

TRIBUNE

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ON FOOD

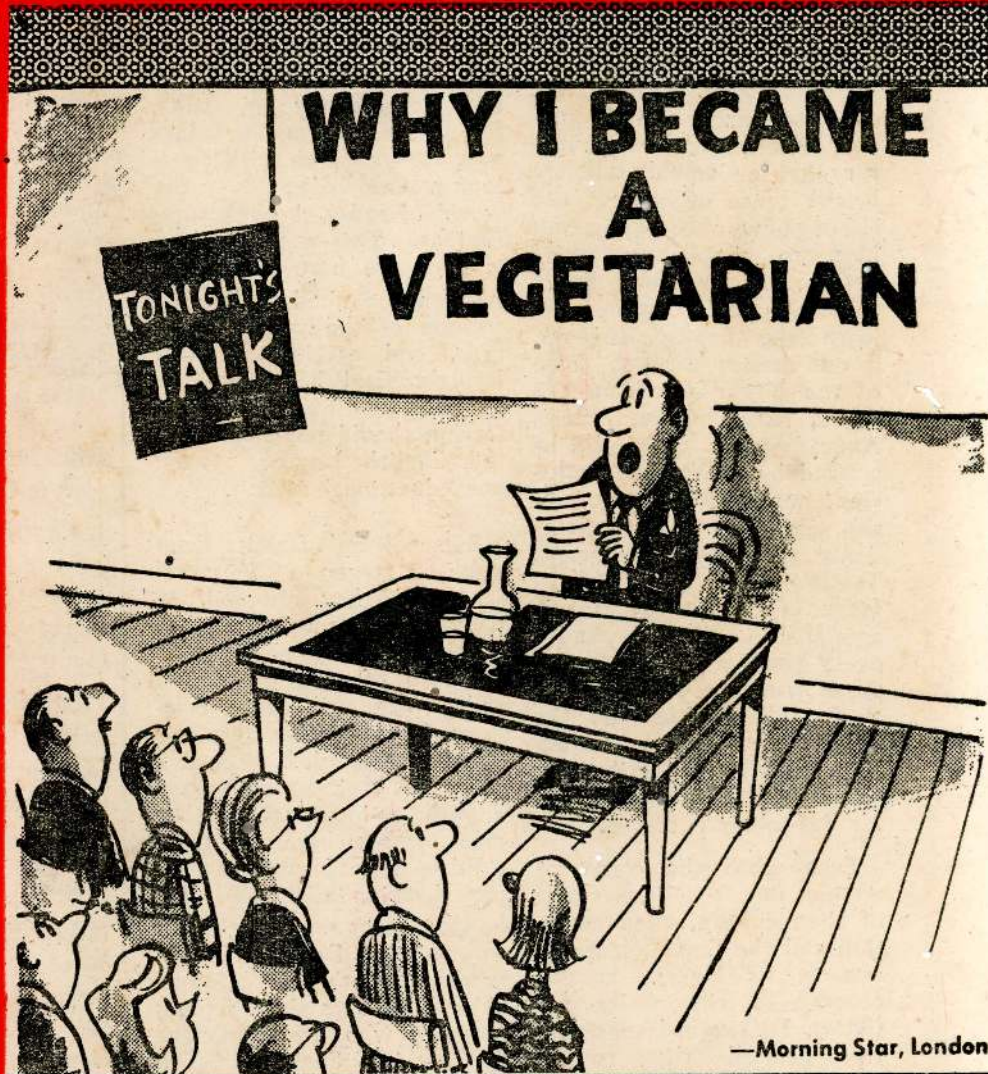
BRIBERY,
FOREIGN
EXCHANGE

DOCTOR'S
PRESCRIPTION

SOCIALISM &
SUBSIDIES

SAFARI

SMUGGLED
CHILLIES,
MILK BOARD
PURCHASES



—Morning Star, London

"First beef went up . . . then pork went up . . . then lamb went up . . . then chicken went up . . ."

Tribunania

ON FOOD

ON THE COVER this time we have a cartoon from a British paper. With our current Sri Lankan penchant for "taking over" anything and everything, we need not make any apologies for taking over this cartoon. It is typically British, with what literary critics would call the British sense of humour, and although we are doing our best to forget everything British, we now have begun to admit openly that we must learn the English language. If one passes through some of the bigger towns in the island, Kandy, Galle, Matara, Anuradhapura, one will be amazed by the "private tutors" which are engaged in the sole job of teaching students the English language. Teachers with a fair knowledge of the English language are in great demand—every graduate from our campuses wants to be proficient in English and they do not mind taking private tuition from a good tutor to be able to use the English language for day-to-day purposes.

Even when the craze for wiping out the last traces of alien culture, alien education and the English language was at its highest in this country—in the fifties and sixties, *Tribune* had consistently pointed that to cut ourselves from a world language like English would be worse than cultural suicide. We have been proved

correct, and we now have a generation of young people out of our educational institutions who have not acquired the capacity to communicate in any language. Some of them may be experts in Sinhala or in Tamil, but with only the limited number of books available to them in these two languages they have nothing to say because they know so little or even nothing at all. It is humanly and economically impossible for any of the smaller languages to keep pace with developing knowledge in the world of today through translations. That was why (and is why) we have always advocated the need to be tied to one of the world languages, and as history had brought English to us, we have said that it was best that Ceylon should not throw out the English language from our educational system.

But political fanatics who came to power in this country, (and they are still in power), decreed that English should be taboo because it savoured of something alien and, worse still, of imperialism. These fanatics have not openly retracted, but secretly some of their tribe want English re-introduced (but most of them have sent their children abroad to get a proper education in English). Now hesitant steps are being taken to re-teach English in our schools, but there are formidable difficulties about finding teachers who are proficient in teaching English. The British Council endeavours to help; but our educational system is in such a morass that there is very little the

British Council can do to pull the Mahmud *cum* Udagama (pickled with *acharu* from the free-education of Kannangara coupled with the anti-alien hysteria of Dahanayake) chestnuts out of the fire. While the mess in our schools increase day by day (the children are now only fit to march in Republic Day parades), hundreds and thousands of students are seeking private tuition to learn English. Part of the increased sales of *Tribune* is based on the demand from students and public servants who want "to learn English."

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HAVING explained why *Tribune* has no inhibitions about "taking over" from the English (we prefer to do this in preference to taking over English-owned estates which we are not yet in a position to manage), we will come to the cartoon itself. In a sense it lends support to the pundits and politicians of the United Front who now blame world prices for all the current ills of Sri Lanka. This is better than blaming the UNP, (as the UF still does) or the Marxists (as the UNP had done earlier).

World prices have certainly added to the problems Governments had to cope with, but when governments did not do what they had to do, world prices have created greater distress. This is especially so in this country. This is one of the few countries in the world which can be entirely self-sufficient in food: grains and cereals, lentils, meat, fish, eggs, fruits, milk—everything in fact to keep make people healthy and happy.

True enough, British imperialism had made the economy lop-sided with a monoculture in agriculture, viz. with export plantation crops, but this country has enjoyed self-government from the year 1930 (from the days of the Donoughmore Constitution). Furthermore, from 1948 we were free under UNP aegis, but from 1956 we have had the blessings of the magic of the package known as the Bandaranaike policies, except for a short spell between 1965 and 1970 when we reverted to the Senanayake package. After 40 years of

self-rule, we are far from being self-sufficient, and because we have no more money (we have squandered our inheritance on a mess of pottage) to import food, we are faced with starvation. We have had plans galore (as we have had them for the last forty years) to develop agriculture and grow more food, but nothing has come of them. Our population has kept increasing, but not our agriculture (not in proportion however to our population increase). We now have land ceilings, income ceilings and what-have-you—to increase production and productivity *a la Kobbekaduwa*—but the people of Sri Lanka will soon realise that the fate which has overtaken the Kobbekaduwa Milk Board will soon overtake the whole of agriculture. It is now admitted that the paddy targets set out by the Ministry of Agriculture and the Paddy Marketing Board have not been attained—*Tribune* has been persistently predicting this for the last 18 months.

In Great Britain, as the cartoon points out, a person has a chance of at least becoming a vegetarian because the price of beef, pork, lamb and chicken has gone up. In the past, beef was the cheapest of the meats in Ceylon: today pork is the cheapest, but the prices of all four have gone on increasing that most people find it extremely difficult, if not impossible, to buy any kind of meat. Fish too has hit the ceiling, and eggs are daily going up in price. Milk products have already reached dizzy heights and cheese

is something unknown in this country. All the expensive cows we have imported to improve our stock have proved useless and many of them had died owing to neglect and bad maintenance.

In England, it is yet possible to be a vegetarian: cheese, vegetables, lentils and other proteins are still available at reasonable prices. But in a cold and temperate climate, with meat-eating food habits, to be a vegetarian is difficult. It is austerity with a vengeance. It is the worst punishment which can be inflicted upon a human being.

But in Sri Lanka, in the hot and humid climate, one can be a vegetarian and yet be healthy—as long as we got our proteins and other essentials, viz. dhals, milk products, fruits and the like. But its just these we lack today.



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RAMBLING NOTES

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Bribery, Foreign Exchange, Food

SRI LANKA seems to be blessed with many mini-Watergates and also a whole heap of potential big Watergates. One senior police officer of the rank of ASP has been "trapped" into accepting an alleged bribe from persons said to be smugglers and kasippu kings; another police officer of similar rank in the metropolis is alleged to have been in an import racket in the wake of the 1971 insurgency.

We don't seem to know how to grow lentils. We have made a mess of our dairy industry in spite of the heavy investments we have made during the last 40 years. Fruits are becoming unobtainable—they are being swallowed up by our tourists who get our rupees at FEECs rates.

This is the sad plight in which we find ourselves. The cartoon depicts the plight of the Englishman who has to become a vegetarian. In this country, such humour is not possible. In Sri Lanka today, we can neither be meat-eater: nor vegetarians with any degree of satisfaction. Meat has become too expensive and there are insufficient proteins to sustain healthy life on a vegetarian diet.

This is something for the Government to think about.

These are only straws in the wind.

There are some who say that even the officers of the Bribery Commissioners' Office should be investigated: that if one knew the ropes and the methodology it would be possible to lay traps for innocent officials and plant the necessary "evidence" upon them to bring a charge against them. Underworld gossip has it that there are officials in the middle and lower ranks, anxious to get detections and convictions, who are susceptible to various pressures to induce them to lay traps. Many cases have come up in our courts where the evidence of officers of the BCD (Bribery Commissioners' Department) has not been accepted: in fact, they were disbelieved.

What is reprehensible is when the BCD is made a tool in the hands of the political party in power. The UNP is known to have abused their power by utilising the BCD for party ends. Can the UF claim that its hands are clean in this respect? The present chief of the BCD is known to be upright and principled, but he has to depend on the "reports" of many subordinates—some of whom are not above doing a little "cooking" of evidence and reports to demonstrate their "efficiency" — stemming either from their diligence or from promptings of a corrupt nature.

At least, the BCD is now going all out for some bigger fish irrespective of their family connections and political affiliations. It is known that some of those who have been "trapped" recently are well connected by UF standards. Knowledgeable

circles are keeping a vigilant eye to see what will happen to some of those who have been "trapped".

To "trap" a suspect through a decoy is about the worst possible way to detect a crime—if bribery can be considered a crime at a time at all when it is the prevailing philosophy of the land. Only the man who receives "cash" as a bribe is "trapped", charged and penalised. But there are so many other forms of bribery, especially in the firmament of politics, that do not come within any definition of bribery in the penal code or any other legislation. But there are others which fall within the scope of such definitions, but politicians go scot-free.

The Milk Board scandal threatens to develop into a mini - Watergate and it will be interesting to see how the leader of the Opposition, Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, will handle it. If he plays his cards well, the stink which now envelops the Milk Board will mushroom into a major explosion of H-bomb magnitude. It is loaded with many megatons of explosive material. It will be also even more interesting to see whether the UF will attempt to whitewash the whole thing. In the past the LSSP, CP and even the SLFP at times, had specialised in exposing scandals of this kind. This time they stand at the wrong end of the stick? Will they act against their own loyalists if it is shown that they have either been corrupt or have been guilty of a major default of duty.

WITH THE SCANDALS mounting up day by day the Government has still to

do something about the distressing situation in the economic sphere. Minister T.B. Illangaratne has, in recent times, been one of the most outspoken among the Ministers depicting the true and sad state of affairs prevalent in Sri Lanka.

In a recent speech, he pointed out that with a foreign exchange deficit of Rs. 1,050 million, the Government was in a real quandary. This "confession" he is said to have made at a meeting of the Government Parliamentary Party on June 5. This is how the *Daily Mirror* reported the meeting. "Mr. Illangaratne was replying to criticisms levelled against the Government by its backbenchers in regard to the ever-increasing living costs, price hikes in milk foods, etc. He was in fact meeting these criticisms in the absence of the Minister of Finance, Dr. N. M. Perera who arrived sometime later. The Trade Minister explained that the earnings of the Government for this year was around Rs. 2,200 million while the amount needed for importing essential consumer items, raw materials for industries etc., cost about Rs. 2,750 million. To add to the bargain he pointed out, that the servicing of foreign debts, too, needed an extra Rs. 500 million.

"He submitted that as a result Sri Lanka was almost Rs. 1,050 million in the red. This is the deficit that is worrying the Cabinet and to which we have been addressing our minds most seriously, he added. He also asked what else the Government could do in the face of this mounting deficit.

"The backbenchers who were very critical of governmental activity urged that immediate steps be taken to implement the progressive legislation already passed by the National State Assembly. Their main grouse was that the people have not felt the impact of such measures like land reforms, ceiling on incomes, ceiling on housing etc., They requested the Government to take immediate steps to decentralise the administration and budgetary expenditure. They also wanted a complete overhaul of the existing bureaucratic machinery."

BUT EVEN more difficult is the rice situation. The Paddy Marketing Board now seems to have set a modest target of 24 million bushels for the last Maha, and of this only 16 million bushels seems to have been collected so far. There was a time not so long ago when the Ministry of Agriculture spoke about collecting 50 odd million bushels: then it came down to 46 millions, and then it suddenly dropped to 24 millions. But the actual collection will not probably go beyond 16 million. And we are already on the threshold of the Yala crop.

To overcome this shortfall and decreasing production, the Government — no doubt prompted by the Ministry of Agriculture with its allegedly near-genius prodigy of a Permanent Secretary, Mahinda Silva, has fallen upon a new method of inducing production: ENFORCED CULTIVATION BY GAZETTE NOTIFICATION. Already there is a gazette notification under the Emer-

gency Regulations which has laid that idle lands would be handed over to those willing to cultivate and that Competent Authorities would be appointed for every area to make people know what they should grow and what they should not.

It will be real fun when the Competent Authority in each area gets going. He will probably have to get the Army to enforce his orders, but who will check whether the man asked to grow yams has planted manioc instead.

NOT MANY people seem to realise that the shortage of rice is worldwide. The decline in the production of rice in almost all rice producing countries in the last two years has undoubtedly created problems both for the producing as well as consuming countries. While the former, except for a few developed ones among them for whom rice is not a major export earner, are faced with balance of payments difficulties, the latter have to pay a high price for their rice imports. It is, therefore, only proper that the international community should be agitated about it, and the Food and Agricultural Organization, as the competent authority, should be engaged in holding consultations on its consequences. The meeting of its inter-governmental group on rice, which opened in New Delhi some weeks ago, evidently assumes some importance in this context.

But what can this meeting or others that the FAO might hold to consider these problems achieve except in pooling and disseminating some infor-

mation on research in developing better, high yielding varieties of the cereal? The developed rice-producing countries have little interest in undertaking any international action to stabilize rice prices and ensure its adequate supplies to needy nations. Their interest, if at all, is in exploiting every situation to their advantage. While a scarcity prompts them to raise the price of their cereal and also use it to extract economic and even political concessions from the importing countries, a good crop finds them unloading their supplies in even the traditional markets of developing rice-producing countries. In either case the losers are the developing countries, both rice exporting and importing as Burma and Thailand among the former and Sri Lanka and India among the latter know to their cost. It would have been the same in wheat, if most of the countries exporting it had not belonged to the developed world. The FAO, with all its concern for safeguarding the interests of all nations, can hardly change this situation. It can at best help in focussing attention on its unwholesome aspects, as it has been dutifully doing in respect of almost all major agricultural commodities.

Yet, the situation is not irremediable if the developing countries can help each other and act in concert to defeat the game of the developed countries. There is enough scope for absorption of their rice surpluses in the developing world itself, and it should not be difficult for them to work out suitable arrangements for trade on barter or any other

mutually advantageous basis. They can also easily cooperate in research to increase the yield as some of them are already doing. "World Food Security" on which the representative of the FAO Director General rightly laid stress at the New Delhi meeting, has relevance only for the developing countries and they should also be the most concerned about providing it unto themselves.

A NEWS AGENCY, writing from New York, summed up the difficult food problem: "Many of the world's underdeveloped countries spread throughout the four continents are facing serious food shortages caused by an unprecedented series of droughts. Most of the world's more extreme climatic zones face droughts—and occasionally flooding—from time to time. But this year freak weather conditions have coincided in widely separated parts of the globe, ruining already inadequate agriculture and stretching relief reserves to the limit.

"Millions of people are going hungry as a result of droughts in central America, Africa and in India and some other countries of Asia. Even Cyprus, in the Mediterranean, is experiencing its lowest rainfall for 80 years and the winter grain crop has failed almost completely. This comes after food production per head fell for the second successive year in the developing regions of the world. Production of food rose by 1 per cent in 1972, but the population rose by 4 percent.

"This means that in many countries—with the hottest summer months still to come—there is simply not enough food to go round. In India one of the worst droughts for years has so far effected about 200 million people — slightly less than the entire population of the United States. The Government has had to rush grains by special trains to relieve the situation in the western States of Maharashtra. Reserve stocks of grain built up in years of good harvests are virtually exhausted, and the outlook for the summer months is grim.

"In the neighbouring Himalayan kingdom of Nepal, British Royal Air Force transports have just finished dropping nearly 2,000 tons of food into famine-hit areas which have had two bad crop years.

"India's southern neighbour Sri Lanka rarley suffers from the crippling droughts which plague India, but nevertheless was hit by the failure of last year's spring monsoon.

"Further to the east, Indonesia is only just beginning to recover from the effects of a drought which persisted through the last six months of last year.

"Central America's worst drought in 30 years has caused total crop damage estimated at 100 million dollars (about Rs. 73 crores) and has provoked a state of emergency in Costa Rica and Honduras.

"The largest area hit by this year's rash of world-wide droughts is a 3,200 kms strip of West African territory south of the Sahara desert.

From the Atlantic coast of Mauritania to the Barren wastes of Chad in the centre of the continent no rain at all has fallen this year. The drought is also crippling much of Senegal Mali, Upper Volta, Niger and parts of northern Nigeria, disrupting the livelihood of more than 25 million people.

"In northern Ethiopia, on the other side of Africa, rivers and ponds are dry and hundreds of cattle are dying because of the drought which has prevailed there since Christmas.

"Scientists agree that the droughts and freakish weather over many parts of the world may signal global changes in climate and some experts are even wondering if another ice age is on its way. The climatic situation is complicated by the largely unknown effect of man-made pollution.

"Some Soviet meteorologists maintain that the climate of northern Europe, Asia and America will get "markedly warmer" by the year 2,000 and link this with the known recession of the Polar ice.

"The American Nobel peace prize winner Norman Borlaug who started the "green revolution" with his new strains of high-yielding cereals, has called for a world food bank to be set up to solve the problem."

SHAMBA

OUR NUMBERS INCREASE and DECREASE

APRIL 25-30

ANATORY BUKOBA

April 25,

At last I was away a few days. I was able to leave the place in charge of someone. I came back one evening to find the leaves or branches of some of the papaw trees destroyed. In fact, they were missing, and no one knows how. The same fate has befallen one of the two vines that were doing well. I found the large manioc plot beautifully weeded, a very tidy job indeed. There seems to have been the heaviest shower of rain we have had, while I was away. The soil is looking very white in places because of it. The bittergourd and the red onion is looking alright but the other vegetable beds are looking a mess. Only the tampala has appeared as far as I can make out. Nothing looking like papaw has appeared in the beds I sowed with it in spite of what I wrote earlier. The jak plants and the water melon and mackerel appear to be doing alright but they are not growing very fast just now. I did some watering this evening, and watered too, the newly planted or re-planted murunga. Weeds are growing apace, and I must concentrate on them.

We have made a new massa, and three people will be able to sleep here now

quite comfortably. I seem to have a permanent companion, not very experienced as far as I can see, but apparently keen in spite of first appearances.

The idea occurred to me that the word which will best fit the society that I am trying or hoping to build here will be *association*. Nobody has been or will be employed here within the exact meaning of that term. What I want are associates who will bring something along with them. Those who have nothing to bring will be more in the nature of companions.

I have fallen back on Shramadana, especially for the building of this home. But I do not like it. This is only one acre and those associated with this place will have to try to earn a living, or perhaps I should say, their living by various ways.

April 26,

A real topsy-turvy day, and it would seem there are nothing like people to make it so. Fickle people. We were back on the old bread and onions, with plantains thrown in. Three people joined us, making it six, then two went, and two will go tomorrow, and I hope

TRIBUNE, June 16, 1973

two will be left. This will be better than being alone, as I was for six weeks. We were so many for a few hours, I asked some of our members to hire themselves out for the day; there seems plenty of work around but now there will be no need for that. The three who came worked like a machine. One of them climbed a *kumbuk* tree with its smooth back and many sizes bigger than him. I never thought to see it done, and he had his cutting tool in his mouth, some energy, and from Colombo people, too.

The work we did today was domestic. We had about eight *cadjans* left. With these and with others, we extended the roof on one side of our house to form an extension to the verandah. It was to be used for sleeping, but now with our reduced numbers, it will be used as a part-time kitchen. The extension has made us look much larger. Some watering was done this evening.

I also cut some more grass today. The vegetable beds look a hopeless mess except for the manioc, the larger plot anyway, the bittergourd and the red onion. Even the red onion looks knocked about; it was by the rain.

Someone has brought us some sweet potato plants. We put it in a bucket of water for the time being. If only I knew the name of some of the herbs that grow here. One of them was used to flavour the tea the other day, and successful it was. I go out with the cutting parties to keep an eye on what wood is cut. This really is a

grand life, in spite of the uncertainties it brings in its train. A wild pig seems to have been running round the back of the house last night, just a few feet away from it. It left its tracks.

April 27,

It was a full working day. I continued to 'mow' the grass. Then we did some clearing, the first done for a long time. It was in the heart of our wood, and our wood worse than a jungle. The one who cleared knew something about trees, and this was a pleasant change for me. My first companion had known a little, too, and he was very good at recognising *diwul* or *dimbul* trees, small ones, not very easy with so much thorn about. I used the mammoty to uproot what my companion cut today. The wood will remain a wood, but the result of our work will be to make it more accessible, people will be able to walk not crawl, through it.

We spent a packet on food today. It went to Rs. 10/-. For the first time in two and a half months we brought some milk; just did without it before. Our *attili* is full of rice. My friend took some time sorting out the rations packing it into tins and storing it away. Today we had lunch at the correct time, 12.30. Yesterday, it was, at 3 p.m. Quite against my principles.

Some one I said brought me some sweet potato plants, and we cut them up and planted them in the thirty four holes. These went in on one side of the foot-path that leads from the

house to the public bathing place. We have some more manioc to plant. I was able to do some watering, and I gave the mango trees some water. The newly-planted sweet potato had to be watered too.

We have fixed up a sort of going with one of the two mammoties that are here just now. This is to help keep animals away at night.

April 28,

Today was one of those days when no real work seems to have been done. I was half-way through the watering when a friend turned up with a flowering shrub, and I thought it more polite to talk to him than to go on with the watering. Later we were very hungry, and from that point on the day seemed to be a succession of meals. I was very extravagant and bought some biscuits. There was more work with the V.C. *katha*, and then the owner borrowed it back. The evening flew past. Here again visitors upset us. We sat and listened and talked. Our thirty-four new *murunga* cuttings were not planted. A little clearing with the mammoty was done. No watering was done this evening. We have ordered a *hiramana* or coconut scraper, and a *wang-gediak* or chilli pounder from the blacksmith cum carpenter. He has promised us them both for Rs. 6/- I think we shall have to have our own V. C. *katha* to keep the grass and the weeds short.

Our three most pressing problems just now are to get this acre ship-shape, to

put up a tea-room or paddy to provide us with a quicker return for our efforts to live here and to recruit more people. The last will be the more difficult and the solution itself to the other two. Two shops have opened in this hamlet since I came here, and good-will prevails among all, the old and the new. My companion has taken to writing verse, and he is busy with it while I am doing this. What he writes is called *kavvi* in Sinhalese. I think it means poem, and I believe a Sinhalese poem is always sung, not recited. My friend has been a poet some time. We write by open oil lamps. Mine rests on a bed; he is holding his in his hand. There is a nice breeze tonight, but no rain yet.

April 29,

Watering was done this morning, all that was not done last evening, but the sweet potatoes were overlooked. There would not have been time for them anyway. They were done in the evening, however, and also the manioc that was planted today. This manioc thirty-four cuttings, was not planted like those we did before. These were done double, one on either side of the hole. These were also much thicker, broader, than the cuttings we had before. The two new flowering creepers were also watered, and the flowering tree that was planted about a week ago. By then it was quite dark, too dark for me to make my way up from the river.

The first jak tree, the eighteen month variety that I planted two months ago and

which had lost its top not long after, has some leaves on it at last. They appeared yesterday, a reward for my not giving it up and for watering it, when it really seemed quite dead. The *lalu*, planted about the same time looks green, but otherwise it has shown no signs of life, not a leaf. The mango looks like a piece of wood struck in the ground, but I still water it.

An operation was performed on one of the alu-kehel or cooking plantain trees. For about two weeks or even longer, this has had a leaf stuck in its middle, and still folded that did not seem capable of bursting out of its confinement like that leaves on the other trees. So its trunk was cut and removed, leaving just a short stump. I am afraid we have cut it too far down, and we shall just have to wait and see what happens. Today we started collecting our first and own vegetable seeds, chilies and tomatoes. We did this from the chillies and tomatoes we have bought. This is something I had always wanted to do.

April 30,

Watering occupied the early morning. Then we cleared all that had been cut some time ago, and also more recently, and this pile was set fire to this evening. It was in a rather cramped space surrounded by tall trees, and as the flames reached very high, the leaves of these trees must have had another scorching, on the side of the tree that was nearest the fire. A heap had been set fire to here before,

and we made use of the same place as there was no place nearer which was better. I continued to mow the grass and weed with the V.C. *katha*. We have got some seed from the brinjals that we bought, just as we did with chillies and tomatoes yesterday.

There was some clearing done in front of the house, and it has made a great difference. I removed the stains round the flower beds, as the plants are big enough to stand on their own.

We had a wild idea of selling wild *karapincha* in the kaddays. It grows quite profusely here. We were told, however, that there will be no sale for wild *karapincha*. *Karapincha* is used for flavouring curries.

There is a little *pol-palla* around here. I had not seen any when I first came here. It tastes almost like tea, but it is drunk without milk. It is a great herb for clearing the bladder, washing it out as it were. We saved some *atteriya* saplings when we were clearing yesterday, and also some *vel-pennela*, which I am told is a nourishing herb.

NUMBER ONE CRIME

While President Nixon has expressed concern with the increased in all types of crime, he still considers criticism of his administration the number one crime problem in the country today. It has become so serious that he is studying the possibility of bringing back capital punishment.

Art Buchwald

DOCTOR'S PRESCRIPTION

Not Worth the Paper, did you say?

By CANAX

I MIGHT as well come out with it now since there seems little point in keeping mum when that medical man from India has already let the cat out of the bag, also claiming as his a discovery that should rightly be ours. In his case, he appears to have just made the surprise discovery that a patient could be cured by feeding him paper.

The trouble with some people, unused to making momentous discoveries as a matter of routine, is that the moment they trip across something like this, they go making a song and dance about it. We in Sri Lanka, on the other hand, have lived with this discovery, as with many others, for over a decade now. And kept the secret well, too.

The Indian find was largely a stroke of luck, which we over here don't count on much for our discoveries except in the case of, say, a large-scale racket in money orders or the systematic siphoning off of stocks from CWE stores. Even there, there are people who consider it quite the opposite of luck—especially those who get discovered in the process.

THE WAY the Indians stumbled onto their discovery was this: the doctor, in treating an asthmatic, had written out a prescription and at the same time orally ad-

vised that it be taken 'twice a day for eight days'. The patient returned in due course to report he was very much better.

When the doctor called for his original prescription, intending to repeat the medicine for another eight days, it transpired that his prescription had, in fact, been the medicine. The patient had scrupulously followed the doctor's advice and cut up the prescription into sixteen equal doses. And thereby hangs a tale—with a discovery dangling at the end of it.

We didn't have luck giving us a helping hand, and didn't need it, either. With such a wealth of scientific talent around, we keep making discoveries by the hour. When trained minds go in pursuit of progress, luck has little to do with the final outcome. It was simply a matter of careful deduction that brought us the discovery, many years ago, of paper's little-known medicinal and curative properties.

It was a quiet, dedicated (and unemployed) scientist working at the time in his own backyard who observed how healthy our cattle generally were and felt, almost with scientific instinct, if there is such a thing, that it had something to do with diet—which, in the case of our stray cattle, was composed largely of paper.

So to confirm his theory he got around him a whole herd of volunteers, mostly cows, and carried out a series of experiments, feeding one group with only paper and the other with only grass and poonac—but no paper. The group on paper alone, which included a couple suffering from some beastly disease or other, thrived audibly (he was playing it by ear, and could tell from their moo's) while the other lot fell silent—and also victim within weeks to all the diseases in a vet's book, dying natural deaths as a direct consequence.

IT WAS at this stage that I came into the picture, since one of the cows that died for the Cause happened to belong to me. I would not normally have countenanced using a cow as a guinea-pig, because it somehow doesn't seem natural. But considering the circumstances I let it pass. Scientific progress unfortunately demands sacrifices of us all, and a cow as my contribution was getting off lightly.

When the scientist explained his incredible discovery, and the promise it held for easing the human condition, we both decided it was time to carry out restricted clinical trials on our fellow men. The first general practitioner we approached nearly threw us out of his dispensary in a rage. "What do you take me for—a horse-doctor?" he yelled.

After recovering from the initial disappointment, we called on a couple of other

quacks who grudgingly agreed to give it a try. Said one, "The Formulary Committee won't be very pleased if it gets to know." We gently suggested the Committee had never been renowned for its bold, research-oriented approach.

Asked another, "Am I to use the brand-name or confine myself to the generic term? Paper by any other name sounds just as bad, you know."

Sighed a third, "It'll be a big sacrifice for me. There's far more money in treating patients with imported drugs."

So with little fuss and less ceremony the clinical trials got underway. We finally managed to rope in a dozen doctors for the purpose. First reports were more than encouraging. Most encountered little or no resistance from patients to the new paper-cure. One G.P. reported, "The medical profession in this country could well be the most envied in the world, with the possible exception of Africa's witch-doctors, for it has a remarkably co-operative populace to deal with, ready, able and willing to try anything—and not just once, either. As patients, they have a boldly progressive and pioneering outlook."

BY THEN we asked ourselves, can we be assured of regular supplies? After all, we couldn't play about with people's lives. Politicians doing it was different. So we rushed over to the Chairman of the Eastern Paper Mills Corporation, Mr. K. C. Thangara-

rajah, and my friend the scientist (he was my friend by now) let him into our secret. The Chairman beamed with quiet pride. "I knew it, I knew it," he said softly. "I never had any doubt in my own mind that our paper was good, only we didn't know precisely what it was good for until now."

When we brought up the matter of supplies, the Chairman became cautious. "Look gentlemen," he whispered, "I'm so delighted with what you've just told me, I hate to appear difficult. But I can't very well ignore the original objective this Corporation was established to achieve, and you know that as well as I do."

Disappointed though we were, the Chairman was right, of course. The Devil, in our view, was the Printer himself, who was standing squarely in the path of progress. We were almost past the door when the Chairman called out after us, "Tell you what—give us a little time to increase production and we'll keep the medical profession happy as well. But continue your clinical trials in the meantime. I wish I could be of more help."

THE TRIALS went on. One doctor came in with the disturbing news that some of his patients on paper were experiencing unpleasant side-effects. We promptly referred these to Mr. Thangarajah who in turn called for an immediate report from Valaichchenai. The answer came by return of post: 'The paper is quality-contro-

lled at every stage of manufacture and is guaranteed pure.' Which meant only one thing—the water those patients were washing down the paper with was contaminated.

So we lodged a strong complaint with the Waterworks Department. Asked a surprised official, "You mean they're actually *drinking* that damn stuff on tap?"

Another medico among the chosen few, clearly more enterprising than the rest, wrote in to say he had come up against some ailments not responding to paper, even heavy four-hourly doses of it. He was quite sure about the drug, but had his doubts about the method of administering it, which up to then had been strictly 'internal'. He decided to switch wherever necessary. And he said it worked wonders.

The very next time he was faced with an apparently incurable case, he resorted to the 'external' use of the same drug; he simply showed him a piece of paper, which also happened to be his bill, and the patient came to life with amazing rapidity, as though he'd never been ill at all, storming out of his consultation room in a huff, never to return. He records it as his first permanent cure.

Extraordinary, the things that paper can do.

All we are waiting for now, after all these years, is the green light from Mr. Thangarajah. We're ready whenever he is. Boy, is the world of medicine in for a surprise!

IN SRI LANKA TODAY

SOCIALISM AND SUBSIDIES

Dr. N. M. Perera, addressing Rotarians recently, has said that in future, whenever the Government has to import goods from abroad, it will sell these to the local consumers at the prevailing world market prices without any subsidies. This proposal, if and when implemented will spell the end of a state of affairs that has now come to be regarded almost as a permanent feature in Sri Lanka.

To many, state subsidies of essential items have become synonymous with socialism. To many others, it has been part and parcel of the welfare state which they have taken for granted has come into being in this island. Both assumptions are unfounded and entirely incorrect.

The founders of scientific socialism and communism, Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, defined communism as that future society where each will give according to his ability and get in return according to his needs. But even those founding fathers realised that before such an ideal society could be achieved, mankind would have to go through a transitional society called socialism where each would still give according to his ability but get only according to the quality and quantity of the work done.

In other words, Marx and Engels recognised that during the transitional period the members of society must be given material incentives (in the form of wages and salaries according to the work done) before the stage of

"to each according to his needs" could be reached.

THROWING these very laudable concepts of socialism and communism to the winds, we in Sri Lanka have tried to usher in socialism by turning things upside down. Not only do many members of our society enjoy benefits that must be the envy of those living in what are now called the 'advanced socialist states' (like Soviet Russia, East Germany and Czechoslovakia). We have even reached the higher stage of communism which is still a distant dream even for peoples in Soviet Russia (who have been working laboriously building socialism for the last 55 years) and those in Eastern Europe who have been laying the foundations for socialism during the last 25 years or so.

Some may think the author of this article is trying to be frivolous. But isn't the Government implementing the high communist ideal of giving "to each according to his needs" when it doles out free rice to all except those falling into the category of tax-payers?

From feudalism to communism at one leap—that is what we in Sri Lanka have endeavoured to achieve, by-passing the miseries of capitalism and the trials of socialism.

How this "happy" state of affairs came into being is known to many. World War II was boom time for Sri Lanka. While other countries suffered death and desolation, we were fortunate enough to actually make money out of the war because the British, then fighting with their backs to the wall to defend their Empire in this part of the world, made our Island the headquarters of SEAC (their South East Asia Command.)

When the war ended, there were many millions of pounds sterling accumulated to our credit in London. But without using these funds to develop the country, the Government of that time led by the redoubtable Mr. D. S. Senanayake began a spending spree in preparation for the 1947 elections, molycoddling our people with all kinds of subsidies. And so began the era of free education and (almost) free rice.

WHEN WE had run down our sterling balances, luck came our way again with the Korean war. The Korean war boom helped to continue with our post-1945 extravagance. It was when the Korean war ended in 1953 that the crash came down.

Dudley Senanayake, the then Prime Minister, had to face the music and quit office. He was soon to set right things for his party by making things worse for the country. When he became Premier once again in the minority government that he formed in March 1960, the first thing he did was to reduce the price of rice to the old, pre-1953 level. Six years later, as Prime Minister again, he was to cut the ration of two measures to one and give it free.

One of the promises given by the United Front Government at the 1970 was to restore the second measure of rice on the ration, without saying anything about its price. It kept this promise soon after their assumption of power. But it was forced to put up the price of the restored measure twice, and withdraw the privilege of free rice altogether from income tax-payers.

This is the short background to the situation that is prevalent today. What of the future?

It is well known that prices of most essential commodities—rice, flour, sugar etc. are steadily rising in the world market. To purchase them at these high prices and sell them to local consumers at the low subsidised prices that they have become used to is the sure road to economic damnation for the country.

That is why the Finance Minister has, at long last, decided to do what every sane person knew must be done some day—end the policy of subsidisation altogether and make our

people, if they insist on purchasing foreign goods, pay for them at the normal, world market prices.

But, of course, this does create other problems. The Government must, in its own interests, work out their implications, before it proceeds to implement the policy enunciated by the Finance Minister at the Rotary lunch.

One problem is that of the cost of living which the United Front is pledged to bring down. Far from coming down, living costs have gone up since the present Government came to power. And slashing subsidies all at once will send them spiralling to the moon, making life unbearable to the ordinary citizen and further eroding support for the government from even its most ardent followers.

ONE WAY that the Government can overcome this difficulty is by slashing the subsidies gradually while going all out to increase local production of the necessary substitutes. Thus, the subsidy on sugar can be reduced in proportion to the incentives given to the local production of jaggery and cane-sugar. This will avoid the situation created, for instance, by the sudden and complete ban of the imports of chillies which resulted in their prices rocketing up steeply to come down only after local producers stepped into the breach.

A more serious problem is created by the past words and deeds of many members of the UF Government. Some of them have been in the forefront of the struggle for cheaper

food—among them the leftist leaders of the Hartal—that they must be chary of doing what looks like a repetition of 1953. But this is a position which they can readily explain to the people.

The 1953 Hartal was not so much a fight to retain food subsidies as an act of revolt against the false promises of the UNP Government. At the 1952 elections the UNP promised that as long as they were in power, they would give rice at 25 cts. a measure. Having come back to power on this promise, they at once began to renege on it. The parties then in the Opposition had no option but to lead the people in a mass struggle to highlight this fraud.

The Leftist leaders in the UF Government must also make it clear that under the British and later under successive UNP Governments, the fight they waged was for limited economic gains for the downtrodden. It was thus that they came to pioneer the fight for free mid-day meals for school children in the 1930s, the fight for free education in the 1940's and the fight for cheap food in the 1950's.

The sums spent on all these economic and social benefits were very small compared to the total budgetary expenditure. But times have changed. Our population has increased and so have prices in the world market. To continue with the subsidies would spell the end of the economic development of the country which

BECAUSE OF MAO'S THOUGHT

New World Rotation for World Revolution

By M. KARTHIGESAN.

Old-time *Tribune* reader M. Karthigesan, from Jaffna, has sent us a page-in-reprint from the Tennis Souvenir issued by the Jaffna United Club to commemorate the third test between Sri Lanka and the People's Republic of China. It had a very Maoist heading: NEW WORLD ROTATION FOR WORLD REVOLUTION marked in red pencil for the benefit of *Tribune*, whilst the heading in the Souvenir was SPIN IN SPORT...AND SPORT IN SPIN.

Mr. Karthigesan, the author of this piece, sent the reprint on to us with a note: "for favour of publication, with dissenting editorial comment, if necessary."

We publish the piece without any comment at all—and we leave it to our readers to judge whether a spin in the ping pong ball or a tennis ball, created as a result of Mao's Thought, would bring the World Revolution any nearer.

Commenting in the *Ceylon Daily News* on the recent world table tennis championship, Stanley Joseph, a Sri Lanka player who took part in the Afro-Asian tournament held in Peking, said of Hsi En-ting, the present world champion, that he uses as many as eleven kinds of spin on the ball, the puny ping-pong ball.

Hitherto, the earth has reacted only to two kinds of spin—physically, from west to east, with Japan as the land of the rising sun and politically from east to west, with the UN headquarters in New York as the modern hub of world politics.

The westward political direction prevailed for centuries with other capitals—Vienna, Paris, Geneva and London hosting international conferences and deciding the destiny of the world. This direction was reinforced by the positions taken by certain V.V.I.P's. Till the

outbreak of World War II, the President of the USA never moved out of his country, and leaders from other countries had to move westward to meet him. Also, till recently His Holiness the Pope never stirred out of the Vatican, and people in the East had to travel westward to Rome to obtain his blessings.

But there is one leader who for more than a decade has not moved about, who seems to have decided to stay put. That is China's Chairman, Mao Tsetung.

Consequently, for some time now, personalities and Presidents, politicians and Prime Ministers—Nixon, Tanaka, Haile Selassie, Mrs. Bandaranaike and many others—have had to move to Peking to meet him.

That is indeed a new direction, the eastward direction in world politics. Sur-

prising—but not so surprising when one notes that all these leaders are only going back to the country that, with the mariner's compass, gave the world its first awakening to the sense of international direction.

Where, one might ask, was this change of political direction—no longer westward but eastward—first manifested. On a field of battle? No. At an international conference? No. Where then? On a mere table at one end of which stood an American and at the other, a Chinese.

And were they armed? Yes, they were. Fully armed. With ping-pong racquets... and on the ball there was spin, the other-way spin!

Continued from page 12

alone can lay the basis for the building of socialism.

THEY MUST make it clear, as Chou En-lai has told us, that socialism does not consist in giving everything free or at cheap prices to the people. They must use every available medium of propaganda to din into the people that the achievement of real national independence, leave alone socialism, entails hard work through which we can boost local production to the maximum to free us from the stranglehold of foreign imperialist markets.

The Prime Minister has been stressing this theme in all her recent speeches. Other Ministers too must join in this crusade if the people are to be mobilised for the tasks ahead, the march to realise our cherished national and socialist ideals.

TWO JOURNEYS

✽ Madhu and Anuradhapura ✽ Land Ceilings
✽ New Year ✽ Life in Sri Lanka ✽ Dudley Senanayake

by ALKARDI MUGANA

Difficult is the word to describe one's state when pursuing an ardent conversation and at the same time, trying to remember to notice what can be seen from a moving vehicle. When I remembered to make these visual notes, it was the usual Ceylon low-country tangle that I saw, and what a tangle! A tea estate is orderly, a rubber estate just one removed a coconut estate not bad, and the jungle very good. A jungle is orderly compared to our dry zone agricultural land, where everything has been cleared at some time or other, and then been allowed to grow again. This is not land farmed intensively, although you do see it done in a few places, especially, I should imagine, in the traditionally, Tamil areas like Jaffna and Batticaloa. It was such a tangle I saw, I should find it very difficult to describe the mess. The pure paddy lands were quite different. Here there was harvesting going on in places completed in others, and in some it looked as if there had been no cultivation at all this time, but it was the other land that was a tangle.

The spirit of the people was remarkable. I felt it. I feel that the people were capable of looking after themselves, and this assuredness in their spirit radiated. So I missed the approaches to Anuradhapura, saw little of

the town itself, and I only began to sit up and take notice on the road north of the town. What is called the Jaffna road produced a view of more orderly agriculture and better cared-for farms and holdings. Ramewewa passed as a few scattered houses and shops. Now we were on what might well be called the Great North Road coming up all the way from Kandy through Mihintale and avoiding Anuradhapura. Medawachchiya was next, a scattered town sporting some Government Offices. Roads branched off from here and we turned left for Madhu and Mannar. An arresting plantation caught my eye. Surely it must be teak, but it did not look like teak, however, hard I might stare. My companion said it was rubber and I almost gasped. In retrospect, it was probably teak, and if there is room in the bus on the way back, room to look out I shall try to corroborate this. We passed some real jungle, and it was then that I was able to observe how tidy true jungle is.

Prices have gone up a lot. What is called *bath-bagaya* which translated literally means half-rice, or rather, I suppose, half a plateful of this, but in practice means a plateful, but no second helpings, now costs Rs. 1/50, and I know of one place which has nothing to commend it

really, which charges Rs. 2/-, and the extraordinary thing is that people seem willing to pay these prices.

The Madhu Road kaddays on the whole start serving dinner late, say 8 p.m. while in a place like Mihintale all the kaddays are shut by that time and you cannot get a meal after 7.30 p.m.

My impression for what it is worth, is that there is no unemployment in the part of the dry zone I have just traversed say from Puttalam to Mannar, although both the rows I have just named are situated in what is called the arid zone. There may be a little unemployment in Anuradhapura, perhaps, among the Central School leavers and schools in that category. However, money is short, and people have learned to get by largely without it, when they do get money in their hands, they are, I think, prepared to spend in liberally and almost lavishly.

There was a large extent of paddy field that I saw covered with cattle, and not a buffalo among them. The paddy would have been reaped. It was a fine sight seeing so many cattle at a glance, and I thought that Africa must have looked like this to the first Europeans who went there, those vast plateaux of grass covered with deer and other four footed creatures. Talking of this reminds me of the vast herds of elephant I have seen, I think from the Nile paddy steamer in the Sudan, and certainly near the Mountains, of the Moon, those weird hills that lie between the Congo, which is now called Zaire

and Uganda. I have called them hills, but as their name implies, they are really vast mountains with snow on them. I think H.M. Stanley was the first European to describe them, and he did it in his masterpiece, superbly illustrated with drawings, his book called, I think, *Across the Dark Continent*.

Talking of elephants reminds me that I heard, last night, at Madhu Road, a single, loud, drawn-out, unmistakable trumpet of an elephant. Elephants was the last thing I was thinking about, and I was told in the morning that there are a number of elephants around. I could well believe this as the jungle comes very close

This reminds me, too, of a conversation I had with a farmer friend later in the day. It went like this. "Well I suppose you are busy." "Busy? All the lads have nothing to do these days!" "Aren't you harvesting?" "The paddy harvest? That was all eaten by elephants this time, or killed by the drought." I remembered elephants trumpeting in his vilage all night some years back. They seemed able to cope with the elephants then, and I wondered why they had not this time. This conversation took place at the Anuradhapura bus stand.

Something else I was told set me on a line of thought, and my thoughts led this way. Personal land holdings have been limited by fifty acres or so, but this only affects only what is called privately owned land, owned either directly or through what is known as a private

company. It does not affect land owned by what are called public companies, which is I think the name used, and I gather that a public company is a company whose shares the public can buy when there are any for sale. Now it takes money to convert one's property into a public company, and not many small owners can, or could, afford to do it. The law, I believe, requires a public company to employ a secretary, and there again you have to be a rich owner to afford this. Now it seems a great idea, this idea of a share-holding public. Do you own shares? Do you think you are an owner in the company in which you own shares? Then try to change the policy of that company! It is your money that is being made use of, and you just get paid a dividend. It is true that you can ask any number of awkward questions of the secretary or of the chairman at the Annual General meeting but that is as far as you will get, and they have had a long training in answering awkward questions, or they would not be there. You are no more an owner than a man in the moon. The real owner is the principal share-holder, or share-holders, if there are three or four of them holding equal numbers of shares. Now, anyone can turn their agricultural holdings into a public company, and bring a few sleeping partners on to the board. Now, to restrict the agricultural holdings of individuals and private companies, and not of public companies, is to me like standing socialism on its head.

I would have thought that any true communist or socialist or patriot could have started with the liquidation of the public companies, and then have gone on to the private companies, and let the true, honest, private owner go free. I say honest, as a man who avoided all these ambiguities. I am certainly not a socialist, whether national socialist (nazi) or international socialist (communist) and that does not make me into a capitalist either. I think there is another way I would like to try out without legislating on the matter either. I am certainly against any form of land ceiling, and I believe in private ownership I think there is much to be said for a voluntary liquidation of land, owners of vast lands of themselves doing something about it. There is certainly much they could do to help.

The cashew, I found is an uninteresting tree, but it appears to be doing well near Madhu. The train which I caught at Cheddikulam was not crowded, but the noise of the engine or of the train did not aid conversation.

April 13-14,

AT STANLEYVILLE, in the old Oriental Province of the Congo, in April 1961, I was startled when, after being told that the Bishop was on Safari, my informant went out to tell me that he was just out for the day. What I am trying to say is that in Swahili, the word *safari* covers any kind of trip of long or short duration.

In these *safari* notes I try to convey to the reader what

I have taken in on those journeys and any impressions I have formed that I think may be of interest. There are some journeys where for one reason or another it is difficult to notice the scenery, and one has just to be content with saying something about the people one meets. At the same time one has to be sure to give away no confidences.

There was a Tamil from Balangoda who was employed by a Colombo man on the proverbial "hena" in the dry zone. One hears so much about *henas*, that one wonders how the word *chenas* crept in its place and began to be used even in Governmental parlance. He had not been home for a year, and he was on his way to Colombo to collect his money before doing so. Then there was the man who had been invalidated out of the Volunteers although he looked fit enough to me. They and others were on their way to Anuradhapura some of them to the film, but, as it was Sinhalese New year, the buses were few, and it would soon not be worth their while going, if their object was the pictures.

IN ANURADHAPURA bus station, buses were not plying except one or two really long distance ones, leaving quite late. People seemed to have made up their mind not to travel, and so it was not difficult to get in these buses, and use them even for short ways or stops. The Old Town, around the old Buddhist places of worship, was almost deserted, and one seemed to have the place

to oneself, and it was surprising how among so few one succeeded in meeting so many people one knew, including some not seen for years.

One cannot say that there is any really striking beauty about the art of any of these places of worship. Everything seems so solid and plain. Even the dagobas hardly convey an impression of largeness; it may be that they are so symmetrically true, that they do not for this reason, just as a well-built man hardly appears tall. The modern arrangements for visiting these places are good, well lit up and conveying an impression of spaciousness, a blessing no doubt when there is a large influx of pilgrims during the proper seasons.

THE ACTUAL Sinhalese New Year seemed to have begun late in the evening this year. There was not much sign of merriment. Many people seemed to have gone to bed, although there seemed to me to be more people than usual at the cinema hall that I saw. They were no doubt private parties. I heard of at least one, although I could see no evidence of any. The celebration I thought later, must have been left over for the following day.

When I had moved on out of Anuradhapura, the country side was asleep, but then that is usually the case in these parts, as it would be in an English village. Most people seemed to have gone away to their other home, the village and the home of their wife, for instance.

There do not seem to be any unemployed these days. I think

it is a change in people's attitudes. People no longer seem to have that old "socialist" attitude that someone, the total mass of employers, including the Government, must provide employment for all. Everybody seems to have found something to do now, and, moreover, they are no longer anxious to leave what ever it is they are doing.

There is a strange contrast in no money and an amplitude of money, which I find very difficult to understand. It is as if I was to say, people have no money and yet have it. It may be that money circulates very freely locally, so that people have no money at one moment, and at the next moment have it. In Europe there is said to be a *Consumer Society*, which I take to mean that Society is all geared to relieving people of their money as even as they earn it, and my own experience was that it was so. In Ceylon I would call it a *Circulating Society*, where people do not just earn money, in the sense that they get their wages or salaries, but rather that they come by money. You might stretch a point and say that everybody is a bank ready to part with money only to come by it again.

The difference between this Society and the Consumer society is this, that in the latter you have to keep going, earning ever more and more money to replace the money that is taken off you in one way of spending or another. *In our society money comes more readily to hand, and you do not have to worry, or, rather you are a fool, or*

more westernised, if you do. In this economic scene I would say that this society of ours in Ceylon, outside the world of the Fort, or Colombo is a very Christian one.

EVERYBODY seemed glad to see me at the village where I went. There was some confusion as to whether certain people had something to do or not. I think the answer to this riddle was that the village had a life, a life in the whole which took in all their time, and they were unwilling to leave this for a life where, although they would have something definite to do, yet by their very nature, or the fact of there being a specific task, yet would not take in life as a whole. In short, they were very worried that there would be times in their day where they would have nothing to do, when they would be bored, and strange to say, they dreaded this boredom. It is not the usual impression one has of the East. But in China a game like *ma-jong* was invented to ensure that there would be none of this boredom.

In the East I would say that politeness is carried to extreme lengths. You might say that the Easterner is a master of politeness and that he hates to be rude, although he would take any amount of rudeness from other people, so that you might say he never loses his good manners and seldom his hair. He would seem to be more ready to take to extreme violence—hence so many murders—them to commit the lesser offence, punishable only by ostracization possibly that of being rude. Their

reluctance to be rude, and to depart from his good habits, leads to very strange results which drives those brought up in the Western tradition to distraction when they came across it.

A man would rather say Yes, when pressed than No and then he will think nothing of it, and he will fail to act on his Yes. He not only appears to have broken his word but to have lied. Perhaps the Easterner knows when you are trying to overdo yourself as regards his own freedom of action, and rather than lose a friend by telling you where to get off, he will let you scold him for not keeping his word and retain your friendship, which he will do, when you find that he has taken your scolding in good part.

SOMEONE, a woman, hailed me with the news that Mr. **Dudley Senanayake** had died the previous night. They all, and by that I would say 99% of the people missed him very much, and they knew that they were going to miss him more in the future. White flags were out in many farmer's homes, in the streets, and were even his portrait on the wind-screens of the buses.

He was never so popular or loved as when he had died. One person referred to him as his or our Prime Minister. In view of what has happened recently, and from the way everybody referred to him, there seems little doubt that he is going to outdo both his own father and S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike as legends.

This seems a wonderful time for someone to start talking about the **Dudley Senanayake** policies, and to capitalize on them politically as others did with **Bandaranaike**.

As for myself I liked the man very much, although I cannot say I liked all his policies and I shall just mention two I did not like—Family Planning and the Mahaveli Project. Everybody trusted him and they are going to miss him very much. I do not mind acting as a prophet for once and say that some people are going to get a mighty shock over his funeral.

Pretty well half the world here is going to Colombo to pay him their last respects, and I expect his funeral will turn out to be all but a state one. The next few days may prove a shock for everybody who misunderstood the 1970 landslide. I remember someone telling me only two days or so after that election, "Well, we put the SLFP back this time, we'll put the UNP back next time, in 1975". It was a young man who said so, and he said it with a laugh, and meant what he said.

I should say that of all the Prime Ministers Ceylon has had, Mr. Dudley Senanayake has been the most loved, and my only justification for saying this is the people's reaction to his death. I would say that the bureaucracy and the newspapers did most to contribute to the National Government's fall in 1970, and also some of the Ministers and for this, of course, Mr. Senanayake must take the blame, because, as Prime

Minister, he was responsible for choosing his Ministers or Cabinet.

Most certainly, Ceylon began to feel one country again during the early years of his Government, but for the rest, nothing really was done until the Prime Minister started his "grow more food" campaign half-way through his Government's term of office, and then no one worked as hard at it as he did. But it was started too late, and he failed to get across to the people the real point of the exercise, which was not to provide the people with more food, but to conserve foreign exchange. I remember one educated man making the foolish remark, "I do not see this extra food on the tables" One of the first things this Government did was to call the campaign off.

If you asked me the difference between the country as it is now, and it was seven years ago, I would say it was in the field of employment. In those days there was a lot of apparent unemployment, which deceived most people because they could not make it in that most of the so-called unemployment was really caused by people wanting white-collared jobs or the security of pay that employment brings.

Now everybody, who is not employed is self-employed, and, in the last resort, employed or self-employed within their own families. Which ever opposits you use or choose, it comes to the same thing in the family business or businesses, even when that is farming.

FROM THE HILL COUNTRY

AZIZ and KUMARASURIAR CLASH

from A TRIBUNE CORRESPONDENT

Hatton,

The Hillcountry Writers' Association held its celebrations on 27th May 1973 at Hatton St. Bosco's College Hall. The Chief Guest at this Celebration was Mr. Kumarasuriar, the Minister for Posts and Telecommunications. Mr. A. Aziz, the Appointed MP was also present along with Mr. Baladhandaythem the MP for Coimbatore, India.

When he spoke, Mr. Kumarasuriar created a big controversy by attacking the plantation trade unions in general. When Mr. Aziz rose to speak after Mr. Kumarasuriar, he replied the Minister's speech. While Mr. Aziz was replying Mr. Kumarasuriar, the Minister got up to answer Mr. Aziz. But Mr. Aziz didn't allow the Minister to disturb his speech. Mr. Aziz told, "Mr. Minister, Don't be hasty. When you were speaking I was waiting patiently. Now you should listen to me patiently." The crowd hooted at the Minister and he went back to his seat.

THE MINISTER in his speech made the following points which provoked Mr. Aziz:—

The previous speakers complained that the plantation workers of Indian origin are the most oppressed in this country and that they are segregated. The question should be posed as to who are responsible for this state of affairs. Are the plantation workers discharging their duties towards this country? Isn't there truth that the plantation workers stay in Sri Lanka and love India in their hearts.

The forefathers of the plantation workers came from the poverty stricken villages of South India. Since they underwent untold hardships due to the oppression of feudal lords, they came to Ceylon believing their Kanganies. After coming to Ceylon they faced another kind of feudal oppression. **Now they are**

oppressed by their Kanganies and Trade Union leaders.

When I came to canvass in the Nuwara Eliya bye-election I wanted to meet the workers who had votes. But I was cautioned to meet the Leaders. Why should we approach the workers through their Trade Unions? Why should the workers approach us through the Trade Unions?

When we visit Hindu temples we have to pass various small gods, before we could see the main god. This is a remnant of feudalism. In the plantations, if we have to meet the workers we have to go through their brokers, the trade union leaders. The estate workers should come out of their slums. They should throw away the weight of their trade unions. They should embrace the national political parties.

In the line rooms of the plantation workers, one finds very often the photos of Gandhi, Nehru etc. Why? some love Madras coffee—Why? This situation should change.

If the plantation people of Indian origin want their rights, then they should throw away their Trade Unions and embrace the national political parties. I would like them to join the SLFP. Even if they don't join the SLFP, they can create political movements or join other political parties.

MR. AZIZ, in his speech stated:—

I am entitled to answer the Minister as he had put me in the dock by attacking the trade unions in the plantations. It will be better to trace the history before making such unjustifiable attacks on the trade union movement. It is an undeniable fact that only the trade union movements in the plantation areas had defended the rights of the plantation workers and not the political parties. Although some parties spoke for the rights of the plantation workers of Indian origin, they did nothing.

In 1939, when the plantation workers lived like semi-slaves, none of these political parties came to their defence. When the so-called independent government disfranchised the plantation people of Indian origin, none of these parties struggled to defend the rights of plantation workers. Some only spoke about these matters.

When we staged the satyagraha movement, we were assaulted by the police, and we were trampled by their dogs and horses. No political party worth its name, came to our defence. We went to the Parliament to present a petition. We were not allowed to do so. We were bundled into the police vans and then thrown out at distant places. When we faced this situation before the parliament, no one who belonged to these national political parties, who were inside, came out to sympathise with us. They never came out even to inquire from us. Only that independent MP from Galle Mr. Dahanayake who came out to speak to us. Mr. Minister will now understand whether the trade unions or these political parties stood for the rights of the plantation workers.

Today the workers live in semi-starvation level. All the trade unions, including the trade unions which are led by the political parties are fighting for a monthly wage. While these unions are fighting outside the political parties don't open their mouth inside the parliament. When I spoke for the monthly wage in the parliament mine was the lonely voice.

Now there is a food crisis in the plantations. The workers don't get enough flour or rice. They are starving. Who spoke about their plight in the parliament. Again it was my lonely voice. Where was the Mr. Minister then?

We don't deny the fact that the People's Government brought out many measures in the interest of the plantation workers and we are very thankful to Mrs. Bandaranaike.

There is no trade union without politics. We support the progressive forces. There is nothing wrong for the Minister to call upon the plantation workers to support the progressive political movements in Sri Lanka. But it is not justifiable to request them to throw away the trade unions and remain undefended. I say, with all the faults, it is only the trade unions, which had defended and fought for the rights of the plantation workers."

There is nothing wrong in having the photo of Gandhi who is a great man. Why shouldn't one like Madras coffee. Being a Muslim, can't I like Buriyani? The Minister wants the workers to integrate with the villagers. This is correct. But why does the government prevent the plantation workers who are citizens of this country from taking part in village committee elections? The workers are national minded. During the insurgency period they toiled and produced more tea, rubber and copra for export. One should see in action whether the plantation workers are national minded or not.....

SKYLAB

SWITCH FROM NEAR FAILURE TO SUCCESS

by WALTER FROELICH

Washington,

The turnaround from near-failure to success for *Skylab*, America's first space station, hinged largely on two technological concepts of the US space programme known as "redundancy" and "systems analysis." These two concepts—gradually being adapted for other critical human endeavours, such as medicine and aeronautics—were mainly responsible for reversing *Skylab*'s impending role as costly orbiting junk to perhaps the most valuable tool man has yet used in space.

SKYLAB was abandoned by many observers as a dismal setback for space exploration after some malfunctions following its launch on May 14 at Cape Kennedy, Florida. Since then, analysis of the problems by experts and the application of remedies have restored *Skylab* to a functioning laboratory and home in which a crew of three astronauts are living and working in unprecedentedly spacious and well-equipped surroundings in earth orbit at an altitude of 270 miles.

After arriving at the space station in an Apollo spacecraft on May 25, the crew transferred from the Apollo into the station and started some of the planned scientific experiments. The outcome of *Skylab*'s medical and

industrial experiments and its sun and earth observations may determine how fast and in what direction space exploration will move in the future and the extent to which such exploration can help improve life on earth.

IN ONE of the first experiments aboard *Skylab*, Dr. James P. Kerwin, the first US physician in space, extracted blood samples from his own arm and those of his fellow crewmen, astronauts Charles Conrad, Jr., Commander, and Paul J. Weitz, Pilot.

Such periodic samples, to be stored aboard *Skylab* and analyzed on earth later, are among experiments expected to shed new light on the physical effects of prolonged exposure to weightlessness. This is expected to increase the understanding of the human body in health and disease through knowledge obtainable only in space.

The ability of the astronauts to carry out such experiments and even to inhabit *Skylab* was threatened by the earlier malfunctions. A torn heat shield, probably due to vibrations during launch, caused *Skylab* to overheat. The damage to two solar panels for converting sunshine to electricity has robbed the space station of about half its intended power

supply. With careful budgeting of the available power from other functioning solar panels, the astronauts are expected to be able to live in relative comfort in *Skylab* as planned for 28 days and to carry out nearly all planned experiments.

An attempt to release one of the stuck panels when the astronauts approached *Skylab* in the *Apollo* failed. But a similar repair attempt with a hook on a pole is expected to be made while Conrad and Kerwin "walk" in space outside *Skylab* on their 26th day in orbit to exchange film cassettes on the exterior sun telescope system.

If that repair results in increased power supplies, the work of two subsequent three-man crews, who are to inhabit *Skylab* for 56 days each, could proceed at about normal pace even though the second damaged solar panel is beyond repair. *Skylab*'s designers, building on the experience of six landings by men on the moon and 21 other US manned space flights, provided for the generation of more electricity than would ordinarily be needed. This reserve power was meant to provide the redundancy which served US space planners so well in earlier missions.

REDUNDANCY means the ability to substitute a second system for one that fails. Redundancy permitted three astronauts to return safely to earth after an explosion ripped vital equipment and supplies during the Apollo-13 around-the-moon flight in

April 1970 and also saved several other missions from possible failure.

The overheating problem was solved when the Skylab astronauts installed an umbrella-like sunshade on the outside of the space station through an opening in a Skylab wall shortly after they entered the station. That solution grew out of "systems analysis," also called "systems engineering," a procedure in which a complex problem is divided into its component sub-problems, each of which is analyzed by specialists.

In solving the Skylab heat problem, a prime requirement was that the chosen method effectively replace the function of the lost heat shield for the remainder of the projected eight-month Skylab project without veiling the sun telescopes and other research instruments.

Systems engineering also was used to hold down heat damage during the 11-day period that Skylab was in orbit until the astronauts arrived. Flight controllers rolled the station to shift sun exposures so that heat did not build up too much in any one place inside the craft.

For News Behind
the News

Read

TRIBUNE

Regularly.

LETTERS

* Humanist Comment on Corruption

* Prayers for Our Leaders

Sir,

Genuine and committed humanists are forced to react to the corruption of our society. Some—especially in the political opposition—say that public corruption has reached an all-time high. These are impressions, impossible to document. However, corruption exists and is widespread, and the humanist must react.

The political animal reacts often only politically. If he is a government man, he is either himself a significant fount of corruption, or turns a blind eye to it, or minimises its extent. If he is an opposition man, he blames the government; often, he welcomes the presence of corruption, which profoundly dissatisfies not only the non-corruptible, but also the corruptors and the corrupted, and dissatisfaction makes the opposition win the next elections.

The humanist reacts humanistically. To him corruption dehumanizes, undermines confidence in social relationships, destroys the good in the people, extends among them the range of evil, demonstrates the lack of self-reliance or weakens whatever self-reliance there is. What I cannot do on my own merit, my bribe will do!

Our party position is certainly at the root of much of

our corruption. To make membership of a political party or flag-waving support of it, a condition for obtaining justice is deliberately to introduce corruption into the body politic, like a tubercular infection into the lungs of a man.

The cure is not just to put another political party in power. In fact, the danger of corruption by political patronage is that it is self-perpetuating. The next government will have its own noisy exactors of the price of support, and will continue the process of corruption.

Deterrent punishment for corruption is one avenue to its cure. The MD Store has no salt. It is freely available at 20 cts. above the marked price at the commercial store just opposite. The Ccp does not have dates. They are purchasable publicly all over the town at Rs. 1.50 per lb. You appoint highway inspectors to check the sale of subsidised fertiliser; in a few months the inspector has built himself a mansion on the highway. Price-inspectors in the big town markets are a big joke. Papers pass quickly in offices if palms are oiled; if the paper trays are not lined, your papers go lower and lower down in the tray. The only danger of using punishment as a cure is that in a class—and caste-structured hierarchical society like

Corruption

ours the small man gets easily nabbed and then has the least access to clever lawyers. The real corruptors are high up in the socio-political order. These are those who need to be publicly ridiculed on the Galle Face Green.

The basic humanist cure is a truly people-centred political and social order. The "democratic" form of socio-political society is class-structured and elite-directed. The "communist" form of society is party centred and great leader-directed. Both forms are corruptive. What humanists seek is real, vital, popular participation at all levels—not merely at the level of public-function mass rallies of people (thousands who lined up to weep on April 21 lined up again to cheer on May 1 for the mass rally enjoys the opportunity of mass hoodwinking).

The humanist cure—though the humanist sometimes looks like an over-romantic girl butterfly—is radical and revolutionary. Only such a cure will effectively cure corruption.

Paul Caspersz.

Kandy,
13.5.73

* * *

Sir,

The first anniversary of the Republic of Sri Lanka is, I feel, an appropriate day to share what I came across in a book entitled "The Prayers of Peter Marshall" edited by his wife Catherine Marshall. Under the above caption, is stated the

following prayer for the "Leaders of the Nation":—

"Our Father, bless, we pray Thee, the leaders of this nation (America) Strengthen the courage of the representatives in Congress assembled—sincere men who want to do the right, if only they can be sure what is right. Make it plain to them, O Lord. And then wilt Thou start them out on the right way, for knowest that we are hard to burn.

"Forgive them for the blunders they have committed, the compromises they have made. Give to them the courage to admit mistakes. Take away from us as a nation and as individuals that stubborn pride which, followed by conceit, imagines itself to be above and beyond criticism.

"Save our leaders, O God, from themselves and from their friends—even as Thou hast saved them from their enemies.

"Let no personal ambition blind them to their opportunities.

"Help them to give battle to hypocrisy wherever they find it.

"Give them divine common sense and a selflessness that shall make them think of service and not of gain."

* * *

"May they have the courage to lead the people of this Republic, considering unworthy the expediency of following the people.

"Save them from the folly of man-made schemes and plans. Give to them the faith

and courage together to seek God's inspired plan and, finding it, to propose it, knowing that when it is God-inspired, Thou wilt open the way for it through all obstacles.

"As Thou hast made and preserved us a nation, so now mould us into a people more worthy of a great heritage.

"In Thy strong name we make these prayers—Amen."

I am aware that the Leaders of Sri Lanka are not all of them Christians. However, it may not be out of place for those of us who are Christians to remember our Leaders and all those in authority in our prayers for our Nation—Sri Lanka—as did Peter Marshall for his great nation—America.

Our Leaders need our warm-hearted prayers, and those of us who are Christians should pay attention to what the Rt. Rev. G. N. Luxton D.D., L.L.D., Sixth Bishop of Luxton, has expressed thus:—

"I have never belonged to a political party, and have always felt that the Government in power was my Government, to be prayed for devoutly and to be supported and criticised according to its deserts."

Sam T. Abeyesckera.

Colombo 15.
20.5.73

IS IT TRUE?

Sherlock Holmes

* On Smuggled Chillies

* Milk Board Purchases

IS IT NOT TRUE that the Army has caught several boat-loads of chillies being smuggled from India into Ceylon in recent times? That in one instance a whole lorry-load was caught in the Elephant Pass sector? That the crew of the lorry had run away? That this abandoned lorry has not been claimed by anyone? That the registered owner had stated that this lorry had been stolen from him and that he had notified the authorities of the loss well before the lorry was seized?

That chillies in India are still selling around Rs. 1.50 to Rs. 2.00 a kilo (2.2 lbs)? That smugglers would carry across the stuff for a fee around Rs. 2 to Rs. 3 a kilo? That an "importer" would thus be able to get a kilo of dried chillies from India for about Rs. 4 to Rs. 5 a kilo? That he had to take the risks of seizure? That on an average, according to underworld gossip, one shipment in ten was caught by the Army, Navy, Police or the Customs? That this would add about another Rs. 2 to the shipments which got through? That for Rs. 6 to Rs. 7 a kilo a person, with capital and the right connections, could get chillies from India? That

these chillies could be sold to Government at the "guaranteed" price of Rs. 17 a kilo?

That all that this person had to do was to sell these smuggled chillies to the Government stating that he had cultivated them? That on the clue of the seized lorry near Elephant Pass, Sherlock is convinced that Government should launch an investigation to find out whether some of the persons in the Anuradhapura District, who had "supplied" a record crop to the Government at the end of the last season had not really supplied chillies which they had obtained from India through unofficial channels? That this was easier than growing chillies? That after discounting for the risks the profit was one hundred percent (100%)? That at least in the case of one big supplier to Government Sherlock is convinced that he had not produced the record crop he is alleged to have produced?

IS IT NOT TRUE that the story in the *Aththa* about the Milk Board purchases of milk powder have not been denied? That the *Aththa* of June 4 had stated that a Belgian

supplier had complained to the Prime Minister that though its tender was the lowest it had been rejected by the bosses of the Milk Board for "corrupt" reasons? That this 50-year old firm, *May Mondt & De Praet*, claimed to be one of the world's leading suppliers of milk products? That its representative had shown that at the price it had tendered the Board would have been able to sell a pound of milk powder for Rs. 4.75. That at this price the Board would be making a nett profit of 25 cents a pound after paying for all the normal expenses including the salaries of all the employees in the Milk Board? That if the Government did not charge FECCs on milk powder imports, the Board would be able to sell a pound at Rs. 3.26 and yet have a profit of 25 cents a pound?

That the *Aththa* also reported that the successful tenderer was a firm with a name **FREDDY BAINES**? That from all reports and accounts it is said that this firm (Freddy Baines) does not manufacture or produce milk powder? That at best this firm is no more than a firm of brokers and commission agents? That the *Aththa* reproduced the telegram which this firm had sent to the PM when its tender which was the lowest was rejected out of hand by the Board? That this firm further claims that its product was of the highest quality with all the required specifications about full cream being fully complied with? That the tender in question was for 4000 (four thousand) tons?