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Letter From The Editor

DURING THE DEBATE ON THE FOREIGN MINISTRY'S VOTE, on November 26, Minister Hameed categorically stated (according to a report in the *Ceylon Daily Mirror*, 27/11/80— Kenneth Hall and Noel Senaratne reporting: "The Government was strictly non-aligned and would on no account allow any of its ports to be used as a base by any foreign power....Replying to Opposition criticism during the discussion on the votes of his Ministry, Mr. Hameed said that it was unfortunate that members should give credence to certain cock and bull stories published in certain newspapers. The newspapers reported that Trincomalee was being offered as a base to the US. This was baseless as Sri Lanka's commitment to non-alignment was firmly established. Government allowed the naval vessels of all nations to call at Colombo as long as they did not carry nuclear weapons.").

This assurance did not come a day too soon. In fact, it was long overdue. For several months, and more especially after the news had been flashed that an American multinational was negotiating to set up a refinery in Trincomalee, Opposition party papers had alleged that this refinery was only a smokescreen for a US base. Even before that, allegations were made that the Jayewardene government was on the verge of permitting a US naval base in the Trincomalee Harbour. This was denied by government spokesmen from time to time, but unfortunately not emphatically or persistently enough to satisfy the doubting Thomases. President Jayewardene when he was in New Delhi in September for CHOGRAM—2, had been questioned by pressmen and he had unequivocally stated that Sri Lanka did not propose to grant base facilities to any foreign power, let alone any super-power. But, in spite of this, these stories persisted and the impression has been successfully created in India and other non-aligned Third World countries that America was on the verge of making Trincomalee a US naval base. This impression has gained so much ground that even an astute and cautious commentator like Madras *Hindu's* G. K. Reddy in a piece on November 21, on the Indian Ocean, speaking about the US naval build-up in the region stated: " Besides expanding Diego Garcia, the US is negotiating for bases in Oman, Somalia, Kenya, Saudi Arabia, Egypt and seeking facilities even from Australia, Sri Lanka and Singapore.". The fact that Reddy should include Sri Lanka's name with the other countries he mentioned, is an indication that Sri Lanka's non-aligned image is not what it was nor what Minister Hameed fondly believes it to be. The simple fact is that Sri Lanka's external publicity in regard to its foreign policy and many of its internal developments as well has become devoid of credibility and unless the government takes serious steps to correct picture it will not be long before this country is dumped along with other client states of the US and the West. Minister Hameed's statement in our Parliament will have little impact abroad unless the message is carried to the makers of public opinion in different countries through the appropriate media which reach them. It is unfortunate that even with such a close and friendly neighbour like India the proper rapport has not been established with the press there to ensure that incorrect assumptions that Sri Lanka was negotiating to sell Trincomalee to the US are not accepted in the way they have been. Sri Lankan Governmental spokesmen can pat themselves on their own backs about the "unsullied non-aligned image of Sri Lanka" and dismiss the allegations of the sell-out of Trincomalee as malicious lies hinting that they were the fabrications of left-wing opponents, but it is time for the government to sit up and ask why a reputed commentator like Reddy writing for the prestigious *Hindu* should fall for such "cock and bull stories". In fact, the Foreign Ministry like many other Ministries, have now begun to take things so much for granted that they are having delusions about their "image" abroad. Appointment of inept political favourites as "Directors of Publicity" is of little avail. Good publicity requires professionalism at its best and also sustained effort by dedicated men. Sri Lanka's government media and publicity Services are sadly lacking in both.

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Buffaloes & Nestles

ON THE COVER we have a pair of buffaloes, the much-maligned but much-needed animals, ploughing in a paddy field. There is today an universal cry for more draught and working animals, and an equally insistent demand for meat and milk. Unfortunately, the livestock and dairy business in Sri Lanka is in a total mess. The Livestock Board, which had begun to show signs of progress in the last three years has now been thrown to the wolves. The Milk Board with rare determination continues its rake's progress towards becoming the nation's number one scandal.

Everybody knows why things have gone wrong and many people know how the situation can be remedied. The answer is a National Dairy Development Board on the lines it has developed in India. Such a Board must have both livestock and dairy farming under its control. From the end of 1978, such a Dairy Development Board has been under discussion in Sri Lanka. Dr. V. Kurien, Chairman of the Board in India, was invited to Sri Lanka. Discussions took place. A seminar was held. Dr. Kurien, we believe, offered his suggestions and made certain recommendations. But the idea of a National Dairy Development Board was shelved—in a pigeon-hole. Bureaucrats and others, who have vested interests in their petty fiefdoms and little empires, have so far succeeded in sabotaging all integrated livestock development.

In this situation, Tribune thinks that it cannot do better than publish lengthy extracts from the transcript taken off a taped recording of Dr. Kurien's speech at the Seminar held on 15.12.78 at the BMICH. Last week, we published the first instalment. In that Dr. Kurien had pointed out that the Anand Milk Project had, in spite of opposition—inspired by foreign sellers of dairy products—successfully made milk powder from buffalo milk. In this week's instalment he tells the story of India's buffalo milk being turned into condensed milk, and in that process cutting Nestles, the world's largest multinational giant, down to size—so far as India was concerned. He said:

"Now here is the second lesson for Dairy Development. The Bombay Government would not take the milk (from Anand) and they said you cannot make the powder from buffalo milk. Ultimately my colleague, my Deputy, who is now one of India's most famous technologists made a milk powder plant out of a spray gun from paint sprayers and a few tin sheets. He made a model and took it to the Minister and put it before him. The UNICEF were also willing to donate a plant. Bombay's Milk Commissioner was sceptical and said, 'well, suppose it does not work after you invest all this money in a big powder plant'. . . . Then UNICEF's chap not being a technical man said, 'Alright—supposing this plant doesn't work here we'll take it elsewhere.

But let's get a start.' That is how India's first milk powder plant was established in Anand. . . . and Gentlemen let me assure you that not even for a single moment did that plant give any trouble. From the very first day it made powder without any problem. We had milk powder. We began to ask the Milk Commissioner 'why are you importing powder, and why have you passed a law prohibiting us from selling our milk powder in Bombay?'. He had done the wrong. And, already it was free India—not the British Raj. The orders were reversed. Then as we proceeded further we were very successful—milk powder shooting up it was—farmers are not fools and if you can give them an incentive, an assured market and fair price they are not fools, they will produce more.

"So as it went up, I had a phone call from Delhi. It was the Minister of Industries of India. He said, 'Kurien, can you come up to Delhi, I want to talk to you?' I went and met the Minister and he said, 'Kurien, can we make condensed milk?'. I said condensed milk is a messy product, man learnt how to preserve milk by the addition of milk or anything else by the addition of sugar, a long time ago—why do you want me to preserve milk by adding sugar? Today we are making milk powder—that is the latest method, why must I make condensed milk?' He said, 'will you stop lecturing. We are spending two crores of rupees or three crores 30 million rupees importing the stuff, are you going to make it or not?' I told him, No Sir, I will not make it, why don't you ask that firm called Nestle's to do it?'

So he said, I cannot ask. Ask them when you go to Europe—you ask them or negotiate on behalf of India and he gave me a brief, a very generous brief. And I was soon discussing with Nestle's Aliman Thana in the Valley in Switzerland. They have a building which won the first prize for the architectural wonder of that year. It was made out of aluminium and glass and air conditioned by water drawn from the Lake Geneva at a depth of 25 feet. The whole building crackles as the sun comes up, as it expands and in that building I was having a discussion and I was very generous because officially the brief was good, 5% of royalty—repatriation of profit—49% owned by Nestle's Aliman Thana 51% by Nestle's India which means all 100% Nestle's—then he asked what about foreign experts? I said my government will be very glad to permit any number of foreign experts to come to run this plant and I rather innocently added that my government would hope that you would replace them with Indians, in 5-7 years. I remember this year distinctly, the boss of the Board—one of the bosses there said 'but this is a Swiss concern—this is an impossible condition—condensed milk is a complicated delicate process to make. We cannot leave it to the natives to do'.

I actually abandoned the table. You are speaking to a damn native and if you are suggesting to him that in my country there are no people of sufficient brains who, after five years of training cannot, take your job, pointed my finger vote at the Managing Director of Nestle's Aliman Thana, the largest commercial house in the world.

Even after five years of training if Indians cannot take your job you are insulting my country and my country knows how to do without Nestle. Thank you gentlemen'. I walked out, Sir, I was young those days. So, I went back. I went to the Minister of Industries and told him, Sir I've changed my mind. This is what happened. I will make condensed milk... so I went back to Anand and called my colleagues. We spent two years working on condensed milk and how to make it... we had a lot of problems but one day we made it and I telephoned the Minister and said, 'Sir, ban the import of condensed milk, we have made it and put it on the shelf—now give me a helping hand'. The Minister responded.

Then I had a phone call from Delhi, from the Minister—'Kurien, do you remember Nestle's?' and I said, 'Yes Sir, I do remember'. 'They are here'. I thought, Oh my God they have managed it again—and I said, 'Yes Sir,—you know they sometimes work very cleverly'. He said they want to set up a Condensed Milk Plant in India under such terms and conditions as the Governments of India may now dictate—what shall we do? I said, Sir what did you reply to them? He said, I do not want Sir,—you know they sometimes work evry cleverly'. He said they want to set up a Condensed Milk Plant in India under such terms and conditions as the Governments of India may now dictate—what shall we do? I said, Sir what did you reply to them? He said, I do not want to see them. But I have told them that if Kurien gives you a letter of introduction then I will see you. I said my Minister was good. That was good of you Sir. And he said, Kurien settle your account. I said, I most certainly will.

So I told my colleagues Nestle's is coming, polish up the Plant and the Plant should look spotless and they came after two days to see me and I said, 'Don't sit down Gentlemen, go and see the Condensed Milk plant' and they went through the plant and came one hour later and I still remember seeing the four of them and the man who said 'native' was there and I said, Now. Mr. so and so, what do you think of natives? He was having his hat just behind him and put his head down and said, 'Sir, I came here to apologise to you for our rudeness to you. You must forgive us—will you please accept our apologies and give us a letter of introduction to your Minister so that we can put up a plant'. I said, sit down and gave them a letter of introduction and their plant is in production—foreign capital has a role to play but must be disciplined and must be made subordinate to the national interest. Then only should they have a role to play. At least, this is as far as India.

Then as we progressed further, this Minister—and by this time the Minister and I were good friends—he telephoned me and said, Kurien, can we make Baby Food. I said Baby Food is nothing but powder, we are already making it. He said, well, I asked this Glaxo to make it—they said it is impossible, buffalo milk cannot be made into Baby food, there is too many bacteria in the air and so on. I said, there are no problems. Well, you make it? I said, Yes, Sir, I will make it and we made

the Baby Food and today we manufacture 500 million rupees worth of Baby Food and 75% of the total Indian market is in Cooperative hands, the other 25% is shared between Nestles, Lever Bros, and Glaxo—not bad for a Co-op.

The story of India's dairy development has many lessons for Sri Lanka—how we should develop self-reliance and how we should deal with foreign multinationals. Giving Nestle's 60:40 overhand at the Polonnaruwa Condensory was bad enough, but to permit them to open a milk powder plant in the Coconut Triangle which produces the sizeable proportion of our liquid milk is a tragedy that will have disastrous consequences for dairy development in this country.

It is one thing to deal with multinationals on the footing of adequate safeguards for the national interests of the country. It is totally a different thing to sell the best interests of the island to a multinational like Nestle's—for a mess of pottage for a few individuals.

EDITOR'S NOTE BOOK

BUDGET-3

With this yawning gap between income and expenditure Sri Lanka has been compelled, said the Finance Minister in his Budget speech, to depend on "foreign aid". "Mr. Speaker, the strain on our balance of payments as well as on domestic resources brought about by our rapid strides in development was relieved to a great extent by the sharp increase in the inflow of aid in the last three years. During the three-year period ending June 30, 1980, the government concluded aid agreements to the value of approximately Rs. 22,829 million. This is a considerable increase over the value of external assistance provided to Sri Lanka over the 7-year period—May 1970 to June 1977. Of the agreements signed, Rs. 13,907 million consisted of concessional loans and Rs. 8,922 million consisted of outright grants. Of the total aid committed during this period, approximately Rs. 12,222 million or 56 percent was committed during the 12-month period—1st July 1979 to 30th June 1980. A significant feature of aid commitment during this period is the noticeable shift from commodity or import support assistance to project assistance. In 1978 commodity aid commitments exceeded project aid commitments by approximately 14 per cent, while in 1979 and during the first 6 months of 1980 commodity aid commitments amounted to only 24 percent and 6.8 percent respectively, of the project aid commitments. This is due both to the energetic project preparation work undertaken by the Government since 1977 as well as to the increasing emphasis placed by donors on channelling their assistance to development-oriented projects with longer lasting benefits. Practically all major commitments made by

donors during the last two years and particularly during the 12-month period ending 30th June 1980, were for the government's high priority projects such as irrigation power, transport, water supply, port development and other infrastructure developments."

It is true that in the three years, much aid has flowed in. But what has been achieved by this aid concretely—in terms of projects completed? Except for a number of houses and model villages everything else seems to be in the process of construction—whilst the aid and increased money supply has led to a cent per cent escalation on prices of basic essentials.

THE DETAILS the Finance Minister provided about the diversification of the donors of aid has significance. "A further factor of note during this period was the diversification of aid donors. While the major aid commitments continue to be made by the traditional donors such as the World Bank, A.D.B. U.K., U.S.A., Japan, Canada, West Germany, Netherlands and Sweden, several new donors such as Switzerland, Belgium, Finland and Austria have joined the Sri Lanka Aid Group either as full-fledged members or as observers. Negotiations are also in progress with several Middle Eastern countries and multi-national organisations for obtaining additional assistance to finance our development programmes. Diversification of aid donors is being pursued as a conscious policy both in order to obtain the additional funds required for our development needs and also to offset a decline in external aid flows due to recession and other economic problems besetting our traditional donors."

Diversification of aid donor sources, however has not helped to check the current decline in the inflow of aid. Nor has it been possible to check the spiralling growth of prices which has overtaken this country.

"Mr. Speaker, another matter of grave concern for the government has been the marked rising trend in prices. The Colombo Consumers Price Index registered an increase of 15 percent in 1979 compared with an increase of 17 percent in 1978. In the first half of 1980, the Index registered an increase of 16.8 percent. This implies an annual rate of increase of 32 percent. Admittedly, the Colombo Consumers' Price Index with its limited scope and coverage is not a very satisfactory index. The problem of inflation, however, is alarming and it is the duty of all concerned to take every possible step to curb it. More governments fall by inflation than by lack of development. As John Kenneth Galbraith observed "Nothing so weakens government as persistent inflation".

Understandably, the Finance Minister did not want people to jump to the conclusion that the country was "going to the dogs" on an inflationary spiral. He resorted to casuistical logic to argue that owing to the "fundamental difference" between "inflation" and an "increase in the price level"—the present rate of inflation was 18-20 percent though prices had gone up 32 percent.

"Mr. Speaker, while I do not seek to belittle the problem of inflation in any way, I am of the view that the problem has been somewhat exaggerated in Sri Lanka. There is, Mr. Speaker, a fundamental difference between inflation and an increase in the price level. Inflation is a continuous process of rising prices with the rate of increase in such prices accelerating over time. I wish to go into this in some detail to show the great degree of confusion about the basic concept of inflation. As I have indicated to you a little while ago, the Colombo Consumers' Price Index rose in the first half of this year at an average annual rate of 32 percent".

After further mystifying his listeners with statistical details about price movements, he spoke about the adjustments made in the statistical figures (many will call this jugglery and manipulation to paint a picture favourable to government) before emphasising that the rate of inflation was not as bad as it was often made out to be.

"You will note, Mr. Speaker, that the Index showed a jump in the annualised rate of 60 and 70 percent in February and March is the result of price adjustments made by the government on certain commodities like flour and kerosene to bring them into line with world market prices. This is an increase in the price level. In the subsequent months the annual rate of increase in prices has not exceeded 18.6 per cent. The rate of 32 percent indicated by the earlier includes largely the effect on the index of price adjustments made by the government. If that single quantum jump is ignored it would appear that inflation as a continuing process is still running at no more than 18—20 percent."

Knowing the weaknesses of his logic, the Finance Minister resorted to a further apologia to justify the manipulated adjustments to present price increases and inflation to the public. "I did this analysis solely in terms of the Consumer's Price Index to show the rate of increase in the index after isolating the effects of quantum jumps brought about by price adjustments. But, as I said earlier, this index is not a realistic one, and inflation may be somewhat higher than the 18—20 percent indicated by the analysis, but it is certainly not higher than 25 percent. I do not for a moment imply that we ought to be happy or complacent even with this rate. It is still very high but is largely the outcome of a number of external factors beyond our control. Worldwide inflation continues to have the most serious effects on domestic prices. The government will have to take every step to reduce unnecessary expenditure. Strict fiscal and monetary discipline and increased local production is the only way to control inflation as far as possible...."

THEN HE TOUCHED on the sensitive question of the increase in money supply: "During this period we have also witnessed a high degree of monetary expansion. The rate of increase in money supply which was 35 percent and 29 percent in 1976 and 1977 fell appreciably to 11 percent in 1978. The year 1979, however, saw a significant reacceleration in the rate of monetary

expansion to 29 percent. The major factor for this development in 1979 was a substantial increase in the external banking assets of the country which rose by Rs. 1236 million. The government too had to increase its bank borrowings by Rs. 477 million to finance a budgetary deficit brought about by escalation of costs of government's development projects. The private sector too increased its borrowings from the banking system by nearly Rs. 2600 million. The expansionary pressures arising from all these factors were offset considerably by a massive build up of time and savings deposits with the banking system amounting to over Rs. 2400 million. This increase in deposits was in the main the outcome of the interest rate policy of the government. If not for our interest rate policy monetary expansion during the year would have been very much larger. In fact, the ability of the banking system to mobilise savings on this scale, enabled it to meet the growing credit requirements of the private sector, without further fuelling inflationary pressures.

"In the first half of 1980 there was a significant abatement in monetary expansion. Money supply rose by Rs. 609 million or 8 percent. This implies an annual rate of increase of 16 percent compared with the annual rate of increase of 29 percent recorded in the previous year. A major factor contributing to monetary expansion in this period was an increase of Rs. 1420 million in net bank credit to the government. This increase in credit to the Government was mainly the result of a large-scale accumulation of food stocks by the Food Commissioner. A provisional estimate indicates that the value of net additions to food stocks during the first six months of 1980 was of the order of Rs. 1306 million. While the Government had to borrow the amounts shown, which is a little over the value of additions to food stocks, the monetary effect of this was offset by a decline of Rs. 2050 million in the external banking assets of the country."

The UNP in opposition had howled about the increase of the money supply during the last regime. The increase in the three years of UNP rule has been so great that it has overshadowed everything else. The apologies tendered and the explanations offered are most unconvincing. Nobody will or can take that explanation seriously—and as for apologies, who bothers?

THE FINANCE MINISTER then referred to the borrowings from commercial banks: "Borrowings of the private sector from commercial banks have also been a major factor contributing to monetary expansion in the first half of 1980. Such borrowings increased by Rs. 2915 million. Following the pattern in recent years, where the private sector's borrowings have tended to get more concentrated during the first half of each year a lower increase in credit to the private sector during the second half of the year can be expected. Such a result would also be reinforced by the monetary policy measures instituted by the Central Bank in April this year. The government is alive to the need to maintain the rate of monetary growth at a reasonably

low level for achieving price stability and to help create the conditions necessary for sustained growth."

He also seems to have thought that it would be a good exercise to look at "inflation" from the "ordinary man's" point of view in terms of wage increases and the like: "Mr. Speaker, I sought a little while ago to make a distinction between inflation and an increase in the price level. As far as the ordinary man is concerned this is a distinction without a difference. He is affected immediately by an increase in the price level as much as by inflation. However, the Government has always made it a point to soften the impact of price increases by wage adjustments and other measures."

It will be noted that the Finance Minister admits that the distinction he had made between "inflation and an increase in the price level" is a "distinction without a difference" for the ordinary man. It is time he realised that even for others who look matters realistically it is a "distinction without difference". Only pseudo economists and bureaucrats who want to fool ordinary people resort to this logic. Mr. Ronnie de Mel should have been extremely cautious in using this argument in the first instance—for this tight-rope retracting of his steps creates a credibility gap which he will find difficult to bridge.

THEN HE WENT ON to examine the money and real wages earned by certain class of employees: "In terms of a Central Bank study, the money wages of technical and clerical employees in the government sector increased by 16 percent in 1979. In the case of minor employees and school teachers, the increases in money wages were 21 and 15 percent, respectively. These increases are out of a wage rise of 10 percent of the consolidated salary granted in January 1979 and the supplementary allowance of Rs. 55 per month given in September 1979. The real wages, using the Colombo Consumers' Price Index as the deflator, showed an increase of 5 percent for technical and clerical employees, 4 percent for school teachers and 9 percent for minor employees. "The money wage of private sector employees covered by Wages Board Regulations rose by 27 percent in 1979. Workers in agriculture received an increase of 28 percent while workers in industry and commerce received an increase of 17 percent. Deflated by the Colombo Consumers' Price Index the real wages of workers in agriculture showed an increase of 15 percent while those of workers in industry and commerce rose by 5 percent."

In this connection he found consolation in the fact that "it must also be noted Mr. Speaker that there was an appreciable increase in employment during 1979. Central Bank estimates indicate that 130,000 new jobs were found in Government Departments, semi-government institutions and the organised private sector. It does not include employment creation in the non-institutional private sector and in the domestic agricultural sector for which data are not available. However, the Central Bank's overall estimates show that the rate

of unemployment had declined from 24 percent of the work force before 1977 to about 15 percent now. The point I am making is that the increase in employment and the increase in wages which have contributed to increased family incomes, have been able to cushion to some extent the effects of price increase on the ordinary man."

What he sought to establish was that increased employment and the increase of many wages (even if inadequate) had helped to cushion the steep rise in prices. Unfortunately, real wages had dropped so drastically (because prices had shot up so phenomenally) that the sop that the Finance Minister had thrown to ordinary people only added to the credibility gap that has come between the people and the government.



SRI LANKA CHRONICLE

Nov. 17 - 26

DIARY OF EVENTS IN SRI LANKA AND THE WORLD
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CDN—Ceylon Daily News; CDM—Ceylon Daily Mirror;
CO—Ceylon Observer; ST—Sunday Times; SO—Sunday
Observer; DM—Dinamina; LD—Lankadipa; VK—Viras-
kesari; ATH—Aththa; SM—Silumina; SLDP—Sri Lanka-
dipa; JD—Janadina; SU—Sun; DV—Davasa; DP—Dina-
pathi; CM—Chinthamani; WK—Weekend; RR—Riviresa
DK—Dinakara; EN—Eelanadu; IDPR—Information Dept.
Press Release.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 17: Some thirty leading Japanese businessmen arrive in Sri Lanka on November 27 and will be here for a week mapping out with local industrialists joint ventures both in the Free Trade Zone and outside it. Colombo Dockyard Ltd., will shortly establish a second dockyard in Trincomalee, to service the growing demands of merchant shipping in the region, following the recent inauguration of the Prima Flour Milling Complex and the Sri Lanka Coastal Service. A Sri Lanka multinational the Upali Group of companies has formed a joint venture company with the Sabah Development Co-operative, for a 100 million Ringitt (45 million US dollar) "Cocoa under Coconut project in the East Malaysia state—CDN. The Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Tyrone Fernando MP, left for Singapore yesterday on an invitation from the Senior Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Mr. Rahim Ishak; during his visit the Deputy Minister will have discussions with his counterpart, and will call on Singapore Government leaders and officials of various Ministries, including the Ministries of Trade, Economic Affairs and Cultural Affairs. The Attanagalla SLFP party organisations which met last Saturday decided that the nominee for the Attanagalla seat should be made by party branches in the electorate; meanwhile a

six-member sub-committee has been appointed to report to the SLFP Politbureau regarding the views of the party membership in the Attanagalla electorate—CDM. A nutrition survey carried out in eight districts has revealed that 49.6 per cent of pre-school children in the estate sector suffer from chronic under-nutrition. The formulation of a national policy for tea is being considered by the Government in a bid to overcome constraints facing the tea industry—SU. Sri Lanka's native canines—the mongrels derogatorily called the "pariahs"—will get official recognition when they will be "recruited" to be trained in anti-narcotics operations and used to combat drug trafficking; the decision to train local mongrels was taken after it has been found that they had as good a nose for detecting narcotics as those exotic breed such as Alsations and German Shepherds. Sri Lankans spend about 65 per cent of their income on food, drinks and tobacco, the highest proportion spent on such items among 43 countries studied by the US Department of Agriculture; Sri Lanka is the third poorest country on the list. India, the poorest, spends about 63 per cent and Sierra Leone, the second poorest just under 60 per cent; in general the richer the country the smaller the proportion of income spent on food; the United States spends about 16 per cent on food, drinks and tobacco. Soya meat is fast becoming a part of the regular Sri Lankan diet; a ton of soyameat—a pure vegetarian product made of Soya bean—is being sold for a day in Colombo; according to authorities on nutrition, this is a significant breakthrough in the field of protein-calorie malnutrition and much could be achieved if this product catches on—CO.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 18: Sri Lanka will purchase 150,000 tonnes of rice from China and Pakistan to maintain a buffer stock for 1981, Government sources said yesterday. Mr. Anura Bandaranaike, Second MP for Nuwara Eliya Maskeliya, was yesterday unanimously selected by the six-member SLFP Committee, as the SLFP nominee for the Attanagalla seat which fell vacant following the ousting of Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike from Parliament; Mr. Bandaranaike had the support of all five SLFP balamandalayas from the Attanagalla electorate which were consulted by the six-member committee of the SLFP politbureau; the committee headed by Mr. Maithripala Senanayake and consisting of Messrs. T. B. Illangaratne, Halim Ishak, Mangala Moonesinghe, R. P. Wijesiri and K. Shanmugalingam picked Mr. Bandaranaike after ascertaining the views of the balamandalayas.—CDN. Owners of motor vehicles will receive their petrol or diesel ration cards along with the annual revenue licenses from December 1; the Motor Traffic Department is making arrangements for the issue of these cards which have coupons attached, each oil coupon will be valid for a week; the department would receive these coupons by Thursday, a Transport Ministry spokesman told Sun yesterday. Hamilton Shirley Amerasinghe, President of the United Nations Conference on the law of the sea and former President of the UN General Assembly, was seriously ill today after suffering a stroke—SU. A separate train service

will be introduced from Colombo to Trincomalee with effect from the 29th of this month; this will be a direct run from Colombo to Trincomalee and Trincomalee to Colombo—DP. In the interests of commuters, it has been decided to issue weekly bus and train season tickets; there will be a rebate of 20 percent on these season tickets—VK.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 19: Colombo Mayor, Sirisena Cooray, will shortly introduce a toll on all vehicles coming into the City, and channel the proceeds into a roads repair and maintenance fund. Singapore-style legislation to compel car owners to carry a minimum number of occupants is being worked out by the Ministry of Transport, Ministry sources said yesterday. Sri Lanka Freedom Party's General Secretary, Ratnasiri Wickramanayake has taken up cudgels with Iran's Charge D'Affairs here over recent criticism of the Freedom Party's policies in a letter dated 17th November to the Envoy Mr. Jafar Azaming. A 21 member Swedish Investment Mission, sponsored by the Stockholm Chamber of Commerce and the Swedish Fund for Industrial Co-operation in Developing Countries—SWEDFUND will be here from November 22 to 29 to explore the possibilities of promoting investment in Sri Lanka—CDN. A fine of 500 rupees each was imposed on the first, second and sixth accused in the Sirimavo Bandaranaike insult case yesterday; the six accused in this case, M. S. K. Jegathsena, Palitha Pelpola, Y. G. Saddhasena, Mrs. Sreeni Jagathsena, K. K. Upali Wijesena and T. B. Pilapitiya were last week found guilty of being members of an unlawful assembly and causing insult to Mrs. Bandaranaike. Thousands of bus commuters along the Panadura-Colombo stretch were left stranded as employees of the Moratuwa and Panadura transport board depots struck work, in trade union action; the strike was later settled; Police arrested four transport board employees, after an altercation between a private bus operator and these employees escalated into a stone throwing melee; the strike followed late last afternoon—SU. The Government has decided to impose certain controls over the bringing in of gift parcels from abroad; this has resulted from abuse by those sending gift parcels to Sri Lanka—DP.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 20: The performance of government corporations is to be reviewed by the Cabinet of Ministers. The Second reading of the Government's fourth Budget was passed last night by a majority of 104 votes. The Asian Development Bank and the International Fund for Agricultural Development will give Sri Lanka loans amounting to Rs. 530 million for the Anuradhapura Dry Zone Agricultural Project of the Ministry of Agricultural Development and Research, a Ministry spokesman said yesterday—CDN. There is a ding-dong battle going on within the SLFP in the selection of a nominee for the Attanagala seat rendered vacant with the imposition of civic disabilities on Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike. The Finance Minister, Mr. Ronnie de Mel yesterday cautioned the House that if the expenditure over income was not controlled, if the balance of trade deficit was not eliminated or narrowed

and if exports and production were not increased, an era of restrictions and controls could come again—CDM. All paddy lands that have been left uncultivated without a valid reason during 80/81 Maha, will be acquired by the state with effect from January 1, 1981 under a directive issued by the Agricultural Development and Research Minister E. L. Senanayake—SU. The Minister of Land, Land Development and Mahaweli Development Mr. Gamini Dissanayake said in Parliament yesterday that the Mahaweli waters will be diverted to the North with a view to making the North prosperous—DP.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 21: The General call for controls from Opposition benches in Parliament indicated that the only clear policy it had was one that would hit the consumer with a load of scarcities. Trade and Shipping Minister Lalith Athulathmudali told a special meeting of the All Ceylon Trade Chamber (ACTC) in Colombo yesterday. The UNP Working Committee at its meeting at Sirikotha yesterday picked its nominee for the Pottuvil and Mawanella seats in Parliament; the nominees are Mrs. Ranganayaki Padmanathan for the Pottuvil seat and Mr. Chandra Ranatunge for the Mawanella seat—CDN. The Salaries Review Committee has recommended that a percentage of posts of Assistant Commissioners of Labour should be manned by the Sri Lanka Administrative Service—CDM. City Police stations were placed on a general alert from early yesterday after nine persons believed to be members of a radical political group were taken into custody on Wednesday night; the Police clamped down after what detectives believed was the surprise launching of an organised protest campaign aimed at achieving what the protesters called "trade union demands". Colombo will be the venue of a hundred nation third world trade fair from April 28 to May 4 next year; called the Tech-Ex '81 it is being organised by a committee headed by Foreign Minister Shaul Hameed—SU. A special conference is to be convened under the chairmanship of the President to settle the problems created by Estate workers having encroached on state lands in the Northern and Eastern provinces and to grant them relief—VK.

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 22: Telephone subscribers in the cyclone-affected areas of Polonnaruwa, Batticaloa, Ampara and Kalumunai will be able to dial direct to any country in the world from tomorrow when four of twelve ultra-modern electronic exchanges are inaugurated by Posts and Telecommunications Minister D. B. Wijetunge—CDN. The Jaffna police have made a major breakthrough in a number of robberies with the arrests of three persons residing in Jaffna, Annakottai and Chanaganai. The Special Envoy of the Acting President of Socialist Republic of Vietnam, Mr. Dinh Nho Liem, arrives in Sri Lanka on Sunday, November 23 at 12.15 p.m.—CDM. Shipping, landing and delivery charges in Sri Lanka's ports will go up by 25 percent from December 1, this year. Mrs. Ranga Pathmanathan and Chandradasa Ranatunge, the UNP nominees for the Pottuvil and Mawanella seats in Parliament are expected to take their oaths in Parliament when it meets on Tuesday, November 25. City residents

are to be exempted from the tolls that will be levied on motorists entering Colombo, from the Middle of next month. Leaders of five opposition political parties will address a joint rally at the Jaffna open air theatre this evening; scheduled to speak are SLFP leader, Sirimavo Bandaranaike, Opposition and TULF leader, A. Amirthalingam, LSSP leader, Colvin R. de Silva, CP Leader, N. Shanmugathasan and MEP leader, Dinesh Gunawardene—SU. A calm reception was extended to former Attanagala MP and the leader of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party when she arrived at the Palali airport this evening. Cultivators will not be affected by the rationing of fuel from next year; sufficient quantities of fuel will be issued to them for their needs and they will be issued with special coupons for the purpose—DP. The newly appointed M.P. for Pottuvil Mrs. Ranganayaki Pathmanathan said yesterday that she will go ahead with all the development work left behind by "brother Canagaratnam" and also serve the people in the same manner as he did. "I fully understand and realize the hardships of the cultivators. I will come back to power again to wipe out all their hardships; by its import policies the Government has completely ignored the farmers and are making foreign cultivators and farmers rich; this position will be changed as soon as I come back to power," this was stated by the leader of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike yesterday at a meeting held at the Chunnakam Market grounds; the meeting was attended by thousands and thousands of people—VK.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 23: Sri Lanka has recorded a trade deficit of Rs. 12.6 billion in the first nine months of this year with imports costing twice what exports had earned, the Ministry of Plan Implementation has said in its third quarterly performance report just off the presses. President J. R. Jayewardene has strongly urged both government and private sectors to effect maximum possible economics in the use of energy—SO. A White Paper outlining a major shake-up in the management of the national health services will be published shortly; the White Paper formulated by Health Minister, Mr. Gamani Jayasuriya, envisages the establishment of a health service which will enable greater community and professional involvement in preventive and curative work to meet the needs of the people—ST. The special GCE examination for those whose unmarked answer scripts were found in the hands of unauthorised persons recently, will be conducted next month. Sri Lanka's richest fishing area in the north-western waters is in danger of being destroyed through over-exploitation by massive poaching operations being carried out by foreign trawlers most of them of Indian origin—WK.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 24: Trade and Shipping Minister Lajith Athulathmudali said at the mass rally at Dodangaslanda on Saturday that the government was working out a scheme to take back the workers who were misled to participate in the recent strike—CDN. When the direct dialling system was declared open at Batticaloa yesterday the Minister of Posts and Telecommunications Mr. D. B. Wijetunge said that before

the year 1983 the entire country will be installed with the direct dialling system and that immediate action was being taken in this connection—VK.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 25: The Competent Authority for Petroleum Products, Somapala Guna-dheera, yesterday said the quantity of petroleum products to be issued on coupons would be determined by the government each month, depending on their availability. Sri Lanka's exports of manufactured garments have topped Rs. 749 million FOB as at the end of September and are expected to reach Rs. 1,100 million FOB by the close of the year, Textile Industries Ministry Secretary Vincent Panditha said yesterday. One of the biggest talking points in the business world today is the gift parcels scandal at the Air Freight Gift Parcels Section of the Customs at Commissariat Street, Colombo Fort, a Customs source said yesterday—CDM. Foreigners will soon be banned from recruiting Sri Lankans here for jobs abroad without the prior sanction of the Government—CDM. Sri Lanka's thirty-three year old agricultural credit scheme, regarded as a vital requisite for a successful paddy harvests, has fallen short of its original objectives, a survey has revealed. Vietnam last night called on Sri Lanka to use its good offices in bringing about a better understanding between ASEAN and the Indo Chinese nations; this was stressed by a special envoy from Hanoi, Dinh Nho Liem when he met Lankan Foreign Minister, Shahu Hameed at his office last evening. Fuel rationing cards green in colour, are in the process of being despatched from the Competent Authority's office to the Motor Traffic Department at Narahenpita—SU.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 26: A new scheme to control organised racketeers in gift parcels sent from abroad will be brought into operation next week. A five-year Integrated Rural Development Program for the Jaffna District involving an investment of around Rs. 750 million is ready for implementation, District Ministry Secretary and Government Agent Yogenara Duraiswamy said yesterday. Prime Minister, R. Premadasa told parliament yesterday during the Committee Stage of the Budget Debate that government had laid down certain guidelines for dealing with applications for re-employment and reinstatement of public and corporation officers who vacated their posts on July 18. Thirteen thousand women have applied for only 100 vacancies for the posts of women soldiers in the Sri Lanka Army Women's Corps—CDN. Twenty new Magistrates Courts will be set up in various parts of the country next year; this follows the recommendation by the Chief Justice, Mr. Neville Samarakoon, QC that more permanent courts should be established to expedite the dispensation of justice—CDM. Transfers of all state sector employees have been frozen by the government; in terms of a policy decision made recently, future transfers will be considered only for the purpose of placing applicants in their districts of residence—SU.

FOR THE RECORD

According to 30-year voting pattern UNP Must Have Majority In 1983 Under PR System

The voting patterns from 1947 cited by the President on Monday at Kandy were as follows:—

	UNP Votes	SLFP Votes
1947 ..	751,432	—
1952 ..	1,026,005	361,250
1956 ..	718,164	1,045,725 (MEP/SLFP)
1960 March	908,996	648,094
1960 July ..	1,143,290	1,027,154
1965 ..	1,579,181	1,226,833
1970 ..	1,876,956	1,812,849
1977 ..	3,148,651	1,855,331

He argued that the UNP voting has never gone down from election to election but increased except in 1956 which was an exceptional year and many UNP votes were cast for the Bandaranaike's Party. He argued that in 1983 the worst that can happen to the UNP is to get the same number of votes as in 1977 which would be 3.148 million or 51.5 per cent which could not be equalled by any party because the entirety of the new vote in 1983 would not exceed 1.2 million which will have to be divided among all the contestant parties. The party which came second to the UNP namely, the S.L.F.P. got 1.83 million in 1977 and to equal the UNP 3 million votes all the new 1.2 million voters would have to vote for the S.L.F.P.

The UNP would therefore have a majority of votes and a majority of members in 1983, however small, and the President would have to choose his Cabinet from the major party. No Party however, he said; even according to Mrs. Bandaranaike, would get a two-thirds majority and thus be able to change the Constitution, and carry him out from the President's House and throw him into the sea.

—Ceylon Daily News, 13/11/80.

THE 1983 ELECTIONS

Don't Be Too Sure....."

By R. Kahawita

The Ceylon Daily News of 13.11.80, on its Front Page spot lighted the caption, "According to thirty year voting pattern UNP must have majority in 1983 under P.R. system." Thus creating a Fool's Paradise to those who want to stay in power.

The voter, in any country, where elections to form a Government is by a democratic process, is unpredictable. During the last few months we have seen a Carter ousted in a landslide when the forecast was a narrow margin, a Fraser retaining his Government when the forecast was that he would be driven to the wilderness, a Manley was driven out in Jamaica when he was expected to stay in. In voting what controls

the voter is not intelligence but physical comforts and discomforts. In Sri Lanka it is the stomach that influences the vote with seven millions clamouring for the basic food for their survival.

THE THIRTY YEAR VOTING PATTERN as stated in the CDN started in the year 1947. Then there was only one party controlled by the educated, well to do, and the intelligentsia. In that year, according to CDN 751,432 voted under the U.N.P. ticket. The next was in 1952 which was a snap election to test the popularity of a designated leader. Then too there was only one party, but just before the election the party split into two factions, one led by Dudley Senanayake who counted 1,026,005 votes. The other faction led by S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike who was able to veer away 361,250 voters from the U.N.P. One thing is clear up to 1952, there was only one political party and one group of voters. That group of voters subsequently divided into S.L.F.P. and U.N.P.—the root and stem were the same but with two branches. There were other Political groups: L.S.S.P., C.P., Tamil Congress and some insignificant nondescripts. The L.S.S.P. and C.P. gave birth to the M.E.P. which played a significant part in the 1956 elections to trounce the ruling Party.

The two main political groups at the 1952 elections were U.N.P. and S.L.F.P. with 1,026,005 and 361,250 supporters respectively. Both were the same but for the leadership. How can we measure the popularity of each leadership and its policies over the years? If we take 1952 supporters of each Party as one, we find that the U.N.P. has an index of 3.07 and the S.L.F.P., on the same basis an index of 5.14 in 1977. That is to say, on a common reference datum S.L.F.P. has built up a popularity index of 5.14 compared to the U.N.P. 3.07 during the same period. For the S.L.F.P. to match U.N.P. in numbers the popularity index has to be in the region of 8.72, if all the circumventing factors remain the same, on the other hand to build up the difference of 3.58 by the 1983 elections is not beyond realization. Much depends not on them but on the Party in Power. How much of the aspirations of the voters have been fulfilled by the ruling party are the deciding factors?

IN A DEMOCRACY, there is no compulsion. The voter can exercise his free will to choose his next Government. In 1952 it was the U.N.P. In 1956 it was S.L.F.P.-M.E.P. combination, when U.N.P. popularity index registered 0.96, Elections of 1970 March and July cannot be counted. It was a sympathy vote to the S.L.F.P. and the indecision of the U.N.P. leadership that put the S.L.F.P. in power in July 1960 with a 2.83 index. In 1965 it was the U.N.P. with an index of 2.00. It was a weak Government so the result was "a national Government" with six Ministers from outside the Party ranks. This was a disappointment to a large section of the party supporters. In 1970 elections our

popularity index was just 2.5-0.5 more than in 1965. Where as the S.L.F.P. jumped from 3.40 in 1965 to 5.02 to 1970.

In 1977 we improved to 4.19 to be in power, but the S.L.F.P. also improved from 5.02 in 1970 to 5.14 in 1977. One significant result in these figures is the S.L.F.P. never receded below one. Where as we in 1956. There are many reasons for this, and the setting today is similar. We are not with the people.

We have to substantiate this statement. The "antics" of the V.I.P.P. of the S.L.F.P. during 1975 and 1976 (the last two years of extended life of the Parliament) were questionable. Party supporters too did not endorse their actions, and the whole Band-wagon jogged along on a very rugged road till it virtually fell apart in April 1977. The trends and comments of the public, and the supporters of the party are moving in that direction today. It was put very explicitly the other day by a lawyer who said that since 1946 he had been an ardent supporter of the UNP. There were no favours to ask, but it is so difficult to get even near the threshold of a Minister's house today, to explain the present situation he said. A request for an interview they surmise is to ask for a favour. He says "the most serious is luxury for the few and misery for the many."

"So do not be over confident or as a school boy would say—"too cock sure"—to be in the seats of power even "under the PR System". How the voters have changed Government over the years is a test of the voters' prudence and judgement—"Are these boys fit to be entrusted with the power we derive from our constitution?" will be the question they will ask themselves. They are Politically mature enough to ask that question and answer it too. Their answer is through the ballot.

THEY ARE INTELLIGENT ENOUGH to understand the intricacies of a so called PR System. They will educate themselves before they entrust power to the party of their choice to govern them for another spell. They did it in 1977 in spite of all the progressive measures the S.L.F.P. introduced during the seven years they ruled. The voters were not influenced by the Land Reforms, Ceiling on Housing, Exchange Control laws etc. Much of which we are following to the letter as if we had asked them to think and tell us what to do when we replace them. Do not believe this is the bait for vote catching; S.L.F.P. also thought so till they were pronounced in 1977.

They are also alive to the necessity of a working majority in a two party system. Their awareness of this necessity they showed in 1970 and again in 1977. What the average voter wants is a place in the sun within his earning capacity. They count 90% of the voters. There are million farming units cultivating an acre and less today. With the income from that miniscule unit can he purchase his bare minimum when the C.O.L. is near 300, even if he accepts that as the true figure? This is the rural voter. There are others. Who

are worst today than in 1977. We figure that too i millions. How have we tackled their problems? No by the food stamps! They say that is taken by the C.T.B. when they go in search of food. On paper we have hit every target we have set ourselves. We see it in highrise buildings, 46 floor building at Echelon Square" a tubeless tyre factory before we produced a tyre to last more than 5000 miles, Hotel complexes by the Railway—C.G.R.—before they can run the railways at a profit, and so on the story goes on as to what we are going to do like the old class room essay writing—"If I were king what shall I do?"

To think that the voter can be led by the nose, because he wears the "green elephant badge" is wishful thinking. That generation is fast dying out, we are the handful left who still wish to live in a fool's paradise. Others are free to exercise their vote for what they need.

FREE EDUCATION has wrought far reaching changes in attitudes, loyalties, desires, ambitions and aspirations. By 1983 when the PR System becomes operative for the first time in a General election, there will be two and half million more voters in this category. They will understand how to vote an effective and viable Government into power in 1983. As they did in 1977 when they drove the leftists out of the scene altogether and reduced the S.L.F.P. to the irreducible minimum to place the U.N.P. in a massive Majority to rule the country. They did it not for the love of the U.N.P. leadership, but because they knew that only a strong Government could deliver the goods they needed. They trusted the Leadership and gave all the tools the representatives needed to lead the country to prosperity—

The country's prosperity is their prosperity. Have we fulfilled their aspirations and secured for them the place in the sun, they expected to get when they put us in the seats of "Their Government"? An honest, and truthful answer to this question, not by us but by the voters themselves, is the pass-ward for a return to our seats for a second term. The answer must not satisfy the few at the top, nor the party supporters but the bulk of the population which include 1.5 millions voting for the first time. For them, symbols and colours have no meaning—They understand one slogan—"Give us a chance to live—Then we will support".

No fool will commit the same mistake twice. The thirty year voting records points that way. The idea of sorting out the order of the Horse and the Cart of the Trade Minister is a timely warning to re-think our priorities. If we may quote Reagan—"Are you happier today than when Mr. Carter became President". The answer was Reagan got a Landslide victory. It can happen in Sri Lanka—Look Sharp.



TALKING POINTS

● AG's ● CEB ● Nuts ● Cars

By Veritas

Attorney-General's Department Disciplined?

It is well-known that the President is a strict disciplinarian. He also insists that protocol should be observed when necessary since it is only by the observance of rules and convention that you can maintain discipline. A small example of this way of life was evidenced recently at high Government level.

The Minister of Health had submitted a proposal on the Fee-levying Medical school to be set up by the Private Sector. This proposal required the observations of the Attorney-General since it involved some legal issues. The observations were sent to Government by the Attorney-General's Department but alas, the comments had been signed by the *Additional Solicitor-General* and not the Attorney-General. It was noted that according to the Constitution of the Republic the observations must come from the Attorney-General. Accordingly, the Government noted that proper protocol had not been maintained by the Attorney-General's Dept. The Attorney-General and not the Additional Solicitor-General should have sent the observations and signed the relevant paper. The authorities were requested to see that in future strict protocol was observed in these matters and the rules and regulations conformed with to the letter. It is good to note that discipline is maintained at high levels even in such small matters. It is the only way to get discipline maintained down the line as well.

Ceylon Electricity Board. No confidence

between the Minister and the Board of Directors. It is an open secret and more than a talking point that an impasse has been reached between the Board of Directors of the Ceylon Electricity Board and the Minister in charge of the portfolio of Power and Energy, Mr. D. B. Wijetunga. The Hon. Minister has told H.E. the President that he has no confidence in the Board and the Board appears to have told the Minister that feelings are mutual.

Even a meeting and confrontation between the Minister and the Board in the presence of the President seems to have not been able to resolve the deadlock and the situation is getting worse. Board decisions are not getting Ministerial approval and the Minister seems to be relying on one individual—a Deputy General Manager of R.E. fame—to run the affairs of the C.E.B. It is said that this individual has the favour of many heavy weights in the UNP Cabinet including the Hon. Prime Minister but that he is not liked by his colleagues at the C.E.B. He is a go-getter who gets work done and thinks of payment later. When will this conflict be resolved? Over to you Mr. Minister—Power and Energy.

The CO-CO-NUTS Ministry. One may well ask Mr. Harold Herat, the Project Minister for the Coconut Ministry, "co-co-nuts"? which in Sinhalese means "where are the nuts" or coconuts. A recent

advertisement which appeared in all the leading dailies shows the poor performance of this Ministry. Last week the *Coconut Research Board* of Lunuwila (which comes under Mr. Harold Herat) advertised the following seven vacancies.

1. Head of the Division of Plant Biology.
2. Head of the Division of Genetics and Plant Propagation.
3. Head of the Division of Chemistry.
4. Head of the Division of Agronomy.
5. Head of the Division of Biometry and Agricultural Economics.
6. Head of the Division of Processing Research.
7. Chief Accountant.

One can only imagine what the Coconut Research Board must have been doing with all the above senior posts unfilled and vacant. The question is for how long these top posts were vacant and why did the Ministry not act earlier and faster to get them filled. Looking at it in another way, such lapses are evidence of Waste and gross mismanagement and the Minister in charge must take the blame.

By the way, it is said that Mr. Harold Herat was in one way lucky. As a Project Minister holding no Cabinet rank, he is the only one outside Cabinet to enjoy the luxury and comfort of an air-conditioned 604 Peugeot car. According to our sources, when Mr. M. D. H. Jayewardene resigned as Plantations Minister and Mr. Montague Jayewickrema was assigned that portfolio as well, in addition to Public Administration, Mr. M. D. H. Jayewardene's official car (a Peugeot 604) also fell vacant. Coconut being a Plantation Industry, Project Minister Herat felt he was entitled to it. People do comment on how distinguished Mr. Harold Herat looks in spotless white in the back seat of his Peugeot 604—but please Mr. Herat you can have your comforts but at least see that the important posts in the institutions under you are filled because without these men nothing will be done for our NUTS.

The NUT Ministry must become more active rather than trace the decline in coconut production to the rot that set in years ago or keep on blaming the cyclone of 1978 that devastated almost a million trees. The provincial lawyer (now Minister) must concentrate more on the NUTS than trade fairs, carnivals and exhibitions in his own electorate NUT - TAN - DIYA.

More Peugeot 604. Speaking of Peugeot 603 (about 30 of which were imported for all Cabinet Ministers, we are now told that even *bureaucrats* are going in for these luxury cars. The latest purchase is by the *Governor of the Central Bank of Ceylon*. Could he not have done with something smaller and less expensive or did he feel inferior now that Cabinet Ministers travelled in Peugeot 604.

Even more recently, we are told that the *Inspector-General of Police* has ordered a Peugeot 604. Nothing else, he has said, is good enough for the several ceremonial functions he has to attend. When flour and bread prices went up, the People coined a slogan (604 for them i.e. for the Ministers, 205 for us i.e. the

price of a loaf of bread). That was the reaction of the people to these luxury cars. Now the Governor of the Central Bank and the Inspector-General of Police seem to be adding fuel to the fire of antagonism.

ASIAN GOVT'S ABANDON WORKERS' RIGHTS

Favour Multinationals

by Ian Steele

"At 5 a.m. as women workers on the night shift went to vote in their union election they were attacked by rubber-gloved male workers who prompted by the factory management smeared bucketsful of human excrement over their bodies; in their hair, ears, eyes and mouths. The men then destroyed the ballot box." The scene was the Dong-il textile plant at Incheon, South Korea on February 21, 1978. Its inclusion in a report entitled WOMEN IN THE REDEPLOYMENT OF MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY TO DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, now in circulation at the United Nations headquarters in New York, becomes more poignant in the light of political upheavals which have affected Korea's industrial cities since then.

The report by Linda Y. C. Lim of Michigan University's Department of Economics describes the outcome: "Police standing by, watched but did nothing in response to the women's cries for help. One hundred and eleven of these women ended their subsequent 12-day hunger strike when promised an open election; but instead, 126 women were fired and blacklisted by the company and were unable to find work in other factories in the country." Ms. Lim suggests that in most Asian countries, workers' rights have been squandered in regional bidding for labour-intensive foreign industries. Governments and their workers are also being sold short by industrial bargaining which enables foreign companies to play one country against another for labour conditions which border on slavery.

"In all the Asian countries, host governments have enacted restrictive labour legislation as an investment incentive to manufacturers redeploying from developed countries" she says. "Legislation severely limiting the right to strike, or even prohibiting it altogether, is in existence in Southern Korea, Taiwan, the Philippines, Singapore and Malaysia. Workers' organisations and even collective bargaining are discouraged, and labour movements in general are severely repressed by authoritarian governments." Ms. Lim notes that "pioneer" firms in Malaysia and Singapore are, in fact, guaranteed freedom from labour action in their first five years of operation. In the absence of these constraints, some employers have played havoc with the health of their workers and contributed to physical and mental disabilities which appear likely to reflect on the host countries for many years to come.

IN THE PREMIER ELECTRONICS sector which has brought Asian workers into world prominence with

the low cost, quality production of radio and television sets and other circuitry, social costs are mounting among the 300,000 workers employed in these fields in Asia's free trade zones. The electronics industry is generally considered a clean one because of the dust-free, controlled atmosphere needed for sensitive equipment; but the US Occupational Safety and Health Administration placed electronics on a select list of "high-risk industries using the greatest number of hazardous substances."

The report found that in South Korea, most workers developed severe eye problems within the first year of employment; 88 percent had chronic conjunctivitis; 44 percent became near sighted and 19 percent developed astigmatism. "Similar results have been obtained in studies in Hongkong and Singapore", the report states.

A 1975 survey of workers in an American firm in Malaysia found that 44 percent complained of deteriorating eyesight and 42 percent of headaches caused by eye strain from looking through highly magnified microscopes for seven to nine virtually continuous hours a day in the bonding process. "Workers have claimed that whereas multinational employers require perfect eyesight on hiring, they do not provide for the expense of spectacles or eye care when workers suffer eyesight deterioration and are even wont to fire workers whose productivity has been hampered by poor eyesight.

Chemicals are widely used in electronics factories, where there is an absence of adequate protection and workers are not trained or even informed of the dangers of working with chemicals. They constantly work over open vats of acid, for example, which cause burns on skin and eyes, and whose fumes damage eyes, nose skin and lungs. The solvents can cause headaches, dizziness, nausea, drowsiness and vomiting, and prolonged exposure can cause serious liver and kidney damage."

The report states that three of the commonly-used solvents in electronics process are suspected of being carcinogens (cancer-causing). "Metal solder fumes cause shortness of breath, nausea, reproductive problems, kidney and liver damage and even cancer". "In one soldering job, every girl gets sick from the smells after a year of work, but the company forbids transferring to another work unit. The girl can only continue working and lose her health, or quit the job." The report states that compulsory rotating shifts were causing physical and mental illness. Although studies in the US had found rotating shifts to be damaging to workers' health, American firms abroad promoted them as being desirable.

"Finally the fast pace and intensity of monotonous, repetitive assembly work in the tense and rigidly disciplined environment of multinational electronics factories aggravates nervousness and stomach ailments, which forced overtime and production speed-ups, increase fatigue and the likelihood of accidents. Unreasonably high production standards pit production against safety as workers attempt to earn productivity

bonuses to supplement their low base wages. There are frequent productivity campaigns and competitions. But as workers increase their output, the standard quota levels are raised so that no more than a given percentage of workers—usually 15 to 20 percent—can benefit from the bonuses for surpassing the quotas.

"In electronics as in textile and garment factories, there are few rest periods—usually one 10-minute break per shift and a half hour off for lunch—a time so short that in the larger factories workers spend most of it standing in line for food at canteens or hawker stalls and then have to bolt down their food or skip it altogether. Visits to the bathroom are regulated and monitored and work supervision is constant. Attendance and productivity bonuses often form a substantial proportion of the worker's take home pay but may be forfeited for transgressions as minor as tardiness of five minutes or more once a month (Taiwan)".

The report states that many workers are unable to stand the pace and worker turnover ranges from 5 to 10 percent a month in normal period and as high as 50 percent in peak periods of labour shortage or economic boom. This is a factor which, in many cases, plays into the employer's hands because older, exhausted or ill workers way for younger and more "fire" themselves and make vigorous employees. *Mass hysteria is reported as a common reaction to high pressure work in some Malaysian factories.*

"Usually on the late night shift some workers will spontaneously hallucinate and begin screaming, crying, shivering and moaning hysterically and the pattern quickly spreads to other workers so that production is completely disrupted. Factories have sometimes been closed down for days for exorcism when workers believe they have seen ghosts. Those who begin the outbreaks of hysteria are punished, usually by suspension or dismissal."

A 1975 survey of the Industrial health unit in Singapore found that in 85 percent of the 83 companies surveyed, "factories set up with financial support and technical advice from the government or international agencies" were "unsafe and unhealthy to workers", according to the report. The report finds no reason to be optimistic about the future for Asia's industrial employees. It notes the difficulty that countries at different levels of development would have in agreeing on minimum working conditions and labour rights while the regional competition for labour-intensive industry is so strong. Any country which seeks to enforce safeguards for its workers would probably find that its foreign guests would close shop and relocate to a neighbour which isn't so particular about problems like sweat-shops all around.

—Courtesy: *Indonesian Times*



Celestial Fireworks

By V. Buvanaseram

Mr. D. K. R. Karunaratne, the best of us professionals but not entitled to the "Professional Allowance". Such are the distributions in our service. He is our astronomer too. On that clear midnight of November 13/14 1965, he knowingly stepped out of R. Cy. A. F. at Katunayake to view the magnificent display of heavenly fireworks. Red, blue, green, yellow all tints of the rainbow, darting across the sky. The guard, who came to chase him in, remained to gape. The meteorite shower Leonide occurs once a year about this time but such a display occurs only once in 33 years, when our earth gets closest to that comet's debris. The next performance will be in November 1998.

This was a year after the sunspot minimum year of 1964, when Sri Lanka, taken as a whole, had a deficit of 16% in its annual average. 1985 too the rains trailing far behind its average, till this display. It came in from the east, said Karu, and Hambantota received 63% more than its average for November. Badulla and Batticaloa 58% more and Anuradhapura 55% more. Almost every place showed a remarkable increase in rainfall and this increase went into December too. Choosing rain-gauge stations at random, Palai + 62%, Palampodda, Trincomalee district + 31%, strangely, Badulla and Batticaloa got the same percentage increase of 40% Hambantota + 36% and Anuradhapura + 33%. 1965, there was an increase of 10% over the island. Since then our annual average rainfall over the island never exceeded this 10%, till last year, when there was an increase of 22%. We are now at a sunspot maximum.

In August 1972, there was a giant solar flare lasting for about an hour. If such a flare had occurred during the Appolo Lunar mission, the radiation dosage from it would have been lethal for the astronauts. When the matter thrown out in this flare reached earth, it caused violent distortions in the earth's magnetic field, causing a communication black-out. The auroral phenomena it caused at the north pole was seen, as far away as Washington, D.C.

In meteor showers there is an immediate increase in rainfall but in solar flares, there is an immediate drying up of the atmosphere, followed by a greater increase in rainfall. It seems intriguing to some that at a solar maximum, when so much energy is thrown into our atmosphere by solar flares, we record our lowest temperatures. Heating of our atmosphere is done from below and the temperature of the layers close to the ground would be representative of the photospheric temperature of the sun, while solar flares heat out atmosphere from above, hence the immediate drying up, but the freezing nuclei thrown out by a giant solar flare is far in excess of a meteor shower and causes a greater increase in rainfall, that sometimes persists for several months. There were similar flares in June 1946 and Nov. 47.

Percentage deviation from average rainfall

	1972			1946		1947
	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	June	Nov.	
1. Anuradhapura	-99	+11	+78	-18	-63	
2. Badulla	-78	+121	+174	-82	-35	
3. Batticaloa	-86	+173	+24	+55	-62	
4. Colombo	-50	+30	+31	-27	-56	
5. Galle	-45	+117	+45	+05	-71	
6. Hambantota	-26	+318	+97	-36	-02	
7. Diyatalawa	-90	-25	-55	-62	-64	
8. Jaffna	-97	0	-60	-100	-92	
9. Kurunegala	-61	-24	-123	-39	-60	
10. Kandy	-65	+68	-67	-36	-82	
11. Kanakesanturai	-99	+08	+40	+131	-87	
12. Mahailuppalama	-100	-20	+40	-65	-76	
13. Mannar	-100	-72	+45	-100	-68	
14. Nuwara Eliya	-56	+14	+76	-39	-39	
15. Puttalam	-93	+110	+254	-40	-84	
16. Ratnapura	-29	+91	+11	-45	-20	
17. Trincomalee	-99	+87	+141	+126	-50	
18. Vavuniya	-100	+160	+220	-100	-70	

In June, the north and east got very poor rainfall. The monthly average at KKS, Trincomalee and Batticaloa are 0.57", 0.93" and 0.89" respectively. They have had some rains before the June 46 flare. At Kurunegala, the name itself suggestive of differential heating and thunderstorm, the increase in rainfall with the August 72 flare, continued till the end of the year, November +76%, December +10%.

AN ELEVEN YEAR SUNSPOT CYCLE, an eleven year cycle of harmful cosmic particle abundance, in our atmosphere. It takes 11.8 years for the astrologically, benefic Jupiter to orbit the Sun. Are we to dismiss this also as a Cosmic coincidence? Cosmic particles are fundamental particles from which the whole gallery has been built. Some reach us even from beyond our galaxy. They ride to us on the magnetic lines of force. Sunspots are areas of concentrated magnetism on the sun, whose magnetism is even less than that of our earth. No other planet is our solar system has any magnetism of its own except Jupiter. The strength of the magnetic field at the visible surface of Jupiter is about a hundred times the surface magnetic field of our earth.

Voyager's probe is over. We await the results. Will these coincidences be answered? I doubt! The answer lies in the stars—the exploded stars, novas and supernovas. During the solar minimum of 1964, Jupiter was moving under Crab Nebula in Taurus, which must have burst, when life began on earth. There are many of the like sending out to us cosmic particles.

Rings of trees, rabbits of Siberia, Hudson bay company's profits on lynx and fox skins and even wars have long been associated with sunspot numbers. Rings of trees could be explained by the variations in rainfall and Hudson bay company's profits to the northern lights that illuminate the sky to the polar hunters, but the wars! George Gamow, the famed astronomer, explains the American (1775) and French (1789) revolu-

tions and the Russian revolutions of 1905 and 1917 to increased solar activity "having a trigger effect on human passions." The last great war began in September 1939, when according to a graph published by Zurich Observatory, the sunspot number reached over 160, the highest for that cycle.

Our communal riots of 1958 occurred in a solar maximum 22 years later in 1980, besides spewing energy into space, solar flares seem to propagate some sort of disturbance parallel to the solar surface. We of the "shadowed livery of the burnished sun", should take better notice of our sun.

Concluded.

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PEKING TRIAL

The Indictment

Beijing, November 15,

Forty-eight specific offenses are cited in an indictment drawn up by the Special Procuratorate under the Supreme People's Procuratorate which charges "the Lin Biao and Jiang Qing counter-revolutionary cliques" with having "committed four major crimes". The two cliques worked hand in glove during the "cultural revolution" to frame and persecute Communist party and state leaders in a premeditated way, attempting to usurp party leadership and state power and overthrow the political power of proletarian dictatorship, the indictment says. The four major crimes listed in the indictment are: (1) framing and persecuting party and state leaders and plotting to overthrow the political power of the dictatorship of the proletariat; (2) persecuting and suppressing large numbers of cadres and ordinary people; (3) plotting to assassinate Chairman Mao Zedong and stage an armed counter-revolutionary coup d'etat; and (4) plotting an armed rebellion in Shanghai.

The prosecution was instituted by the special procuratorate after examining the written opinion for a public prosecution, the case file and evidence submitted by the ministry of public security in September this year, and after interrogating Jiang Qing and the nine other accused. The Special Court decided to accept and hear the case after examining the indictment. After the plot of the counter-revolutionary clique headed by Lin Biao to murder Chairman Mao Zedong and stage an armed counter-revolutionary coup d'etat failed in September 1971, the indictment says, the counter-revolutionary clique of the Gang of Four headed by Jiang Qing conducted conspiratorial activities against the revolution until being exposed and smashed in October 1976. The indictment says that the Lin Biao and Jiang Qing counter-revolutionary cliques brought untold disasters to China. The 16 people confirmed by the Special Procuratorate after examination as the principal culprits of the Lin Biao and Jiang Qing counter-revolutionary cliques are: Lin Biao,

Jiang Ding, Kang Sheng, Zhang Chunqiao, Yao Wen-yuan, Wang Hongwen, Chan Boda, Xie Fuzhi, Ye Qun, Huang Yongsheng, Wu Faxian, Li Zuopena, Qiu Hui-zuo, Lin Ligu, Zhou Yuchi, and Jiang Tengjiao. Among them, Lin Biao, Kang Sheng, Xie Fuzhi, Ye Qun, Lin Ligu and Zhou Yuchi are dead and no criminal liability shall be pursued against them in accordance with the provisions of items 5, article 11, of the Law of Criminal of the People's Republic of China.

Framing and persecuting party and state leaders in a premeditated way for the purpose of overthrowing China's political power of proletarian dictatorship is one of the charges made by the Special Procuratorate under the Supreme People's Procuratorate in its indictment against the "Lin Biao and Jiang Qing counter-revolutionary cliques." The indictment lists a series of offenses committed by these cliques in framing and persecuting Liu Shaoqi, Chairman of the People's Republic of China and vice-chairman of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party; Zhou Enlai, vice-chairman of the party Central Committee and premier of the State Council; Zhu de, vice-chairman of the party Central Committee and chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress; Deng Xiaoping, member of the Standing Committee of the political bureau, General Secretary of the party Central Committee and vice-premier of the State Council; and other party and state leaders. In 1966, the indictment says, Lin Biao instructed his wife, Ye Qun, to dictate false charges they had fabricated against Liu Shaoqi and Lei Yingfu, deputy director of operations of the People's Liberation Army General Staff. She told him to commit these charges to writing. After going over what Lei Yingfu had written, Lin Biao asked him to enclose it in a letter addressed to Lin Biao and Chairman Mao Zedong. Lin Biao then forwarded the letter and material to Jiang Qing.

In July 1967, Jiang Qing, Kang Sheng and Chen Boda decided without authorisation to hold a "rally for repudiating and struggling against Liu Shaoqi." Liu Shaoqi and his wife, Wang Guangmei, were attacked physically and their house was searched and ransacked. In July and August of the same year, Kang Sheng, Xie Fuzhi and Qi Benyu incited people to organise a "front-line for getting Liu Shaoqi out of Zhongnanhai," surround the place and break into the State Council compound. Jiang Qing assumed direct control of the "group investigating the special case of Liu Shaoqi and Wang Guangmei" and directed its work in collusion with Kang Sheng and Xie Fuzhi. They extorted confessions by torture and rigged up false evidence to vilify Liu Shaoqi and Wang Guangmei as "renegade" "enemy agents" and "counter-revolutionaries". Jiang Qing decided without authorisation to have Yang Yichen, Deputy Governor of Hebei Province, Yang Chengzuo, Professor of China People's University, and nine other people including Liu Shaoqi's cook, Hao Miao, arrested and imprisoned. The eleven were subjected to interrogation and torture, and two of them including Yang Chengzuo died later of persecution.

The indictment reveals Zhang Chunqiao, Yao Wen-yuan and Wang Hongwen of making false charges against Zhou Enlai and other leaders. After hatching a plot, the Gang of Four sent Wang Hongwen to Changsha in October 1974 to tell Chairman Mao Zedong that Zhou Enlai, Deng Xiaoping and others were engaged in activities to usurp power, as Lin Hiao had tried to do at the Lushan meeting of 1970. They also tried to prevent Chairman Mao from nominating Deng Xiaoping for first vice-premier. Wang Hongwen said: "the atmosphere in Beijing now is very much like that of the Lushan meeting." The Gang made use of the media under their control to stir up nationwide criticism of the "big confusion of our time," the "chief minister" and the "Duke of Zhou" thus attacking Zhou Enlai by implication. Jiang Qing, Zhang Chunqiao and Yao Wen-yuan smeared Deng Xiaoping as a "counter-revolutionary double-dealer", "General Manager of a rumour-mongering company," "fascist", "big quisling", "representative of the comprador bourgeoisie," "nagay" and the "chief boss behind the Tiananmen Square counter-revolutionary political incident."

The indictment also charges Chen Boda, Xie Fuzhi and Wu Faxian with making use of the case of the "extraordinary central committee of the Communist Party of China" leaflet found in Tianjin in November 1967. They cooked up the false case of a "Chinese Communist Party (m-l)" on the pretext of tracking down the "behind-the-scenes bosses." They asserted that Zhu de was "Secretary" of the alleged party central committee, Chen Yi "Deputy Secretary and concurrently Minister of Defence" and Li Fuchun "premier". Its members allegedly included Dong Biwu, Ye Jiaoping, Li Ziannian, He Long, Xu Xiangqian, Nie Rongzhen, Tan Zhenlin, Yu Quli, Wang Zhen and Liao Chengzhi. They were also falsely accused of having "illicit relations with foreign countries, making preparation for an armed insurrection" and attempting to "stage a coup d'etat." The indictment also lists as crimes of the Lin Biao and Jiang Qing counter-revolutionary cliques the framing and persecution of Chen Yi, Peng Dehuai, He Long, Xu Xiangqian, Nie Rongzhen, Ye Jiaoping, Lu Dingyi, Luo Ruiqing and other party and state leaders.

—XINHUA.

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MOSCOW VIEW

The Peking Trial

Moscow, Nov. 5,

Jiang Qing gave her first evidence even before the trial opened. "They are beating the dog, forgetting about the master," she was quoted by the Hong Kong magazine, *Cheng Ming* as saying about the organiser of the trial. Mao's widow is further quoted that she was not in any way responsible for the dispersing of the April 1976 march in Tiananmen Square, or for the resulting persecution, and proposed that the Hua Gofeng, then China's Minister of Public Security, be called as a witness.

The trial brims with paradoxes. The thing is not only that those guilty of summary decision-making are now posing as victims of that same phenomenon. Attempts are made to hush up the trial, the most sensational in China's history. The people involved want many facts, which should logically surface during the trial, to be made public, but they are even more afraid of this happening. This concerns not only the defendants but, perhaps to an even greater extent, the judges. Some of the people who were closest to Mao are now being tried both by those who suffered under Mao and by Mao's other associates. And, for some mysterious reason, all three groups are zealously protecting the name of Mao.

The core of the matter is that this is one more stage in the current Peking power struggle rather than a trial. And the defendants are not simply those accused, but are sitting ducks used to reach the real targets—the rival factions, those who, unlike the "gang of four" and the Lin Biao group, are still in power.

While ostracizing the more odious figures of the "cultural revolution" and of the economic calamities, and disassociating themselves from the nightmare of those times, the judges in Peking are not at all willing to condemn the primary reason for it all—Maoism itself.

It would be interesting to learn the charges that are going to be brought against the accused. But there are other charges equally interesting, charges that were not and will not be levied—fanning military hysteria, severing relations with the socialist countries, pathological anti-Sovietism and hegemonistic aspirations. And this is perfectly understandable, because both accused and accusers share the same heritage.

—APN.

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BIGGEST IMF LOAN

To Third World Country

Washington, November 20,

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) in the largest loan it has ever made to a developing nation, is expected to approve a 1.7 billion-dollar package to Pakistan, monetary sources said today. The loan expected to be approved next week, comes when there is western concern about Pakistan's ability after the Soviet Union's military intervention in neighbouring Afghanistan. The United States had planned to give 400 million dollars worth of military and economic aid to Pakistan but was rejected as not enough.

Pakistan's President Zia-ul-Haq met with President Carter in early October, and the United States reaffirmed the US commitment to defend the South Asian nation if necessary. The IMF loan package despite its size carries fewer conditions than have been required in the past, part of the fund's recent policy of being less

stringent with requests from poorer countries, the sources said. The fund and Pakistan officials have disagreed about whether the country should devalue its currency to bring it, more into line with Pakistan's economic condition and make its goods more attractive overseas. The sources said, however, that devaluation was not a requirement for the loan although Pakistan had agreed to examine whether changes in its currency exchange rate should be considered.

The country's agricultural sector in the past few years has suffered from what critics have called mismanagement and inefficiency. Manufacturing has also stagnated, partly because of sharply rising energy costs. But the sources said fund officials believed the Pakistan government had made significant strides towards stabilising the country financially.

There are still major problems, however, Pakistan labours under huge deficits in both its domestic budget and its account with other countries. The sources said the Pakistan government recognised that the country's money and credit policies would be directed towards reducing its rate of inflation, running at almost 18 per cent a year, although that was not a condition for the loan. Also Pakistan intended to revamp its investment programme so that that funds brought a quicker return for the economy the sources said.

—Reuter.

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PAKISTAN

Adding Fuel To "Aid" Fire

By A. H. Khan

Karachi, November 1,

Pakistan seems to be facing a serious deficit in foreign exchange resources to meet its debt-service obligations and straighten out its balance of payments position. During the past week, Pakistan's foreign exchange reserves and balances held outside hit the low at around Rs. 3,720 million, which reflected a shortfall of about Rs. 1000 millions as compared with the average import bill of Rs. 4400 million per month. The desperate situation of the foreign exchange resources gap seems to have been precipitated by the delay in the acceptance of Pakistan's request by the creditor countries, especially the USA to allow rescheduling of the repayment of some current instalments against the previous credits. The rescheduling involves about \$ 600 million. In view of this, Pakistan has been forced to resort to short-term borrowings from international commercial banks. These borrowings reportedly rose to around \$ 800 million last year. There are also reports that during the recent visit of certain top ranking Bank of America officials to Pakistan, the Federal Government Secretaries and high ranking officials of the relevant ministries held discussions with the visiting American bankers with a view to finalising a short-term loan of \$ 200 million from the Bank of America.

Available information indicates that the country met its external debt service obligations through short-term borrowings from commercial banks of international repute last year. The interest rates on these loans on an average range from 12 per cent to 14 percent. It is understandable that if the Government had not resorted to these borrowings, an eventual default in debt servicing could not have been avoided. On the other hand, if the available long-term loans and aids would be used out of the current inflow, the net availability of these loans/aids would have been reduced to zero and thereby the development programmes would have run into jeopardy. THE REPORTS about Pakistan's request to the IMF for a long-term loan of 1.3 to 1.5 billion dollars out of the "extended fund facility" have of late been appearing in the Press quite frequently, and at times these reports indicated that the IMF's Board of Governors had also given approval of the aforesaid loan to Pakistan. It may be pointed out that the above loan of \$ 1300 to \$ 1500 million is the largest ever quantum of loan requirements presented at a time by Pakistan to any creditor agency or country. The annual loan request to the World Bank Consortium, it may be recalled has been, on an average, around \$ 800 million to 1 000 million. Last year, the Consortium granted a loan of about \$ 700 million. Thus, the sharp increase in Pakistan's loan requirement from the IMF indicates the dire need this country is facing at present to tide over its foreign exchange resources constraints. Last year the IMF approved \$ 157 million from the Trust Fund. This shows that Pakistan is out to avail all the available facilities from the IMF. It may be of interest to mention here that Pakistan's transactions with the IMF have been running to deficits during the last three years as compared with the surplus enjoyed in 1976-77.

Statistics about the inflow of fresh aids and loans and annual repayments instalments indicate that although the aid inflow in absolute terms has shown an increase, the net receipts, after taking into account debt-service, payments has reflected a progressive decline. The gross aid inflow during 1979-80 was placed at \$ 1127 million. But after deducting the current account deficit in the balance of payments and debt-service liability, the net aid inflow came to around Rs. 422 million, which compared somewhat favourably with the previous year's net aid inflow of \$ 405 million, due to receipt of \$ 157 million from IMF's Trust Fund. Although the comparative figure was somewhat higher than the previous year's, yet it is obvious that a net aid inflow of \$ 422 million is a negligible amount if compared with the sizeable requirement to finance the development programmes.

PAKISTAN'S EXTERNAL DEBT - SERVICE obligations registered a sharp increase of 54 per cent to about \$ 896 million in 1979-80 as compared with the previous year's amount of \$ 583 million. The seriousness of the situation is self-explanatory. It is however encouraging to find that Pakistan's foreign exchange

earnings during 1979-80 also registered an impressive increase of over 29 per cent to Rs. 4778 million, which consisted of export earnings and other receipts including home remittances from abroad. Nevertheless, the ratio of external debt servicing obligations annually to the country's foreign exchange earnings further rose to 18.8 per cent in 1979-80 as compared with the previous year's 15.8 per cent. If the ratio of external debt servicing is measured exclusively in relation to export earnings, it worked out to as high as 38 per cent rising from the previous year's 35 per cent, although exports have risen by as much as 44 per cent during 1979-80.

The calamitous situation has understandably arisen from a multi-fold increase in the oil import bill during the last four to five years. The oil imports during the current financial year are estimated to account for \$ 1500 million, which would be more than 50 per cent of the country's export earnings. On the other hand, steady increases in prices of modern plants and machinery and electrical equipment, which are needed for promoting development efforts, has also been making increasing claims on Pakistan's limited foreign exchange resources.

Viewed against the above back-ground, the need for re-determining the priorities in our development programmes can hardly be overemphasised. Economising on fuel oil imports and developing the existing indigenous resources of energy, such as gas, coal etc., should be given top priority.

—Courtesy: Pakistan Economist

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USING IMF

To Destabilise Afghanistan

Moscow, November 22,

The official Soviet news agency *Tass* accused the United States today of planning to use the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to finance subversion against the Moscow backed government in Afghanistan. News analyst Leonid Ponomaryov said the IMF was considering lending Pakistan 1.7 billion dollars but it was only an attempt by the US government to heighten tensions around Afghanistan. Ponomaryov said virtually all the affairs of the IMF which grants financial aid to developing and industrialised countries, were under the control of the United States. "Directly and indirectly Washington is trying to consolidate the military regime in Pakistan and through it also to finance the Afghan counter-revolutionaries who have entrenched themselves on Pakistani territory in the guise of refugees", he said. Ponomaryov said Pakistan's President General Zia ul-Haq had tried to organise an international fund to finance opposition to the government of Babarak Karmal but since the idea..... finds no support the United States leaders decided to use the IMF.

—PTC-Reuter

BARBARAK KARMAL

Visit To Moscow

By Masood Ali Khan

Moscow, October 26,

SOVIET UNION AND AFGHANISTAN HAVE forcefully come out for normalisation of the situation in the whole of Asia by the joint efforts of the states of the continent themselves with the aim of ensuring security and peace and establishing good neighbourly relations. Considerable attention is paid in the joint statement signed by Leonid Brezhnev and Babrak Karmal and published here on October 19 to problems of different regions of Asia. In a special reference to India the statement says that both sides positively evaluate the significance of India's peace-loving policy which stands for peace and security in Asia. Both Soviet Union and DRA express profound satisfaction at the results of the visit of Babrak Karmal. Full identity of views on all issues discussed has been registered and as a result of the talks held here and agreements reached Soviet-Afghanistan relations and mutual co-operation will strengthen and develop on a wide scale on the basis of internal friendship.

The visit of Babrak Karmal, the first as president of the DRA, had led to close personal contact and understanding, and the wide membership of the two countries' delegations taking part in the talks have been shown the importance attached by both to this summit and the wide range of bilateral and international problems covered. The atmosphere has been relaxed and the talks have been fraternal and open hearted and held in an optimistic spirit which has as its background the successes of the revolutionary forces and further consolidation of people's power in Afghanistan. There is full confidence that the revolutionary transformations are irreversible and can only go forward.

Brezhnev's forthright and clearcut pronouncements and firm tone in his dinner speech have sounded a warning to the forces of darkness and reaction who are still trying to subvert the Afghan revolution from across its borders. The speech has given new courage and heart to the progressive forces of the DRA. As Noor Ahmad Noor, secretary of the central committee of PDRA, said in an interview the speech was met with profound satisfaction in Afghanistan. It was permeated by the spirit of internationalism and striving to ensure peace and security in the region and throughout the world. The support to Afghan people and Afghan revolution reaffirmed by the Soviet president makes all Afghans feel proud and attests the durable bonds of brotherhood which exist between the two countries and peoples.

Cause of optimism are also the success of DRA in economic field, success of the land reform, stable market and economy and all enterprises working normally. This has been achieved in spite of all difficulties and the bandit raids, arson and destruction perpetrated by the aggressors from outside. In spite of the feudal

terror of the ex-landlord elements the peasants have started cultivating the land given to them by the people's regime and this year's harvest is excellent. One indication is that prices of grain in open market have come down by upto 50 per cent.

Co-operatives are being formed, tractors and harvester combines as also chemical fertilisers are being introduced and the first machine tractor stations have been established. Soviet help in building the economy, in education and health care, in development of science technology and culture is being extended and widened in all spheres and the present visit opens up new vistas it is pointed out.

Babrak Karmal has been given an enthusiastic welcome with crowds lining the route on his arrival and at a huge meeting of the people of Moscow in the big hall of the university he was greeted with a big ovation. Being an experienced parliamentarian and orator he enjoys such occasions. In the star city he was greeted by cosmonauts of many countries—Soviet Union, Mongolia, Romania, France—who are training for future flights and of course by the veterans and many times heroes. The mood has been of warmth, of close understanding, brotherhood and firm friendship everywhere.

As the joint statement says full unanimity of the two sides was confirmed in the cause of ensuring Afghanistan's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, defence of revolutionary gains of Afghan people. Both sides once again declared in favour of a political settlement of the situation around the DRA, and stressed that the way to it is the following: an effective end to intervention from outside, through reaching appropriate agreements with neighbours of DRA, in the first place with Pakistan, on the basis of the proposals put forward by the Afghan government of May 14, 1980.

As for the withdrawal of Soviet military presence from Afghanistan is concerned, it can be examined in the context of such a political settlement and not before aggression against DRA is completely ended and guarantees are given that no resumption of subversive actions from abroad against the people and government of Afghanistan shall take place.

Pravda summing up results of the Soviet-Afghan summit said on October 19 that relations between the two countries have acquired a qualitatively new character, and Karmal's visit and all-round co-operation, the negotiations which testified to full identity of views and mutual understanding on all questions were all a vivid illustration of this.

The Afghan revolution is going through a period of trials due to crude provocations of imperialism and hegemonism from outside. But time is working for the new revolutionary Afghanistan and the situation there is gradually returning to normalcy and attempts of imperialism and reaction are suffering a failure.

Pravda says that the sooner the organisers of intervention, specially Pakistan, understand the futility of their attempts to dictate to Afghan people on the nature of government they should have and what path of deve-

lopment; they should follow, the faster that area will gain tranquility. Soviet Union wants that relaxation of tension should grow deeper and should spread to Asia the most populous continent. The DRA will make a worthy contribution to the attainment of these goals.

Karmal speaking on Moscow TV said that the aims of the PDRA and government of Democratic Republic of Afghanistan are clear. We want our people to live in conditions of peace and security so that no one could prevent them from following their chosen road of progress and construction. Karmal said that this meeting with Leonid Brezhnev and other Soviet leaders had enriched the Afghan with him and other Afghan members of the delegation.

We are profoundly grateful to the Soviet leaders who express the will of glorious Leninist Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the great Soviet people for the extensive and unselfish support for our just cause.

We for our part will make every effort to further develop and strengthen friendship and unshakable brotherhood with the Soviet Union in the interests of peace, security and progress in our region and throughout the world, Karmal said addressing the Soviet people.

—New Age



VOA COMMENTARY

UN Vote On Afghanistan

Washington, November 21,

On November 10, the United Nations General Assembly overwhelmingly adopted a resolution calling for the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Afghanistan. This is the second time this year that the General Assembly has urged an end to the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. It cannot have pleased the Soviet Union to note that this resolution was adopted by an even wider margin than last January's similar call. Nor should it be surprising that the Soviet Union—defying reality—described the UN resolution as outside interference in Afghan affairs and as an obstacle to East-West detente.

From the outset of its attempt to take over, by force of arms, its weak next door neighbour, the Soviet Union has insisted, even in the face of fierce resistance from the Afghan people, that it was simply responding to a call for assistance from Kabul. The wide rejection of such specious Soviet arguments is clearly demonstrated by the size of the General Assembly vote favouring the resolution. The nine new countries that joined this time in condemning the Soviet action include Burundi, Central African Republic, Comoros, Equatorial Guinea, Guinea, the Solomon Islands, Sudan, Zambia and Uganda.

The resolution reaffirms the right of the Afghan people to decide their own form of government free

from outside intervention, and it calls on the United Nations Secretary General to appoint a special representative to search for a political solution that will bring to a prompt and what so much of the world recognizes as an overt act of aggression.

As the American Ambassador to the United Nations, Donald McHenry, spelled out clearly in his speech supporting the resolution, there is nothing new in the Soviet Union's use of force to maintain domination over other countries. That pattern was set in 1953 when Soviet troops put down the German workers uprising. It was reported in 1956 in Hungary, and again in 1968 in Czechoslovakia. Now McHenry noted, Moscow has gone beyond eastern Europe and has assaulted the independence of a non-aligned Islamic nation.

For nearly a year, the Soviet Union has ignored world opinion and the principles of the United Nations charter. Indeed, in its determination to subdue the Afghan people, it has increased its force in Afghanistan to an estimated 85,000 troops. Another 30,000 are massed just across the Soviet-Afghan border on the Soviet side. Moscow continues to insist that some vague and undefined threat from others justified its invasion of Afghanistan. It has gone no farther in its response to world objections to its aggression than to demand that its neighbours, Iran and Pakistan, and other countries, in effect, accept the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan and somehow guarantee the end of popular resistance.

In contrast, the UN General Assembly resolution passed November 20, offers a realistic approach to the Afghan situation. An approach that in no way interferes with legitimate Soviet Security concerns. Its elements are simple: immediate withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan, recognition of the Afghan people's right to determine their own future, and acceptance by all, including the Soviet Union, of the need for a peaceful solution that guarantees Afghanistan's right to sovereignty, territorial integration and the non-aligned status the Afghan people clearly desire.

—USICA

JAMAICA

IMF Topped Manley

By Fitzroy Nation

THE RISE AND FALL of Michael Manley's People's National Party (PNP) in Jamaica is a classic case study of the dilemma facing the emerging societies of the Third World; which path to development? Manley attempted a new development strategy, ran into a steel wall of objection from the western capitalist system and ruling elites in this former British colony, who felt threatened by his policies aimed at improving the standards of the poor.

On 30 October, sustained assault against this administration culminated in Manley's ouster and a landslide victory for the right wing Jamaica Labour Party

(JLP) in the Caribbean island's general election. All pre-election surveys had confirmed what every informed observer here could clearly discern: the major concern of the electorate was the economic hardships of the past six years. They were caused largely by the harsh fiscal and developmental prescriptions imposed on the island by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the powerful Washington-based financial system that now determines the destiny of millions of the world's people.

The Jamaica case reinforces a view held by a growing body of world economic experts, that the IMF is not a neutral body but a political tool wielded by the rich and powerful nations to maintain dominance over the international economic system. Michael Manley declared his party's adherence to the policy of democratic socialism in 1974, instituted a range of reforms designed to bring the poor masses into the mainstream of the country's development, and began a process of democratising structures long dominated by the small wealthy elite.

The destabilization effort launched by the United States against Jamaica in 1975 led to economic deterioration. However, in December 1976, the Jamaican people gave the PNP the biggest mandate ever received by a political party since universal adult suffrage was granted in 1944. The PNP won 47 seats in the elections of 1976, to the JLP's 13. How was it that the party's popular support declined so dramatically in four years?

The years 1973-76 were catastrophic for the countries of the Third World. Inflation levels rose. Commodity prices increased by close to 100 per cent. Oil prices rose to crippling levels, a recession in the west in 1975 and 1976 reduced prices and volumes of Third World exports. Current account deficits for non-oil producing Third World countries during the 1974-76 period amounted to 94 billion US dollars, compared to 32 billion US dollars in the previous three year period. These and other factors were at play in the Jamaican economy when Manley's mandate was renewed in the December 1976 elections.

The new government's efforts to meet the pressing social inequalities met with resistance from the local entrenched elite and the western economic interests, principally the United States of America. When the Government imposed a bauxite levy on the transnational corporations mining the ore here, the companies reduced production by 25 per cent in 1975, and a further 11 per cent in 1976. Foreign capital inflows, declined as well. Western investors it appeared, had lost 'confidence' in Jamaica. From a reasonably healthy 254 million US dollars in 1973-74, foreign capital inflows were reduced to 115 million US dollars in 1975. The next year, there was an outflow as the capitalist class took flight to Miami. By 1976, the country was virtually broke.

Strengthened by the overwhelming mandate, Manley launched hasty consultations with interest groups on the island to get ideas for an emergency production plan. The aim was to attempt a Herculean effort to

increase production of vital exports. Before the emergency production plan, which was in effect a non-IMF economic alternative, had left the drawing boards, the US tightened the squeeze. Foreign banks and local businessmen threatened to lay off as many as 50,000 workers in the manufacturing sector. The US administration of Jimmy Carter told Manley that a package of economic aid it contemplated for the island would only be given if an agreement was reached with the IMF.

Manley capitulated; Negotiations, begun in April, 1977, ended with a two-year standby programme in July 1977. By December Jamaica had failed one of the fund's fiscal performance tests. The IMF immediately suspended the agreement. To obtain a new agreement under the extended fund facility in June 1978 Jamaica was forced to devalue its currency by almost 50 per cent. Taxes were raised. Price controls were lifted. Wages were limited to 15 per cent increases.

The upshot: a reduction in real wages by an estimated 35 per cent in 1978. The following year, real wages fell by 18 per cent; health and education and other social services deteriorated. A senior official of the IMF was reported as commenting that such a programme would have caused 'either the death of democracy or the overthrow of the government' had it been introduced in any other country. It did not result in the overthrow of the Manley government. The Jamaican leader's personal popularity, especially among the disadvantaged, remained high. But this was another instance where the IMF prescription made the patient worse, as Jamaican economist Norman Dirvan puts it.

After recording slight improvement in 1977, the balance of payments deficit worsened the next year, widening by 40 million US dollars. The next year, 1979, it widened by another 78 million US dollars. The harsh economic conditions intensified. The government's popularity continued to slide. December, 1979: Jamaica failed another IMF performance test; this one related to the net international reserves of the Central bank.

The fund suspended the agreement. The government applied for a waiver to restore access to the vitally needed assistance. In return, the IMF demanded budget cuts of some 300 million Jamaican dollars, a move that would have led to the axing of 11,000 workers in the public sector. The IMF identified fiscal mismanagement as the cause of Jamaica's failure to pass its tests.

The Manley government argued that it had little control over such 1979 developments as huge increase in oil prices, higher international inflation and interest rates than expected, and floods in June of that year that cut agricultural exports by 13 per cent. But there was a method to the hardline IMF policy towards Jamaica. Three years after winning the biggest electoral majority in Jamaica's modern political history. Manley was, in 1979, 18 percentage points behind the rightwing JLP in public opinion polls.

The PNP's popularity improved after the decision in March to end negotiations with the fund and seek a

'non-IMF path', but in the face of the almost unbearable hardships facing the country, and amid lavish promises of deliverance' and 'we'll make money flow' from the rightwing JLP, Manley was voted out of office on 30 October.

Within a matter of weeks, the new government of Edward Seaga is expected to re-open talks with the IMF. The terms are likely to be more favourable than those offered to Manley. Third World countries seeking to change the world monetary system have been insisting that the IMF is not politically, or ideologically, neutral. The treatment the fund has meted out to progressive regimes in Portugal, Peru and Jamaica demonstrate this in a most compelling way.

In all of these situations, notes economist Girvan, "the political result of IMF stabilization programmes has been the same; the discrediting of processes of economic and social restructuring aimed at improving the lot of the deprived majorities and the strengthening of the position of the conservative opposition to the government's and to the personalities who have attempted to implement these processes."

With the fall of Michael Manley's democratic socialist administration in Jamaica, the IMF has notched up another victim in its quest to keep the worlds' economic status quo intact. —Inter Press Service.



FILM FOCUS

Discomania

I have delved deep into some back numbers of the Newsweek weekly to update Tribune readers of a new "Beat" that has enveloped the present generation, musically speaking, and has had them on their feet from dusk to dawn in perpetual gyration from head to foot till fatigue takes a hand. Well, here is what I ferreted out on "Discomania" which broke out in a Brooklyn bar and reached fever pitch in 1978. It was baptised as a "shout around the world" and was heard in our parts of the world as well. "Discomania is far more than a Saturday night phenomenon. Some patrons never seemed to want to get home. According to the manager of a *Members Only* Brazilian disco branch, the dance floor is kept open until the last member stops dancing—and sometimes that is not until 9 a.m. the following morning.

Disco to some extent has also bridged the generation gap, for its fans range from 77 year olds to 14 year olds, while religious leaders argue that some decotheques have more to do with decadence than dancing, a Moscow literary gazette has concluded that discos tend to provide "Nirvana for lonely people who wish to be left alone". The disco footwork is gaudy but colourful attire has turned out to be a capitalists' dream, and films based on it like "Grease" and "Saturday Night Fever" have grossed millions. Nearly everyone agrees that discomania would not have reached the proportions

it did, without its super-star John Travolta. There is now a new verb in Portuguese "Travoltear" which means to dance in flashly outrageous style or to dress up and go for a night to the town.

SATURDAY, NIGHT FEVER (English): I was in the midst of a bevy of belles in the age group 13 to 15 from "Bishops" watching this film at the Liberty Cinema on a Saturday morning, and going by the "oohs" and "aahs" that broke out as discomania's main exponent John Travolta (c/o The Beegees) appeared on the screen, there was little doubt that the phenomena had reached near-endemic proportions in our local scene as well. This Paramount Production carries a wafer thin story of youth at the crossroads, their loves and heartbreaks, but towering above this scene is the heart pounding music that propels the dancing on to a never ending uneven crescendo. The handsomely chiselled and springy Travolta is a shop hand who catches the fever and passes it around and particularly to his heart throb, roled by Karen Gerney, His brother a Catholic Priest, who is in two minds about his vocation, takes a peep at Disco, and rushes back to his calling, his mind fortified. A youngster in trouble amuses by asking this priest, whether the Pope could grant him a dispensation from an abortion. I tapped my toes reflexively to evince interest, but the pace of the beat, beat met to it, and that was when the youngsters in the audience took over to squeeze out their moneys worth to a "malarial" pitch and travel along with Travolta!

THE LOVE BUG (English): This Walt Disney production with special camera effects and super animation, beautified by a rare colour photography is cut perfectly to entertain family groups, particularly children, and how well this task is accomplished is for you to see and believe—the present rush on the Majestic Theatre notwithstanding. Without doubt it is one of the finest films in recent times to warm adequately the cockles of the hearts of both young and old, and keep them bobbing in their seats in hysterical fits of sweeping laughter. The story woven imaginatively by Gordon Buford, is centred around a car—Volkswagon OFF 857—with a human heart beat, named Herbie, who having seen better years and with slick limousines standing in his way decides to rejuvenate himself, before being crushed in the junk yard. It develops many humane qualities to accept the challenge of the times, and having found a bosom steering wheel pal in Jim Douglas (Dean Jones), proves his disdainful superiority, by sweeping the cups in the motor races at Le Muens, Monte Carlo, Las Vegas and Tulare, before going for the "Gold" at El Dorado. Herbie propels himself on his own sentimental steam all the time, with Douglas and his chubby pal (Buddy Heckell), being mere accompaniments in his races for fame and fortune. He helps on his pals heart interest with a reluctant love (Michelle Lee), while settling his perks on arch challenger Peter Thorndyke (David Tomlinson), with revengeful rivalry, and even attempts "suicide" when crossed by Douglas and Co. The respective motor races bring out Herbie's wounded vanity to peak, and keeps the audience in

stitches, with gales of laughter rarely heard so much and in such unison in a cinema. Herbie takes on the handicaps of age in his devouring drives and how he overcomes them to win the "Crown" is for you to revel in. The rare magic touch of Walt Disney is plainly evident, and a little dose of it in cartoon style titled "Little Toot" introduces the delightful main features that follows. A very rare family entertainer for all ages—do not miss it, even if the recent transport hikes stand in your way!

SCORPIO (English): A few years back, the inner spirals of the C.I.A. and the F.B.I. in America—both intelligence agencies—threw up chunks of corruption, with the demise of the much feared boss, Edgar Hoover, who tried to carve out a "state" within the United States, and in doing so created a double edged espionage weapon, that even took a peep hole bedroom view of its chief executives. This United Artists production brings into focus factually the ruthless working of the C.I.A. isolating an episode where its star agent Cross (Burt Lancaster) now suspected to be a double agent in his anti-fascist liaison with a Russian counter-agent in singled out for elimination, and a cool killer Scorpio (Alain Delon) is given the murderous assignment. It is Cross Vs. Scorpio all the way, the bullet packed scenes shifting from Washington to Vienna, and back for the *coup de grace*, with the CIA holding the edge to eliminate two agents in one ruthless operation. While an air of dedicated fanaticism pervades the meticulous working of these organisations, which keeps to a single track in thought, logic and deed, its perfectionism in pursuing the witch hunt to a near cult sways the story with purpose and insight. Director Michal Vinner has handled the film very well with Lancaster and Delon adding and cool, cat and mouse ply to the cloak and revolver manhunt that gets under way to indict a cold blooded system that often overreaches its assignment, the remedy proving more deadly than the cure. Scorpio is a tense film that carries a sting to ponder over. See it.

James N. Benedict.

RICE SYNDROME

The Wet Zone

By Derrick Schockman

Rice is as old as our history. Its production is the chief occupation of our farmers. Its improvement is the chief pre-occupation of our agricultural research and extension officers. It is not surprising therefore that rice is the only food crop to show such a great leap forward in the agricultural development programme. The overall output of more than 100 million bushels of paddy in maha 1979/80 and yala 1980 is a record that has brought us almost to the threshold of self-sufficiency.

Yet, when we examine the statistics it is apparent that the greatest increases in production have taken place in the dry zone. In the wet zone where there is no shortage of water, particularly in the low-country

between Colombo and Matara and in the hilly regions of the midcountry around Kandy, rice production lags far behind. How do we explain this paradox?

Excess Water. The rice syndrome in the wet zone, according to research officers in the Dept. of Agriculture, is really a case of too much water. Thirsty as it is, the rice crop cannot tolerate excess water. That is the problem in the low country wet zone where the flooding of the river valleys and the inflow of saline water from the lagoons caused by the obstructive presence of sand bars results in boggy ill-drained and saline soils.

The same problem exists in the midcountry, but in a different form. There the steep hills and rapid run-off cause an excessive up-welling of water in the narrow valleys where rice is grown, resulting in boggy and waterlogged soils. Apart from the boggy soils found in these areas there is yet another problem. Iron oxide washed down from the highlands into the rice fields is converted into a reduced form with toxic qualities. As a result, the new improved BW varieties which have done so well in the dry zone and contributed in no small measure to the flattering statistics we have today in contrast have performed poorly in the wet zone where prolonged wetness and iron toxicity are limiting factors to high yields.

Even the application of fertilizers has done nothing to improve the yields of the BW varieties in the low country wet zone, although there has been some response to the application of conc. superphosphate in the mid country. This may be explained by the fact that the rice soils in the mid-country are markedly deficient in this important nutrient.

Two Schools. Now that the syndrome has been identified the question is whether anything can be done to alleviate the conditions in these "problem" areas. There are two schools of thought.

One school advocates the concentration of resources in the dry zone where the physical environment does not limit the development effort. The proponents of this school contend that since it is impossible to alter the peculiar topography of the mid-country, or for that matter even the poor drainage and flooding conditions encountered in the low country without tremendous capital investment, it would be more profitable to employ expertise and cash in areas which can support the use of high yielding varieties and chemical fertilizers. Aiming for an absolute increase in stable environments, they feel, would be more economical than going for variable increases over the entire rice growing area.

In contrast, there is the other school of thought which believe that maximising land use and productivity over the entire rice-growing extent is vital in view of the population explosion that is expected between now and the turn of the century. And since the low and mid country wet zones are some of the most densely populated areas in this country they would like these places to be given as much or even more attention than others. Politically, socially and economically

his is a strong argument, provided ways and means can be found to overcome the physical disabilities and increase the production levels.

Is there a way out? There might be. The giant strides which have been made in rice breeding in recent years have opened the doors to this possibility. If new improved varieties—other than the Bg varieties—can be produced to give high yields under these boggy, saline, flooded and iron toxic soil conditions, there would be every justification for pumping in more funds for development.

New Varieties. With this objective in mind the Dept. of Agriculture established the Bombuwela Research Centre near Kalutara to cater to the problems of the rice farmer in the low country wet zone.

The Bombuwela Research Station released two new 4 months varieties BW 78 and BW 100 in 1977 and 1979 respectively. These varieties have met with a fair degree of response from farmers. The release of three more promising varieties in 1981 is expected to clinch the issue. The chief characteristics of the new varieties to be released in 1981 are given below:

BW 272-8. Red rice, 4 months, non-lodging, high tillering capacity, highly weed competitive, resistant to blast, bacterial leaf blight and salinity, expected to replace Pokkali.

BW 267-3. White rice, 3 1/2 months, non-lodging resistant to blast, bacterial leaf blight and iron toxicity.

BW 272-6B. Red rice, 3 months, non-lodging, highly weed competitive, resistant to blast and bacterial leaf blight, expected to replace Herathbanda.

While these improved varieties may be expected to replace the currently cultivated indigenous varieties in the ill-drained and iron toxic soils of the low country wet zone, the search for an improved flood-resistant variety to replace Dewareddiri still continues. It is too early yet to predict the final outcome of this rice breeding development programme, but there is ample evidence to indicate that the production levels in the low country wet zone can be improved if farmers take to the cultivation of these new varieties as recommended

In the meantime two new BW varieties, 400-1 and 276-5 of 4-4 1/2 months and 3 months duration respectively which are highly tolerant of iron toxicity, have been released by the Central Rice Research Centre at Batalagoda. Maybe the introduction of these varieties to the boggy soils of the mid country will alleviate to some extent the problems of the farmers in that region.



MADRAS

by S. P. Amarasingam

THE Customs at Madras appears to have been emancipated from nearly all of the red tape and form-filling that British Imperialism had ordained to regulate the travel movements of its subjects. In the old colonial days, the white masters went through the Customs and other bureaucratic roadblocks with the ease that any special elite enjoy in any system.

Today, in Sri Lanka, the situation is no different from what it was in the colonial past. In fact, in some ways, it is worse. The white tourist (and a few coloured elite with hard currency) are welcomed with whining obeisance by brown officialdom, but the natives (except ruling politicians, bribe-giving smugglers and multi-million narcotic peddlars) are subject to the difficulties that the proverbial camel has to suffer to squeeze itself through the eye of the Biblical needle. At Katunayake, foreign tourists (and most of them are white) are not required to fill Customs Declaration forms (at least, I have not seen them do so), but every Sri Lankan native is subject to such time-consuming and paper-wasting procedures.

In Madras, even the natives (Indian passport holders) do not appear to have to go through this antiquated procedure. I have not made a study of Customs procedures in the two countries to make categorical statements, but I am only recording the impressions that I gathered as I went through the barriers at Katunayake and Meenambakam.

I did not have any confrontation with the Customs Officer who examined my luggage at Madras. He asked me why I was going to Delhi. He also asked me what I had in the heavy cardboard box. I told him that they were copies of the book I had written. He insisted on having an autographed copy—I had one in my briefcase to give him. He did not want me to open the cardboard box or my bag. He asked me if I had anything dutiable—and I told him what I had. He then put his chalk mark on my baggage (there were no yellow tags with "customs" on them) and gave me a gate pass to leave the premises—and off I went.

The Customs at Madras (or anywhere else) have no terrors for me because I never had that kind of money to buy things that would interest any Revenue Department. From Sri Lanka, I usually took a bottle or two of Ceylon arrack, a few pounds of Ceylon Tea and a whole lot of give away knickknacks produced by our Cottage Industries. Coming back from India, I would at best have half a dozen Sangu Mark double-width sarongs, a box of cigars and products of handloom or cottage industries to be distributed as souvenirs. Whilst at all times I could face a Customs officer with a clear conscience, I dread the avalanche of touts, porters and taxi drivers who descend on passengers at every airport in our region—I have no knowledge of what it is in other places.

Madras is particularly bad in this respect. Though porters are unionised in co-op and a charge is levied on every piece of luggage on a receipt (more time wasted), every porter demands a further fee. But their demands are however comparatively small. Touts for hotels are annoying but they are easily silenced. But the taxi-drivers at Madras airport are in a class by themselves. They have a union cum guild system and brook no competition from outsiders. They are a tribe akin to vultures and vampires. And they do not even pretend to hide their thuggery. They have been this from the time I have known them in the fifties, but in recent years they have become more aggressive and are now a menace hard to describe and terrible to deal with.

Unfortunately one cannot do without them. The airline no longer has a coach service to the city as of old. But there is a co-op or a private service that operates with the airline's blessings. One has to wait half an hour at least after clearance from Customs before this coach starts on its round trip through the city before getting to the airline office—touching at every "star" hotel where foreign tourists stay. Those like me who cannot afford a "star" hotel—there are many excellent non-"star" vegetarian hotels in Madras—have to spend a long time in this coach before reaching the airline office, and thereafter one has to get some other transport to reach the hotel of one's choice. This trip to the airline office takes very nearly 1 to 2 hours—for a distance that would take a taxi or car only 20 to 30 minutes even with a heavy rush of traffic.

Any passenger, except the leisurely foreign tourist, would like to avoid this coach if he can help it. In the era before the OPEC price increases I had no qualms about asking a friend to send his car to fetch me from the Airport. But fuel prices being what they are I now refrain from taxing my friends. I have therefore experienced the full measure of the odious strategies of the Meenambakam taxi-drivers whose only aim to relieve unwary passengers of as much of their cash as possible. The knowledge of the language is of little consequence, for the intonation and idiom of the Tamil I speak marks me out immediately as a Sri Lankan.

I therefore took the precaution of asking my good friend R. Varadachari (PTI's man in Colombo for 11 years and now Regional Manager for South India with headquarters in Madras) to send someone to meet me at the airport. He did. Being a native Madrasí, this young nephew of Chari was able to contain the unwholesome greed of the taxi driver within reasonable limits. I had only 18 hours before I took the plane to New Delhi early next morning (at 6 a.m.) and I wanted to make the most of the little time at my disposal.

I reached the Press Trust of India (PTI) office at 3, Club House Road (near the Connemera-Spencer junction on Mount Road) a little after 1 p.m. Varadachari ("Chari" in Colombo and "R.V." in Madras to his friends and associates) was in charge of a large territory, the four Southern States—Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu. In Colombo he was in the field, now he is essentially a desk man.

After a snack, I went to a tailoring establishment (with a textile department) and placed a few orders. Over the years I have developed a fondness for Indian textiles. I think that they have an excellent range and the prices are most competitive (even with our adverse exchange rate). I had first gone to Madras in 1942, and since that time the city has undergone more changes than other cities I have known. I planned to stay three or four days in Madras on my way back to meet old friends and meet a few political leaders. It would be appropriate to write about the Madras of then and now.

Chari—the same hearty and uninhibited person I had known in Colombo—would not let me spend the night at a hotel and insisted on taking me to his flat way out in Adyar. He is building a house for himself close by and he hoped to finish this sometime in January next. Chari was also able to get P. Unnikrishnan, now Asst. General Manager of PTI (headquarters in Bombay), on the phone. Unnikrishnan was PTI man in Colombo for 7 years in late fifties and early sixties. He had later served in Moscow for many years and was now back in India. He was closely associated with the Indian Institute of Mass Communication which was the organising the Conference on the MacBride Commission Report for UNESCO. He told me that he would also attend the Conference and would meet me in New Delhi. The Indian telephone system seems to work very well—we were able to get Bombay without any delay on the direct dialing system.

Chari gave me a brief run down on the latest developments in India and insisted that I retire early because I had to get up a little after 4 a.m. in order to get to the Airport by 5.30 a.m. Even the Indian rum which I had sipped before dinner did not bring me sleep and I dipped into the "literature" I had brought to prepare myself for the UNESCO Conference on Information. Having discussed, before, during and after dinner, "international news agencies" with Chari, I read what Rosemary Righter (whom I had cited in the first piece in this series) had to say about western news agencies; "The Third World's resentment indisputably begins with the fact of Western dominance over the means of communication. Even though more than 120 news agencies exist, the largest dwarf the rest in terms of manpower, facilities and technology. Most developing countries must rely for their international and regional coverage upon the four major Western news agencies—Reuters, The Associated Press, United Press International, and Agence France Presse—along with syndicated copy and overseas radio services. The flow from these sources alone is enormous. A news desk receiving only the world services of the "Big Four" and Tass (the Soviet news agency) has to sift through 300,000 words daily.

"To argue that no agency forces anybody to take its services, and that the number of clients is a tribute to the agencies' accuracy and neutrality is an inadequate response. For critics of the Western news agencies claim that their power stems not from the quality of their services, but from historical accidents of imperialism and technical pre-eminence.

"Because of their pervasive influence, the news agencies have a particular responsibility to free their reporting of national or Western bias and to see that their news services closely match their subscribers' interests. Yet critics point out that this is impossible since the agencies' main news markets are in the industrialised West. They cannot help but speak to the developing world with an alien voice. An international language that describes the rise in coffee prices as a "coffee crisis" is patently a fraud. As Hilary Ng'Weno, editor of Kenya's **Weekly Review**, has put it: 'Third World people have come to feel a great sense of importance over the cultural influences which permeate the relations with the Western world through the mass media. It is an unrelenting one-way traffic of ideas and values from the Western countries to the Third World....'"

Thinking of the implications of the one way traffic in communication, I dropped off into an uneasy sleep. The weather was uncomfortably warm even for a Sri Lankan and the whirling fan did not help much. I was up before the crack of dawn and I was at the airport well before the scheduled time of departure.

(To Be Continued)

NGUVU

Strange Happenings

By Bwana Rafiki

THE TIME was around 10 p.m. There was a bus to take me to Maradana and another took me to Borella. Yet another bus took me to the end of the road along which I wanted to go. It is a very long road and there was another bus to take me along that road. The number of the house I wanted to visit ran into three figures and the bus could only put me down approximately at the place I thought I wanted to be. I walked back along the way I had come and there was the number of the house as large as daylight, at least by torch-light. There were several houses with that number and I found the right one. The man I wanted to meet was up. I explained my business and he said he would help. A strange car took me home.

My leaving our house at such a hour was by any judgement unreasonable in that it could not have been justified by any logic and I could not justify it myself. Yet at the end of it all it turned out to have been the right thing to do, as I discovered. As for the hardships I expected to face, I knew from experience that on the Galle Road at that hour I might have to wait more than half an hour for a bus, yet I proposed travelling on a much less frequented route. I was able to catch four buses in rapid succession. I found the house which I hardly expected to do. Furthermore, the man whom I had come to see was up, and he was the only one in that house to be awake and on his feet. I found he was on holiday and that I could not have met him at his office and my work was urgent. That was by no means the end of a remarkable series of happenings.

All this was capped by a telephone call I was able to make the next morning by coming home the previous night I could have stayed the night where I went, but decided, against it. The reasonable decision would have been to

have stayed. My unreasonableness was over-looked and within minutes of my leaving the place I had visited, somebody not only stopped at the signal I had given him for a lift, but of his own accord with no prompting from me decided to go diametrically miles out of his way to lift me home. My coming home that night put me in a secure position to make that telephone call I referred to which was highly relevant to the business that had taken me out of the house at such an unusual hour the previous night. I had been lucky, but luck does not always work out well.

VERY OFTEN I have returned to the bungalow at night after visiting the cattle to see they were all right, only to have rain come down within seconds of my stepping indoors. Once I distinctly heard my spectacles break when a bus driver hit me for giving the number of his bus to a lorry driver whom he had to try to pick a quarrel with merely because he, the bus driver, was drunk. I knew something of the man's history and violence, and the driver of the lorry was miles from his home enroute from Jaffna to Colombo. When I left the bus after getting to my destination a mile on, I shone my torch on the floor of the near-empty bus to pick up the pieces of my spectacles and was astounded to find them undamaged. I am convinced they had broken. The driver hit me, by the way, when I refused to step off the bus when a villager told him what he had seen me do and I remember the man doing this with such glee.

This reminds me of another incident of which I was a witness and which took place near Matale. A group of friends was out for a walk when they all suddenly disappeared leaving two men behind. These two eventually made their way through some bushes to where a man was lying on the ground. There was a group of men and a group of women near him. One of the two men who had been left behind was soon by the side of the man lying on the ground and feeling his pulse. It was faint and then it ceased altogether, whereupon our man looked up and asked the group of women what had happened. Eventually came the reply that the man had drunk a liquid fertiliser, whereon our man who had been praying that this stranger would die a happy death at once asked God that the man not die at all, for there is no happy death for a suicide. Almost at once the man began to stir.

My last story is of a woman relative of ours in America who was going to have her womb removed because of cancer. Her family who had gone to England from Ceylon for a while at once wrote to the future Pope, **Cardinal Montini**, in Milan to send her direct some relic of Pope Pius XII, which he did. Now I had seen a photograph of this relative of ours and I have, and still have, no doubt at all of her cancerous condition for I had seen others as thin as she was die of cancer. After the arrival of the relic when the time came to operate, the doctor conducted a preliminary test and could find no cancer, and the woman subsequently, and it was later by more than a year, bore a son, her second. A woman dying of cancer in Kala Oya was cured in a similar way by another relic of the same Pope, but the growth remained on the woman.

Land Alienation

Sir,

An interesting letter to the *Tribune* of November 1 by Indrani Iriyagolle with reference to the major shift in land policy in this country is commendable and certainly calls for re-thinking. I was myself taken by surprise by this news in the *Sun*. To substantiate it further, may I present the points in the news item (verbatim) and explain the vital issues that follow? Reasons for shift in land policy expressed in the news item are: (1) this is part of a major shift by the Government (in land policy) from current "egalitarian" distribution of small holdings amongst the peasantry, in order to optimise land use; (2) that 60% of new land so far developed under major irrigated projects "suffer inadequate utilisation" i.e., at the hands of small farmers; (3) longer lease period of 10-30 years; (4) enlarged unit size to attract capital investment of resources of at least Rs. 50,000/-; (5) prevention of transfer of lands without approval of the authorities.

The issues that follow from the above are:

1. The egalitarian distribution of land among small farmers was from its inception intended for optimum utilisation of land as well as providing employment. This has been the primary objective in all our irrigation policies. The gigantic Mahaweli Project itself was conceived of to give priority to such objectives. If so, is not the new change of policy a serious and deliberate step to undermine the very foundation of the small scale farmers' interest? To mouth "egalitarianism" at the inception of such projects and later convert these into "capitalist interests" is a complete betrayal of the trust placed by the masses in a government. Such changes expose double standards, unreliability and political expediency which is not in the good interests of the people.

2. A specious reason has been given on this, to justify the present horrible proposals viz. that planners (who are they) have warned that as much as 60% of new land so far developed under major irrigated projects "suffer inadequate utilisation", i.e. at the hands of small farmers. Surely, if there has been "inadequate utilisation" of land in major projects the first priority of government should have been to implement a programme for intensive development of such land. Further, if such a large extent of land in projects where investments have already been made have still to be developed properly, why on earth did the Government commit us and future generations to a vast undertaking such as the Mahaweli Programme?

3. and 4. Both these leave out completely the small scale farmer for whom the project was intended. What now happens to the various components of the Mahaweli Projects which have been declared to be feasible on the basis of agricultural development by small farmers? The present proposal is certainly a denial of feasibility so far claimed both in this country and to

delegations from donor countries. This further points out that donor countries have been misled and aid misused. Problems that did not exist are created in the name of service to the community/farmer.

5. Surely everybody knows that existing law and regulations are sufficient to cope with any land transfer problems? It is only a matter of proper enforcement of these! Worst are the blunders committed by Ministers and officials who contradict each other on these simple procedural solutions!

I hope this finds a place in your journal so that planners could take note. An urgent review on the entire Mahaweli Project today is an urgent necessity. The public is disappointed with this white elephant.

G. P. M. De Silva.

19, Gower Street,
Colombo 5.
8.11.80

-X- -X-

A Cry For Justice

Sir,

Today the Bible, the word of God, which the Christians consider as the living word of life has cast a spell over the secular realm too. I have noticed that now and again the *Tribune* review quotes the Bible. My attention was specially drawn to the editorial of the October 25, 1980 issue of the same review, when it quoted the Gospel according to St. Luke 6/41-42. This particular editorial, speaking of the deprivation of the civic rights of Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike and Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike brought out a point to the notice of the government authorities. It said ".... no explanation will satisfy unless Government takes immediate measures to cleanse the UNP of, at least a few of those who are alleged to be corrupt and have misused power." And in this contest it quoted the Bible which says ".....and why beholdest thou the mote in thy brother's eye, but perceivest not the beam in thine own eye.....?"

It is not only a nationally accepted fact but also an internationally recognised fact that the UNP came into power with a overwhelming majority. Vested with the sovereignty and the authority of the people it resumed the ruling power of the country. Right from the beginning the UNP alerted us to the corruption and the abuses committed by the last regime. It was obvious that the people knew the overall picture of the country at the hands of the last government, and in fact that was why the UNP was hailed by the people so highly. The people indeed gave the UNP power not to hear what the last government did, but rather to establish a just and peaceful society and to steer clear of malpractices as a government. However the echoes of the faults and the wrong-doings of the last regime disappeared into thin air eventually. Then with the so called 'accelerated development programme' the coun-

try began to move on. In view of a prosperous future the sufferings and hardships that the common man has already undergone are innumerable. Experts in different fields particularly the economists as often surfaced specially through the *Tribune*, have proved that the future is not so promising, as preached. Our citizens have their strong doubts whether this promised future will end up in a mere utopia. The foreign loans and aid will definitely have their gravely dangerous effects on us towards the end of this century.

Amidst occupation with this 'accelerated development programme' the government also has decided on setting up inquiries into the corruptions of the last government, and to take necessary steps in the name of Justice. As a result the Presidential Commission was appointed and authorized to inquire into the evils of the last regime. In the course of time many were questioned and many were listened to before the suitable measures were taken. This commission found Mrs. Bandaranaike and Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike were guilty and their civic rights were removed as a punishment. This controversial event created some unrest in the political atmosphere of the country. Though the tension and the uneasiness has abated, a critical evaluation on this issue can be welcome.

The Majority of the country however feels that the measures effected on Mrs. Bandaranaike were too harsh and hard. With the promulgation of the new 'Electoral Law' Mrs. Bandaranaike was sent to total political exile, prohibiting her even to canvass for political candidates and to speak on political platform. The people however are beginning to wonder whether it is justice that is meted out or whether it is the devil of revenge on rampage masquerading in Justice uniform. I do not mean to minimize or to reduce the gravity of the guilt of Mrs. Bandaranaike. If she deserves that punishment, that should be her lot, as the just ruler is entitled to praise so the corrupt ruler deserves punishment. Political consistency also demands, in the name of the same justice, that necessary steps must be taken to wipe out the corrupt elements found in the rank of the UNP as well.

It is well known that corruption and abuses are rampant in the political administration of today. Everybody is aware that injustice and bribery permeate in the country. Today the perception of the people is such no amount of mass-media propaganda can deceive the public opinion. The noble statement of Abraham Lincoln is almost a hand writing on our walls: "You can deceive all the people for sometime, and some people for all the time, but not all the people for all the time."

The government is praiseworthy for its remarkable achievements in certain fields. We Sri Lankans can equally be proud of some of our leaders of the UNP, who are indeed models of sincerity and dedication. Above all the people will be ever thankful to the government for trying to let justice rule the country, provided the UNP will allow itself to be governed by the same justice. If the UNP leaders do not commit themselves for this great task all their achievements will be for-

gotten and they will stand dangerously vulnerable for being paid in the same coin.

May I bring another notable quote from the Bible. 2 Sam. 12/2-4 says that on a certain day Prophet Nathan came to King David and narrated a case: There were two men, and one was very rich who had great flocks, and the other was very poor and had only one single sheep. But one day when a guest came to the rich man's house the rich man killed the sheep of the poor man and had a grand time. Then the king was so furious he said that the rich man should be killed. At his words then the prophet said ".....It is then you should be killed." Because king David who had a number of queens and wives had in addition possessed the wife of a person called Uriah and had this husband killed in battle. The Bible says that the king was punished accordingly.

The same dialectic applies here too. Be a humble villager or a majestic king, friend or foe, justice must bear itself unconditionally. At this point it is proper to recall the words of William Shakespeare who said ".....That in the course of justice none of us should see salvation". It is therefore categorically imperative that justice must be done without partiality. In the face of justice nepotism and favourism should not find home. This is the noble aspiration and the high hope of every good-willed Sri Lankan of today. Thus our expectation is that we all as a nation may find ourselves in a country where Justice and Peace prevail and where a real *Dharmista* society will be born.

S. D. Francis Wijeratne OMI

National Seminary,
Ampitiya.
1.11.80



REVIEW

Sri Lanka

1. **RACE & CLASS—A Journal For Black and Third World Liberation. Volume XXII, Autumn 1980 - Rs. 35.00.** 2. **FREE TRADE ZONE** by Fr. Tissa Balasuriya—**LOGOS** Vol. 19. No. 2

The main article in *Race & Class* deals with Sri Lanka. And this issue of *Logos* is devoted entirely to Sri Lanka's **Free Trade Zone**.

THE FIRST ARTICLE in *Race & Class* entitled "Sri Lanka, The Economics of Capitulation" by Satchi Ponnambalam briefly argues the main trend of government's economic policy and shows how Sri Lanka has become a faithful servant of the IMF and the World Bank. This article is based on a chapter of his forthcoming book on "The Crisis of Dependent Capitalism: The Sri Lanka Economy 1948-1980" to be published shortly by ZED in the UK.

One cannot find fault with this UNP Government for removing the food subsidies and introducing the food stamp scheme for the needy. But the effect of liberal import policy has had an adverse effect on the local production especially in the agricultural sector.

One cannot help but give due credit to the earlier government that it safeguarded the interests of the farmer. This government has only compelled the farmer to migrate to seek employment elsewhere.

The very ambitious project of Mahaweli has been a subject of severe criticism. It is the author's contention that "Sri Lanka achieved 73.1 percent self-sufficiency in rice in 1970 and 73.4 per cent in 1974 by obtaining only a third to a half of the potential yield of the new hybrid varieties. If agricultural policy concentrated on encouraging transplanting, combined sowing in rows, renewing seed paddy every two to three years, and judicious use of water by farmers, the national average yield could be increased to 80 bushels per acre. This would take the country into self-sufficiency in a single year, rather than having to spend—as the accelerated Mahaweli Project involves—Rs. 30,000 million of borrowed money over six years to reach the same goal". The World Bank too has admitted this (p. 122).

One cannot but have misgivings about the colossal amount (wastage?) spent on the new Parliament. The Greater Colombo Development scheme of which this programme forms a part has no justification other than political connotations. Colombo became the centre of Sri Lanka in the days of catamarans and steamships. The regions that actually require development are the rural sector and not townships, by strengthening the power of the executive and making the constitution less flexible. The abolition of by-elections, abolition of local government in the GCEC areas, suspension of the operations of certain laws in the GCEC Zone and finally the section 157 of the Constitution guarantees full safeguard to foreign capital.

These guarantees are in open violation and contradictory to the stand taken by the Third World countries. The over-anxiety to offer stability in return for foreign investment may lead to a little bit of totalitarianism. Evidence of a Singapore style government is not wanting in Sri Lanka. The recent strike threats and government attitude has been pointed out as a trend in that direction. These should recommend well for the policy makers of the government and others.

The *Race & Class* also contains articles on Pakistan, *Creative Women in Changing Societies*. The former, based on an interview, shows how the position of Zia-ul-Haq has become unstable and that Pakistan may very soon face the problem of solving the combined agitation of the Sindhis and the Baluchis. Whether the proposed \$ 1.76 billion IMF aid would be able to save him his Presidency is yet to be seen. It also contains notes on Arab Women and Western Feminism, US Imperialism in the Philippines and Free Trade Zones. It also includes four book reviews on Iran, the Indian Political Economy, Ireland and Race and Culture in America. The cover page of *Race & Class* carries the map of Sri Lanka in green—i.e., the colour of the UNP with Sri Lanka—the Economics of Capitulation as sub-title.

\$ in Sri Lanka is written as \$ indicative of the trend Sri Lanka has taken in recent times.

THE PROCESS OF GEARING the economic resources of this country to serve the interests of European economies started in the 16th century. Though the country was politically divorced from the European entanglement in 1948 yet the economic stranglehold continued to plague the country. To make the economy inward looking, D. S. Senanayake endeavoured to develop the agricultural sector of the country. Under the Bandaranaike an attempt was made to socialise the economy and free the island from the shackles of local and foreign capitalists. The enthusiasm evinced then to nationalise and distribute the income among the masses ran into snags largely due to the inefficiency and corruption of successive administrations. Well meaning economic measures were ruined by political adventurers and favourites. As these governments did not have the political will to seek remedial measures the economy entered into a parlous state of stagnation. To free it from such a state was Jayewardene's Government's first priority.

The major programmes of this government such as the Mahaweli, tourism, housing and Colombo development were not new but have now been accelerated to achieve quick results. These programmes in the past could not attract enough capital and foreign aid due to certain political and ideological constraints. These constraints have now been relaxed by a liberal import policy, liberalisation of foreign exchange, unified exchange rates, and higher rates of interest. This relaxation occurred at a time when multi-national corporations operating in Hong Kong, Taiwan and Singapore have been looking for fresh pastures for further investments.

The government's anxiety to activate the economy has had its desired results. Yet its immediate and long-term effects are under constant scrutiny. Colombo and its suburbs are already in throes of change and are beset with socio-economic and environmental problems. Moreover this Colombo Development Programme can worsen the situation by drawing more migration from the rural areas.

THE MUCH PUBLICISED Free Trade Zone is yet to start in full capacity. The brief analysis given here (pp 122-125) will show that it has not had the desired effect to date. Supplementary reading to this section is the *Free Trade Zone*, the Logos Publication. The facts and figures, and ideas expressed in both agree to the last syllable. The tables given in the *Free Trade Zone* would vouch for the disappointment of the whole exercise. It reveals to what extent the best talent and workforce of this country are being surrendered to the exploitation of the multi-nationals. Its concern was not merely and purely economic but to the attendant evils that it may bring in its wake.

Fr. Tissa Balasuriya's lengthy article, based on a talk given at the Seminar organised by the Socio-Economic-Development Centre raises questions whether

the FTZ will lead to any development—of course development has more than one meaning. This book also contains articles on export-led industrialisation, bargaining in the Free Trade Zone and comparisons and situations similar to FTZ in other countries.

Both the authors of "The Economics of Capitulation" and "The Free Trade Zone" agree that the Second Republican Constitution of 1978 was for all practical purposes meant to guarantee the smooth operation of this dependent economy. Political stability is a prerequisite for economic development. Political stability depends on the smooth functioning and continuation of the governmental machinery without "fundamentals of policy". This has been achieved, as elsewhere scholars both in Sri Lanka and abroad.

Omega



Govt.



Notices

**The Land Acquisition Act (Chapter 460) As Amended By The Land Acquisition (Amendment) Act. No. 28 Of 1964
Notice Under section 7 (1)**

Reference No. LD/A 534

It is intended to acquire the land described in the Schedule below for a public purpose. For further particulars please see Government Gazette of the Republic of Sri Lanka No. 117 of 28-11-1980 (Part III)

D. M. Nandisena
Additional Government Agent.

The Kachcheri,
Kandy. 7th Nov. 1980

Schedule

Situation: Botota village, Medasiya Pattuwa Minor Division Harispattuwa D.R.O.'s Division, Kandy District.

<i>Name of land</i>	<i>Plan and Lot Nos.</i>
Hapugaspittiyewatte	Lot 1 in P.P. Maha 1955

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

Reference No:—@30794

Action has been taken to acquire the lands described in the schedule below. For further particulars please see part III of the gazette of the democracy socialist republic of Sri Lanka No. 118 dated 05.12.80

Schedule

Situation:— In village of Nakulugamuwa (F.V.P.) in the Grama Sevaka division of Nakulugamuwa east, in Tangalla D.R.O.'s division in Hambantota district.

Name of land:— Kandegodella
Extent:— A.4 R. 0 P. 10
Survey Reference:— Lot No. 295 F.V.P. 302

D. W. Abewickrama
Additional Government Agent,
Hambantota District.

Kachcheri, Hambantota.
14th November 1980

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

Ref. No. 34/3228

Land Ministry's Ref. No. 03 J 78 E 354

The lands described in the Schedule below have been acquired. For further particulars please see the Gazette of The Republic of Sri Lanka No. 118 of 05.12.80 (Part III)

Schedule

Situation of Land:— In the village of Motagedara, D.R.O.'s Division of Wellaboda Pattu West and Four Gravets, Matara District.

Name of Land:— Maddumagewatta

Lot & Plan No:— Lot No. 1 in P.P. 30/1004

G. S. Ediriweera
Acquiring Officer, Matara District.

The Kachcheri,
Matara. 4th November, 1980

GRAMA SASTRA—30

—Scribblings On Uva Villages

Ruralia Abandonata

By Gamiya

TAKE THE PAPERS from August 1977 to August 1980 and you can draw a graph of upward interest, a raising curve in the newspaper-interest shown in the village and rural areas of this country:

- CDN: July 30 '79 : Maximum state relief to the poorest
Oct. 6 '79 : PM at GA's conference: 'Consult the People in Development'
Sept. 6 '79 : Develop country at village level—PM.
July 13 '79 : Rome parley aimed at helping rural poor
Aug. 6 '79 : Land distribution at Ambalangoda
Oct. 2 '79 : Well on way to rice self-sufficiency
Oct. 9 '79 : Bio-gas plants for village housing
Sept. 29 '79 : Most villages now have electricity
August 6 '79 : Frustration, main cause of youth revolts
July 13 '79 : Gems fetch Rs. 37 million in foreign exchange
Sept. 27 '79 : Rs. 300 million floating hotel first in Sri Lanka
August 6 '79 : "Asian Church becoming more mature"—Archbishop Rotunno.

Then I went back to a WHO magazine of the SEA Regional Office. *The March to Health*, edited by Dr. V. T. Gunaratne, the then regional director of SEA/WHO (1948-1973 issue): "Burma: 85 percent of the country's population is rural"; "Indonesia: 85 percent of the country's population is rural"; "Nepal: the country is largely agricultural, almost 94 percent".

Not only was French the one-time language of diplomacy, it also suggested that a country is defined by its countryside, for *pays* is country, or *mon pays* (payee) is my country and *paysan* is peasant, and *paysage* is landscape. How tragic in Asia today, that most of the *pays* organised and run from huge centres of industrial or planning wastage are today ruining both the *paysage* (with factories) and the *paysanneries* (peasantry), in the name of the GNP of the *pays*.

In our ruralia, when a Nakkala woman has to simulate booking by sending smoke from her kitchen-roof by boiling water with nothing to put into it ("other-wise people think I have not eaten and they came and

question"); when 16-year olds get VD for they have been taken for a jeep-ride by a big shot pretending to take the whole group to get them textile jobs, then the picture of my countryside and the ravages made on it by some raving wolves who sit in seats of power and talk glib retteness, is complete.

The surest way to get over it is to draw a red hering across the trail and strip someone else of civic power. But you cannot fool all the people all the while, for as the PM said: People means power. They are sovereign. Are they? Really?

Of course in our listing above, the random newspapers have lent themselves unevenly to this game of listing news-scrippets. In fact, the last four item will be enough material to those who believe in real contemplation that "will bid not sit nor stand but go" to the help of these unfortunates who send people to power while they remain apparently powerless, who have vote and voice but are voiceless just now ("you can not talk and plan", they say).

One thinks of a superb Pole from a country which has vindicated the right to strike; one knows that his emissaries can also face the truth squarely if they want to, in a country that has dragged in the dust the right to strike, with all its collective bargaining and all that.

Don't you know.



LETTER

CONFIDENTIALLY

November 29,

Perhaps that milk packet is meant to be a "sachet"—a (French) container for (powdered) perfume

which some advertising copy-writer transferred to mean a container for (powdered) milk which the Milk Board uses for milk. Somebody mispronounced the French word and somebody else spelled the mispronunciation phonetically.

Fr. C. R. Daly S.J.

31, Clifford Place,
Colombo 4.
30th November 1980

TENDER NOTICE

MINISTRY OF FISHERIES

Institute Of Fish Technology

Construction Of A Building

For The Fish Feed Factory At

MATTAKKULIYA.

Tenders are invited by the Chairman, Tender Board, Ministry of Fisheries for the Construction of a building for the Fish Feed Factory of approximately 2000 sq. ft. located at Mattakkuliya.

Tender forms will be issued to the Contractors registered with Government Departments for the construction of buildings of a value not less than Rs. 500,000/—.

Tender should be made on prescribed forms. The Tender documents may be obtained commencing 2nd, December 1980 at 9.00 a.m. up to 12.00 noon 15th, December 1980, from the Director/Development, Ministry of Fisheries, Sir Mohamed Macan Markar Mawatha, Galle Face, Colombo 3, on a payment of non-refundable deposit of Sri Lanka Rupees One Hundred (Rs. 100).

The Tender will close on 22nd December 1980, at 2.00 p.m.

ANURA WEERARATNE,
Secretary/Chairman, Tender Board.

Confidentially

Potpourri

IS IT NOT TRUE that according to a report in the Sun last week: "The production of the country's major cash crops during the first nine months of this year was lower than the production during the corresponding period last year, according to provisional data prepared by the Central Bank of Ceylon. The tea production during the period of January to September 1980 was ten per cent lower than the production during the corresponding period last year. In 1979 tea production from January to September was 152 million kilos as against 137 kilos in 1980. In September alone tea production in both 1979 and 1980 stood at 13 million kilos. Rubber production during the first half of 1980 was 16 per cent lower than the figure last year. From January to June 1979 production was 73 million kilos while in 1980 it was 61 million kilos. In June 1979, 12 million kilos were produced as against 14 million kilos in 1980. Coconut production during the first nine months of 1980 was 14 per cent lower than production in the previous year. From January to September 1979, 1,806 million nuts were produced as against 1,554 million nuts in 1980. In September last year, production was 213 million nuts while in 1980 it was 186 million nuts. The Central Bank data also show a drop in paddy purchases under the guaranteed price scheme. Paddy purchases by the Paddy Marketing Board during the first month of 1980 were 58 per cent lower than the purchases during the same period last year."

That it is clear that the downward trend in production of major crops has continued into 1980? That the wishful thinking of some UNP politicians that matters had begun to improve is only to keep up the morale of supporters who have begun to despair? That nobody is now willing to accept the excuse of the weather for the escalating decline in agricultural production? That to arrest the drop in PMB purchases, paddy prices have been increased at a time when it can only benefit the trader, middleman and the hoarder?

○ ○ ○

IS IT ALSO NOT TRUE that some weeks ago—probably four—there were staggering newspaper headlines: IMPORTED CONTINENTAL FLOUR COSTS 82 CENTS A KILO LESS FROM MONDAY: FOR THREE MONTHS: BREAD PRICE THE SAME? That the reports in all papers read: "Imported Continental flour will cost 82 cents less per kilo from Monday. This price cut will be in force for 3 months, the Food Ministry said yesterday. A note issued by the Cabinet on the recommenda-

tion of the Cabinet Sub-Committee on Food Production Purchase and Distribution. It said Food Minister S. B. Herat has directed that Continental flour now being marketed at a price of Rs. 5.22 per kilo should be sold to the public at Rs. 4.40 per kilo. As from Monday November 3, this price reduction will be in operation for a period of 3 months. However, flour produced by the State Flour Milling Corporation and Prima Ltd., at Trincomalee will continue to be sold at the present price of Rs. 5.22 per kilo. Since the Food Commissioner's Department will be selling flour at two price levels from Monday the price of bread will remain unchanged. The Food Commissioner states that the reduction in the price of continental flour for the 3 month period will entail a loss of Rs. 100 million to Government. The Food Commissioner has in stock 150,000 tons of wheat flour. The average monthly draw of flour is about 35,000 tons?"

That complaints have poured into the Tribune office that this 82 cents less a kilo Continental flour is not available to the ordinary man? That Tribune Investigators have not been able to find a single shop or store where this Continental flour was available? That at most co-operative stores the story is always the same—"sold out" or "haven't received stocks"? That traders also have the same story "there is no Continental flour for sale with us.....where do you get it?.....get it from the newspapers..... That it is a pity that newspapers that published these reports do not follow up their banner headlines with investigative stories whether such a price drop was in fact available to the public? That there is no doubt that the Food Department has released a large quantity of excessive stocks "to the trade" at a reduced price to enable the public to pay 82 cents less for a kilo?

That it is equally clear that the public have not got the benefit of this reduction? That the conclusion is compelling that the Food Ministry by this transaction has only helped traders, wholesalers, Co-op. Union managers etc etc. to make windfall profits? That there is a growing belief that a similar racket has been perpetuated through the sale of what is termed "spoilt stocks of rice"? That millions of rupees of such rice have in recent months been unloaded through merchants who have promptly sold them to Co-ops and other Government agencies in Colombo and the outstation? That Tribune does not have enough investigators to probe each one of the proliferating scandals of the Food Department (and other Departments and Corporations)? That Tribune with its limitations, however, hopes to come up with some interesting revelation on the food front in the near future?



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RACE & CLASS

A JOURNAL
FOR BLACK AND
THIRD WORLD
LIBERATION

Vol. XX II No. 2, Autumn 1980.

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The following cinemas are awarded the Presidential certificates for A, B & C Grades

NAME OF DISTRICT	'A' GRADE CINEMA	'B' GRADE CINEMA	'C' GRADE CINEMA
1. Amparai	—	Vijaya Theatre—Amparai	Asoka Theatre—Kalmunai
2. Anurachapura	—	Ajantha Cinema—Kekirawa	Rani Theatre—Kekirawa
3. Badulla	—	Ethwiji Cinema — Bandarawela	—
4. Batticaloa	—	Regal Theatre—Batticaloa	—
5. Colombo	Regal Theatre—Colombo	Monto Cinema — Narahenpita	Kalyani Cinema — Athurugiriya
6. Galle	Sarasavi Theatre—Galle	Anura Cinema — Ambalangoda	New Rekha Theatre — Elpitiya
7. Gampaha	Nilmini Cinema—Wattala	Alight Cinema — Kochchikade	Jayalath Cinema — Katunayake
8. Hambantota	—	Belco Cinema—Beliatta	Regina Theatre — Walasmulla
9. Jaffna	Manohara Theatre—Jaffna	Easwaran Theatre — Killinochchi	Wesley Cinema—Manipay
10. Kandy	Odeon Cinema—Kandy	Regal Theatre—Gampola	Abhaya Theatre — Huluganga
11. Kalutara	New Minerva Theatre — Kalutara	Vinns Theatre—Wadduwa	Waruna Cinema — Dharga Town
12. Kegalle	Chaya Cinema—Kegalle	Vinusa Theatre—Mawanella	Champa Cinema — Dehiwela
13. Kurunegala	New Imperial Theatre — Kurunegala	Sandalanka Cinema — Sandalankawa	Ranjani Cinema—Hettipola
14. Mannar	—	Aynn Theatre—Mannar	Sri Paranthan Theatre — Pesalai
15. Matara	Broadway Theatre — Matara	Chandani Cinema — Weligama	—
16. Matale	Kasino Theatre—Matale	Visakha Cinema—Dambulla	Jayanthi Cinema—Rattota
17. Moneragala	—	Sri Ramya Theatre — Moneragala	Mahaweli Cinema—Bibile
18. Mullaitivu	—	Sivajothy Cinema — Mullaitivu	Jessie Cinema—Mullaitivu
19. Nuwara Eliya	—	Regal Theatre — Nuwara Eliya	Revathy Theatre — Punduloya
20. Polonnaruwa	—	Samupakara Cinema — Hingurakgoda	Ajura Theatre — Medirigiriya
21. Puttalam	—	Dharshana Cinema — Koswadiya	Samara Theatre — Nattandiya
22. Ratnapura	New Imperial Talkies — Ratnapura	Nilmini Theatre — Eheliyagoda	Geethan Cinema — Kalawana
23. Trincomalee	—	Sri Krishna Theatre — Trincomalee	Adoma Theatre—Kantalei
24. Vavuniya	—	Royal Theatre—Vavuniya	—

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