

# TRIBUNE



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# Letter From The Editor

READERS WILL WONDER why *Tribune* has chosen the picture on the cover this week. It is a ceramic representation of one of the hindu mythological figures on one of the gopurams in the Sivan Temple at Munneswaram near Chilaw. We are not certain who this figure represents, but the exact identity is not required for the purpose we have in mind. Among other things, he is a hunter with a bow and arrow. In the age and era in which he practised his vocation as one who killed animals and birds for food (or for the protection of crops) he only helped to maintain the ecological balance of nature unlike the fire-powered hunter of today who has already wiped out several species of fauna and is still in the process of eliminating many more. But even more significant is the fact that such a hunter existed at a time when the country was still adequately covered with forests and jungles unlike today when trees are being cut down indiscriminately and entire forests and jungles have been eliminated from the face of the earth. There has been an outcry against deforestation in Sri Lanka and many other countries and it can be said that a new awakening has begun to overtake even people in high authority who are in a position to do something about the matter. Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, during her recent trip to the UN, UK and Norway, it is reported, had stated that one of the matters she would attend to when she got back was to start a campaign to grow more trees. This is welcome news, but what is essential is that it is not enough to plant more trees but to see that what is planted is looked after so that they grow into trees. Readers will recall that on January 8, 1973, the Government of Sri Lanka had officially mobilised the population to grow several million trees—according to the SLBC and the official newspapers the number planted ran into millions—but a sad fate overtook all these saplings, seedlings and other plants: the overwhelming majority, if not the entirety died, for lack of care. It is necessary to ensure that the new effort will not meet with a similar fate. We have published several articles and comments on the question of TREES. Some of our readers may be tempted to think that the question of deforestation and the cutting down of trees has become one of our hobby horses which we ride to death (or several deaths, over and over again), but this is only because we are deeply concerned with the dangers facing this country and the world by the suicidal mania for cutting down trees and forests in several parts of the world. Even our Conservator of Forests (who is also, paradoxically enough, the Chairman of the Timber Corporation entrusted with the task of making profits from our forest resources) has uttered several warnings recently that Sri Lanka had cut down more forests than was good for her climate and environment. A similar warning was given in respect of forests in Indonesia last year. A news report had set out: "If Indonesia is not to shrivel into a desert wasteland, it has to curb decisively the reckless destruction of its rich forests—soon. Indonesian leaders must wake up to the urgent need for a well-defined forest policy to replace the present raid on the nation's forests," writes Professor William Meijer of the University of Kentucky. "Present trends show that the primary dipterocarp forests of Indonesia are going to be finished in 20 years", he added. Not everyone will agree with Professor Meijer's grim forecast which is the central theme of the publication: *Indonesian Forests and Land Use Planning*. But the University of Kentucky scholar makes a good case for the reviewing of Indonesia's 'wide-open' policy for its forests. And his case has a special cogency because it rests basically on data and view points of reputable Indonesian foresters: men like Soekiman, Atmosudarjo, and Gatot Soebagio. Indonesia threw open its forests in 1966 when it passed its Foreign Investment Law. The size of the timber land available for concession is impressive. Total potential is 28 million hectares. Of these are 15 million in Kalimantan; 9 millions in Sumatra; 1.4 million in Celebes; 2 millions in Moluccas and 0.4 in West Irian. Concessions released since 1966 have spiralled: from 5 million hectares in 1966 to 15 million in 1969 and 22 million in 1972. The figures for 1974 are not yet available. The theory behind the law is valid. Properly managed—and replanted and conserved—tropical forests like those of Indonesia can provide an almost 'perpetual' source of revenue for government. But the operative world is 'proper'—and it is Meijer's claim that the excellent forest management plans, written by Indonesia's technicians, have remained that: Plans. Indonesia has not yet reached the ideal stage where plans really carried out. The Kenyuck professor quotes the Indonesian foresters as saying. He adds: 'the plans are utopian under present conditions'. The conditions he cites appear to be carbon copies of the problems in the Philippines, Thailand, Bangladesh.

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## EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

## Saviours, Pests &amp; Pesticides

LAST WEEK we gave our readers a glimpse of EMERGENCY WILPATTU and the operation spear-headed by the 'Saviour' of our wild life to provide water for the drought stricken animals at Wilpattu although this same champion of wild life strenuously opposed such a move a few years back when the suggestion to provide more water for the animals emanated from persons other than himself.

At this stage it is pertinent to ask whether the deplorable situation that arose at Wilpattu on account of the drought could not have been averted or at least alleviated but for the fact that the self styled 'Saviour' had vehemently opposed the provision of more water for the animals in the past, as shown by the extracts from his speeches quoted by us in our last issue.

We are credibly informed that as far back as 1922 the Wild Life Protection Society (then known as other Game Protection Society) restored the abandoned Buttuwa and other tanks in Yala to ensure that there would be a plentiful supply of game to fall victims to the guns of its members.

In an article on "Increasing the Fertility of Natural Reserves" that appeared in *Loris* in December 1966, the author expressed the view that "there are only two major and acceptable methods" of increasing the animal holding capacity of national parks, namely:—

(a) To provide more permanent sources of water on the basis of a carefully prepared plan and

(b) To increase the productivity of open spaces (mixed grass/herb vegetation) by means of manuring."

The author of this article?—Thilo Hoffman, of course, Yet, when the same suggestion as at 'a' was made by others barely three years later he opposed it tooth and nail, branding those who proposed these measures as 'classroom ecologists', thus exhibiting the typical reaction of a megalomaniac who will reject as worthless any suggestions from any

one but himself. Now, he is no doubt eating his words (uttered at the 76th Annual General Meeting of the Wildlife and Nature Protection Society and reproduced on page 3 of our issue of October 16, 1976).

Readers may have wondered why we asked what appeared to be an irrelevant question in this context, viz., "why not fertilise the plains in our national parks with Baur's fertilisers to improve the fodder situation?" A glance at item '(b)' above will supply the answer. Thilo Hoffmann, boss of Baur & Co., major importers and distributors of fertilisers, in his capacity as Secretary of the Wild Life Protection Society makes a blatant effort to induce the authorities to import and use fertilisers in both national parks to improve the fodder situation. We cannot do better than quote his own words from the article referred to:—

"I strongly urge that a careful plan for the provision of more permanent sources of water and the immediate large-scale use of ground rock phosphate be drawn up and implemented in both national parks... The cost per acre for duty free material would be in the region of Rs. 50/- for the first heavy initial application and of Rs. 15/- to Rs. 20/- for subsequent annual applications (plus transport). Thus, for a relatively modest annual outlay of say Rs. 10,000/-, more than 500 acres of starved pasture could be greatly improved, both quantitatively and qualitatively, and provide better fodder for 3 to 5 times as many animals as they do now."

Thus, do the 'Saviours' of our Wild Life try to save it!

But, to get back to EMERGENCY WILPATTU, is there an iota of evidence that the entire operation was not a scandalous waste of other people's money and time and of precious imported fuel? Does anyone, including the Department of Wild Life Conservation, know, or can anyone tell us (a) The numbers (even approximately) of the different animals living in the Wilpattu National Park? (b) How many of these are known to have actually succumbed to lack of water? (c) What quantity of water was supplied daily, in the EMERGENCY operation, to meet the needs of the Park? (d) How much of this

water really went to meet the domestic needs of employees of the Wild Life Conservation Department stationed in the Park? (e) What did the entire operation cost? We do not grudge the use by officers of the Department of part of the water supplied, as they no doubt suffered along with the animals on account of the water scarcity, but we have not heard of any casualties or fatal ties resulting from water shortage among these officers or the Villagers of the area.

SPEAKING OF the dangers to our environment, it is also necessary to draw attention to the limitless harm done by the indiscriminate and excessive use of pesticides in Sri Lanka as elsewhere. In some of the most "advanced" countries, where the use of pesticides has reached unbelievable proportions, there now exists serious movements to combat the excessive and unnecessary use of pesticides. We have received a small leaflet from the USA entitled PESTICIDES—DOS & DON'Ts—An Audubon Guide. The author is Mr. Ian C. T. Nisbet, who is "director of the scientific staff of Massachusetts Audubon Society and a member of the Joint Scientific Staff of the Massachusetts and National Audubon Societies. An environmental biologist, he is an expert on environmental effects of pesticides and served as a consultant to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in recent public hearings on the suspension of aldrin, dieldrin, chlordane, and heptachlor."

The leaflet itself will be a revelation to many who had unthinkingly been persuaded to accept pesticides as "technological advances" in the march of human beings towards "progress."

"Chemical pesticides are overpromoted and overused throughout the world. Probably half the pesticides use in agriculture and 80 to 90 percent in homes and gardens is unnecessary and wasteful. Recognizing that indiscriminate use of pesticides is a contributing factor in environmental pollution, more people are becoming interested in creating and maintaining a healthy environment with little or no chemical pesticides. Some persons, such as organic gardeners prefer to use no pesticides at all and have surprisingly few pest problems. When

chemicals must be used, however, this guide will direct the homeowner to the least damaging and least hazardous ones available.

"Let us first define our terms. Pesticide is a general term for any material (usually a chemical) used to kill 'pests'. Pesticides include insecticides (to kill insects), herbicides (to kill weeds), fungicides (to kill fungi, such as molds, rust, etc.) and rodenticides (to kill mice, rats, etc.)

"Nothing is a pest per se. Only occasional, localized excess numbers give an organism the status of a pest. The objective of pesticide use should be to reduce the population of the organism below the threshold at which it achieves pest status, not just to kill bugs. The same rule applies to weeds, which are only plants that grow where we don't want them.

"Chemical pesticides are designed to kill. The decision to kill is a serious one since most insects are beneficial. Know you have a pest problem and it is stubborn enough to warrant use of a

chemical before resorting to pesticides. Don't panic. Don't use a pesticide as "insurance" (except for fungi). Do no more than spot-treat where pests can be seen; do not broadcast pesticides. Follow label directions precisely and do not overapply.

"All pesticides damage wild life. All pesticides have a broad spectrum of activity and can affect beneficial plants and animals as well as pests. Insecticides reduce the food supply for insect-eating birds and mammals. They also kill predators and parasites which form part of natural control systems. Their use often promotes resurgence of the target pest or outbreaks of new pests. Herbicides eliminate plants on which beneficial animals may depend. They also kill nontarget plants, and weeds are often the first plants to regrow on the treated site.

"No pesticide is totally safe. Several pesticides thought to be safe only a few years ago have proved to be health hazards on more detailed testing. It is likely further

testing will reveal hazards posed by some pesticides presently regarded as safe. Certain individuals, especially those suffering from metabolic disorders, are hypersensitive to pesticides. Some, such as arthritics may be sensitive to inter ingredients in pesticide formulations. And even the propellants in pressurized spray cans are now under suspicion.

"Read the label. The label gives the chemical names of active and some inert ingredients, the pests against which the mixture may be used, specific instructions for use, and precautions. Use of a pesticide in any way not specified on the label is a violation of federal law."

We will refer to the recommendations in the leaflet regarding what should be done and should not be done. If we want to plant more trees to re-afforest Sri Lanka, we should also have a realistic attitude towards the use of pesticides in the context of environmental purity.

## SRI LANKA CHRONICLE

# Oct. 4 — Oct. 9

A 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; DM—Dinamika;  
LD—Lankadipa; VK—Virakesari; ATH—Aththa;  
SM—Silumina; SLD—Sri Lankadipa;

**MONDAY, OCTOBER 4:** The Chief Justice, Mr. Victor Tennakoon, has informed the President, Mr. William Gopallawa, of the inability of the Supreme Court to accede to the request of the government to appoint a panel of Supreme Court judges to investigate and report unofficially on allegations of political vindictiveness or extreme hardship in the acquisition of land by the State: in the course of the debate on the Interpretation (Amendment) Law which was passed in the National State Assembly, Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, gave an assurance that she would appoint an independent body at the highest level to investigate allegations of political vindictiveness and extreme hardship in lands taken over under the Lands Acquisition Act—CDN. The Ministry of Trade has informed all responsible officers for price controls that the emergency price control measures introduced by the government in May this year should be intensified and stressed that these measures were not introduced only in view of the Non-aligned conference which was held in Colombo in August—CDN. The Ceylon Workers'

Congress requested the Prime Minister to release all youth taken into custody under emergency regulations and to give a categorical statement that elections would be held in 1977—VK. The Medical Specialists' Association yesterday decided to join the Government Medical Officers Association in any action that the latter intend taking to win their demands: meanwhile Mrs. Siva Obeysekera, Minister of Health, has summoned the representatives of the GMOA for a discussion this evening regarding the demands the Association has placed before the government—CDN. Dr. Kurt Waldheim, Secretary General of the United Nations, held a reception in honour of Sri Lanka Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike: the foreign Ministers of Norway, Pakistan and the Permanent Representative of China in the UN called on the Prime Minister—CDM. According to the Aththa tension prevails in the three state textile mills in Thulhiriya, Veyangoda and Pugoda: this follows certain steps taken by the authorities against the trade unions in these textile mills—ATH. Government decided to give special power to customs and other authorities to check the export of antiquities until such time an amendment to the Antiquities Act is moved in the National State Assembly—DM. The Peradeniya Campus of the University will be reopened tomorrow: this follows discussions between trade union representatives of the Campus and the Minister of Education, Dr. Badiuddin Mahmud—DM. According to the officials of the Motor Commissioner's Department within the next two weeks the 7 Sri series of registration for motor cars will begin: at present the Department is registering nearly twenty new cars daily—LD.

**TUESDAY, OCTOBER 5:** The Government has decided on a re-training program for the entire work-

force in the state sector: the training will be on new methods and techniques, new values and new forms of organisation: a national Training Policy Authority and an Inter Institutional Council which will be responsible for the development of national training policies for the implementation of development programs will be set up: Mr. T. B. Illangaratne, Minister of Trade and Public Administration and Home Affairs, has recommended these programs to the government—CDN. According to reports from New York, Prime Minister Mrs. Sirima Banaratake's call for a special session of the UN General Assembly devoted to disarmament is fast gathering momentum at the UN: several countries that addressed the General Assembly have expressed their desire for such a session as proposed by the Sri Lanka Prime Minister—CDN. In an interview with the *Daily Mirror* Mr. R. S. Perera, Minister of Information and Broadcasting, said yesterday that he was totally opposed to any postponement of the general elections scheduled for 1977: Mr. Perera said that he told some of those who were in favour of a postponement to count him out if it comes to a two-third majority in the Parliament to decide on the postponement of elections: meanwhile Mr. Pieter Keuneman, Minister of Housing and Construction, addressing a meeting of Communist Party Youth Leagues in Colombo said postponement of elections only played into the hands of the UNP and other reactionary forces: he also said that such a postponement would help the UNP to hide its political bankruptcy and its absence of policy, program and principle behind the so-called "threat to democracy": Mr. Keuneman further said that concentration should be on the next general elections rather than waste the energy in debates whether general elections should be held or not—CDM. Interpol warned Sri Lanka authorities to keep a sharper watch on tourists who have become carriers of narcotics from the country—CDM. The discussions between deputations of the Government Medical Officers Association and the Medical Specialists Association and the Minister of Health, Mrs. Obeysekera, went on till late into the night yesterday and the outcome of the talks was not known—CDM. Dr. W. Dahanayake, MP for Galle, has challenged Mr. B. Y. Tudawe, Deputy Minister of Education, to debate the Pirivena Education Bill with him in Colombo: Dr. Dahanayake holds the view that the Pirivena Education Bill does not serve the purpose for which it has been framed—LD. The Ceylon Transport Board announced yesterday that striking unions of the Aluthgama Bus Depot have agreed to instruct their members to return to work—LD. 8,000 farmers families will be given lands in the Mahaveli development area next year: these families will be selected from Kurunegala, Colombo, Kalutara Kegalle and Ratnapura districts—DM. The Committee appointed by the Minister of Education to probe the incidents that led to the strike by employees of the Peradeniya Campus will begin its sittings today in the Campus—ATH.

**WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 6:** Employees of the CTB belonging to the LSSP-controlled All Ceylon United Motor Workers Union in eleven depots struck work yesterday and the public was put into great inconvenience especially in the down south bus routes: yesterday's strike was a follow-up of a work stoppage at the Aluthgama Depot: the strike at Aluthgama was sparked off following an incident of alleged police

assault on two CTB employees: the LSSP controlled union which struck work has said that unless the Police officer concerned is transferred the strike will continue—CDN. A Bill entitled "Gratuity Law" will be introduced in the National State Assembly by Labour Minister, Mr. Michael Siriwardene, to compel employers in the private sector to pay gratuity to their employees on retirement—CDN. Members of the Government Medical Officers Association and the Medical Specialists Association will announce today their decision after discussions they had with the Minister of Health, Mrs. Siva Obeysekera: the Health Ministry yesterday said 684 doctors in government service have resigned during the past five years and this number amounted to three years output from both medical faculties—CDM. Mr. Hector Kobbekaduwa, Minister of Agriculture and Lands, decided to allocate 28,000 acres of land for nearly one lakh of families that have no lands: these lands will be allocated to these families in small blocks to build houses: these lands will be given in Nuwara Eliya, Kandy, Matale, Badulla, Ratnapura and Colombo districts—DM. The Police investigating the Kollupitiya tavern robbery have yet to recover Rs. 55,000 out of the Rs. 213,000 grabbed by four gunmen: Police said the Rs. 95,000 has been spent by the robbers—LD. Mr. Hector Kobbekaduwa, Minister of Agriculture and Lands, ordered that all products of the Milk Board should be distributed only by the Milk Board and not by other institutions: the Minister made this order after receiving complaints regarding the products of the Milk Board being distributed by the the Co-operative Marketing Federation—CDN. Trade unions of nurses lauded the shift system introduced in government hospitals: according to the new shift system nurses in all hospitals will work from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 1 p.m. to 7 p.m.—CDM. The Ministry of Education will plant 10 million plants under the Tree Planting Campaign—DM. Mr. V. Ponnambalam, the Communist Party stalwart of the Northern province, will temporarily keep out of politics for personal reasons and will concentrate on educational work—VK.

**THURSDAY, OCTOBER 7:** The Ministry of Public Administration has asked all Secretaries of Ministers to submit progress reports on the use of official language in all departments and state corporations under their ministries by the 30th of November: this is being done to prevent any shortcomings or default on the part of state officers or other authorities in the implementation of the official language policy—CDN. The strike by 12 CTB unions was called off yesterday after union representatives held discussions with the Chairman of the CTB Mr. J. C. T. Kotelawela: union sources said the strikers will return to work this morning—CDN. Mr. Jan Pronk, Minister for Development Corporation of the Netherlands, who is on a visit to the island called on the Acting Prime Minister, Mr. Maithripala Senanayake, yesterday: Mr. Pronk yesterday addressed the Sri Lanka Association for the Advancement of Science on "New International Economic Order and Dutch Foreign Policy"—CDN. 130 doctors of the Colombo General Hospital yesterday staged a one-day token strike as a protest against the inconclusive talks the GMOA and the Association of Medical Specialists had with the Minister of Health, Mrs. Siva Obeysekera: all work in the OPD and clinics in the Colombo general hospital came to a standstill owing to the strike—CDN.

At the UN General Assembly yesterday China's Foreign Minister said his country fully endorsed the proposal of Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, to make the Indian Ocean a zone of peace—CDN. According to an agreement signed in Karachi yesterday Sri Lanka will buy 100,000 tons of rice from Pakistan: shipment of the rice will begin next January—CDM. Inaugurating the first meeting of the Delimitation Commission on local bodies Mr. W. P. G. Ariyadasa, Minister of Local Government said that elections to local bodies will be held only after the Commission determines the electoral boundaries of local bodies—VK. The District Judge of each judicial district has been appointed Revising Officer for all electorates falling within his district by Mr. T. B. Illangaratne, Minister of Public Administration, Home Affairs and Minister of Trade—CDN. Aluthgama Police which raided the residence of a prominent citizen seized contraband valued at Rs. 400,000: the resident who was produced before the Government Agent was fined Rs. 1,100,000 and the contraband confiscated: the *Daily Mirror* stated that it reliably understood that the fine was not paid and court action is being instituted against the person—CDM. The Railway Security Services has complained to the Minister of Transport that owing to political patronage security personnel are unable to bring to book certain unscrupulous activities that are taking place in Railway stations and in railway carriages—LD. Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, will leave for Norway today from London: she will hold talks with leaders of that country on obtaining aid for Sri Lanka's fishing industry—ATH.

**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 8:** The Government has decided to offer cars imported for the Non-aligned Summit Conference for National Lotteries Sweep prizes: several cars imported for the conference were allotted to government departments and co-operations and the remaining will now be offered as first prizes in the National Lotteries Sweep—CDN. The Government this week decided to fix the controlled price of beef at Rs. 3/- without bones and Rs. 2.50 with bones: the controlled price of mutton will be Rs. 5.00 without bones and Rs. 4.50 with bones: a special gazette notification to this effect will be issued shortly—CDN. Mr. J. C. T. Kotelawala, Chairman of the CTB, said that all workers who struck work have returned and the Board is now running a normal service—CDN. The GMOA which threatened to go on strike from today has postponed its decision: the GMOA and the Medical Specialists Association will meet again on Monday to review the decision—CDN. According to the *Daily Mirror* at the summit talks between the SLFP and the CP held this week several have expressed the view that the Government should now begin its activities on an election footing: the consensus among the leaders of the two coalition parties was on the basis that the general elections would be held on the due date and the Government should now embark on a crash program of work aimed at affording greater relief to the people—CDM. The conditions stipulated by the Sri Lanka Co-operative Marketing Federation for the purchase of betel leaves by Pakistani buyers (the only country that buys betel leaves from Sri Lanka) are so stringent that they have backed out: according to *Daily Mirror* these tough conditions have made the country lose millions of rupees in valuable foreign exchange—

CDM. The Interpol has informed Sri Lanka authorities of a possible visit by international hijacker "Carlos" under a different name—VK. Mr. T. B. Illangaratne, Minister of Trade and Minister of Public Administration and Home Affairs, told the *Virakesari* that if the Tamil United Liberation Front is prepared to hold discussions with the Government with a view to solving the problems facing the Tamil speaking community he would make arrangements for the Tamil leaders to meet the Prime Minister for these discussions: he further said that the Prime Minister is keen to solve the problems of the minority communities. Anuradhapura and surrounding areas which experienced a continuous drought during the last few months received heavy rains during the past two days—DM. Mr. A. Mahendran, Superintendent of Police in charge of security arrangements for general elections said that arrangements are now being made to provide security for 6500 polling centres all over the island: he further said that a final decision would be taken shortly on the question of elections should be conducted in one day or two days—LD. The *Aththa* in an editorial requested government to solve the problems of the Tamil speaking community before the next general elections: the paper said this should not be approached as a political problem but a humane problem.

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 9:** Mr. A. Amirthalingam, ex MP for Vadduwoadai, in two statements of objections filed in the Supreme Court yesterday in the matter of applications for revision and writs of Certiorari and Mandamus filed by the Attorney General in respect of the order made in the Trial-at-Bar which discharged him has stated that the High-Court-at-Bar had no jurisdiction, right or power to try the charges against him—and therefore the Attorney General was not entitled to invoke the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court to direct the three judges of the High Court to try him—CDM. Mr. Pieter Keuneman, Minister of Housing and Construction, speaking at a Communist Party meeting in Grandpass said if the progressive forces were to be fully mobilised for victory in 1977, definite steps to redress the urgent grievances of the national minorities were as essential as measures to increase employment and curb inflation—CDM. Mr. Bernard Soysa, LSSP Second MP for Colombo South, speaking at a function in Bombay organised by the Indian Council of World Affairs said Sri Lanka's friendship with China is not suspect and as such there are no political overtones in the ties between the two countries—CDM. Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, arrived in Oslo on Thursday to begin a three-day official visit to Norway: she was received at the airport by the Prime Minister of Norway and the Foreign Minister: later she was interviewed by the Norwegian Television and she answered questions on a wide range of subjects including the Indian Ocean Peace Zone proposal, the new international economic order, the common fund of commodities and the Integrated Commodity Scheme—CDN. Dr. Badiuddin Mahmud, Minister of Education, told the *Daily News* that the government has decided to scrap the colonial system of estate schools and to bring all children in these schools to the national stream of education—CDN. According to the *Aththa* the University will admit the same number of students as last year to the various campuses as no room has been made for additional

admissions—ATH. Ministry of Industries approved 21 new industries during the month of September—DM. The Dudley Front has decided to contest all UNP candidates if the former fails to capture power in the UNP before the next General Elections — LD

## INTERNATIONAL DIARY

### Sept. 30 — Oct. 8

**THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 30:** Mr. Andrei Gromyko of the USSR addressing the 31st General Assembly of the United Nations said that Russia considers it reasonable to the wish of a number of Asian and African countries that the Indian Ocean be turned into a peace zone: he further said that as far as the Soviet Union is concerned it never had a military base in the Indian Ocean and has no intention now to build its military bases in the Indian Ocean. Prime Minister, Ian Smith of Rhodesia, invited a British envoy to Salisbury to discuss ways of overcoming snags in the Rhodesian settlement plan: Mr. Smith himself admitted that the majority of African leaders are not in favour of the Anglo-American peace settlement plan. The United States Senate yesterday approved a 5.1 billion dollar foreign aid bill nearly one-third of which will go to Israel: the bill was passed by 56 votes to 24 after being approved by the House of Representatives on Monday. Prime Minister Fidel Castro of Cuba said that a fall in the world market prices of sugar and the rising costs of imports may force a review of Cuba's present five-year development plan: the Cuban leader told this in a news conference in Havana. Japan yesterday told the Soviet Embassy in Tokyo that talks on the return of the top secret MIG 25 would soon begin in Japan: Japanese sources said that Japan's Foreign Minister, Zentaro Kosaka, and his Soviet counterpart, Andrei Gromyko, had a 75-minute discussion on this question and Mr. Gromyko had wanted the return of the aircraft and its pilot who is in the United States now. An Israeli warship has fired twice at the ship in which Lebanon's Left leader Kamal Junblatt went to Cyprus from Lebanon on his way to Cairo for talks there. Britain announced that it will apply to draw on its remaining credit at the International Monetary Fund—worth about 3,900 million dollars—in an effort to rescue the crumbling pound sterling. An Indian leader of a gang was sentenced to six years jail by a London court for secretly transporting Asian immigrants to Britain from Germany in a secret compartment built in cars: the judge described the crime as trafficking in human souls.

**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 1:** Two Argentinian scientists after research for thirty years have invented a dehydrated meat powder which is in pale yellow colour which could be a solution to solve the malnutrition problem: this powder need no refrigeration and could be shipped like cement in bags and could also be turned out into biscuits or bread. Black Rhodesian leaders who met in Gaborone in Botswana welcomed the British announcement about holding constitutional talks. Diplomatic sources in Gaborone said that British

Foreign Office Minister of State, Ted Rowlands, will visit Tanzania for talks with President Julius Nyerere and then go to the Mozambique capital of Maputo to meet President Samora Machel: Dr. Kenneth Kaunda said in Botswana that if Prime Minister Ian Smith ends his rebel regime in Rhodesia "he could have a place in the Sun" he told the leaders of Rhodesia and South Africa to think how they would feel if the blacks treat them the same way how they treated the blacks. President Ford yesterday pledged American support for a British loan application of 3.9 billion dollars from the International Monetary Fund. The Soviet Union yesterday detonated a nuclear device underground at a test site north of the Arctic Circle according to a spokesman for the Emergency Research and Development Administration. In Lebanon, Palestinian commandos fiercely fought major attacks by Syrian forces along the mountain areas: following urgent appeals for help by PLO leader Yasser Arafat Egypt yesterday called for an Arab mini-summit to meet within 48 hours to discuss the Lebanon situation: Mr. Ismail Fahmi, Egypt's Foreign Minister, condemned Syria's action in Lebanon and accused them of sabotaging the Arab Peace-making efforts.

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 2:** Dr. Henry Kissinger, Secretary of States of the United States, yesterday proposed immediate preliminary talks between North and South Korea aimed at convening a full-scale conference, including the US and China to settle the Korean question: he said the US and China can participate in the preliminaries as observers. Soviet Union yesterday sent a message congratulating China on the 27th anniversary of the Peoples Republic of China: the Russian Communist Party official daily *Pravda* said Moscow was prepared to normalise relations with China. According to the *Hindu* a former private secretary of Mr. M. Karunanidhi, First Minister of Tamil Nadu, told a government commission of inquiry that the former Chief Minister took Rs. 1.7 lakhs commission on a spraying deal from Bombay Aviation Companies for aerial agricultural spraying in Tamil Nadu in 1971. A Rhodesian Court sentenced a Roman Catholic Bishop, Donald Lamont, to ten years jail for failing to report the presence of African Nationalist guerillas: the Irish born church leader who is Bishop of Umtali and a noted critic of the minority government's race policies, immediately said he would appeal. Rival leaders of the African National Council, Joshua Nkomo and Bishop Abel Muzorewa, met in Bagorone secretly to heal the rift in the ANC which both claim to lead. Black leaders in Rhodesia have proposed that the Ministers of Defence and Law should not be whites in the proposed interim government in Rhodesia: meanwhile, the Rhodesian government has insisted that it will not begin real discussions on a constitution at the initial black-white talks: the conference convened by Britain which is scheduled to start within the next two weeks is likely to be held in Southern Abayaka: this conference will only deal with the Anglo-American proposals. In South Africa pamphlets have sprung up calling for a mass uprising—"war"—by blacks if the South African government does not grant them equality within two weeks: the pamphlets said war will be waged against the white rulers if the demands of the blacks are not granted and the night of October 24 has been fixed as the date of the war: China has demanded



the expulsion of Taiwan from the International Monetary Fund: China's national day was celebrated in a quiet manner but the Friday celebrations boosted Prime Minister Hua Kuo-feng as the undisputed leader following the death of Chairman Mao Tse-tung. China has decided to veto any move by interested parties to nominate anyone to the post of UN Secretary General outside the Third World: the term of the present Secretary General ends next year.

**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 3:** After a meeting with Lebanon's new President, M. Elias Sarkis, Soviet Charge D' Affairs, Vladimir Silikine, said that the USSR was taking a new initiative in the Lebanon crisis: the Soviet diplomat said the results of the initiatives would be known in few days. Mr. Tapley Bennett, Deputy Permanent representative of the United States in the UN, said that the US would oppose any attempt or any economic sanctions to South Africa including a mandatory arms embargo: he said this during the UN Security Council's resumed debate on the Namibia (South West Africa) question. According to the *Tass*, the Soviet Union has called for the Geneva Middle East Peace Conference to be reconvened: the USSR has sent its suggestions to the governments of the United States, Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation. *Tass* commenting on the speech of Dr. Henry Kissinger at the United Nations in which he criticised Moscow for its campaign against his recent negotiations with white and black African leaders about Rhodesia described Dr. Kissinger's diplomacy in the Rhodesian affair as "unpopular and miscalculated". France will sell two new combat submarines to South Africa, according to French naval headquarters: the deal was confirmed on October 1 and the delivery dates will be announced later. The *Washington Post* in a front-page story by two leading reporters who were responsible for disclosing the Watergate scandal, said Attorney General Edward Levi and other top Justice, Department officials have started an investigation into Mr. Ford's campaign finances while he was a Congressman from Michigan. Prime Minister Seni Promoj of Thailand said he expected to disclose the names of the members of his new Cabinet this week: he also said the formation of the new Cabinet was necessitated on accepting back the Premiership after resigning the post 24 hours earlier.

**MONDAY, OCTOBER 4:** Leading finance ministers of the member countries of the International Monetary Fund who met in Manila decided that member nations of the IMF both rich and poor should take speedy action to put their economy in order instead of depending on credits. Mrs. Margaret Thatcher, leader of the British Conservative party, in a major policy document released yesterday, has urged a reduction in immigration. West Germany went to general elections yesterday and Chancellor Helmut Schmidt's Social Democratic Party is expected to win by a slender majority. Mr. Sittaram Kesari, leader of the ruling Congress Party of Bihar, said recent floods in the East Indian State affected nearly eight million people and over 400,000 mud houses have been destroyed. Four prominent Republicans wanted President Ford to dismiss immediately Mr. Carl Butz, Agricultural Secretary, over a lewd racial slur he made during a plane trip with a pop star and a former Nixon aide: a White House spokesman said

President Ford had already reprimanded Mr. Carl Butz and the latter regretted the incident and promised a public apology. Thousands of black Africans gathered in Salisbury to welcome back nationalist leader Bishop Abel Muzorewa after more than a year of self exile: officials estimated that more than 100,000 Africans would gather in Salisbury to welcome the black leader of the South West African People's Organisation (SWAPO) met Prime Minister, Fidel Castro of Cuba in Havana and both discussed the South African issue in detail. Egyptian Foreign Minister, Mr. Ismail Fahmi, returned to Cairo yesterday after talks in Paris on the Lebanese crisis and said the results would emerge in a few days: at an airport press interview he did not, tell further details of the talks he had in Paris. Rhodesian black leader Rev. Sithole accused US Secretary of State Dr. Henry Kissinger of displaying "a 19th century white mentality" by not consulting nationalists during his Southern African peace initiative. Venezuela, South America's biggest oil producer, will seek a rise in the price of petrol at the next OPEC meeting in Qatar in December this year. Romania pledged its support to the Soviet-led Warsaw pact. A British treasury official said yesterday that he was not sure whether Britain would get its 3.9 billion dollar loan from the IMF. Following a court order electrical board authorities restored power to the Indian Express newspaper office: earlier over a legal battle about press censorship letters withdrawing the censorship order was issued to the newspaper office but later the electricity supplies were terminated.

**TUESDAY, OCTOBER 5:** US National Security Council presided by President Ford decided not to use plutonium fuel in commercial nuclear power reactors in the United States for three years: according to the US's *Sunday Times* President Ford was reported preparing an appeal to all governments to defer the commercial use of plutonium in the nuclear power industry. Chancellor Helmut Schmidt's left liberal coalition suffered a large loss of votes in the West German elections on Sunday: according to computer results the government would keep its hold on power, but it's present 46 seat majority would shrink to a precarious six in the new house. World Bank President, Robert McNamara, in an effort to help world's worst-off nations offered a graphic description of what it meant to be poor in 1976: he told the joint annual meeting of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund now being held in Manila, Philippines, that the annual income of more than one billion people in the world's poorest countries has risen only about two dollars to 150 dollars in the past decade of massive inflation. When black leader Bishop Muzorewa returned to South Africa after 16 months of self-exile more than 100,000 people gave him a tumultuous welcome in Salisbury: meanwhile another black African leader, Joshua Nkomo, rejected Kissinger's peace plans as a basis for discussion at the pending British-convened meeting on Rhodesia: but the white community in Rhodesia has accepted the Anglo-American proposals presented by the State Secretary, Dr. Kissinger in Pretoria two weeks ago as a package deal for black majority rule in two years. Indian Socialist Party leader, George Fernandes, was brought to court handcuffed and chained: he told court the chains on him were symbols of what had happened to India since astute of internal emergency was imposed last year: he was

formally charged before a Metropolitan Magistrate along with 21 others for conspiring to overthrow the Indian government by violence.

**WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 6:** The United States Supreme Court yesterday cleared the way for 166 executions—the first in the US for nine years—when it refused to reconsider an earlier decision upholding the capital punishment. President Ford's Agriculture Secretary Carl Butz resigned yesterday: he was earlier reprimanded by the President and several others who urged President Ford to sack him over a statement he had made about the black community: this comment is said to have affected a section of President Ford's possible votes in the November elections. US Treasury Secretary, William Simon, warned OPEC countries that a further price increase in petroleum product will aggravate the already troubled economic and financial situation of the world. The United Arab Emirates (UAE) will propose a ten percent oil price hike in addition to a higher price for lighter crude oils when OPEC meets in December this year. Over six-hundred people are feared dead and some 65,000 lost their homes in La Paz city in Mexico which was affected by a worst hurricane: armed troops stood by as looters tried to remove cash and goods from families affected by the hurricane. In Thailand, Right wing and Left wing supporters staged rival protests and Prime Minister Seni Pramoj came under attack over his newly formed Cabinet: the rightwingers came out firmly in support of former Prime Minister, Thanom Kitikachorn who returned to Bangkok from exile in Singapore two weeks ago despite strong protests by leftist student organisations. US Treasury Secretary, William Simon, announced that the US would look favourably on an application by China to join the International Monetary Fund but would strongly resist any attempt to expel Taiwan: he told this at the World Bank and IMF sessions now being held in Manila. Rhodesian Prime Minister, Ian Smith, held a ninety-minute talk with senior British and US officials on preparations for a British chaired meeting on the transfer of power to blacks in two years time: the talks Mr. Smith had is said to be very constructive.

**THURSDAY, OCTOBER 7:** The military seized power in Thailand yesterday in a lightning coup following a bloody battle between armed Police and Leftist students at Bangkok's Thammasat University: a military organisation calling itself the Administration Reform Committee (ARC) imposed martial law on the country: an announcement made over the official radio said Admiral Chaloryoo who had been defence Minister for one day in the newly formed Cabinet will be the Supreme Commander: Police attacking the leftwing students who wanted the former ruler of the country Thanom Kitikachorn sent out of the country were joined by rightwingers in the Thammasat University premises: Police said the students were armed with American made weapons when they fought. In West Germany, Christian Democrat leader, Helmut Kohl, will be officially informed today that he will not be eligible for the post of Chancellor as he failed to break the coalition of Social Democrats and Free Democrats: earlier, Helmut Kohl invited the Free Democrats to join him in a coalition to form the government. A trade agreement between India and Bangladesh due to end this year has been renewed for another three years.

US pledged to provide Bangladesh with satellite photography facilities to give assessment of monsoon floods. The 16th session of UNCTAD opened in Geneva on Tuesday. A Congressional report over the Mayaguez incident blamed President Ford for the death of 41 American troops when US forces attacked Cambodia to win the release of the crew of the captured freighter Mayaguez: the report said hasty decision making and intelligence blunders led to the unnecessary deaths of the US troops: according to political observers in the US this report will go against President Ford in his election campaign over Democratic rival Jimmy Carter: President Ford is still fresh from the criticism levelled against his administration over the comment Agricultural Secretary, Earl Butz, made about the black community which ended in the latter's resignation. The Indian Express newspaper filed a writ in the Delhi High Court alleging that the action to seal the company's printing press was illegal: the writ claimed that the sealing by municipal authorities over the non-payment of taxes is in contempt of an earlier court order. Mr. Michael Foot, leader of the British House of Commons, said he hoped that India will help Britain to solve the Rhodesian problem.

**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 8:** Thailand's new military ruler Admiral Singad Chaloryoo made a nation-wide broadcast announcing tough new rules for Thailand and claimed that a Communist plot had been engineered by students and others trying to take over the country: the 60 year old Admiral clamped a midnight to 5 a.m. curfew in the country: he also ordered martial law and the setting up of military courts throughout the country: in a broadcast to the nation he said that he would conduct general elections and a return to civil rule will be made possible as soon as the conditions return to normal. In a nationally televised debate Democratic Presidential nominee Jimmy Carter sharply attacked President Ford's foreign policies: he said Secretary of State Kissinger was the President when came it to foreign policy: in this second television debate of the three President Ford insisted that his policies towards the Soviet Union and on the Middle East, Africa, Europe, South America and Asia were good and were the right one: the President according to observers started a campaign controversy when he also declared that the Soviet Union did not dominate Eastern Europe: the Democrats on commenting on this statement by Ford said the latter is ignoring the human rights of millions living under the communist control. On the eve of his departure to Jakarta Australian Prime Minister, Malcolm Fraser, came under fire from the Labor Opposition over the Australian Government's policy on East Timor. A High Court Judge in New Delhi ordered the unsealing of the printing press of the *Indian Express* newspaper company: following a writ by the newspaper office the High Court Judge Narain ordered the authorities to break the seal and not to interfere with the running of the press: newspaper office authorities hailed the court decision as a victory against what they called official harassment. Former Air Defence Chief of Switzerland, Brigadier Jean-Louis Jeanma, has been arrested for alleged espionage: Parliament in Switzerland was told he was in contact with the Russians since 1959 and has told them all about the country's air defence system: his wife knew about the activities.

LETTER FROM INDIA

## Political Stability

— in spite of subversion —

From Our Correspondent

New Delhi October 10

There are indications that relations between India and Sri Lanka are growing into expanding dimensions of cordiality. The Fifth Non-aligned Summit held in Colombo in August was a clear demonstration that the two countries were able to co-operate effectively in international matters to advance the cause of peace and non-alignment. On bilateral questions of economic co-operation, too, there have been significant developments.

The Ceylon (Sri Lanka) Petroleum Corporation is understood to have offered to provide facilities to the Oil and Natural Gas Commission (ONGC) for a supply base at the Trincomalee port in Sri Lanka for the latter's off-shore exploration in the Cauvery basin. The ONGC, which has greatly appreciated the offer will be deputing a team to Sri Lanka to examine and discuss the proposal further. The Trincomalee port has got a good draft of about 70 feet and will be very well suited for the berthing of supply boats that will be required for the transportation of heavy equipment once the off-shore exploration in the Cauvery basin gathers momentum. The Canadian company, Asamera of Calgary, has completed its seismic surveys in the Cauvery basin and the selection of suitable drilling sites will be decided upon shortly.

Sri Lanka, which has been engaged in off-shore exploration on its side of the meridian line, has already shown considerable interest in the exchange of data with the ONGC. The Ceylon Petroleum Corporation had earlier signed contracts with two U.S. companies, Cey oil Corporation, a subsidiary of Pexamin Pacific Inc., and Marathon Petroleum Corporation Ltd., which have already drilled a few exploratory wells. The data being exchanged between the Ceylon Petroleum Corporation and the ONGC are expected to provide a complete picture of the encouraging oil prospects in the area. The facilities that will be available at the Trin-

comalee port for the ONGC in addition to the base in the Madras harbour, will ensure greater co-operation between India and Sri Lanka in off-shore exploration.

It is now known that India and Sri Lanka will shortly also implement a program for exchange of geological and scientific information for the development of the oil industry. This follows discussions between the Minister of Industries and Scientific Affairs, Mr T. B. Subasinghe, with Mr. K. D. Malaviya, India's Minister for Petroleum in Delhi recently. It is expected that this exchange program will mutually benefit the two countries, particularly in oil exploration work.

As a direct result of the Delhi talks Oil and Natural Gas Commission of India will use the petroleum storage tanks in Trincomalee harbour for storing their crude oil. These tanks which have been lying idle since World War II, will be a good money spinner for the Ceylon Petroleum Corporation. The ONGC will shortly send a team to Sri Lanka to finalise arrangements in connection with the use of these tanks.

With the strengthening of India's economic position and political stability, the West has changed its attitude towards India in many ways. Western countries now seem inclined to accept India's emergence "as a vigorous and viable politico-economic entity, finally adhering to its own internal and external policies untrammelled by foreign criticism."

G. K. Reddy summed up the situation admirably in the *Hindu*:

"In the initial stages of the Emergency, the prompt support extended by some friendly countries for the steps taken to cope with the kind of crisis that had arisen was naturally viewed as a token of fundamental goodwill for India in its aspirations for disciplined development. But the mere fact that some of the other countries tended to decry this action is no longer being looked upon as an insurmountable barrier to better understanding of the Indian scene.

"The continuing criticism in the West is, therefore, seen more as a distortion than disapproval of India's bid for orderly progress through a reorientation of its social system. What really matters is

that there is now an increasing recognition of the need for some serious rethinking on the basic purposes of democracy and their applicability to emergent nations in the context of their own local conditions. The very basis of an ideological approach to differing political situations in the Third World is thus undergoing a radical change, as the Big Powers readjust their attitudes towards India shedding some of the old fixations."

Commenting on "the attitude of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries", Reddy said, "has been quite simple and straightforward both in its concept and application. They have taken the stand that it is not their business to question the relevance of the country's actions in dealing with political dissension for preserving its national integrity and ensuring greater cohesion. So as friendly countries they felt it was their duty to extend unqualified support for the promulgation of the Emergency which was considered necessary by the Government."

About the new Chinese attitude towards India Reddy stated: "The Chinese adopted an equally realistic attitude in taking note of the dynamics of the new situation and responding to the moves for better relations with India, in a conscious attempt to regain some of their lost influence in the sub-continent. They have realised the importance of Sino-Indian normalisation in restoring some degree of confidence among other Asian countries in their political pursuits in the region."

Reverting back to the West, Reddy said: "the Western powers, too, have started shedding their earlier inhibitions and making the necessary overtures to undo the damage done by their unfriendly and at times even hostile reaction to the recent Indian events. There are enough indications from the United States that no matter who becomes the next President, the new Administration will take suitable steps to undo the harm done to Indo-American relations. The British, French and West German Governments have been dissociating themselves from the activities of the Socialist International which has been carrying on a virulent anti-Indian campaign in Western Europe. Though none of them has

openly disapproved of the adverse press criticism in their countries they are all taking steps to improve relations with India in the belief that the present strains are only a passing phase."

And finally, he concluded: "the sum total of all these perceptible changes in the Big Power attitudes is that there is not only a better understanding but also greater tolerance abroad of the action taken to stabilise the Indian political system. This is, no doubt a reassuring sign that if a country has firmness of purpose and faith in the validity of its actions, world opinion will sooner or later begin to take note of the beneficial features despite its earlier reservations. Perhaps the most important factor that has gone a long way in influencing the change in Western attitudes has been the rapid increase of Indian prestige in the Afro-Asian countries which are looking upon India as a major power centre in its own right having emerged stronger from the ordeals of the recent developments. The fact that it is able to function effectively as their spokesman in various world forums and act as a rallying force in mobilising Afro-Asian opinion has provided additional justification for the initiatives of some of the Big Powers to improve their relations with India before they are edged out by others with higher stakes in the region.

"The forthcoming visit of the Prime Minister to Tanzania and Zambia, the two countries at the forefront of the five front-line Southern African States, could not have taken place at a more appropriate time. The visit will help to fortify the African people's faith in India's total identification with their struggle for racial equality and freedom. And with its increased prestige on the international scene, India can play its rightful role in helping to shape the course of events there." IT IS IN THIS CONTEXT that one must view one of the most recent pronouncements of the Prime Minister on some of the matters confronting the country. Reports in the Delhi press emphasised the highlights: "The talk abroad that there was a strong trend of separatism in India has been dismissed as baseless by Mrs. Indira Gandhi. She, however, said that

divisive forces were getting monetary help from outside the country.

"The Prime Minister, who was inaugurating to-day the AICC-sponsored National Institute of Social Studies and Research, detailed the working of various forces, inside India and outside, to the detriment of the country's interest. The Institute, she said, should, therefore, not only acquaint the Congress cadres with the party's philosophy and ideology, its history and its role in the freedom struggle, but also with the working of the Opposition parties. She referred to the Opposition methods to create confusion, the essential element of which was a whispering campaign. The technique, adopted from the time of the first general elections, was perfected by the RSS, the Hindu Maha Sabha and later by the SSP, she said. It was employed variously—it took the form of propaganda against the Government for supplying to the farmer 'inferior' water after taking electricity out of it or campaign at the time of the Kumbha Mela by parading the cow and by making the point that Mr. Nehru had no regard for it.

"Now misunderstandings were being spread in regard to the family planning programme. Before the Emergency, foreigners visiting India, invariably, blamed the Government for ignoring family planning, but now it was being charged with interfering with the private life of the people. She deprecated the deliberate campaign to create misunderstandings and spread rumours about compulsory sterilisation. Similarly, she condemned the attempts to bring religion in it—she had been told by top religious authorities that Islam did not forbid family planning—this was clear apart from other things, from the fact that it was being practised in Pakistan and other Muslim countries. Unfortunately, a bogey spread by a few could vitiate the general atmosphere she said.

"Vested interests in India and abroad saw danger to themselves in the effort to establish Indian standards, she said. This explained their concentrated attacks on India although they sought to justify their criticism on the plea of special love for India. In the process, they applied double standards. Some of the democracies supported all kinds of dictatorships, either military or otherwise, where nobody asked when the elections would be held or how many people had been murdered.

"She found it odd that the very people who attacked Mahatma Gandhi and Mr. Nehru said that these leaders would not have approved of the steps taken by the Government now. She took exception to the support given by some powerful groups abroad to the Opposition here and the inflow of vulgar, misleading literature. What would be their reaction if we were to comment on happenings in their countries.

"Equally important to her was the need for Congress workers to know about the origin and development of the Opposition parties—of the Jan Sangh and the RSS, for instance. Obviously, she wanted them to go behind the superficial view resulting from the assertions of the two parties that they were different entities. She recalled how, once in Parliament, a Jan Sangh member spoke collectively for the Jan Sangh and the RSS—he used the word "we" and stuck to his remarks, even after she interrupted with a query. She drew attention to another aspect of the working of the Opposition—some of them were opposed to socialism and pleaded for the profit-based philosophy of affluent nations. Profit, she said, was good for strengthening the base of the industry but not as an objective. The Opposition parties, however, could not stand on their legs and that was why they brought in the words Congress or democracy whenever they got together (and sought to function under one label).

"Some opposition elements, she said, sought to exploit Mahatma Gandhi's name and claimed to follow his philosophy. It was all the more important for Congress workers to study Gandhiji's philosophy—and to be clear about his views on subjects like property rights, minorities or poverty. Are the Opposition parties agreeable on his views, she asked. She cited the case of a group of industrialists who organised discussions on Gandhiji's ideas of trusteeship but rejected his view as not practicable. They had to be clear, Mrs. Gandhi said, about the party's ideology in the interest of its sound functioning. It was particularly important because the Congress was not a political party as understood elsewhere in the world, but a movement, with a wide range of opinions and even ideologies in its ranks. And an attempt had to be made to ensure its united working. Though

the split in the Congress came in 1969, it had been in the making for several years, she said, with separate groups functioning in it.

"They needed a strong grounding to understand the various issues before the party, and this could be provided by the new Institute. She however, warned against the tendency of the people getting into grooves through such Institutes. Mrs. Gandhi also spoke of the need for their knowing the country's problems—for, none in the world could help it, should it collapse economically. To those who criticised the Government for taking foreign aid, she said that the element of foreign credit was just 14 per cent in the last 27 years and was merely three per cent in the current Plan."

**KNOWLEDGEABLE POLITICAL CIRCLES** are aware that the Prime Minister's remarks about foreign funds to certain Opposition groups were prompted by revelations which have come to light in regard to the DMK in the South and the Opposition Movement in some Northern states which had resorted to extra-parliamentary action to overthrow the Indira Gandhi government. There is widespread belief in ruling circles that the USA was still using the CIA to make trouble for the Indian Government. Even those who think that some of actions were only a hangover of the Nixon era are disappointed that such actions have not ended.

Foreign intervention in the internal politics of India have again been spotlighted in the case that has been filed against George Fernandes and 22 others. They are being charged with conspiracy to overthrow the Government by violent means and as a prelude they had planned to begin with acts of sabotage and the like. Though the word CIA and the USA are not officially or publicly mentioned, it is common knowledge that the Government and the Establishment in New Delhi believe that it is the CIA which was behind the George Fernandes outfit. What has been a source of disappointment to these circles that in spite of bitter criticisms and numerous exposures in the USA and abroad about CIA activities to subvert and de-stabilise foreign governments, these activities were still continuing.

It is also being mentioned that the recent military coup in Thai-

land was obviously planned by pro-American elements who would now receive the fullest support of the USA to "contain" communism in Thailand as well as in Indochina. This new dictatorship in Thailand—even under the facade of a civilian Cabinet—will endanger peace in Southeast Asia and would tend to destroy the new image that ASEAN countries have been trying to present the world about their "independent" existence. But even more disturbing has been some of the evidence that has transpired in the case now going on in Rangoon about a few army officers who had attempted to stage a coup against the Ne Win government. Press reports indicate that Capt. Ohn Kyaw Myint, said to be one of two captains accused of masterminding the plot, had sought asylum (or had attempted to seek asylum) in the US Embassy in Rangoon. This was said to have happened on July 2: but it is said that the US Ambassador had not been willing to give Ohn Kyaw Myint asylum. According to reports, witnesses are believed to have testified to "connections" between Ohn Kyaw Myint and some US officials, but until the Court makes its findings, it is felt in New Delhi, that it would not be fair or correct to take this "evidence" seriously. It is also considered significant that just when this coup was being staged in Rangoon, oppositional activities had been sparked off on Burma's borders among tribal and political dissidents.

What Prime Minister Indira Gandhi has been stressing in recent years is that relations with the USA and the Western countries could not be "normalised" to the point of cordiality and friendship until such activities by western agencies to subvert and de-stabilise governments, which did not "toe the line", were ended. It is felt that more than criticism by foreign statesmen and governments it would be the liberal and democratic pressure inside the USA itself and in other western countries which will finally bring to close a sad chapter of such intervention. The excuse usually trotted out by western countries that such undercover activities were necessary to curb "communist" infiltration and expansionism has lost all validity or conviction.

The trial against those involved in this coup began in Rangoon on September 10. Though the coup was masterminded by young officers, one of the accused caused a surprise: retired General Tin U, former chief of staff and defence minister. There were 7 other accused: a colonel (commanding officer of Burma's northern military division), a major and five captains. Two majors and six captains of the 14 men originally arrested did not figure among the accused, either because they had been made prosecution witnesses or for lack of evidence against them. According to the formal complaint by the Police, the aim of the plotters was to seize power by assassinating President U Ne Win, the Secretary of the Burma Socialist Programme Party (BSPP) and of the State Council, General San Yu, and the Director General of the National Intelligence Board, Colonel Tin U. After the coup, the plotters would form themselves into a "military revolutionary council", abolish the BSPP, and proclaim the reasons for the seizure of power and the foreign policy of the new regime. General Tin U's involvements, according to the police, was passive. It is alleged that he had been informed of the plot by Capt. Ohn Kyaw Myint who had also told him that the young officers would reinstate him in his posts which he had lost on March 6. The accusation was that, though he knew about the plot and the plotters' act of treason he failed to pass on his knowledge "forthwith" to the authorities—such suppression of information is punishable with seven years rigorous imprisonment under Burma's Penal Code. The trial is expected to take over a month. This is the first coup attempt in Burma ever since General Ne Win himself seized power in a coup in 1962. Whether this new coup was a really serious politically-inspired plot, or just a piece of stupid adventurism on the part of some disgruntled young officers, there is no doubt that there has been foreign involvement in it.

The Ohn Kyaw Myint case in Burma and the George Fernandes case in India have aroused a great deal of interest in the Indian capital, especially in the backdrop of the successful seizure of power by the General in Thailand.

## MARGINALIA

## \* MP's Letter \* Decentralisation \* Sinhala

by Bryan de Kretser

**THE MP LETTER.** Victim's Pal (vide *Daily News*) has elected to write in defence of the system of the MP letter. He cites a case of a teacher victimised by a boss, who was a lady (the writer is unaware of the women's Lib movement). Appeals to officialdom failed to bring relief, but the MP's letter did. Now I wonder if the writer is aware that in the narrative he has made frank confession that the letter of the MP is an all powerful thing, it overrides all normal processes. And I would ask whether he thinks that it is wise to put such power into the hands of mortal men, with no checks, on such power?

In feudal times, many a lady wanting such a MP letter might have been invited to bed with him if she were young and attractive before such a letter was forthcoming, but of course these are enlightened times and our MP folks all near-arahatship, so no such danger exists. I too can cite the example of a close lady friend who happened to be in charge of a hospital where one nurse stayed away from work for two hundred and twenty-three days in the year. My friend rightly judged that such a person stood in need of reprimand. The nurse took up the matter with the MP, and it was my close friend who was ultimately reprimanded!

**RECENTLY A MOVEMENT** concerned with the protection of trees has developed. Folks have suggested that the GA in each area should be made an assistant conservator of forests to help protect trees. Well and good. But what will the GA do if the MP looks at a tree and declares "I see no tree there only a large rock which stands in the way of progress" I'll give you the normal response—the GA will say "You are right, my Lord, my eyes deceived me, there is only a rock there, it must be removed", if he fails to give this reply, he himself will be removed to less salubrious climes.

Maybe I shall be told I exaggerate. But it is wrong and dangerous for mortal men to amass the power which, under the guise of the MP's letter, our MP folks have amassed. If they declare they are beyond the temptations of lesser mortals, they must excuse some of us if we remain sceptic.

**DECENTRALISATION OF FUNDS.** Large sums of public money are being handed over to MP folks or chaps with ambitions to become MPs these days. They are having a field day with the money. Large amounts are handed over to local supporters to spend on development projects, presumably. One MP has decided that the most urgent local need is to run a district newspaper. As if the Government point of view is not put over to us ad nauseam through the State communications media.

But the point about all this is that it happens to be our money, yours and mine, that is being used up in this way. Surely, in each district, committees ought to be appointed to decide the area needs vis-a-vis development, and equally surely, such committees should not have a majority of folks who are the MP's Yes men. It is this kind of open elections politics which our Party system has degenerated into.

**SINHALA.** It is near election time perhaps, and as is also usual when such elections are close, there is a growing concern for the place of Sinhala. Various measures it is reported are being taken to restore Sinhala to its proper place. We are accustomed to all this. It is one way to fool the people, the majority Sinhala speaking, at this time. When the elections have come and gone, the concern for Sinhala will also disappear, and English will remain the master language in this country.

**LANGUAGE AS AN INSTRUMENT OF OPPRESSION.** Just recently the Editor of the *Daily News* has written with much sensitivity on the place of Sinhala in Sri Lanka society, and of course made reference to the place English still enjoys in the key-power bastions in this country. I have for a long time tried to make a plea for the restoration of Sinhala to dominance in the interests of the development of this island people. Invariably folks write back

to argue that we cannot do without English. Despite the fact that no one denies that, for purposes of science and maintaining contact with the outside world, English is needed, this English cry is raised. I believe it is a kind of red herring tactic. It serves to confuse us and confuses also our thinking on the subject. The fact of the matter is that, if this nation is to progress, its own language-Sinhala-must develop to full orb'd sovereignty in this land. It must be the language in which we deal with each other as natives of the country: English serving us best when we meet with foreigners or have to communicate with them. I told someone the other day, that English would only properly be taught in this country when the English-speaking elite was removed from its present dominating position in the country. May sound somewhat contradictory, but I am prepared to defend that statement. At the moment English is being used by this group as an instrument of oppression. Its identification with the colonial powers and its present service in the international community gives those who use this language in Sri Lanka privileged position which is being used in an unfair way. It is no longer necessary to use English when natives communicate with each other. Yet the chief language in Government offices and Mercantile establishments CONTINUES TO BE English.

Of course I shall be asked how this habit becomes an instrument of oppression? The answer is that the dominant position of English serves to build an inferiority complex among the masses of our people. They remain uncertain of themselves. They nurture feelings of frustration and resentment. And the English-speaking elite continue to regard the "natives"—Sinhala speaking chaps—as non-persons. A doctor for instance will speak of his isolation when posted to some remote town in the rural area, he has no one to talk with. By this he means no one who, with him, can form some Service organisation. There are perhaps ten thousand interesting folks in the town, but alas, they belong to the non-person group—they are Sinhala-speaking chaps. It is this schizophrenic division of our peoples which hinders developments

and prevent progress. All unconsciously also the English speaking group become English culturally. (Someone called this the neo-colonialism of the mind for which certainly the old colonial powers are not to be blamed) They put themselves on one side, building ghetto communities in the smaller towns, isolating themselves from the mainstream of national life. Outside are the strange undeveloped folks, crude, and not to be trusted too much. The continuing reliance on foreign experts takes place largely because the Ruling elite much prefers to hand over decision making to a transient group, rather than allow native talent to surface for fear such native talent could threaten their own security. So the natives are kept in their place, save for the few who manage to struggle and keep into the English speaking elite. The poor village type folk who attempt to try their Second language English competence when they meet the English speaking elite chaps are greeted with hoots of laughter or contempt, they are advised to speak in Sinhala instead. Result, they prefer a permanent silence in the presence of the ruling class. No true dialogue takes between the two groups. They remain suspicious of each other. Every attempt to help the mass of the people to learn English as a second language, not as the mother tongue which it is to the ruling elite class, is stymied by continuing hold the elite group has on the nation as a whole.



IN THE NORTH

## Hindu Educational Movement

— 1840 - 1880 —

by K. Arumainayagam

An attempt was made to contain the educational activities of the Christian Missionaries as early as 1842. In that year, the gentry of Vannarponnai resolved to establish a school for the defence and propagation of the Saiva religion. The men who interested themselves in Hindu religious activity of this period were Wyti-

linga Chettiar, Mootovelue Chettiar, Shroff Cooronader Mudaliyar and Ragunader Mudaliyar.

Quite contrary to the popular belief that Arumuga Navalar's religious activity commenced in and around the year 1847, it should be remembered that he also associated himself in the religious upsurge of the year 1842. This school was opened on Saturday the 22nd Oct. 1842. But they faced a difficulty in finding a qualified teacher to conduct classes in Saiva Agamas and Shastras. They got down a teacher from South India but they could not such headway in the attempt. This experimental institution ultimately "metamorphosed by its patrons into a school exclusively for Tamil studies." Another attempt was made by one Kootdepully to set up a school for study of English and Tamil. But this attempt also failed.

ANY SERIOUS ATTEMPT to contain the Christian Missionary Educational activity may be said to have commenced with the religious activities of Arumuga Navalar. He may be said to be the pioneer of the Hindu Educational Movement in Jaffna. His personal experience taught him the futility of continuing the traditional school system of the Hindus and the merits of the Christian School system. He also found it to be very effective to do religious propaganda. His first venture in this field was his Saiva Prakasa Vidyasalai established at Vannarponnai in 1848.

The main reason for opening the school was the social and religious attitudes held by the Christian Missionaries on the one hand, and the reluctance entertained by the Saiva parents to send their children to Mission Schools. The Hindu parents felt that the instruction needed for their children to qualify for a useful and profitable career should not involve their alienation from the traditional culture and environment. This school had 8 classes and the curriculum of studies at the start included texts on religion, Tamil Literature, Grammar, Arithmetic and Logic. The books used in this school were either written or published by Navalar. His Infant Readers, known as *Bala Padam* three in number, contained the essence of Hindu religion and other moral

and useful subjects. All educationists of South India and Ceylon praised Navalar's readers to be better than the texts used by Christian Missionaries.

From the commencement, this school faced severe financial difficulties. The Saivites had an implicit faith in the religious neutrality of the English Government. They held a meeting decided to apply for government grant-in-aid to run the school, because the government gave financial aid of £500 to Protestant Schools and it was recently that they permitted the Roman Catholics to open schools and favoured them £150 as grant-in-aid. The circumstances under which Catholics appealed to the Government for aid to their schools was not dissimilar to that of the Hindus.

Two Catholic English Schools, one for boys and the other for Girls were established in Jaffna Town in January 1850. "From the commencement of the Jaffna Catholic English Schools, application seems to have been made to the School Commission for Government aid but without success. Hence, in March 1850 the leading Catholics of Jaffna addressed a memorial to Lord Torrington, the then Governor of Ceylon on the subject. In that Memorial they pointed out that since one of the indispensable rules of the schools run by the Protestant Missionaries in the North was 'that the members of the said schools should learn the Protestant Catechism and attend Divine Service in the Protestant Churches', they had been compelled to avoid sending their children to Protestant Schools. Since Bishop Bettachini had recently established two English Schools—one English School for the boys with two teachers one of whom is an Englishman, and one English School for girls under the direction of an English mistress 'they appealed to the Governor to direct the School Commission to allocate government grant to these schools also according to the proportion of Catholics living in the Northern Province.' And they succeeded in getting a grant of £150.

In 1852 Arumuga Navalar and the Jaffna National Educational Society, believing that the government might extend similar grant to them appealed for financial

support. The reasons given by the Arumuga Navalar was not different from that of the Catholics. "The petitioner (Arumuga Navalar) is equally bound to acknowledge that by the labours of the different missionaries in the Northern Province the state of Society has been considerably improved. It would however be disingenuous on his part were he to hesitate respectfully and with deference to express his own conviction that had the influence in the Missionary Schools been less exacting in the renunciation of the conscientious attachment to the religious predilection entertained by the Tamil youths instructed therein, the latter would have derived morally greater advantages from the tuition imparted to them. The desire to acquire a competent knowledge of the English Language and other information afforded in those Seminaries induced many to conform for a time to the rules to which however they paid little regard after the completion of their studies."

**BUT THE SCHOOL COMMISSION** which was dominated by the Christian Missionaries and the European Officials did not view it with favour. They refused grant on the ground that the system of education proposed to be given by that body was of a character not consistent with the objects of their institution. It should be borne in mind that at that time Saivites sought the support of the government, the Church Missionaries had 29 schools, Wesleyans 8 schools and the American Missionaries 95 schools in the Jaffna Peninsula alone.

Secondly, the Christian Missionaries themselves did not view such developments with favour. At the start, they criticised the institution for excluding the Bible, English and Western Science from the curriculum as a retrograde step which will not bring any benefit to the Hindu population. In fact, the *Morning Star*, a publication of the American Missionaries criticised this school and its curriculum in five instalments entitled "Native Education." (See *Morning Star* issues of May 12, 26, June 23, July 28, and August 11, of 1853).

It argued against the contention that the enlightened policies of the British Government was to support and encourage education

irrespective of religious truths. One of the editorials said that "the regulations of government generally relating to education, and more especially the fundamental principles on which the special School Commission was organised, as well as the manner in which it had hitherto been conducted, came to show that the British Government both in theory and practice, did regard the Christian element, as contained in the revelation of God, as a primary and indispensable importance in every education whether for natives or Europeans."

All these five instalments were reviewed by a Hindu and this was published in the same paper with the editorial comments. The reviewer apparently a Saivite, admitted the benefit derived from the study of the English Language, Literature and Science introduced by the Western World. However, he refused to concede to the Christian Missionaries the exclusive right to conduct the education of other religionists. He commented that the Saivites "repudiate all description of exclusiveness. Still they insist on their privilege of thinking, judging, and acting for themselves, but concurrence and the assimilation have their legitimate limits. Individuality is intractable whether applied to person or communities or nations or races. Whether it be just, fair and reasonable for one party to assume the right to insist that another party shall confirm implicitly to the views, opinions and usages of the claimants that a total abrogation of self and social bonds held conscientiously sacred by the persons from whom such concessions is expected, may safely be left to the verdict of the enlightened and impartial public either British or Hindu."

**UNDAUNTED** by the failure to obtain government grant, the organisers of the school carried on the activities of the school with voluntary contributions they mostly received in the form of free rice. Later, the expenses of the school were met out of the income derived from the sale of Navalai's books and endowments. This school received government grant only in 1870 after 22 years of existence and that too after the introduction of the Bible as a text for English and the good offices exer-

ted by the then Government Agent of the Northern Province Mr. Russell. Though English was taught as a subject, yet this school was registered as a vernacular school. In that year, this was the largest Swabasha School in the island which had 260 students and received the highest grant among the Swabasha Schools. The children received education free and the teachers, mostly Navalai's friends and his pupils taught gratis.

As their finances were inadequate to set up rival private schools to match the Christian Schools the Saivites agitated the Government to set up more Government Schools in Jaffna, because since the grant-in-aid system came into operation, the government closed its schools and entrusted the education of Jaffna to the Christian Missionaries. As the demand for more and more English educated men in Government and other enterprises increased the people of Jaffna realised the value of English education. Therefore they pressed the Government to open more schools. By about 1855, due to financial reasons and others, most of the missionaries were forced to close down a number of these schools. (Batticotta Seminary was closed in 1855 and reopened in 1872). This caused almost a panic among the Hindus who reaped the benefit of English education.

At the same time, the Christian Missionaries also increased the school fees. Because some of the missionaries relinquished Government grant in aid as Government placed restrictions on scriptural instructions. The missionaries were disappointed with their own performance in matters of conversion and were reprimanded by the home authorities for not doing enough religious propaganda and conversions. They realised and they were justified in their conclusions that more and more Hindus patronised the Christian Schools not to become Christians but to acquire a sound English education. As such, the Christian Schools placed a high premium for obtaining such education. To overcome these restrictions, the Hindus could do nothing but to appeal to the government. But the reply of the government was typical of its attitude. The Governor of the day said that "fees should be high enough



to arrest that too easy acquisition of English, which fills every Government Office with noisy applicants for work and strips the fields of that labour which is the source of wealth."

(To be Concluded)



BUILDING A VILLAGE HOUSE—95

# Talking Of Trees

By Herbert Keuneman

Quite a few are doing so, so, these days, talking of trees: a gratifying number, and I imagine a good deal of the credit should go to Iranganie Serasingha and her Tree Trustees, the Ruk Rakaganno. But not, alas! enough of those who should be talking about them to the greatest purpose: the rural folk, one doesn't call them 'peasants' in these days when they have become *govi mahatturu* for propaganda purposes.

Trees as a kind of *objects d'art* trees as curiosities, trees as monuments...these naturally tend to be what catch the drawing-room imagination (and it isn't their fault if a fair many of the most active Ruk Rakaganno fall under such a head. It isn't the country's misfortune, either. It was, for instance, just such objective enthusiasts that saved a stump of Colombo's last surviving ebony tree, opposite St. Bridget's Convent, when a ganglia-activated Municipality—just a roadside tree—was about to cut it altogether down). But trees as a consciously recognized part of one's own immediacy—the ecological tree—don't let us face it, enter as they should into the national consciousness. They don't enter into the peasant's consciousness, in short.

Sure, even the peasant—for brevity and convenience' sake (I can't keep saying The Rural Population) I shall go out on a limb and call him that—even the peasant talks of trees; he has had the radio's lead to do so, ever since the sudden official conversion to a line a few of us have been plugging for years: that trees do somehow contribute not only to the timber-wealth of a country but to its climate as well. But he talks of them, as the radio and all other means

of government propaganda—on any subject—teach him to: in lip service' public protestations, or for a conversational gambit. He does not—and neither do most other people, even those of less parochial interests—*feel* about trees-in-the-mass that they are as much a whole entity as, say, a food-tree he may have planted and, as a whole entity, even more important to his welfare than his coconut or jak or mango. *nikam gahak*, just a tree, is far too common a point of view. For there is, of course, no tree that is just-a-tree; every one is a representative limb of the trees-in-the-mass that contribute immeasurably to the rainfall that keeps his carefully cultivated food tree alive.

Amongst pundits this has long been an arguable point: so arguable, and there are so many points, that in Sri Lanka of late politicians anxious to create new colonies of (1) voters (2) rehabilitated peasants, in that order, have successfully inhibited argument about it: even pundits are inhibitable when their jobs depend on politicians. It was always possible to allow the voices of trees-have-nothing-to-do-with-it pundits to explain away unseasonable droughts by talk of changing world-climatic patterns—and, mind we, these too may very well be changing—and by talking learnedly of Convictional Rains, the rains by which the vast preponderance of Ceylon crops save the tank-supplied ones are fed and even the tanks themselves are replenished for the Yala sowing, once the brief monsoon is over.

The pundits might, indeed, put in more than a little of useful arguing about the Convictional Rains themselves. For these are not, obviously, affected like the monsoons by changing world-climate. They are local patterns. And they are at least as important to Ceylon (having regard to her physical features, which are ideal for them) as monsoons which grow steadily more unpredictable.

Nearly everybody knows what convection is; and if you don't, you can easily illustrate the phenomenon for yourself by dropping a few tea leaves into the centre of a saucepan of fast-boiling water. (But be sure, for the sake of a clear illustration, to have your source of heat considerably smaller than the diameter of the pan). You will see the leaves whirl

out towards the circumference of the pan, get sucked down and inward again towards the centre, rise, and repeat the cycle over and over. What happens, of course, is that the hottest and therefore least dense water rises and is replaced from all sides by the colder. This spreading upward and outward of the hotter layer and downward and inward of the cooler naturally applies to any fluid, and the more concentrated the heat source the more marked the circulatory currents. This is why the air, itself a fluid, over our Ceylon mountain-mass, largely rocky and easily heated and already elevated, moves in quite strong, high-level winds toward the plains.

Now warm air holds quite a lot more moisture insuspension that cold. So, when the outflowing Convection Winds, carrying clouds of moisture with them, rise to that level at which they grow too cool to support the water droplets they bear, the moisture condenses and falls as rain. All very clear.

All very clear. But what no one in the early days of ample convectional rainfall seems to have bothered to work out was whether the moisture held in the air towering upwards over so comparatively small an area as from Dambulla to Deniyaya (90 mls.) and Avissawella to Passara (55 mls.) and some of it (from over the highest hills) starting off as pretty cool and relatively unladen air to begin with, was actually sufficient to deposit rain all the way from the hill-country to, say, Anuradhapura; and Batticaloa; and Tangalla, and Colombo...say, over 5/6,000 sq. miles. Did, perhaps, the clouds in those happy rainy times recruit themselves locally, so to speak, with moisture?

For it should be remembered that convection, if less spectacularly, is going on everywhere under the sun that is literally under the sun, and not just over the hills. Panting Ehetuwewa is spouting its column of heated air into the sky, beseeching that what moisture it uplifts as an offering be blessed and re-bestowed transmuted into rain; but nothing happens. Mind you, we have the clouds. But still nothing happens. Why only now so?

Maybe what did happen in the old good days was that even in

the Ehetuwewa updrafts there was just enough moisture borne aloft to the flagging cloud expedition from so far away? And maybe such reinforcement was what took place all along that welcome meteorological relief army's route(s)? So that with each access of local aid the main force of nimbus troops could fight a little further forward until every last practicable remnant of the precious supply it had set out to bring to the thirsting lands below was bravely spent?

This sort of hypothesis is for the pundits to consider; and there are signs that they are doing so: I overheard a scrap of talk on the radio the other day which seemed to say that there is rain in our clouds—of course! there is—but the trouble is to bring it down; and there seemed to be talk of 'seeding' them with chemicals or using other artificial means, such as bombardment, to do so. The usual big talk that takes place when nothing appears to be immediately possible and the people's bread must be substituted for by promise of circuses! But I hope they will also investigate the likelihood that something on the lines I have above described—I am no pundit in such matters (as may be only too evident) and I realize that there may be several scientific flaws in what I therefore chose to argue in a metaphor—is at least possible. Clearly, if a local supplementation of moisture-laden air can act 'catalytically', as it were, to produce precipitation—otherwise we should have nothing but, at best, the return of as much excess moisture as we contributed—the provision of ground cover in order to conserve the moisture we are to contribute is critical; and in our climate TREES are the beginning of efficient ground-cover. I hope the pundits consider that.

It is by no means certain they will. Too many of them have been conditioned to account trees expendable because cutting down trees can bring immediate financial (and/or political) returns and our society, even the academics amongst us, tend to think in terms of the 'salvage-tapping' of our every economic resource.

Yet, to draw the correct conclusion and make the correct decision about our trees are, together, of the utmost urgency. If any of this argument is right, to

persist in our destruction of trees could be to initiate a chain reaction. Without trees we cannot secure efficient ground-cover? Without efficient ground-cover we cannot conserve sufficient moisture? Without sufficient moisture we cannot boost the nimbus that reaches us, convection-borne, from the hills to the point at which they burst in rain? Without rain we cannot grow trees. It is a vicious circle. And every year the viciousness is more intense than the year before.

Yes! not a circle but an ascending spiral of deadly risk. *How long before we reach the point of no return?*

This is why the pundits must somehow be allowed to remain objective: to arrive at the Truth about Trees. And this is why Ruk Rakaganno and sophisticated tree lovers are probably more important to the movement to save trees than the peasant, the villager: the former are better able both (by education) to appreciate the problem and (by disinterestedness) to urge its ideal solution. If only more of the pundits were as disinterested; if only less of them were plain uninterested! And a few are deliberately hypocritical. Be this said

The pundits' is, more or less, the villager's viewpoint; but with a discouraging sophistication of cynicism in it, however seldom still all too often! Better to be a villager, ignorant and self-centred, than a selfish scientist full of knowledge but self-seeking. Yet, with the political backing he courts and receives, such is the type of pundit widest and loudest heard.

When I call the villager ignorant I do not speak of schooling. Many villagers, even of the older generations, are literate and many can follow a syllogism. The ignorance I speak of is not a lack of information but of conviction. (I am at present engaged in a running fight with Dinga to persuade her to keep bandaged a slight wound in her foot. It has already caused her cellulitis—brought down by anti-biotics—and as long as the pain was there she retained the bandage the hospital put on; but now that it is better the wound is open to the dust again. And our dust swarms with streptococci. Nevertheless, she has passed her SSC, including her paper in health;

and has taken, besides, a post-school course in (amongst other things) home nursing. Village 'ignorance' is of that sort.)

When the villager looks at a tree, he sees either 'my tree' or 'just a tree'. 'My tree' he is protective towards; 'just a tree' he considers expendable. Even the 'my'-ness can cut both ways: a tree he owns because it grows in his *akkare* becomes an expendable tree the moment he wishes for any reason to cut it down, his sense of responsibility towards the tree ends with his own convenience. (Of course, he doesn't have to be a villager to think that way!)

But the fact is, I think, the villager hates trees unless they are thoroughly tamed and domesticated and exploitable. To him a tree is the only representative of nature rampant against which he can be wholly victorious. The once unremitting campaign man had to wage against the wilderness remain in his racial memory, and he takes it out on the tree, the wilderness' last soldier!

Ruk-Rakaganno would like a preponderance of rural members. They could get them if they could show the slightest immediate benefit a member could personally look for: a job, a handout, possibly even a drink; the same way political parties show vast memberships. But I still pin my faith on the emotionally captivated Guardians of the Tree. More strength to them!

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FORTY YEARS AGO  
IN A TEA ESTATE—II

## Back In Jaffna

— Flashback —

By Ina Trimmer

When my husband left Ceylon as a child he spoke Tamil fluently. Like all children left very much in the care of an ayah who pick up the language she speaks, my husband jabbered away in Tamil and spoke with a perfect Jaffna accent of which he was very proud. Besides, all his friends belonged to the Tamil families which whom his parents had close association. He told me that they were amongst

his dearest and most trusted companions and I know that when he died his feelings were still unchanged.

My husband was evidently a little terror. An old lady who lived in Jaffna at that time spoke of him with bated breath "Pa-ha-ah! Bertie Pillai! (Bertie child) Ba-a-a-d boy."

Once there was a wedding.

The bride lived three miles out of Jaffna and my husband had listened to his parents discussing it, so he decided to pay the bride a visit. A wedding present was a necessity. He heard his mother telling his father so. He picked up a little box in the go-down where he found what is locally if erroneously, called a tarantula. Tarantulas are common in the northern province. They are fearsome indeed; large spiders covered with hair, fierce, wicked looking, a revolting sight. How he could have made up his mind to do it, I don't know, but he managed to noose open and ooped it alive into the little box. With it nicely parcelled and tied up he slipped out of the mission house and set out to walk three miles.

Trudging along in the burning sun of Jaffna, his little fat legs moving as fast as they could, he found his way to the wedding house for he had been there before with his parents.

"Bertie Pillai! Ha! How did you get here? Did you come alone? Where are your parents?" he was asked.

Tired out with his mighty effort he demanded a drink.

"Where the bride? I have a small present for her." All this in Tamil. The bride greeted him shyly.

"You're a good little boy to come and see mee."

"I've brought you a present," handing her the box.

"Thanking you. What is in it?"

"Something nice. Something I thought you would like. Open it and see."

"Of course I will."

She began to undo the parcel; then opened the lid.

One howl of anguish she gave. A terror stricken cry, as she flung the box away.

"Ber-r-rtie! How could you" gaped the mother. "Kill that

tarantula, some one!" But it had got away in the ensuing confusion.

In the meantime his parents had missed him. In and out of the narrow streets of Jaffna they searched, for they knew he was a favourite with everyone, even the kaddai keepers and he would likely as not have been calling on some of his friends.

Old Dr. Paul, father of the late Dr. S. C. Paul, was a great favourite with Bertie and he would talk by the hour to that venerable old gentleman who was amused at his fluent Tamil. But no Bertie! Not there or anywhere! (I was the only one who called him Teddie).

Then he was brought home, rather a frightened but defiant little boy. He knew what awaited him. Many a time had he been caned by his father, many a time had his mother sent him to bed without a meal. Many a time had they deplored the naughtiness of their son.

When relating this incident to me he said—"never have I forgotten the caning I got. My father, usually the calmest of men, always so quiet and controlled thought I had committed a heinous sin. So I got it! Fair and square! I had no dinner that night, my mother's part of the punishment. If I had a son I'd let him catch as many as tarantulas as he liked."

"And give them to brides?"

Bertie Pillai had the grace to look abashed.

When Bertie returned to Ceylon twenty three years later, on furlough, he had forgotten all the Tamil he ever knew. It was a gradual process at first and then he suddenly realized that he couldn't remember one single word.

In Assam he spoke Hindustani which seemed to drive the nails deeper into his memory of the language which, as a child, had almost been his mother tongue. On his visit to Jaffna he accompanied his father and mother to the Methodist Church on New Year's eve for watch night service. His old friends were all there, Mary Paul, Nallama Tampoe and many others. They crowded round him after service when all the wishing and kissing took place.

"Bertie don't you know me?"

"Can't you recognize me?"

"Have I changed so much?" he heard on every side.

"Epudi sukam Bertie?" How are you.

"Eppa Vanthai" (when did you come).

Then, like a rising flood, deeply buried memories stirred, long forgotten, over which even the subconscious mind had cast a veil. In a rush they surged to the surface. Familiar faces, voices of old friends, loved associations the lift, the music of the language that was second nature to him—such a combination was irresistible. It broke down the barriers of Time and to his tongue came the words he spoke as a child. Bertie was indeed home again. He spoke with his old loquacity. There was no hesitation. The words flowed from him, his Jaffna accent as perfect as any of the others who had gathered round.

Happy badinage followed.

"What Bertie! No wife yet! You will soon be an old bachelor, no! We thought you'll bring a nice English girl to show us."

"No Mary, I was waiting for you."

"Waiting for me! I am married now."

"Yes, and I see you've a daughter too. You forget me."

"Well, what to do!"

Days and moments quickly pass on holiday, and time was running short. Goodbyes were imminent.

"Bert" said his mother as they sat in the vast verandah of the ancient Vembadi mission house where my husband as a child used to ride up and down on his pony.

"But, I don't want you to leave Ceylon. Your father and I are now at a time when we need one of our children by us. The rest have all flown away and we are alone."

She put her hand on his as if to hold him down.

It was a new role for her. She who had controlled the family all these years; whose word was law to them she was not pleading with him, "Trimmer amma" of Jaffna as she was affectionately called, was a powerful personality.

"But mother what do you expect me to do here? I have the promise of a very good job in Assam. I shall walk into it when

I return, and if I make good it will be mine for as long as I wish to keep it."

"We'll get you a job here. Your father has friends who can help."

My husband hesitated. He wanted desperately to go, but he wanted equally to ensure his mother's happiness. They approached Mr. O'Dell Figg an old friend. Could he help? They wanted their son in Ceylon. He had already been tea planting four years in Assam. It was in itself a recommendation.

That fine old merchant prince who wielded the fortunes of many estates, who was then a power in the island, inspected the aspirant for work under him and liked what he saw.

"Are you a good accountant!" he asked.

The answer was "yes". Figures were my husband's speciality.

"I would like you in my head office, but go first and then learn planting conditions in Ceylon, both tea and rubber".

So my husband went to Demodera. Then later came the command—"go to Bibile Estate. Take over. It's in a mess. If it's not cleared up Dunlops will pull out."

He went to Bibile. His line was tea but this was an all rubber estate.

Now was the opportunity to prove his worth.

He was on his mettle. He set himself to learn not only the work but the reason for the disintegration of what might have been a flourishing concern. Fever was one of the causes.

To everyone's surprise he made a profit and that very first year, the first year itself.

(To be Continued)

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## NEXT WEEK

- POLITICAL EARTH QUAKE IN PEKING
  - TRINCOMALEE
  - THE EGG MACHINE
  - THE PRESS
- 

## EVERY CITIZEN A LAWYER

### Law And Justice

by An Ex-Cop.

THE ACCUSED, one of the five indicted, who retained the eminent Counsel, had been regular in his daily payments but something untoward had happened. He was short of a thousand rupees. He was desperate. With much difficulty by appealing to some friends and relatives he succeeded in providing the 'pound of flesh'. The lawyer then made his appearance. It did not make matters easy for the client. He was found guilty along with the other accused.

"The Law is one thing. Justice is quite another." These words were uttered by a brilliant judicial officer now serving somewhere in the North in the capacity of a District Judge. I had the rare privilege of enjoying his scholarship, lively and scintillating wit, knowledge of history, archaeology, and above all the company of a true gentleman. These words did not strike me as particularly profound. I am an ex-flat footed Cop and very slow on the uptake. It did take me some time to realize the wisdom of this remark especially in the context of the present trends in the administration of Justice in our Country which have transcended all outmoded forms of procedure.

I have also appreciated the sentiments and deeply influenced by the logic of Robert Southey (1774-1843), Poet, writer of miscellaneous prose chiefly remembered for his association with Samuel Taylor Coleridge and William Wordsworth, leaders of the early Romantic movement. Among his major works were "Life of Nelson (1813), still a classic and Joan of Arc (1796). Southey enunciated in most simple terms "While actions are always to be judged by the immutable standard of Right and Wrong, the judgement we pass upon men must be qualified by considerations of age, country, station and other accidental circumstances and it will then be found that he who is most charitable in his judgement is generally be the least unjust."

Does it require the sophistry, the brilliance of Jurisprudence or

the quintessence of the knowledge imparted by eminent jurists like Archbold in his *Pleadings, Evidence and Practice in Criminal Cases*, Philipson on the *Law of Evidence*, Treatises of C. S. Kenny, or Turner, the mastery of oratory and the esoteric expertise of Case Law, cross-examination to present facts—the truth in the most simple, lucid manner and then leave the rest to those who sit in judgement who see to it as Sydney Smith put it so appropriately—"The only way to make the mass of mankind see the beauty of Justice is by showing them, in pretty plain" terms, the consequence of injustice.

In certain specialised fields such as matters pertaining to Labour disputes, Industrial matters, Offences under the Customs Ordinance, Inland Revenue Law, Municipal Law, etc., there are retired officers who have served and specialised in these branches who will certainly be in a better position to assist the Judge than a comparatively young man of the legal profession. The proposed draft Legislation can help these retired officers who for various reasons opt to retire and who would be able to augment their pension by levying a moderate fee as stipulated by pleading for another who is arranged in the Magistrate's or the District Court. Is it beyond them to study books on Procedure and Evidence? Can they not respect Convention and the correct etiquette both in and outside the Court?

THE PRESENT Administration of Justice Law No: 44 of 1973 which was the product of assiduous study, revision and foresight was calculated to simplify procedure. Section 2 of this Law states very clearly:—"Provisions of this Law are intended and shall be construed to achieve the following objectives:—

- (a) Simplicity and uniformity in procedure
- (b) Fairness in Administration
- (c) The elimination of unjustifiable expense and delay and the just determination of every judicial proceeding.

How vibrantly consonant with these precepts are the words of Owen Feltham (1602-1668), "best known for his essays" resolves Divine, Moral and Political in which the striking image (some borrowed by the Poet Henry-

Vaughan) are held to be more original than the ideas". He said: "To go Law is for two persons to kindle a fire at their own cost, to warm Others and Singe themselves to cinders, And because they cannot agree as to what is Truth and Equity, they will both agree to unplume themselves that others may be decorate with their feathers."

The old Criminal Procedure Code, Chapter 16 of the Legislative enactments of Ceylon Section 211 states:- "The Accused or his pleader may then enter upon his defence and may examine his witnesses (if any) and the Accused person or his pleader may then sum up his case. Section 211 of the old Procedure Code is now replaced by Section 138 (1) of the Administration of Justice Law No. 44 of 1973 which reads:- "At every trial and when the Court calls upon the Accused for his defence, it shall, if he is NOT represented by an Attorney-at-Law, inform him that he is entitled to give evidence on his behalf and of the legal consequences of his failure to do so, and shall call his attention to the principal points in the evidence for the prosecution which tell against him in order that he may have an opportunity of explaining them."

The proposed Legislation merely supports and supplements the provisions of this section. In cases where persons who do not have the financial wherewithal to retain expensive lawyers, the proposed legislation gives him the opportunity, the right and the privilege to get some one on whom he has confidence to "Explain the principal points in the evidence for the prosecution which tell against him."

Does this call for the eloquence, oratorical or theatrical exuberance and flamboyance of an Oxford or Cambridge graduate or even a member of the Inner Temple of any Inns of a foreign Land? It would be relevant to remind the readers of some of crafty wiles of some lawyers—the local legal "sharks" who magnify the offence, intimidate their clients with the impending danger of imprisonment and heavy fines and thereby 'induce' their clients into parting with very high fees. There are also those who very cunningly adhere to the "fruit diet" of living on "dates"—no offence meant to the country that

sends us the dried fruit of the date palm which is now a popular substitute for sugar.

Cannot an educated, intelligent person with an average sense of logic in lucid and simple language of the Magistrate's and District Courts explain the "principal points in the evidence which tell against the accused"? Are we to deny the poor rural folk to seek the services of prudent persons who can truthfully and with sincerity plead on their behalf and maybe do so 'Pro Deo'? It was the great "Alfred Lord Tennyson who in his *Aylmer's Field*" wrote:—

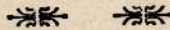
"Mastering the lawless science of our Law

That codeless myriad of Precedent,  
That wilderness of single instances  
Through which a few by wit or fortune led

May beat a pathway out to wealth and fame."

We are making a big 'song and dance' at aiming at simplification, expeditious disposal of cases and socialistic trends in other spheres of life but we are still clinging to the antiquated systems of the colonial regime. Let it not be said that the common man for whom so much is said to be done was denied a chance to make a pathway to a little wealth and a little fame without making it the sole prerogative of some "legal giants" to amass more than what they have acquired.

(Concluded)



## A Tribute to The Dog

By George Graham Vest

(GEORGE GRAHAM VEST, United States Senator from Missouri from 1879 to 1903, was one of the leading orators and debaters of the Senate. As a young man practicing law in a small Missouri town, Vest represented a man who sued another for the killing of his dog. Vest displayed no interest in the testimony, but when his turn came to address the jury, he made the following speech—end with the case)

*Gentlemen of the Jury:* The best friend a man has in the world may turn against him and become his enemy. His son or daughter that he has reared with loving care may prove ungrateful. Those who are nearest and dearest to us, those whom we trust with our happiness and our good name may become traitors to their faith. The money that a man has, he may lose. It flies away from him, perhaps when he needs it most. A man's reputation may be sacrificed in a moment of ill-considered action. The people who are prone to fall on their knees to do us honour when success is with us, may be the first to throw the stone of malice when failure settles its cloud upon our heads. The one absolutely unselfish friend that man can have in this selfish world, the one that never deserts him, the one that never proves ungrateful or treacherous is his dog. A man's dog stands by him in prosperity and in poverty, in health and in sickness. He will sleep on the cold ground, where the wintry winds blow and the snow drives fiercely, if only he may be near his master's side. He will kiss the hand that has no food to offer; he will lick the wounds and sores that come in encounter with the roughness of the world. He guards the sleep of his pauper master as if he were a prince. When all other friends desert, he remains. When riches take wings, and reputation falls to pieces, he is as constant in his love as the sun in its journey through the heavens. If fortune drives the master forth an outcast in the world, friendless and homeless, the faithful dog asks no higher privilege than that of accompanying him, to guard him against danger, to fight against his enemies. And when the last scene of all comes, and death takes his master in its embrace and his body is laid away in the cold ground, no matter if all other friends pursue their way, there by the graveside will the noble dog be found, his head between his paws, his eyes sad, but open in alert watchfulness, faithful and true even in death.

Compiled by Anaclitus Silva



# Confidentially

## The Western Press

IS IT NOT A FACT that there was a significant turnout at the BMICH on Sunday, October 17, to felicitate the Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike, after her historic address to the UN General Assembly "on behalf of two-thirds of humanity grouped in the nonaligned movement and her visits to UK and Norway where she strengthened the existing friendly ties"? That religious leaders and dignitaries were among the most prominent participants at this meeting? That political leaders of the United Front vintage also took a leading part in the proceedings? That the President, Mr. William Gopallawa, in a special message issued on the occasion of this Reception to the PM said that she already occupied a place in history owing to her exemplary service to the country? That the President said that she had achieved a place of renown in international affairs by the successful leadership she gave to the Fifth Non-aligned Summit held in Sri Lanka? That the President had specially mentioned the move made at the Summit and the United Nations to create a new international political and economic order and said that her address at the United Nations would help to propagate her fame further throughout the world? That the most noteworthy and most quotable part of the PM's speech was the slating she gave the "western press"? That she had emphasised that her historic address to the UN General Assembly had been "blackened out" by the Western Press? That not a line was mentioned in this regard and she was surprised at that attitude? That in regard to the coverage by the Western press of the Nonaligned Summit she said that the pressmen of the Western newspapers had tried more to pick holes such as whether there were internal differences between countries rather than report the important decisions taken unanimously? That they were not bothered about the concrete and constructive steps taken at the Summit? That they were out to sling mud and ridicule the movement? That

she was happy to state that despite that campaign against the movement, it was growing from to strength? That the rest of her speech—fully reported in the local press—consisted of references to some important aspects of her work and that whatever honour had accrued to her it was really honour to the country? That what interested the *Tribune* and many thinking people in this country is that she, for the first time perhaps, had lashed out at the "western press"? That so far, in spite of criticisms of the western press by Mrs. Indira Gandhi and other nonaligned leaders, Mrs. Bandaranaike had never launched a full-blooded attack on the western press?

That though she has criticised sections of the local press, ever since she had entered the political field, for slanting news, managing news and even backing out important news, she had never attacked the "western press" in such unequivocal and unambiguous terms? That there is no doubt that the speech at the U.N. did not get the coverage it deserved? That, apart from everything else, she was voicing the sentiments and aspirations of two-thirds of humanity? That this fact had been emphasised by leading US newspapers like the *New York Times*, *Washington Post* and others, several times in recent months? That in spite of this, there was a virtual blackout of her speech? That the western news agencies also treated the speech in the most step-motherly way? That bits and pieces were put out by the western wire services in a way that made no impact? That it was because of "treatment" like this that nonaligned countries have initiated moves to set up a nonaligned newscast to be utilised by the nonaligned news agencies and press? **That it is time that the western press realised that the writing on the wall was clear? That the days of the western press were numbered as an international phenomena? That two-thirds and more of the human race will not tolerate for much longer the arrogance and the sectarian attitudes of the western press? That it is a fact that the western press (and its influence which is already at a low ebb) will fade away in the same way that colonialism and imperialism have be-**

gun to fade away? That there is an ever-widening credibility gap between the western press and the rest of humanity outside the western countries? That today, unlike ten years ago, the knowledge as to how the western press (and the media) can twist, distort, slant, blackout, and manage the news (through half-truths, etc.) has become universal? That western newspapers had even begun to lose validity and credibility at home? That that was why the US press had thought it necessary to present the truth about the Pentagon Papers (and the Vietnam War), the abominations of Watergate and the horrors of the CIA? That such actions had restored a little credibility to some US papers? That even such papers, which claimed the "right" to maintain the freedom of the press and the right "to print everything fit print" (and much else besides) however, fight shy of presenting the truth about two-thirds of mankind in the nonaligned movement? That this is because they place the exploitative interests of the western world far above the emancipatory aspirations of the non-aligned and developing world? That as long as the countries, which had become poor and undeveloped as a result of the growth of an aggressive capitalism and militarism in Western Europe and North America, humbly "toed the line" and accepted the exploitation of their resources and trade (by western masters), then the western press wrote romantic and sentimental pieces about these countries and their peoples? That no sooner these countries wanted to emancipate themselves from the stranglehold of various kinds of exploitation, then the western leaders and the western press howled from the housetops about the "tyranny of the majority"? That strident speeches and statements were thereafter made by US leaders that the "tyranny of the majority" must be liquidated? That unless the West woke up from its Rip Van Winklism and accepted realities which had emerged, it will be only a question of time before the western world and the western press, as we have known them in the last fifty years, will disappear from the face of the earth?



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