposal by the Minister of Industries and Scientific Affairs, Cyril Mathew, to enter into contracts with seven American oil firms for off-shore oil exploration. The External Resources Department has set up a committee to review the progress of aid utilisation to expedite the disbursing of aid according to schedule. The existence of life in other parts of the universe is a certainty, says Dr. Cyril Ponnampereuma, the Sri Lankan Professor of Chemistry and Director of the Laboratory of Chemical Evolution of the University of Maryland, College Park, USA, who arrived in Sri Lanka on Tuesday on a short visit—CDN. The President Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, has expressed concern

that the public is experiencing great difficulty and delays in transacting business with government institutions. Prospects of Sri Lanka obtaining even more aid than last year are bright, according to a member of the Sri Lanka delegation attending the Sri Lanka Aid Consortium meeting which began on Tuesday at the Paris headquarters of the World Bank—CDM. Special public relations officers will be posted to government departments having dealings with the public, the Cabinet decided yesterday; this came on a suggestion made by President J. R. Jayewardene who is said to be keen to ensure that every state department not only gives a better deal to the public but also deals with them courteously. Police investigating the theft of 27 revolvers from the Excise Department yesterday found that 600 rounds of ammunition had also been stolen from the strong box in the Department head office in Fort—SU. The Sri Lanka Aid Consortium meeting which ended in Paris yesterday had again pledged a high level of support for the national economy but drew attention to the possibility of the country's public investment program forcing it into expensive commercial bank borrowing—CO. Joint Trade Union Action Committees to launch a campaign demanding a salary increase in accordance with the cost of living and other demands of all sections of workers; the campaign with the participation of all sections of workers will demand a salary increase of Rs. 300 and a further increase of Rs. 5 for each point increased in the C.O.L. Index—ATH. The Colombo Municipality has taken steps to increase taxes of small traders to finance P. M. Premadasa's project to beautify the Colombo town—DK. Employees of a large number of newly opened industries have complained to the Labour Ministry that these industries do not have the necessary facilities for workers and the necessary measures for the security of workers—DM.

FRIDAY, JULY 4: Donor countries and international agencies pledged aid in various amounts aggregating to Rs. 8,432 million in support of Sri Lanka's normal development program outside the Mahaweli project at the two-day meeting of the 12-nation aid consortium which ended in Paris on Wednesday, a Finance Ministry spokesman said. A survey conducted by the Central Bank on instructions

from the Cabinet to monitor the spending and purchasing patterns in the rural sector has revealed a higher standard of living in this sector now, compared with previous years. Thirty eight Commonwealth countries will take part in the eight-day Commonwealth Education Conference, the biggest ever Education Conference to be held here beginning August 5. The Inspector General of Police, Mr. Ana Seneviratne, yesterday appointed a six-member committee to work out a new salary scheme for senior police officers—CDN. Education Ministers from 38 countries will lead their delegations to the eighth Commonwealth Education Ministers' conference to be held in Colombo next month. State lands all over the country will be demarcated into zones according to their economic utility under a massive government programme for maximum utilisation of land over the next 10 years. The Court of Appeal yesterday directed that Rev. Mathew Peiris and Mrs. Dalrene Ingram the two accused in the Vicarage deaths case be released on bail. There has been a record paddy harvest of 68.5 million bushels for the 1979/80 Maha cultivation which is the highest ever reaped in any year for Maha, Agricultural Development and Research Minister E. L. Senanayake announced yesterday—SU. Minister K. W. Devanayagam speaking in Jaffna stated that he would spend 1 million rupees for housing of government servants; houses will be constructed with the help of the Housing Department near their places of work—VK. Number of development projects started by UNP government in 1978 will come to a stand still as the cost of those projects were increased by 3 folds because of the devaluation of the rupee and the UNP government's monetary policy—DK. The Government which has decided to increase the salaries by Rs. 70 to escape from the workers unrest has decided to introduce simultaneously a development tax from all workers; the government has not yet decided the percentage of salary that will be taken as the new tax—ATH.

Confidentially

Gas Turbines—Why Delayed?—1

WHILST IT IS TRUE that post-mortems into politico-socio-economic matters are no more than painfully tedious exercises of little value, there are times when such post-mortems must be held? That in the case of the current power crisis in Sri Lanka it is necessary to hold several ongoing post-mortems into various aspects of the power debacle? That whilst it is true that drought is the main cause of the present power crisis, there is also no doubt that its severity could have been greatly minimised if the thermal gas turbines plant the Government had decided to instal over two years ago had been set up without delay? The first post-mortem must therefore be into the question why this thermal plant has been so unduly delayed? That if the delay is due to the antiquated system the government adopts to set up projects of this kind, something must be done to change the system so that the country avoids similar tragedies? That if however, the delays were due to the machinations of designing persons who used the loopholes in the system to cause delays for their own selfish ends, then stern action is called for? That even if the government is reluctant (for understandable reasons) to appoint a public commission or committee of inquiry, it is absolutely imperative for the President to know how the delays were caused and whether any individuals (VIP or otherwise) were in any way responsible for the delays? That so far as our own information goes, the Cabinet had in principle decided in April 1978 that a thermal plant to provide supplementary power was essential? That the recommendations of the local Technical Committee contained in a Ministerial Cabinet paper that gas turbines would be the best was also accepted in principle and the money allocated for the same? That instead of calling for tenders immediately on specifications drawn up locally by our technical experts (who are as good as any in the world) it would appear that the Cabinet, out of an abundance of caution, had wanted a foreign firm of consultants to check on the recommendations of the local Com-

mittee of experts? That although the foreign firm of prestigious consultants only confirmed the recommendations of the Local Committee, this process took very nearly six months or more? That the first loophole in our system therefore is the time taken to appoint a firm of foreign consultants? That whether this is necessary at all is a most important question and obtain their Report? That in this case the delay (No. 1) has had fatal consequences?

That, thereafter, came Delay No. 2 where designing individuals endeavoured to chop a change the specifications agreed on for certain ulterior and sinister motives? That it is here that the various local Tender Lobbies and "connections" came into operation—and there was further unnecessary delays before the "International Tenders" were called for from a few pre-selected firms which were known to be able to cope with a tender of this magnitude? That just before Tender Forms were issued, it is alleged that there were manipulations by certain persons and groups to monkey with the specifications no doubt to help certain manufacturers? That the delays continued to persist because some of these (foreign "connections") manipulators had pulled in high places to induce demands for reports and explanations at every stage? That more weeks had passed in the process and it was only towards the end of last year that the Tenders were closed and the Tender Board appointed by the Government narrowed down the bidders to three and after final evaluation selected the lowest tenderer as the most suitable? That this firm belonged to the Italian multinational of the Fiat Group? That the next lowest tenderer was Westinghouse of the USA? And that the most expensive of the three was John Brown of the UK? That this selection by the local Tender Board was fully endorsed by the foreign consultants? That this column in the issues of *Tribune* of December 29, 1979 (Vol. 24 No. 25) and January 5, 1980 (Vol. 24 No. 26) had referred to the story of how the Cabinet had been persuaded or misled into rejecting the recommendations of the Tender Board and the firm of foreign consultants and thereafter to pick on the highest tenderer who has now delayed fulfilling the contract?

(To be continued)

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