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Letter From The Editor

As anticipated by all knowledgeable observers, the Special Session of the UN General Assembly failed to formulate agreed principles for the North-South negotiations scheduled to begin on January 12, 1981. Face-saving rhetoric was indulged in by some countries by asserting that negotiations would be continued during the regular sessions to overcome the refusal of the rich nations to give up their positions of privilege and entrenched self-interest still sustained at the expense of the poor countries producing primary commodities and raw materials—all except those producing oil. One matter that found no solution was about the question as to who should have the final say in these talks. The poor nations wanted the General Assembly which they had pointed had always been praised by the Western nations who made much of its moral standing and prestige. But now the rich nations insist on the infallibility (and irreversibility) of the decisions taken by the IMF and other institutions where they enjoy a weighted vote far out of proportion either to their population or their current economic clout. It must be also noted that the affluent nations continue to resist even the UN target of providing as Official Development Assistance (ODA) of even seven-tenths of one percent of their GNP. For the USA even this would mean 3 1/2 times the current US contribution. Another significant fact that surfaced during the Special Sessions was the attempt to divide the poor by stressing the need to bring pressure on OPEC to reduce, or at least freeze, oil prices. But OPEC and the poor nations had seen through this game and "decided that they had once again to hang together lest they be hanged separately". Commentators in the developing world have pointed out that on every demand made by the poor nations there was sympathy in words but resistance in practice—including such demands as increase in aid to meet modest UN targets, fair prices for raw materials sold by poor Third World countries and the removal or reduction of trade barriers. The rich nations who had earlier preached the doctrine of free trade and the "comparative advantage as the basis for locating industries" have now retreated into heavy protectionist barriers and countervailing duties. Only Singapore's Lee Kuan Yew has refused to condemn the protectionism of the rich countries—this was the stance he took up at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Regional Meeting at New Delhi from Sept. 4 to 8. He had also proclaimed that a country's industries had no right to survive if they could not compete in "the rat race" even with protectionist obstacles. Even Australia's Malcolm Frazer had found it impossible to agree with Lee Kuan Yew's formulations on trade policies. Lee Kuan Yew apart, the Third world of poor nations stand united for a fairer share of the world's trade, its wealth and resources. Sri Lanka is only one of the many (of the 140 odd) nations, but is has an important role to play to end the rat race—for its own self-interest if not anything else.

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Tamil Politics

ON THE COVER we have a picture of a group of youthful dancers from the Muslim community in the Eastern Province. It is not the cultural aspect of the Tamil speaking Muslim community that we want to examine this week, but some of the recent developments in Tamil politics as a whole. The overwhelming majority of the Muslims in the Tamil areas in the North and the East, like the Muslims in other parts of the island, have for a long time now followed positive, pragmatic and realistic policies (*vis a vis* the Sinhalese majority) to promote the interests of their own community—though many of them had been tempted for a while to pursue the negative and sterile policies of boycott, fifty-fifty, federalism, Eelam and the like advocated by Hindu and Christian Tamil politicians based in Jaffna and who had successfully, but unfortunately, dominated parliamentary election politics from the thirties to this day. Due to the impractical negativism of this kind of political demagoguery and the arrogant chauvinism betrayed by many Hindu and Christian Tamil politicians, the Muslims had generally opted to collaborate with the Sinhalese politicians and parties in power.

But the recent decision of the TULF to approve the District Development Councils (DDCs) Bill, and to collaborate with the Government to implement this new framework for national development (with a measure of regional autonomy), has introduced a new element into Sri Lankan politics. The decision by the TULF has put the Eelam issue into cold storage, temporarily at least, so far as the dominant leadership of the TULF is concerned whatever verbal lipservice is paid to Eelam.

But there is still a vociferous and articulate minority, mainly based in the Jaffna peninsula, which is totally dissatisfied with this new trend in TULF politics. Though most of them welcome the DDCs as a measure to help in the development of long-neglected areas, they are angry that TULF leaders who had foisted the Eelam demand on them in 1974 on the community (and had successfully contested the 1977 elections with this cry)

should pigeon-hole Eelam so easily. There is also, a small hard-core minority of Eelam fanatics who will continue to shout about Eelam and make a noise in international for as long as ex-patriate Tamil groups in the UK, USA and elsewhere provide them with money for such propaganda

In the same way, there is a hard-core group among the Sinhalese which has begun an insidious campaign to stress that the DDCs tilted too much in favour of the Tamils to the detriment of the Sinhalese—and that the DDCs would pave the way for Eelam through devious means. This campaign is led by the same elements which had opposed the Bandaranaike-Chelvanayakam Agreement in 1957 and the Dudley Senanayake's District Councils in 1967—but this time they, had failed to prevent the Bill from being adopted by Parliament

Whether the SLFP, which opposed the DDC Bill in Parliament will be persuaded to adopt this anti-DDC stance with anti-Tamil demagoguery for the next elections is still too early to predict, but the equivocal position it has so far adopted on the matter is significant.

In the meantime, there is a ferment among a local section of the politically active Tamil elite in Jaffna. Below we publish a report from a correspondent in Jaffna on the trends that have manifested themselves: "Tamil politics especially in the Jaffna peninsula, is now in a state of piccalilli (a pickle of chopped vegetables and hot spices—Ed.) causing anxiety and challenge to the TULF leadership. The TULF leadership has become the chief target of attack and is now victim of the Frankensteinian (Eelam) monster it created at Vaddukoddai in 1974 without any forethought or foresight. The present trend commenced with a debate held at the Bharathi Community Centre, Kadduvan South, Eralalai, which questioned the mild and muted attitude of the leadership and surfaced the impatience of the youthwings of the party. There were resignations, disappointments and change of loyalty. A few of them changed the traditional loyalty and Kumar Ponnambalam's Congress became the chief beneficiary. The TULF consoled itself that these were borderline cases. However, a new and forceful dimension was

soon added when the TULF openly supported the DDC Bill.

"The criticisms were levelled not against any particular clause or the body of the Act itself. We have our doubts whether they had seen the Act. But that did not bother them—because any open support from a party which went to Colombo to establish a Tamil Eelam was a negation of the trust. Long before the bill was passed a group of left-inclined organisations known as the "Consciousness" group (mainly composed of University Students) held a seminar under the auspices of the South Asian Study Seminar at the Jaffna University. This Seminar was based on the Tennekoon Commission reports and was aimed at finding out whether it would offer any panacea for the Tamil problem—having analysed the report from various angles, all the young lecturers arrived at the conclusion that it offers no solution to the problem. These seminar papers were widely circulated (it was cyclo-styled and sold) and the issues of the "Consciousness" group. (*Unarvu*) gave publicity to the seminar. This had an anticipated reaction from the TULF leadership. The situation was something new to the leadership. Most of the Tamil (except perhaps for A. J Wilson) University dons have never barged into the realm of politics so far. So long the University was situated in Peradeniya and Colombo, controversial subjects like this was an anathema. Now for the first time, there was the likelihood of an emergence of intellectual guidance to analyse the problems in proper perceptive—perceptions may differ. This development inevitably was a challenge to the rhetorical skill of the politicians who mesmerised the Tamil audience with their wanton verbiage up to now.

"Secondly the open acceptance of the DDC was a great betrayal—in the eyes of the local radical wings and the organisations abroad. The government, youth wing claimed could always make use of this to do its own propaganda abroad. One may not necessarily support and agree with their claims, but in the context of the TULF leadership this was a clear betrayal of the trust the youth of their party placed on them. The burning of the effigy of the leader A. Amirthalingam in the Jaffna University, was the work of nearly fifty

to hundred students, would have gone unnoticed if not for the press and Amirthalingam.

"Amirthalingam suspected a challenge to his and his family's leadership and therefore had berated his critics with words and arguments which do not speak well of his stature and maturity. The dual role played by certain TULF MPs are suspected by both the leadership and radical wings. It was a scream and not an argument to exculpate himself of the charges levelled against him. He accused the lecturers for aiming at Vice-Chancellorships and students to obtain 'classes'. Tamil dailies which always look for sensational news gave wide publicity to views that would place him against the dissatisfied lot and not to the arguments he adduced in favour of the DDC.

"It is a tough job for Amirthalingam without the support of mass media to justify his stand. *Suthanthiran* which has been the party's chief organ is against him and so is *Chudar* a monthly journal published in Colombo. The TULF has now decided to start a paper of its own. There is now a talk of the revival of the F.P. boycott of DDC elections—all this points to the despondency of the Tamil politics again and that its leadership is in a quagmire cannot be disputed."

In this connection, the interviews and discussions, the Editor of *Tribune* recently had in Madras on his way back from New Delhi, and which will be published in this column next week, will show the reactions of the leading parties and politicians in Tamil Nadu to the latest developments in Tamil politics in Sri Lanka.

x x x

FILM FOCUS

Lester James

Of an evening I drop in to chat with former Lake House film critic, E. C. T. Candappa, under whose editorship of the *Messenger* I had contributed a regular weekly film column. The conversation touches rarely on cabbages and kings, occasionally on king-makers, but frequently on film-makers. So it was we talked of Lester James Pieris, apropos

of French film critic, Louis Marcolles' assessment of Lester as 'one of the last greats of world cinema.'

"Of Lester's worth and greatness as a film maker", says ECT, "there is general agreement and no doubt. But I like to think of so many other aspects of Lester's personality that could come under the umbrella term of 'great'. It has been said that the greatest art is the art of life. I believe that Lester's greatness as a human being transcends his greatness as an artist. It is fitting and just that success should crown all he does because he wishes everyone well. He is unselfish in a milieu not known for its generosity of spirit. He is willing to share all he knows and that is considerable. He is the antithesis of the stereotype film maker. He is no 'cigar-chewing neurotic. Indeed, he contributes to stilling the bustle around him to a climate of serenity. He is a man for all that, enjoying a smoke and the friendly glass. He is an excellent raconteur with few peers, albeit a great listener. His films have that extra touch of humanity because he is a sensitive individual, warm hearted and deeply involved with the human condition."

DEATH ON THE NILE (English): Novelist Agatha Christie fans, there are many in Sri Lanka, and they are flocking in to see one of her best sellers in celluloid, under the expert direction of John Guillermin, who was also behind the camera in directing "The Towering Inferno"—a film that ran for many weeks in the city. This film has lined up a whole array of stars, at least three of them, David Niven, Bette Davis and Angela Lansbury quite over the hill now, although they were very big names in the film world at one time. The main role in this story is taken by Peter Ustinov who rules to perfection the portly Inspector Hercule Poirot who with his own clumsy but clever and calculated clue-baiting, turns trumps in the end in the final sequences to strip bare the masquerading killer as always. In Agatha Christie plots, whose exclusive style in spinning a web around all those, even remotely connected to a murder, which ultimately brings out the villain, pulling out the evidence strand by strand to tie up the story neatly. This well photographed film, has the blue and placid waters of the river Nile in the

background, on which the luxury boat "Karnak" cruises with a millionaire, a Madame Doyle, widowed, but remarried to one who she has stolen right under the nose of another (Mia Farrow), who also joins the boat with veiled vengeance in her heart. To add to the gathering plot that escalates, the Madame also string around her neck a valuable set of Potsdam Pearls, this giving every passenger on a platter, a deadly motive for bumping her off—and that is exactly what happens when Passenger Poirot is literally caught napping under introduced drugs on that fatal night. From this point the super-deductive sense of the Inspector takes over and the killing is re-enacted over and over again, point a "peeling" finger at every one abroad, except himself, for the evil deed. In characteristic style, the brilliant "expose" comes as a shock to the guiltless ones on the boat and the audience at curtains. While being scornfully referred to as a Crocodile without a "croc" as he closes in, Poirot gets even, with these gems which he projects with purpose, but gleefully, at journey's end, viz., "evil in your heart will make a home there" and "the great aspiration of women is to inspire live". It is a brain teaser of a film and if you go guessing "who dun it", I beg you will be wrong. Just sit back and get into the bite of the dialogue which mesmerises and misleads—thanks to the brilliant pen of the authoress.

MUWAN PELESSA II (Sinhalese): Probably a final sequel to Part I of the series, this film is photographed in Eastman colour and directed by Yasapalitha N. Nayakkara for whose directorial talents, I have developed a sneaking fancy over the years. The story traverses smoothly, the path of a successful radio play, that had many glued to their radio sets, week after week. It boasted the escapades of Rob'n Hood like character, Kadira (Rox Kodipilly) who makes a cave in a thick jungle, his home, but swings in Tarzan style to physically succour those in distress. A thin story breezes through, with pretty S.iyani Amarasena, versatile Joe Abeywickrema and dynamic Rob'n Fernando, giving off their best, with veteran Hugo Fernando in a characteristic role as Rahamy which fits him like a glove. In

nature's bounteous surroundings, the splendour of the greenery and Sri Lanka's silhouetted hills are captured captivatingly by the camera. I would even add that this is the best outdoor Sinhalese film in colour to date, with a story cut out perfectly for family groups. You will make up to the scenic wealth of our country, and of which we are very often blind to while foreign tourists imbibe it to the full.

CHATTAM EN KAYIL (Tamil): With the story, script, production and direction in the hands of T. N. Balu, this film in colour strung together, story wise by a series of improbable coincidences and contradictions, with the charismatic appeal of Actor Kamalahasan attempting to come through in a dual role, but wearing thin all along the way to a whimper, his customary repertoire fast running out. To kiss or not to kiss, being the burning question on everyone's lips in the Indian film world now, Kamalahasan, tastes this forbidden fruit in the film, which stops inspiring otherwise, hugging a hackneyed formula trail. To me the film and the story was mere piffle, but there are others of this generation, who agree to disagree with me, and are storming the cinemas, to be out of this world for a while. Consolation prizes I award to reputed villain Sri Kanth who wears a "halo" well, and Sri (Neeya) Priya who comes easy on the eye!

James N. Benedict.

DOCTOR OF LETTERS

DR. JAMES T. RUTNAM

by K. M. de Silva

Professor of History, University of Peradeniya and Member of the University Grants Commission.

JAMES T. RUTNAM who celebrated his seventy-fifth birth day in June was awarded a doctorate, *honoris causa*, by the University of Jaffna at its first convocation held on September 13. It is a richly deserved recognition of a lifetime of dedicated commitment to scholarship and generous assistance to scholars.

He has been at various times journalist, schoolmaster, businessman and political activist; but while his interest in one or all these

roles has waxed and waned he has remained steadfast in his love of learning and of books. The splendid library he once had attested to the catholicity of his tastes, and its riches by way of rare books and rarer documents easily surpassed those of many public institutions in the island. Dozens of this country's scholars have benefitted from the ready access they have had to his collection of books and documents. The time came—as it inevitably comes to all but the most affluent people—when the books could no longer be accommodated in his house spacious though it was. They were then donated, with characteristic generosity, to educational institutions which will hold them as a collection for the use of generations of scholars to come.

His first venture into scholarship was a brief but well documented essay on *Trial by Jury in Ceylon* which won for him the Walter Pereira memorial prize for legal research at the Law College. This essay marked the beginning of a life-long interest in the career of Sir Alexander Johnston who was a Puisne Justice and later Chief Justice of the island, one of the founding fathers of the island's modern legal system in the early nineteenth century, and a man who was far ahead of his times in his political ideas. Through the years James Rutnam collected a mass of documents and books relating to Johnston's life which now await, hopefully, a biographer, or at least a doctoral student in search of a topic for a dissertation.

A common interest in scholarship brought him in touch with E. W. Perera one of Sri Lanka's distinguished scholars—statesmen of this country. He helped the latter in his critical essay on *The Jury System in Ceylon* published in 1933. The friendship lasted till Perera's death. When the contents of E. W. Perera's personal library were scattered through random sales after his death a substantial portion of it passed into Rutnam's hands.

This however was far from being James Rutnam's most notable acquisition of papers. That honour would go to the packet of two hundred of Horace Walpole's letters which he acquired during one of his numerous travels in Europe. The bulk of Walpole's papers were in the library of Yale University and Wilmarth S. Lewis a trustee of that University was en-

gaged in a systematic search for material to complete their collection. The letters in the hands of James Rutnam were essential to fill a huge gap in the publication of the collected letters of Waipole which Yale University press was bringing out in some fifty sumptuously produced volumes. When Yale offered to buy the letters from him James Rutnam responded by gifting them to the library of that University because he felt it was the natural home for these letters. This was in the mid-1950s.

By this time Rutnam had published his brief sketch of the *Life and Times of Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam*. This short study was a sympathetic but critical assessment of this remarkable man's contribution to the life of the country, superior in insight and analysis to the weightier biographical studies on other members of this distinguished family, produced so far. It is indeed a pity that he has not had the time to sit down to write the full scale biography of Arunachalam for which he is so well-equipped both because of personal knowledge of so many events relating to him, and also because of the documentary material on Arunachalam that he had gathered together over the years.

Two recent scholarly essays by him rank among the best works in their fields. I refer to his papers on *The Polonnaruwa Colossus* (Jaffna 1979) and on *The Revd. A. G. Fraser and the Riots of 1915*. The first of these despite the critical skills demonstrated in it, the easy familiarity with sources and the facile demolition of airy theories, is clearly overshadowed by the second. There after several decades of interrupted research, one gets as near as one possibly can be to a rehabilitation of Fraser from the charges levelled against him by E. W. Perera, and D. B. Jayatilaka that he had in his own way contributed to the hardening of official attitude to the Sinhalese in the aftermath of the riots of 1915. The meticulous care with which he checked every detail in his article, and the patience with which he searched for and collected documentary material for it were alike amazing for a man of his years and wide range of activities other than scholarship pure and simple. The "reconstruction of events" according to the late Professor W. J. LaBrooy, "could hardly

be faulted" and the interpretation placed on Fraser's conduct and motives carried conviction. It is a piece of historical research which any professional historian would have been proud of.

Looking back over a rich and varied life, James Rutnam can derive great satisfaction at having passed the torch of scholarship to another generation through his generous gifts of books and documents. It is not everybody who donates a huge collection of books to a University—as he has done to the University of Jaffna—or establishes a Research Institute, the Evelyn Rutnam Institute in Jaffna founded and funded by him and his children in memory of his late wife, their mother. This Institute, located in close proximity to Jaffna University, is intended to provide a meeting place for scholars; it is the nucleus of a research library, with facilities for conferences and scholars in residence. He calls it his "Taj Mahal" and hopes it will be an institution that will help bridge the gulf between Sri Lanka's two major ethnic groups (His wife was Sinhalese).

James Rutnam is fond of describing himself as a successful failure. He was thinking, of course, of his failure to win election to the national legislature. He could hardly have been thinking of his contribution to scholarship.

(The above article appeared in the **Ceylon Daily News** of 16th September 1980 but the author's name was erroneously described as E. R. de Silva)

SRI LANKA CHRONICLE

Sept. 11 – 17

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—Diamina; LD—Lankadipa; VK—Virakesari; ATH—Aththa; SM—Silumina; SLDP—Sri Lankadipa; JD—Janadina; SU—Sun; DV—Davasa; DP—Dinapathi; CM—Chinthamani; WK—Weekend; RR—Riviresa; DK—Dinakara; EN—Eelanadu; IDPR—Information Dept. Press Release.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 11: Prime Minister R. Premadasa has set up a committee to collect data and formulate methods by which close links could be established between the people and the Development Councils. Buddhist clergy and laity, representing 650 million Theravada and Mahayana Buddhists meet from September 19—22 at the Peace Pagoda, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire England, to hold a conference on world peace—CDN. President J. R. Jayewardene will lead a campaign to explain to the nation in detail the benefits of the District Development Councils and the relevant economic issues. Sri Lanka will now be able to conserve as much as 90 million US dollars on the imports of wheat flour annually; this follows the drop in the consumption of flour locally since February 1980 due to the removal of the flour subsidy—CDM. Employees who defied the Government's ban on strikes and consequently lost their jobs will have their cases reconsidered by the Cabinet, spokesman Anandatissa de Alwis announced yesterday—SU. It is understood that the Jaffna/Colombo air service will go into operation from the 15th of October—EN. The World Trade Union Federation in a cable to President Jayewardene has strongly protested against the suppressive measures adopted by the Government against the strikers—ATH.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 12: Trade and Shipping Minister Lalith Athulathmudali has moved in to have government cargo which clogs port warehouses cleared—CDN. The Minister of Finance and Planning Mr. Ronnie de Mel has agreed to a proposal that casual clerks recruited to the public service prior to April 1979 should be absorbed into the permanent cadre—CDM. The Greater Colombo Economic Commission's request for 600 million rupees to meet its development costs next year has been pruned down to 60 million rupees by the Government. A general reorganisation of the education system upto secondary level is being considered by government. The "nidan utsawa" (placing of the navaratne—nine precious stones) ceremony of the Sri Jayewardenepura parliamentary complex will be held on September 22, Constitution Day—SU. The Government is considering changes in the educational system and

six committees have been appointed to go into this matter—DP. The government has decided to reintroduce a number of clauses in the GCEC Act; these clauses were withdrawn by the government on a decision made by the Supreme Court that these clauses were inconsistent with the Constitution—JD.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 13: Government proposes investing a massive Rs. 624 million over a five year period to rehabilitate tea plantations in Badulla and set up three new factories in the Galle District exclusively for small holders, an official spokesman said yesterday—CDN. The Minister of Lands, Land Development and Mahaweli Development Mr. Gamini Dissanayake has suggested a set of principles that could be followed as the consideration of appeals for the reinstatement by employees who had vacated posts as a result of the abortive strike of July 18—CDM. Sri Lanka's first national academy for military and academic training for officer cadets of the Armed Services will get under way next month—SU. Strict legal action will be taken against those who destroy forest and carry out chena cultivation; necessary instruction has been given to G.As and A.G.As by the Local Government Ministry—VK. A new variety of seed paddy which would yield about 200 bushels per acre has been discovered; this seed paddy will be distributed among farmers for cultivation during the next Maha season—EN. A survey conducted by the Sri Lanka Advisory Committee on Drugs has revealed that there are 10,000 drug addicts in the country a majority of whom are children between 13 and 18 years of age—LD.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 14: Finance Minister Ronnie de Mel who leaves for Berumda and Washington later this week will have talks with senior IMF officials in an effort to win back IMF extended fund support to Sri Lanka suspended earlier this year—SO. The genuineness of the the foreign expert mania now gripping certain sections of the public and the private business sectors will be examined by the government; according to various reports received by the Ministries it was now suspected that a number of these so-called "experts" come out to Sri Lanka for a "luxury paid holiday" and in no way could help in any of the development plans

envisaged by the State—ST. Millions of rupees of Norwegian aid to Sri Lanka, earmarked for the poorest of the poor, appear to have been systematically siphoned off for private and political gain in a massive scandal—WK. Sub-committees would be appointed to each Ministry to give advice and to accelerate development projects; such committees will consist of members of the respective Ministry; President Jayewardene has decided on this matter—CM. 3 million out of the 4 million workers in the country have not been paid the Provident Fund by their employers; this has been revealed in a survey conducted by the Central Bank—SM.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 15: Seven major private sector firms have moved in to set up container loading and unloading stations on the outskirts of Colombo, at the invitation of Government to handle the increased volume of container cargo traffic; handling of container cargo has risen to 3,500 containers per month, from 2,200 at the end of last year, and indications are that the 4,000 mark will be exceeded before year's end—CDN. Prohibitive University Fees in the United States and UK universities have led to a large number of foreign students seeking admission to the universities of Sri Lanka—CDM. Sri Lanka's terms of trade will worsen sharply this year as imports cost more and demand for exports slackens, the World Bank warned—SU. Conflicts in the Jayewardene Government have vastly increased and signs are that there will be a major cabinet crisis with the next budget. The differences between the Prime Minister and the Finance Minister and the conflict between groups in the cabinet over the issue of re-employment of strikers are two main new issues in the cabinet—DK.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16: Young doctors will be able to earn about Rs. 1000 more a month under a new scheme now being prepared by the Health Ministry; this scheme will come up for government approval this week; Doctors who are off duty will be employed for four hours each day at their institutions at rates ranging from Rs. 10 to 15 per hour, a Ministry spokesman said—CDN. Locally manufactured products will be given preference in the future in the purchase of the requirements of the entire public sector; this decision has been taken by the Govern-

ment on the recommendation of Mr. Cyril Mathew, Minister of Industries and Scientific Affairs. The District Development Councils coming into operation shortly would not only accelerate development in the country as a whole but would make full use of every available resource at the grass-roots level where the people are concerned, said the President, Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, when he addressed a mammoth rally at Hyde Park, Colombo yesterday evening—CDM. President J. R. Jayewardene yesterday warned that the cost of living in Sri Lanka would continue to rise in the future—but assured the people that Government would be able to progressively increase wages according to available resources and the expansion of production—SU. In the interests of travellers a further passenger ship service will be started from next year between Colombo and Tuticorin as the one between Talimannar and Rameswaram—VK. At a meeting held at the Hyde Park yesterday, president Jayewardene said that it was the Government's policy to develop the country, give employment to the unemployed and grant salary increases to workers; he also said that development schemes will not be given up even if the World Bank or any party in the country opposes this move—DP.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 17: President J. R. Jayewardene has directed that all those who vacated office by not attending their places of work on 18th July 1980 and thereafter should be taken back if they satisfy certain conditions, a press communique issued by the government yesterday said. President J. R. Jayewardene celebrates his 74th birthday today; to mark the occasion countrywide religious ceremonies, blood donation campaigns and programs to feed the sick and the poor have been organised—CDN. The University of Sri Lanka was not fit places for young bhikkus to carry on their higher studies said the President J. R. Jayewardene when he opened the Sri Jinaratana Educational Service Institute, on the borders of the Beira Lake on Sir James Peiris Mawatha yesterday. The fees paid by a foreign student admitted to any discipline in a Sri Lanka university is roughly equal to the sum spent by the State on the education of a local student in that discipline—CDM.

Against Poor Countries

by Padma Joshi

WEST GERMAN CHANCELLOR has done it again: The developing countries are steeped in corruption. They are wasting our money. Chances for such eruptions from the volatile Chancellor come twice or thrice every year. Last time he gave uncontrolled vent to his temper on this subject on the poor countries. It was on the occasion of the UNCTAD Conference in Manila last year.

What does the West German Chancellor (Prime Minister) mean by corruption? Has any case come to his notice where West German aid has disappeared into private pockets? Are the funds the West Germans have given to poor countries not used for the agreed purpose? Not one example has so far been presented where funds have been misused or disappeared in the private pockets of the Ministers of the developing countries. Unless the West Germans themselves have given amounts for such purposes, as Siemens did in Indonesia and Iran and the West German officials themselves in Turkey and Somalia and many other African countries.

In all fairness it may be said that it is possible for the developing countries to have some sympathy with this West German Chancellor since politically he has faced quite some defeats lately and is perhaps, therefore, over sensitive. He went to Moscow with great expectations to come back as an established leader of the Western world. Mr. Schmidt brought nothing from there except the ridiculous satisfaction that he has been there, which means quite a lot to the West Germans in this time of the coming elections, an empty feeling of prestige. His opponent for Chancellorship Strauss, in order to get some of the aura has been able to reach only Jerusalem and Cairo and some places in South America.

Mr. Schmidt talks, at the same time, that with West German money the developing countries, instead of developing themselves are buying arms. His point perhaps is that had West Germany not given money to them, they would have spent their own money,

on development and would have no money for arms, or would spend their money on arms and would have no money for development. India spends 1.6 billion dollars on arms from the USSR because it can spend the 390 million marks (200 million dollars) it receives from West Germany on machines.

IS THIS A RESPONSIBLE statement to make? Firstly, talking of arms, West Germany, is spending about 100 billion dollars a year. For what? Has she any enemies in the world except the Imaginary ones? Secondly, West Germany itself, is the second biggest country, after the US, distributing arms and ammunition to the world. The most recent example is a 600 million mark grant to Turkey specifically for the purposes of buying arms.

India has still China occupying her territories and Pakistan has invaded India at least three times during the last thirty years. Who but West Germany and her friends are trying their best to make out of China a mighty military machine? That is perhaps nothing. Indians will have to, as it looks today, fight Pakistan and China to protect their national entity rather than make one more factory. As an intelligent statesman this ought to be clear to Mr. Schmidt. Which other country had he in view when he said this? In Somalia there is humanitarian help necessary but the West Germans are busy sending tanks there. To Pakistan they delivered arms when actual fighting was going on.

West Germany has no more money for the developing poor countries because she is wasting huge amounts in financing a bankrupt England and the artificially created fortress of the European Economic Community, arms to Turkey and Somalia and anyone who wants them from her on a promissory note of help against Russia.

IT IS THE HARD EARNED MONEY, of the West Germans and they should be able to spend it the way they like. If they do not want to give a penny to the poor countries, they have their right to do so and the poor countries have nothing to object. But at every step, Mr. Schmidt wants the help of the poor countries. For example, in Afghanistan, none of his friends has been able to do anything: his protector the US, the whole of West

Europe, all his other friends far and wide: South Africa, Argentina, Pakistan, Turkey none can do anything. Now he wants the poor Third World countries to do something. In every speech lately he is asking this. What does he want the Third World countries to do?

Here another competent question arises: Mr. Schmidt is made Chancellor by the West German Socialist Party whose Chairman, Mr. Brandt is also the Chairman of the Socialist international and is conducting the North-South dialogue. How does this rhyme together? The Chairman is talking big about the poor countries and its Chancellor-nominee is always abusing those countries? Does not the grand sweep of Mr. Brandt's conception and design touch the nominee at all? Once in a while Mr. Schmidt shows traces of a claim to the leadership of the whole Free World (whatever this may mean). His party bosses start to give the 'public his inner thinking by asking the people, After Carter, Who? After the American debacle in Vietnam, Iran and Afghanistan and all along the line, who would assume the world leadership? They start hinting at Schmidt. Can such a man be capable of the role at all?

What does Mr. Schmidt want? He wants the help of the poor countries, that means their votes, should the counting of heads be necessary at some future date, for his dream of the unity of the German speaking peoples minus Austrians who are also German-speaking but cannot be a part of the German nation today, as they want to have nothing to do with the dream. But he is not clear of the frontiers he wants. Some parties in West Germany want Hitler's Reich fully restored. Some want little less, Schmidt's Party wants even lesser. Even when the West Germans themselves are not clear in their mind as to what their frontiers should be, how can the poor put in their nose for such a cause, even if granted that it would solve the problems of the world for ever? Also, why should the poor countries put their eggs in the West German basket?

You have to read the daily press of West Germany to realise this. Even in their worst days more British had shown more understanding of India and its position than the West Germans of today. Read what the articles in the Frank-

furter, Sddeutsche, Spiegel and the reportage of their national News Agency DPA are writing about India and the other poor countries. They are full of contempt, misquotations, wrong statements, ridiculous insinuations. In none of them is any understanding of anything happening in India and the other poor countries to be seen. But Mr. Schmidt has made the conclusions of such a press as his own. Is this the world contemplated by Mr. Schmidt? Mr. Schmidt is talking as if West Germany is doling out money to the Third World countries out of love for them. While the poor countries thank all the time for the West German help they are very clear in their minds on two points: Firstly, they will not go down and die if West Germany stopped helping them. If Mr. Schmidt is dissatisfied with the "waste" of his countrymen's money and would prefer to spend that amount nay even more on armaments and tanks to Somalian and Turkey instead of bread which they need more, then he can do so, and still the poor of the world would live somehow or the other. But he knows that the things are not that easy and simple. Then, for every million marks given by West Germany as aid, or loans, so many hundreds of jobs are created in the West Germany industry. Most of the money the industrialised countries give, comes back to them by way of orders on machines. Is it such a bad thing?

The European civilization, of which Mr. Schmidt is so proud, left India with hundreds of thousand of villages without drinking water. It was there for hundreds of years and had the full control of the Indian economy. It's no use telling us now that this happened because we were lazy and incompetent. If they had the money to make palaces for themselves without labour force, they could also have made wells for the drinking water for the people left under their subjugation and responsibility. We had thought of the Second World War as a milestone in the development of the political conscience of mankind. The primitive and tribal political conceptions of Bismarck, Kaiser and Hitler were supposed to have given place to an enlightened democracy and socialism in West Germany. But when Mr. Schmidt talks of the poor countries today, one feels the traces of old voices coming on

the stage from the old background. Can West Germany have a grand design for a future world under these circumstances?
—Patriot

BALUCHISTAN

A Tinder Box

—astride three frontiers—

by Pranay Gupta

Zahidan, Iran,

To see this part of the world is to wonder why anyone would want to live here, let alone fight over the rugged, mountainous terrain bereft of foliage or vegetation. Cold and windy in winter, it is so hot in summer that sweat instantly evaporates on the skin. Yet, in this remote southeastern province of Iran the revolutionary Government of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini has clashed with Baluchi tribesmen who contend that they are being economically and culturally repressed. Here, as in other ethnic regions, Teheran's adroitness may determine whether Iran will survive intact or be shredded into ethnic splinters.

THE BALUCHIS would undoubtedly welcome autonomy throughout their transnational sub-region in Iran and across frontiers in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Like other minorities—Azerbaijani Turks in northwestern Iran (who spill over into the Soviet Union) and the Kurds of Kurdistan (which was cut up among Iran, Iraq, Turkey, Syria and the Soviet Union)—they want autonomous states, although not necessarily independent of the nation. Baluchis and Kurds are Sunni Moslems, while the majority of Iran's 35 million Moslems are Shiites.

In Pakistan, frequently rebellious Baluchistan accounts for nearly half the territory, although the 2.5 million Baluchis are only about 3 percent of the population. Since the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and after last week's election victory in India of Indira Gandhi, who is regarded as hostile, Pakistan's leader, Gen. Mohammed Zia ul-Haq worries more than ever about internal troubles, the more so since the new Soviet-installed President of

Afghanistan, Babrak Karmal, referred to the "legitimate aspirations" of the Baluchis and Pashtuns, another cross-border minority) in his first speech.

AFGHANISTAN has never accepted its Pakistan frontier, first drawn on British maps in the 19th century, and Kabul even voted against admitting Pakistan to the United Nations in 1947. Before he was deposed, the Shah of Iran virtually adopted Pakistani Baluchistan as a protectorate, sending American supplied helicopter gunships, some manned by Iranian pilots, to help put down a Baluchi uprising there in 1974. Selig S. Harrison, writing in Foreign Policy magazine, described the Shah's nightmare scenario as envisaging Soviet-coordinate twin rebellions of Baluchis and Pashtuns, launched from staging points in Afghanistan. Proclaiming a People's Republic of Baluchistan, the rebels, the Shah feared, would promptly welcome a Soviet naval facility to the port at Gwadar, in Pakistani Baluchistan, commanding 750 miles of coastline near the entrance to the Persian Gulf. The Shah is gone, but his nightmare is more worrisome than ever.

Evidencing nervousness, a Pakistani military court recently sentenced the Pakistani correspondent of the *Far Eastern Economic Review*, Salamat Ali, to a year in prison on charges that his report of Baluchi unrest incited dismemberment of the country. In today's Iran, Baluchis do not hide strong feelings of ethnic identity and resentment at the repression they perceive as coming from Teheran. National officials, in turn, are deeply suspicious of Baluchi motives. "We seem to be the unwanted of Iran", said Mowlavi Abdul-Aziz Mollazadeh, the Baluchi religious leader. "They are nothing but smugglers, these Baluchis," said Habib Ghariri, Teheran's Governor of Baluchistan Province, officially known as Baluchistan and Seistan.

SEISTANIS, SHIITE MOSLEMS who are favored by the Khomeini regime, also live in Zahidan. Better-educated land-owning Seistanis hold relatively well-paying Government jobs. In contrast to the mud shacks and unpaved streets of Zahidan's Baluchi quarter, Seistanis live in neat white-washed brick homes with gardens and streetlights. Proud but poor, Baluchis often appear ill-nourished, while Seistanis

look better fed and clothed. Seistanis ride in cars often a Mercedes; Baluchis travel by motorcycle and donkey-cart.

Last week, four Government militiamen and soldiers were ambushed and killed near Zahidan. Baluchi resentment has deepened since Teheran gave the Seistanis weapons. Three days of fighting with guns and machetes erupted in the city last month, leaving at least 12 men—including one militiaman—dead. Declaring martial law, Teheran sent in troops, which are still in place. Ayatollah Mohammed Kafami, Shiite leader of the Seistanis, blamed the unrest on "American agents". Arriving to mediate, Ibrahim Yazdi, former Foreign Minister and trouble-shooter for Ayatollah Khomeini, also said, without elaborating, that "American agents" had been arrested.

Khomeini regime officials complain that Baluchistan was laggard in last year's revolution against Shah Mohammed Riza Pahlavi. Governor Ghariri noted that a marble equestrian statue of the Shah remained in Zahidan's main square for weeks after the monarch was deposed. Finally the army removed the monument, leaving a broken leg of the Shah's marble horse still in place. "The Baluchis just didn't think of pulling down the statue", the Governor said.

IN RECENT YEARS, the Baluchis lived in relative harmony with Teheran, after the Shah's troops had ruthlessly put down minor uprisings. The Shah's border guards looked the other way while Baluchis carried on traditional smuggling of radios, tape recorders, bicycles, motor-cycles, perfumes and cosmetics, jeans and suits sold in Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Smuggling is one of the few available livelihoods in this harsh land. With only 8 inches of average rainfall per year, farming is virtually nonexistent. Unlike Pakistani Baluchistan, where multinational companies have been exploring in search of oil and uranium, there are few natural resources on the Iranian side.

Iran says there are only 650,000 Baluchis in Iran, compared to 11 million Azerbaijanis and more than 5 million Kurds. Until recently, the Baluchis, spread thinly over rugged terrain, were not regarded as a threat. The Shah's imperial forces kept them in line, but the

Khomeini Government, distracted by unrest in Azerbaijan and Kurdistan, may need to call on the forces now in Zahidan to go elsewhere. Furthermore, mountainous Baluchistan is made to order for guerilla units, as the Pakistan Government well knows.

Baluchi leaders make no secret of their dislike for the Teheran regime. Culturally and politically, they see little for themselves in the Shiite-dominated Islamic republic. Last month, Baluchis boycotted the referendum on the proposed Islamic Constitution that is expected to install the 79-year-old Ayatollah Khomeini as the nation's Faghi—the supreme spiritual and political leader—for life. The Baluchis see the Constitution as one more indication that the Shiite majority is not prepared to offer concessions to minorities.

For the Government, however, holding onto Baluchistan is a question of capital importance. There is a growing sense in Teheran and in the Ayatollah's home city, Qum, that a successful Baluchi insurgency could stimulate the other unhappy ethnic groups and perhaps bring down the new Islamic republic.

—New York Times

NGUYU—12

Daily Chores

by Bwana Rafiki

Good luck, and I hope all is well on the estate, was the sum of what my father said to me and his thoughts and his words were prophetic as I found out. It all started, one day, one evening to be precise, months earlier, when I was told there was someone waiting for me at the bungalow. I thought it was someone I had been expecting. It turned out to be a stranger and his wife and child, all Tamils. It suited us both that he should stay. He saved me a lot of money in Vedaralas' fees, but we also lost some cattle through deaths both before and after he arrived. Things did not always go right and he was a difficult character. The other day he took it upon himself to go to the police with a complaint against the watcher and that ex-employee

of mine whom some readers may remember has been a nuisance. The day my father uttered those words, I arrived on the estate and learnt that the Tamil had been admitted to hospital in a bad way.

This happened on Sunday evening and it was Wednesday before I met him, which was after his return from hospital. His face had obviously been hurt and I was told he had stitches inside his mouth. It appears to have been the watcher's non-resident son who hit him, and the injured man is unfortunately one of my milkers. I worked out the costs of running a dairy some days ago. It seems quite obvious that mine is running at loss. The trouble is the cost of feed, for which I am paying Rs. 135/- a hundred-weight of coconut poonac, four hundredweights, instead of Rs. 45/- for Dairy max which the village Co-operative will not get me, and the other problem is the exorbitant price of barbed wire which means that I have to add another couple of men to the dairy section to cope with the cattle as the fences are not to be relied on.

Last night I sat up for several hours, till after 3 a.m. in fact, working out the balance wages of the staff on the two estates, and what also took quite a lot of time, checking the figures to see I had made no mistake. Twenty-four hours have passed to a day, and it is 3 a.m. again, but this time I am in Colombo trying to write this so that anyone who reads it would not be reading balderdash. I am in much worse shape than I was at this hour of the morning yesterday, for it took me quite a time to understand what I had written. However, my mind has cleared now by sheer dogged effort, a persistence in trying to make some sense of it all. I am feeling much better, in much better shape, but it is already 3.30 a.m. and the wages will have to be paid out this evening, the balance wages on both estates.

A party was what got me home so late that I was up still at 3.30 a.m. writing *Nguvu*. I did not know every fellow guest but I was introduced to most of them. It was a party of people of like interest of several nationalities, creative people, supremely happy, serious, all talking a common language. Time flew. When I thought it was time to be getting

home, alarmed at the lateness of the hour, for it was nearly midnight, and stood up, I was astounded to see there was no reaction, not a flicker of an eyelid as it were from anyone, all absorbed in talking seated round three tables, no one gone home yet, all set as if the party had only started. My walking dame of trishaw fame, a good friend of mine, was there. This time we got a lift home, no walking and a lift all the way.

Friday is the day Christ died on just as Sunday was the day He rose entire from His tomb and clothed with the body which had been crucified on the cross. Like us all He had a heart which because He was God as well as man is called by Roman Catholics the Sacred Heart. Of all the Fridays in the month, the first has come to be set apart as a day of reparation to the Sacred Heart for all the sins of the people in the world. A religious practice said to have been called into being by a revelation of Jesus Christ in appearance to a woman surrounds nine consecutive first Fridays of the month with the hearing of Mass and the reception of Holy Communion as reparation.

That was first Friday as we call it for short, but today I felt truly shattered. One of my own personal staff, domestic, said he was leaving instantly but was stayed, two sawyers of a lunumidella tree threatened to cart off the wood they had sawn as I had not paid them the advance which they had mentioned yesterday and expected *instanter*, Rs. 500/-, and another of my personal staff refused to cook so that we both went without our lunch. All these matters were settled to my satisfaction including the no-lunch but they left a scar. On the bright side I kept my honour in all these matters, and I went to the nearest big town six miles away to buy some cattle eye ointment and cornered the veterinary in her home, all this after setting off by bus from here at 7 p.m. I got there to find that the pharmacy was not closing for another hour, good old Ceylon keeping its own times.



SAVANT

ANANDA COOMARASWAMY: REMEMBERING AND REMEMBERING AGAIN AND AGAIN by S. Durai Raja Singam (*Limited Special Edition, copies available, from author and publisher at 7, Road, 11/3, Petaling Jaya, Malaysia 1.*)

Sometime during the latter half of 1979, SLBC in one of its rare flashes of perception of listener preferences had arranged to interview Dr. Rama Coomaraswamy son of Dr. Ananda Kentish Coomaraswamy. It was very well done by Marion Abeysekera. In fact this was so that I immediately sent a letter of appreciation to SLBC inquiring whether such programmes could not be arranged with greater frequency. There was not even the courtesy of an acknowledgement. So much for the SLBC.

During the course of that interview Dr. Rama Coomaraswamy mentioned that his father and his works were much better known and appreciated in the Western world than in the East. There was a tinge of sadness I thought. It must be true, for in a collection of nearly 150 articles I find very few from this part of the world. The same though is echoed by Pratapaditya Pal "it is not surprising that Ananda Kentish Coomaraswamy is still little known to educated Indians", he writes. However, Sri Lanka's own first Prime Minister Rt. Hon. D. S. Senanayake considers that "we owe to Dr. Coomaraswamy, as to no other man, the stimulus for the revival in modern times of our cultural and spiritual heritage."

Dr. Ananda Coomaraswamy was born on 22.8.1877 in Colombo, son of a famous jurist, Sir Muttu Coomaraswamy who had been knighted by Queen Victoria. His mother was a young English woman from Kent, Elizabeth Clay Beeby, who belonged to a respectable English family. At 25 young Ananda Coomaraswamy had received the D.Sc. and came over to Ceylon as the Director of Mineralogical Survey of Ceylon. He left after two years.

A. K. C. discouraged Durai Raja Singam from undertaking this biographical study saying "I am not at all interested in biographical matters relating to myself and I consider the

modern practice of publishing details about the lives and personalities of well known men is nothing but a vulgar catering to illegitimate curiosity.....and shall be grateful if you will publish nothing but the barest facts about myself. What you should deal with is the nature and tendency of my work." Durai Raja Singam has not departed from this guideline set for him by this great man. Lives of great men keep reminding us all the time and it is good for posterity if every such man can find his own Boswell. N. S. Krishnamurti paying tribute to this Boswell, "Today Raja Durai Singam of Malaysia is doing the work of several institutions single-handed. His ardent admiration of Gurudev A. K. C. is very great. Alone he has collected information about A.K.C. and has published two volumes and he is now collecting the letters of A.K.C. His yeoman service, done for sheer love of labour remains as long as A.K.C.'s fame lasts."

A.K.C. was an iconographer par excellence, linguist being fluent in at least 12 languages apart from his mother tongue English, philosopher and scholarly expert in ancient Indian literature and art, poet and scientist. This is versatility hard to match. He was a complete man and came very close to the Renaissance ideal of a universal man says a contributor. He was educated at Wycliffe and at London University. Being a child of two worlds, in him was synthesised the two cultures so much so that he was able to write that "the chosen people of the future cannot be any nation or race but an aristocracy of the earth uniting the virility of the European youth to the serenity of Asiatic age."

"A.K.C. is not a son of Mother India but a grandson, born by Mother India's eldest daughter, Ceylon as it was cartographed and generally termed. He was a Tamil, I learnt only upon his father's side. His mother was English" writes St. Nihal Singh in his contribution. The reference to our own country, Sri Lanka, as being the eldest daughter must surely strike responsive chords in the hearts of Indians and Sri Lankans. This sense of oneness has always been cherished. I have not come across a more touching description. Nihal Singh also refers to the influence his two cousins Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan

and Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam exerted upon A.K.C. in order to Indianise him. It will be remembered that the oneness of the human family is the cause that was consistently espoused by these two Knights in our own country.

The contributions are from men and women from several parts of the world who have achieved eminence. It would thus be a superfluous exercise on my part to expatiate further. Rather I would commend to those who are interested in the life and times of this great son of Lanka to read this collection of tributes to the man and discussions of much of his work. A.K.C. had published his first article as a young man of 18 in 1895 entitled *The Geology of Doverow Hill* and by his 70th birthday in 1947 he had become the author of more than 500 publications. The articles covered Indian, Indonesian and Sinhalese Art and several essays including the most outstanding one on the Dance of Shiva. All these have been discussed. "Whatever the field one is working in, one finds that Ananda Coomaraswamy has something on it" says V. Raghavan while Miss I. B. Horner thinks that "his devotion to truth and the search for it was the guiding motive and master passion on his intense intellectual life."

The articles that touched me most deeply were the poignant ones by La Meri and Dorothy Norman. La Meri tells the author of the publication, "I am indeed too humble a one to offer tribute to his memory. Let me, then, my heart full overflowing, fold my hands in the Anjali he taught me, lay one fragrant flower among the many radiant garlands..." Dorothy Norman who visited the savant shortly before his death "There was something deeply moving about hearing the far away voice sharing the quintessence of what the long and dedicated life had taught. But I left with a heavy heart nevertheless. When I left I said sadly to those whom I joined "That extraordinary man will soon die. I shall never see him again." Within a little over a week I received word that he had died."

I would have liked Mr. Durai Raja Singam to have introduced each contributor to the reader. This, however, does not certainly diminish the value of the book. Printed in Malaysia on art paper and containing a large number of excellent plates the book is priced

at 36 Malaysian dollars (exclusive of postage). The ordinary edition is priced 25 dollars.

Devaratnam Danforth.

+ + +

GRAMA SASTRA—22

—Scribblings On Uva Villages

"And, Den, a Post Office"

by Gamiya

"Denna dena deno

Post office is a dingy den-Oh!"

It is a junction town, capital of a remote District. (Mind you, when I say "remote!", it is close for me but far, oh, far away from the Planning Boys in the centre of Reality, as they think). However, in this remote District capital, there is a post office which is like a square Box, 60 by 40. It has two shafts of light, and the Postmaster and his crew, like galley slaves, just go ahead, rain or sun (little rain, of course, for most of the year, you know), and work and work till they can. Two shafts for light, five fluorescent lights, on, when they can creep through the maze of powercuts, symbol of the 'powerlessness', of the people.

I met a stray postman and asked him: "what can you see in that dingy dark hole which is like the black hole of Calcutta?" He said: "Yes, it is hard to see in the day time, and day-time is like night-time, What to say or do, there are other problems for the country, and we are like another satellite station far away in space". Wise postman, sound image, but the darkness remains.

Buses wind their way in and out of the In-gate and Out-gate, with precision and regularity; the officers are courteous and prompt to civil and uncivil alike, and yet, this is not the right size and shape of a District post office. It cannot be. That there can be 25 and more Sugar-cane factories, and a large number of monks who are at the beck and call of people for their ministrations; that there should be officers a penny-a-dozen all over this junction town of rubber proportions, who will want to write home and all that,

and then to see that the post office is so dark, is worth an exorcism as I said at the beginning. It was a kattadiya (for so he told me his profession), who said that he was sent a letter from Welimada, on the 3rd of a month, and he got the "letter safe and sound, delivered on the 18th." Now, now, my man, that is an exception: "You are not going to hold anything against the gallant Postoffice crew for a short delay like that, long though it be." To which he replied: "meketa baliyak natanda one, me palaveni sare novel" (This is worth an exorcism. This is not the first time!! exclamation marks, mine!)

Come to think of it, letters are sent to B....via H.... from this 'satellite station', if you know the trend. A relic of old Britannia. Hard work, splendid output, and I think the addressees' names just cannot be read in the dark. That's the most normal explanation which is both excuse and exorcism bundled into one. Captain and crew, take courage, the village areas are being opened up, and (oh, I'm sorry,you are only a junction town, though capital of a District). Cheer up, the lights are coming. Take time off, and read the Tribune when the daylight dawns for you around four p.m. when you come out of your den. Denna dena deno.....den....Oh!



SECURE STANDARDS

Only For a Short Time ?

by Jayantha Somasundaram

HAVING EMBARKED on a policy that led to hyper inflation, the Jayewardene Raj has spent quite a bit of time and effort since July 1977 attempting to gloss over its responsibility. It is not blind to the collapsing living standards and the pauperisation of wage earners. Even if the Government has its vision impaired by the tinted wind shields of those Peugeot 604s, it still cannot run away from reality.

One ploy of the Government has been to blame the big bad sheiks of OPEC for raising the price of oil. To get credence for this they enacted a farce called the 'OPEC petition.' Yet the truth of the matter is that the OPEC price hikes have been the result, not the cause

of inflation. They, primary commodity exporters like ourselves, have only tried to get a fair price for their exports, in a situation where their imports from the industrialised West have kept sky rocketting. We too have been attempting precisely that with our tea and rubber. The comparative elasticity of tea and rubber, the propensity for quantities bought to fall in proportion to rises in price, has thwarted our efforts. The oil producers are a little luckier than us.

So instead of admitting that the West is deliberately paying a pittance for our exports and jacking up the prices of our imports, the Government is absurd enough to allow unrestricted imports at currency rates determined by this unfair market, and taking the easy way out by blaming the Arabs. All this ties up neatly with the wishes of their Western masters and their pro-Israeli foreign policy.

The UNP has learned in the past that its white masters are prone to bite the hands that venerate them. In 1953 this led to the then UNP Government having to hobble over to the Chinese to get our supplies of rice via the rubber rice pact.

Now that the Western lending institutions, themselves are beginning to frown on the progress of events in Sri Lanka, the Jayewardene Raj has had to explore the possibility of getting compensatory assistance from the big bad oil sheiks. So they have hastily hidden the 'OPEC petition' behind their back, toned down their attacks on the Arab oil exporters and to deliver the coup de grace, J. R. Jayewardene himself climbed a public platform down south to abuse the 'imperialists'. We live in hilarious times.

Hardly a week passes without some significant price hike. At the time of writing, the price of sugar, cinema seats and the cost of foreign telegrams and calls have been increased. Some items like housing have become astronomical and now defy inclusion in price indices or inflation rates.

The government's only response in the last three years in the wake of its disastrous policies, has been to offer wage increases of a compensatory nature. These wage increases

have only resulted in further fuelling on inflation. But the pressure on the government is great, and it is promising another wage increase in the budget. Runaway inflation is around the corner and living standards even in the higher income groups where they have so far been secure, have but a short time to live.

* * *

EL SALVADOR

Danger Of U.S. Intervention

by Bob Moryan

The formation of the Revolutionary Democratic Front (FDR) last April was a fundamental step towards overthrowing the American-backed civilian-military junta that has taken the repression of El Salvador to the worst levels since 1932. It was then that 48 years of military government were begun with the massacre of over 30,000 workers and peasants. The FDR, recognized by the Socialist International as the true representative of the Salvadorean people, unites all democratic and popular organisations of El Salvador around a programme that will bring democracy and social justice to this small Central American country. The present policy of the civilian-military junta, which this year so far has resulted in the murder of over 4,000 people by the armed forces, and the Right-wing para-military groups, is described by the FDR as the application of an American strategy of "killings with reforms" which aims to restore control of the country through the annihilation of all opposition groups.

In addition to the enormous military and economic aid received from America and the distortion of news from the country by the American news agencies, it is significant that the present wave of killings became systematic only after the arrival of the American Ambassador, Robert White, and 35 top military advisers in late February. Until then the ruling groups and the armed forces had been divided over how the popular opposition should be confronted with the majority of the armed forces and the oligarchy refusing to accept the limited "reforms" demanded by

America. This disorganisation was expressed in attempted coups and assassinations. With White's arrival the differences were sufficiently resolved for the para-military group to become united in the "white warriors union" and for the Junta to be able to announce details for land reform.

THE PROPOSED LAND REFORM would not have affected the economic base of the oligarchy, which is in coffee production, cultivated on farms safely below the 500-hectare limit outlined, but it has already been abandoned. The day before the Land Reform Decree on March 7, a State of Siege was imposed. While the international press reported the "deep changes" resulting from the reform, the operations of the armed forces and the paramilitary groups escalated. The first target was independent sources of information about what was really happening in the country. Archbishop Romero who had written to President Carter calling for an end to American support to the antipopular regime and denouncing the fraud involved in the reform, was one of the first victims of this campaign that has meant the bombing of the last independent newspapers, the murder of journalists and the closure of human rights offices.

The areas in the countryside strongly supporting the FDR are militarily occupied, villages "suspected of harbouring guerillas" have been attacked by helicopter gunships and napalm and their inhabitants massacred. Selective and brutal murders are carried out to terrorise the rural population. The main aim of this policy of annihilation of the popular and democratic organisations is being attempted through the systematic murder of their leaders and activists and the bombing of offices and meeting places in the capital and regional towns. At the moment a political murder is carried out every half an hour.

Internationally, the participation of the Christian Democratic Party (PDC) is being used by America to give some credibility to the moderate image of the regime and to win support for the intervention of a "peace-keeping" force. Inside the country the majority of the PDC have left the Junta to join the FDR, leaving only to top leadership, who

are unable to fill all the Cabinet posts and Government positions.

Outside the country the violence is being portrayed as a conflict between "the extreme Right and Left" and a careful separation is made between the army and the para-military groups. This separation has been challenged by impartial observers such as Amnesty International. The truth of the portrayal of the FDR as "extremists of the Left" can be assessed by the fact that it has organised three general strikes this year, each time bringing a 90 percent stoppage of production, transport and commerce.

Journalists who have recently returned from El Salvador report that, despite the scale of the repression, the optimism and confidence in victory of the Salvadoreans is high. They are prepared to confront any foreign intervention in support of the isolated junta, which is suffering moral decomposition and panic, particularly since the popular armed forces have inflicted over 2,500 losses on the armed forces since January and the desertion rate is 600 a month.

The FDR is preparing the final steps for the popular victory through pre-insurrectional general strikes, the next of which will be this month. It has also warned that the possibility of direct American military intervention is very real. This would internationalise the conflict with dangerous consequences for world peace, and the FDR has called for international pressure to prevent America from using this option.

Further information can be obtained from the El Salvador Solidarity Campaign 29, Islington Park Street, London N 1. —Tribune UK.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONSERVATION

Aids Social Unity In Sri Lanka

IT IS SINGULARLY APPROPRIATE that the latest UNESCO International Project, the conservation of historical monuments in and around Sri Lanka's ancient capitals, should

be inaugurated by UNESCO's Secretary-General in the city of Kandy at the height of its annual festival—the Perahera.

While in the rest of the country the two mainstreams of Sri Lankan culture, the Sinhala-Buddhist and the Tamil-Hindu, were mixed as a result of wars and invasions, their blending in Kandy was more peaceful. The later Sinhala kings married Tamil princesses. Moreover, in Kandy, this culture, whose visible signs the UNESCO project aims to preserve, is still very much alive and less affected by European influences than elsewhere. This is seen most vividly and spectacularly in the Perahera procession. In this the most sacred Buddhist relic, a Tooth of the Buddha, and the images of four Hindu deities are paraded through the streets in a procession of more than 100 splendidly caparisoned elephants, accompanied by drummers, dancers and dignitaries in traditional court dress.

Unlike the other UNESCO international projects, which are concerned with the preservation of a single monument such as Abu Simbel or Borobudur, or with a single site such as Carthage or Sukhothai, the UNESCO-Sri Lanka project relates to five separate sites in the triangle formed by the ancient capitals of Anuradhapura, Polonnaruwa and Kandy. As a result it covers a wide range of architectural activity and it is remarkable that the civilisation of so small an island should have produced as many monuments, covering 2000 years, deemed sufficiently important by UNESCO to be made part of their World Heritage programmes.

Some of the projects are quite spectacular and, since display is coupled with conservation will enhance the Triangle as a tourist attraction. In Anuradhapura, for example, there are two gigantic stupas—traditional Buddhist Reliquaries—which are now jungle-covered mounds but, when the project is complete, they will have been restored to their original shape—each a hemisphere of brick whose pinnacle will reach a height only a few feet lower than the top of the Great Pyramid at Giza. At Sigiriya, the rock citadel with its famous frescoes, the pleasure gardens will be excavated and replanted with their pools and fountains restored. The temple caves at Dambulla, with their wall paintings, will not

only be protected from the ravages of water and insects but will be lit to allow visitors to see them properly. The conservation work on the Buddhist and Hindu shrines in Kandy will be extended to cover the landscaping of the area in which they are set. It is only the excavation of the ancient University complex at Polonnaruwa which is envisaged as an archaeological exercise pure and simple.

However, almost any major archaeological undertaking becomes a tourist attraction. What makes the Cultural Triangle Project unique is the way the Government has turned the task of raising funds to pay for the 40% Sri Lanka has to contribute, into a benefit rather than a burden, UNESCO's International appeal is designed to raise the other 60%.

THE GOVERNMENT has decided that, if this undertaking is to have any real meaning, it must be undertaken by the people of Sri Lanka as a whole. The raising of the Sri Lankan share of the costs—channelled into the Cultural Triangle Fund—is to be a national effort; since the culture of the Island is the heritage of all its people, irrespective of whether they are Sinhalese or Tamil, Buddhist or Hindu, high caste or low caste, all should share in the realisation of this project. It is clearly the Government's aim that, quite apart from marshalling the money needed for the project, the appeal should act as a bond uniting the various communities between whom divisions are all too prone to widen.

The Government is equally determined to include school children in the fund raising, not because they have access to much wealth—they haven't—and not even because of the project's obvious educational value, but because, by participating the children will identify with the project. In this way it will enlist the next generation, who will have to ensure that the achievements of the project are protected in the future.

The Government is also committed to a massive development programme for which it is hard pushed to raise the necessary revenue. It has, therefore, decided that it would impose an admittance charge for tourists visiting the ancient monuments, the whole income from which will go to the Cultural Triangle Fund. The rest of Sri Lanka's contribution will

have to come from voluntary contributions. Raising such sums—the present target is Rs. 60 million, (i.e. roughly US \$ 4 million) over five years will not be easy in a country where a labourer's daily wage is still less than \$ 1.50. The Government has turned to a multi-national company operating in Sri Lanka, which is marketing oriented and itself active in cultural activities in Sri Lanka, to advise on publicity for the Fund. A publicity Committee of senior marketing executives from a broad range of private and public sector organisations has been established to this end.

On the recommendation of this Committee, the Government has decided to organise the fund raising in such a way that people are encouraged to give frequently even if the individual donation is small. In fact the basic unit is a brick costing Rs. 2/50 (US \$ 0.16). To encourage frequent donations each contribution counts towards a goal at which some recognition can be achieved. Rs. 250/- makes the donor a patron, Rs. 2,500/- will result in the donor's initials being stamped on the 1000 bricks the sum buys, which happens to be a traditional form of public recognition and costs nothing since modern archaeological practice requires all new materials to be marked in any case, and the donor also receives one brick, mounted as a souvenir.

ONCE THE FUND APPEAL IS LAUNCHED in the press, on TV and on radio, the Publicity Committee has devised various ways of keeping the Fund before the public eye. However, the wider objectives have not been ignored. There is a special programme for schools, with collection cards based on 25 cts. contributions and step by step recognition as various numbers of cards are completed. This recognition is not confined to the individual child; certificates and wall plaques are available to schools who reach targets either in the form of a stated number of cards or, to encourage smaller schools and those in poor areas, by the active participation of at least 75% of the pupils in the school. In addition the Ministry of Education will prepare kits for teachers to illustrate each of the individual projects.

However, in a country as poor as Sri Lanka, any project where participation de-

pends on giving money, however small the unit, automatically excludes most people. At its first meeting the Publicity Committee considered the concept of "Shramadana", that is giving labour instead of cash, or voluntary work. The Department of Archaeology understandably was very wary of the prospect of enthusiastic but untrained people turning up unannounced at work sites. The Chief Commissioner of the Boy Scouts, then raised the idea of supervised troops of "shramadana" workers. This idea is being developed so that, when suitable work opportunities arise, the Department of Archaeology will approach various organisations asking them to supply teams of volunteers. Such workers will receive receipts for work done which qualify them for recognition just as though they had made a money donation. In this way the opportunity to contribute will be immensely widened.

Sri Lanka's share of the cost of the UNESCO/Sri Lanka project will be met without imposing any new tax and without stopping work on any existing archaeological project. It will be met by the effort of the people of the country who, through becoming more aware of their cultural heritage, will be drawn more closely to each other, and the methods used are themselves in keeping with the cultural traditions of the country.

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DOUBLE STANDARDS

The Polish Strike

by Kunanandan Nair

WESTERN DOUBLE STANDARDS were blatantly exposed in their attitude to two strikes—one by French Fishermen, and the other by ship yard workers in Poland.

While there was no comment in the use of the French navy to smash the blockade of France's ports by hundreds of fishing boats, leaving some of the boats listing under the attack of rockets and tossing fishermen into the stormy waters with water cannons, the western leaders and media made seathing comments on, and even issued threats at the Polish government, when thousands of ship-

yard workers at Gdansk went on strike for better working prospects. *At the time of writing, 90 per cent of the workers' demands were met, and the strike was nearing a negotiated end.*

But the US, British, West German and NATO political leaders and monopoly mass media, while congratulating the French government for breaking up the strike, shamelessly interfered in Polish internal affairs and tried to prolong the unrest there. Western leaders even warned, that suppression of the Polish strike would damage detente and destroy the chances of holding the Madrid European security follow-up meet next November. In the past 20 years, there were very big strikes in West Europe, (the 1968 French strike nearly toppled President de Gaulle's power), but there never was such naked foreign interference as in the case of Poland. *The Polish strike was used by the west for aggravate European tensions and wreck detente. Some glaring examples:*

West German Chancellor Helmut suddenly cancelled his summit meeting with GDR head of state Erich Honecker (scheduled on 28th and 29th August) having come under heavy pressure from President Carter, NATO generals and his own coalition partners in the government. Hinting clearly at the Polish strike, Schmidt said the "European climate" was not good now for the summit. President Carter had used his "hot-line" to Schmidt the day before the cancellation, to warn that the Polish situation would deteriorate, and Schmidt should not compromise the anti-socialist movement in Poland by holding a goodwill and detente meeting with a leading communist leader.

Western mass media, day in and day out played up the Polish unrest to give the impression that "collapse of communism is impending". And on the otherhand, played down the French strike. Meanwhile in NATO headquarters in Brussels secretary-general Joseph Luns ordered a special unit to monitor Polish developments and "get ready" for any eventuality. In the "situation room" commandpost exercises on "roll back communism" were held.

The US daily "Los Angeles Times" reported that "the Polish situation is being monitored

closely by western embassies in Warsaw, and a full exchange of intelligence information and analysis took place among permanent representatives of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation at NATO headquarters in Brussels" on 20th August. In the United States, FBI-CIA links in the "International Longshoremen's Association", with powerful influence on the atlantic seaboard docks, announced it would boycott cargo to and from Poland to back the strikers. And finally, Polish-born Pope John Paul, breaking his silence, said: "were here, in Rome are united with our fellow Poles", giving his unasked for blessings, to the strikers.

President Carter calculated the strike would paralyse Poland and that the communists would be compelled to use force, and there would be a civil war, and there a Dubeck (1968 in Czechoslovakia) type development would be forced on the Polish leadership.

The Soviet Union would then interfere to defend its neighbouring socialist system and, like Afghanistan, he could utilize the situation to heighten the confrontation, justify his hard line and win the election as a "strong president who can defend USA."

The settlement of the Polish strike no doubt is a disappointment for "nuclear musclem" Carter and his NATO hawks.

—Courtesy: Blitz, Bombay.



POLISH UPHEAVAL—I

Price Of Complacency

by R. K. Mishra

Editor, Patriot, New Delhi.

'A plaque commemorating the victims of December 1970 will be mounted on the main gate of the shipyard. The form and inscription of the plaque will be worked out with the management of the shipyard the municipal architect of Stezechin and a mixed commission set up by the government implementation by 17 December 1980.'

From the text of the agreement between the government commission and interfactory strike committee in Stezechin.

HISTORY has repeated itself again in Poland. For the third time since it became a member of the community of socialist nations, millions of angry workers, reacting sharply to what they regarded as severe economic hardship and political mismanagement, moved into defiant action forcing a sweeping change in the ruling Communist Party, the government and the administration. Though the upheavals in Poland since July this year, when the government announced the abolition of the heavy subsidy on meat prices, have a striking similarity to the powerful protest action by Polish workers in 1956 which brought Gomulka out of oblivion to the pinnacle of power and the widespread upsurge which forced him to quit and clear the decks for Edward Gierek to assume the country's stewardship ten years ago, this year's events, by all accounts, may have a more profound impact on the future of Polish policy. As an eminent Polish observer remarked, while the past actions ended in readjusting the course within the framework of the model the concessions won by the striking workers last week may lead to the evolution of a new model. Of course, it depends on if and when and how the decisions incorporated in the agreement are implemented.

I reached Poland seventy two hours before Edward Gierek, the Polish Communist Party chief, was relieved of all positions in the party following a brief cryptic announcement that he had suffered heart attack. On the surface, business went on as usual when Lot (Polish airline) plane landed at Warsaw airport in the early hours of the morning. A Polish Foreign Ministry official, Mr. L. Zemburwski, welcomed me with a carefully cultivated warm smile which could, however, hardly lessen the infectious impact of the surcharged atmosphere. Even in normal times, Poland appeared to be an enigma: a socialist country where eighty per cent of the agricultural land is owned privately and a sense of pride for being the home-land of the Pope who was praying at the Vatican for

"Poland's struggle for social justice and the preservation of its inviolable rights to its own life and development" when the country's crucial economic sectors were paralysed due to strike actions and the whole world was gripped with apprehension about the course Polish events might take.

But in a crisis it could be a bewildering experience. A few hours in Warsaw, a few meetings with government and party functionaries and a few sessions of animated discussions with journalists and intellectuals: a feeling of utter dismay gripped me and I had to remind myself constantly of the powerful traditions of the Polish workers who have brought down governments repeatedly by direct action, since the founding of the People's Republic after the defeat of the fascists in the Second World War.

ONLY MUCH LATER when I was reading the full text of the agreement between the striking workers' leaders and the government's negotiating commission, headed by a Deputy Prime Minister, did I realise that the workers' demand for the installation of a 1970 plaque was an eloquent device to remind the leaders that they could ill-afford to forget the lessons of events which shook the country a decade before. This will tend to perpetuate the now well-established tradition of direct action of the Polish workers against established authority.

People were willing to talk with amazing frankness and without any inhibitions. Most of them, including members of the Communist Party, were unsparing in their criticism of the leadership. The "blunders" committed by it were frequently mentioned. Though most of them demarcated themselves from the dissidents, that is opponents of the socialist system, it was difficult to draw the line where one set of criticism ended and another began.

True, the storm broke out this time also on the question of abolition of subsidy on meat prices by government on 1 July. But it would be utterly simplistic to attribute the upheaval which has shaken Poland to its bones, to this factor alone. This is evident from workers' charter of demands and, more importantly, from the terms of agreements signed

by the government and the inter-factory strike committee led among others by Lech Welsha, son of a Polish emigre settled in the United States. The agreement contains seeds of far-reaching changes in Polish economy and polity.

WESTERN OBSERVERS will be indulging in self-deception if they gleefully view the cataclysmic events in Poland as a revolt against the socialist system. It is not. On the contrary, it revealed the possibility of workers' fight against bureaucratic distortions and economic misdirection in a socialist system. It will be equally naive to denounce these developments as the hand work of imperialist forces. It was a real peaceful protest-action by the workers. A million workers of the shipyards Gdansk and Stezecin and the industrial region of Silesia participated in a strike which froze the country's economy. They just dug in their work places and said that the government should send a team to negotiate their demands. They did not come to the capital. They just waited until the Government could no longer withstand the pressure and appointed a high-power negotiating commission.

The depth and the sweep of workers' actions and their determined mood can be judged from the fact that a million of them completely abstained from liquor (government closed down all wine shops in strike-bound regions) during the period of strike to avert untoward incidents. And this is no ordinary sacrifice for Poles whose love for liquor is proverbial in Europe. Not that imperialism would not have stoked the fire if it were not certain of immediate counter-action by the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. But the roots of the political earthquake, to quote, an eminent political observer, must be traced to the shocking laxity which grew in the political system, the yawning communication gap between the people, the party and the leaders, hopelessly erroneous economic policies and clearly visible degeneration in all walks of life brought about in considerable measure by Poland's vulnerability to economic manipulations by the western countries, specially the United States.

Perhaps, some of these mistakes occurred

due to Gierek leadership's anxiety to accelerate the pace of Poland's industrial development, an understandable overreaction to Gomulka's somewhat conservative economic policies. But even this would not explain fully the revulsion with which the Poles speak about widespread corruption, favouritism and inefficiency in their society. Officials admit, albeit with some reluctance, the existence of this malaise. Evidently, the disease was spreading in the body politic for several years. Its worst symptoms remained suppressed due to powerful financial anti-biotics provided by the western countries in the form of huge loans. Poland's debts with the western world grew ten-fold since 1971. Last year the country had to pay seven billion dollars in export earnings for servicing and repaying debts. The "generous" western credit had the effect of making the economy flabby and lulling the vigilance of Polish leadership by concealing the symptoms while the disease was becoming malignant.

(To be Concluded)

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U. S. VIEW

Strike In Poland

by Chris Kern

Washington, August 18,

The general strike along Poland's Baltic coast—centered in the huge Lenin shipyard at Gdansk—continued August 18 with no prospect of an early settlement. This is the fourth time since the Communist Party took power in Poland at the end of the Second World War that party and government officials there have been faced with a major labour crisis. And so far, at least, they appear to be making a determined effort to avoid using the repressive tactics that, in similar circumstances twice before, have created a situation that has brought down Polish governments. IS IS CLEAR that the strikes that are taking place along the country's Baltic Seacoast present the Polish leadership with a real dilemma. On the one hand, party leader Edward Gierek obviously wants to avoid a show of force of the kind that resulted in the

deaths of at least 45 people during the Gdansk riots of 1970, as well as in the ouster of his predecessor, Wladyslaw Gomulka. A deputy Prime Minister has been dispatched to bargain with the workers, and the government has already offered the strikers a pay increase to alleviate their economic grievances.

On the other hand, the workers' demands go well beyond economics—and well beyond what any government in Poland has yet been willing to tolerate. In addition to their economic demands, the strikers are calling for a guaranteed right to strike in the future, trade unions that are controlled by the workers themselves and not dominated by the Communist Party; an end to government censorship and free access to the country's mass communications media for all religious groups.

The merger of the traditional economic demands of the workers with the political demands of Poland's dissident intellectuals has not escaped the government's attention. The official press says the strike is threatening the national security and argue that the atmosphere in Gdansk has become favourable to what it refers to as "anti-socialist forces". What is not clear is whether this is just another argument that is intended to convince the workers to accept a limited economic settlement or whether it is designed as a potential pretext in case the government ultimately decides to use force to end the strike.

It is also not clear to what extent the government's tactics are directed at the workers and their sympathizers among Poland's general population and to what extent they are directed at the Soviet Union. In an unusual television speech August 15 during which he acknowledged the seriousness of the labor crisis, Prime Minister Edward Babuch said the workers' strike had caused concern among Poland's allies. Those allies, he said, "believe we shall be able ourselves to overcome our difficulties"—a statement that may at once have been an expression of reassurance to the Soviet leadership, of warning to the Polish workers and of the anxiety within the government in Warsaw. —USICA



POLAND

Collective Bargaining?

by Wikter Moszczyński

London, August 15.

Poland's surprising strike-bound July followed on a critical situation facing Edward Gierek's Government, which included such diverse elements as negative economic growth, an unhealthy imbalance in Poland's external trade figures, doubts among creditors of the country's ability to meet its debt obligations, an energy shortage, food shortage, a housing shortage, disastrous floods and an independent opposition movement growing stronger every day.

Faced with an indebtedness of more than £ 8000 million to Western banks and multinationals (the highest in Eastern Europe) and a drop in produced national income of 2 per cent Mr. Gierek had been reducing investment and subsidies on the home market and products. For the hard-pressed domestic consumer market, this has meant a combination of yet more shortages and yet higher prices.

SHORTAGES in such basic commodities as meat, bread, vegetables furniture, motor vehicle accessories, children's clothes and electrical appliances have been increasing for many years, partly because of faulty distribution and low productivity, and partly because of the determined export drive for such consumer goods.

Danegold to the East had always been unpopular, but the recent Moscow Olympic Games caused particular resentment because certain products disappeared from the home market altogether. Polish-cooked ham may have made the Western visitors' stay in Moscow more palatable, and Polish-made paint may have adorned the Moscow streets and stadiums, but neither could be obtained in any state shop in Poland for some months.

Even British train travellers to Poland who had booked couchettes suffered last week when they found that all available comfortable rolling stock had been commandeered to ferry visitors to the Olympics, so they had to be satisfied with an all-night journey on hard seats. Resentment by the unprivileged

non-dollar trading section of the population at such deprivation was very bitter.

The resentment was compounded by the 15 per cent increase imposed on July 1 and announced two days later in most of the less prosperous provinces of Poland. There had been a creeping unofficial inflation for many years, particularly in meat prices, which were operated on the basis of decreasing the stock supplied to the state shops; and increasing that available in the "commercial" shops at double the price or more. Dramatic price increases had been temporarily discounted by the authorities after the bloodshed and humiliating withdrawals in price increases in 1970 and 1975. Now these new smaller July increases were to become a flashpoint again.

Within a week of the imposition of the price increases, strikes by skilled and unskilled workers had broken out throughout the country. They spread to car factories, shipyards, textile mills, bearing plants, the railways and municipal workshops.

BY THE END OF JULY at least 80 plants were affected and now 120 have been reported in all. Workers ignored the staterun official union channels and set up independent strike committees and negotiating bodies to put forward their demands. These ranged from pleas to rescind or modify the price increase, through demands to increase wages so as to offset the increase in living standards, to requests for no victimisation of strike leaders, a halt to the despatch of food and other goods to the Soviet Union, better working conditions, reforms in economic management and better representation of workers' interests in the future.

Some of the strikes lasted for as long as a month, and virtually all were successful in improving wages. There was a mushrooming of protest from one factory to the next as the rews of successful strikes spread like wildfire. In one helicopter factory where a 15 percent wage rise had been agreed after a three week strike, but not actually instituted, the employees went on strike again and the management conceded their demands within one day. One dissident described it as a "nationwide round of collective bargaining."

There were no bitter riots, street fighting or massacres as in 1970 and 1976.

Both workers and authorities went out of their way to avoid any bloody confrontation. The Social Self-Defence Committee (KOR) and other sympathisers, including Catholic clergymen, urged the workers to remain in their factories during the strikes, while the authorities in turn urged the factory management to concede all possible economic demands, and to assure strikers of no victimisation.

Yet these events betokened a considerable abdication of power and loss of face on the part of the authorities. Their control over wages, over wholesale prices and over the trade union machinery has been very badly shaken. Edward Gierek is now licking his wounds in his comfortable corner in the Crimea while his Soviet seconds whisper advice in his ear.

The next round in the bout is bound to come soon. Will it be absolute repression, or a Polish version of the Prague Spring; mere economic reforms, a devolution of power in the system of centralised planning or real industrial democracy? Of one thing everyone is convinced. The present chronic impasse cannot continue.

—Tribune, U.K.

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U.S. VIEW

Brezhnev Versus Detente

by William W. Wade

Washington, Sept. 10.

Soviet party chief Leonid Brezhnev has coupled a call for East-West arms talks with sharp criticism of U.S. foreign policy. Brezhnev has a strange way of pursuing East-West detente—a goal he repeatedly praises. He tells Europeans that the good things of detente are there for the taking, that only the wrongful policies followed by Washington prevent a relaxation of international tensions. But then he spells out—as he did in a speech in Kazakhstan August 29—a peculiar Soviet version of US policy that just does not coincide with the facts.

For example, he has accused President Carter of trying to make the idea of nuclear war more acceptable to public opinion. In

fact, Carter's new Presidential directive on nuclear strategy is designed to prevent nuclear war through a more credible US policy of deterrence. Defence Secretary Harold Brown, who publicly explained the directive, has repeatedly emphasized the US view that no one can win a nuclear war.

Brezhnev has also accused Washington of delaying proposed talks about limiting Europe-based nuclear weapons. In fact, US initiatives last January and April for such talks were rejected by Soviet officials. Brezhnev, at that time, had a precondition for starting negotiations: he would talk only if the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation first cancelled its plans to match existing Soviet weapons with modernized weapons of its own.

After seven months of Soviet delay, Brezhnev, during a Moscow visit by Federal German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt, dropped his precondition. Even now, his sudden interest in haste rings false. The question of Europe-based nuclear arms is so complex that the negotiations themselves are likely to take years.

On Afghanistan, Brezhnev hits more false notes—by this time, familiar false notes. The Afghanistan question, he says, can be settled easily, if, as he puts it, American imperialism stops trying to "smother the Afghan revolution and turn Afghanistan into a new springboard threatening the Soviet Union and the Freedom-loving independent countries of the East."

Again, Brezhnev has overlooked some simple facts; America could not smother a revolution in Afghanistan if it wanted to; the foreign troops on Afghan soil are Soviet troops, not American; the million-plus Afghan refugees in Pakistan and Iran attest to the unpopularity and counter-revolutionary nature of the present Afghan government.

Brezhnev, it is plain to see, does not talk the language of detente, the relaxation of tensions, but rather a language of creating difficulties where none ought to exist.

—VOA/USICA



In Our Air Force

Helipads and Air Force stations are places generally outside the Tribune beat. But a reader who recently had occasion to go to a couple of Air Force outposts (one in which a helipad is situated) was surprised to see in the guard room at the entrance a photograph of an air force officer with the legend that he was "*persona non grata*" and that he should not be admitted (without, we presume a special dispensation).

Our informant was surprised to see this—it was like the picture of an IRC (Island Re-convicted Criminal) displayed at police stations and other public places. But what baffled him and has staggered us is how a person becomes *persona non grata* to the Sri Lanka Air Force (SLAF). Only a sovereign government can exercise any disciplinary or punitive action after declaring a person *persona non grata*—and conventions in international law have grown up as to how this concept is brought into force. This unique SLAF order about a "*persona non grata*" being refused entry is something new and funny. A sentry guard has the right to refuse admission to anyone whose face he does not like, but as he was unlikely to refuse admission to an officer or a retired officer, this ridiculous precaution of hanging up the picture for identification was evidently hit upon.

The more we pondered about this the more puzzled we became. It was not merely a laughable matter to be dismissed with a smile and a shrug. There was evidently more to it than met the eye. Firstly, has the SLAF hierarchy the right to declare any person—even a retired officer—*persona non grata* and to hang up his picture (like that of a common criminal) at every place where the SLAF High Command exercised jurisdiction? Secondly, even if the Czars in the SLAF had this right according to their Book of Rules, was the action in this case taken on just and fair grounds? And, even if the SLAF had the right to use the international law concept of *persona non grata*, can the SLAF marshal good reasons to convince ordinary people that this action did not savour of malice and blackmail?

So intrigued has Tribune become about this *persona non grata* photograph at SLAF stations that we have asked a Special Investigator to probe this matter. We will also welcome information and comments from readers who may be able to throw light on this queer business in the SLAF which savours of a grotesque but comic mock-drama.

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RESTORING

A Rice Based Agriculture

By Nissanka Seneviratne

This is the concluding section of a review paper on research on rice diseases written for the Rice Symposium at the BMICH, Colombo, on 25th and 26th September 1980.

The author, Dr. S. N. de S. Seneviratne, is Plant Pathologist at the Central Agricultural Research Institute, Gannoruwa, Peradeniya.

"And Isaac redug the wells of his father Abraham, the ones the Philistines had filled after his father's death, and gave them the same names they had had before, when his father had named them." Genesis 26, 18.

The biblical narrative of Isaac restoring to their former status the wells which his father had dug and which the colonisers had stopped is symbolic of rice cultivation in this country. For this, surely, was Sri Lanka's pride in agriculture in the age of her pristine glory—when this land was a granary, and her people were fed from the abundance of her harvests. Good rice nutritious and satisfying; good grain, that stored well in barns, in the bissas. Those proud generations sought no food aid, they held no hands outstretched seeking the pity of patronising donors, and their children did not open hungry mouths to be stuffed with crumbs of bread or the gimmicks of soya, processed refuse that will debilitate their bodies and maim their minds. Trodden by the heavy boot of colonialism, rice cultivation receded to the backwoods and the rice farming peasants languished in abject poverty.

Yet, with independence, as Isaac had redug the wells which had been dug in the days of Abraham his father, the patriots of independent Sri Lanka, at least some of them, began the restoration of the country's rice based agriculture which had given meaning and purpose to her people in the days of her former glory. They dreamed again the dreams that their forefathers dreamed—of development spearheaded by agriculture. They had visions of a flourishing agriculture, as in the days of their forefathers, that had once made Sri Lanka great. So tanks were restored; irrigated farming received an impetus; Gal Oya was born. That vision has been dimmed by the pressure for liberalised imports, the distorted priorities of planners, and the prescriptions of lending agencies.

Again, if colonialism destroyed the backbone of a rice based agriculture, let not the positive features of the colonial experience pass unnoticed and unacknowledged. For the British, before they departed as the colonial power, had also given to this country some of the finest fruits they had nurtured, among them a versatile language—English, a firm foundation in modern science as we know it, and a solid infrastructure on which to build a scientific and technological capability in independent Sri Lanka.

WITH THE IMPORTANCE OF DOMESTIC AGRICULTURE, particularly rice cultivation, recognised at the dawn of independence, with the capability in scientific research acquired during the colonial period, and through the utilization of our own traditional assets, the first major steps forward were taken in rice research. Rice blast was a devastating disease. Resistance to blast was recognised in the local Murungakayans. M 302 was used as a donor in breeding for resistance to this disease. H 4 was produced. Later developments have removed rice blast from its position as a major constraint to rice production and reduced the damage caused by it to negligible proportions. The significance of these achievements, a fusion of the modern universal science with Sri Lanka's national resources which included the national scientists cannot be overemphasised. It is prudent now, more than thirty years after independence, when foreign domination stalks the land, to ponder

on these major achievements in agricultural research in independent Sri Lanka.

From the standpoint of diseases, the task is two fold—to contain and control diseases prevalent in the country; to prevent the introduction into this country of new ones, as well as more virulent or dangerous races or strains of existing pathogens. What has been written in this review is the story of our efforts to achieve the first objective. The achievements are impressive. Losses caused by rice diseases have been reduced to negligible proportions. The need to rely on chemicals to control diseases has been virtually eliminated, and with it, the drain on foreign exchange and exposure to the hazards of poisoning and pollution associated with them. The discipline of Plant Pathology has been, as it were, one instrument in an orchestra, and researchers in this discipline players, contributing with others—disciplines and players—to the orchestrated effort of rice production. There are many instruments and many players. The music they have produced is good. It will be naive to name a lead instrument or to identify a star player.

IT MAY TAKE MANY YEARS AND MUCH EFFORT to achieve a strong position with mastery over the pathogens that cause crop losses. But that situation can be changed dramatically within a very short time if destructive pathogens or devastating strains are introduced into this country from elsewhere. Such devastation can be carried in seed and biological materials. The transmitters of such seed and biological materials, frequently, are "foreign experts" and VIP's returning from their trips abroad. Sometimes, even knowledgeable individuals are offenders, even in good faith. Twice at least, during the past fifteen years, this country has come perilously close to the brink of disaster. The pressure to grow the variety Taichung Native 1 and the implications of that ill-conceived move may well have tilted the scales in favour of bacterial leaf blight.

It is unrealistic to assume that a learned judge, however distinguished in his own field, will be equally competent in making decisions involving the area of host pathogen relationships. With the de-

velopment of the so-called miracle strains of rice by the International Rice Research Institute, seed of the variety IR 8 was introduced in bulk to Sri Lanka from the Philippines. By a miracle, we in this country were spared a catastrophe through the possible introduction of races of the rice blast fungus prevalent in the Philippines, a catastrophe which recently befell South Korea when large scale introductions of seed paddy were made from the Philippines. Foreign experts are another tribe who have no qualms about introducing seed and biological materials into this country. They are here for a limited period of time and they must enjoy a kind of diplomatic immunity in these matters and do the things they want. The full consequences of some of their activities here will be realised only after they have departed to lucrative habitats elsewhere.

It is prudent to write into these agreements on foreign aided projects and foreign experts, in addition to the clauses about the duty-free things that these experts can import, stringent provisions about what they must not introduce. It is imperative that they be denied the freedom to introduce diseases into this country, not infrequently, with the participation of local collaborators.

It is well to remember that biological warfare is no longer a myth. Devastating races of *Pyricularia oryzae* have been produced and they cannot be for biological control of a possible weed, *Oryzae, sativa* in developed countries! It has been documented that 72 million litres of herbicides were poured into Vietnam (Bengtsson, 1976) and that chemicals whose use is not permitted in developed countries were liberally applied in that unfortunate country. The introduction of destructive pathogens or pathogenic races could also necessitate a recourse to the adoption of measures for chemical control of diseases. Agro-chemicals, like arms, have powerful lobbies and both are areas in which the multinational empires play for high stakes. Foreign experts, not infrequently do have associations with such interests abroad and these do not

always operate for the well-being of this country.

ANOTHER ASPECT—that deserves attention is the trend to reduce the number of varieties being cultivated, perhaps ultimately to a single variety! With an increasingly influential lobby for rice processing involving machinery it is conceivable that one variety, with only one size of grain, one texture of husk, etc. will be sought, conveniently processed by the machines. Further with the developments in the seed industry, another area being invaded by multinationals, it is more likely that there will be found advocates in this country who may promote the idea that the number of varieties cultivated in this country must be reduced to a minimum, perhaps to just one! From the point of view of disease, such a trend will be suicidal. For all that is necessary is for one pathogen mutant to be produced, either naturally, or through the frightening techniques of genetic engineering which could attack this single variety. Devastation will be accomplished with amazing speed. There are sobering lessons to be learnt from the incidence of the rice blast disease in South Korea or the ragged stunt virus disease in Indonesia. Decisions now and in the future, affecting the destiny of this country and the well-being of her people, must be taken by scientists, bureaucrats and politicians with mature judgement and not with the naive cynicism of sceptics or the childish innocence of juveniles.

While what has been achieved in the research on rice diseases must be a cause for satisfaction, there is promise of continued advances in the future. Yet, the hope that such promise inspires is marred by the fears of the pitfalls discussed in the preceding paragraphs. The commentary is relevant in a technical paper for scientists too are players in the theatre of a hostile world where ruthless plunder and insatiable greed have brought mankind to the brink of disaster. There are no Thomas Jeffersons or Bertrand Russells strong enough to steer mankind, now drifting in a wayward course, to a realisation that a civilised world presupposes that each man is his brother's keeper. The new mandarins

(Chomsky, 1969) analyse problems in a scientific value-free language and have rejected the traditional role of the intellectual as conscience of the community. The possible consequences of that situation are frightening.

The statement issued at the 14th meeting of the World Order Models Project at Poona, India, in July 1978, was a strong but timely indictment of the way in which science and technology have become instruments of a global structure of inequity, exploitation and oppression.

".....Something is seriously wrong; What started as a liberator of the human spirit and held the promise of "happiness and plenty" for all has resulted in inequity, exploitation, alienation and apathy. Far from being an instrument of human salvation, modern science has gone on a course that threatens survival itself."

".....the neo-colonial phase, in which the penetration of the transnational corporations makes physical occupation of territory unnecessary, has led to much greater control and ravaging of the Third World, and seduction of its elites into a global structure of power, privileges and wealth."

We, in Sri Lanka, must be sensitive to the realities of the age in which we live. In the advances that have been made in combating rice diseases, modern science has served its creative and productive role, liberating the rice farmer from the fear of destruction of his crops by pathogenic agents, and held out to him the promise of happiness and plenty. Continued research must be sensitive to the signals flashed by the global structures of power, privileges and wealth, and be responsive to the cries of the poor and marginalised for basic human needs—that includes food. So principles must be respected, policies framed and programmes implemented to ensure happiness and plenty rather than inequity, exploitation and oppression.

MUSINGS

From Sri Lanka-pore

This note is by an old friend and reader of *Tribune* whose contributions have over the years appeared in our pages. He was prompted to write these lines on receipt of the book *Havana To Kabul*—with the author's compliments. Unlike in the past, the writer is today placed in a situation where he feels "It may be advisable to supply a *nome de-plume* perhaps *Richard Lee* under which I may fly again in musings from Sri Lanka—pore". All power to the polemical elbow of *Richard Lee—Ed.*

Sir,

I was hoping to buy your *Havana To Kabul* when your gift copy arrived in the post today—I thank you very much for this munificence at a time when the inflationary spiral has also affected the cost of information, and is inducing a serious condition of intellectual malnutrition in the concerned intelligentsia of this "democratic socialist republic" where the gap between profession and practice has plummeted from the sublime to the ridiculous in three short years. To those who are aware of your trenchant and unswerving adherence to the cause of true national liberation and anti-Imperialism your book will not come as a surprise, but I wish its circulation could be promoted among those egg-heads who are busy indulging their suddenly affluent egos building castles in the air for their indigent political patrons and foreign speculators battering on the juicy morsel of a still underdeveloped country ripe for neo-colonialist exploitation. I fear for them when the mirage begins to disappear and turn into the desert, for no oasis will remain for their comfort.

As soon as I have read your book I will write again, but I hope your observations and analysis will have some impact in the precincts of our airconditioned Foreign Ministry, who are adept at burying their heads in the sand in the attempt to preserve the special purity of its non-aligned stance!

It was good to read the unexpurposed text of the good Bishop's pronouncement on the recent repression of workers, and the irresponsible and wholly indefensible im-

position of an Emergency and the consequent unprecedented lock-out. The crisis of confidence arising will fester and suffocate for the rest of the lawful term of h's Dharmista regime. There are none so blind as those who will not read the signs of our times.

You have fallen a victim to the chicanery and sharp practice of the *Ceylon Daily News* in their reproduction of David Housego's significant analysis of the now notorious Paris Aid Consortium meeting. It was a mangled version of the original article which appeared in the *Financial Times* (No. 28220) of 18th July 1980 under the title: "SRI LANKA—AN IMF SUCCESS STORY STARTS GOING WRONG". The *Daily News* besides changing the title, castrating Housego, also omitted to give the date of the *Financial Times*, so readers had no way of checking on their own to compare the reprint and the original! Such are the ways of our free press in a vibrant democracy.

It is an interesting speculation as to why David Housego (an alert Sri Lanka watcher for the *Financial Times*) has no contribution to make in the special Sri Lanka Survey in the *Financial Times* of August 27, 1980 timed for the joint Seminar with the GCEC in Colombo. Philip Bowring, Stephanie Gray and Merryn do Silva (sic) (obviously Mervyn de Silva) share the coverage of economics and politics and the trends in the openly capitalist road the UNP has chosen to resurrect the colonial past in a Jaywardenepura present. But the evaluations and averments are no task for their cosmetic flair and a tidy window-dressing tailored to suit the objectives of the Seminar and the aspirations of its promoters and advertisers. The realistics are far removed from the continuing gloss of the tantalising word-pictures.

Richard Lee



LETTERS

ADB

Sir,

In your September 13th issue Dr. Upali Nanayakkara, Director-Marketing, Agricultural Development Authority has criticised the article entitled "Current Trends in the Production of Subsidiary Food Crops" of which I was the senior author. I have a few remarks to make on these criticisms which call for riposte from me.

The publication referred to was prepared and submitted in August 1979. Subsequently, alarmed by the deteriorating performance of this sector which confirmed the findings presented in August 1979 I submitted another paper entitled "Subsidiary Food Crops; A worsening situation" in May this year. This publication did not appear in the *Tribune*.

After the appearance of these two papers however, and despite Dr. Nanayakkara's comments submitted to the National Food Policy Committee, Government made certain adjustments and refinements in the policies affecting this sector.

The contents of Dr. Nanayakkara's rejoinder demonstrates quite eloquently how differently we have set about searching for the truth, how differently we value the whole truth, and how difficult it is to be truly objective, notwithstanding the text books we have learnt or read, the training we have undergone or even the ideologies and philosophies that appeal to us.

Since Dr. Nanayakkara's arguments can be easily handled and demolished by the editor who has promised to do it I have been spared the bother of dealing with his "learned piffle" as referred to by the editor. Dr. Nanayakkara seems to be very much enamoured by the theories of comparative costs, international specialisation, free open market etc. when in fact those who pontificate and preach them are manipulating the prices of their agricultural produce, and are building butter bergs, waging chicken wars, destroying cereals, dumping fruit and beverages into the oceans and steam rolling potatoes in order to subsidise their

own farmers; and all this while the other half of the world starves.

No doubt Dr. Nanayakkara would like to be regarded as the Chief High Priest of the Free Open Market rather than one who keeps a free and open mind. He may however feel somewhat let down by the comments and reasons attributed by the World Bank for the poor performances in the subsidiary food crop sector which you have published along with his article. The World Bank has not considered his "n" variables, population growth, agricultural research, investment in irrigation etc. but has correlated data on production, trade and prices, not different from the method adopted by me. One significant difference between my paper and that of the World Bank's however is that the latter flashed its danger signal approximately one year later than that of the native. Surely Dr. Nanayakkara should read the Psalms of David, Book I, Chap. 2, Verses-3.02-3.08.

Dr. Mervyn de Silva.

Colombo 1.
September 15, 1980



Foreign Aid

Sir,

I have been able to get at least some of the information I was expecting from Prometheus. The International Herald Tribune of 27th June '80 carried parts of the Annual Report of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

The Soviet Union together with six East European Countries gave 700 million U.S. dollars in aid last year. This represents 0.04% of their G.N.P. The report acknowledges that this figure does not include the sum of about one billion dollars of aid given annually to Cuba by the Soviet Union. Much of Soviet aid goes to Cuba, Vietnam, Afghanistan and other communist or pro-communist countries.

There are other facts and comments in the Report that are interesting. Though the goal set by both the UN and the Brandt Commission for the quantum of aid is 0.7% of

G.N.P., the average fell from 0.35% in '78 to 0.34% in '79. Here are figures for some of the contributing nations for 1979:—

	0.94% of G.N.P.	totalling 956 million dollar
Sweden	0.93%	1.4 billion "
Netherlands	0.93%	428 million "
Norway	0.52%	2 billion "
Britain	0.44%	3.3 billion "
W. Germany	0.19%	4.5 billion "
U.S.A.	—	4.7 billion "
OPEC	—	2.6 billion "
Japan		

The Report mentions that though OPEC aid is broadening geographically to Asia, Africa and Latin America, it is focussed on Muslim countries, especially Syria and Jordan.

Fr. James Cooke O.M.I.

St. Joseph's o.m.i. Seminary,
26, Green Path,
Kohuwela, Nugegoda.
2nd September '80.

POEM

News Item +

This sparrow sang in the rafters
Winging all grace through the twilit space
Between nave and transept, chirping
A benediction. The chancel is filling
With the pious, and the sparrow is chirping
High in the rafters,
Glory to God, he chirps, and compassion
To mankind. The reverend father
Is about to service God. The reverend father
Cannot silence the sparrow, the reverend father
Orders the verger
To shoot the sparrow dead
Because he cannot stop him singing.

And the verger
Shoots
The singing sparrow
Dead

Anne Ranasinghe

+ "Sparrow shot in St. Helen's Parish Church
at Brant Broughton near Newark, Notts."

Confidentially

The Bowatenne Mystery

IS IT NOT TRUE that whispers filtering out of the electric curtain protecting the secrets of the Ceylon Electricity Board (CEB) reveal that there is an attempt to hush up some mystery connected with the Bowatenne Power Station which everyone had expected to be commissioned by January-February 1981? That if the work had been completed on schedule Bowatenne should have been commissioned a long time ago—and the 1980 power crisis could have been greatly minimised? That making allowances for all the delays—everyone of them, in retrospect, avoidable and unnecessary—the last date for power from Bowatenne, according to all the high CEB authorities, was February 1981? That the present whispers indicate that Bowatenne will not be ready by February 1981 and that it will take another one, two (or three) years before it can be commissioned? That the whispers also betray a clandestine attempt to make everyone forget Bowatenne and throw the spotlight on the new gas turbines? That hydel power would cost the consumer only 30 cents per unit, whereas thermal power would cost over Rs. 2.10 per unit? That under cover of this thermal umbrella, the Minister has been persuaded to fly a kite at a public meeting recently that the electricity charges would be further upped in November? That the Minister would do well to look into the mystery of Bowatenne and find out why the coming of hydal power is being delayed?

That whilst the Minister pursues his inquiries, the President and the Cabinet should investigate the Bowatenne Mystery independent of the CEB? That the answers of the CEB *de facto* hierarchy-in-power should not be accepted (through whichever *de jure* channel they are presented) without a critical scrutiny of every point made? That the President should find out how far the contractors were really responsible for the delay and whether they were not led up the garden path by their "clients"—the CEB—dropping hints that there was really no hurry to com-

plete the job in view of the decision to place orders for the gas turbines? That it will be necessary to also find out whether the delay was induced by those interested in the import of gas turbines? (That incidentally it might be worthwhile probing the whisper that the Canyon hydel project was delayed until the order for the gas turbines was finalised? and that as a result of these delays and other machinations the capacity of Canyon has been greatly reduced?) That to come back to Bowatenne, the common people of this country will soon be apprised of the true facts, even if the official media is fooled into purveying slanted, misleading and false information? That unless the government sits up and takes notice of the dark doings at Bowatenne that has resulted in the delay, the credibility of the government will slip further? That if a few more Bowatennes take place credibility will drop to the point of no return? That in this connection, the separation of "Power" from "Irrigation" has wrought great harm? That in the interest of the country as a whole at least Hydel Power and Irrigation must come under one Ministry? The other forms of energy—including nuclear, if and when it comes—could (and should) be handled by another Ministry? That how, each time there is an increase in the charges for electric power, the people grumble more angrily about the waste, sabotage and corruption in the CEB, of the vast armada (on land) of new vehicles which run wildly in all parts of the country, of the vast quantities of petrol, diesel and engine oil which CEB employees sell in the black or under the counter? That if the CEB has "another side" to the Bowatenne Mystery *Tribune* will be pleased to publish it? That it is perhaps in the wake of the growing groundswell of indignation following his statement of a further increase in electric charges, has thought it necessary to soothe public apprehension by proclaiming that "hydel power (was) the answer to our energy problem", (CDN 22/9/80? That if the Minister, who is still held in high esteem by the public, is serious about what he said, he should set up a combination of Sherlock Holmes and Hercule Poirot to unravel the mystery of Bowatenne?

A TREE FOR EVERY CHILD

This should be part of a wider programme of social forestry.

Every child in the island should be persuaded to plant a fruit-bearing tree and should be made responsible for looking after it. A nameplate should be affixed on the tree exhibiting the name of the child. It should be the property of the child for which he or she should be given ownership with the annual yield.

If each child, particularly in the rural areas, could be encouraged to plant one tree and look after it until it reaches maturity, we will have a massive tree plantation programme and also a new generation of people who are oriented to the growing and rearing of trees. The planting of fruit, fodder and fuel wood trees under such a programme will, to some extent, meet the requirements of the rural community for fuel and nutrition.

A total effort must be made to increase the forest cover in Sri Lanka by at least ten percent of the country in a decade for the preservation of our environment. A tree plantation programme must be undertaken not by the Forest Department alone but schools and other institutions.

A TREE FOR EVERY CHILD

Space Donated



Help save the glory that is Lanka

Sri Lanka, our island home is the scene of 2,500 years of a unique, continuous cultural development.

The achievements of our ancient artists and engineers, and the glorious pageantry which still survives can be found today in the cultural triangle formed by Anuradhapura, Polonnaruwa and Kandy.

But some of the priceless monuments of our heritage are in danger of decay and destruction. UNESCO sees in these monuments part of the cultural wealth of the world and are sponsoring the Sri Lanka Cultural Triangle Project to collect funds and commence urgent conservation.

We, the people of Sri Lanka, must contribute Rs. 60 million as our share. To meet this responsibility the Cultural Triangle Fund has been set up.



Your contribution - however large, however small, given once and for all, or step by step, raises the Fund nearer its goal.

As your contributions reach each step you receive recognition for your effort and the contributions already made are counted towards the next step.

The Cultural Triangle Fund is an approved charity and donations are tax deductible. Cash donations can be paid into the Fund account at any branch of the Bank of Ceylon. Other contributions should be sent to:

CULTURAL TRIANGLE FUND
212, BAUDDHALOKA MAWATHA, COLOMBO 7.
SRI LANKA.

A GUIDE TO THE STEP BY STEP DONATION SCHEME

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Buys one brick

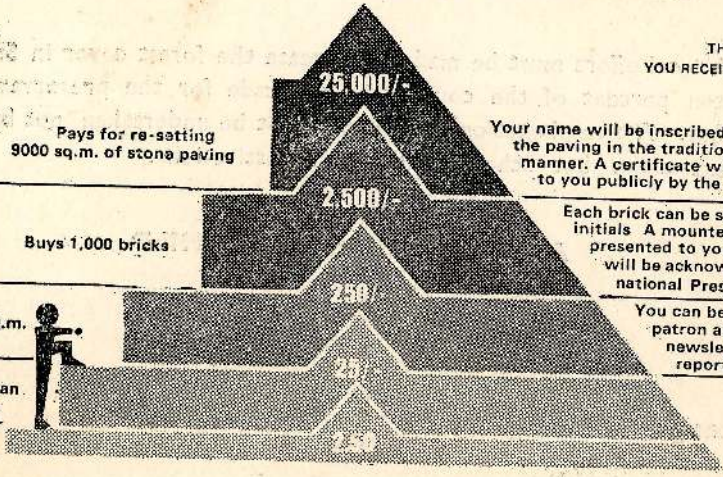


THE RECOGNITION YOU RECEIVE AS A DONOR.

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Each brick can be stamped with your initials. A mounted brick will be presented to you. Your contribution will be acknowledged in the national Press.

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