

TRIBUNE





AN EXHIBITION AND SALE
OF
SOVIET BOOKS AND PHOTOS

from 5th to 7th April 1977

AT JUBILEE HALL

Hyde Park Corner, Colombo.

*The exhibition will be opened
on 5th Tuesday at 9 a.m. by
The Hon Minister for Social Services*

Mr. S. S. Kulatilake

The Exhibition will be open daily from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.

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Letter From The Editor

Lollipops cannot win elections even in a country where the overwhelming majority are poor with a few who are incomparably rich. The poor, no doubt, are thankful for all the lollipops they can get, but in recent times when the entire world has been cast into the melting pot they do not seem inclined to barter their votes for mere lollipops. The recent general elections in India have demonstrated this in no uncertain terms. In Ceylon, lollipops have helped to win elections only when they were suitably sugar-coated with emotional language and religious slogans. Even an astute politician like Indira Gandhi had developed a "conviction that because economic conditions had improved under the State of Emergency and corruption had been reduced, the electorate would prolong her reign indefinitely. The rhetoric of her campaign was that the Indian masses were untroubled by the loss of democracy and were interested only in their improved financial condition. The outcome of the election is a thundering denial of such cynicism, a ringing affirmation that the masses are interested in democracy." There are indications that the government of Sri Lanka has decided to shower a surfeit of lollipops on the Ceylon electorate beginning from the Sinhala and Tamil New Year to help the SLFP to win the forth-coming general elections. The rice ration has been increased. Canned fish, gram dhal, textiles, garlic, coriander and a large number of other items which have been in short supply for a long time will, it is reported, be made available to the common man at reasonable prices through the governmental network of co-operatives. We shall examine the mechanics of this exercise in subsequent articles, but for the moment we wish to examine some of the trends that have emerged in the Indian General elections and which have relevance to the people of Sri Lanka. The results, as has been stated in many places by many persons, have come as a rude and stunning shock even to those who felt that they were knowledgeable about the politics of India. At a first glance the following significant trends can be recognised: (a) the decimation of the ruling Congress in all the Northern States, the heart-land of Hindi and the traditional stronghold of the Congress and the Nehrus; (b) the decimation of the DMK in Tamil Nadu where it was thought that the separatist-inclined ultra-tamil party could not be dethroned for fifty years; (c) the emergence of the Janatha Party-cum-Congress For Democracy as a major electoral alliance paving the way for a possible two party system in India where the lesser and smaller parties have already become subordinate to the major Two as "allies"; (d) the inability of the Left Parties, whether pro-Moscow or pro-Peking or pro anything else, to become major national political entities; (e) the CPI and the CPM, in spite of all their brave talk about their independence as national parties, now tail behind the Big Two. While noting these, it is also interesting to find out the reasons why Indira Gandhi and her Congress slumped in popularity in such a remarkable manner within a short period. In 1971 she was supremely popular and had won a landslide electoral victory which had given her a two-thirds majority in Parliament. Her popularity was even greater during the Bangladesh episode at the end of 1971. Today she has lost even her seat in the Lokh Saba. The reasons for her defeat have been publicised in all newspapers and commentaries and we refer to them only as a matter for the record. It is said that the Emergency she imposed from June 1975 coupled with all that went with it—suppression of civil liberties, restrictions on the press, the abolition of the rule of law, detention without trial, compulsory sterilisation and forcible slum clearance—was the basic cause for her downfall. To this must be added the unfortunate role played by her second son Sanjay who not only drove political allies away from the Congress, but also personal colleagues of his mother out of the Congress. Indira Gandhi herself made the unforgivable mistake of trying to push Sanjay into political supremacy through short cuts that lost her many friends and mass sympathy. Sanjay himself was unable to carry with dignity or honour the role he had assumed in his attempt to rocket himself to the top ranks of the political world, within a twinkling of an eye. Indira Gandhi has now admitted her mistake and has accepted "the verdict of the polls unreservedly and with all humility". Her son has said that he would quit politics. If Indira Gandhi regains the common touch she had lost in the last two or three years she may well stage a come back at the next General Elections and face the vagaries and uncertainties of politics in the modern world.

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EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Indian Election

The results of the Indian elections have caused an upheaval in the thinking and expectations of politicians and political parties in Ceylon. No political party has, up to date, issued a statement or a comment on the outcome of the Indian elections. But it is likely that they will do so soon. The *UNP journal*, which has been critical of Indira Gandhi's Emergency Rule will no doubt say "we told you so" and preach sermons on the virtues of democracy. The Left party journals will take the oversimplified line that there has been "polarisation of forces" resulting in a new alliance of "reactionary groups" to defeat "the progressive alliance" led by Indira Gandhi. It will be unwise to be satisfied with such over-generalised and over-simplified analysis. While it is true that it is yet too early to venture into an analysis of the Indian elections, it is interesting to see how the two important newspaper groups in this country have editorially approached this question.

The *Daily News*, in an editorial on Wednesday, March 23, had in a self-righteous homily entitled "The Indian Election" stated:

"The obvious reasons for the defeat of the Congress party would no doubt be seen as the rule by emergency, the jailing of political opponents and the curbing of free speech during the last nineteen months. While these actions have given rise to a lot of criticism, nationally and internationally, it would be wrong to think that these were the main causes of Mrs. Gandhi's defeat. Even though her bitterest critics abroad had come to the conclusion that the course of action she had resorted to in the last nineteen months was deplorable, still they admitted that the suspension of democratic rights during this period had in fact enabled the creation of an unparalleled economic resurgence in the country, so much so there was not a single political analyst abroad or local astrologer who could affirm that the Congress would be defeated at this election to the extent where Mrs. Gandhi would lose her seat."

What this verbosity means is that the *Daily News* does not agree

with the thesis that Emergency Rule (and all that is implied) was the main or true cause for Mrs. Gandhi's defeat. In fact the *Daily News* seeks to defend Indira Gandhi's Emergency Rule by stating "the suspension of democratic rights during this period had in fact enabled the creation of an unparalleled economic resurgence in the country". In support of this thesis the *Daily News* adduces as proof that "there was not a single political analyst abroad or local astrologer who could affirm that the Congress would be defeated at these elections to the extent where Mrs. Gandhi would lose her seat."

It is not difficult to understand why the *Daily News* is so anxious to defend Emergency Rule and to suggest that there has been economic resurgence under Emergency. Does this portend the shape of things to come if the Authorities that now control the destinies of Lake House should regain political power in the coming elections? Or was it a mere whimsical logic of a leader-writer in Lake House who sees security in a "managed press" under cover of Emergency?

The *Daily News* then proceeds to offer its own explanation as to why Mrs. Gandhi lost the elections. This is what it said:

"Mrs. Gandhi herself had felt quite correctly the pulse of the nation and thought it was time to prove her critics wrong. She would, no doubt, have succeeded had not Mr. Jagjivan Ram, a Congress stalwart and a long time supporter of the Nehrus, decided to pull the carpets from under her feet. From then on the easy victory predicted for Mrs. Gandhi came to be revised, but not severely enough to say that she would be out of power at the end of the election. It is thus to the single defection of Mr. Jagjivan Ram that the extent of the defeat of the Congress Party could be traced."

The *Daily News*, in its "innocence" (or ignorance) attributes the defeat of Indira Gandhi and her Congress to the defection of Jagjivan Ram. Would it not be more correct to think that Jagjivan Ram quit because he knew what was coming—sensing the mood of the people in the Indian sub-continent? Or has the *Daily News* taken upon itself the res-

ponsibility to issue an implied warning to local Jagjivan Rams who might be tempted "to pull the carpet from under her feet" (Mrs. Bandaranaike in this case)? The *Daily News* thereafter tries to find out why Jagjivan Ram should have acted in the way he did and suggests that it was because "most of the reforms carried out during this period of emergency rule were done with the help of the Congress Youth Party which was the creation of Mr. Sanjay Gandhi, Mrs. Indira Gandhi's son."

There is no doubt that the Youth Congress (not Youth Party) led by Mr. Sanjay Gandhi had played an important part in certain matters during this period, especially in the matter of compulsory sterilisation and family planning and in forcible slum clearance, but there was an even greater area where the abuse and excesses of Emergency power was generated by a group of adventurists and operators who trampled under-foot the freedoms of the people in order to usher in what they thought would be a millenium through the Twenty-Point Programme. These operators had also persuaded Indira Gandhi to muzzle the press and to rely heavily on a managed media, official and otherwise.

It is also true that these adventurists and operators, who had become a kind of palace guard isolating Indira Gandhi from old colleagues, good friends and even the common masses and who were also responsible for insulating her thinking from the realities of the day, were cronies of Sanjay. The real trouble had arisen when Sanjay wanted at least two hundred Youth Congress nominees to be selected as candidates by the Ruling Congress for the General Election. To accommodate these two hundred it would have been necessary for Indira Gandhi to sack, retire or push out old veterans of the Congress.

The Youth Congress had also raised a slogan that all over 60s should be barred from receiving Congress nomination. If this procedure were followed, men like Jagjivan Ram would have been eliminated from the political scene. Before this disaster overtook him and before the Congress High Command sat down to select the candidates before nomination day, Jagjivan Ram resigned. This explo-

ded a bomb in the Congress. Immediately thereafter the two hundred Youth Congress aspirants for nomination dropped to a mere handful and Jagjivan Ram had quipped that his resignation had saved a large number of old Congressmen from being denied nomination.

Jagjivan Ram's resignation no doubt accelerated the process of disintegration within the Congress but Indira Gandhi was at least able to win a minimum number of seats in the Southern States by re-nominating old stalwarts. It must, however, be stressed that Jagjivan Ram's resignation did not constitute the main or sole cause for the defeat of the Congress. When Jagjivan Ram resigned, there were politically vociferous elements in Ceylon who had stated that defectors like him would come to a sorry end not very different from the fate that overtook certain defectors in Ceylon during the last two decades. Those who know Ceylon's recent political history are aware that many defectors, who had pulled the carpet from under the feet of their leaders, have risen to great heights of eminence and power.

The Daily News then proceeds to advance a defence of Sanjay Gandhi. This is what it said:

"While it is true that Mr. Sanjay Gandhi brought in an element of dynamism into the reforms he carried out he was injudicious enough to tread on the toes of the older members of the party. Besides, the five point reforms he introduced, which were the basis of a modernisation program for India, included a controversial sterilisation campaign which got out of hand in several states."

According to the Daily News Mr. Sanjay Gandhi was a dynamic personality anxious to introduce reforms to modernize India, but the Daily News does not seem to be worried that Sanjay wanted to introduce an ultra right wing inclined programme which could be forced down the throats of common people only under authoritarian and dictatorial powers enforced by a powerful army and vicious politicians and bureaucrats protected by a muzzled press. It is this that the Indian voter has rejected. With his rightward turn, Sanjay had alienated the entire Left that had supported Indira Gandhi. With his bumptious arro-

gance (Daily News reduces this to injudicious behaviour) Sanjay drove out of the Congress some of the most loyal and long-standing supporters of Indira Gandhi. It was because of Sanjay that a large number of persons like Bahaguna and Nandini Satpathy were forced out of Congress. Sanjay wanted to make room for his untried, unknown and ill-mannered Youth Congress nominees.

The Daily News seems to be dimly aware of the havoc played by the Youth Congress, but once again rushes to the defence of Sanjay and attributes motives to explain Jagjivan Ram's conduct—motives which many people will not accept. This is what the Daily News said:

"Perhaps the final blow came when the youths in the Congress sought nomination for about 200 of their members for the general elections. It is apparent that the five point modernisation programme

which also included the ending of casteism, was treading incautiously on dangerous ground. Mr. Jagjivan Ram who leads a very powerful minority group has with the help of other groups which are now merged in the Janata Party checked the course of the Congress Party."

The Daily News, with a touch of sarcasm, wondered whether the Janata Party would be able to "deal with India's enormous problems within the framework of democracy."

Is it the Daily News's contention that the enormous problems of India could not be resolved within the framework of democracy? Does this mean that the Daily News and those who dictate its policies believe that only authoritarian emergency rule could solve the problems of countries like Ceylon?

FAST DISAPPEARING

ON THE COVER, this week, we have a picture of a Goviya, the small proprietary peasant farmer. He is the bedrock of the Sinhala farming community, a real and traditional gentleman of the rural areas of Ceylon. Ever since the Senanayakes and his kind of Brown Sahibs had a say in the agricultural policies of this island from the mid 1920s, it was their objective to create more goviyas of this type through state-sponsored land colonisation schemes. The SLFP under the Bandaranaiques from 1956 to 1965 (with Philip Gunawardene and C. P. de Silva in charge of Agriculture and Lands) continued the same policy by seeking to make even the big farmers into small farmers through the Paddy Lands Act and other legislation. The UNP between 1965 and 1970 wanted to develop big gentlemen farmers and bring large joint-stock companies to develop large modern farms through Special Leases. After 1970, Land Reform was directed at liquidating not only the big farmers but also privately owned large scale plantations. Even though, under pseudo-socialist sloganising, lip service was paid to publicly-managed large scale plantations and farms, the emphasis has so far been on fragmenting some of the best developed estates in order to allot land to so-called "landless" people—anything from quarter of an acre to three acres each now (earlier three to five acres had been allotted). This fragmentation is not being done to satisfy the "land hunger" of landless peasants but to create a new tribe of govिया voters, romanticised in Sinhala political lore, out of nondescript elements politically attached to MPs of the ruling Party. The UNP and the earlier SLFP had wanted to re-create a govिया of the old world, but the SLFP-UP government has fallen down between two contradictory objectives—one to create goviyas of the old world and the other to fashion a new kind of agricultural wonder worker for state plantations or state farms or the nondescript units known as "co-operative farms", "collective farms", "usawasamas" and "Janawasamas." The overwhelming majority of new allottees of small units—up to three acres each—are not interested in farming. They had been misled into the belief that a little piece of land and a little work would bring them wealth untold because the state would spoonfeed them into prosperity. No sooner they discover that such dreams were only a mirage, they become absentee permit holders of the land used thereafter either as residential plots or leased out to mudalalis who have the capital and know-how to make agriculture pay.

The Daily News even criticised the Congress for having "climbed down" and also admitted some of its mistakes during the election campaign. This is what it said:

"A further defeat for the Congress Party was when it climbed down on the sterilisation program and admitted that excesses had been committed, but it complicated matters further by attributing the excesses to the zeal of government officials."

Does the Daily News think that a government should not make such admissions?

Finally, the Daily News ends up with the eulogy:

"For all that the Congress will be remembered for the political and near miraculous economic success it had achieved at the end of its thirty year rule which has won it world wide admiration. The greater glory, however, is for the woman who led it by giving it strength and purpose and direction it earlier lacked and proved her commitment to democracy though she has had to pay a very great price for it."

The Daily News almost regrets the fact that Indira Gandhi was foolishly persuaded to hold a general election because she has had to pay a very big price for it.

This Daily News attitude is contrary to what has been said in newspapers in India and in many countries in the rest of the world. The general consensus of opinion in responsible newspapers in the Third World and elsewhere is that in spite of Indira Gandhi's attempts to undermine the democratic process while in office it is to her everlasting credit that she is abiding by it. Newspapers in India have pointed out that no sooner she decided to hold the elections she removed all restraints on a free and fair election. Cynics may say that she did this because she had felt certain of a walkover victory. Whatever it is, it is clear that Indira Gandhi had not been able to gauge the mood of the Indian people so far as their reactions to her record during the Emergency. From the days of Gandhiji right up to about 1972 or 1973, the Congress, whatever its other limitations and drawbacks, was always able to sense the mood of the

masses and formulate policies and programmes to win their confidence and lead them to action. The fact that Mrs. Gandhi was not able to do this was because the Press had been shifted and did not reflect the mood and thinking of the common people.

The Daily News seems to think that Mrs. Gandhi had called for an election because she felt that the masses were still with her and that Jagjivan Ram's defection had brought about the debacle. In sharp contrast to the laboured attempt of the Daily News to defend the emergency regime of Indira Gandhi was the outspoken and realistic editorial in the Daily Mirror of March 23, entitled "Unsterilised Democracy". The editorial stated:

"In the unwritten Book of the People, there is an unforgivable sin—the arrogant abuse of power by those in whom the people themselves have freely reposed their trust. With an unforgiving ruthlessness, the Indian electorate has wreaked a fierce vengeance upon the Congress party and in a more mercilessly in personal way, from the Indian Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi. When over 300 million voters go to the polls in a land of legendary diversity, the issues are certain to be varied and complex. But there is not the slightest doubt that the issue which roused the wrath of the Indian people and united them in an oppositional campaign unprecedented in contemporary Indian history was the Government's insolent abuse of emergency powers for partisan political advantage and often for the most petty private gain. Congress satraps, the Prime Minister's purohitas and proteges, Delhi's Machiavellian mandarins, the police, the armed forces and the intelligence apparatus, the new-style commissars of the mass media, Mr. Sanjay Gandhi's private Mafia and goon-squads joined together to create a personal dictatorship dubiously legitimated by parliamentary majorities, constitutional amendments, and judicial verdicts. Two years of Emergency and the Indian people saw the vague but sinister outlines of an emerging police state, where even a well-intentioned family planning programme could become a weapon of tyranny."

After discussing various details in regard to the elections, the Daily Mirror, went on to say:

"In a way, Mrs. Gandhi's fate is a sad one. A few years ago, THE ECONOMIST, no great admirer of the Indian leader, featured her on its cover under the title "EMPRESS OF INDIA". A truly British imperial tribute, the sentiment may have been shared by many millions of Indians. In Asia and in other parts of the Third World too, she was held in the very highest esteem, rightly so. Whatever the clever stratagems employed, Indira's India had cut Pakistan into two. She was the liberator of Bangladesh. Soon India became an atomic power and a fast developing industrial nation. With a cynical dexterity that the British would have appreciated and the Indonesians envied, she added a new word to real politics, "sikkimization". British India seemed more united and stable than under the British. Came the High Court judgement, special legislation, constitutional amendments, emergency and postponement of elections. Nemesis lay nearby."

The Daily Mirror editorial then attempts to evaluate the immediate prospects:

LETTER

Sri Lanka or Ceylon

Sir,

Three cheers for your forthright comments. I am afraid you seem to have forgotten something. We are no more "Ceylonese" but "Lankans." So, Tribune should be a journal of Sri Lanka (not Ceylon) and World Affairs.

Lionel Wijesiri

46, Madinnagoda Road,
Rajagiriya.
21/02/77

We will always be Ceylon and the Ceylonese. Constitutions will come and Constitutions will go, but Ceylon will go on. The 1972 Constitution and the official nomenclature of Sri Lanka may disappear or be altered sooner than many people think. We are Taprobanians, Serendibians, Lankans, Sri Lankans—but all the time Ceylonese. —Ed.

"The great banyan tree of the Congress has not been uprooted, only badly shaken by the winds of change. After 30 years, an Opposition party has been elected to office and the world's most populous democracy has now faced up to that essential test of a robust pluralist system and survived the trails of transition. The Janata Party has started well. Sensing the mood of the people, it has decided that its first job is to restore all the lost liberties. The acting President has already revoked the emergency on the advice of the Cabinet which probably never seriously contemplated the possibility that an Opposition might one day use (or abuse) those self-same extraordinary powers. Now

it is for the Janata Party and its allies to prove that it can also govern the country competently." Finally, the Daily Mirror stated: "Meanwhile, for ruler and ruled, a last lesson offers itself as an amended aphorism. India is not Indira and Indira is not India. India is and will remain the people of India."

But what the Daily Mirror did not say was that the amended aphorism is applicable to Sri Lanka as well. Though it is yet too early to start drawing lessons for Ceylon on the basis of parallels, it would be wise for the rulers in Sri Lanka to be able to gauge the mood of the common people in regard to several matters of topical

relevance.

For instance, just to mention one matter, the Establishment in Sri Lanka should ponder on the wisdom of the attempts of some people in power to helicopter sons and sons-in-law into the political arena. The deep resentment generated by such attempts will have serious impact on the outcome of the elections in this country. Whether such progeny come from the Left, Right, or Centre, the common man will not be willing to accept dynastic parachuting into power by young people who have not done adequate apprenticeship at grass-roots level.

SRI LANKA CHRONICLE

Mar. 17 — Mar. 20

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—Dinamina; LD—Lankadipa; VK—Virakesari; ATH—Aththa; SM—Silumina; SLD—Sri Lankadipa; JD—Janadina.

THURSDAY, MARCH 17: The government has decided to assist manufacturers in the public and private sectors to meet the consumer demand for popular brands of soap; tallow, which is 1/3 the price of coconut oil is to be permitted to be imported duty free; this will go a long way in lowering the costs of soap manufacture; this is an alternative to a demand by the industry for an upward price revision. The doctors in the General Hospital Colombo, who kept away from wards yesterday morning in protest against the closure by the authorities on Tuesday night of some of the rooms occupied by them in the Merchants Ward and the non provision of living quarters to a new batch of 12 doctors who assumed work on Tuesday went back to work in the evening after a settlement by the authorities in consultation with the doctor's unions. More benefits to the people from the revaluation of the rupee came today in the form of reduced prices for a number of consumer goods and raw materials for the production of consumer goods. Training courses for skilled craftsmen will now be available; these courses have been collectively sponsored by the Regional Development division of the Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs, the Sri Lanka Light Engineering Co-operative Federation and the Sri Lanka Industrial Development Board. The President left on a goodwill mission to Thailand and Bangladesh from the BIA, Katunayake yesterday. A six member team from Libya, is due in Sri Lanka today for talks with the government on trade, economic and bilateral relations—CDN. The government will issue three pounds of rice per consumer per week throughout the island from April 4; at present consumers in

Colombo are issued three pounds while those in the rice producing areas are given two pounds. The P.M. last evening met a deputation from the TULF: it is reliably learnt that there was a frank exchange of views on certain basic issues which could lead to the narrowing down of the vast differences that exist now; a further meeting will be held shortly. Further to the investigations regarding the Thai rice order investigations, it was discovered that many of the documents are missing, and Mr. M. B. Senanayake, who relinquished his duties as Food Commissioner early this week, left the island in the early hours of yesterday morning; his departure was discovered when a high official of the Food Ministry tried to contact him regarding the Thai rice deal. The suggestion that a National Road Safety Council should be set up to co-ordinate activities to reduce the rate of road accidents in the country, was made by the IGP, at a top level conference held at the Ministry of Transport on Tuesday. Mr. Mubarak Thaha has been released from police custody; he is at present warded at the Cardiology Unit of the General Hospital, Colombo. Kamal Jumbhatt leftist leader of Lebanon was ambushed and killed while travelling in a car by an unknown assassin today—CDM. The Sinhala Etymological dictionary has taken 50 years to finish the first letter of the Sinhala alphabet; it will celebrate it's 50th birthday next Monday by bringing out a volume which will finally cover the first letter. With the arrival of large consignments of canned fish in the island shortly, and with the decision of the CWE to sell it at Rs. 4, fish mudalalis will be forced to lower their prices; they now charge as much as Rs. 7 for a pound of seer—CO.

FRIDAY, MARCH 18: The government last night gazetted price reductions on a number of essential goods which have direct bearing on the cost of living; the new prices were gazetted by the price control department on the advice of the National Prices Commission. Four ounces of imported gram dhal will be issued monthly to every ration book holder from the middle of next month; it will cost the consumer Rs. 2.80 a lb. The price of tea is going up, partly because of the increasing demand, according to the daily Guardian; in supermarkets tea costing 17p to 18p for a quarter pound will be 20p to 21p by easter, and more by the summer.

Sri Lanka is overjoyed at the American President's proposal for the demilitarisation of the Indian Ocean, said the deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs at a Foreign Office press conference yesterday. Sri Lanka will present three reports and 17 papers at the Non-aligned Foreign Minister's Conference to be held at New Delhi from 6 to 11 April. A 12.5% increase in freight rates on all commodities in the Ceylon Continental Conference will take effect from April 1; on the Ceylon-UK Eire conference lines the increase will be 15% on all commodities other than tea—CDN. The JCTUO which consists of major trade unions in the public and private sectors is planning a show down with the government to win its demands. Governmental surgeons are poised for strike action; it is understood that if no satisfactory solutions to their problems are found by March 30 the association will resort to strike action—CDM. The Colombo Rubber market reacted to the revaluation yesterday with both sheet and crepe prices declining. The government plans to impose price reductions on a number of locally manufactured articles notwithstanding arguments of the manufacturing industries concerned who point out that their current production utilises raw materials imported at pre-revaluation prices. Import Control Authorities have decided to recommend to the government that the sale of 'luxury' goods be banned. The Indian Election Commission yesterday ordered a partial repoll in eight of the 300 constituencies in which voting took place yesterday after reports of serious disturbances, particularly in the northeastern states of Bihar and West Bengal—CO.

SATURDAY, MARCH 19: Consumers throughout the island will receive an extra pound of rice on the ration from April 4; consumers from non-rice producing areas will be entitled to four pounds on their books for the fortnight beginning April 4; consumers in rice producing areas who get two pounds will get three pounds; this change in the rationing scheme was announced by the Food Department yesterday. According to Mr. B. V. Dreesman, Secretary General of the Freedom from Hunger Campaign at a press conference yesterday, if there was any developing country going to attain self-sufficiency in food, it would be Sri Lanka; he apparently made this observation after studying conditions in a large number of developing countries. Prices of a wide range of utility ceramic ware have been reduced by the Ceylon Ceramics Corporation with immediate effect; this decision has been taken in keeping with the steps now being taken by the government to bring down the cost of living. SLFP May Day celebrations in conjunction with its trade unions will take place this year on an elaborate scale at Galle Face Green, where the rally as in previous years, will be presided over by the PM. The SLFP's largest trade union combine, the Sri Lanka Independent Trade Union Federation and the Sri Lanka Independent Government Workers Trade Union Federation which held the major membership in the now defunct JCTUO, have decided to call a separate front called the Progressive Council of Trade Union Organisations. The second charge sheet has been issued against the LSSP rebel group led by Mr. Vasudeva Nanayakkara; they have been asked to explain why they called off the recent strike abruptly two days after the work stoppage was launched. A trade team led by Mr. T. B. Ilangaratne will leave for USSR on Monday to conclude a general trade agreement based on freely convertible currency between the two countries—CDN. Investigators probing corruption among officials in government departments and public

sector corporations are now spreading their net wider following recent disclosures and tip-offs. A large variety of hard-to-get mass consumption items will be available during the Sinhala and Hindu New Year; large consignments of food items including gram dhal, canned fish, coriander, cummin seed, garlic etc. imported by the CWE have already arrived. 'The travel industry is greatly perturbed about the consequences to tourism on the recent revaluation of the Ceylon rupee' states a press release issued by the Travel Agent's Association of Sri Lanka. Several Pakistan Opposition leaders were arrested yesterday following anti-government demonstrations. The Price of coconut oil has come down from 6900 a/- metric ton to 5500—CDM.

SUNDAY, MARCH 20: The TULF yesterday expressed satisfaction at the progress of talks they have held so far with the PM and her Ministers on some of the problems of the Tamil speaking people. An ambitious scheme, to stop children from begging for alms near hotels and other places where tourists gather, is being planned by the Tourist Board in association with Probation and Child Care and Social Services Departments. The Ceylon Steel Corporation and the State Hardware Corporation have been told to look into the possibility of manufacturing various requirements of the CTB and the CGR; if some of the innumerable items that are imported could be manufactured locally, it will save millions in foreign exchange and provide plenty of employment too, it is believed—SO. The Bribery Commissioner has sought permission from the Speaker of the NSA to investigate 12 allegations of bribery against Members of Parliament; the speaker has granted permission in respect of three cases while permission was refused in six cases; the Bribery Commissioner is awaiting a reply from the Speaker in the other three cases. Work in many government hospitals where equipment requires repairs or replacement has come to a virtual standstill; it is understood this is due to repeated requests, some made even by telegram being ignored by the Electro-Medical Division of the Health Department; it is learnt that X-ray plants, Cobalt therapy machines and similar equipment are not functioning in several provincial and outstation hospitals. Mr. Anura Bandaranaike began his activities as the new Chief Organiser for the Nuwara Eliya-Maskeliya electorate with a series of meetings last week end; he said at one of these meetings that his fight was not against individuals and that his fight was pitched at a different level; and he said that he had chosen that particular electorate because he would have an opportunity of contributing to the cause for which his father had died from the Kanda Uda Rata. Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike, the Finance Minister, subscribes to only one philosophy, says his predecessor, Dr. N. M. Perera—'after' me, the deluge—ST. admission to the University of Sri Lanka next year will be only from among students who sat the GCE 'O' Level in December 1975 and will sit the GCE 'A' Level in April next year; those who sat the NCGE in December 1975 and will sit the HNCE in April next year and attain qualifying standard will not however be admitted next year; instead those eligible for University education on the basis of their performance at the HNCE will pursue further studies, the courses being drawn up by the Department of Education in consultation with the university; these 'package courses' will be given at certain centrally situated schools and will not last a whole year; they are intended to bring the HNCE students to a level comparable with the present 'A' level student.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

BY LANKAPUTRA

- Britain ● France
- Indian Ocean
- Janata's Foreign Policy?

THE LABOUR GOVERNMENT IN BRITAIN was faced with the prospects of a Parliamentary defeat last week. Mr. Callaghan's government had met with several serious set-backs in recent weeks, the most important of them being the inability to get approval for a Bill to set up separate assemblies for Scotland and Wales.

Following in the wake of this parliamentary defeat, Conservative leader, Mr. Thatcher had tabled a no-confidence motion which was due to be debated on March 23/24th. With the defeat of Labour candidates in several by-elections in recent months and in the context of the slender majority the Labour Government had originally started with, it was reported that the government would fall unless the Liberal Party came to the rescue of Mr. Callaghan's government.

The following joint statement by the Prime Minister, Mr. James Callaghan, and the British Liberal Party Mr. David Steel, MP, was issued at the Prime Minister's office on the night of Wednesday, March 23:

"We will set up a joint consultative committee under the chairmanship of the Leader of the House, which will meet regularly. The committee will examine Government policy and other issues prior to their coming before the House, and Liberal policy proposals. The existence of this committee will not commit the Government to accepting the views of the Liberal Party, or the Liberal Party to supporting the Government on any issue. We agree to initiate regular meetings between the Chancellor and the Liberal Party economic spokesman, such meetings to begin at once. In addition, the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Liberal Party will meet as necessary. We agree that legislation for direct elections to the European

Assembly in 1978 will be presented to Parliament in this session. The Liberal Party re-affirm their strong conviction that a proportional system should be used as the method of election. The Government is publishing next week a White Paper on direct elections to the European Assembly which sets out the choices among different electoral systems, but which makes no recommendation. There will now be consultation between us on the method to be adopted and the Government's final recommendation will take full account of the Liberal Party's commitment. The recommendation will be subject to a free vote of both Houses. We agree that progress must be made on legislation for devolution and to this end consultations will begin on the detailed memorandum submitted by the Liberal Party today. In any future debate on proportional representation for the developed assemblies there will be a free vote. We agree that the Government will provide the extra time necessary to secure the passage of the Housing (Homeless Persons) Bill, and that the Local Authorities (Works) Bill will now be confined to provisions to protect the existing activities of direct labour organisations in the light of local government reorganisation. We agree that this arrangement between us should last until the end of the present Parliamentary session, when both parties would consider whether the experiment has been of sufficient benefit to the country to be continued. We also agree that this understanding should be made public."

With this support from the Liberal Party, Mr. Callaghan's government was able to survive a vote of no confidence. It is yet too early to envisage any special developments as a result of this co-operation between the Labour Party and the Liberal Party in Britain.

IN FRANCE the recent Municipal elections has shown a tremendous growth in the electoral popularity of the left-wing alliance between the communists and the socialists. On March 23, the French Minister for Home Affairs, Mr. Michael Poniatovski, issued the following communique: "Forty five cities of 30,000 to 100,000 inhabitants were at stake in the run off elections. Sixteen of them went to the major-

ity and twenty six to the opposition. Three other cities were taken by left wing organisations. A study which will go more into details will enable one to draw all the conclusions of these elections. It can already be said that the reopert of votes cast was done with discipline in the opposition whilst within the majority the stepping down of candidates did not always benefit the remaining one. This means that he did not have all the votes he expected at the end of these two rounds of the Municipal elections. As far as the thirty nine cities of over 100,000 inhabitants are concerned, the majority keep seventeen whilst the opposition won twenty two."

There is no doubt that the French Establishment are worried by the left-wing in the French Municipal elections because many observers believe that in the general elections next year, the present trend was bound to repeat itself in a much more accentuated manner. It is interesting to note that on the night of March 23, the French Prime Minister, Mr. Raymond Barre, issued the following communique: "The second round of the Municipal elections shows an unquestionable success for the left wing union if the majority retains some solid positions. It obviously suffered from its divisions over the last three months in the capital as well as in other cities the report of votes does not seem to have worked satisfactorily between the various candidates of the majority whilst it worked entirely for the left wing union parties, within this latter and in spite of appearance the communists party is in fact the main winner of these elections; its allies have opened up the entrance to townhalls of which its powerful organisation had until now been kept aside. I hope that the groups of the majority will draw the conclusions of these elections for the forthcoming legislative ones. These groups must unite openly and stand by the President of the Republic and the Government if they want to maintain for France an economy open to Europe and the world and at the same time a tolerant and just society. France's problems remain, they will not be solved through facility and illusion but through effort and discipline. The Government which is in charge of the nation's interest will continue for its part to face

up to the necessity of the economic and financial recovery of the country."

The President of France is now confronted with a leftward swing among the people and also with a Gaullist Mayor of Paris (in a 100 years), Mr. Chirac, who was his Prime Minister not so long ago. It is difficult to see how the President can reverse this trend in the immediate future.

IN THIS COLUMN LAST WEEK reference was made to the enthusiastic statement made by Mr. Lakshman Jayakody, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, at his Press Conference on March 17, welcoming the policy statement of President Carter in regard to the Indian Ocean. Mr. Jayakody felt that the USA had turned over a new leaf and that it now accepted the peace-zone proposals made by Prime Minister Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike. The following despatch in the *Far Eastern Economic Review* of March 25, 1977 throws a different complexion on the whole question.

In an article entitled "MISREADING CARTER'S SIGNALS", Steven Barber from Washington stated: "President Jimmy Carter set the cat among pigeons in Australia last week with his disclosure that he had proposed to the Soviet Union that the Indian Ocean should be 'completely demilitarised'. His suggestion was in the context of the nuclear arms control negotiations between the superpowers. In point of fact, nobody has any thought at this point to start dismantling the American naval communications facilities to Diego Garcia or in any other way changing US strategic plans for the Pacific Basin. For Malcolm Frazer and Gough Whitlam to have got worked up about it in Parliament suggests that neither is well plugged in to what is afoot in Washington. Carter was merely saying that he had put a up a host of new ideas 'directly and indirectly' to the Soviets on how to get ahead on a new Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT-2) before the 1972 freeze on inter-continental ballistic missile deployment runs out this October. 'For instance', he said, 'I suggested we forgo the opportunity to arm satellite bodies and also the opportunities to destroy observation satellites... that a comprehensive test ban be put

into effect, that prior notification of test missile launchings be exchanged.' The Indian Ocean suggestion was sandwiched into the list as something on which he felt quick agreement might be reached to pave the way for 'more drastic overall commitments on atomic weapons'. It would be a tedious process, but it was worth tossing out suggestions to get the ball rolling. As seen from Washington, Australian politicians would not seem to have a keen appreciation of the facts of life where nuclear weapons are concerned. Post war US presidents have been acutely conscious of their awesome responsibility, but it does not mean that it will lead to a unilateral withdrawal from the outer ramparts into fortress America.

"On the other hand, as ex-submariner Carter well knows, the Soviet Union would be giving less away than the US were it to pull out of the Indian Ocean as part of a complete superpower demilitarisation of the area. It has already established bases in the Horn of Africa, at Berbera and Mogadishu, and is hopeful of developing more in Mozambique. In addition, Moscow knows that when necessary, it can lean a little harder on India for repair facilities in its ports. To suggest, as Mrs. Gandhi does, that the US presence on Diego Garcia drove the Soviets into the Indian Ocean is putting the cart before the horse with a vengeance. But the significance of the Indian Ocean in current global strategy is below the waves as well as on the surface. It is of great concern to the US and its allies that the sea lanes from the Middle East oilfields around the Cape of Good Hope to the west and via the Malacca Straits to the east, should not be subject to Soviet blockade or interference. From a purely American viewpoint, however, these waters provide splendid hiding places for Polaris nuclear submarines. In short America's deterrent forces are not solely deployed in the Atlantic but to the south as well. And Carter made that plain the other day—and for the first time by any US president—when he referred to the Indian Ocean in the context of SALT. What Carter did, in effect, was to challenge the Soviets to give up their naval expansion in support of their meddling in and around the Arabian

peninsula and East Africa. He knew that their inevitable refusal would let the US seize the high ground in the moralistic contest for the hearts and minds of pious politicians in New Delhi, Colombo and elsewhere."

It is premature to speculate on Carter meant when he threw in his suggestion about the Indian Ocean, but it has induced a great deal of wishful thinking. Carter has set a ball rolling which may bear fruit.

THE UNITED STATES is undoubtedly pleased about developments in India as a result of the elections. After commenting on the fact that democratic processes had re-emerged in India, the *New York Times* in an editorial of March 22 has stated: "What next for India? The patchwork coalition that so unexpectedly brought Mrs. Gandhi down may well fly apart as the moment of responsibility approaches. No leader has appeared who seems vigorous and respected enough to pull together that politically, racially, religiously and culturally variegated land. But that does not necessarily point to anarchy, as the fearful predict. The newly constituted Parliament may well produce a leader younger than Moraji Desai and more inspiring than Jagjivan Ram, the two chief contenders. And if not, India still has institutions—the Army, the Civil Service, the State Governments—stable enough to provide a more or less orderly transition to the country's next stage."

But more important than American attempts to evaluate the Janata Party Government is the expectation of a shift in Indian foreign policy and how the US should react to it.

"Of particular importance to the United States is the expect shift in foreign policy. The attitude of the Congress party which has ruled since independence, has varied from a self-righteous edginess toward the west to a chilliness bordering on hostility. All indications from the victorious alliance, known as Janata, are that a friendly attitude can be expected toward the United States, with a noticeable cooling of feelings for the Soviet Union. Whatever its foreign policy, India has begun to earn a new claim on American sympathies and perhaps aid. All who love freedom are measurably

safer today than before the Indian election and they have an obligation to encourage the spread of the democratic habit."

Will US expectations be fulfilled? The Indian masses, which threw out Mrs. Gandhi and her Congress, will not hesitate to throw out the Janata Party if it betrayed pro-US, pro-Western policies, contrary to the Gandhi-Nehruian non-alignment policies. Or will the Janata Party and some of its allies be able to infuse pro-West attitudes in the thinkings of Indian peoples?

* *

INTRODUCTION

The April 1971 Insurrection In Ceylon—2

by H. A. I. Goonetilleke

This is the second of two instalments of the Introduction in H. A. I. Goonetilleke's book **THE APRIL 1971 INSURRECTION IN CEYLON: A BIBLIOGRAPHICAL COMMENTARY.**

PARADOXICALLY ENOUGH, the whole insurrection—antecedents, developments and denouement—was most inadequately reported at the time in the local and world press. There was less concern with what was happening than why it was happening and later less concern with what had happened than what was likely to happen. This was largely due to the strict censorship imposed by the Government, shortly after April 5th 1971, of all news pertaining to activities related to the emergency and arising from the insurgency and the banning of nine newspapers and journals published by the Janata Vimukti Peramuna (People's Liberation Front) and other radical left-wing organisations not allied to any 'established' Socialist party. Though preventive censorship, according to the book, has now been lifted far almost three years, the intellectual life of the country has not been emancipated, because areas of creativity continue to be surrounded by barriers that hinder unconditional presentation of ideas, and make their full evaluation impos-

sible. Indeed, to judge from the prevailing silence all comment and analysis on the events of April 1971 appear to be virtually taboo except those, perhaps which may present views attractive to the current administration.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the bulk of the literature provoked by the insurrection has been published abroad, and most of these contributions, to the debate have been written by outsiders, more privileged perversely than Ceylonese to comment on this cataclysmic event. Preconceptions, political prejudices and biases, and the need to produce neat and congenial hypotheses, have inevitably produced many distortions about the basic issues in the encounter between the main protagonists. But they reflect a whole spectrum of opinion, ranging from ecstatic possession to contemptuous derision, in which many valuable and significant strands of appreciation and understanding can be discerned. Whether the writer is proclaiming that the JVP represented the highest form of an autonomous mass uprising in the shape of an unalloyed radical youth movement, or denouncing it as an infantile ultra-left disorder leading to a nihilist romantic adventure, masterminded by crypto-fascist agents, the information and analysis are essential to perceiving even the tip of the iceberg. But, after all the varieties of exultation or condemnation, speculation or interpretation, dire prophecy or many-splendoured vision have been read and digested, one is left irresistibly pondering over the enigma of whether revolutions can be artificially induced and new societies brought into being before the time is ripe and all the signs and portents have been studiously observed. Any attempt, however bold and imaginative, at inducing the premature birth of a new order appears to be, therefore fraught with peril in that counter-revolutionary neo-fascist societies or dictatorships are likely to arise. These, by their very nature, will vitiate and destroy the dreams and aspirations for which a revolution is undertaken. In the classic socialist strain, the liberation of mankind can only be wrought through majoritarian and democratic decision and enterprises, whether violent or non-violent.

THIS ABORTIVE REVOLT, as mentioned earlier, signalises a political and intellectual crossroads in the fractured contemporary history of Ceylon, especially after the formal colonial yoke, disguised in pretentious dominion trappings, began to be eased after 1948. In this period all too familiar neo-colonialist strategies, and sub-imperialist modes of economic conduct were permitted to penetrate a supposedly liberated society, and not even the "Social Revolution" of 1956 had succeeded in stemming or turning say the political and cultural conditioning resulting from the operation of these subtly powerful agencies. The insurrection therefore, cast a flare over cardinal aspects of the theory and practice of revolution in what is commonly considered a revolutionary era. Concern in the future must increasingly be with general structural factors and circumstances impacting on a revolutionary situation, and less with personalities, old or young, living or dead, specific circumstances, and a mixture of purely incidental factors. Capitalist systems make use of a wide and devious spectrum of repressive techniques to build up a structure of violence, and it is saddening that self-styled socialist regimes are only too prone to sedulously cultivate the very methods they are pledged to abjure. Revolutions occur when the assorted victims of these repressive structures, through a concerted expression of will and highly conscious mobilisation, attempt to change the structure in favour of those exploited. Revolutions are not conjured up out of some visionary air, reeking with the stale stench of populist slogan-mongering; no inexorable, mechanical processes impel them into the open. On the exploited is cast the burden of strenuously and deliberately determining the revolutionary goals which will ensure that there will be progressively less exploitation, less infiltration by irrelevant material, technological and cultural devices, less fragmentation of their unity, and less marginalisation of their out-cast strengths. They must equally be prepared to confront the inescapable challenge of a non-verbal language of revolution—violence—when faced with a structure where power has degenerated into forms of violence and oppression in the effort to perpetuate itself. Indeed,

to judge from the experience of the last twenty five years, 'revolution' seems, more often than not, to have become an activity studiously designed never to succeed. 'Revolutions' and swelling movements for radical change have been talked away by a vociferous disproportion between passionate consciousness and intellectual analysis on the one hand, and lack of practical will on the other, or vaporised through the strident rhetoric and clamorous symbolism of para-military street pageants on May Day—an annual public dramaturgy of rising expectations by the deprived in the auditorium of the privileged.

AS A BIBLIOGRAPHER I have found myself increasingly under siege in the last four years by inquiries about what to read on the insurrection. This select bibliography, therefore, is an exploratory attempt to document the main and specific contributions to the literature on April 1971, most of which have been written and published after the events. The value of the present bibliography would have been immeasurably strengthened by the inclusion of certain other unpublished material—ag the various versions of the seminal "Five Lectures", the hot gospel core of the JVP ideology, but these were unfortunately not available to me at the time of compilation. Another important document is the judgement of the Criminal Justice Commission in the principal trial which ended on December 20th 1974, but that had not been published up to the end of April 1975 owing to delays in translation and printing. The early temptation to impose a pre-insurrectionary, insurrectionary and post-insurrectionary pattern on the material was given up in favour of a convenient straight-through alphabetical organisation by author—each has its advantages and disadvantages. Some of the items were available only in mimeographed or typewritten form for private circulation, but have been included as they constitute essential threads in the over—all documentation. Purely descriptive annotations which reflect the writers' views have been provided, at some length in certain cases, to enable the bibliography to bring out the salient features of the crisis, and to serve as a searching commentary in itself. I hope

it will help people to appreciate the tragic necessity of understanding the central concepts and subtle inflections of this notable occurrence, which is likely to mark a watershed in the modern history of Sri Lanka. No longer can the breaking of parliamentary wind be mistaken for a political thunder-clap.

The end of the April insurrection, it seems plain was only the beginning of that insurrection's role in Ceylonese history and thought. Despite failing to achieve any of its objectives, it provided fresh and novel viewpoints on problems of development and the economics of the transition from dependence to socialism, free of the seemingly impregnable hold of Western models and modes of analysis, which have, for too long, been permitted to fashion both political and economic impulses. Self-reliance and self-determination were posed as the true means to inward-looking and self-generating development. It threw into confusion those 'progressive' forces to whom a mere redistribution of power at the state and bureaucratic levels—without a continuation of mass protest and mobilisation—was the *summum bonum* of socialism. But it has also helped to consolidate and strengthen the reactionary forces in the country so that a possible merger of these groups, both within and outside the government, appears likely in the near future. Civil rights, too have been seriously emasculated and democratic freedom endangered, so that the supreme task of the radical intellectual or worker in deriving relevant socialist formulae to fit the special circumstances of what must be accepted in a unique society, has been further imperilled.

I am indebted to many friends (some in my own profession) at home and abroad, for putting me in touch with materials not otherwise available to me. I cannot, unfortunately discharge this burden of gratitude by name, as they have preferred to remain anonymous. This bibliography is, in some way therefore, an act of thanksgiving.

I must thank the Director, Centre of Socio-Religious Research University of Louvain, for publishing the first version of this bibliography in a strictly limited non-commercial edition for private distribution in November 1973. The response to this has sti-

mulated the updated version presented in these pages, and I am doubly grateful to him for agreeing to publish this second edition in its present form.

(Concluded)

GENERAL ELECTIONS—1977

Issue Before Voters—2

By Tissa Balasuriya O.M.I.

This is the second part from a talk given at the Seminar on "General Elections 1977" on March 9, 1977, held at the Centre For Society and Religion, 281, Deans Road, Colombo 10.

SRI LANKA is a youthful nation. About 70% of the population is below the age of 35 years. A good number of these, who are between 15-25, are unemployed. On the other hand the leadership positions in the country are mainly held by older people. While the age of retirement in the public service is 55 years; the political leaders of all the established parties are in their sixties or even close to the seventies. This situation is also likely to cause a certain tension within the political parties prior to the Elections.

A more important issue; however, is the demand by the youth for radical socio-economic changes. The insurrection of 1971 was an indication of their discontent. The youth question the premises of the older leadership. They are prepared to go further in egalitarian measures and to reconstruct production on socialistic lines. The Tamil youth have now reached a point of frustration similar to that of the Sinhala youth in 1971 and of the Sinhala people in 1956. There is radicality an impatience among the youth. The lifting of the emergency may prove to be the removing of the lid from this deep seated frustration. The elections will provide an indication of their impact. The youthful groups are seeking to have their say in the older political parties as well as to present parties of their own such as the JVP and the MYP to the electorate.

General Elections

HUMAN RIGHTS. Another area of relationships is the position of human rights in the country. We have seen the eclipse of certain basic human rights as the freedom of expression, and association due to the emergency regulations. The growth of the socialized sector and the power of the big companies and of their allies among the elite has also effectively reduced freedom of employment and hence of expression. The powers of the officials and police have grown enormously in recent years. There is a yearning among people for a guarantee of freedom even while we seek to advance towards Socialism. This is a specific situation in Sri Lanka as many Western style democratic countries are not socialistic, and the socialistic regimes tend to be restrictive of human rights. General elections are a peculiarly democratic institution. Can we go towards effective Socialism through the means of the ballot. This is a crucial issue which we have to answer over a period of time.

PRODUCTION. The above considerations show questions concerning the distribution of monies, wealth and power in society. Production is equally important for we must have more of goods and services to distribute to all. Here the question is *production of what, for whom and by whom, and in what manner?* This involves also a question of the type of society we want. Those who emphasize equality will want the production of the basic needs of all before the provision of luxuries for a few. They would prefer a community ownership of the means of production. There is also the question of the degree of self reliance and the type of technology to be utilized. Hence also the connection with foreign countries. Should we be open to the capitalistic or socialistic countries and their investments?

There will be sharp divisions on these issues. Some will emphasize private enterprise, openness to the Western countries, the incentive of profit, efficiency in management, tourism, export promotion etc. Others will urge common ownership of the means of production, a fear of the foreign enterprises especially of the capitalist countries, greater self reliance in technology, workers management, basic needs strategies etc. Still others will be for the middle path or

mixed economy with various types of mixtures. Production is an all important issue for us with our still increasing population, and the growing expectations of the people. The problem of saving or earning foreign exchange will also enter into this question. The different political parties will present their policies for production in agriculture, industry and services. These will also imply their attitude towards distribution.

ISSUES. From the clash of these forces and their inter-relation we can foresee some of the issues that are likely to dominate the general elections. In the short term the issues before the people will be those of high cost of living, inflation, unemployment and shortages of commodities. In each constituency the local loyalties of family, caste and tradition will play their role. There will also be the excitement of election meetings, publications, the changes and counter charges, promises by candidates and parties, fears and tensions roused up as the elections draw near.

Yet beyond all these can we delineate certain longer term trends and issues that too will emerge during the election. The clash of class interests will be a major factor. The interests of the unemployed, the poorer workers and peasants will be to remove the economic imbalance in our society. This will lead to the issue of *what type of Socialism do we want?* Every party is proclaiming itself to be socialistic and democratic. Even in the Indian elections all the major parties claimed to be democratic, secularistic and socialistic.

In different elections different issues have predominated. The Elections of 1952 and 1960 were marked by their closeness to the deaths of D. S. Senanayake and S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike. Yet in 1956 the economic issues were linked to the cultural and religious renewal among the Sinhalese people, specially the Buddhists. In 1960 the schools take over issue gave a religious tone to the elections in addition to the problem of safeguarding the gains of 1956. In 1965 the issues were more concerned with production, efficiency and democratic rights or the problems of the working of the socialistic ventures. In 1970 the concerns were once again regarding

an advance towards a more socialistic society.

At present the cultural and religious issues are less pronounced among the Sinhala majority community, for 21 years after 1956 they are more in the position of possessors of their rights. But for the minority Tamil people the question of race, language and religion may be predominant in the coming election. The class issues will be quite marked among the Sinhala people; the Moors and Malays will be rather torn between class, and language in so far as they may be Tamil speaking. The people of Indian origin will once again vote in considerable numbers and be able to sway the decision in several hill country electorate. It is in this welter of trends and countertrends that we can try to discern the different issues.

CLASS. In the country as a whole it is the socio-economic class interests that will be the longer term issue that will be decided by the elections. *Socialism* requires a change in the means of production in the direction of common ownership, management and the sharing in its benefits. How will the present general agreement on "Socialism" express itself in the party manifestos, in the choice of the voters and in the implementation by the next government? Will there be a continuation in the growth of the public sector, or will the process of socialization be halted? How will the nationalized sector be managed? This is particularly important in agriculture. For the Land Reforms of 1972 and 1975 have vested nearly a million acres in the State, but there has been no final decision as to their future management. Will they be owned by the State? By collective farms? communes or small holders? How will the tea and rubber estates be related to the villages. How will coconut lands be reorganized after being vested in the State? How will productivity be maintained, augmented or deversified.

It is firmly clear that there will be no return of the vested lands to their former owners. All parties are agreed on this. But there may be differences as to the extent that is to be given to small holders, and how much should be collectively owned and managed? Earlier changes in governments

have had an impact on the agricultural policies such as the giving up of the leases of large land areas to big companies.

The class issues will manifest themselves in a thread towards a more communitarian form of production and distribution. If different parties will try to meet this problem differently. Those who are not really intent on change will tend to promise socialism but try to dilute it with half way measures or by encouraging small scale capitalism. The measures suggested for bringing about more equality in society too will have to be studied. Will there be income ceilings? Will wealth be limited in some form? Or will there be a mere transfer of wealth as from land ownership to service industries like tourism? How will health facilities and educational opportunities be expanded? Will doctors have private practice? Will the inequality in schools continue? Will private transport continue to flourish while public transport is wrecked? Or is it possible to improve public transport without curbing private cars? What is the pattern of taxation proposed?

What will be the attitude towards foreign investments? This is an extremely important area of policies that we must watch in the election manifestos. We cannot avoid contact with other countries given an import-export economy and cultural ties. But we cannot also expose ourselves to be exploited by the big companies and agencies of other countries. After political independence the danger is economic dependence. The giant multinational corporations of the West and Japan are endeavouring to get a strong foothold in our countries. They want to control manufacturing trade, and tourist sectors even if they let go the ownership of "export-promotion areas" is a recent device by which they try to infiltrate into our country, our economy and our value patterns. The Sri Lanka general public needs to enlighten itself on these issues so as to bring pressure on the candidates and political parties not to betray the nation.

The future of the tourist industry is another important aspect of policy determination. At present there is a tendency to cater for the tourists even at the expense of the needs and rights of

the local population. We are building luxurious hotels alongside miserable slums. Scarce resources are being diverted to develop an industry which increases our dependence on the holiday tastes of foreigners. We neglect workers who earn most of our foreign exchange and pamper visiting tourists. What policies do the different parties offer concerning this type of economic growth. What are its cultural effects? What of the growth of prostitution and venereal diseases? Can we not, at least, set a limit to the hotel construction and number of tourists coming here, so that we can cope with them and do not have a lopsided economy?

RACE. The racial issue is likely to be paramount in the North and of considerable importance in the Eastern Province. Today the country has to face the situation that a section of its population has come to the point of such deep seated frustration that it speaks openly of the formation of a separate sovereign state for the Tamils. How will the communal problem relate to the class issue? At what points will they criss cross? What combinations of policies will the different parties adopt? How will the major national parties respond to this challenge? Do race differences now constitute several classes of citizens—the dominant race and less privileged ones? Or are the fears of the Sinhala people the result of a sense of being under privileged even in their own areas? Can the democratic processes bring a satisfactory solution to these issues?

Allied to this question is that of the *integration of the village and the estate populations* in the hill country. What will be the cultural impact of such a process. How can employment be generated in those areas—by intensified agriculture? New small industries? What of the integrated development of whole regions such as hills and their corresponding valleys together?

Religion is less likely to be an explicit issue in the coming elections, though it is implicit in the racial problems. The fear of *Marxism* as an enemy of religion and of democracy is not likely to be brought up so intensely as in all the previous general elections. But this too is still a potential hot issue if it is roused up by some to fever

Human Rights of all persons in Sri Lanka will be a crucial issue. This is partly due to the long drawn out emergency, the take over of Lake-House Press and the sealing of the Independent Newspapers, the experience of detention without trial, police excesses, administrative discrimination, the political favouritism, the MP's chit system for employment. The desire to safeguard our democratic way of life is strong among our people, specially the youth who had to suffer much during and after the Insurrection of 1971. How can future governments be made more responsive to peoples needs and rights and more responsible to them in a continuing manner during the six years between general elections?

The *administrative reorganization* of the country is likely to be further debated during the general elections. The needs of production, full employment, the ensuring of human rights and peoples participation, the decentralization of power in the country and the demand for a relative autonomy for the minority race(s) all require a further restructuring of the country's administration. How will the peoples in the villages who form about 70% of the population be able to determine their own path to development with the help of the skills and other means available in the cities? Already the different political parties have begun to express themselves in this direction. There is already mention of "District Peoples Development Councils", "community councils" and other councils based on "territorial, occupational, consumer or other appropriate social basis" in the pre-election proposals of the different political parties. Within this proposal there will be the interplay of class, communal party and religious interests. Are there likely to be major changes in the Constitution of 1972. How will the language issue be resolved in it?

Such decentralization will also have to be seen how they can be co-related to central planning with a socialistic thrust for the mobilization of the resources of the whole country. How will the country's huge unemployment problem be solved by the different parties? How will the cost of living be brought down? What will be the prices and wages policy? How will income and wealth inequali-

ties be reduced much more meaningfully? How will the basic needs of food, clothing and housing of all the people be provided for?

Other related issues are the cultural evolution of our country. How will the socialistic trends respect the values of the human person, of languages, communities and religions? What will be the role of the mass media, and the part in the coming years?

Some of the more striking issues have been briefly enumerated here. As the parties announce their manifestoes the public should evaluate them in terms of their promises. The seriousness of their intention to implement them can be evaluated from their past record, the type of candidate proposed, the alliances formed and the likelihood of being able to influence State power in the future. Ultimately it is the peoples long term radicalization and their strong determination to effect changes that can ensure the building of a specialistic society in freedom and with justice to all.

(Concluded)

* * *

LESSON FROM INDIA

Sanjay Gandhi

SANJAY GANDHI has been and is still in the news. After the rout at the polls, he has donned sack clothes and ashes, but it will fool nobody in India regarding the role he had played. In Sri Lanka, many do not know that the Indian voter has revolted against Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi, for having attempted (and nearly succeeded) in installing son Sanjay in the seats of power through authoritarian Emergency rule.

We publish this note from CPI's English organ, the *New Age*, of March 6, 1977, to enable our readers to have an insight into the manner in which the Son was projected at jet-speed into politics. The CPI, it will be recalled, virtually broke away from Indira Gandhi owing to the politics, policies and antics of Sanjay. —Ed.

ON DECEMBER 23, 1976 PRIME MINISTER Indira Gandhi said at a Congress workers' meeting in New

Delhi: "He (Sanjay Gandhi) is much too small a fry. Obviously he is not going to be the Prime Minister or the President or anything like that. All he can be is a Congress worker." This "Congress worker" is a different kettle of fish, it seems. Chief ministers and governors rush to receive him at airports. Other Ministers and Congress leaders swoon over his "dynamism" and his "leadership." And he dispenses favours all round, as if he is the arbiter of the country and the government.

In November last he flew to Madras to "assess" the flood and cyclone damage. Why should he, with no status in the government, either ministerial or official, "assess" the damage, is not explained. But what is more, Governor M. L. Sukhadia was at the airport to receive him and "accompanied" him on the inspection tour. And at the end of the tour he declared that 20 thousand houses will be built for those who have lost their houses. Who will build, it was not said.

The issue whether governors should sully their offices by dancing tune to private individuals was raised with the authorities. The answer was that the governor had gone to the airport to receive Minister of State for home Affairs Om Mehta. The Minister himself was reported to have "accompanied" the other person. Do governors go to airports to receive Ministers of State? They do so only in the case of the President and the Prime Minister, according to protocol. Has Om Mehta become third in ranking next to the President and the Prime Minister or has somebody else acquired the de facto rank? There is no answer.

But this was before the Prime Minister's "small fry" speech. What about after that? Looking at the newspapers we get the following picture. On January 4 he was in Pratapgarh and Jaunpur. UP chief Minister N. D. Tiwari was in attendance along with PCC president Mohsina Kidwai. At Pratapgarh he told the audience what type of people would be given tickets by him when the elections came. On January 11 he was in Karnal. Haryana chief Minister B. D. Gupta was in attendance. He told a public meeting that the UP chief Minister had agreed to his "suggestion" that jobs should be

given to Youth Congress workers. Why don't you follow suit, he asked Gupta. On January 15 he was in Patiala. Punjab chief Minister Zail Singh was in attendance along with PCC president Mohinder Singh Gill. Satpal Kapoor was also there grovelling his admiration. The "national youth leader" asked Zail Singh why he doesn't open government offices in all the villages, as suggested by Gill.

Incidentally, the public relations department of the Punjab government had inserted a rather ornate advertisement in all the dailies, including those from the capital, extending a "most loving and respectful welcome" to Sanjay Gandhi, "the harbinger of new life, new light". On January 16 Rajasthan Chief Minister was singing hallelujahs to him in Jaipur on his flying visit to the pink city. On January 17 he was receiving a memorandum from a particular teachers' organisation in Delhi. The memo listed their demands for improving their living and working conditions. Why the memo to him, there is no reply. On January 23 he was in Jagdalpur telling the advasis of Bastar jungles to plant trees. In tow was Madyha Pradesh chief Minister S. C. Shukla. The following day found him giving an interview to a newspaper. In the interview he declared that there were "a number of people" in the Youth Congress who should be MPs. It was only a question of giving them the opportunity.

On January 30 he was in Cuttack to a regal reception. At the head of the waiting line was chief minister Binayak Acharya. He had been on record soon after his installation as chief minister that "it was Mr. Sanjay Gandhi who first considered the change as necessary in view of the political crisis in Orissa and he even showed the way how to achieve that."

Well, that was the last we saw him in the newspapers for some time. Of course, we heard that he had to get out of his car outside the district magistrate's court in Sultanpur and walk up to the office just as everybody else, to file his nomination papers. On February 2 had come Jagjivan Ram's resignation and that was that.

But habits die hard. On February 27 we find the following in the *Times of India*: "Mr Sanjay Gandhi

has asked the people to submit to him specific cases in which sterilisation was done by using coercive methods and assured them that stern action will be taken against officials responsible for it" (emphasis added).

Pray, who is he to take action against officials? One is reminded of what was heard from the press gallery in the Rajya Sabha on March 1:

"I do not name him. Everybody knows him. He has no status as a Minister. He lives in Delhi. He is not very old either. But on his advice Chief Ministers are thrown out" ECA?.....



A DATE WITH THE HANGMAN—I

No Way Out

By R. C. Thavarajah
Retd. Supt. Of Police

"YOU WILL HENCE BE TAKEN TO THE WELIKADA PRISON, COLOMBO AND WITHIN THE FOUR WALLS BE HANGED BY YOUR NECK UNTIL YOU BE DEAD. MAY GOD HAVE MERCY ON YOUR SOUL." To the man standing in the prisoners' dock, these words ominously pronounced in the sombre silence of the Supreme Court, Hultsdorp brought very little comfort. Before sentence of Death was passed when he was asked whether he had anything to say, he made a pathetic and desperate denial of his guilt. It was in vain. He was unceremoniously ushered out of the dock by the formidable Fiscal Guards into the "Black Maria".

That was thirty six years ago. Regi—I am using only a part of his first name in the most sincere hope of ensuring his anonymity—was employed as a fitter in the Boiler Section of a very important State Works Establishment at Rattmalana. He had a wife and four children to support. What he received as emoluments was not adequate to meet the demands of household necessities, school fees, books and clothing for the children. In dire need of cash to meet urgent expenses, he had joined a Cheetu Club. He requested the organiser to pay him the aggregate of the month's collection

These Cheetu Clubs have been in existence in our country for quite a long period. They appear to be a part and parcel of the 'special' economic system of this Island. Although Section 30 of the Cheetu Ordinance, Chapter 159 of the Legislative Enactments of Ceylon requires that these Societies be registered, the rule is observed more in the breach.

The organiser, also an employee of the same Establishment, was not quite straight in his managerial capacity. He had the uncanny habit of manipulating things to oblige a member who "saw" to his trouble. Regi pleaded with him and impressed on him the urgency of his need. He had tried begging of him for over three months. Finally, enraged, by the latter's brusque retort "Try and get it if you can", Regi plunged the kris knife, he was carrying concealed, into the man's chest. Death was almost instantaneous. No one had witnessed the stabbing. It was in the early hours of the morning. For some strange reason which he still cannot explain, Regi lifted the limp and life-less body and placed it at the door step of his own quarters which was some distance away. After that, he fled in the vain hope of escaping the Law.

Contrary to the popular belief that a criminal returns to the scene of his crime, Regi kept away from work and the Police. He sought shelter in his own native village. He could not conceal himself for long. Within a matter of nine hours, he was arrested. The Police officer making the arrest was one who knew his stuff. Although a superficial examination did not reveal anything incriminating, he got the suspect examined by the Judicial Medical Officer of the area. A thorough examination resulted in finding a trace of dried blood underneath the toe nail of one of his feet. Laboratory test by the Government Analyst who compared the scrapings from the suspect's toe nail and the sample of blood found at the scene of offence established the fact that both were the same blood group. Although Regi had taken the precaution to wash his body and legs, he had ignored the possibility of some tell-tale minute detail—a mistake which the criminal always makes. This evidence was the proverbial 'last nail'. It was the sheet-anchor of the case for the prosecution

which was built on a chain of circumstantial evidence.

There is a tendency, sometimes, for young and inexperienced officers to neglect getting suspects especially in investigating cases of murder, examined by a Medical Expert. The earlier Law—Section 149 of the Criminal Procedure Code provided for the Magistrate "to cause the person accused of Rape, Carnal Intercourse with a young girl, Un-natural Offence, or Hurt of a serious nature or Hurt whether serious or not alleged to have been caused by an instrument for stabbing or cutting to "forthwith be examined by a competent Medical Practitioner. The present Law, the Administration of Justice Law No. 44 of 1973 is not so restrictive. Section 71 (1) provides that when a Police Officer making an investigation considers that the examination of any person by a Medical Practitioner is necessary for the conduct of the investigation, he may, with the consent of such person, cause such person to be examined by a Medical Practitioner. The Medical Practitioner shall report to the Police Officer setting out the result of the examination. Sub-Section (2) provides that where any person does not consent to being examined, the Magistrate can order a Medical Practitioner to examine such person.

On the evidence available, Regi was indicted for Murder. The Trial by Jury was presided by His Lordship Justice Canekeratne in the Supreme Court of Colombo. The Jury returned an unanimous verdict of 'guilty'. Doomed to certain death, Regi found himself in the narrow confines of a small 'compartment' about six feet by four and a height just one or two feet above his head. Only a mat was provided. This item of "Luxury", unfortunately had been the habitat of a fairly thick population of the flat, ill-smelling, blood sucking members of the common form of existence with a marked and abundantly reproductive capacity. Sometimes, they have the rather ingenious ability to seek food and lodging in the furniture of waiting rooms of some Government Offices probably provided to dispel any possible soporific effect that may be induced on callers during the long wait. An enamel plate which had seen better days but certainly under the same environs was pushed through the very ner-

row gap between the floor and the locked door. It contained food Regis was in no mood to eat.

A merciless storm of myriad thoughts kept lashing venting its fury on his already depressed mind. A horrifying cacophony of hysterical shrieks, frenzied outbursts of revenge, some most plaintive pleadings for freedom, mingled with mournful wailings of the desperate in Death Row filled the air with an agonising din. Regi tried to close his eyes and ears. The efforts proved abortive. From outside, the shadows of the Night were penetrating menacingly into the eerie loneliness of his cell. The crows were noisily fluttering and settling down for the nocturnal perch on the dark tree tops. In the complex tangle of confused thought, Regi seemed to experience the strange macabre feeling of vultures swooping greedily on human carnage. The hours passed quickly with unrelenting certainty, ruthlessly whittling down the very brief span of life for the man condemned to die.

REGI was not a literary giant versed in Western classics. He was not one of those who could use his intellectual causticity to garrotte or guillotine critics who dared to express contrary views. He had not been to prestigious Halls of learning like Oxford or Cambridge, either on his own merit or through the "right connections". He could not, therefore, like Doctor Faustus in Christopher Marlowe's "mighty drama" translated from Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe's Faust, "universally considered most profound and most representative expression of the German mind, try to abate the excessive speed of Time by pleading, "Lente, Lente currite equor Noctis"—Slowly, Slowly, run ye horses of the Night. Instead, in the sterile silence of the night, the cruel hand of introspection and the abject misery of his plight kept prodding him—unmitigatingly reminding him of his guilt. He felt the urge to scream insanely.

The dawn of the next day began to break. Feelings of incarceration were accentuated. His only thought was of his poor wife and the children. He wept bitterly as he realised the dismal future that inexorably faced them—A helpless widow burdened with children who would be the offsprings of a man

hanged for murder! "Open the door and set me free" he cried out loud as he banged his hands on the door with all the strength he could muster. The only response was the echo of the sonorous rattle of the strong iron door and the resounding rumble of his own heart throbbing away in the quietness of the short hours of the morning.

A few more days to live! He could not say "Give me Liberty or give me Death". There was not even the remotest possibility of escape. The thick strong rope of the hangman was there to give him death. In that helpless state of enervation, he managed to kneel down. He prayed and prayed long—pouring out his contrite heart in the most fervent appeal to God for help.

As if in response to his most penitent yearning, a faint glimmer of hope appeared. He was told that an appeal to the Court of Criminal Appeal had been submitted. The information was conveyed by a close relative through the thick strong wire mesh designed to prevent poison or weapons for suicide being introduced secretly. The messenger saw suspense, fear, and anguish almost indelibly furrowed into Regi's brow. His eyes appeared to be deep unfathomable wells that spoke a thousand thoughts though not a word was said.

The Appeal Court dismissed the Appeal and affirmed the sentence of death. Their Lordships who heard the Appeal could not find any reason to vary the order of the Trial Judge. The charge to the Jury had been meticulous. It was faultless. There was neither a single misdirection nor a mis-statement. Crushed by the result of the Appeal, Regi sank back again to the abyss of despair. The frigid, clammy shroud of Death seemed to strangle him apathetically. As the last ray of hope vanished, he saw the prison guard approaching him in a slow measured tread. His countenance assumed a combination of the Mephistophelean visage and the cold eyes of a Mediaeval inquisitor. He measured Regi's height, recorded his body weight and noted tattoo marks, birth marks etc—all sinister and brutal forebodings of that Fatal hour to come. The marks of identification are recorded to ensure that the wrong man is not hanged. The height and body weight are obtained

because, in the past, there had been instances of the rope snapping. A friend of mine, Mr. Joe Vanderstraaten, who is an avid reader and keenly interested in legal matters had given me a copy of the SUN WEEK END of 5th March, 1972. 'SHANKAR', in his most interesting article entitled "How to Cheat the Hangman", refers to such cases and efficient lawyers contending that the sentence meant only one hanging. The writer adds that the practice now is try the rope before the day of the execution and ascertain its capacity to "take the strain."

An energetic pair of Roman Catholic Priests, one a French Priest and the other a Sri Lankan of the local Parish set about their task with quiet efficiency but with most commendable promptitude and dedication. Truly, they belonged to that genre of the Clergy who are positively dynamic in their mission to serve God and man. They certainly did not confine their sacerdotal duties only to the mechanical repetition of rituals, ceremonies, sermons and Litanies. With the assistance of His Lordship the Archbishop of Colombo, they made an Appeal to His Excellency, the Governor-General for the grant of a reprieve. There was provision for this even in the earlier Constitution. The present position is set out in Section 22 (2) (c) of the Constitution of the Republic of Sri Lanka which provides "that where any offender shall have been condemned to suffer death by the sentence of any Court the President shall cause a Report to be made to him by the Judge who tried the case and shall forward such report to the Attorney-General with instructions that after the A.G. has advised thence the Appeal shall be sent together with the Attorney-General's advice to the Minister whose function it is to advise the President on the exercise of the said powers."

Percy Bysshe Shelley wrote:—

"To suffer woes which HOPE thinks infinite?

To forgive wrongs darker than death or night;

To defy Power which seems omnipotent;

To love and bear, to HOPE till hope creates

From its own WRECK the thing it contemplates:....."

It was a complete physical and mental WRECK that knelt down feebly and prayed once more with devout faith clinging resolutely to the flying hours

(To be Continued)

IN A TEA ESTATE—20

Every Day.....

By Ina Trimmer

BRAE woke every morning to the sound of a horn that reverberated down the narrow cleft of the valley. At each blast blown in our back garden, the answer was returned clearly and faithfully by the waiting hills. It called the "coolies" to work at 7 o'clock in the morning. At noon it announced the hour set apart for lunch. At four o'clock in the afternoon the workers were called back to the muster ground from where they had dispersed in the morning each to his set task.

When we were in the Little Bungalow I always heard the Tappoo. What a contrast in the two calls. The horn, harsh and blaring smote sleeping ears with rude command. The Tappoo, quite as insistent but with joyous rhythm. It seemed to say—"wake up and get going. For Time is flying. Time is flying." The little drum on which the tappoo is played gave forth not a call to work, but an invitation to the dance.

I had misgivings when I knew I would live on Brae. I was leaving the old way for a strange new road, turning my back on paths I had known since childhood, I who had never left the amenities of a town, had shopped and marketed from day to day, whose servants usually amounted to a mere three or four if we kept a chauffeur. There was always a woman servant to attend to personal requirements. But now it was all different. I was surrounded by men on every side. I saw and sometimes met the two clerks, the conductors, the dispenser, but never their wives, and the servants were all men.

I was horrified at first when a man servant entered the bedroom every morning with our bed side tea, swung the mosquito

curtain back while I still slept and woke me with a soft 'Lady'. But I soon got used to being attended only by men, to tackle recalcitrant cooks and their lazy mates as their helpers are called, to see that the house coolly polished among other things, the wooden floors, and the 'head boy' was not too spooty to work.

We always carried a large stock of food in the store room. Beef box day was once a week but we had to be prepared for unexpected guests who would always have to stay at least a night. We never had the pleasure at Brae of inviting anyone to a meal. It just could not be done because of the distance. On the day I first came to Brae we bought a prodigious quantity of food, just as we did later whenever we returned home after a trip to the outside world.

The beef box came from Kandy, our nearest big town where we had an account with the Cross Stores who were beef box suppliers. There is a traditional style for a beef box, a zinc case 2½ x 1, 1½ ft. x 1 ft., banded with heavy strips of wood. Anywhere up-country these boxes can be seen, carried on the coolies' heads, each estate home depending on the contents for a week's sustenance. The quantity of stuff, a beef box can hold is amazing—several pounds of meat, and fish, tinned food, butter, fruit, every imaginable commodity for daily house-keeping. Our's brought vegetables too, because it was impossible to grow any on Brae owing to the heavy winds that smote it during the South-west Monsoon. Our bread was usually made at home or brought at the little kadde next to the Post Office in Madukelle thirteen miles away and brought by the tappal cooly when he went every morning with our letters.

Thirteen miles he went and thirteen miles he returned, every day in good or bad weather—mostly bad—over hill and dale. He would repudiate the very suggestion that he should do some other job that would not entail such arduous labour. In spite of his thin, spindly legs, and emancipated undersized frame he covered those twenty six rough hard miles in less than six hours. We usually received our letters and newspapers of the previous day by 3 p.m.

We had a succession of cooks at Brae. Life on the lonely estate did not suit most of them, so they came and went; all except Arumugan who was born there, grew up with the old Scotsman's children and was taught to cook by the old gentleman's wife. Arumugan was not our regular servant but he came in during interregnums to help out. He was certainly a good cook as well as an accomplished mattress-maker thanks to Mr. Briggs. It would not be easy to beat Arumugan's pastry. His chicken pie with puff pastry was something to dream about.

Kandasamy stayed with us longest. He was a funny little man who always called me 'Muddum' very truculent in the kitchen, a positive martinet with his 'matey' whom he sometimes frightened with an upraised knife. But everyone knew it was all due to his henpecked state. His wife was a true virago and he lived in constant fear of her whether it was in the lines below our bungalow or even in our kitchen where he vented his unsatisfied spleen on the other servants. He began every sentence with 'Ahntha' which as far as I knew meant merely 'there'. "Ahntha, when I going home today Muddum my wife one mad dog." On my inquiring what caused this strange metamorphosis he looked abashed. 'Ahntha, she very jealous woman. Tore my shirt and pulled the hair because I little talking to horsekeeper's wife.'

KANDASAMY was a really excellent cook. His Yorkshire Pudding left nothing to be desired, his hamburgers were worthy of any American home, his rice and curry better than any cookwoman's but he had a speciality of his own that I invented for him—'Brae Rotis'. They were evolved from the ordinary variety and to differentiate them we tacked on 'Brae'. They have been tried out even in England, and found good. A pound of flour makes about twenty five Brae Rotis, each about three inches in diameter. Here are the vital statistics. To a pound of flour already sifted with a little salt, two teaspoons of baking powder and two of sugar add the whole of a large finely shredded coconut, mix well and roll out about a quarter of an inch thick. Cut into circles and fry a golden yellow or light brown in deep shortening of any kind. They can

be eaten hot and crisp with butter and jam or with sausages sambals or any other accompaniment you please. Delicious any way you like.

Recently I was given my own recipe by someone who told me I should try Brae Rotis because they are really nice. She would not believe me when I said they were my own invention and replied—"These are Brae Rotis and not any other kind."

Thus did our days pass, quiet and uneventful. It was a monotonous life and it made me think how little we knew of how the other man lies. We were completely dependent on each other for companionship. To realize the loneliness of estate life, particularly as it must be to a man who is unmarried, it is necessary to experience it. The hours are long after sundown, when work is over. When the lamps are lit, and there is not another glimmer anywhere to show there is a human habitation within miles; and one is alone. What is there to do? Read? Radio? Try it hour after hour, evening after evening. It is a never-ending cycle of loneliness. No wonder planters marry.



SAFARI

May 3—8

By Alkardi Mugana

May 3,

My destination seemed a long way away and I thought I would need an early start to get there, but with one thing happening after another as it always does, and always one more task to do, so that I might leave happily, I did not reach Colombo till 4.30 p.m. and learnt there that there was a connecting bus at nearly 7 p.m. This gave me the time that I wanted in Colombo. I missed the bus by five minutes, but a kindly time-keeper, as we call them in Ceylon, told me that the bus had some defect, and that if I hurried along to where this work was being done, I might catch the bus. I ran as best I could and caught the bus with more than enough to spare. A very drunk *mudalali* saw to it that I

had a seat and then ragged me unmercifully all the way. I am afraid I left him rather abruptly when I found a seat further forward. The conversation had begun with him wanting to know all about coconut planting from me, but I refused to be drawn into giving him any formulas about it. That human element?

May 4,

Some years ago I walked on to some land I knew, at Mahakandawara, from an unusual angle and saw someone whom I came to know much better later on. He was with his brother who came from the Ginigathena area. My first visit to his house miles away coincided with the anniversary of the return of an elder brother who had run away from home when this young man was too young to have any recollections of him and who had returned after thirteen years. My second visit was my present one, a year and half-a-month later, and, as before, I arrived at quite a late hour. I was received at once, and I was made welcome by everyone. The house is situated in a lonely place. The father of the man spoke to me today about old times, and of an English owner of an estate who sent his nephew, who had arrived to help him, packing without receiving him, as he had turned up five minutes late for lunch on the estate, five minutes late for this his first appointment and my informant approved of this display of discipline. The nephew had a name which was well known to me, although I do not think I do not remember ever meeting him, and so he must have made good later. My host told me that all the local English Planters had gone to Africa, to plant tea I suppose. It was short-sighted of all our governments not to foresee the end of such a development as regards our balance of payments

May 5,

This house has two of the finest little books in English that I have seen; one about Ceylon by a chap called Alfred Clark, first published in 1910, with a reprint, in 1923, and with eight fine illustrations, coloured photographs; and the other, with the first sixteen pages missing, but with stuff written by such people as Julian Huxley, John Galsworthy, J. B. Priestley, Hugh Walpole, R. L. Stevenson, and a host of unfamiliar names, most of it very good, indeed. The

two brothers in the house were becoming quite familiar with English. One of them was as much at home in the tops of tall trees as a *wanderoo* monkey, and the other confessed to trembling if he was faced with heights. I learnt in these parts what seems to be quite true, that it is almost impossible to get a government job, or any job remotely to do with government, without a letter from the local member of the National State Assembly, and that getting this depends largely on one's party affiliations. I also began to learn that whatever good reasons a man may have for staying at home, these no longer apply when there is the prospect of a good job even miles away, and that these jobs are sought and coveted. The absent members of the family, I was with, were scattered widely, and some of them were farmers.

May 6,

Up was I at 4 a.m. and I lit the lamp. Then into bed again and I kept dozing off for nearly an hour. Soon after 4.15 my friend got up. He had asked for the matches at four when I was struggling to get one lit. He got up, and as on every working day, he went into the kitchen to get food ready for his brother and him to take away as tiffin for their tents. They were off to work as soon as it was light enough to see their way, for their way began along a footpath across the brow of a hill, and they had two miles to go. I left when I was ready and had had some breakfast. At Avissawella I failed to get down and overshot it by ten miles. It was a fortunate mistake. I met a Dean of our Church and extolled the *Tribune*. I was able to visit a friend at Kahawatta during the fifteen minutes that the next long distance bus, I caught was there. He thought I had come to stay. On the bus was an acquaintances of a friend the friends I had just stayed with, and whose address I had been given. Then it was a case of over the pass that leads to Deniyaya, and a three mile walk to where I am now.

May 7,

The day has been so full, I feel I have been here two days, and yet nothing that has happened is of the sort I could readily describe. I could write more easily of what I read today. To quote words I would have to delve into the

LETTERS

• Mr. Kahawita And The Tamil

bottom of my pack and upset everything that is on top of the book. In an age other than *Anno Domini*, what I read might well have sounded like cannibalism, but this particular form of cannibalism, eating flesh and drinking blood, has been done by some of the most remarkable men that have lived for well or near two thousand years, just five hundred years short of when the Buddha lived, or a thousand years from when Hinduism probably came into existence, and from Abraham. Paul VI is one of the never recruits, if I may consider seventy years as just a year. The remarkable thing is that, initiated, eternal life depends on this particular cannibalism. This apart, there is nothing more wholesome, normal or same than the man whose flesh we eat. In a world where, according to the best authorities, nothing is as it used to be, this man, to me at least, towers as a bulwork.

May 8.

The best hour for scenery is before the sun is hot, and before dusk falls in what I think is usually described as the cool of the evening, and I must say that the scenery within three miles of Deniyaya is hard to beat. Allowing for a difference in vegetation and crops the scenery that I saw was quite like England at its best, the southern English countryside. There is something about the people, too. Some are almost coal-black, and these have almost to a man fine features and a good physique. The degree of pigmentation does not seem to run by families, as if it was something hereditary. Anybody who knows the area would think it odd if I did not mention that nearly everybody in the area is jewel-conscious. I do not know whether it is because of government policy about CRA-holders, or the chance, if one was bold enough to take it, of earning a quick lakh by one's own sweat and labour. I would not know as I have not known Deniyaya long.

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NEXT WEEK

- ① REVALUATION—
—Gimmick or Genuine?
- ① TOURISM
—Revaluation Pricks Bubble
- ① PRESIDENT CARTER'S
—Foreign Policy Morality
- ① CONFIDENTIALLY
—Dawasa

Sir.

The issue of the *Tribune* of March 19th, 1977, published a letter by one R. Kahawita of Colombo 3, under the title 'SIRIMAVO'S TALKS WITH TAMIL MP's'. As it is one of the most one-sided and prejudiced pieces of writing I have seen recently, it cannot be allowed to pass unnoticed.

Mr. Kahawita's basic argument is that the Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike, ignored the minorities (the Tamils in particular) all this time and now, at the tail end of her Government she is bargaining with them to keep herself in power. The recurring theme in his letter is that the Prime Minister needs the TULF to 'bolster' her numbers in the National State Assembly which presupposes the fact that she plans to carry on the NSA beyond May 22nd, 1977.

Let us now dispassionately, minus the bias in Mr. Kahawita's letter, observe the arguments one by one. Firstly, does the Prime Minister plan to extend the life of the NSA as pre-supposed by Mr. Kahawita? The Prime Minister has repeated time and time again that she will dissolve the NSA on May 22, 1977. She has matched her words with deeds by gearing entire administrative apparatus to the holding of a General Election this year and she has already picked most of her candidates as announced in the newspapers recently. So there is no reason to believe that she plans to postpone elections this year or any other year, moreover, why should she destroy the democratic process, because it was she who saved democracy in 1962 (during the abortive military coup d'etat) and in 1971 (during the insurgency) as admitted by Mr. J. R. Jayewardene himself. It is not imaginable that a person who saved democracy will destroy it.

Secondly, the NSA will meet for only three days before the date of dissolution. Mrs. Bandaranaike has a very comfortable majority over the United Opposition, in spite of the defections from her ranks.

If Mrs. Bandaranaike plans to hold elections, and the NSA meets for only three days, and she has a very comfortable majority still over the United Opposition why does she need the TULF or any else to 'bolster her ranks'?

Mr. Kahawita states that she ignored the Tamils all this while. This supposition too is incorrect. Mrs. Bandaranaike could not negotiate all this time with the Tamil leaders because they rigidly held the position that they will not talk to any party until they were given a separate state. Now they have considerably softened up on this rigid position and they have come to the Conference table with a much more flexible approach to the question of a separate state. Mrs. Bandaranaike has always said that she will not agree to a separate state and she has repeated this recently at the conference table. Therefore, there has been no sacrifice of principle on her part. Moreover she has sent nearly all her Ministers to the North constantly since 1970 and undertook herself a very successful tour of the Jaffna peninsula. So how can Mr. Kahawita say that she 'ignored' them?

Though Mr. Kahawita's political sympathies are obvious when he states that the people 'want a political change' and that the 'Sun is about to rise again in Sri Lanka', he cannot deliberately overlook the fact that the UNP not only ignored the Tamil problem but mislead them completely as stated recently by one of the leaders of the TULF.

Has Mr. Kahawita forgotten so soon that the late Mr. Dudley Senanayake coalesced with the Federal Party in 1965 after that General election, purely in order to form a Government as he did not have a clear majority? And that the FP left the so called 'National Government' a few years later only because the UNP did nothing to solve the problems of the Tamils? If Mr. Kahawita is so concerned about the minorities he should have given a more balanced picture of the situation.

Mr. Kahawita would do well to read a recent statement made by the leaders of the TULF where they stated that they have been misled by the UNP and that they have always known their position vis a vis the SLFP, and that is precisely why they have chosen to talk with the Prime Minister, in

spite of the protestations of the UNP.

Some of the other remarks made by Mr. Kahawita on the Prime Minister better be left alone as they are made with bitterness sans logic. Mr. Editor I hope you will publish my letter as you published Mr. Kahawita's views on the matter.

Radhan Rajaratnam

5/1, Arethusa Lane,
Wellawatte.
20.3.1977

• Dr. Kovoor

Sir,

Among the millions of God-believers all over the world, they all come to seek the favour of their Lord in His house of prayer. Some approach Him casually. Some come to His house of prayer in rich attire. Some come in rags. Some kneel in prayer, some stand with their heads bowed down in prayer. Some prostrate themselves in total surrender at the feet of their Lord. And some open their mouths wide and loud to sing the praises of the Lord. Amidst this wide variety of men, women and children who come to the House of Prayer to commune with their God, a learned rationalist doctor in our country while challenging the existence of God, wants some one to show him where God exists.

Surely have we not heard times without number our saints and sages of ancient yore proclaim that "God is Truth and Thou are that. Search for that Truth in you and realise for thyself. That will make thee free." So then why this vain struggle to get some one to prove if God exists or not. Is it not time now the learned doctor strived on his own to search for the 'Truth' embedded in him and awaiting to be realised by himself. For it is said God reveals Himself to the humble and hides His readily available Grace from the highly learned and curious minds.

N. Sri Kantha

Alwis Town,
Hendala.
12.3.77

• Jesus And Politics

Sir,

Contrary to what Inna says in the *Tribune* of 19.3.77 "some people are saying that Jesus had nothing to do with politics" are correct and not wrong or misinformed. The life and teaching of Jesus as described in the gospel are most lucid and intelligible, and they need no interpretation or annotation by so called theologians and clergy.

Every incident referred to by Inna supports what he calls "some peoples" views. Pontius Pilate, the Roman Governor, before whom Jesus was sent for trial arrived at the same conclusion despite the fact that he feared to displease the people. Even if Crucifixion was the Roman penalty for rebellion Jesus was handed over to the crucified not for any fault of his own but at the express demand of his accusers, the Jewish priests, the scribes and their stooges who were present at the trial in place of another condemned person whom they asked to be released in order to revenge themselves on one who in no uncertain terms condemned priest craft.

It is preposterous as well as foolish to say that the clergy should be interested or participate in politics merely on the pretext that Jesus did so. At a dinner party Charles Lamb, the famous essayist, was requested by the 'hostess to say grace before dinner. Charles Lenii imperturbably looked round the dinner table at the faces of those present, then closed his eyes and mumbled "is there no clergyman here? Thank God!"

Similarly readers of Inna's article in the *Tribune* will pray "From witch craft as well as priest craft good Lord deliver us."

R. W. Wikramanayake

Mt. Lavinia.
22.3.77

BOOK REVIEW

Sevaka Sevana

To those who believed that a new order, a better order is needed for the advancement of any country, can be on the triangular "basis"

of 'Religio Socio-Scientific' ideas and programmes, cannot find a more inspiring, thought provoking publications, than these published under the title "SEVAKA SEVANA."

The Editor of these interesting Booklets is the Rev. Fr. Michael P. Rodrigo. The first publication was for the year 1975, and the second for the year 1976. Every articles in these Bulletins are stupendous and soul stirring.

SEVAKA SEVANA, the Ministries School or new-type of seminary of Bishop Leo and the new Diocese of Uva (Badulla) has published its second volume. Most of the articles are manifestly an understanding on what lies beyond the ritual, which without real life becomes a soulless shell. Self-Sacrifice has been detected as the basic ground of meeting among all religions. Four sevakas have written on Self-sacrifice, serving Uva by new Ministries, Ecumenism, in Action; and sharing in relation to Bana-Picit, and the Eucharist.

An article on Fears and Hopes in Uva sustains one's interest, and a thought provoking article on Eucharist without Bread and Wine by Dominican priest ends the stimulating series.

The 90 pages keep one interested all the time. The 1975 publication carried articles on a background of Uva. In volume 2, almost as if to present the basic thrust of Sevaka Sevana-Inter-Faith dialogue and togetherness in action for Social Justice—Haj. M. A. A. Raschid offers a most thought-stimulating article on Selflessness as a Buddhism's necessary role on other Religions.

While perusing these Bulletins one feels that the leaven is in the dough. Perhaps this was why, I was told by a friend that Rome sent a happy encomium to the 1 volume 1975, "this is the first time that the clergy of Sri Lanka have done such serious theological reflexion on their country."

The sound ideas, the style of writing are the pride of the various writers who figure in these articles. These Booklets (Bulletins No. 1 and 2) can be had, from SEVAKA SEVANA" Senanayake Mawatha Bandarawela Rs. 2/50 and Rs. 3/- respectively.

A. S. C. Knight

Confidentially

• Corruption—2

IS IT NOT A FACT that last week this column had not completed its notes on the peccadillos of purchasing officers of government agencies like the Marketing Department and the Paddy Marketing Board? That under cover of safeguarding the interests of the state the worst forms of corruption have become endemic among officials charged with purchasing produce from farmers? That several readers of *Tribune* have described their experiences at centres where, for instance, black gram is now being purchased at the floor price of Rs. 2.50 a lb? That the official, (usually an appointee of the Political Authority), throws a fit when a farmer brings what would be considered "normal" and "average" quality black gram? That the official shouts and rants that the stuff was below grade and that it was full of dirt, stones and the like? That the farmer is asked to take the stuff back and winnow the same and bring it back after cleaning further? That one in a hundred farmers does this and sells his super grade number one quality at the floor price for the average quality (Rs. 2.50)? That this excellent black gram, when mixed with poor quality black gram, will improve the latter's grade? That whilst one out of every hundred farmers has the time, energy and patience to separate his best to sell to the Government, ninety-nine farmers take the path of least resistance and sell their produce to middle men and brokers (not the old mudalalis alone) who are in now the Camp of the political authority or the MPs of the ruling party? That these middle-men (not the traditional merchants but the new breed of political stooges who are "in business") buy the black gram at prices ranging from Rs. 1.90 to Rs. 2.10? That these gentlemen have set up purchasing centres not far from the government depots? That PMB, MPCs, APC buying officers promptly take over these stocks from the middlemen (who publicly swear by the ruling party and decry it in private) at the floor price of Rs. 2.50?

That the very same sacks of black gram which had been rejected a few minutes earlier when brought by the actual producer is accepted as satisfactory from the political brokers at Rs. 2.50? That these middlemen, brought into being by the state capitalist economic policies (which have been masqueraded as "socialist"), make on an average 0/50 cents or more on a pound? That the only reason why they are able to make this money is the political patronage they receive from the MP or Political Authority in the area? That the minor officials are willing to do anything for these brokers not only because the brokers give them a small "cut" from the proceeds of this kind of highway robbery but they are also excellent contact men to be in touch with if the purchasing officers get in any "trouble"? That this is how the circle of corruption is maintained? IS IT ALSO NOT A FACT that corruption in the higher echelons of the Corporation World has reached Watergate levels? That the newspapers had made a sizeable story about the fact that Mr. Anura Weeraratne, described as the wizard who had effected miracles in industrial development and production, has been held for questioning with two others for large-scale corruption in foreign exchange? That it would be unfair to make any comments (even within legally permissible limits) while the investigations are still under way? That it would be however pertinent to point out that ever since Independence there have been many meteors and shooting stars who had been on top of Sri Lanka only to fade away in disgrace? That one outstanding example was Sir Oliver Goonetilleke? That *Tribune*, ever since its inception, had pointed that the Oliver Goonetilleke philosophy of making a virtue of the tricky art of making quick money—either at the races, or smuggling or in other shady deals—had laid the foundation for the growth of corruption in this country? That Oliver Goonetilleke's logic and techniques of getting to the top and making quick money had become accepted as a way of life in Sri Lanka in the forties and fifties—and this is no doubt one cause for the proliferation of corruption in the sixties and seventies? That whilst Sir Oliver held sway in the highest levels of Governmental power,

Ceylon had produced other wizards like Em. Saundranayagam who took top honours in the world of international crime? That lesser Olivers and Emils have flourished since the fifties and in recent times they have flourished under the benign patronage of politically powerful men? That to every Thaha and Farook Sally charged before the Criminal Justice Commission there were many who have gone scot-free? That it is said that the investigation into the affairs of Anura Weeraratne and Ivor Patternot had stamped several persons in the top brackets to take trips abroad presumably for health check-ups? That a new mystery had come into the picture with Food Commissioner M. B. Senanayake not only resigning his job but also departing from the island in the most inexplicable manner to take up a job in a private firm abroad? That readers will recall that *Tribune* on several occasions had stated that the Government, the Establishment and the Administration were sitting on top of a volcano of corruption that was ready to burst open any time? That in recent months many small volcanoes have begun to explode in Sri Lanka? That a vast earthquake (now earthquakes are in fashion in the world) will throw up the corruption that has eaten into the vitals of the Ceylonese nation? That something is fundamentally wrong with our body politic if a leading and powerful politician thinks nothing of seducing the young wife of an insurgent in detention when she goes to the politician for redress and justice for the many bureaucratic wrongs done to her? That President Carter has insisted on a new morality in American policies and administration? That something like that has to develop in Sri Lanka if a beginning is to be made in the matter of cleaning up the Augean stables of corruption? That the selling of textiles short of length is only a minor evil compared to other grave crimes against the people through corrupt acts?



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