

TRIBUNE



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Letter From The Editor

THE SCENE depicted in the picture on our cover this week is from what was once a large and flourishing coconut plantation not far from the suburbs of Colombo. The estate in question is no longer large or flourishing. It has been fragmented into tiny plots ranging from three acres to half an acre and has been distributed among the landless mainly in that electoral district but also among favoured ones from other electorates who find this estate a convenient place from which to travel to Colombo daily for work. One of the objectives of any Land Reform is to enable cultivators and peasants to own the land they have traditionally cultivated and to obtain the full fruits of their labour without landowners grabbing the better part of the crops. Land Reform has in the modern period—from the French Revolution onwards—been also used to distribute land to landless peasants. Besides this, in the contemporary era of socialism, land reform has been mainly used to effect a more efficient utilisation of land by persuading peasants and farmers to derive the full benefits of advanced technology in large scale and mechanised agriculture through state and collective farms, or through co-operatives. Capitalism has shown how large scale operations and mechanised farming can produce miracles in production, but those who see iniquity and injustice in the private ownership of land with the concomitant defecation of personal private profitmaking have sought to use co-operatives and collectives to undertake large-scale mechanised farming. Without going into the merits or demerits of private or public ownership so far as agricultural production is concerned, it is clear that Land Reform can be justified only if greater and more efficient production targets are achieved. In Sri Lanka, Land Reform, in spite of loud protestations about idealistic objectives of improved agricultural development and romantic proclamations about righting wrongs done by colonialism and imperialism, has run into snags that have already caused serious setbacks in production. The Government and the authorities are no doubt aware of the adverse trends in production which have arisen as a result of land reform, but these are being temporarily hidden behind a series of smokescreens alternating between sob stories about the devastating impact of the drought and the evil actions of the former (now disposed of) landowners who are alleged to have neglected the land because they knew the take-over under the Land Reform Law was coming. What official propaganda has not admitted so far is how the new owners of land under the Land Reform Law have caused even greater havoc than the drought and the old owners and have contributed in no uncertain way towards the growing crisis in production in all agricultural activity in the island. The picture on the cover is a graphic example is how a coconut estate which had been maintained as a showpiece model of coconut production is today (within four years of Land Reform) derelict land with no coconut production worth speaking about. Those who had been granted allotments were only anxious to have a residential plots on which they erected shanties to travel to and from Colombo. Many of the coconut estates within a radius of twenty to thirty miles of Colombo have become now veritable colonies of shanty dwellers. The coconut trees were first "slaughtered plucked" for young kurumbas; and these shanty dwellers are not concerned about applying fertilisers and even if the benevolent Government gave them loans to buy fertiliser they used the loans for other purposes. (And if the Government granted the loans in the form of fertiliser, it was not difficult to sell it on the open market and utilise the money to buy arrack or fancy polyester shirts). Even before the trees had no more kurumbas, the leaves were cut to make cadjans or ekels—ekels is the latest montraditional export (earning CRA) and vast quantities are now exported without the authorities being worried about the damage such exports do to the coconut industry. In theory, ekels are extracted only from dried leaves which fall down, but in the greed to acquire CRA money, leaves which should have been left on the trees for many more months have been cut down to boost the export of ekels. When there are no more leaves (and kurumbas having disappeared a long time before), the trees are cut down for rafters—and as there is a glut of coconut rafters and reapers on the market the trees now end up as firewood. Apologists will argue that this fate has overtaken only a tiny segment of the coconut land under Land Reform, but if one travels through the heartland and the periphery of Sri Lanka's coconut lands, one can see the pitiful state of the industry. The coconut for domestic purposes is now Rs. 1.20 to 1.40 each but very soon it will be Rs. 2 and the Government will thereafter be compelled to import coconuts for domestic consumption just as coconut poonac is already being imported.

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EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK**• Current Developments**

January 10,

In any strike and emergency situation, there are always casualties, and in the current wave of strikes, the biggest casualty, so far, has been the official (propaganda) mass media. There is no need to enter into details about the manner in which Lake House and the SLBC dished out information to the public and also the vagaries of the press briefings of the ubiquitous head of all official propaganda in the country, Mr. Ridgeway Tillekeratne. One thing became obvious as the days went by: that the credibility gap between the people and the official media widened in the most staggering fashion. This gap had narrowed considerably immediately after the nonaligned summit in the euphoria that followed the successful Conference.

In the darkening gloom of the widening gap between the official media and the people, the *Daily Mirror* and *Sunday Times*, emerged as the only newspaper group publishing daily papers in more than one language willing and able to print all the news fit to print with due consideration for truth and reality. The news in these two papers were the closest to the realities as they unfolded themselves. Only those who read these two papers (and the Sinhalese-language *Lankadipa* of the same group) were able to know some of the basic facts of the developing strike situation. The *Virakesari*, the Tamil daily, with understandable caution and restraint also published all relevant news in a straight forward and truthful manner. The communist daily, *Aththa*, had a difficult role as the paper of one of the constituent parties of the Government, but from the end of December it was clear that its sympathies were with the strikers and the trade unions which were demanding that the Government should negotiate with "strikers". The LSSP daily, *Janadina*, was the vigorous champion of the strike and from its column it was clear that it was spearheading a campaign (camouflaged in trade union terminology) to compel the Govern-

ment to start a dialogue with the leadership of the striking Unions—known to all to be the LSSP.

The doctors—GMOA and AMS—as anticipated, called off the work-to-rule after a decision was taken to that effect at a special emergency meeting of the two Associations yesterday, January 9. In this case, too, the Government had refused to negotiate with the two Unions on the specious plea that it was not willing to enter into a dialogue (or even continue the old stalemated negotiations) whilst the doctors were on a work-to-rule, forgetting the fact that the two Unions had started their "trade union action" only because the Minister had not been willing to continue meaningful discussions with the two unions whilst seeking to make appointments to key posts contrary to established practice and thereafter present a *fait accompli* to the Unions. No sooner the work-to-rule started, the Minister (Mrs. Siva Obeyesekera) took up the unrealistic position that she will not negotiate with the two Unions as long as the "trade union action" was continued. When it was found that the work-to-rule was effective and that it was not possible to organise a group of dissident doctors to break the work-to-rule the official media had launched a vicious and malicious campaign against the doctors. *Tribune* has commented on some aspects of this campaign, and it still hopes to publish a detailed analysis of the propaganda offensive against doctors to show how untruthful, how unfair and how degenerate official propaganda and its mass media can become.

The two Unions of public service medical men had held out alone. They did not get any support from any other trade union in the country. In fact, most surprisingly, veteran trade union (and political) leader, Dr. N. M. Perera, had condemned the work-to-rule campaign of the doctors as some reactionary conspiracy of degenerate upperclass people to hold the poor and sick to ransom. This showed that the LSSP had still not outlived the political obsessions of the thirties and forties that doctors (like lawyers) were

some kind of brown sahibs who had to be liquidated as the "running dogs" of capitalism, imperialism (now neo-colonialism) and reaction. The communist *Aththa* had taken a totally different stand and it lent unqualified support to the struggle of the doctors to obtain redress for their many grievances and had pleaded with the Government to negotiate and settle with the doctors. In retrospect, it seems funny that Dr. N. M. Perera, who damned the non-LSSP doctors work-to-rule and wanted them to resume normal working (by implication he did not want the Government to negotiate with them while they were on the work-to-rule), should argue differently in regard to LSSP railway unions—he has said nothing personally so far, but the LSSP media and unions have raised a hue and cry demanding that Government should negotiate with strikers and their leaders. It is always easy to justify a position through casuistical self-righteousness, but the LSSP attitude to the doctors' struggle surprised many people.

The doctors' Unions, although abandoned by all other trade unions in the country, had waged a single-handed struggle. Their unity and determination to stand their ground against propaganda barrages of the official media made the Government (and the Cabinet) to wake up to the realities of the situation. The last trump played by the Ministry was to "welcome" a dissident trade union formed by half the dozen medical men in the hope that puppet show would be able to undermine the work-to-rule of the GMOA and AMS. But this attempt to make a strike-breaking "saviour" of a few dissident doctors' turned out to be total and complete flop. This finally convinced the Government that something had to be done besides maligning the doctors through the official media. It was then the Government resorted to the transparent device of getting a Sectoral Committee of the Cabinet to pull the chestnuts out of the fire for the Minister (who had evidently been misled into the belief that the doctors could be brought to heel and made to eat humble with a little toughness and persistent scolding through the official media). The Government, understandably,

had to save the face of the Minister, and there is no doubt that the Sectoral Committee was able to do this. The Minister thereafter opened a new dialogue whilst the work-to-rule was on, and the doctors refused to call it off until an appropriate point had been reached to justify the suspension of the trade union action. Many of the demands of the doctors (which did not involve finance) were conceded including the demand not to proceed with the appointments to certain key posts.

It was also heartening that the Minister had shown a change of heart and this had eased tension, but the usual bureaucratic delays had slowed down negotiations that should have been tolerated. When this new dialogue with the Minister had reached the point where the Minister had undertaken to set down the position in a letter, the railway strike and other strikes had reached a dangerously crucial stage with the LSSP's CFL threatening a General Strike by calling out the CTB on the midnight of the 9th and all other Unions on the 12th.

The Government, understandably, though unnecessarily, conceded the demand for a festival advance of Rs. 500, but at the same time, provocatively invoked the Essential Services Order on January 4 and demanded that the doctors should end their work-to-rule forthwith under pain of suffering the penalties envisaged in the Order. There was a special threat directed at the doctors in the official communique: they were pointedly told that the confiscation of property was one of the penalties that could be imposed for violating the Essential Services Order. This threat was not directed at the other workers on strike (probably on the Marxian cliché that that a "proletarian" had nothing to lose but his chains—not true of the Port, CTB and Railway workers in Sri Lanka who are now a privileged middle class in "developing" Sri Lanka), but the official media repeated *ad nauseam* that the property of doctors would be confiscated if they did not call off their work-to-rule forthwith.

Whoever had advised this propaganda line did not seem realise that it was totally unrealistic—because, apart from everything else, very few doctors had any property at all not even a small car which was the status symbol of the medical profession when doctors (and lawyers) had still been brown sahibs. (Today, the comparatively highly paid CTB drivers own private hiring cars and taxis which they operate as "mudalalis" whilst doctors cannot now afford such luxuries as owning cars). The threat to confiscate "property" was not the only empty threat in the Essential Services Order. The doctors did not defy the Order in the way the Railwaymen, Clerical Servants and others had defied the Order. The doctors neatly side-stepped the Order through a clever quibble by announcing on January 6 (the first deadline under the Order) that (a) no copy of the Order had been served on their Unions, (b) that they were working "efficiently" according to the departmental rules laid down (meaning that working - according - to - rule was not striking), and (c) that the Unions were awaiting the reply from the Minister on the state of

their negotiations. As a bait to the Government the doctors also mentioned that the Minister was now taking a responsive attitude to their demands and that a fruitful outcome was expected from the final stages of the negotiations. The Minister sent her letter promptly on that day, viz. January 6, and the GMOA and AMS immediately publicly summoned a special meeting of the two Associations on Sunday January 9 to discuss the question of calling off of the work-to-rule. The meeting was duly held and the work-to-rule was called off. All's well that ends well, although the Emergency deadline that doctors should call off the work-to-rule "forthwith" on January 6 had turned out to be no more than a pious wish. The doctors had their way and the government managed to save its "face".

There are two important "lessons" to be drawn from the trade union struggle carried on by the two doctor's Union: that unity in their ranks coupled with realistic and restrained trade union action had brought them success: and that even an isolated trade

FIRST STAMP ON REUNIFICATION OF VIET NAM

The Ministry of Communications of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam has approved a design for the first stamp on the reunification of Viet Nam. This has been done as part of the steps to reunite the country.

The design of the stamp comprises a map of the whole of Viet Nam which is super-imposed on a drum bearing figures of art depicting Vietnameses, culture and civilisation. The art figures are a replica of the drum found in Ngoc Lu, after which it is named.

The art figures which depict the activities of man since the Copper Age have been drawn dexterously by the Vietnamese artists to make the stamp a fitting symbol of the great event of reunification.

The stamp has been printed in Cuba. In all, the Cubans will print ten million copies of the stamp as their contribution to the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam.

A delegation of DRV officials has already been to Cuba to receive the first set of a million stamps from the Cuban Minister of Communications, Pedro Guelmes.

Pedro Guelmes told the DRV delegation that the first million stamps on the reunification of Viet Nam were printed in a record time of eight days, instead of the usual three months, as a token of solidarity of the Cuban people with the people of DRV, which they considered as a sister nation.

The reunification of Viet Nam is an old cherished dream of all patriots which Ho Chi Minh put in his immortal words:

"Our Fatherland will certainly be reunified. Our fellow-countrymen in the South and in the North will certainly be reunited under the same roof."

union group can achieve a great deal by entering into principled negotiations. It is not unlikely that LSSP fire brands would now say that the doctors had revealed their "reactionary" tendencies by calling off the work-to-rule at a time when the "revolutionary fervour" of the working class was on the rise to lead the way towards a general strike. Not one of the other trade unions had lifted a finger in favour of the doctors and it would be wrong to expect doctors to extend any sympathy to the other Unions.

Observers of the current scene cannot but be struck by the fact that Essential Services Order had brought only a section of the Railway workers back to work. On the other hand, a large number of other Unions in trades which have been decreed as "essential" have come out on strike after the Order was promulgated. This did not anything to add to the prestige of the Government. It is also not very clear how many in the Railway, who were on strike, have returned to work. During the strike official statements had claimed that only 7000 of the 26,000 railway workers had been on strike—and with this stoppage on the railways had been complete. And now we are told today that 12,000 odd railwaymen had returned to work. Is it that this 12,000 are from the non-striking 19,000 railwaymen? Or have some of the striking 7000 also returned to work? A few trains are no doubt being run, but can this bring normalcy to railways? In the face of the support extended to the Railway Unions on strike by a very large section of the trade union movement, it is not likely that the railway strike can be resolved through the Essential Services Order.

At the time of writing, a section of the CTB has come out on strike as from midnight yesterday (January 9). And according to the daily papers four CTB Unions went out on strike. The papers have also reported as follows: "meanwhile the Ceylon Oil Workers Union comprising workers of the Ceylon Petroleum Corporation, a 20-union front of the Ceylon Electricity Board and the State Corporation Workers' Union have

given notice of strike action unless the Government holds immediate discussions to solve the dispute with the railway workers."

All political parties have been strangely reluctant to issue statements on the strike. Only the Opposition Group in the NSA, consisting of all Parties, had issued a joint and collective statement calling upon the Government to settle the strike by granting the request for a festival advance of Rs. 500. The LSSP, as such, did not issue a statement, but its CFL has not only supported the strike but has also issued a call for a General Strike if the Government did not climb down and settle the strike through negotiations. The position of the LSSP, judged by the actions and statements of its leading trade unionists was unequivocal: it was all for the strike and the escalation of the strike.

Though it was known that the UNP Unions had joined the strike, the UNP as such, until today, did not indicate that it "officially" supported the strike. This was the first time that the UNP has thrown its weight behind a major strike movement sponsored by the LSSP. The UNP, no doubt, believed that the LSSP-sponsored General Strike would be a "success" and it did not want to be left out of the picture in any negotiations or dialogues from positions of strength between the trade unions and the Government. Some SLFP Unions had supported the strike until the Prime Minister closed the ranks and invoked the Essential Services Order.

The SLFP hierarchy had begun to take a firm ideological line only after the CFL had issued the General Strike call and brought out its unions in the CTB. The SLFP trade union federation, echoing the political line of the PM issued a statement stressing that "the present strike has been launched by certain interested parties to topple the government and instal a dictatorship....."

The CP was in a difficult position. With the strike in the Railways a "success" for the first time in its history, the CP could not afford to stand aloof. Without considering the merits of the demand for Rs. 500, without considering the

financial and economic implications of the demand—by any standards the demand was unreasonable and excessive—CP unions tailed behind the LSSP unions in participating in the strikes. The CP justified its actions by arguing that the Government must negotiate with the strikers—not merely grant demands unilaterally. The Politbureau of the CP reviewed the position vis a vis the strikes and it was stated in some news reports that the CP could not subordinate its affinities to the working class to governmental power. This meant that the CP was willing to break with the Government rather than oppose the strike.

There was a general expectation that there would be major General Strike on January 12. But the fact that the CTB strike was partial and ineffective except in the South of Ceylon made many wonder whether all those whom the LSSP and the UNP expected would really come out on the 12th. While people were impressed by the fact that there had been a complete stoppage in the Railways, there was total and complete resentment against the strike and the escalation. The ordinary man, not in the lower rungs of the Public Service, felt that the Rs 500 was unreasonable and excessive, and was surprised that the Government granted it at all. What seemed preposterous was that even after the Government had conceded the Rs. 500—which everybody knew the Government and the country cannot afford—the trade unions wanted to continue and extend the strike.

With the CTB strike—called only to ask the Government to negotiate with the strikers even after the demand had been granted—popular sentiment and opinion—which had been apathetic during the first ten days of the Railway strike began to swing to sharp hostility towards the strike. Even many of those who had been sympathetic to the strikers now began to express doubts about the wisdom of escalating the strike. And the fact that the UNP openly supported the strike created doubts and suspicions about the ultimate motivation of the strike.

Jan. 21 — Jan. 26

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—Dipam-
 mina; LD—Lankadipa; VK—Virakesari; ATH—Aththa;
 SM—Silumina; SLD—Sri Lankadipa; JD—Janadina.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 21: Increased bank loans to university students in 1976 cost the government around Rs. 12,800,000. This represents an increase of Rs. 3,300,000 over that of 1975. The increased disbursement was due to government increasing the quantum of loans from Rs. 1,500 to Rs. 1,800 for a student from 1976 for ten months. The PM told the members of the NSA yesterday that all persons taken into custody during the strike will be released shortly. She also said that the government would decide when fit to lift the press censorship and the ban on meetings in the Colombo district. The leader of the House told the NSA yesterday that the government will allocate a date during next month's sittings to debate the Opposition's no-confidence motion against the government. The Politbureau of the Communist Party has adopted a resolution calling for the withdrawal of the press censorship, the ban on public meetings in the Colombo district and the Emergency regulations regarding strikes. It also calls for the release of trade unionists under detention. Changes aimed at reducing social disabilities and stigmas in the registration of births and simplifying of application forms proposed by the Minister of Trade Public Administration and Home Affairs have been approved and will be introduced soon. The Speaker announced at the conclusion of yesterday's Parliamentary proceedings that Parliament shall be the sole censor of its own proceedings. He said that a committee consisting of the Leader of the Opposition, the leader of the House and the speaker could determine what could be published—CDN. The Wimalaratne Commission which was appointed to inquire into the events connected with the police shooting on the Peradeniya Campus on November 12 last year will hand over its report to the President today—CDM. The delivery of the Aththa paper by CTB buses has been prohibited by Mr. Jack Kotelawala. Since there is a shortage of coconut poonac in the island, the Oils and Fats Corporation had to import it from the Philippines—ATH. Nearly 32,210 employees of the Local Government Service will benefit from the recommendation recently made by a five member committee to the Minister of Local Government to absorb all local government employees and all local authorities into the state service. The Examinations branch of the Department of Education has called in the CID to investigate complaints that question papers of the recent GCE(OL) examination have leaked out; the CID has questioned several people in this connection. The Salu Sala has made arrangements to issue three yards of cloth to each person during the Sinhala and Hindu New year.—CO.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 22: The establishment of a unified 12-grade salary system ranging from the labourer to the General Manager in an estate, a unified

leave and retirement system and a personal accident scheme for workers are some of the more important recommendations of a committee which handed the report to the Minister of Agriculture and Lands yesterday. A team of high officials of the Education Ministry will leave for the Bandarawela educational Region on January 26, to confer with MP's Estate management and education officials in the region on how the take over of estate schools in the Bandarawela educational region could be accomplished. The Education Ministry hope to take over 250 estate schools before the end of March. In addition, 350 more estate schools are expected to be taken over before the end of this year. Sri Lanka's tallest building—206 feet high—which took over six years to build will be declared open today by the PM. The building is yet another notch in the progress of the poor man's bank—the People's Bank—and also a tribute to the skill of engineers in the State Engineering Corporation. The NSA adjourned immediately after lunch yesterday for lack of quorum—CDN. The Customs Preventing Office has blown the lid off a massive racket operated by certain businessmen who have been importing luxury goods in the names of foreign missions, and "smuggling" them ashore by using spurious embassy seals. Judges have been delegated powers of dismissal and disciplinary control in respect of all officers serving in their courts irrespective of the salary scales of the officers. The secretary, to the Ministry of Justice, in a circular to all high court judges, District Judges and Magistrates has stated that the delegation of these powers will be operative with immediate effect. However, disciplinary proceedings which have already commenced and are now pending would be continued and completed by the Ministry. Betting all past records since its inception 21 years ago, the National Lotteries Board's total income from the sale of lottery tickets for the financial year ending 1976 was Rs. 40,329,600 exceeding the previous records during the financial year 1976 by Rs. 2,269,350—CDM. The leader of the opposition asked in the NSA yesterday why only the UNP MP Mr. Punchinilame was arrested under the Emergency Regulations for speaking in support of the strikers while two government MP's who also did likewise in the very same meeting were not arrested—VK. 60 lakhs of Rupees have been allocated for the payment for the festival advance to the railway workers—DM.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 23: The Supreme Court has held that organised betting activity by a punter constituted a business, and that gains from such betting are taxable while losses are deductible from other income for tax purposes. The Shipping Tourism and Aviation Ministry's Fauna and Flora Protection Advisory Committee has called for the withdrawal of the brochure on the export of fauna as "it is fundamental conflict with the spirit of conservation". The Advisory Committee has also proposed a total ban on the export of snakes as recently done in India. This has been approved by the Ministry. The craze for antiques among some tourists, has prompted certain locals to resort to the theft of these items from temples and other places of worship for sale to foreigners at very high prices. The Price Control Department conducted 45 successful raids last week throughout the island. The majority of offences were where shopkeepers who flouted the price law by hoarding exercise books and profiteering in sales. The Criminal Detective Bureau

has expressed grave concern over the alarming rate of co-operative robberies some of which have been "inside jobs" causing heavy losses—SO. A special emissary has been sent by the Leader of the Opposition to Jaffna to sound the TULF leaders on their present political plans. The report of the findings indicate that the Tamils do not wish to play politics with one party or the other nor exploit a political situation, for the Tamils will settle for nothing less than an Independent Eelam. Three campuses of the University of Sri Lanka have lost an entire term of the current academic year owing to their being closed as a result of strikes and other disturbances. Non Muslims who embrace the Muslim faith to marry a second, third or a fourth time without obtaining a divorce will in future not be able to do so. This prohibition is contained in the draft legislation to amend the country's marriage and divorce laws on the basis of the main recommendations made 20 years ago by a commission. In the same week that Sri Lanka proclaimed its "maritime zone" and India announced its exclusive economic zone at sea, there was a virtual invasion of Indian trawlers into our fishing grounds—ST. A new bill tabled in the NSA will enable the government to arrest and bring to Sri Lanka any person who commits a crime in this country and escapes from the law and flees to an alien land—VK. The University is making provisions from next month for students to stay at home and obtain their degree by listening to lectures broadcast over the SLBC—SLDP. The amount spent since 1970 for importing cars into the island has been 28 million 52 lakhs and Rs. 88,675, the number of vehicles imported were 3359—ATH.

MONDAY, JANUARY 24: A Tea Small Holders Authority to assist nearly 120,000 small scale planters who own a quarter of the land under tea in Sri Lanka has been appointed by the Minister of Plantation Industries. The Authority will consider its primary duty to help this category of planter who has in past years been the victim of the middleman, and a host of other problems including transportation. The last strike was an attempt to topple the government and not to win any worker's rights. Behind this move there were rumours that there was foreign interference, said the PM at a public rally at the Veyangoda public grounds yesterday. The government has approved a Rs. 200 million project for the electrification of the Colombo suburbs rail network. Involving a total track distance of 131 miles the electrification project will cover the lines between Colombo and Negombo, Veyangoda and Panadura which daily carry the heaviest loads of commuter traffic. All government schools and training colleges will reopen today after the Christmas and New Year vacation. Prof. W. M. K. Wijetunge, President of the Vidyodaya Campus has submitted his resignation to the Vice Chancellor—CDN. Sri Lanka's tea industry closed with a crop shortfall of 17.1 million kgs with high and low elevation teas being down 4.2 million kgs each and medium by 8.5 million kgs. The Speaker of the NSA has certified the Parliamentary Pensions Act and claimant's applications will now be attended to. The Industrial and General Workers Union (CP) held its annual session recently and the general secretary in his report emphasises the necessity to strengthen the struggle to nationalise the multi-national and non-national establishments in the country—CDM. It was boom time for Sri Lanka's Tourist Trade last year with tourism bringing in Rs. 232 million in foreign

exchange. This was a 40% increase in comparison to the foreign exchange earned by the tourist trade in 1975. The Port of Colombo is now working briskly to unload large consignments of essential foodstuffs. There were over 25,000 tons of flour and about 50,000 tons of rice, in addition to about 20,000 tons of wheat for the Flour Milling Corporation, 9,000 tons of sugar, 5,000 bags of coriander and a consignment of dried fish were also to be unloaded. Nearly 700 street lamps in the City of Colombo are out of commission. More beef will be brought into Colombo for sale today as 65 trucks of the railway used to transport cattle for slaughter will be in operation from today, according to the Chief Veterinary Surgeon of the Colombo Municipality—CO. Of late there is a shortage of Lakspray milk food in the market though according to the National Milk Board, they have been releasing more stocks. Whereas they were releasing 15 lakhs of pounds, for the last two months they have been releasing 20 lakhs of pounds. Investigations are going on as to why there is a shortage—DM. The Aththa says, that it understands reliably that though the Vice Chancellor has recommended that all six campuses of the University be opened on the 31 of this month, the Minister has suggested a further postponement—ATH.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 25: The Board of Governors of the University of Sri Lanka wants the "transition period" of the University to be continued until a new University Act is formulated to replace the old University Act. The "transition period" was intended to bring about changes for the improvements of University standards. It was aimed at getting the University curricula restructured, eliminating duplication of courses for study, and cutting down unnecessary expenditure. The Rehabilitation Department with the concurrence with the People's Bank will give loans to rehabilitated insurgents of the 1971 April insurrection. These loans will be given to them to start industrial, agricultural or commercial project in the recommendations of these loans consideration will be given to unemployed and unqualified people too. The State Distilleries Corporation has emerged as the fourth largest revenue earner for the government—CDN. The General Secretary of the Communist Party controlled Public Service Workers' Trade Union Federation yesterday lashed out at the Lanka Sama Samaja Party. In the first official statement since the strike was called off, he accused the LSSP of sectarianism in trying to show that the recent strike was the LSSP's solitary endeavour. He refuted the charge made by the Sama Samajist leader that he had worked against the strike. The State Distilleries Corporation hopes to produce 15 lakhs of bottles of coconut arrack this year if there is no severe drought, the Chairman of the Corporation stated yesterday. Four more additional distilleries at Chilaw, Girulla, Beliatta and Jaffna are also expected to be set up. Foreign elements which failed in their activities in India have now turned their attention to Sri Lanka. This fact was not revealed by her to the Cabinet because of the fear of losing the source of information. So said the PM at the rally held for the draw of the 600th National Lotteries Draw at Nittambuwa yesterday—CDM. A goods train carrying cement and oil was derailed on the 214 milepost near Elephant Pass. About a quarter of a mile of the railway track was completely destroyed and there was a great deal of loss incurred—

LD. Bombs were hurled at CTB buses and saw dust introduced into fuel tanks. One CTB driver who did not participate in the unreasonable strike is still lying in the hospital critically injured by a handbomb thrown at him. Sabotage was also rampant in the CGR, said the PM, when she addressed a meeting held at the Nittambuwa Public Grounds yesterday. The Controller of Prices, has appealed to the IGP for help in stamping out corruption among butchers in Colombo. Sri Lanka and the US signed a 2.8 million dollar loan agreement today for a five year project to assist the Department of Agriculture's Rice Research Program; the project will seek to increase paddy yields by developing improved paddy varieties and cropping systems, for the ten major production zones in the country. The sale of rentals for arrack, toddy and foreign liquor establishments in Colombo brought the government Rs. 7,105 for 1977—CO.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 26: About 200,000 acres now managed by electorate co-operatives will be dissolved in stages and handed over to the Janawasa Commission: this has been decided upon by the Minister of Agriculture and Lands, in order to expand the Janawasa system of collective farming. The Janawasa Commission now manages a little over 50,000 acres with a membership of twenty thousand. The PM wishes to state that she has not been correctly reported by the Daily News of the 24 in respect of a speech he had made at a public rally at Veyangoda. What she in fact had said was that there was a certain pattern in the strikes which caused some doubts in her mind as to whether there was some external interference and also due to certain information she received and any more details could not be divulged to her audience because she had not even divulged, it to her ministers. The Department of Immigration and Emigration has formulated a programme to repatriate 20,000 Indians whose visas had expired and are still in this country. Pre-vocational study will be a compulsory subject for teachers of all training colleges joining for professional training from this year—CDN. The SLFP had never deceived the Tamil people. It had always made its position quite clear to them from time to time. It had never been hypocritical in its fundamental approach towards them. But, as far as the TULF demand for a separate state was concerned the SLFP could not and would not permit it for any part of the country. This is an extreme demand, and he asks the Tamils to drop it and agree to talk. So said, Mr. Anura Bandaranaike, Chief Organiser of the SLFP Youth leagues at a mass rally last Saturday at Manipay. The export of locally produced coffee has been allowed as a sequel to the good prices fetched in the world market and the decrease in production in major coffee producing countries—CDM. Sri Lanka's coconut industry is facing a big crisis. It is faced with the problem of meeting the ever increasing demand for nuts with the production falling far short of targets. This has been attributed to many factors, according to the General Manager of the Coconut Cultivation Board. One cause was the prolonged drought, another was the insufficient application of fertilizer, also with the ever increasing population, consumption had gone up and production could not cope with the demand. Although there has been no official ban on the export of coconuts, the Coconut Marketing Board has clamped down on its sale or export with an administrative control. Many measure

are also being taken for increasing the production. Police have launched a special anti-crime drive in the city: this move has been necessitated in view of the alarming increase in thefts and burglaries—CO.

INTERNATIONAL DIARY

Jan. 11 - Jan. 12

TUESDAY, JANUARY 11: US Defence Secretary designate Harold Brown said US forces, except air support, could be reduced in South Korea. Iran said it would switch to barter dealings in its petroleum trade and reduce aid because of a sharp decline in oil exports. The Mayor of Peking and the capital's garrison commander came under public attack today. Accused in wall posters of clinging to the coat tails of Mao Tse-tung's widow Chiang Ching. Palestinian guerilla leader Abu Daoud arrested in Paris was described by Israeli army sources as a senior Commander of the Black September Movement which attacked the Munich Olympic village in 1972. British negotiator Ivor Richard met leaders of the 'Patriotic Front' Rhodesian nationalist alliance here today but apparently failed to win their support for his settlement proposals. The Lebanese government has announced a decree on press control, in an attempt to settle the situation in the Lebanese press and other public information media.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 12: Thai and Malaysian forces are planning a joint operation against communist guerillas in Southern Thailand according to Bangkok sources. More explosives were discovered near President Marco's presidential mansion and police reported that explosives found earlier were connected to a remote control detonation device. Capt. Onn Kyaw Myint a former aide-de-campe to Burma's army chief of staff, was sentenced to death for his role in an abortive coup attempt and five other officers were given jail sentences. The arrest here of Palestinian guerilla leader Abu Daoud turned into a major embarrassment for France today as the Arab world condemned it and Israel prepared an extradition request which the French could scarcely grant. British envoy Ivor Richard today received a categorical assurance from the five 'frontline' African states that the guerilla war in Rhodesia would stop if a majority government were established. Iran may lose 2,000 million dollars in oil revenue following the increase in crude oil prices by ten percent that came into effect from January 1.

LATIN AMERICA

Paraguay

Growing U.S. Penetration

By Miguel Medina
Prensa Latina

The Paraguayan regime's growing concessions to the foreign transnationals, chiefly from the United States, represent a factor of incalculable consequences for the sovereignty of that land-locked Latin American country, said sources in exile. The concessions also favor the US strategy of perpetuating its presence in the domestic economy and politics of the countries in the Southern zone, they added.

A manifesto published recently by the Political Commission of the Paraguayan Communist Party warns that the country is in danger of disappearing as a sovereign and independent nation, of "turning into a state completely subjected to dependence and to exploitation by the big foreign monopolies.. The regime of General Alfredo Stroessner, implanted by the Central Intelligence Agency 22 years ago," the manifesto said, "guarantees the transnational companies raw materials, superexploitation of workers and free repatriation of their large profits."

Although Paraguay's economic structure, which is based on agriculture, is being complemented by the development of Brazilian industry, sponsored by the US, direct investments from the latter country may be found in a great many sectors. The US transnationals are taking over enormous amounts of land, for mining, forestry, farm and stock exploitation. They have seized the hydraulic resources of the country which has the most important rivers of the Plata Basin in its territory and have also occupied the land and air transport sectors. These companies are installing an entire series of service industries, department stores and supermarkets, as well as obtaining concessions in communications. Together with Brazil they have also invaded the Paraguayan banking system.

LAST JUNE, the US company Anchuts Corporation obtained a mining concession, approved by

the Paraguayan parliament (but the opposition lawmakers, who were in the minority, walked out). The contract is for an area of 162,700 sq. km, that is, the entire eastern region of the country, located between the Parana, Paraguay and Apa rivers and the cordilleras of Amambay and Mbaracayu. It authorizes the exploration and exploitation of all mineral resources in the region—metals, non-metals, precious stones, radioactive minerals and solid, liquid and gaseous hydrocarbons.

During the exploration period which is divided into two stages of three to four years each, the state asks the company to deposit only 100,000 dollars as a guarantee in the Central Bank "to safeguard against damage to third parties, caused by the prospecting work." As a guarantee for the exploration works, the company will pay the state the ridiculous amount of three cents per hectare of land obtained.

In the case of exploitation, royalties will amount to 3 per cent of the gross production of minerals, 6 per cent of the profits from every mine, with an income tax equi-

valent to 25 per cent of liquid profits. The latter figure is a fiction since the company can deduct a great many costs from its profits: costs for transport, maintenance, administration, as well as deficits from previous years. It can also reduce profits up to 50 per cent by claiming depletion of the mines.

THE FACILITIES given to the Anchuts Corporation, made extensively to other companies according to Law 550 on the regulation of forcing investments, allows the absolutely free entry into Paraguay of all types of machinery and equipment for the exploration and exploitation of mineral resources. During the initial and renewable term of the contract (20 years for exploitation) company officials can bring in, also tax-free, all their personal effects and those of the subcontracting companies and their employees. The company can also, once the small domestic demand is covered, export products at existing world prices and retain abroad, for a period of 15 years, 100 per cent of the foreign currency generated by these exports. Therefore, the foreign monopolies in

FORCE MAIN INSTRUMENT OF US FOREIGN POLICY

Washington,

In a special survey America's Brookings Institution has observed that the United States has made the threat of using force the main instrument of its foreign policy in an effort to ensure a development of international events in line with its interests.

The survey by staff members of the Institution recorded at least 215 occasions in the last 30 years when Washington used its military might to achieve its political aims abroad.

It is said in the Institution's report that shows of force involved American naval ships, airforce planes and ground troops. Towards the end of the forties and in the fifties the United States deployed its strategic nuclear forces on 33 occasions.

It used nuclear blackmail tactics again in October 1973 during Israel's aggression against Arab states. To prevent Tel Aviv's defeat the Washington protectors of the Israeli aggressors put on alert American nuclear forces around the world.

"Although the Brookings Institution did not cover the events of the past year they showed", 'Washington Post' says on January 4, "that the United States has not abandoned its policy of interfering in the affairs of other states by threatening the use of force." The newspaper says that such shows of force took place in 1976 in South Korea and Kenya where the USA rushed its naval and air forces.

The report of the Brookings Institution, however, leaves out such ventures of the Pentagon as the Korean and Vietnam wars, and "routine" military exercises.

But even without them, the authors of the report have found enough examples of gunboat diplomacy which was used by American ruling circles in an effort to influence the foreign and home policies of other countries.

—CNS

U.S. Penetration

the country "are not obliged to give an account of their foreign exchange earnings to the Central Bank or to any other commercial bank in Paraguay." Paraguay's legal opposition, which withdrew from the discussion on the concession Bill, declared that the project meant an unlimited sellout of the country's natural resources.

Since the forties, US companies have been prospecting for petroleum in the Paraguayan Chaco region. Subsidiaries of Standard Oil of New Jersey concluded their work saying that possibilities existed but without mentioning anything specific. After a long period of inactivity, except for some isolated attempts at prospecting, and after the increase of oil prices, in only a few months several US companies obtained large contracts in the region which has one of the most dramatic histories in Latin America. Thousands of Paraguayans and Bolivians lost their lives at the beginning of this century in the arid lands of the Chaco in a war waged between the British and US transnationals for control of the area's petroleum.

STANDARD OIL kept its studies on the existence of oil in the lands it had obtained in concession secret even from the Paraguayan Public Works Ministry. The Paraguayan Communist Party declared that oil in the Chaco could appear at any moment, but that it would not mean development for the country, given the Leonine conditions of the contract. The Esso-Aminoil and Esso-Repsa groups own concessions totalling 800,000 hectares of land. Their contracts are for forty years, with the state receiving 11 per cent of royalties in case of actual exploitation.

Texaco-Gulf Inc., a subsidiary of the Texaco Corporation, obtained a concession of 3,000,100 hectares of land also for forty years with tax and other benefits similar to the ones obtained by Anchtus.

The only company that has a portion of national capital and interests in petroleum is the Refineria Paraguaya S.A., which has a monopoly over the refining and distribution of petroleum in the country. According to reports, the company is waiting for "the best bidder" to give it 120,000 hectares of lands at exorbitant prices when exploitation begins in the neighboring areas.

Although the Consortia had not given Paraguay any information on their oil investigations in the region, they had, however, taken pains to protect those resources. For years different opposition parties have denounced the existence of a US air and military base in the Chaco, where the transnationals already own concessions for some 18 million hectares of land. Several airfields have been built in the area since 1967 and airports have been planned for different cities in the country, financed by international organizations such as the World Bank, which is controlled by the United States.

Why does Paraguay need such an extraordinary infrastructure, since its economy is based on farming and its foreign trade is carried on through ports on the Paraguay River? The CP of Paraguay stated that the US wants to take advantage of the country's strategic position in the heart of the continent to install missile launching bases and a communications network which would allow for the speedy transport of troops to safeguard, at all costs, the great wealth the US steals from the Latin American countries.

Another way of protecting US interests in Paraguay and of expanding them, the CP said, is the Peace Corps which first arrived in Asuncion on December 10, 1968. The first contingent was made up of 50 persons but today there are hundreds. "Specialists in rural, sanitary, home-improvement, student and labor activities" are working throughout the country under the direction of experts from the CIA with the mission of spreading anti-Communist propaganda, gathering information on the opinion of social groups and detecting any progressive movement that may be organized.

The exploitation of Paraguay's forestry resources has been an important investment target for foreign capital since 1870 when Paraguay began to form a dependent agricultural social structure. Transnationals of different countries have invested in the field: Paraguayan Development Corporation which acquired 267,607 hectares of land and the Bloch group of Brazil which announced the construction of a plant or the manufacture of 200,000 tons of cellulose in the Alto Parana region controlled by US and Bra-

zilian companies. In addition to the extraordinary increase of foreign investments in Paraguay, foreign capital also enters via the financing of credits by international organizations, such as the International Development Bank and the World Bank which refuse to lend money to the progressive countries.

Delfin Ugarte Centurion, the minister of industry and trade, recently said that Paraguay's foreign debt amounts to 617 million dollars and that in 1978 foreign investments and loans will rise to billions of dollars. National experts say that the foreign debt already exceeds the normal dimensions of the economy. Export volume in 1975 represented only 30 per cent of the existing foreign debt. Some private sectors were happy when in 1973 and 1974 exports grew notably; but today they are concerned since in 1975 sales abroad increased by only 3.65 per cent as compared to the previous year.

Last year Paraguayan exports amounted to 176 million dollars while imports grew to 212 748,000, dollars, giving a nominal deficit of 39 million dollars in the balance of trade. Even the least pessimistic elements of the private sector say that this situation will last for some years.

However, reports from the US Agency for Development in Latin America, one of the most specialized in obtaining high yields from

Medicine

The owners of a Japanese pharmaceutical company have been charged with fraud. They have made a tidy sum manufacturing and selling a highly expensive, much advertised medicine for intestinal diseases. A checkup revealed that it was merely a mixture of starch and sugar, and had no curative properties whatsoever. The buyers of this medicine had the consolation to know that they were in a much better position than the people who had come to Tokyo from all parts of the country to demonstrate and demand punishment for the manufacturers of patent medicines which had harmed their health.

its investments in the region, stated that Paraguay holds fourth place in all of Latin America for the volume of capital exports. Only Brazil, Mexico and Venezuela are ahead of the country in this regard, it stated.

SHORT STORY

Walking Stool

It is a new moon night. Not even a single star is out to give a little light. There is only the cold breeze of the hills rustling the tea bushes. No one seems to be about. The shrill howling of a lone jackal pierces the silence of the night. One can discern the figures of some men as they make their way through the tea bushes with a lighted torch. They reach a small hut and soon you can hear drums rhythmically beating and a low murmured chanting. Slowly the drums become louder and faster and the voices likewise become strong and clear. The speed and sound keep on increasing till with a final crescendo, the chanter with a wild look in his eye, long, curly hair flying in the breeze and wrapped in a red cloth comes dashing out of the house with the drummers following behind. But, what is this object that they are all following? It is a plain and simple three-legged stool. But wonder of wonders, it is 'walking' on its legs without anybody's help! It is advancing towards the labourers' 'lines' and is entering one of the doors with the men close behind. Within a few minutes, despite cries of protest an old man is being dragged forcibly away. The stool now stops walking and the men carry it back. There is not a hum from any of the other houses. The inmates are lying awake in mortal fear, afraid to intervene lest they undergo the same fate. The old man is taken to the boiler room of the tea factory and beaten unmercifully for his alleged crime of stealing vegetables. He is then dumped outside and the torchbearers and their companions return home.

After that everything is quiet again except for the labour-

red breathing and groaning of the old man. Two or three figures creep up silently, lift the old man and take him back home.

The sun had risen on that dark night and is about to set, a bright orange orb descending in the sky. In the distance a lone figure is wending his way through the unkempt bushes. On the next hill the man can see the tea factory, and bungalow. The man spits out a mouthful of red betel juice on the ground contemptuously and says to himself. "Thank God I won't have to suffer anymore under those wretches! It must be my lucky star which enabled me to secure employment elsewhere."

Gopal was a fine specimen of the coffee coloured Dravidians. His ancestors had come from South India during colonial times with many others to man the estates. Their lot had been hard at all times, yet their brethren in the motherland had always thought that they were very fortunate to come to this emerald island.

Now, suddenly their position had become intolerable. If it was merely a shortage of food or lack of work it wouldn't be so bad—it was this terribly inhuman and unjust way in which they were treated. As many as could leave the estates had done so and started on the long journey north in search of employment. And many were in the process of going. But what of the many thousands left behind? Gopal also had been dying to go away but he had not wanted to leave his aged father in the streets while he looked for a job. Therefore, he had gone on his own to make sure of employment before taking him along. Now, mission accomplished, he was returning home to fetch his father and sister.

As he turned the bend he could see a cluster of labourers talking together in the distance.

"I hope those rascals have not been upto mischief again. I wonder who the poor victim was this time? What a terrible way of wreaking vengeance on one's you are angry with or bear some grudge against! If they don't wish to employ us let them send us away instead of subjecting us to such cruelty! Using the very devil to make a stool walk! What won't

they think of next? In any case, I shall be away from this place before very long!" he said to himself.

Around the next bend he saw two or three of his acquaintances talking together. They hardly returned his greeting before they turned quickly away from him. Gopal wondered at this but walked on, for he was soon going to learn why they behaved in that manner.

In the distance he could see smoke rising to the sky, and as he came nearer he saw the flames consuming the mortal remains of some body. A cool breeze brushed his face and he shuddered as he wondered who had died in his absence.

When he reached the lines, his heart missed a beat and all the blood drained away from his face. For there was a large gathering outside and he could hear his sister's heart-rending wails. For a moment he refused to believe it, thinking like all of us do even when the truth stares us in the face—

"Such a thing could not have happened to me, now, especially now!"

But, yes it was true. The funeral pyre he had just seen had been his father's. He had been the latest victim of these inhuman cruelties and had succumbed to his injuries, being old. They had cremated him not knowing when Gopal would return.

VINODINI

Justice

Forty-seven presidents, managers and other high-placed officers of a score of packing materials companies were recently tried in Chicago for violating the Antitrust Act by colluding to fix high monopoly prices for their goods. They all pleaded guilty and Judge Parsons sentenced nearly all of them to four or five day's imprisonment. They were informed that they could serve their sentences in their free time and in comfortable premises especially chosen for that purpose. Judge Parsons also told the accused that he would give sympathetic consideration to any requests for a reduction of sentences.

The Loves And Many Lives Of Simon Baas (i)

By Herbert Keuneman

So, 1977's preliminary canter runs true to form! and if you have read the last rather disconsolate article I wrote in this series you will agree that the dismal picture I painted was not more dismal than reality promises to prove itself.

But not all of reality.

'The brute-tamer stands by the brutes,

a head's breadth, only, above them. A head's breadth, ay! but therein lie hell's depth and the height up to heaven.'

Now, if ever, it seems to me therefore is the time to turn determinedly from the murk; for the height up to heaven is within man's gaze, also.

I am therefore going to tell you (as I have some time promised to do) the story of Simon Baas, who I think is a man who scaled the height. Remembering that heaven is not a place in which one dwells but an experience that transmutes every dwelling place thereafter, an undissipatable cloud of transfiguration glory; paradise is never really lost.

This is a true story. Simon Baas is a still living person, Simon Baas are his real name and title, and I tell his story by his own permission. It is a very long story and will take many weeks to tell, and maybe I shall have to interrupt it from time to time should anything of overriding village importance take place to demand reporting. But I intend to tell it all, because (a) it is a typical village story—every village still has its Simon Baas, thought not all as full of insight and as frank as this one—and (b) it is a lowly, homely story, for all its adventure, not of high happenings and great personages nor a Success Story; it is but the tale of a man whose life has come full simple circle from a thatch cabin in a Colombo slum to a thatch-roof house in a Vanni village; and (c) it includes—or is included by—the loveliest village love-story, true or fictitious that I know; but, above

all, because (d) it is the story of how a man reached and recognized and remembers such a heaven as you or I may achieve no matter how furiously the politicians and the economists and the professors of sociobiology may rage together. As Simon Baas himself puts it: 'The whole of my life, though I did not know it, had been rising to this point like the clear, clean, cool peak of a mountain rising above the tangled jungle of the plain.'

I wish I could show you Simon Baas. Today he is very old, very frail and feeble and blind, very gentle of voice, very patriarchal with his snow-white hair to his shoulders and his snow-white beard to his waist. But there were still glimpses of the old young Simon when he told me his story many years ago: a small grey wiry old man then, with his grey hair tied at the back in a small tight knot, a great grey conjee-strainer moustache, and small black, bright, fierce but humorous eyes. He told the story with a wealth of detail, digression and comment, and as habit of limning the shape of events with his hands, both of them sweeping up together to a point to mark the climax of some anecdote, one of them waving disconsolately downwards to illustrate disaster, or one stretched forward and wagging an admonitory finger as he recalled some ancient rivalry whose fires might be banked but still they burned; and he let no niggling inconsistency of time or place—or, I suspect, of any other mere exactitude—halt the steady rush of crowded incident and variform experience that marked and made the tale. It was all the better for its characteristic embroidery. A wonderfully rich tapestry he wove, a kind of cyclic design showing a man who as I have already said travelled a wide and variegated circle to come back to a condition not far from that he started from. Often as I have suffered biographical inflictions, as a priest, there was not a moment when Simon Baas' biography seemed such an infliction. Such accidents as he recounted! Othello stuff.

If you knew Simon Baas you would not look at him—for all his 'non-achievement'—askance. Or, maybe, you would not if, only, you possessed that rare but critical margin of moral discrimination that

enabled you to see him as he is! For he has achieved (and few achieve as much) but what he has achieved a thousand of us may not have had the nous to realize we ever had in our hands. A bleached and scarred piece of human drifted stranded on the grassy verge of the village tank: a man whirled by currents beyond his power to stem, out of the slough of life in a city slum and battered by the passage of a dozen brawling streams come at last from the froth and bubble into still water? Not my Simon Baas! He has found standing water, yes: but he knows, better than the nine hundred and ninety of us, of how pure an essence. And you in your wisdom hold that less than heaven?

Turn east at the big *kon* tree by the side of the road in the midst of the Ehetuwewa bazaar and take the sandy track glorified as Rohala Para (Hospital Street) in today's grandiloquent fashion, following two sides of the hospital fence; and if you will then bear right at the fork in the road you will come to a great towering ficus—a monumental tree: Simon Baas delights in dignifying it by the title *rukshaya* rather than the humbler term *gaha*—under its shadows you will find Simon Baas house. For he no longer lives in the *gammandiya*, the heart of the village, in his wife Menik Hamy's house his right to which as he will relate he fought so many a battle to establish, but in his *akkare* (a free hold bestowed by Government, as upon any villager judged by Land Settlement a permanent and responsible resident).

Simon Baas' house though, glory be to God! far from the genteel pretentious *banggalava* style, is not a typical 'village' house for all its mud walls and thatched roof. As befits the house of a once leading building-baas, the walls are plumb; most of them are plastered and whitewashed as well, and the doors and windows panelled. And there is considerable furniture in it: a dining table and chairs—for use, by at least the male members of the household—a blackened lounge with leg rests, a high-backed bench for the casual guest, a bed or two, and a cradle for the current baby. Although Simon Baas, has, some years since, given up supplying this latter with occupants, Jayawardana Baas (Menik

SAFARI

Before The New Year

By Alkardi Mugane

April 5,

Let us say a man is fifty years old. Three old aunts, who must surely have been present at his birth, come to see him, one of whom is his godmother, and who, I verily believe, had delivered him, too. Then there are present, these years later, his father and mother, and many a younger generation. All his sisters are alive, but scattered about the globe, their husbands and all their children, one of whom is married. This young man of fifty, now old with worry, had lived in many parts of Ceylon, and he had received an education both abroad and here. The chief advantage of an educational establishment is that gives you a background of a few friends and teachers who remember you for what you were, and I believe this is what can be called a very sure sheet-anchor. He was not of a robust type, but the fortunate intervention of a war made him physically so that he never looked back in that one respect, in spite of the occurrence of very serious illnesses at long intervals. For his passion for games he owes a lot to his father, sports like rowing, rigger and skiing, but not football and cricket. He knew what it was to be in the ranks, to have a non-commissioned rank, and to have a commission. Then followed a period of farming, Oxford, and short spells of teaching, more farming, forestry at the bottom, for the most part with a scythe, a tannery, and what turned out to be the happiest years of his working life, two years down an iron ore mine. Then followed a spell of adventure, which his father's best friend of his Oxford days described as a Don Quixote existence, where he got hurt. The final of this may be yet to come. Then there were many years of sheer freedom, lived on a shoestring as regards money, then responsibility, a short halcyon period, truly short-lived; and now a letter. Who knows what that will bring?

April 6,

That letter, one man's version of events, but full of love and good will, was read where there were

Hamy, his favourite's son and his father's successor) carries on the good work and periodically presents Simon Baas with heirs sufficient to have reassured philoprogenitive Abraham! Nor do his sons by his present wife fail him.

'And now' (said Simon Baas as he drew to the end of his story) 'I can die without fear that what I have hewn with my hands and cemented with my sweat and tears need be left desolate or pass to a stranger.'

'Do you remember that what drove me from home and sent me out on the wanderings that led me so deviously but infallibly to this place was the bitter thought of a breadfruit I might not eat from a tree that had been my father's and his father had planted? This, then, I have accomplished: that no one shall ever deny my sons after me what grows from the roots or is reared on the foundations I have laid down to raise gifts for them. That they are neither rich nor rare gifts I know well: I have come a long way and moved but little, from a cadjan hut to a small house with a cadjan roof! But it is a roof the stormwinds of misfortune shall not easily blow away. Here I have found and founded for my family what in my own childhood was taken from me: deep sweet soil and what belongs within, and springs from, it.'

For a time after Manik Hamy—own wife of my bosom—died' (Simon Baas went on) 'it seemed as though the stormwind that indeed could wreck my house had begun to blow. I could settle down to nothing. All that I had saved I spent on four years of drink and gambling. In four years the hearth in my house was never lighted. Our son Jayawardana I gave gladly to the care of a stranger: a schoolmaster, Hendrik, who in that evil time was better than a father to him. But I—I was alone and at the end of my resources... of spirit, not less than of finance. There was nothing, it seemed, but to wander again; yet now I knew in my heart that there was nothing and nowhere wandering could bring me.

'It was then' (Simon Baas concluded) 'that a friend—a true friend, and my namesake: Simon Baas, of Ihalagama—look me boldly to task. For it is a bold thing to offer hope to a desperate man. He it was that

reminded me that to wander without purpose was less than a man's part, that even animals knew a purpose in their migrations; that there was no sense in seeking, unknowing what is sought; no profit in letting go, without a better thing to grasp at. He reminded me that in my loins not yet less than in those of my son I held the seed of the future not mine to deny. He introduced me to a quiet soft-spoken comely girl of Kallanchiya: Ukku Amma, my present wife. He persuaded me then, when I had bred two more sons, to apply to the Crown for the land I now live on, new land, with no name but my own to the title. He made me begin again.

'And that beginning' (insists our Simon Baas) is the real end of my story.'

But there is a word I, his chronicler, will add to it: the word of a great and wise man though of another century and an alien culture.....

*'A wanderer is man from his birth.
He was born in a ship*

On the breast of the River of Time..

'Haply, the River of Time,

*As it grows, as the towns on its
marge*

Fling their wavering lights

On a wider statelier stream—

May acquire, if not the calm

Of its early mountainous shore,

Yet a solemn peace of its own.

*'And the width of the waters, the
hush*

*Of the grey expanse where he floats,
Freshening its current and spotted
with foam*

*As it draws to the Ocean, may strike
Peace to the soul of the man on
its breast:*

*As the pale Waste widens around
him—*

*As the banks fade dimmer away—
As the stars come out, and the
night-wind*

*Brings up the stream
Murmurs and scents of the infinite
Sea.'*

(To be Continued)



Autobiographical?

two views of the Mahaveli, one a few yards away down the road of the Poigolla dam and the stretch of the river below it and the other directly in view of where the letter was read, an even longer, lower stretch of the Mahaveli falling away in a direct line from this vantage point, on a hill, a river with water in it, but which was said to have been bone dry until it rained a week or two ago dry because of the diversion above the dam. There was one other present when the letter was read, a stranger who is now an acquaintance, but the letter was read, in private. The significance of this event was that our man of fifty had seen this view forty years before when he was ten, and in the company of his parents. Then it was a different view, just, I suppose, a very fine view of the Mahaveli, stretching away miles below but the man was short-sighted and so he would hardly remember any details, just the very fine panorama. The three were accompanied then by a member of a very remarkable Order of men, numbering many tens of thousands probably, and the last and the first man our half-century saw before he set off forty years later on this walk, and on his return, was probably the sole representative on the spot of this same Order. Just as that other man, forty years before, had had a hand in shaping our man's career, so, it is to be hoped had this fellow member of his company or order, if prayer means anything at all.

April 7,

Profesor C. S. Lewis wrote a story, on the cover of which was a ladder probably Jacob's ladder. In an anecdote, the details of which are now hazy, there was a man with a monkey on a string, a hunchback of a little man, like a scold, mean, and the monkey was a sort of puppet which he dragged around. He would not let go of it, he said: No! No! and then his attachment to this decrepit little monkey weakened, this impurity to which he was so attached, for that was what the puppet of a monkey was. Out his attachment went: the man underwent a transformation, all in a matter of moments from a mean little man he grew, and kept on growing into something rather like a Greek god, nude as a Greek statue is, into a great athlete of man, big,

and the monkey grew into a horse, a big prancing horse, unto whose unsaddled back the man leapt, and away they went in full gallop, as straight as a die, away into the mountains miles away, the mountains which the top of the ladder, heaven. The *Bhagavad Gita*, which I cannot lay hands on just now, has something pithy to say on attachment to impurity. One of the states or stages which a man comes to in this attachment, it says, is madness. A former head, of the C.I.D. said that all crime all aberrations, can be put down to sex as their beginning as something deeper than a *prima facie* cause. He would have known a little of what he was talking about. All this may seem a little Freudian. Prudery on the other hand but it is funny how all these terms refer to women. To find the right mean about sex, I seriously think we have to turn to Christ, but even Christ was torn asunder by his various interpreters, and hence so many heresiarchs.

April 8,

Four people, three against one, three with some good points and prejudices, and the one not without his points, too. Can four people govern? Let us take it as a fact that some people govern others. What I am here concerned about in the composition of those who govern. Does effective authority lie with one person or more? The soldim of Turkey, during the Crusades, told Francis of Assissi that if he did a *volte-face* about his religions beliefs, his own life would be in danger and his throne or authority shattered, and I presume it would have been so chiefly from the people with whom he shared the government, and to some extent, too, from those who were governed by them. Let us take another example, two people, mother and son, who just cannot agree about some other people, and those other people reacting favourably towards the one who appreciated them, the mother. Let us get back to the first case. I think the solution here lies in the story of Jonathan, David and Saul, David had been anointed while Saul, the king, was still alive. Saul sought to kill David, and Jonathan, Saul's son befriended him for two reasons his friendship, and because Saul was acting unreasonably. Perhaps the real solution is Time, which has to be God's

Time. Meanwhile, several cattle are ill, and a good lamp shattered. Whatever are we going to do?

April 9,

Woke up this morning seeing clearly that certain unilateral decisions of mine had led to a big mess, shunting people around at other's requests, or to be precise, one's man's working partner, in over-anxiety on my part for success, without first taking counsel with the co-management or co-ownership. Things had then gone from bad to worse, until the final solution had neither been much of a success itself, but by then there had been other complicating factors which bedwilled, I think the word is, any possibility of success. It had been a reaction of the co-ownership on some quite irrelevant issues, issues which loomed large in their minds. As I felt had come to the end of my tether, I felt a long holiday, already offered, was needed. So off I went to consult an octogenarian, a great success in management in his day in another sphere. He tried to look at every aspect of the matter before giving me his advice. Meanwhile, the Sinhalese new year is almost upon us, and we are left without a housekeeper for the week-end, let alone a cook. My own holiday is on schedule, but heaven knows when it will be taken.

April 10,

This had happened to me before, no cook or house-boy, no watcher, and others yet to go on leave, and then people walked right into your life, giving it a new aspect. It had happened to me before in virtual jungle, when I was really alone, and not just merely inconvenienced as here. From people

Inflation

The World Matchplay Championship, one of the most popular golf tournaments in Britain, will not be held this year. Carreras Rothmans, the tobacco company which had financed it since 1964 to boost the sales of their products, said they could no longer defray the expenses which had grown considerably as a result of inflation. Before, \$ 16,000 sufficed to organize the tournament and pay for the prizes, and today it takes all of \$ 75,000 to do that.

to money. It had happened in the money sphere, my taking precautions against having no money, only to find that I would have been right, rendering these precautions superfluous, totally unnecessary. There are three more lots of people to go on leave, and they are doing themselves right royally about the length of it. The cattle section, bar one man, has been loyal, although one has given me adequate notice, ample notice of his leaving. As if to make up for it, he has worked really hard this evening. The sick heifer bawls when it hears us coming when it has fallen over on to its side from its sitting position. This is to tell me to hurry along to be sure of coming to take it by the horns and drag it back into an upright stance. As soon as I had done this tonight, it at once started munching its grass again, as if nothing had happened. The sickly, weakened heifer, this same one, had greeted me once with a bellow when I had returned after a few days.

POINT OF VIEW

New Deal For University Education

by H. A. I. Goonetilleke

FIVE YEARS of resolute agitation against the structure and forms of university governance and administration appear to have paid off, even though the final breach was hastened by the mounting opposition to the Amending Bill in October 1976, and the squalid sequence of events on the Peradeniya Campus resulting in the tragic death of a student on November 12th. The significant decision of the Minister, as contained in his welcome directive to the Vice Chancellor of January 3rd, to terminate the transition period and withdraw the transitional provisions of the Act of 1972, marks an enlightened turning point in the history of higher education in this country. Coupled with the Minister's invitation to all sections of the university community to furnish him with fresh proposals for a new University Bill the resulting situation is the best opening

students and staff of the six campuses of the University of Sri Lanka have been provided with in the last six years for telling the Government how they wish their university to be structured and run.

The meaning of the decision to do away with the repressive and authoritarian provisions of the transitional period on 15 February 1977 is relevant to any discussion of re-formulating a new University Bill, which will ensure, the very least, democratic and participatory forms of administration. Foremost among these transitional provisions was the highly centralised and undemocratic structure of university governance whereby a small group of officials appointed by the Minister both in Senate House and the Campuses, and another group appointed by the omnipotent Vice Chancellor were allowed unlimited and unprecedented temporary powers to re-shape, control and administer the university. The termination of the transitional period enables the elective principle in the Act of 1972 to become operative so that the various Boards and Authorities of the University can be properly constituted after five years of inactivity and, more important, the key officials like Vice Chancellor, Presidents and Deans will become subject to election. This practical recognition of the elective principle will enable a much greater degree of participation and decision-making in university affairs by all sections of the university community—students, academic and nonacademic staff—leading to a significant elevation of academic freedom and autonomy, besides a more efficient and democratic administration.

THE ENDING of the transitional period, of course, cannot be other than merely an important preliminary stage to repealing or rescinding the operation of the University Act of 1972, which contained certain highly objectionable principles and provisions. The replacement of this unpopular legislation by a new Bill, which eliminate these obnoxious provisions, needs to be drafted and presented by the Minister with all possible speed. In any re-thinking and formulation of this fresh legislation, certain key concepts of the structure and functioning of universities contained

in the Governments own Bill for the Establishment of a University Grants Commission introduced in Parliament on 4 April 1971 (and unnecessarily withdrawn) are worthy of inclusion. They were, to summarise briefly:

- (1) A University Grants Commission responsible to Parliament through the Minister of Education. This body should be properly constituted to ensure independence and freedom from political pressures, except the demands of national educational policy.
- (2) Independent and separate universities enjoying academic freedom and the proper degree of autonomy, financial and administrative, within the ambit of UGC directives.
- (3) The Minister of Education to have no direct power over university governance or administration except in passing on government policy measures and other advice to the UGC for its consideration.
- (4) Elective principle to be incorporated in the most democratic manner possible to the election of the key officials in universities—Vice Chancellors, Deputy Vice-Chancellors (or Presidents), Deans etc.
- (5) Adequate and meaningful representation in all relevant Boards and Authorities of staff (both academic and non-academic), and students.

These basic principles flowed from the policy statement of this Government in 1970 regarding the establishment, maintenance and administration of universities, and this Bill of April 1971 was the true reflection, qualitatively and quantitatively, of the demands of the academic community, both staff and students. Its restoration has been the principal demand in all memoranda and other submissions to the authorities in the last five years. A return to the saner provisions and thinking in this Bill should be the corner-stone, therefore, of any new University Act.

SRI LANKA'S CONSTITUTION—1

People, Elections And Emergency

by An Attorney-At-Law
From The Wann

"The Constitution of Sri Lanka became the Fundamental Law of Sri Lanka deriving its power and authority solely from the People". This is the preamble to the Constitution adopted and enacted on the 22nd May, 1972.

Chapter 1 of the Constitution deals with the People, the State and the Constitution and proceeds to enact that in the Republic of Sri Lanka, Sovereignty is in the People and is inalienable. It is very important that this fact be made known, given publicity and instilled into the minds of all, particularly in this Election Year when self-appointed political advisers have recently started canards that the President could be called upon to rule the Country under Martial Law, that there will be no elections after 22nd May, 1977 and the Present Government can continue in power under the Emergency Rule indefinitely.

The Constitution clearly lays down that the Sovereignty of the People is exercised through the National State Assembly of elected representatives of the People and that the National State Assembly is the supreme instrument of State Power of the Republic. Further the National State Assembly exercised this power under three clearly defined categories:—

- (a) the legislative power of the people
- (b) the executive power of the people including the defence of Sri Lanka through the President and the Cabinet of Ministers, and
- (c) the judicial power of the People through Courts and other institutions created by law.

Thus it is patently clear that it is the People who are supreme and that the executive powers of the President and the Cabinet of Ministers flow from the authority vested in the National State Assembly. The President has been named the Head of the Republic, the Head of the Executive and the

Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces. The President's functions have been clearly defined under the Constitution and he can act and function only in terms of and under the powers granted to him by the Constitution.

The question of Martial Law and President Rule are concepts of a Colonial Era where the Head of the State was a representative of the British Monarch and our people were regarded as vassals of a foreign power. It is this lingering colonial concept in the minds of some people that has given rise to speculation of that type in total disregard of our Constitution.

On a study of the Constitution there is a seeming anomaly in regard to the First National State Assembly which came into existence on the 22nd May 1972 almost negating the provisions of Section 4:

- (1) as none of the members of this Assembly, at the time, were elected to this First National Assembly under this Constitution,
- (2) as there are six persons including some Cabinet Ministers who have not been elected even to the House of Representatives which existed as at 22nd May, 1972.
- (3) and therefore the provisions of Section 4 of the Constitution which clearly postulates:

"The Sovereignty of the People is exercised through a National State Assembly of elected representatives of the People"

do not strictly apply to those of the present members who were not elected under this Constitution.

notwithstanding the provisions of Section 42 (1) which declares that persons who were Members of the Constituent Assembly immediately prior to the commencement of the Constitution shall be members of the First National State Assembly. It could be argued that the majority of these Members are not legally elected members to the National State Assembly under the Constitution which clothes them with authority to exercise sovereignty of the Peo-

ple. This is a matter for students of Constitutional Law.

Be that as it may, it has been clearly laid down that the transitional existence of this non-elected First National State Assembly shall *ipso facto* stand dissolved on the expiry of 5 years on the 22nd May 1977 by reason of Section 42(5) of the Constitution. For those persons who assert that it is a question for the Prime Minister to decide whether the First National State Assembly should be dissolved or not on the due date, the provisions of Section 40 (1) in regard to the duration of the National State Assembly consisting of persons elected thereto under this Constitution will give the answer. This section lays down that the National State Assembly elected under this Constitution shall continue for 6 years from the date of the first meeting and no longer and "the expiry of the period of six years shall operate as a dissolution of the National State Assembly." Section 42(6) lays down that the provisions of the Cons-

Truth-in-labelling for U.S. wines

The Government has proposed a new truth-in-labeling regulation for American made wine, featuring a government seal, the exact month and year of bottling and specifications for the types of grapes that can be used.

The program will be voluntary, and officials of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms said they don't know how much of the industry will adopt it.

It would apply mainly to wines made with grapes from specific vineyards or grape-growing areas—not to most jug wines or those produced from grapes with anonymous backgrounds.

Nor was it clear how much more consumers would pay for wine bearing the government seal. Bureau officials said they expected those facts to emerge from public hearings on the proposal and subsequent comment before it is made final. No date was set for enactment.

titution relating to the National State Assembly elected under the Constitution shall apply to the First National State Assembly and therefore the expiry of 5 years shall operate as a dissolution. The Prime Minister who is a creature of the Constitution can only take a decision to have the National State Assembly dissolved if she desires to have a dissolution before the due dates and not otherwise. Once dissolution takes place the duty is cast on the President to see that General Elections are held within 4 months and therefore there is no room for speculation about the holding of a General Election.

The glib talk of wishful thinkers that the life of the First National State Assembly could be changed by a two third majority vote amendment of the Constitution appears ridiculous when one appreciates that this First National State Assembly is not composed of members elected under the Constitution. The question may well be asked what right have the six members nominated to the defunct House of Representatives to decide upon or vote for the continuation of their continuance in an Assembly to which they were never elected. Even the legality of the members of the First National State Assembly deciding upon or Voting for their continuation, when they were never elected as representatives to the National State Assembly is a matter of serious doubt and no responsible member could indulge in such an exercise.

Now that it is quite clear that according to the Fundamental Law of Sri Lanka the People are supreme

and that elections have to take place within 4 months of the 22nd May 1977, the next question that has been raised is whether elections could be held during a State of Emergency. During the course of the past six years we have had several by-elections while there existed a State of Emergency. We are in an almost permanent State of Emergency from early 1971 up to date and a State of Emergency has become a normal pattern of Government even by a once popular government. However it is interesting to note that the Constitution clearly provides in Section 40(2) that a General Election has to take place even during a State of Emergency. This sub-section reads as follows:—

"If at any time after the dissolution of the National State Assembly an emergency is declared under Section 134(2) the Proclamation declaring the emergency shall operate as a summoning of the National State Assembly to meet on the tenth day after such Proclamation. The National State Assembly so summoned shall be kept in session until the termination of the emergency or the conclusion of the General Election whichever occurs earlier and shall thereupon stand dissolved."

Therefore, no one need have any doubts that there shall be a General Election in 1977 whatever type of unrest may exist in the country necessitating the continuance of the State of Emergency.

It is a credit to our Constitution makers that they have made the Fundamental Law of Sri Lanka so clear and provided for every eventuality in order to preserve our democratic right to exercise our vote to have a Government of our choice. If the People are enlightened in regard to this aspect of our law, the fears, doubts and speculations that are being engineered and instilled into their minds will disappear. The People being aware of their inalienable rights will look forward to the future with hope, uphold the Constitution, assert themselves and make positive and meaningful preparations for the inevitable forthcoming General Election. The People of this country have now attained a high degree of political maturity

and cannot be misled by false propaganda, intimidation or specious arguments adduced from time to time.

(To be Continued)

REVIEW

To Cripple Minds

Any Woman Can! by David Reuben
M D Published by Corgi Books.

The human species is the only one that is neurotic about sex. What were the circumstances that led to the sex war, sado-masochism, prostitution, prudery, Casanova, Playboy, censorship, strip clubs, alimony and pornography? Elaine Morgan in *The Descent of Woman* (Tribune 30th Oct...) approaches the problem from biology, Evelyn Reed in *The Evolution of Woman* (Tribune 22nd Jan.) approaches it from the socio-economic point of view, while David Reuben in *Any Woman Can* examines the cultural problems.

During 50,000 years of our prehistoric existence sex was a normal healthy affair. Then, beginning with the Dark Ages, the link up began between sex and guilt. Sex became something sinful, and if permitted at all, was restricted to "married couples in bed, in the dark, fully clothed, involving an important man and a frigid woman."

The Bible was misinterpreted, even mistranslated, to support this new morality.

For more than a dozen centuries every persuasive force available has been harnessed to desexualise the most highly-sexed animal this planet has ever known—the human being.

In an obscurantist era, this neurotic attitude to sex was adopted and propagated by the Church, in its efforts to gain control of the will and mind of an illiterate populace, by implanting a terrible feeling of guilt.

This campaign of misguided misanthropes to seize absolute control of man's most intimate and personal function, would be a taste.

Special

The widow of Lord Beaverbrook, the multimillionaire British newspaper magnate, stuns nothing for her pet dogs. She recently chartered a 227-seat jet airliner to send miniature pinscher Pax and terrier Chung across the Atlantic. The aviation company lost nothing by the deal and the two canines travelled in comfort. A company spokesman quoted her as saying that her pets were too sensitive to fly in company with so many strangers.

less joke, if it were not for the fact that the project has been a complete success.

One of the principal effects of this campaign to cripple the minds of men and women, has been the irrationally inferior position allocated to women, in everything from sex-rights to daily wages. Living as we are in the shadow of International Womens Year, we have perhaps become more conscious of this. But what is at issue, is not merely the provision of equal education, employment and wage opportunities for women, but their acceptance as equals and the throwing overboard of archaic concepts.

Any Woman Can is a follow-up on David Reuben's earlier best-seller *Everything you wanted to know about sex but were afraid to ask*. Everything has since been made into a film.

Any Woman Can is built on psychiatrist David Reuben's extensive clinical studies. And through these clinical studies he presents the problems that women face social, emotional and sexual. He also gives detailed guides on evaluating and interpreting the conduct of men—and provides a sort of ready reckoner for choosing a man.

One of the secrets which he divulges is that regarding milk. "If a woman wants to make herself indispensable to a man she can pull out all the stops and unleash the ultimate weapon—milk.

"Whether he gets it from Mother, a cow or a camel, milk leaves an indelible impression. When mother gave the breast or bottle she gave love and affection at the same time. The six-foot 200-pound man sipping a cup of coffee with cream is emotionally only moments away from the 20-pound baby at his bottle. If a woman can establish herself as the provider of milk she literally makes herself part of her man's unconscious mind. Nice legs, a good figure, bright conversation, feminine flattery, can turn the head of most men, but not the one whose woman supplies milk and love in abundance."

Jayantha Somasundaram

LETTER

Reply To Inania's "Julian's Pen-Itch"

Sir,

I am surprised that the writer, who calls himself INANIA (alias 'Inna') in the *Tribune* of January 22, 1977 should cover his own identity and call me "Jekyll-Hyde" when I write fearlessly under my own name, whatever I deem should be brought to the notice of the General Public and the readers of Newspapers. Thus, it would be obvious that the reference to "Jekyll-Hyde" does not fit Julian Senanayake.

For the benefit of INANIA and his backers, allow me to let "the cat out of the bag". This reference to me as "Jekyll and Hyde" was made in the *Catholic Messenger* of 6th June 1976 and for over five months one-sided attacks were published by the Editor of the *Catholic Messenger*, Revd. Fr. Francis Madiwala, non-stop, ignoring my replies, protests and pleadings.

On 16th May 1975, I wrote a letter about "abuses in the Catholic Church" and ended that letter with the words:—"In these permissive days" and "Permissive age", words like "MODESTY" and "SIN" are off the vocabulary. In the following issue Mr. Oscar M. Abeyratne supported me.

On 6th June, Mr. U. R Spittel attacked me in the *Messenger* on an article I had published in the *Times of Ceylon Sunday Illustrated* on over-population, which had no bearing to the *Messenger* viewpoint on immodest dresses worn by women in Church. Then, in rush James N. Benedict who called me "one with a Jekyll and Hyde personality". This was on 17th October 1976. On that same date, on that same page, were several other attacks on me followed by a cartoon by the Editor of the *Messenger* ridiculing, insulting and threatening me. The foot note read as follows:—

"Does this package belong to you? The name is "Obliteration", Can't be mine. My name is Juliani.

Unfortunately, the Editor of the *Messenger*, Revd. Fr. Francis Madiwala, seemed to relish the attacks on me and found space always

for such unwarranted accusations. He never published any of my replies to the points raised by my adversaries. All relevant questions were answered by me, but the Editor of the *Messenger* withheld them from his columns of the *Messenger*! Christian Charity!

I made my complaint on the phone and in writing to the Bishop of Colombo Dr. E. J. Fernando and Revd. Fr. W. L. A. Don Peter, whose letters of acknowledgements are with me, to be produced if need be. I sent them duplicate copies of my replies to the attacks appearing in the *Messenger*. With all that one of my letters were published and at the end, on 31st October 1976, this Editor, Revd. Fr. Madiwala, published a twisted version of my last letter, with a meaningless footnote by him admitting that my letters had not been published by him, as he considered them not to be of public interest and for want of space. I then wrote to the Editor of the *Messenger*, Fr. Madiwala, Bishop Fernando and Revd. Fr. Don Peter stating:—

In a true democracy "both sides of a view must be heard. Any journal or newspaper which withholds one view or wilfully distorts it is guilty not only of journalistic fraud but also a violation of the sacred duty of journalists..." I do not wish to comment further on this particular point.

I had sufficient grounds and proof with me when I wrote in the *Ceylon Daily News* paper, as follows:— (CDN 2nd October 1976)

"I, as a Catholic, feel shocked and alarmed at the manner in which the 'Catholic Messenger' is trying to discredit Government. This paper of a religious community has no business to dabble in politics. Julian Senanayake."

I gave a gentle warning to the Catholic Church in Sri Lanka on 2nd October 1976, but this has not been heeded: and the *Sunday Times* of 2nd January 1977 asked openly: "IS CARDINAL TRYING TO INFLUENCE CATHOLIC VOTE?"

When I wrote in the *Times* paper about Birth Control, writers in the *Messenger* took umbrage, but no one has dared to answer the question posed in the *Sunday*

Times of 2nd January 1977. My writing to the Daily News was after my appeals to the Editor Revd. Fr. Madiwala, Bishop Fernando and Revd. Fr. Don Peter failed.

Here are some of the state ments appearing in the Messenger that I objected to:— (CCM 2.10.76).

"Elections: Ballot or BULLET? "We will sacrifice our lives and hoist the flag of revolution with the help of the Lanka Sama Samaja Party, the Federal Party and the Vimukti Balavegaya against an illegal postponent. Elections will be postponed over my dead body. If it makes any attempt to be in power after May 22, 1977." Briefly the threat is, if there is no ballot, expect the bullet. A postponement of elections will meet with unbridled hostility.

"Mrs. Bandaranaike is making headway with her brand of Socialism diluted with a sprinkling of democracy.

"This Government of Ceylon is at the moment ruling the country under a dictatorship, that everybody will understand.

"My only request as a Catholic is do refrain from making any statements praising this Government or siding it."

What could one say-but that the Catholic Church does not want the present Government to continue?

We must accept any government that comes to power for it will be the peoples' wish.

The Catholic Messenger's Editor found space for this attack on me

by James N. Benedict. (Messenger issue of 4th July, 1976) It discloses the spirit of the Catholics' idea of Chrsitain Charity.

"**JEKYL AND JULIAN.** I had crossed swords with Julian Senanayake, a few yeas back in an Observer Forum debate on the Pope and the PILL..Mr. Julian Senanayake is a powerful adversary with his rather versatile pen, which blazes the local newspapers but for the contradictory positions he has taken on different matters at differenet times. I am HAPPY that reader U.R. Spittel has caught him napping (Messenger 6.6.76) and extracted the Hyde from Jekyll JULIAN. The lesson of course is that one cannot play Jekyll and Hyde too often with his pen, weaving his pen through various Newspaper columns without being caught. Over to you Julian Senanayake. James N. Benedict. (Messenger 4.7.76)

The ball was in my court. I played it back: but the Editor of the Messenger played false, without publishing my reply. That is how INNA is under the impression that I have been knocked out; it is now obvious that it not so, but that the ball played back from my court had been intercepted, unsporingly, by the Editor of the Catholic Messenger, who caught that ball!

The present Editor of the Catholic Messenger, a layman Mr. E. C. T. Candappa, as who replaced Fr. Madiwala, writes in the Editorial of the Messenger dated 23rd January 1977 as follows:-

"Some Christian journalists consider the tools of their trade

as an arsenal..with which to batter, bludgeon, blast, bomb..and utterly demolish the person holding another point of view."

This is exactly what the Editor of the Messenger Revd. Fr. Madiwals did to me by publishing letters from correspondents who wrote with venom, vitriol and acrimony against me and went to the extent of threatening me with "OB-LITERATION" and a cartoon in the Messenger of 17th October 1976.

How come this controversy is resusciated after six months by INNA, in the Tribune of 22nd January 1977?

Julian Senanayake

14/4, Piyaratnarama Place, Dehiwala. 24.1.77

WASTE?

9 lbs Of Rice Lost For Every 100 lbs Paddy Milled

There is a national loss of 9 lbs of rice for every 100 lbs of paddy milled for the ration.

This is revealed in a report of a sample survey carried out by the Paddy Marketing Board in five districts following consumer's complaints that rationed rice supplied from local paddy has to be re-polished at hulling plants or in domestic kitchens.

The survey disclosed that over 90 per cent of the households sampled, regularly reprocessed the rationed rice incurring losses in the quantum of rice besides having to pay cost of milling.

Consumers who use a village hulling plant lose a minimum of 17 per cent of their rice in the process and also pay a fee of 3 to 6 cents per lb. Consumers who reprocess by hand pounding lose a minimum of 13 per cent of their rice. The reprocessing also produces much broken rice, thereby lowering grain quality.

The research study on the survey states that a rice miller is expected to produce 71 lbs. of milled rice with 3 per cent bran removed,

FREEDOM

Freedom from fear is the freedom I claim for you, my Motherland!— fear, the phantom demon, shaped by your own distorted dreams;
 Freedom from the burden of ages, bending your head, breaking your back, blinding your eyes to the beckoning call of the future;
 Freedom from shackles of slumber wherewith you fasten yourself to night's stillness, mistrusting the star that speaks of truth's adventurous path;
 Freedom from the anarchy of a destiny, whose sails are weekly yielded to blind uncertain winds, and the helm to a hand ever rigid and old as Death;
 Freedom from the insult of the dwelling in a puppet's world, where movements are started through brainless wires, repeated through mindless habits; where figures wait with patient obedience for a master of show to be stirred into a moment's mimicry of life.

Rabindranath Tagore

from 100 lbs. of paddy. In practice the bran is never removed and unpolished rice is supplied to the Food Commissioner. The miller therefore has an extra "profit" of 3 lbs of rice per 100 lbs paddy.

The report adds: "When the consumer has to reprocess this rice, the nett outturn of rice become 62 lbs rice from 100 lbs paddy. If polishing is done at a commercial mill where all aspects of rice processing are integrated, the 3 per cent bran removed in polishing is recoverable as a by-product and the nett outturn is 71 per cent.

"There is, therefore, a national loss of 9 lbs of rice from every 100 lbs of paddy milled for the ration, the report states." *Ceylon Daily News, 10. 10. 76.*

PAPYRUS

From The Old World To The New

by Wilfred Wille

MUCH HAS BEEN MADE of the fact that Thor Heyerdahl had attempted to prove that Old World mariners could have sailed from Africa to the New World, and brought civilization to the American Indians. Heyerdahl built out of papyrus reeds, a 40-foot vessel in which, during the summer of 1970 he and his crew sailed from West Africa to the West Indies in a 57-day voyage. The vessel was named the Ra-II after the Egyptian sun god.

It was a crowning feat of courage and ingenuity, but it did not prove that the ancient Old World mariners made such a trip to enlighten the inhabitants of the Americas.

Without detracting from the success of the doughty Heyerdahl and his intrepid crew, it should be pointed out that they were equipped with modern navigation instruments, sextant, compass, signal flares, etc. Moreover, they knew where they were going and how to get there. They travelled on known sea lanes, met passing vessels, and were confident that help was not too far away.

This is altogether different from sailing into a vast unknown sea or being tempest and wind-tossed across an ocean to another continent.

The ancient Peruvian craft mentioned in the article were built of bundles of tubular totora reeds which grow to a height of eight feet. Tied together with vines in the shape of a cigar with upturned ends, these bundles provide a buoyant craft that can be used for fishing. The craft has no keel.

Such canoe-length reed craft still are used by fishermen on Lake Titicaca high in the Andes mountains. Similarly, rafts of buoyant balsa wood seem to have been used to collect bird droppings from offshore South American islands for fertilizers. Straw bundles also were used to build floating bridges.

Spanish historians reported also seeing small reed-boats along the Pacific coast in ancient times. Known to the coastal Peruvians as huampus, these reed boats were called "little horses of the sea" by the Conquistadores because the native fishermen frequently straddled them as they paddled out into the sea. After use they were pulled ashore to dry.

Such small craft as cited in the article certainly could not withstand an ocean voyage. (See Walter A. Fairservice, Jr., "The Ancient Kingdoms of the Nile", plates 21, 31, 32; Barbara Mertz, "Red Land, Black Land, p. 233; Victor W. Von Hagen, "Realm of the Inca," p. 198).

Jose de Costa, a Jesuit writing in 1588, described these crafts as made of "faggots of bulrushes and dried sedges well-bound together which they (the Indians) call balsas (not to be confused with balsa wood rafts)." He continues: "Having carried them upon their shoulders to the sea, they cast them in, and presently leape upon them. Having so set they launche out into the deepe, rowing up and down with small reedes on either side they goe a league or two into the sea to fish."

He then tells about the return and writes, "Being come in to land, they drag their barks, the which they presently undoe and lay abroad on the shore to drie." (See Victor W. Von Hagen, "The Desert Kingdoms of Peru," p. 132-34).

Garcilaso de la Vega, Spanish historian of the 16th century and part Indian, writes, "Along the entire coast of Peru the Indians go fishing in little reed boats . . . and

the sea being very calm, they can venture out four to five league from shore in their light skiffs. But to carry heavier loads they always use (balsawood) rafts."

Most of the pictures of Peruvian craft which have survived Spanish destruction show small boats with a single enormous occupant, presumably a god, culture hero, or sinchi (chief). These probably were ceremonial craft. There was, however, no picture of a larger vessel of the Heyerdahl type which appeared to have a deck and carried several persons with some baggage.

On the other hand, the Egyptian papyrus-built boats of the same size and approximate shape were used on the Nile River and along the Red Sea and Mediterranean coasts. They date back to around 3000 B.C., perhaps earlier, in the Archaic or early Dynastic Period of Egypt. Up to late times these boats still were used by sportsmen of the nobility for fowling on the Nile.

Water transportation was necessary for the Egyptians. They had to cross the Nile which severed their country. Because of the paucity of suitable trees for wood-working, the Egyptians soon turned to Lebanon for its cedarwood which could be cut into long planks for building. This precious wood was used for coffins, furniture, and boat building by the Egyptian. It was this cedarwood which was the prize of many conquests and commercial trading.

Even before the 18th Dynasty and the New Kingdom (1600 B.C.) Egyptian wooden ships plied the seas, displacing the large reed-built boats. Their sealanes were along the coasts. Egyptian mariners rarely sailed beyond the sight of land. Even then heavy loads had to be carried by rafts on tow.

Legends there are, of course, of long voyages such as the circumnavigation of Africa, but there are no hard facts to prove that Egyptian mariners ever sailed beyond the pillars of Hercules (Gibraltar).

Nevertheless, Egyptian coastal trade was widespread. It extended to India among the Dravidian peoples and to the mythical land of Punt, probably what is known as the Sudan. The goods in this trade was carried largely in wooden ships many of them built of cedar

Confidentially

• Strikes • Fires

IS IT NOT A FACT THAT THE LAST CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR week was the bleakest ever in Sri Lanka? That bread and flour were short? That the price of rice had therefore gone up? That fish and meat were rarities? That to make things worse the Railway was paralysed by a strike from December 22? That the demand for a Rs. 500 festival allowance (to buy school books etc) was a little hard on the government finances and seemed unreasonable to VIP bureaucrats and the people in the top income brackets who grudge the taxes they pay (in spite of the unwarranted tax holidays in many sectors)? That, unfortunately, such top brass do not seem to realise that high living and irrational consumerism (which this country cannot afford), set in motion by the CRAs, hotellers, corporation bosses and the like, has whetted the appetites of the "lower" (because they are poorer) sections of the community? That in recent weeks the newspapers were full of advertisements of CRA imports (food, clothing, and what not) at prices no one would have dreamt of paying a few years ago? That a tin of imported canned fish that had cost under a rupee ten years ago, was now retailed at Rs. 11 odd a tin? That the list of such atrocities can be multiplied ad lib? That, in addition, full page advertisements have been calling upon people to wine, dine and dance at five-star, four-star and even lesser starred hotels at prices calculated to cause a revolution soon? That a dinner dance ticket (for New Year's Eve) in one hotel was Rs. 130 a head? That the cheapest among such convivial "orgies" was Rs. 45 a head for a modest and "cheap" menu? That drinks, alcoholic and otherwise, were separate and additional? That the influx of new cars has become a talking point in every arrack tavern? That all this has aroused the inner appetites of the "lower" classes for more "festival" money for spending? That if the Government had wanted the "lower" classes to freeze their consumerist

cravings, the Government should start the freeze from the top? That it is one thing to cater to foreign tourists, who, it is said bring hard currency (in addition to generating many undesirable activities—narcotics smuggling, gem smuggling, prostitution, a false FECCs-sense-of-values, etc. etc.), but it is another thing to pander to a newly created CRA elite to indulge in ostentatious, consumerist opulence of the most vulgar and degrading kind? That the Government should not allow papers to publish advertisements for CRA goods and dinner-dances at starred-hotels if it wants to keep mass consumerism within limits? That the Government is only asking for trouble when it permits this rich new elite to splash around in opulence in the way oil kings from the deserts of Araby do? *That it is well to remember the fate of the Monarch who had asked people to eat cake when bread was not available! That before X'mas any amount of cake was available in Colombo at a price but there was no bread even for gold?*

IS IT NOT A FACT that the fire at the stores of the Weaving Supplies Corporation has set many tongues wagging? That even before the newspapers had reported that an audit verification of stocks (after several years) had begun in the morning of the day on which the fire had started at 9 p.m., there was talk of dirty goings-on? That it is also reported that all stock books had been burnt? That nobody will be surprised if the Head Office records have also been destroyed (by white ants)? That whilst people await the findings of the Police investigations, the wildest whispers are going the rounds? That it was not merely a case of stocks being spirited away but that part of the stocks ordered from abroad were never really in fact physically received in Sri Lanka? That whilst on paper certain stocks were alleged to have been received, in (physical) fact the quantities were less? That some blue-eyed gentlemen (not necessarily in the Corporation) got the benefit of such "short" shipments in hard currency abroad? That the local collaborators were also well looked after? That such "rumour" and "gossip" may well be false and unfounded, generated by street-corner title tattle, but experience indicates that smoke of this kind

never arises without a fire somewhere? That a major fire and conflagration is a fact and a reality so far as the Weaving Supplies Corporation is concerned? That, in this connection, street-corner gossipers suggest that it would be useful to have a schedule of the top brass of the Corporation who have travelled abroad in the last three or four years (not necessarily to place orders for the Corporation)? That it is surprising that such a large stock was accumulated in one place without proper precautions? That newspaper reports have stated that loss was in region of Rs. 15 million to Rs. 21 million? That cynics (in the top brackets of the bureaucratic hierarchy) quip that if the audit had not started probing there would have been no fire and that the Government (and the country) would have only lost what was "short" in the stocks (pilfered unreceived, pinched, etc.)? That the moral is that sleeping dogs should be allowed to rest and that the audit should not be let loose on Corporations like the Weaving Supplies Corporation? That a few other Corporations, where an audit might ignite a fire is now the talk of the town? That the sins and shortages in the Weaving Supplies (and certain other Corporation) are not of recent origin? That they go back over the years? That for this reason no single person on the top can be held responsible for the shortages because there have been many changes in the short period? That lesser mortals, who had collaborated in the game, usually had to pay the price? That this kind of murmurings and grumbings fills the atmosphere in Sri Lanka today? That as we said, all such talk may be false—the result of indignant and frustrated discontent of the hoi polloi? But, that out of such gibberish may emerge truth that may unravel some of the mysteries of the contemporary era in Sri Lanka? That there is betting now as to the next Government Corporation where a fire will take place? That it would be wise for Government to freeze the activities of the Audit and call it a day by cutting the losses and forgetting the past? That what is important is the future, and the need to prevent Rs. 21 million loss to forget a Rs. 5 million pilferage? That it is best to let new elite "sleeping dogs" in Corporations alone?

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