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TRIBUNE



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Letter From The Editor

ON THE COVER, this week, we have the picture of a Kandyan (Dancer) Magician performing an act. We are not sure what he is trying to do: whether he is swallowing a sword or a snake or a firebrand. It does not really matter. We picked on this picture only to show that the public is today very much in the dark about a great many matters. And light (to show us the path) has become so expensive that more and more people are being pushed into greater and greater darkness. Households that paid an electric bill of Rs. 50 a month now have to pay Rs. 150 or more if they consume the same volume of electricity. The result is that most households of ordinary people have fewer lights—whilst lights blaze wantonly on public buildings to boost the morale of the Government. The Ministry of Energy and Power trots out the increase in the prices of OPEC petroleum products as the reason for the unconscionable increase in electricity charges. But ordinary people are not convinced. They see so much waste, corruption, theft and worse in the operations of the Ceylon Electricity Board that they feel that OPEC oil is only a cover to mask maladministration. It is open secret that vested interests in the CEB with French and other Connections have run amok and have brought a total and complete confrontation and deadlock between the Minister and the Board of Directors. From all accounts everything is at a standstill. What the President will do to have to resolve this confrontation which is adding heavy burdens on the people is yet to be seen. *Tribune* has received reports from a variety of sources about the growing mess in the CEB and we have raised queries that must compel answers whilst throwing light on some dark recesses of our kingdom of power. (1) Has the *Connection* begun to have its way again? (2) Is it true that over the last six months the Tender Board of the CEB has been carefully questioning every Tender and scrutinising each individual award in extreme detail and have found several instances of deliberate misleading of the Tender Board by interested parties? (3) Is it true that part of this questioning process has led to the hiring by the CEB of University Engineering Faculty as independent consultants to advise on the performance of past purchases? (4) Is it true that the University's highly qualified engineers have reported against the performance of past purchases? (5) Is this hurting the *Connection* so strongly that attempts have been made to change the composition of the Tender Board against the wishes of the Board of Directors? (6) Are acts of provocation being done in the Board by interested parties in falsely dismissing and interdicting workers to create disturbances and provocations? (7) Is it true that recently, because of the Board of Directors' unanimous views on the need for impartiality in appointments and award of Tenders, their powers have been drastically curtailed in the "national interest"? (8) Is it true that because of the prevailing turn of events, a large number of senior engineers are thinking of joining the Brain Drain and several have applied over the last few weeks for jobs abroad? (9) Should not the powers that be take an immediate interest in this state of affairs and see that the cancer of corruption and intimidation of senior executive is stopped? We will welcome comments from our readers.

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EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike

Colombo, October 6,

NEXT WEEK, on October 16, the Bill to deprive Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike and Mr. Felix R. Dias Bandaranaike of their civic rights will come up in Parliament. With the massive steam-roller majority of the Government, there can be no doubt about the outcome. The SLFP will naturally oppose it. The TULF has announced its opposition to it. Whilst the TULF is opposed to such disenfranchisement "in principle", and is likely to confine its opposition to the parliamentary forum alone, the SLFP is caught in a cleft stick because of its reported decision to carry on a political campaign in the country only in favour of Mrs. Bandaranaike whilst leaving Mr. Felix R. Dias Bandaranaike to fend for himself.

Besides leaving this stalwart SLFPer (whatever may have been his faults) in the lurch, the decision to abandon Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike is a tacit admission that the Commission's findings are correct so far as FDB is concerned and what is more that the Commission had a right not only to make such a finding but to also make recommendations. Whilst thus implicitly accepting the *bona fides* of the Commission in the findings against Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike, SLFP spokesman, making every effort to keep clear of the law of contempt, have declared that political pressure (and therefore *mala fides*) was behind the Commission's finding against Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike.

Unfortunately, the SLFP is today singularly isolated without any political allies. The TULF which is the only other Opposition political party in Parliament has drawn away from the SLFP after the latter opposed the DDCs Bill on the tendentious ground, among others, that it will divide the country—hinting that the UNP was paving the way for Eelam. The TULF has registered a formal protest against Mrs. B's disenfranchisement—and is not likely to do anything more.

Even the political parties not in parliament today do not seem likely to do anything more than protest mildly "on principle". Neither the CPSL nor the LSSP have so far not indi-

cated that they will join in a political campaign to make a martyr of Mrs. Bandaranaike, and the most that can be expected of them is a little rhetoric and a number of slogans denouncing "discriminatory" and "unjust" use of the Commission as a propaganda weapon to prove the "reactionary and anti-democratic character of the UNP. The JVP has so far not said anything on this matter, but the party's chief *bete noir* continues to be Mrs. Bandaranaike and the SLFP. The Maoist (group of seven), the lonely pro-(Deng) Peking party and other miscellaneous and nondescript groups have so far not said anything, and even if they did their views are not likely to have much impact on the electorate.

IT IS NOT ONLY in the domestic scene that the SLFP is without strong or vociferous allies, but in the international arena also it has to play a Lone Ranger game. Apart from weakening life lines to Belgrade, Baghdad, Tripoli and New Delhi, the SLFP's international lobby is weak—and these countries will take extra care not to get involved in the internal politics of Sri Lanka. Peking, which is still the spiritual home of the small hard-core inside the SLFP on which Mrs. Bandaranaike seems to place so much reliance, cannot even offer comfort to her in the contest of the current global geo-political alignments.

And the only "special envoy" Mrs. Bandaranaike has available to invoke sympathetic responses abroad is her son Anura. He could however do better than raise a bogey about the CIA in New Delhi to sell his line, but to do this just before embarking on a trip to the USA, allegedly to undo the mischief Prime Minister Premadasa had supposedly done, betrayed tactical immaturity. Without the assistance of "international parties" like the CPSL, LSSP, NLSSP or even the TULF and the JVP (which have substantial pockets of support in certain foreign capitals) and the total inability of Peking to move out of its pro-US/UNP orbit, the SLFP's international arm is today only a distant mirage.

President Jayewardene's decision to insist, as reports indicate, on implementing the recommendations of the Commission by disenfranchising Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike and her nephew Felix Dias Bandaranaike is a well calculated move to neutralise political

opponents who have refused to join the UNP in a National Government to "save the country". There is no doubt that this cold, calculated and carefully calibrated decision—taken in the face of apprehensions of disaster entertained by many Cabinet Ministers and UNP VIPs who had counselled him to take a "softer" line.

This decision to disenfranchise Mrs. Bandaranaike can be expected to cause deep resentment among the 35% to 40% of the Sinhalese voters who have traditionally voted SLFP. But a substantial and sizable minority among the SLFP members at all levels secretly welcome (for different reasons) Mrs. Bandaranaike's seven-year suspension from active participation in parliamentary politics. Political observers also feel that the disenfranchisement of Mrs. Bandaranaike will accentuate the factional conflicts within the leadership of the SLFP, and President Jayewardene could not have chosen a better time for what has been described as a "surgical strike" (*Lanka Guardian*) and a "declaration of war against the SLFP" (*Weekend*). Angry reactions and protest demonstrations from some supporters of the SLFP must be expected and all security forces had been put on the alert at least two weeks before the Commission's findings were released—but up to date the reactions among ordinary people show that these precautions were excessive. It is hard to see a difficult law and order position arising owing to the disenfranchisement of Mrs. Bandaranaike.

So far as the UNP is concerned, the decision to "sack" 40,000 odd public and private sector employes was a far more potentially suicidal action than the disenfranchisement of Mrs. Bandaranaike. This fact has probably dawned on those who are responsible for continuing the lockout of the 100,000 or more for an unduly long period and they seem to have realised that this can have serious long-term repercussions on the political fortunes of the UNP. It is likely that the Cabinet decision "in principle" to re-employ on "conditions" the persons who were denied work for having been involved in the strike will be expedited and the conditions de-

manded may be even relaxed.

TO SPEND TIME on examining the charges, the evidence and the findings in respect of Mrs. Bandaranaike and Mr. Felix R. Dias Bandaranaike is a fruitless exercise. The SLFP long ago decided that Felix Dias Bandaranaike was guilty of several acts of political misdemeanour and had *de facto* removed him from active politics even before the Presidential started function. The voters of Dompe had rejected him in 1977. The UNP Government is now only seeking to give *de jure* validity to something that has taken place in reality.

In the case of Mrs. Bandaranaike, no one has attempted to defend her on the ground that there has been a miscarriage of justice on the basis of the charges or the evidence. If one dips through the pages of *Tribune* published in the period 1970-1977 it will be found that all charges brought against her before the Presidential Commission were reflected in criticisms in our columns against the government within the limits of the prevailing permanent State of Emergency, the continuing press restrictions and the pre-censorship imposed from time to time.

All that those who seek to defend Mrs. Bandaranaike have so far said is that the punishment is excessive and that it betrayed political malice in order to eliminate temporarily at least the challenge from an opponent before the next General Election. If the SLFP and the UF partners had been responsive to press criticism when they were in power, they would not have fared so badly in 1977. Instead they muzzled the press and critics were silenced or ostracised. The press in Sri Lanka had not recovered from the restrictions, imposed on them in that period. Lake House was taken over in 1973 and its publications became government bulletins. With the change of Government they have become advertising gazettes. This Government followed the example of the last and took over the *Times of Ceylon*.

In defence of Mrs. Bandaranaike, one argument advanced is that so many others have done and are doing things far worse than the charges on which she has been held guilty and that therefore the punishment savours of political victimisation. We will examine this "defence" in due course

(To be continued)

Sept. 25 - 29

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

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

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 25: The Special Presidential Commission which is investigating the misdeeds, abuse of power and corruption by the government of former Prime Minister Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, has found Mrs. Bandaranaike guilty of misuse of abuse of power and recommended that she be deprived of her civic rights. The Commission has also found Felix Dias Bandaranaike, her nephew, who held important portfolios in her Cabinet from 1970 to 1977 guilty of corruption and abuse of power and recommended that he be stripped of his civic rights; State Minister Anandatissa de Alwis said the Cabinet decided yesterday that the recommendations of the Commission be accepted and that consequential action be taken in Parliament—CDN. Saudi Arabia's recent increase of two dollars per barrel in its oil price will cost Sri Lanka an extra Rs. 124 million annually, the Ceylon Petroleum Corporation calculated yesterday—SU.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 26: A gang of young men, waving pistols and hand bombs in typical Chicago style, hurst into the Airport Authority office, Chatham Street, Fort and robbed cash amounting to over Rs. 44,000 yesterday morning. The Prime Minister Mr. R. Premadasa left for New York last night by Airlanka to address the UN General Assembly on Monday; he was accompanied by Mrs. Premadasa and his Secretary, Mr. Bradman Weerakoon—CDM. The Government's resolution calling

for the imposition of civic disabilities on former Prime Minister Mrs. Sirimavo R. D. Bandaranaike and her expulsion from Parliament will now be moved on October 16. The Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) yesterday decided to oppose the resolution to be moved in Parliament by Prime Minister R. Premadasa on October 16 to deprive former Premier Mrs. Bandaranaike and ex-Minister Felix Dias Bandaranaike of their civic rights—SU.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 27: A large number of foreign medical undergraduates have also sought admission to the two medical faculties in Sri Lanka for undergraduate study; one reason for this influx of foreign students seeking admission was due to the comparatively low fees charged by the universities here from foreign students. The Ceylon Electricity Board and the National Water Supply and Drainage Board were optimistic yesterday about the nation's supplies of energy and drinking water as moderate to heavy rain was reported in most parts of the country—CDN. A 24-point plan to reduce the cost of construction formulated by the Prime Minister Mr. R. Premadasa who is also the Minister of Local Governments, Housing and Construction has been approved by the Cabinet. An official intimation from Iraq yesterday about its inability to ensure continued oil supplies due to its current war with Iran has led to the Ceylon Petroleum Corporation urgently seeking new sources of supply. A heated debate ensued at the Sri Lanka Freedom Party's Politbureau meeting on Thursday night, on whether the party's political campaign, in the wake of the Special Presidential Commission's findings should be to espouse the cause of both party leader Sirimavo Bandaranaike and former Minister Felix R. Dias Bandaranaike, who face civic disabilities. Another batch of 83 GCE April examination answer scripts have been recovered from a boutique in Gampola by the Gampola Police—SU. Officials of the Ministry of Transport are considering whether to increase bus fares once again to cut down the losses which have doubled because of the oil price increase—JD.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 28: The 1980 budget has gone completely off the rails and the country's economic planners are stressing the need to ensure that the next budget that

is now being drawn up will not suffer the same fate—SO. A special counterfeit intelligence unit will be set up by the Defence Ministry to keep a tab on international crooks who may make Sri Lanka the base for the transshipment of counterfeit goods having internationally famous brand names. Ramakrishna Maharishi whose two main ideals were renunciation and service rendered great service to humanity; the President Mr. J. R. Jayewardene said this in the course of his address at the Golden Jubilee celebrations of the Ramakrishna Mission, Colombo yesterday—ST. The Defence Ministry has launched a programme to modernise and bring up to mark the country's armed services. The Sinhala language will be heard for the first time at the UN General Assembly when Prime Minister Ranasinghe Premadasa delivers a speech in his mother tongue tomorrow. Detectives investigating the leakage of answer scripts of the GCE Advanced Level examinations are attempting to trace three people in a bid to determine whether there was sabotage—WK. The Balangoda Paddy Research Institute has produced paddy seeds which could be harvested after 75 days; this new kind of seed paddy has bettered the world record held by China which produced a paddy seed which could be harvested within 85 days—SM.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 29: From Wednesday the conversion to the metric system of weights and measures in all activities and transactions affecting the general public in Sri Lanka would have been completed, a spokesman for the National Metric Conversion Authority said yesterday—CDN. Fuel taxes are to be introduced under a new scheme to levy taxes and tolls on motorists for every public benefit obtained from the highways; this tax is expected to be imposed on each gallon of fuel purchased. SLFP-leader Sirimavo Bandaranaike, addressing a party meeting at Bogambara yesterday said she considered it a historic occasion to address the crowd from the historic Bogambara grounds for the last time as an unfettered citizen enjoying full civic rights to work and stand for elections. A plane load of Sri Lankan evacuees from war torn Iraq arrived at dawn today on board a special Kuwait Airways Boeing 707 charter. Steps are being taken by the Ministry of Industries to increase customs duties on imported goods which are being produced locally and

at the same time reduce custom duty on the imports of raw materials—LD. Mrs. Bandaranaike has challenged President Jayewardene to prove that to remove an elected member of Parliament by an unfair law on an ex-party case is not a misuse of power; Mrs. Bandaranaike in a public rally said that the President is misusing his power in removing her from Parliament and alleging that she misused power as Prime Minister—DK.



Govt.



Notice

My No. 3/41/606

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

It is intended to acquire the land described in the schedule below for a public purpose. For further particulars see Part 111 of Gazette No. 110 dated 10-10-1980 of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.

Schedule

Situation: Central Province, Matale District, Ukuwela Divisional Revenue Officer's Division, Matale Medasiya Pattuwa, Wariyapola Gramasevaka Niladhari's Division, Wariyapola Village.

Name of land: Wariyapola Estate
Extent: 37 Acres 0 Roods 22 Perches
Plan and Lot No./Nos.: PPMa/597, Lot No. 1

District Land Office,
 Matale District.
R. Samarakoon

The Kachcheri, Matale.
 17th September, 1980

TENDER NOTICES

MINISTRY OF FISHERIES

NORTH WEST COAST FISHERY

DEVELOPMENT PROJECT FUNDED BY THE ABU DHABI FUND FOR ARAB ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

SUPPLY OF EQUIPMENT FOR OUTFITTING OF FISHING VESSELS

The Ministry of Fisheries has commenced the implementation of the North West Coast Fisheries Project. The Project involves the construction of 100 numbers Drift net/long line (34' Class) Vessels, 50 numbers Trawlers (34' Class) purchase of two 50' combination Vessels for initiating a Pilot Project for off-shore and deep-sea fishing and establishment of a model fishery service centres. All 34' Class vessels will be constructed by local boat yards. The first phase of the project comprising the construction of 10 numbers proto-type Gill net/long line Vessels is in progress. Tenders are invited for the supply of the items of equipment which are required for outfitting all the fishing vessels as set out below.

- ABP/MF/ 1 One Hundred (100) numbers Drift net/line haulers
- 2 One Hundred and Fifty (150) numbers S.S.B. Radio Telephones
- 3 One Hundred and Fifty (150) numbers Steering Compasses
- 4 One Hundred and Fifty (150) numbers Hydraulic Steering Gears
- 5 One Hundred and Fifty (150) numbers Echo Sounders
- 6 Three Hundred (300) numbers full drop marine windows with laminated toughened glass
- 7 One Thousand and Fifty (1050) numbers fixed windows laminated toughened glass
- 8 Fishing gear and Accessories for One Hundred (100) numbers Drift net/long line Vessels
- 9 Tuna Long lines for One Hundred and Fifty (150) numbers Vessels
- 10 Electrical Lights
- 11 One Hundred and Fifty (150) numbers Whale pumps.

The Tenders should be made on prescribed forms. The Tender documents containing the prescribed forms will be issued up to 12.00 noon 3rd November 1980, by the Director, Development Division Ministry of Fisheries, Galle Face, Colombo-03, Sri Lanka, on the production of official receipts from the Chief Accountant, Ministry of Fisheries for the payment of a non-refundable fee of Rupees One Hundred and Fifty (Rs. 150/-) and a refundable tender deposit of Sri Lanka Rupees Two Thousand (Rs. 2000/-).

The Tenders will close at 2.00 p.m. 3rd December, 1980.

East Coast Fishery Development Project— Funded By The Government Of The Netherlands

The Ministry of Fisheries has commenced the implementation of the East Coast fisheries Project based at Valaichchenai. This Project involves the construction of a Modern Harbour, cold storage rooms, a marketing complex and construction of new fishing vessels. The Project is being financed by the Government of Netherlands. Invitations to bid for the Civil Engineering works and Ice Plant are set out below. In accordance with the terms of the Aid Agreement tenders are limited to eligible source countries. A list of such eligible countries is available on request.

1) Construction of Shore facilities of the Fishery Harbour at Valaichchenai.

Tenders are invited for the construction of the shore facilities of the proposed fishery harbour at Valaichchenai.

The work under this tender comprise the construction of the following major facilities among others.

- 151 metre long quay wall
- 80,000 litres capacity water tower
- Two storeyed office complex
- Terminal building with cold storage room and market area
- 10 tons capacity boat lifting arrangement
- Boat repair workshop building
- 4000 sq.m. of roads and paving

Only tenderers who have successfully executed at least one Civil Engineering heavy construction project consisting not less than Sri Lanka Rupees 5 million shall be qualified to tender

The tenders should be made on prescribed forms are being issued now and will be issued up to 12 noon on 24.11.1980 by the Project Manager, East Coast Fisheries Project, Ministry of Fisheries, 56, Galle Road, Colombo 3. Sri Lanka, on production of official receipts from the Chief Accountant of the Ministry of Fisheries for the payment of a non-refundable fee of Sri Lanka Rs. one thousand five hundred (Rs. 1500/-) and a refundable tender deposit of Sri Lanka Rs. two thousand five hundred (Rs. 2500/-).

Tenders will close on the 24th November 1980 at 2.30 p.m.

(2) Supply and installation of One 20 ton Ice Plant and other ancillary equipment for the Fishery Harbour at Valaichchenai.

Tenders are invited for the execution of the undermentioned services at the Fishery Harbour Complex at Valaichchenai.

1. Supply and erection of one 2 ton block ice plant
2. Equipping storage room for holding 60 tons of block ice.
3. Equipping storage room for holding 25 tons of fresh fish on ice in boxes.

Tenders should be on prescribed forms. The tender documents are being issued now and will be issued up to 12 noon on 24.11.1980 by the Project Manager, East Coast Fisheries Project, Ministry of Fisheries, No. 56, Galle Road, Colombo 3, Sri Lanka on production of official receipts from the Chief Accountant of the Ministry of Fisheries for the payment of a non-refundable fee of Sri Lanka rupees One hundred (Rs. 100/-) and a refundable tender deposit of Sri Lanka rupees Five hundred (Rs. 500/-).

The tenders will close at 2.00 p.m. 24th December, 1980.

INSTITUTE OF FISH TECHNOLOGY

CONSTRUCTION OF A BUILDING FOR A 5-TON BLOCK ICE PLANT AT MINNERIYA

Tenders are invited by the Chairman, Tender Board, Ministry of Fisheries for the construction of a Building for a 5 ton block ice plant of approximately 4000 sq. ft. located at Minneriya.

Tender should be made on prescribed forms. The Tender documents may be obtained now and up to 12.00 noon on 17th October 1980 from Director/Development, Ministry of Fisheries, Sir Mohamed Macan Markar Mawatha, Galle Face, Colombo 3 on the payment of a non-refundable fee of Sri Lanka rupees 100/-.

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

INSTITUTE OF FISH TECHNOLOGY

SUPPLY OF A LABORATORY SCALE PELLETIZING MACHINE

Tenders are invited by the Chairman, Tender Board, Ministry of Fisheries, Sir Mohamed Macan Markar Mawatha, Galle Face, Colombo 3 from accredited local agents and Principals for the supply of the following goods:—

- (a) Laboratory scale pelletizing machine (one set)

Further detailed eligibility requirements are given in the Tender Documents.

Tender Documents may be obtained from the Director Development, Ministry of Fisheries on making a refundable tender deposit of Rs. 100/- Tender documents are being issued now and will be issued up to 3.00 p.m. on 21.10.1980 .

Tenders will be received until 10.00 a.m. 24.10.1980 and will be opened immediately thereafter.

MINISTRY OF FISHERIES,
P.O. BOX 1707,
SIR MOHAMED MACAN MAKAR MAWATHA
GALLE FACE,
COLOMBO 03.
SRI LANKA.

CEYLON FISHERY HARBOURS CORPORATION

CONSTRUCTION OF PURANAWELLA FISHERY HARBOUR

World wide Tenders were invited for the construction of Fishery Harbour at Puranawella, Devinuwara (Dondra), Sri Lanka.

This work comprises the following:
Part (I): Construction of

- 460 M rubble mound break-water
- 260 M rubble mound groyne
- 360 M rubble revetment

Part (II): Dredging

Tender documents now have been issued to all Prospective tenderers. The Tender closes on 14th October 1980 at 2.00 p.m.

INSTITUTE OF FISH TECHNOLOGY

CONSTRUCTION OF A FISH FILLETING AND FISH MEAL FACTORY AT MINNERIYA

Tenders are invited by the Chairman, Tender Board Ministry of Fisheries for the construction of Fish Filleting and Fish Meal factory of approximately 2500 sq. ft. located at Minneriya.

Tender should be made on prescribed forms. The Tender documents are being issued now and will be issued up to 12 noon on 17.10.1980 by the Director/Development, Ministry of Fisheries, P.O. Box 1707, Sir Mohamed Macan Markar Mawatha, Colombo 3 on the payment of a non-refundable fee of Sri Lanka rupees 100/-. The Tender will close on 22nd October 1980 at 2.00 p.m.

SGD: **ANURA WEERARATNE,**
SECRETARY/MINISTRY OF FISHERIES AND
CHAIRMAN/TENDER BOARD.

ANGOLA

South Africa Fails

by Colm Foy

London, Sept. 22.

When Angola became independent on November 11, 1975, its future seemed bleak. The People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) the socialist-oriented dominant force in the struggle against Portuguese colonialism, was under attack from two other organisations with big power backing. The first of these, the National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA) was openly supported by the CIA and had a long history of hostility to MPLA. At the time of independence, FNLA forces were a mere 25 kilometers from the capital, Luanda. The second organisation, the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) formed on March 13, 1966, also had American backing and as the July 1974 issue of the French magazine *Afrique-Asie* revealed, had a long history of collaboration with the Portuguese colonial forces. It was on UNITA's behalf that South African troops first invaded Angola on August 8, 1975.

AT FIRST, South Africa denied involvement in Angola, then admitted that its troops were in the country but only to guard the jointly owned Cunene Dam on the border, with Namibia. Press reports, however, told a different story and, on December 17, 1975, South Africa admitted that its forces were heavily involved in the Angolan civil war many miles from the Namibian border. They had intervened in an attempt to dislodge the MPLA from a position of pre-eminence in independent Angola, to smash MPLA's forces and instal Jonas Savimbi's UNITA possibly with FNLA in power. Their reasoning was simple; MPLA was openly socialist in orientation and was violently opposed to the racist regime of apartheid. The Portuguese revolution of April 25, 1974 which had come as a great shock to South Africa had left them with socialist Frelimo on the north-eastern border in Mozambique. In this context, Pretoria was prepared to do all in its power to stop MPLA from coming to power on the other side of the sensitive Namibian frontier.

The intervention of Cuban troops on November 12, 1975, requested by Angola's late President Agostinho Neto, thwarted South African plans. Pretoria's army was stopped at the Kueve river in Kwanza-Sul province and rolled back towards Namibia. The last South African troops with the remains of UNITA's bands crossed into Namibia some time in March 1976.

UNITA was and is, basically, a tribalist organisation. Its basis is in the Mbundu people of Angola's Central Highlands. Following their defeat in 1976, UNITA was forced to withdraw most of its troops from its home area into Namibia. South Africa, however, continued to support the movement and to supply UNITA bands in the forest by air. In this way, a UNITA "presence" was maintained after MPLA had occupied Savimbi's "capital", Huambo, in February 1976. These forces continued to harass MPLA. In addition, South Africa, besides violating Angolan airspace regularly to supply the forest groups, has been lending cover to the UNITA forces based in Namibia to enable them to make forays into Southern Angola. Thus, Pretoria has never ceased its interferences in Angolan affairs.

The difference with the South African interference, which started at the beginning of May and continued into the first week in June, is that it was a full-scale invasion. What caused this escalation? Two basic factors influence the answer: first, the drive of the Angolan Army (FAPLA) against remaining UNITA bands on the Central Highlands and secondly, the imminent implementation of United Nations resolution 435 on the decolonisation of Namibia.

MORE DIRECTLY IMPORTANT to South Africa, though, was the objective of securing favourable conditions inside Southern Angola prior to the implementation of Resolution 435, Namibia is very important to South Africa, not only as a buffer against black Africa—the only one left since the Patriotic Front's victory in Zimbabwe—but also as a rich source of uranium, diamonds and other mineral wealth. For these reasons Pretoria sees it as imperative that its hold on the country must not be broken. The South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO) is upsetting these plans

by continuing to maintain its liberation forces inside Namibia and by the widespread support from the local people which it apparently enjoys.

Thus, the recent South African invasion of Angola was designed to crush SWAPO militarily by destroying its bases inside Angola. The same goes for the more recent smaller-scale incursions. Tied in with this strategy, the South Africans also hoped to install their old friends UNITA IN WHAT WAS TO BECOME THE DEMILITARISED ZONE IN Angola, allowing them then to claim that Angola's government did not control the border area and therefore could not guarantee the status of the demilitarised zone.

It seems, however, that South Africa has a big mistake. SWAPO in Luanda confirms its leadership remains intact and that its struggle will continue. For UNITA, its days are clearly numbered. The remnants of its army in the highlands have turned to banditry and terrorising the local population in order to get food, now that their supply lines have been cut and their bases destroyed. Denied his tribal base, Savimbi depends totally on South Africa for support and will clearly be unable to maintain sufficient presence in Angola's southern provinces while his own Mbundu people, now terrorised by the remnants of his army, are turning against him.

—Tribune, U.K

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BOLIVIA

Dictators Wait For Reagan

by Imogen Mark

London, September 22.

"The drugs mafia has bought itself a government," said an American drug enforcement official last month. He was referring to the latest military regime to instal itself in Bolivia. Exports of party-processed coco, grown in Bolivia, now outstrip tin as the main export earner and cocaine is reckoned to have brought in a massive 600 million American dollars last year in illegal income. But the threat of an elected Leftwing civilian government taking office, as it should have done

last month, pushed the drugs mafia to support the military coup, and protect its business against a clamp down.

THE NEW REGIME and its drug connections is a serious setback to the American drug enforcement programme in the region, and one good reason that the Carter administration is firmly opposed to the military takeover. A second reason for Washington's opposition is the Bolivian regime's other crucial backer—the military Government in Argentina. Argentine participation in the planning and execution of the coup last July is well established. Their help has ranged from training selected soldiers and officers to operate in the same kind of paramilitary gangs as have carried out thousands of kidnappings and killings in Argentina over the past four years, to supplying propaganda film for Bolivian television. They have also provided some 200 million American dollars in immediate loans to tide their new colleagues over a difficult period.

The Argentine President, General Jorge Videla, has made his motives quite clear; we do not want another Cuba on our doorstep, he told a military assembly last month. But the coup in Bolivia is also a direct challenge by the Argentine regime to the Carter administration, a response to the American Government's human rights policies of the past four years, which the Latin American military believe have weakened the struggle against the "communist menace" and threatened the "western, Christian" values which they are there to safeguard.

These four dictatorships are all banking heavily on a victory for Ronald Reagan in November, and a return to the good old days of Nixon and Kissinger, when defence of the West came before all other considerations. Bolivia has thus become something of a test case, a trial of strength between America and the military regime it helped to create almost a decade earlier. America has not recognized the new regime in La Paz; nor have the EEC countries, including Britain, nor the majority of Latin American countries. They can fairly claim that the present regime does not yet control the territory. The winner of the June elections, Herman Siles Zuazo, is still in the country, in hiding, and has proclaimed a "government

in clandestinity". He is seeking recognition for his government, and his vice-president elect, Jame Paz, is touring widely in Latin America, America and Europe to seek support. (He will be visiting Britain at the end of the month to attend the Labour Party Conference).

The EEC countries and America have all suspended their aid programmes and the regime is desperately short of money. The military gangs, who are being used rather than ordinary troops to carry out the continuing raids and detentions, are not being paid. They are paying themselves by looting their victims, homes and carrying off anything movable.

Rumours of divisions and counter-coups being plotted are rife in La Paz, and the regime seems to have very little support, either civilian or military. Its chances of consolidating its hold on the country are slim. What the Argentine press called "the first coup of the Reagon era" may prove to have been still-born.

—Tribune, U.K.

low-country tea, and then rubber. Kalutara District as delineated by the colonial administration, covers 623.75 square miles of which there are 3.5 square miles of land logged marshes, lagoons etc. Today this District carries a population around 775,000 showing an increase around 70,000 during the last 10 years. The main urban development is Kalutara Town maintaining a population of 35,000 which seems to show an increase of 5000 over the past ten years. These figures indicate that there is no population explosion or a movement of people into the district, except for the natural increase. Why? Because the Britishers developed whatever land that was available for development, after reserving what land was necessary to maintain the way of life of the indigenous inhabitants. They did not rush into development like a bull in a china shop or as our bulls are contemplating to do today. No, they set up an organisation to collect all the physical data necessary to decide what areas should be reserved for conservation, what areas should be reserved for the needs of the indigenous population etc. The balance they developed to a set patterns.

One of their earliest actions was to collect rainfall data; every planter, or the "rapist of the soil", if one desires to call him so, set up his own rain-gauge station to collect and study rainfall quantitatively. Today, we are lucky that the Britisher did this because we have very reliable and informative rainfall figures stretching beyond a hundred years. According to these figure, Ratnapura together with Kalutara registers the highest rainfall in the Island averaging around 175 inches per annum. Because these two areas are the first to be hit by the S.W. monsoons. Ratnapura is only 24 miles away as the crow flies, East of Kalutara. When the British realized this and the implications if all the forest cover in the District were to be developed, they in true spirit of custodians of our wealth and of their concern for the people, left untouched all land above 1000 ft. above mean sea level. They protected and legislated to maintain these areas in their natural condition, till they handed over their custody to the people. These are the reserves that have

WARNING

Destruction Of The Kalutara District

by R. Kahawita

The Ceylon Daily News (CDN) of 13.9.80 has published a proposal for a comprehensive "Integrated Development Scheme" for the Kalutara District. It is, no doubt, a scheme of development to spend loan funds as well as to give opportunities to earn large profits. But it is also the destruction of what was left over to maintain the ecological balance in the area; destruction of the water shed reserves of the district; destruction of what these reserves can contribute to the conservation of water resources; silting of the flat bottom valleys—the paddy fields on which the worker class subsist to supplement their wages.

KALUTARA DISTRICT, with an evenly distributed rainfall pattern, is one of the areas that drew the attention of the Britishers as a good region to experiment with coffee,

been taken up as the CDN says, "for the Integrated Development Scheme in Kalutara District." We opt to call it "A plan to destroy Kalutara District." Why so?

THE BRITISHER had established an unwritten principle, when he allocated land for the use of his nationals, or that of the indigenous population, that 10% of the forest cover should be left in its natural state. A principle the first U.N.P. Government continued to follow from 1932, the year "The Rehabilitation of the Peasant" was inaugurated. This principle was followed faithfully in issuing chena-permits, land for village expansion, Irrigation Development, L.D.O. permits and in any operation where land was the subject. As time went on, the administration fell short of their responsibilities; the politicians pressed on to relax these rules, and a host of other factors forced the powers that be to forget all the conservation requirements of land and water and went on a rampage like the herd of 318 elephants rampaging in the Mahaweli Development area today as their reserves are being taken up for development.

What are the benefits the country has reaped by not following this principle? Soil erosion, increasing flood heights and frequency of floods, extinction of certain species of valuable flora and fauna, arable land becoming deserts, changed rainfall patterns, encroachment of the dry zone into the wet zone, in general everything that can destroy the national resources. Currently a pertinent question has been raised "Lanka is not for burning?"

This same question was raised in 1936 in the "State Council" which created an interesting debate between "The Father and Son." Son urged that all land 5000 ft. and above M.S.L. should be reforested before implementing any development projects in the Mahaweli Basin. The answer was, 'If we do that, how are we going to earn Foreign Exchange to carry through the development projects to rehabilitate the indigenous population'. The answer had quietened the questioner. But the problem has multiplied.

Out of a 623.75 square miles in the Kalutara districts, there should be 62.37

square miles of natural reserves according to the principle enunciated by the Britisher, and followed by us for a time. The 35,000 Acs. now taken up for the Integrated programme is a major part of this reserve viz. 54.64 square miles leaving only 4.23 sq. miles of land and 3.5 square miles of marshes etc. So "the rape of the soil" goes on in this era of enlightenment.

ACCORDING TO THE REPORT prepared by the panel of experts named in the C.D.N. news item, the areas taken up for development are 1000 ft. above M.S.L. They also say that some areas are too wet for commercial crops like tea and rubber, yet the crops contemplated are Rubber, tea, mulberry and other subsidiary minor crops? In selecting these crops, the excessive rainfall in the region as commented by the experts does not seem to have influenced decision making or to question why these hillocks were left out of the then development plans, in the midst of the rubber estates.

The report also refers to some streams and major water-ways that have their source in these "minor hills, draining away the excessive rainfall. This is the very reason why the Britisher reserved these as "rainforests" to save the "natives" paddy land in the flat bottom valleys" from natives and sitting. The Britisher has gone and the floods have taken over, to destroy himself by his own stupidity."

If we sit back and ponder, the much despised colonialist has shown greater concern about the conservation of our natural resources than ourselves today. I know of an old Planter in Ratnapura District who had planted over a thousand Nadun trees along the gullies, ravines, drains and streams in his property. I saw them about the year 1963 or so: they were then worth about 5000/- per tree. Even "the natives" were encouraged to plant Hora, Singhala del, Hul, Nadun along the streams in the district particularly in Naboda, Tebuwana etc. There was no publicity then, yet they did a conscientious job to preserve our national wealth and not hand over a desert when the time came for them to go. They set up a planned Agricultural Industry on which we depend very heavily for our subsistence at this very moment, thanks to their foresight.

The Britisher, to whom we should be grateful for introducing these crops and leaving behind a wealth of expertise, know-how, and a well managed plantation sector, planned the exploitation of the forest lands methodically. According to his experience some crops could not be grown in too wet an area so he reserved them as forests. Some areas now coming under the development scheme were found to be too wet for rubber—May be 90 days in a year of 365 days is not enough to maintain a labour force. So they left such areas in jungle.

Mulberry is a new crop to us. It is not grown for the berry. It is grown for its leaves to feed the silk worms. Those who are in the business known that wet leaves cannot be fed to the Silk worms. With the reported rainfall intensities, the leaf may be more often wet than dry. This is of no concern to any. There is money for the developer.

WITH SUCH HEAVY RAINFALL a very effective cover crop and a well maintained system of "catch drains" to conserve the soil, maintain soil fertility, prevent soil erosion and damaging the crops in the valleys, are necessary and should be included in a development plan, even if we agree for a moment that the integrated plan can be justified. These are measures that a peasant cannot be forced to do. We have not succeeded so far. When the Britisher was responsible, any recalcitrant planter who neglected to adopt these measures and caused damage to the bottom lands was hauled up before the courts punished and made to pay compensation. The report also refers to the problem of damage without preventive measures is mentioned by the panel of experts. We suppose, they cannot go beyond as the ball is in another court, with another panel of experts who do not understand the hazards of such devastation of our forest cover. Their understanding is:— There is money to spend, How shall we spend it, while the going is good, destruction will be on us on another birthday. The basic scheme is estimated to cost 271 million rupees and in terms of the Finance Minister's forecast it may add up to 540,000,000 rupees. The reason for pushing ahead with the plan is "But there has been no increase in the land brought under new plantations for the last 20 years. Therefore it is imminently important to bring new lands under plantation schemes." Apart from the obvious weakness of the argument, the report does not say that there are

no other lands private or public except these reserves for development in Kalutara District, and that is why there has been no land development activities in the district. And to develop these water-shed reserves will increase the poverty of the people rather than benefit them. The report continues: "The General occupation of the people is cultivation of paddy." "The district records the lowest yields in the Island—29 bushels per acre." But why so low? The question has not been raised or explained. May be, because the target is to spend 271 million rupees in ten years. That is the target which will give immediate opportunities to the developers to earn quick money and nothing to the peasant. The approved percentage of profits to developers is 35%, so there will be around 10 million rupees available annually to be shared like "Ali-Babba and his forty thieves". Of course 10 millions are peanuts in terms of the current Government spending spere.

IT HAS NOT OCCURRED to the experts that yields are low because of frequent floods, silting, and flood damage to crops, due to heavy rainfall. Also that paddy cultivation is not the main source of their income—The major section of the population are wage earners. One could not create from such a group an agricultural community, nor an efficient small holders of tea, rubber or mulberry granting that growing mulberry is profitable.

So on these flimsy ideas, theories, and concepts of development, integrated or otherwise, we will be spending to destroy what the Britisher in his wisdom left as reserves to protect the interests of the natives while he took the major shares. As mentioned in the report, the forest lands which were denuded over the years of its forest cover should be put back into forest and not under mulberry, tea or rubber. The country is dangerously low in timber resources, we are importing building timber to meet the current demands, we do not have high class timber like Ebony, satin, and teak nor suitable timber for reepers etc. When "the burning of Sri Lanka" in the Mahaweli area is over we may be just left with reeds as in Ethiopia.

Save Kalutara District from the Integrated Development Scheme and put back the 35,000 Acres into forest trees like Nadun, Hora, Singhala Del, Hal, etc. should be the

crop. Do not do it to spite the Britisher who left these reserves, nor cut the nose to spite the face. If earning a quick buck is the motivation there are other avenues to earn this without punishing the 759,000 people in Kalutara district. We hope His Excellency the President will intervene to save the ten per cent forest Reserve left untouched by the Britisher to save our people who were living amidst his plantations.

In the wake of the proposed destruction of Kalutara District, there was, on 18.9.80 a dedication Page in the *Ceylon Daily News*, with a quotation from the Preachings of Gautama Buddha, extolling the value of trees and Forests. The irony of it is, we say these things with blatant insincerity to catch the eye of the Powers that be, for self-gain. However it is amazing that such individuals believe that by these things, a praise here, a "yes sir" there, folded palms here and there, they can win their future happiness.

I cannot refrain but repeat the story of two robbers who went to church to pray for mercy and to save them from punishment. One offered his humble prayer and supplication for mercy. Other promised to Gift an image of the God in gold if they were to be saved. His companion on overhearing this "promise to gift a gold image" asked him "how are we going to do it, we were caught robbing because we had no money to buy the food and now you promise to make a gift in Gold". The other replied, "Okkoma boru machan", "apite berenne thamai ona", It is the same motivation behind the adulations we read in the press.

OFFICIAL EXCHANGE RATES

Official Exchange Rates of Commercial Banks to their customers for Telegraphic Transfers fixed on Tuesday this week were as follows:—

CURRENCY	PER 100 UNITS	
	Buying Rate	Selling Rate
U.S. Dollar	Rs. 1719.50	Rs. 1722.50
Sterling Pound	Rs. 4102.00	Rs. 4108.00
Deutsche Mark	Rs. 950.20	Rs. 951.80
French Franc	Rs. 409.65	Rs. 410.35
Japanese Yen	Rs. 8.2275	Rs. 8.2425
Indian Rupees	Rs. 220.80	Rs. 221.20

THE ACTC VIEW

Development Councils

G. G. Ponnambalam Jr.

We publish in three parts the talk at the Centre for Society & Religion at the weekly Seminar Series on **DEPENDENT CAPITALISM & DEMOCRATIC SOCIALISM** on 03.09.1980 on *The Development Councils Act* by G. G. Ponnambalam Jr. General Secretary, All Ceylon Tamil Congress. (ACTC)

ANY SCHEME OF LEGISLATION that will provide for greater economic development of the various areas of this country must be heartily welcomed. But, will the Development Councils, as envisaged in this Act, which are being set up for the purposes of accelerating economic development activity in a District through its Executive Committee and its District Minister, achieve its purposes? Are these Councils so autonomous and independent as to be able to indulge in planning and co-ordination for economic development of those areas? Are the Development Councils local bodies? Do these Councils permit of decentralisation of administration? Will these Councils help the Tamil speaking people and their traditional areas, or is there a possibility that these Councils can act to their detriment? These are important questions that come up for consideration on an analysis of the Development Councils Act.

To my mind, the most important and illuminating provisions in the whole Act are contained in Sections 16 & 34. That the Councils have absolutely no initiative in formulating schemes for development, let alone 'accelerated development', of their districts, that the council is not the focus of development planning is amply shown up by these sections. For, amongst the functions of the Councils is the *Approval* of the annual development plan submitted to it by the Executive Committee (Section 16(1)(a)). The word 'approval' shows that the drawing up of the annual development plan is the business of somebody outside the Council and its Committee, as only

the implementation of the plan is by the Committee (Section 16(1)(b) and 34(d)). Section 34(a) says that the Committee can consider the draft development proposals prepared by the 'appropriate Minister' (a person outside the Council) in respect of all or any of the subjects specified in the First Schedule to the Act. What is more, such proposals, together with other proposals that might be formulated by the Committee in consultation with the 'appropriate Minister' are embodied in what is called the annual development plan which is then sent to the Minister of Local Government, who, thereafter, sends it to the Council for its approval (Sections 34(a) and 38(1)).

Surely, these provisions put paid to the arguments that the Councils are able, as independent and autonomous bodies, to address their minds to the development of their districts. On the contrary, the Council and its Committee will be acting, in this respect, somewhat as a rubber stamp. It would seem that a Council can draft a development scheme in respect of any subject not included in the schedule. But this must be submitted for the approval of both the Minister of Local Government and the appropriate Minister (Section 16(1)(e)). Even if approved, which is purely discretionary, it will be subject to certain terms and conditions (Section 16(2)). But if this scheme is one which does not meet with the approval of the Ministers or is contrary to the governmental policy, there is no chance of it being approved and the scheme would therefore have to fall by the wayside.

NOWHERE IN THE ACT does one find the definition of 'annual development plan'. It would seem that this 'plan' is an amalgam of bits and pieces of 'plans' submitted by various Ministers under whom the subjects in the First Schedule come. Even though there is an impressive list of subjects in the First Schedule, one does not know whether the annual development plan for a District will embrace many projects concerning the subjects in the First Schedule or just a few. In this respect there is every chance that some areas might be discriminated against in that political considerations may distort the choice of projects and resource allocations. Furthermore, no-

where in the Act is there provision for the Councils to indicate as of right their preference to the authorities regarding the schemes or works they wish to have to develop their areas. Of course, there is section 42 which says that it is in the discretion of the Council to approve with amendments or modifications all or any of the items in the annual development plan or to add any item to it. If there is any form of alteration to the plan sent to the Council by the Minister of Local Government after it has been approved by the Committee, it would seem that it will have to be sent again to the authorities for consideration. There is no provision in the Law to say that the authorities will necessarily accept the alterations at that stage. *How then can any Council decide on any piece of development and then have it implemented. The members of the Council become a mere non-vocal audience in any development process.*

That the Ministers would forward to the Councils various national development programmes and projects and allocate funds and expect them to be executed is therefore amply shown by Sections 16 and 34. Under this Act, planning and preparation of projects, and the determination of local and district priorities will lie with the 'appropriate Minister'. It is they who will determine employment oriented projects. The Councils will be impotent in making a survey of the resources and development potential of the areas and prepare a plan of development for the District. The Councils are not the centre piece for planning and project formulation. This Act does not give the Councils any form of planning exercise. They cannot initiate capital works of a local nature. *This Act will not enable the people to participate in the discussions of policy. The Councils will not be able to steer their own destiny or to exercise their own will. In short, it would seem that the Councils are devoid of any initiative or power.*

IF THE COUNCILS have no initiative in drawing up development schemes, how are these Councils different from the District Co-ordinating Committees. These Committees, that have the Government Agent as its head, include all Members of Parliament in that Dis-

trict and all local heads of Government Departments. These Committees co-ordinate and review the implementation of Government programmes in the District. This being so, is this Law only a ruse to substitute 'elected members' for the local heads of departments? Perhaps, this is the democratization the advocates of this Act are seeking.

Perhaps this is what they mean by 'peoples participation.' They want to ensure pressure not merely of members of Parliament but also of the 'elected members.' Or, is this Law being brought only to give a constitutional and legal standing to the concept of District Political Authority or District Minister, as were said by the President to the delegation of bhikkhus and laymen who met him on the 20th of August 1980?

Does this Act make provision for the Government to give sufficient funds, expertise and equipment to these Councils? Any development will be subject to these being available. A large proportion of the monies going into the Development Fund will in turn depend on the largesse of Parliament (Section 18(2) (e)), the Cabinet (Section 25), the grants by the 'appropriate Minister' in consultation with the Minister of Local Government (Section 18(2)(f)). Even the loans which the Council wishes to raise to implement the annual development plan and for the other purposes must first win the approval of the Ministers of Local Government and Finance (Sections 18(2)(g) 26, 29, and 35(h)). If there is no approval, some portion of the plan will have to be abandoned. Even the rates, taxes, duties fees and other charges which a Council has power to levy and which augment the Fund, will in turn have to be approved by the Ministers of Local Government and Finance and confirmed by Parliament, (Section 24). Even so insignificant a matter as the choice of a Bank to lodge the money of the Fund will depend on the Ministers of Local Government and Finance (Section 19). Investments of monies from the fund will have to be approved by the Ministers of Local Government and Finance (Section 20). If the Minister of Local Government has to sanction in writing even expenditure below Rs. 2000/- for a public ceremony (Section 21(1)(g)), one can imagine

to what extent the Council is free to spend money on any venture which it decides on. There does not seem to be that degree of freedom in the exercise of discretion in regard to expenditure.

There is no financial independence. Even the monies payable to officers who work for the Council will have to be determined by the Minister of Local Government (Sections 21(1)(i) and 35 (b)). Indeed, it is for this reason that the President says that Municipal Council has the power to spend the money they collect, but the Development Councils do not even have the power! What is more, at each meeting of the Council, its Chairman will have to submit a statement of receipts and expenditure for the previous month which has to be promptly despatched to the Auditor-General. Further the Council has, diligently, to report to the Minister of Local Government at the end of each year about its administration and the state of its finances (Section 49).

These provisions remind me of societies in schools, which, I dare say, work with greater freedom and are not treated so childlike! The Minister of Local Government has some hold on the Council, again, through the Auditor, Section 52(1)). An amendment in Parliament to Section 18(h) says that into Fund could go any donations or other assistance made generally or for any specified project with the approval of the Minister. This means that individuals or organisations are open to donate. This provision will surely open the flood gates to a lot of corruption. Section 45 shows that the Councils will have to spend within the budget even in the case of necessity. This means that if in a year a project is found to need more money than allotted to it, then monies voted for other projects will have to be utilised for this project. Therefore, there will be no money for those other projects. To this extent the development is retarded and the government will not come to its rescue. If the Councils have to rely to a great extent on these grants, they would be subject to a considerable amount of Parliamentary and central control. This undermines initiative and vitality.

(To be Continued)

The DDCs

Below we publish an article entitled "The Development Councils Farce" from the *Forward* (1/9/80), the journal of the Communist Party of Sri Lanka (CPSL), by its Political Correspondent.

THE HURRIED and surreptitious way in which the UNP government introduced and rushed through its Development Councils Bill itself belies its claim that this new law represents a great extension of grass-roots democracy. The government has claimed that the present law is largely the work of President Jayewardene personally. He is supposed to have "torn up" the report of the Tennekoon Commission which he had appointed to make proposals on this matter and made his own draft after discussion with the TULF leader, Mr. Amirthalingam.

While the emergency and the press censorship were in force, the draft Bill (declared "urgent" even though work on it had been going on since 1978) was placed before the Supreme Court, which was asked to report on its constitutionality within 24 hours. No member of the public and, indeed, hardly any member of Parliament knew the contents of the Bill at this stage. They could not, therefore, make any representations about it. Holding that certain clauses of the draft Bill were unconstitutional, the Supreme Court recommended that the people should be consulted through a referendum. Rejecting this, the government dropped the disputed clauses. The law was presented to Parliament on August 8th while the emergency was still on, and debated to a finish on August 22nd, six days after the emergency ended. Only after this were copies of the new law available to the public.

THUS THE PEOPLE were presented with a *fait accompli*. They could not even see the Bill until it had been passed. And even if they had succeeded in doing so, there was very little they could effectively have done about it, for the press was censored and public meetings banned under the emergency. The two main claims made on behalf of the new law are that it (a) decentralises and democ-

ralises the administration so as to give the people of different districts greater and more direct control over administrative functions that affect their daily lives; and (b) helps towards a solution of the problems of the national minorities, especially the Sri Lanka Tamil nationality. **Both these claims are false. In fact, the very opposite is the case.**

The claim that the law decentralises and democratises the administration has been refuted by no less a person than the Bill's author, President J. R. Jayewardene himself. An official handout from the President's Secretariat published in the *Daily News* (21/8) quotes him as saying: "The Development Councils possess only constitutional powers. The executive power is with the District Minister. Before this every government expected to create District Councils with executive power. But these Development Councils do not enjoy executive powers. **They do not have the powers that even the Municipal Councils, Urban Councils, and Town Councils possess.** In this way the executive powers of control of the Development Councils are in the hands of the District Minister and the Executive Committee chosen by the President, **without whose consent these Councils have no power to do anything.** If the need arises, the President can dismiss or change all three parties."

With brutal frankness, President Jayewardene had thus made it clear that the proposed Development Councils will be run in the way he wants, by a majority of persons whom he appoints, can be dismissed or changed at will, and cannot do anything unless he agrees to it. The most they can do is to make recommendations for the consideration of himself and his nominees.

BUT THIS IS NOT the whole story. In fact, the Development Councils will mean that the people in the districts will have **EVEN LESS POWERS** of control over the administration of their own affairs than they have at present. (1) In November 1978, when it was decided to set up Development Councils, the UNP government by decree abolished all Village Councils and Town Councils for ever. Despite their limited powers, these Councils were those closest to the people and a basic feature of democracy in Sri Lanka at grass-roots level. They had become a medium through which the people, through their elected representatives, not only looked after their

immediate affairs but expressed their views on important matters of the day. This was one reason why these Councils were so disliked by the UNP which seldom fared well in elections to them.

(2) The Development Councils, which take their place, will consist of (a) the District Minister, (b) the MPs of the area (ex-officio members) and (c) elected members, whose total number should be LESS than the ex-officio members. The President will decide how many elected members each Development Council will have, irrespective of the size of the district or its population. The law also does not spell out the process by which the elected members will be chosen. Indeed, it does not even state that they should be elected by universal franchise!

(3) The Tennekoon Commission's report, however, does give some indication of what to expect. As Mr. Maithripala Senanayake MP pointed out in Parliament, it will reduce sizably the participation of the people in this process. The Kandy district, with a population of 1,263,000 people, will have only 15 elected representatives instead of the 794 elected members in local authorities at present. In the Galle district, with a population of 789,000, there will be 10 elected representatives instead of the present 502.

There is no need to labour the point further. Far from making the administration more democratic and decentralised, the new law restricts still further the existing democratic process of local government and **increases the authoritarian power of President Jayewardene**. It marks a return to the colonial form of over-centralisation of power in a neo-colonialist guise.

Another disquietening feature of the new law is Clause 26, which permits the Development Councils to obtain unlimited loans from foreign countries, institutions and individuals, opens the gates for the penetration of our country and its economy at grass-roots level by the trans-national corporations and the foreign capitalists. None other than the TULF leader, Mr. Amirthalingam, has made it plain that the new law will not solve the problem of the minority nationalities. "It is clear", he told Parliament on August 22nd, "that the present Bill is not

meant to be a solution to ethnic problems or an answer to the demand for a separate state."

As shown earlier, the intended Development Councils have nothing in common with regional autonomy or even a modified version of it. Although an impressive list of subjects with which the Councils can concern themselves is set out in the law, none of these can be given effect to without the consent of the President, his District Minister, and the Executive Committee dominated by his nominees. *It is also hardly likely that the Development Councils will contribute substantially towards solving the problems of the minority nationalities when their genesis was an attempt, to AVOID such a solution.*

AS IS KNOWN, President Jayewardene made the Development Councils proposal and appointed the Tennekoon Committee in order to AVOID calling the All-Parties Conference, which the UNP promised in 1977, and which may have made some constructive contribution towards a solution. The fact that the TULF, by majority, has supported the Development Councils may grant some temporary respite in communal tensions. If this happens, it is a negative benefit—which is about the best that can be said about the whole sorry business.

Of course, it is not possible to agree with Mr. Maithripala Senanayake, speaking on behalf of the SLFP in Parliament, that "The Bill that is presented now.....is yet another exercise to divide the country," The same attempt to arouse opposition to the bill on racist grounds has been made more vigorously and less subtly by the SLFP outside—especially through the *Dinakara*. This type of racist opposition is not only totally without foundation, but must also be condemned. The new law is certainly yet another attack on the democratic process, but it equally certainly does not divide the country.

In point of fact, the Development Council law is a device through which President Jayewardene personally and the UNP in general will seek to carry forward their policy of creating a united front of the capitalist forces in Sri Lanka against the working class and democratic forces. In getting the capitalist and opportunist elements in the TULF to

accept and go along with the new law, *President Jayewardene has stopped one front of opposition to himself and his government.* Of course, it is more than likely that the TULF leaders, who are now supporting President Jayewardene, will meet the same fate as they did when they linked up earlier with Dudley Senanayake—only to complain some years later that they had been “tricked and let down”. But for the time being, President Jayewardene has scored a temporary victory in his plan to bring the capitalist elements of Sri Lanka together.

It is not forgotten that President Jayewardene tried to use the Tennekoon Commission to build bridges of co-operation with capitalist and opportunist leaders of both TULF and SLFP. He has succeeded with the TULF and is likely to step up his attempts to reach similar accommodation with the SLFP through other means. As far as the progressive forces are concerned, they have to expose the deceit of the Development Councils without allowing capitalist forces to use the law to fan communal discord once again. They must continue to fight for a real decentralisation of the administration and for self-determination and regional autonomy for the Sri Lanka Tamils.

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THE DISPUTE

IRAQ – IRAN WAR

—official statements—

IRAQ'S CASE

On 17th September, 1980, H.E. Dr. Sa'adoun Hammadi, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Iraq, summoned all Heads of Arab and other Diplomatic Missions in Baghdad and placed before them the following facts:

One of the explicit conditions of the 1975 Border Agreement between Iraq and Iran was that each country must maintain good-neighbourly relations with the other. The Agreement also contained the following three Protocols:

- (1) The first Protocol defined the land border between Iraq and Iran.
- (2) The second defined the Iraqi-Iranian territorial waters at the Shatt Al-Arab on

the basis of the Al-Talook Line—which runs down the centre of the waterway's deepest channel.

- 3) The third Protocol dealt with the maintenance of border security between Iraq and Iran according to which both countries undertook to refrain from any type of enemy activity along their respective borders.

Since the new regime came to power in Iran, it broke the conditions of the 1975 Border Agreement, recommending and even encouraging hostilities between the two countries. Many responsible Iranians declared that since the Agreement was forced on Iran during the Shah's regime by imperialist influence, and since it did not represent the will of the Iranian people, Iran was no longer bound by the Agreement.

As a consequence of Iran dishonouring the Agreement, Iraq in turn considered it null and void and reverted to its original pre-1975 position at which time the whole of the Shatt Al-Arab was regarded as Iraqi territory.

Since Iraq considers every inch of its land as being a part of the Arab Homeland, both its disputed land border and territorial waters at the Shatt Al-Arab also belong to the Arab Homeland. While Iraq has no interest whatsoever in Iranian territory, it is determined to regain all its usurped lands and exercise full sovereignty over them and will repulse strongly any aggression against its lands or threat to its sovereignty in the defence, not only of its own territory, but also to protect the entire Eastern border of the Arab Homeland.

Embassy of the Republic of Iraq.

Colombo
Sept, 10 1980

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IRAN'S CASE

THE GOVERNMENT OF IRAQ has repeatedly given as the excuse for invading the territory of Iran, that the Government of Iran has broken the terms of the 1975 Algiers Accord on the Iran-Iraq border. They have further stated that they demand concessions from the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran over navigational rights on the River Arvan-Roud Shatt-Al-Arab) as the price for a ceasefire.

The statements of the Government of Iraq are completely baseless. In order to counteract the false propaganda made by the Iraqi Government, the facts of the matter must now be given, and the treacherous actions of the Iraqi government revealed in their true light.

The border dispute between Iran and Iraq has a long history dating back to the 17th Century. In more recent time, the issue first re-surfaced in 1837 when the Governor of Baghdad, under the Ottoman Empire attacked Khorramashah Port. On that occasion, the Government of Tsarist Russia and Great Britain mediated in the dispute by setting up a Commission which negotiated with both parties for several years until an agreement was reached in 1847. The agreement contained 9 Articles, some of which the Government of Iran refused to ratify. However, due to pressure from the Governments of Russia and Britain, a temporary acceptance of the agreement was forced on both Iran and Ottoman governments in 1848.

THE SITUATION REMAINED unsolved in the long term, and in 1913 a new Protocol was signed in Istanbul, after negotiations in London between the Governments of Iran and the Ottoman Empire. In 1914, a Memorandum was signed, delimiting the land and river borders between the two countries, and it was confirmed by the Governments of Russia and Britain. However, certain portions of the proposed border were not ratified by the Iranian and Ottoman Governments. For example, the provision relating to the River Arvan-Roud (Shatt-Al-Arab) remained in dispute between the two countries. All the river, bar the port Khorramshahr, was placed in Ottoman territory, although Iranian sovereignty over the river was not disputed by the Ottoman Government.

In 1919, Iraq came under British rule by a League of Nations Mandate, which expired in 1929, when Iraq regained its independence. The Government of Iran agreed to grant recognition to the independent Government of Iraq on the condition that a more equitable agreement be reached on certain provisions relating to the delimitation of the frontiers between Iran and Iraq. But no agreement could be reached despite referring the matter to the League of Nations in 1934. In 1937, however, a non-interference agreement, known

as the Baghdad Pact was signed between Iran, Iraq, Turkey and Afghanistan. The Government of Iran signed the agreement, despite the fact that the Pact made no reference to Iran's sovereignty over the River-Arvan-Roud (Shatt-Al-Arab). It was informally decided however, that both Governments' would have equal rights of navigation and equal control over the management of the River. In 1969, the Government of Iran abrogated the 1937 Baghdad Pact after the Government of Iraq had repeatedly broken Articles 4 and 5 relating to joint control and management of the River Arvan-Roud (Shatt-Al-Arab) and had violated International Law.

THE DISPUTE continued until 1975, when through the mediation of the Algerian President, Boumedienne, at an OPEC meeting of Heads of State in Algeria, an Accord was reached on the Iran-Iraq frontier question between the Heads of State of Iran and Iraq. This was known as the 1975 Algiers Accord. The Accord was later expanded into a Protocol based on the delimitation of land borders agreed in the 1913 Protocol and the subsequent Memorandum of 1914. In October 1975, the Irani-Iraqi Convention on frontiers was signed. This convention comprised five agreements. Three of them referred to minor matters like frontier guardsmen, grazing of cattle and settlement of dues between the two countries nationals. The most important agreement was that relating to navigational rights in the River Arvan-Roud (Shatt-Al-Arab). Under the terms of this agreement, Iraq and Iran bettles the controversy by recognising the delimitation of "Talweg", or the deepest part of the river, as the border between Iran and Iraq. This agreement terminated the dispute by finally agreeing on the dualist principle in regard to the control and management of the River.

The Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran fervently denies any Iraqi accusation, based on blatant lies and baseless propaganda, that Iran has in any degree infringed the 1975 Agreement.

On the contrary, it is Iraq which has consistently perverted the terms of the Agreement in respect of land and river borders. However, despite Iraqi provocation in breaking the terms of the 1975 Agreement, the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran wished and still wishes to solve the problem

by peaceful means. But it is the Government of Iraq, which has resorted quite unprovoked, to force and naked aggression, using as an excuse allegations against Iran in connection with the 1975 Agreement.

It is Iraq which has invaded Iran, and tried to alter the land border which was agreed in 1913 and 1914, and reconfirmed in 1975. It is Iraq which has claimed full rights over the River Arvan-Roud (Shatt-Al-Arab), contrary to the principle of "Talweg" agreed in the 1975 Accord, and it is Iraq which on September 17th abrogated the Agreement, prior to an invasion of Iranian territory. The Iraqi aggressor is only trying to disguise his intentions and confuse world opinion. Iraq has invaded Iran not because of the 1975 Agreement. It has an altogether different aim in view, an aim which breaks every principle of non-interference and non-aggression agreed upon by the Non-Aligned Movement and the civilised nations of the World.

The Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran calls upon all Governments and all Muslims to condemn the flagrant Iraqi invasion in the most unmistakable terms.

Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran.
Colombo.
Sept. 29, 1980

FILM CORPORATION—2

Re-Thinking Essential

by Anura Bandaranaike

Films and the State Film Corporation have been very much in the news recently. The debate in Parliament on September 2, 1980 on some amendments to the State Film Corporation Act, No. 47 of 1971, threw a great deal of light on the working of the Corporation. An outstanding contribution was the speech made by Mr. Anura Bandaranaike, (Second Member Nuwara-Eliya-Maskeliya). We publish this speech in full in two parts. The second part appears this week. We have taken the report from the Hansard, Vol. II No. 9 of Sept. 2, 1980.

THE OTHER POINT I would like to raise

is about the 'hold-over figures'. Hold-over figures are specified amounts of money which films must make over a specified amount of time. If the film does not bring in that amount of money, that film is removed from that circuit. As far as I can see, without any logical reason, the Chairman of the Film Corporation suddenly raised the hold-over figure to Rs. 17,000 and a film had to make this sum of Rs. 17,000 in four days. You have to make Rs. 17,000 in four days, and if you do not the film is taken off that particular circuit! This has placed the local producer in a very difficult situation, because only a few films like "Ganga Addara" make that amount of money. The average Sinhala film cannot make Rs. 17,000 in four days. The only explanation I can give to this is that the Corporation wants to get through the long queue of films soon. That may be a noble idea, but it is practised in the wrong way. You cannot rush through a cinema queue like running through the O.P.D. queue. You have to have a rationale, a sensible basis, on which to operate and show these films. You cannot suddenly step up the price and say, "If you do not get this Rs. 17,000 in four days, off your film goes from the circuit". It is very unfair, Sir. It caused a lot of hardship to the directors of the local film industry.

The alternative as the hon. Second Member for Colombo Central has pointed out quite rightly, is not to find a system where you can rush through the queue like this irregularly, but to build more cinemas in this country. There is a long queue of films awaiting release, and the only way they can reach their audience is by having more cinemas in the country. Let us see what you have done about it.

The Chairman of the Film Corporation, Mr. Anton Wickremasinghe, is a friend of mine and I have nothing against the poor man, but the way he is running the Film Corporation is absolutely disastrous. This old man, Sir, he made some very good films. He is a good friend of mine. He always looks after me, takes me for dinner and so on. Apart from that, I think, the way he runs the Film Corporation is utterly questionable. He stated at a press conference he called, that the Government is going to build one hundred odd cinemas by the year 1983. I do not know when, but he said this sometime ago. Three years have passed and only some 6 or 7 cinemas

have been built! You must accelerate that like the Mahaweli. My point is, if your target was to build more cinemas why did you not go ahead with it? Do not make grand promises that you are going to build one hundred cinemas in six years. You would not even build 20 cinemas by the time the end of your term of office comes. This kind of irresponsible statements coming from the Chairman only heightens the disillusionment in the Film Corporation.

THE OTHER POINT I want to make is this. There is no supervision or control of policy. There is a zero control of policy. The Chairman may be a good-hearted gentleman. I am not denying that. That is not enough. Where would the good-heartedness take the Corporation? You have to set the pattern and the rationale on which you operate. You cannot discriminate; you cannot allow things to drift. You cannot take more and more power into your hands and let the Corporation go to damn! You cannot do that. *Therefore, I would urge the Government to re-think their entire policy on the Film Corporation instead of changing names and doing things like that.*

The other matter I want to raise is with regard to the film stores. It is rather a serious matter because the local film industry is in difficult straits. During the time of the last Government there were what were called the film stores. The main function of a film store was to take back the films after their first release, to go through the films, repair any damage that may have been caused to the films after the first release and to release to the rural cinemas a whole film. But, after this government came into power film stores ceased to function. Between the first release and the second release there is no supervision of the condition of the films.

Recently certain people who were shooting a film at Embilitiya in the Kolonne Electorate had in the evening gone to see a Sinhala film. The duration of this film in Colombo had been two hours and thirty minutes but at Embilipitiya it had been one hour and twenty-five minutes. That means much damage had been done to this film; they had removed chunks of it and what was shown was utter nonsense for there was no story there was no continuity. It was an absolute mash of rubbish that had been shown. There had been no checks. During the period of our Govern-

ment this whole process had been gone through, but during the period of this Government it had not been so, and as a result the rural cinemagoers are discriminated against. I would seriously urge the Government and particularly the President to re-establish the film store and go through every film between the first and the second release.

NOW, SIR, the other Clause which we find rather awkward and embarrassing is Clause 8, Clause 8 says: "63A (1) No suit for prosecution shall lie—(a) against the Corporation for any act which in good faith is done or purported to be done by the Corporation under this Act; or (b) against any member, officer, servant or agent of the Corporation for any act which in good faith is done or purported to be done by him under this Act or on the direction of the Board of Directors."

What we object to this is that it will regularise the improper conduct and give legal sanctity to various improper decisions taken by the Corporation. This was not there before and perhaps this Government has thought it best to bring in this amendment because the former Minister of Justice, Mr. Felix R. Dias Bandaranaike, at this moment, has filed an injunction against the Film Corporation with regard to the film called "Sagarayak meda". This was probably introduced after Mr. Felix R. Dias Bandaranaike decided to sue the Corporation. I do not know whether it has retrospective effect.

(Mr. Speaker): I think you are treading on dangerous ground.

Mr. Anura Bandaranaike: I am not.

Mr. Speaker: You are trying to do it now.

Mr. Anura Bandaranaike: I never tread on dangerous ground.

The other important matter I wish to raise is this. It is a practice that was there during the last Government which the present Government has abandoned. That is the 100 per cent financing of a film by the Film Corporation. During the SLFP Government we had a scheme under which the corporation moved in and financed a film 100 per cent. The film was financed entirely with the corporation's money. This Government has abandoned that practice.

I should like to draw attention to two films produced during the last Government's regime which were financed 100 per cent

by the corporation. One was "Handaya" which recently won a coveted award in Rome. The corporation made no attempt to help the producer and the director of this film to take it to Rome. It was taken entirely on the initiative of the producer. The corporation gave maximum publicity in the press to the film being 100 per cent financed by the corporation but did not mention a word about having done away with the scheme of 100 per cent financing introduced by the last government. You abandoned that policy, but today you say that this was a film that was produced with 100 per cent financing by the corporation. This kind of dubious behaviour by the corporation should not be allowed to pass without question. The people of this country, particularly those involved in the film industry are not fools.

Another film which carried away many of the Presidential Awards recently was "Palangetiyo". This film was also produced with 100 per cent financing by the Corporation. These two illustrations clearly show what advantages 100 per cent financing has in the local film industry.

Coming to another very important aspect, it is interesting to see the profits position of the corporation during the last two or three years. Before 1977 the profits of the corporation nearly doubled year by year. There was 60 per cent return on capital. In 1978 you had a profit of nearly Rs. 12 million. In 1979 the profit dropped to Rs. 7.5 million, a drop of 4.5 million. That was in spite of the 40 per cent increase in the rates of cinema tickets. If you had not increased the rates of cinema tickets, your profit would have dropped to about Rs. 4 million. That would have been a drop of Rs. 8 million compared to 1978.

WHAT IS THE REASON for this? I think this is the opportune time for those in the UNP Government to examine the reasons why the corporation is in this state, why the profit is going down in spite of an increase in the rates of cinema tickets.

Once again I would like to tell the Government that it is useless changing names, changing one name to another. It is pointless transferring the executive functions of the general manager to the chairman when the

chairman has already forfeited his functions. Instead of decentralizing, you are concentrating more functions in the chairman, who does not know how to exercise his functions.

Clause 4 of the Bill refers to control and supervision of film studios. There are no film studios today in this country except one. Ceylon Studios has closed down. Vijaya Studios of Hendala is about to close down. The corporation's studio is virtually not functioning. So what is there to control and supervise? You have no film studios to supervise at all. So, this amendment to control and supervise film studios is meaningless as things stand because there are no studios at all to control.

FINALLY, I would like to draw attention to six promises that the National Film Corporation made during the last three years. Six things were promised but not one was done. *Firstly*, they promised to establish new studios—to construct them newly. Nothing has been done about that. *Secondly*, they promised to process colour films locally. Nothing has been done about that. *Thirdly*, they were going to give credit to people who propose to produce colour films. Nothing has been done about that either. *Fourthly*, they were to build a National Film Complex. I think they have started on the work but I would like to know how far they have progressed. *Fifthly*, 106 new cinemas were to be constructed in three years. They have completed six in three years. *Sixthly*, they promised to encourage quality local Sinhala films. Far from encouraging, they have completely discouraged local quality Sinhala films in the way I stated at the beginning of my speech giving the example of "Ganga Addara"—how badly and ill-advisedly they pulled it out of the Majestic Circuit to give way to a trashy American film.

I would like to conclude by saying once again that this Amendment is useless, it will serve no logical purpose because the Chairman of the Corporation has abrogated his powers to God knows whom, and the Corporation is just drifting on a free-wheel basis without any supervision and no set procedure in regard to various issues.

I urge the Government to treat the malaise without changing names, without changing pillows to cure a headache. Go into work-

the working of the Corporation and try to remedy its defects. Otherwise the local film industry, which has already gone from bad to worse—tremendous disillusionment has set in the local film industry—will be killed finally. We are prepared to give the fullest assistance to lift the local film industry from its dormant state because our objects are the same. So, I would seriously urge upon the Government not to confer more powers on the Chairman but to go into the entire working of it, find the defects and remedy them.

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A COMPARATIVE STUDY

Salaries Of Academic Staff Of The Universities

by A Special Correspondent

THE SALARY STRUCTURE of academic staff of the Universities of Sri Lanka have remained substantially unaltered from 1968. Since then there have been several revisions of salaries granted to officers in the administrative grades of the government as well as officers in state corporations and statutory bodies, all of whom draw most of their staff, like the University, from a common pool of university graduates. Even though there has been considerable agitation among the academic staff, their request for an appropriate revision of salaries has gone unheeded. The resultant frustration, exacerbated by the alarming drop in real incomes, has been one of the main reasons for a large number of academics going abroad. The extent of this frustration can be measured by one incident—an advertisement for posts in the University of Sokoto in Nigeria drew over 180 applications from all the universities in Sri Lanka.

The main purpose of this note is not to make an elaborate survey of the theories of salary determination or of the movement of salaries of University and other sectors in terms of real wages but merely to compare University salary structures with two other salary plans—one approved by the Central Bank Authorities in June 1980 for their staff and the other prepared by the NIBM for officials in the Corporations under the Ministry of

Industries. The note assumes that, within the present economic systems, wage differentials are a prime element of motivation and that a sense of relative deprivation can have frustrating consequences.

THE UNIVERSITY SALARY STRUCTURE is as follows: Assistant Lecturer Rs. 800-920; Lecturer Grade II Rs. 1,100-1,300; Lecturer Grade I, 1,350-1,700; Associate Professor, 1,600-1,850 and Professor, 1,750-2,175. With the statutory additions of the special allowance of Rs. 90 payable in terms of Treasury Circular No. PWP 2 of 8 June 1979, the 10% of the salary payable per month in terms of the decision of the Cabinet dated 10.1.79 and the supplementary allowance of Rs. 55 per month payable in terms of Public Administration Circular letter No. 329 of 8.10.79 the total emoluments will work out as follows. It is to be noted that, university academic do not receive cost of living, rent or marriage allowances: Assistant Lecturer, Rs. 1,025-1,157; Lecturer Grade II, 1,355-1,575; Lecturer Grade I, 1,630-2,015; Associate Professor 1,905-2,180 and Professor, 2,070-2,537.50.

It has to be further noted that these salary scales are not automatic time scales. An assistant lecturer must spend five years in that grade and must within that time obtain post-graduate qualifications—either a Master's degree or doctorate. It is becoming increasingly difficult for most young assistant lecturers to make arrangements for obtaining these qualifications, without which he will not be promoted to the lecturer grade; this means that there are assistant lecturers who are stagnating at the maximum of their grades. A lecturer Grade II must spend six years and a lecturer grade I 8 years in their respective grades before promotion. Since merit promotions to a higher grade are available only under very stringent conditions, this means that, under normal circumstances, an assistant lecturer must spend in the service of the University 20 years from the date of his recruitment to reach the grade of Associate Professor—the initial of which is Rs. 1,600!

The salary levels approved for the staff grades of the Central Bank are set out in Annexure 1 and the structures now under consideration for the Ministry of Industries in Annexure II. The salaries indicated therein for the Central Bank have to be increased by

the additions of all the statutory allowances referred to earlier, a cost of living allowance of Rs. 181.30 equated to the cost of living index as at 31.12.79 with additional allowances of Rs. 2.50 per month per point of subsequent increases, a rent subsidy of 20% subject to a maximum of Rs. 300 per month and a married allowance of Rs. 100. The Ministry of Industries salaries will have added to them only the statutory allowances.

THE FOLLOWING TABLE attempts a comparison of these salary structures at levels that are generally comparable, in terms of qualifications and seniority. As far as the Ministry of Industries' salaries are concerned, we have taken these fixed for scientific staff as being the most appropriate for comparison.

University:

Assistant Lecturer (a graduate with a good class)	1,025.00
Lecturer Grade II	1,355.00
Lecturer Grade I	1,630.00
Associate Professor	1,905.00
Professor	2,070.00

Ministry of Industries:

Grade V (a graduate)	1,245.00
Grade IV "	1,520.00
Grade III "	2,070.00
Grade II "	2,345.00
Grade I "	2,895.00
Special Grade	3,720.00

Central Bank:

Probation Staff Officer (a graduate with a good class)	1,606.80
Staff Officer Grade I	1786.30
Staff Officer Grade III (including marriage allowance of Rs. 100)	3,201.30
Staff Officer Grade IV	3,586.30
Special Grade	3,861.30
Deputy Governor	4,136.30

Note: 1. The Comparisons are made at the initial of each scale. 2. All allowances have been added. 3. Other benefits enjoyed in both the Ministry of Industries and the Central Bank such as bonuses amounting to one or two months' salary every year, medical benefits etc., have not been quantified. Central Bank officers enjoy the benefits of both a provident fund and a pension scheme. 4. These scales have been implemented with retrospective effect as from 1 July 1979.

In order to demonstrate that the present University salaries are even below the salary structures prepared and implemented prior to 1975, we give below a table comparing these salaries with those applicable to Scientific and Administrative Services of Sri Lanka. These services have avenues of promotion to higher ranks not specified therein; These figures too are at the initial of each scale and include all allowances now being paid.

Sri Lank Scientific Service:

Class III	860.00
Class II	1,707.00
Class I Grade II	2,037.00
Class I Grade I	2,202.00

Sri Lank Administrative Service:

Class II Grade II	893.00
Class II Grade I	1,707.00
Class I	2,037.00

As a matter of interest, we would like to refer also to salaries paid by the People's Bank. A graduate with a class joining the junior staff ranks and becoming the Manager of bank will draw the following emoluments:

Monthly salary	
inclusive of allowances	Rs. 2,800.00
Inspection allowance	350.00
	<u>3,150.00</u>

He will draw in addition a two months bonus which computed on a monthly basic will work out to Rs. 400.00

The General Manager of the People's Bank enjoys an inclusive monthly salary of Rs. 4,775. His share of the bonus comes to the equivalent of Rs. 900 per month.

In addition, officers of the bank enjoy medical benefits and low-interest loans for housing and for the purchase of cars and furniture. These benefits have been quantified at approximately Rs. 650 per month.

It is interesting to note also that a junior clerk at the bank receives a total compensation of over Rs. 1,800/- per month in monetary and non-monetary benefits.

While we are aware that inter-country comparisons of wage-levels are fraught with all manner of difficulties, we cite below some examples of salaries drawn from other under-developed countries, partly in order to emphasise the temptations to which our academic staff are subject.

Malaysia:

Lecturer (MA or PhD) £ 3,602 (Rs. 133,274)
£ 6,800 (Rs. 251,600) per annum.
Associate Professor £ 7000 (Rs. 259,000)
£ 8,000 (Rs. 296,000) per annum.

West Indies:

Lecturer £ 35,100 (Rs. 114,073) £ 44,000
(Rs. 143,000) per annum.
Professor £ 47,000 (Rs. 152,750) £ 58,500
(Rs. 190,025).

Sierra Leone:

Lecturer L£ 4,888 (Rs. 54,971) L£ 6897
(Rs. 106,773) per annum.
Senior Lecturer L£ 6,246 (Rs. 96,695)
L£ 7,601 (Rs. 117,672) per annum.

Papua—New Guinea:

Lecturer Gr. I & II K12,810 (Rs.)
K 14,660 (Rs.) per annum.

Guyana:

Asst. Lecturer G\$ 6,120 (Rs. 38,372)
G\$ 8,640 (Rs. 54,172) per annum.
Lecturer G\$ 9000 (Rs. 56,430) G\$ 14,760
(Rs. 92,545) per annum.
Senior Lecturer G\$ 12,360 (Rs. 77,497)
G\$ 18,300 (Rs. 114,741) per annum.
Professor G\$ 15,480 (Rs. 97,060) G\$ 22,680
(Rs. 142,203) per annum

Hong Kong:

Lecturer H\$ 79,920 (Rs. 268,531) H\$ 84,600
(Rs. 284,256) per annum.

Note: The above examples have been taken from advertisements in the Times Higher Education Supplement of recent months. The conversions are approximate at current rates.

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NGUYU—14

Coconuts

by Bwana Rafiki

On our two estates, the coconuts are picked by a team of pickers using long bamboo poles with a knife attached to the end, and there are six picks in a year. The nuts that the buyers reject are made into copra and a local man comes along and takes it. The coconut shells used to be used to make the fires to dry the kernels, and the shells of those

nuts become the fuel for the next copra-making two months later or whenever the next crop is sold and removed leaving the rejections. Of the rejected nuts some are good enough to be made into copra and others are not, and it has been practice on our estates to use these last as fuel instead of the previous crop's coconut shells. Now the shells are sold at Rs. 8/- per hundred, but we have never realised any money on them till this time for the shells just disappeared.

The last two crops were husked about the same time as each other and the second of these crops had a phenomenal number of rejections. It was the opinion of the Visiting Agent that the buyer of the second crop has not husked and removed all the coconuts that he might have done. The combined rejections for both crops was over five thousand nuts. From these over five hundred-weights of copra was made. There were only 1,500 coconut shells or less that a third of all the rejections I was present for the counting of only the first four hundred. The whole business sounds fishy, and I await the opinion of the Visiting Agent with interest and some impatience. In the small hours of yesterday morning I read parts of a brilliant sermon on stealing which was made by a north African a thousand five hundred years ago and I read it out of a book worth Rs. 400/-.

That was what the book cost me, and I must say that I find the book worth every cent of that. I have been reading it for weeks and I am only half way through, and I have not missed a day for fear of losing the thread of what it has to say. Yesterday I got a statement from my superintendent of the count of the rejected nuts that I spoke of, of how many hundred-weights of copra were sold out of those rejected nuts, and of the number of coconut shells that he counted of those rejections that were made into copra. He was obviously in two minds about giving this concise summary and thought deeply of the implications for him of committing himself in writing to a personal knowledge of the facts. So the whole of this short business took a little time. As far as I could make out, there was a conference on my verandah of all those who would obviously be involved in any hanky-panky if there has really been any at all.

August, but we have been having much rain. There are really two estates here. Mine

does not use fertilizer, or *ratta para* as they say in Sinhalese and the only concession it makes is to use with the cowdung and green manure, that is, weeds slashed that day and the slashings from fences, five pounds of common salt per tree. The other estate uses fertilizer, and as we missed putting it down during the southwest monsoon we hope to take advantage of this off-season rain to do so. The grazing and fodder grass on my estate is insufficient for all the cattle I carry, and so we take advantage of the juxtaposition of the other estate for both. In fact, when the estate was divided up, the cattle sheds fell on the side of the other estate but close to the boundary, a matter of a few yards. Also the dairy well, a little further off. Now two acres has been demarcated by a surveyor round this area and part of the land on which the cattle are tied at night.

Well, Rs. 5,750 has gone for five tons of fertilizer. That was for the other estate. On my estate this week I have had to ask for the staggering sum of about Rs. 1,750/- which is Rs. 500 for advances to the workforce, over Rs. 500 for poonac, Rs. 200 for salt, Rs. 100 for the bungalow, Rs. 100 as a loan, Rs. 100 for contingencies and nearly Rs. 250 for other payments. This in a week that does not include the payment of balance wages. The requisition for the other estate came to less than Rs. 200, a much happier state of affairs I thought. I received money for tamarind that I sold. Much work went into collecting it and drying it, but we had stored it so long, weevils had attacked it. There was over two hundred-weights of tamarind and it seemed a pity to throw it away. We realized the sum of Rs. 100, by no means a princely sum. We have still to sell our arecanuts.

The rather detailed account here of a section of our finances must have made rather tedious reading. All that hit about coconut shells was about only one of the estates. I will not go into the seemingly same scandalous state of affairs on the other estate which took a different turn, except to say that the shells which disappeared in two days were said to have been used as fuel to make the copra on the estate I have already spoken about, copra which was said to have not been dried properly inspite of the phenomenal number of husks used or said to have been used by the no-so-experienced man who dried the copra

that week-end. A newly calved cow had a bad attack of mastitis on her udder and three treatments of Terramycin has almost cured it. She will have one more dose tomorrow, the dose being a whole tube of ointment squirted into the infected teat.



GRAMA SASTRA—24

—Scribblings On Uva Villages

The Mud - Alali

by Gamiya

YOU CAN CALL IT what you like, but the mudalali comes from *mud*-spelt m-u-d, 'mud, and *alali* (allied with): That man puts to death large numbers of people long before their death, and what do the unwary people say, and what are they made to say: "Aiyo, Mudalali mahatmayah nethnam, api sung thamai". (If not for this great-souled mudalali we are down). But wiser young men seem to say: "Velenda ta giya thena" (today the trader rules), but not for long, I tell you. Anxiety, high pressure, hypertension get him in the end, and the radio waves carry the message day after day.

I stayed into a boutique recently. Gave what I was asked for when I wanted to buy a piece of Sunlight soap, Lever brothers and all, blue and gold label. Came home and opened it, and behold inside: S-U-N-I-T-H-A on the mudalali-mud principle. Write SUNita and sell it as SUNlight. I just let it go at that for the 1/75 paid. Sent for another piece without any reference to the former. There it was, marked on the outside: maximum retail price: 1/40, but he charged 1/75, for smelling old stock, that had long, dismissed the smell of Sunlight soap. Both labels are with me, and I'll send it to the editor to get these recalcitrant Ruhuna merchants who trade on the pre-1886 name of Ruhuna and suck dry the poor of present Uva. This is a brazen and most un-Buddhistic practice dictated by the theme: "Strike while the iron is hot; have it all and rake the profits while the going is good." But, my man, I'll tell you, you will come to a bad end. Read the *gandabba sutta*, your monk will tell you.

A SICK PERSON took a car recently, from milepost ten to twelve, an exact distance of two miles, and she was charged 20/- Twenty rupees and cents nil, in the lingo of banking. No wonder when the village is abandoned, there is a seething resentment underneath, and no amount of Gandhian principles and Dhammapala piety can erase half-a-line of the writing on the wall. To stem the tide is an enormous uphill task, (pardon my mixed metaphor).

Meanwhile in the small hick-towns of Uva, where white men waste their time in hill resorts adding to the burden of our people by their presence fostered by surplus profits (one told me that with half his money he can stretch it to twice his stay, whatever that means)—I know of Price Control Inspectors who reside in annexes of certain Drapery stores of Grocery stores! The rest can be easily imagined. I knew of Labour Officers (but that was two years ago and I hope the era ended), residing in hotel annexes and fraternising with sooty bakery-men who had more work on holidays than on normal days. Who is fooling whom these days?

For a Price Control man or a Labour man to charge someone who thus goes a long way to meet his bill, is like an undertaker's man trying to look sad at a 5-lakh funeral (casket to boot)!

And the small fry keep on getting caught while the big money wangles away without ever a frown, without ever a worry or wrinkle on his brow.



FILM FOCUS

TAMIL CINEMAS

A grouse that reached my ears, I wish to pass on for the eyes of His Excellency, President J. R. Jayewardene and Chairman Anton Wickremasinghe of the State Film Corporation, who hold the reins effectively on the local film industry. On the Galle Road stretch, from the Galle Face turnoff to Ratmalana end beyond, there is not a single cinema that exclusively screens Tamil films, which are to a large extent consigned to the backwoods of the Colombo South areas.

With five circuits exhibiting Sinhalese films, that are evenly distributed, it is obvious that a fair remedy is called for, and this column has no doubts that action will follow

on this spotlight. The Plaza cinema in Wellawatte which successfully screened Tamil films over the years was absorbed into one of the Sinhalese circuits, and the returns do not indicate that this change has been a wise one, for I walked into the Plaza a few days ago and witnessed a handful for the late show, while the staff on duty was almost double this number.

I might add in contrast here, that the Kalpana Theatre, which somehow screens some good Tamil films is not patronised as it should be, due to its location, away from the main routes in an area where fewer Tamils reside, and the late shows at this theatre very often run to depleted houses. The Eros Cinema does no better and I feel that a suitable switch-over based on the daily turnover, in consultation with the corresponding exhibitors should benefit both Sinhala and Tamil picture-goers in the long run.

RAJA DAWASAK (Sinhalese): Producer, Director and Cameraman Timothy Weeraratne who has to be admired for the risks he takes in film making—remember the Tamil film **Nanguram** which turned trumps—has however not been that lucky with this production, the story of which projects into a period during the reign of King Sri Wickrema Rajasinghe, who reigned righteously, but reposed his trust on a lecherous Chief Minister (Piyadasa Gunasekera) who was regularly on nocturnal prowls, seeking out beauties among the indigent subjects of the land to let off his lustful desires. Thus it was, he stumbles on the shack of pretty Ranmenika (Malini Fonseka) whom he attempts to abduct, with the royal forces Wickrema (Vijaya Kumaranatunga) stands in his way, sword and all. The whole exercise moves on at snail's pace, with several wooden characterisations, but none could be blamed for it all, for such sagas come more to life on the stage than on the screen, and have seldom been a success at the box office—remember that expensive production "God King" which failed too. Colour might have been a saver, but in black and white, it is not only the celluloid that has been wasted in this film!

MIGHTY HIMALAYAN MAN (English): There is an oriental touch to this Warner Brothers production, which swings from the Himalayan slopes in India to Hong Kong, to laylow and tame a recent King Kong, more gigantic and pre-historic, with a view to exhi-

biting him, for commercial gains, which attempt goes awry. Apart from the fleet of foot actress Evelyn Kraft, the cast is entirely Singaporean and the film is in eye-catching Panavision and colour. The towering ape is tracked down by an expedition which traces him by his YETI cast footsteps, but does not reckon with the scantily clad jungle beauty, whom the monster obeys and protects in the Jungle surroundings, only to run amok when "civilization" challenges their relationship with violence and rape, in a sophisticated milieu. Skyscrapers crumble in his angry hands as he ambles along amidst them, till all the land and Air forces in Hong Kong are mobilised to make him bite the dust, in full battle. The film was gripping while it lasted and would be double so to children—so take them along for a thrilling evening's entertainment, remembering that we lived too in their innocent and rambling world of make belief, once upon a time.

THE GAUNTLET (English): This is yet another Warner Brothers production in Panavision and colour, directed by the main actor—the tall gaunt and hunkish Clint Eastwood himself. Having stepped out of his cowboy kit, which thrust him in the public eye and earned him fame and fortune once, Clint now cashes in on the former while stacking up more of the latter, in varying roles. In this film he is a drink-sodden cop Ben Hockley, who is picked on by his boss, a depraved Commissioner of Police to wipe himself clear of his once sadistic rendezvous with a woman of easy virtue (Sandra Locke)—now behind bars on a hooker of drugs charge and in exculpating his guilty conscience attempts to bump off two "embarrassments" with a single volley of bullets. Hockley becomes a different kettle of fish, when he becomes alive to the capricious Commissioner's set up and together with the our spoken hooker taken up the gauntlet to run it down on four wheels to an ear shattering climax. The dialogue is risqué and loaded with a veneer of sex, which keeps scorching at intervals, while some action sequences are overdone to tease one's credibility. Clint, the director, is outshadowed by Clint the actor, yet I for one feel, that he should hop a horse and rattle back into West-erns, if he is to linger longer in films!

BREAKOUT (English): That rugged and

tough actor Charlec Bronson is the main attraction of this Columbia Production in colour. As the hardy Nick Colton, who is ever ready to stick his neck out as a one man mercenary, but at a heavy price, he is hired to rescue Jag Wagner (Robert Duvall) from a Mexican jail on a framed-up murder charge, by his wealthy wife (Jipp Ireland). As the helicopter operation gets under way to snatch Wagner, the plot deepens further to expose the manipulators who pull the strings in New York to have him out of the way. In this true story, Bronson steps up the tempo in his own characteristic and carefree style to carry out his assignment to the very last bullet. The conjugal visits to Mexican jails, heavy with graffiti on its walls titillate, while an unexpected decapitation on runway leaves the audience gasping. This film may not quite well be one of Bronson's best efforts, but is compact enough as a warmer on these wet evenings.

James N. Benedict

SOVIET FOREIGN POLICY

Andrei Gromyko

This is an abbreviated version of the speech made by the Soviet Foreign Minister, Andrei Gromyko, at the plenary of the 35th Session of the U.N. General Assembly.

New York, September 23,

Speaking at the plenary meeting of the 35th session of the U.N. general assembly today, the leader of the Soviet delegation, Andrei Gromyko, member of the political bureau of the CPSU central committee, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR, said, in particular, that the international situation has become complicated lately. This has been caused by an abrupt turn in the policy of the USA and a number of other NATO countries. As far back as in May 1978 the NATO countries decided to increase automatically every year their military expenditure almost up to the end of our century. In December last year they adopted a decision on the production of new U.S. medium range nuclear-missile means and on their deployment in Western Europe. This is aimed at changing the military-strategic situation to the unilateral advantage of the bloc of NATO. At the same

time Washington proclaimed its own multi-billion arms building programme. The course which the USA has chosen cannot be described in any other way than a militarist one, the leader of the Soviet delegation pointed out. It manifests itself in the so-called 'new nuclear strategy'. Under the cover of the talk about a possibility of some 'limited', 'partial' use of nuclear weapons, the talks which has nothing to do with reality, the makers of this strategy seek to instill in people's minds the idea of admissibility and acceptability of a nuclear conflict. Is not it at variance with the peoples' expectations that Washington has postponed for an indefinite time the ratification of the Soviet-U.S. strategic arms limitation treaty (SALT-2) Washington has shown that it holds cheap its assurances and promises on that score, which it made earlier.

Dealing with new developments in U.S. foreign policy, Andrei Gromyko emphasized: the methods of pressure and blackmail in the field of foreign policy make themselves felt in various parts of the globe. An undisguised violence is being applied to Iran. This is a matter of common knowledge. The U.S. actions in the Persian Gulf area jeopardize the sovereignty not only of that country but also of other countries of the area. The U.S. military presence is being built up in East Africa where new U.S. military bases are being set up in the most recent time. This takes place, in particular, in Somalia, the country the leadership of which continues to lay unfounded territorial claims upon neighbours. The direct consequence of the anti-Arab deal in Camp David is the unslackened tension in the Middle East where the situation is fraught with dangerous contingencies. One should not shut one's eyes to that. That deal, which treats slightly the just demands of the Arab states and the inalienable national rights of the Arab people of Palestine whose sole legitimate representative is the Palestine Liberation Organization, is designed to satisfy Israel's annexionist claims and to assert U.S. military presence in the Middle East.

Andrei Gromyko went on to say, makes for destabilization of the situation in Indochina and in the whole of South East Asia. Over there as well, they act hand in glove with the Peking hegemonists who, having staged the aggression against the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, continue military demonstrations on the Vietnamese-Chinese bor-

der, organize provocations against the People's Democratic Republic of Laos and the People's Republic of Kampuchea, the voice of which, we are confident, will sooner or later be heard from this rostrum. Other countries of the area are also under Peking's and Washington's constant pressure. In recent years the United States and also some other western countries are increasingly trying to play the "China card" in order to capitalise on the great-power ambitions of Peking which is keeping pace with the most zealous adherents of the "from positions of strength" policy, and is preaching doggedly and with cynicism the inevitability of a new world war and has no intention whatsoever of giving up these preachings.

IT WAS NOT SO LONG AGO, Andrei Gromyko went on, that in Vienna, where the SALT-2 treaty was signed, there had taken place a frank conversation between Leonid Brezhnev and the President of the United States Jimmy Carter, who also recognised the need of preserving the existing approximate parity of the military might of the east and the west, the Soviet Union and the United States. This was recognised also by the leaders of other NATO countries. Now, contrary to their former statements, the leaders of the NATO bloc are striving to change the strategic equilibrium in the world in favour of this bloc. *It is here that the complication of the present international situation is rooted.*

The attempts to give some other interpretation to the events in the world arena, to cast aspersions on the foreign policy of the Soviet Union by resorting once again to the myth about the "Soviet military threat" are nothing but crude deceit. Only gullible people can heed the groundless contentions that the temporary introduction of the limited Soviet military contingent into Afghanistan is the cause of the aggravation of the situation in the world. As it has been explained already many times, our step was taken with the aim of giving assistance to the Afghan people in defending the country's sovereignty, in repulsing armed intrusions from the outside against its territory, and also of preventing the origination of a direct threat to the security of the USSR on its southern border. This aid was provided in response to repeated requests by the government of Afghanistan and fully accords with the 1978 Soviet-Afghan

treaty and the United Nations charter. Now that the situation in Afghanistan is gradually returning to normal, on agreement with the Afghan government some of our military units have been returned home. One often hears, including within the United Nations, that some people want a full withdrawal of the Soviet military contingent. We reply to this: The USSR will withdraw it on agreement with the government of Afghanistan as soon as the causes that made the introduction of this contingent necessary cease to exist, but not earlier than that.

Turning to the USSR's peace initiatives, Andrei Gromyko said that those who keep talking about some "unprecedented build up" by the USSR of its defence potential obviously are trying to divert the attention of people from their own plans of deploying hundreds of new American nuclear means on the territory of a number of West European countries. In the interests of preventing a new round of the arms race the Soviet Union came out for the holding of talks on an equal basis and with observance of the principle of equal security. To eliminate the obstacles erected by the NATO decision on the road to talks, we propose to commence without delay the discussion simultaneously and in organic connection the question of medium-range nuclear weapons in Europe and the question of American forward based weapons.

It is understood that the possible accords will be realised after the ratification of the SALT-2 treaty. It appears that by delaying with constructive answer to the substance of our proposal it is hoped to dampen the positive international response to this proposal. We express hope that common sense and a responsible approach to the improvement of the situation in Europe will prevail. We would like to believe in this. The Soviet Union is prepared to enter talks with our partners on this above-stated just basis at any time. At the same time it should be clear that the Soviet Union, countries of the Warsaw Treaty will not permit a violation of the military-strategic balance with NATO states. All plans to disrupt this balance should be renounced.

The USSR and other countries of the socialist community have never aspired and are not aspiring for military superiority. They never had and will never have any strategic doctrine except a defensive one. "Our

country's foreign policy", as it was again stated with full clarity by Leonid Brezhnev in his recent speech in Alma Ata, "is a clear and honest peace policy which is not directed against anyone else. We do not encroach on anybody's land and do not interfere in anybody's internal affairs. But we shall always manage to defend our rights and legitimate interests."

Speaking, in particular, about the results of Leonid Brezhnev's meeting in the Crimea this summer with the leaders of fraternal parties and states, Gromyko stated: The Soviet Union, the socialist community have marched and will march in the vanguard of the struggle for international security. But we are not claiming monopoly in this field. We will be in the same rank with all states which consistently pursue a policy of peace and averting the threat of a new world war, a policy of easing tension. A large number of our initiatives, among them those in the time since the previous session of the United Nations general assembly, are witness to the concrete deeds of the countries of socialism. They include the proposal, made by the Warsaw Treaty member-states at the conference of the political consultative committee, to hold a meeting at the highest level of the leaders of states of all areas of the world to discuss problems connected with the elimination of seats of international tension and the prevention of war. They include the measure to curb the arms race and of disarmament, of strengthening peace in Europe and in the whole world that are contained in the declaration adopted at the same conference. They include the initiative of the USSR concerning talks on medium-range nuclear weapons in Europe in close connection with the American forward based weapons. They include the recently completed by the Soviet Union withdrawal from the GDR of 20,000 servicemen, a thousand tanks and other military equipment. This includes the proposal of socialist countries at the Vienna talks which provides among recommended steps for the reduction of 13,000 American servicemen and 20,000 Soviet servicemen over and above the Soviet military contingent that was unilaterally withdrawn from the territory of the GDR. **This includes the withdrawal of some Soviet military units from Afghanistan—Tass.**

(To Be concluded)

Confidentially

Strange & Sordid

IS IT NOT TRUE that the corridors of political gossip in Colombo are today reverberating with stories about the strange and sordid things that overtook an Odyssey undertaken by a group of Sri Lankan VIPs in search of the mythical Golden Grail in a foreign land? That the group consisted of four (or five) persons and our benevolent government had sanctioned an allowance of £ 5600 (or thereabouts) for their expenses—subsistence, taxis, entertainment and the like? That additionally the air tickets were also provided? That having heard of some mysterious occurrences in previous Odysseys of this kind—such journeys come once a year, sometimes oftener—the VIPs on this occasion had appealed to one who overlooks these trips that the money sanctioned for personal expenses should be handed out to the individual travellers and not be left in the custody of a semi-VIP who has customarily taken upon himself the duties of a Caretaker manager-cum-treasurer on such jaunts? That in the days of unnecessary foreign exchange austerities in the past, this kind of “management” of money for lodging, food drink and taxis may have been helpful? That in the present era of exchange liberalisation verging on the extravagance of generous plentitude (to prevent any incursions into the black market) this kind of managerial intervention seems to have given rise to temptations that even a Greek like Ulysses may have found it hard to resist? That unfortunately the Sri Lankan counterpart in the latest Odyssey is alleged to have fallen hook, line and sinker into a quagmire of what appears to be serious deviations from the book of rules? That Ulysses of this trip (let us for convenience call him that) is today accused of a serious of misdemeanours by the VIPs who claim that they have been victimised, humiliated cheated and worse during this journey? That a charge sheet it is repeated, (it cannot avoided in this age of dharmista righteousness, where it is an even greater crime to hush any transgressions that are alleged to have taken place), will soon be drawn

up by the VIPs to be presented to the VVIP? That the accusations may be summed up thus: (a) that the Ulysses of this story had failed to carry out the instructions of the VVIP to divide the booty of £ 5600 (sterling) among the voyagers so that each one had control over his privy purse: (b) that in a foreign land where the group had been quartered before the final assault on Golden Grail, the VIPs had become so frustrated and so angry with the kind of treatment being meted out to them that they had threatened to quit and return to their homeland without fulfilling their mission, but the VIPs found that on the conditions laid down in the APEX tickets they could not return home without completing the full onward mission, and were therefore compelled to be prisoners of our Ulysses; (c) that even little pleasures and small mercies like a conducted tour in a great big city were denied to them; (d) that on the money chiselled out of the money allocated for the convenience and happiness of the VIPs it is alleged that Ulysses had been able to provide a trip gratis (for the most part) for two or three members of his family—even airlines throw in a couple of free tickets if a team manager does the ticketing direct in the present competitive world (without the commission for a travel agent) especially on the APEX rates? That surprisingly Ulysses had also cancelled his journey into the Dark and had hastened post haste home to undo whatever mischief the VIPs concerned may set in motion? That at present a tug-of-war has started between the VIPs who want a public exposure of this scandal and Ulysses who is said to be moving heaven and earth to have everything hushed up? That startling developments are expected by some, but *Tribune* knows from experience that in Sri Lanka such contentious problems that threaten to flare up are usually smoothed over a few handshakes and promises of good conduct in the future? That another grouse of the VIPs is that on the same plane that took them to a great big White City was a lesser VIP from Sri Lanka and that he was accorded full VVIP treatment by being received on the tarmac in an official car (to be whisked away without any formalities)—whilst they (the VIPs) had to go through the endless drudgery of routine formality and bus travel from the airport to the city?

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