

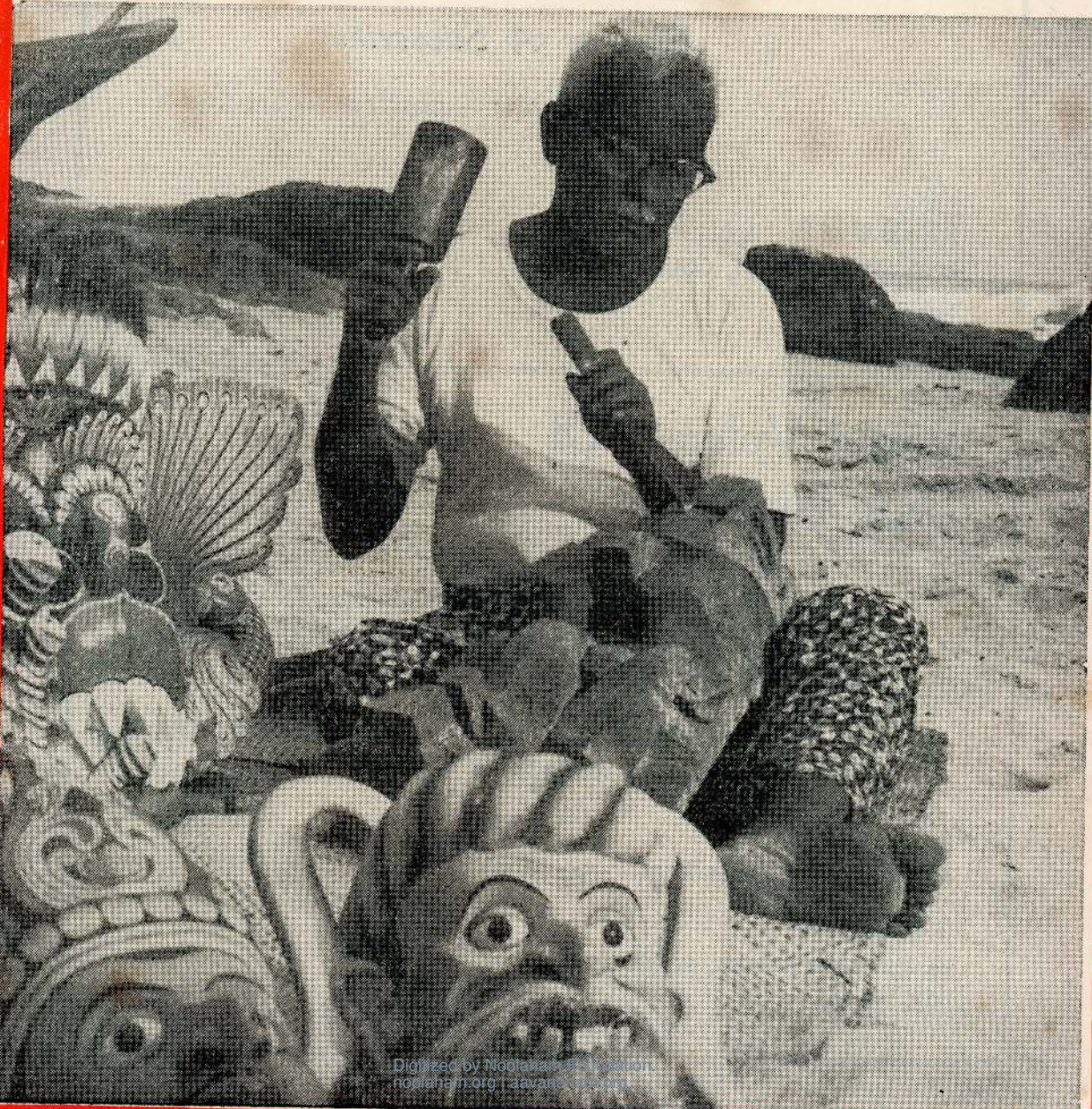
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Letter From The Editor

SRI LANKA is famous for its masks and it is a good thing that a new fillip is being given to the mask-making industry by their popularity among tourists and buyers abroad. But it is not the commercial and export aspects of masks that interest us—masks hide but portray stylised personalities. Mask dancing is an intricate art of symbolic expression, but there is no mystery about the whole business. Not like the recurring talk of Cabinet reshuffles. The *Sud-Divasa* group of papers and the *Virakesari* have been announcing a major reshuffle nearly every weekend. The reports of such a reshuffle immediately after February 4 increased in volume and frequency and at times were evidently highlighted with a touch of hysteria that stemmed from wishful thinking about much-desired changes. So far there has been no major reshuffle. But there may well be reshuffle before this issue is on the newstands. As we had often indicated, a reshuffle when and if it ever comes will be no more than a switching of departments and functions. The simple position seems to be that the UNP does not seem to have any new talent besides the Ministers already chosen—and some of the younger and newer elements are not likely to make the grade. There are already over a hundred Ministers—Cabinet Ministers, Deputy Ministers, Subject (or Project) Ministers, District Ministers—in a parliamentary group of 148. The transfer of departments from one Minister to another is likely to take place sooner or later, but this will be gradual and hardly perceptible. Take the case of Education. After the examinations stink-bomb and the mess in the entire field of education, Higher Education was taken over by the President. The Administration Service in Education was handed over to Lionel Jayatilleke who continued to be Deputy Minister of Education and also functions as the Minister of Educational Services. Similar changes may be expected in the near future in other Ministries. In the meantime, this country is sinking deeper and deeper into economic crisis. Nature has also been harsh. The drought persists—and all interested should read the articles by V. Buvanasingham in *Tribune* about the changing rainfall patterns as set out in the articles entitled JETS AND RAINS. This week he has written about the Solar Eclipse which falls today. He has not touched on the astrological implications of this solar eclipse. Nobody had, however, expected this aspect to be discussed in Marxist China—but *Reuter* in a despatch from Peking on January 22 stated: "A total eclipse of the sun will take place over south-west China on the Lunar New Year's day on February 16, which according to popular superstition foretells catastrophe, the *New China News Agency* (NCNA) said yesterday. It said it would be the last total solar eclipse visible over China until the year 2007. Superstition among the local people has it that an eclipse on New Year's day foretells catastrophe and is an ill-omen; NCNA said without feeling constrained to criticise the belief." Our Astrologers have so far not said anything about this eclipse but they will. What they say, Sri Lanka has difficult days ahead.

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Tea, Planters & Coconuts

Colombo, Feb. 12.

The Editor made a sentimental journey to Nuwara Eliya last weekend—mainly to see the state of the Tea Plantations and also to meet a cross section of tea planters who are known for their professional competence. There was a touch of nostalgia in the visit because in the fifties and early sixties, the Editor had known the tea districts and happenings in the plantations intimately on a professional basis. Thereafter the visits had been fewer.

In recent weeks *Tribune* has spotlighted part of the mess that is the tea industry today. *Tribune* had received so many conflicting and contradictory versions of the state of affairs in the tea plantations that the Editor thought it necessary to go up to the hills to acquaint himself at first hand about the real situation. On the way up the Editor also dropped in to see the NLDB Rosita Cattle Farm at Kotagala where neglected calves are salvaged from dairies which slaughter-milk cows leaving no milk for the calves and which thereafter are brought up to standard and sold to dairymen when they are certified pregnant. We were impressed by the splendid work being done by a few dedicated men. This project merits a special article—which we will write when the photographs are processed and space becomes available in the *Tribune*.

In the same way we will write about a modern cheese-making plant we saw at Bogahawatte (a little off Kotagala) where we sampled top rate Cheddar-Swiss type of Cheese which is undoubtedly of international standard. It is the best locally made cheese we have tasted—and with this cheese no one needs to bother about imported cheese. The Milk Board cheese is sub-standard compared to this, and understandably the little plant at Bogahawatte is unable to cope with the demand although it has not yet chosen a brand name. The young man and wife who run this place with such success want to expand production and improve quality before choosing a brand

name. At present they are daily processing 800 litres of milk into 100 lbs. of Cheese, but they soon hope to handle 1500 litres of milk a day.

Whilst in Nuwara Eliya, we also took the opportunity to visit the New Zealand Farm which has been miraculously salvaged from a decrepit condition into a marvel of place with 800 odd Dutch Freisans. This was a farm where a large number of cattle, specially imported from New Zealand, had found their graves. Nestling under the brow of Horton Plains, the NLDB Farm is today something on which much can be written. And we will do this soon.

COMING TO TEA PLANTATIONS the Editor was pleasantly surprised that the vast majority, if not all, the estates in the Nuwara Eliya district are in excellent condition—agriculturally. But on the way up we found the whole stretch of the Watawala valley in bad state of neglect and desolation—where afforestation is the only way to profitably use the land. There is no reason, however, why the whole valley cannot be turned into pasture land for livestock. Buffaloes roamed the Watawala valley right up to the Great Western range in the days before the phill country was cleared for tea—and they can do the same again under scientific management.

Most of the tea estates on the road from Ginigathena—estates that were classified as grade one just seven or eight years ago—are in the most miserable state of neglect—large and numerous vacancies, erosion, coarse leaves (because of missed plucking rounds or wrong pruning), diseased bushes etc. etc. This was the state right up to Kotagala from which there were increasingly good patches of tea. There was a little more improvement past Talawakelle and Lindula and by the time we reached Radella area, we felt that all was not lost in our tea plantations. The estates were as good or even better than in the past.

We hope to be soon able to visit the Hatton-Bogawantalawa, Uda Pusselawa, Uva (right up to Madulsima) regions and then down Ramboda to Gampola and Galaha, finally after that, the Mutale-Madulkelle areas. This is not only to have an idea of the present state of the plantations left in tea after the

Land Reform and Nationalisation exercises but also to meet a cross section of the professional planters still left in the country—many of our best have been driven to seek employment in India, Uganda, Kenya, Malawi, Malaysia, Indonesia and now Sabah.

We made this journey into our tea lands because, for another three to five decades, this country has to depend on tea and rubber as a main foreign-exchange earner. It will be a long time before coconut can earn anything at all—the danger of having to import coconuts, predicted in 1968, has already become an imminent reality. Minor export crops are good as side lines. Gems may help—but smuggling, cheating and tax-free incentives leave little for the Treasury. Tourism is a mirage where nobody knows the real nett earnings because ninety percent of the needs of the tourists are imported. Tourism is parasitic, and, as it has happened in many countries, it can be transitory.

Sri Lanka has no known mineral resources to become a major industrial country and the only really substantial source of wealth is agriculture—in the developed plantations (tea, rubber and coconut), in the non-plantation agricultural sector and in livestock. Livestock is once again in an embryonic state of growth, after the decimation under Land Reform and the misdeeds of the Department of Agriculture during the last decade, and it will take another 10 years or more for results—and that is if no stupid mistakes are made at governmental or other levels. Non-plantation agriculture is today lost in a quagmire of under-utilisation of already irrigated and cultivable land with low productivity and obsolete methods of cultivation. Mahaveli should show profitable results for another twenty to thirty years, and even after the construction works are complete, these lands may suffer the same unhappy fate as lands in other major irrigation schemes—under-utilisation and wasteful use of water. In the mass euphoria about free imports and tourism nearly everyone in authority has forgotten the need to strengthen our non-plantation agricultural sector.

IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, all thinking persons will realise the need to pay the greatest attention to our plantations. We hope to meet planters in a few other districts and

regions before we make our final conclusions, but after the Nuwara Elya visit, one compelling thought has come to the forefront—that if the government will only consult the professionals trained and tested in the industry, solutions to the present difficulties will be found easily. In the early years of the transition from the old order to the new, there were frustrations and misunderstandings that stemmed from wrong decisions, victimisation, discrimination, favouritism and the like which had made many professionals a little sour. Some had resented the passing away of the old order. Today, most, if not all, have accepted the new and want to make it work. They do not want to go back to the old agency system because they know the weaknesses of that system and the difficulties of resurrecting an agency system that had been thrown out because of the malpractices and abuses the system had spawned.

Most planters we met feel that the existing two organisations—JEDB and SPC—should be streamlined and defects removed to make the plantations yield better results. They feel that this can be done without going into another traumatic experiment of subjecting the industry to go under eight Corporations—like agency houses of old. In the first round of discussions the Editor had, he was able to identify the matters that need rectification, the sectors that had to be strengthened and urgent reforms that had to be carried out.

Before the Editor goes into these matters in a more detailed way in subsequent issues, there is one thing that cannot be delayed, and that is that the professional planters should be consulted by government as how the plantation industry can be improved. The Ceylon Planters Society should come out of its introverted shell of being interested in only narrow trade union problems like salaries, terms of employment, termination of employment etc. and come forward as a body of professionals to help Government to find solutions to urgent problems in the industry. Salaries and terms of employment are important but this should be made subordinate to the urgent need to put the industry on a proper footing.

The government, for its part, must not depend on over-rated bureaucrats (however good their public relations in making Ministers and MPs happy) who cannot fit into even the new kind of provincial or district administration envisaged under the New Constitution of 1978 and its amendments. Such bureaucrats must be kept in their place to do some bureaucratic paper work (and not be allowed to fashion policy by being asked to write reports on which to formulate policy). The real policy must be done by pragmatic and realistic political leaders who have the vision and capacity to look beyond the next two or three general elections and make bold decisions in the interests of the country and the people as a whole. This is a matter the President can ill-afford to leave to bureaucrats who have outlived their usefulness or Ministers who cannot see beyond having petty little empires to provide employment for favourites. The President has to act.

LEAVING TEA ASIDE FOR A MOMENT, we must refer to coconuts. In the *Ceylon Daily News* of Thursday, February 7, a report on the first page under the banner headline **COCONUT WILL COST RS. 25 EACH IN TEN YEARS: RONNIE**, stated: "Finance Minister Ronnie de Mel stunned a crowd at Devinuwara when he told them that Sri Lanka would have to import coconuts within the next ten years at Rs. 25 a nut. Speaking on Independence eve to a crowd which included agricultural extension officers the minister said the overall condition of the 110,000 acres of coconut lands in the district left much to be desired. Some estates which could produce 10,000 nuts a year were barely managing to produce 1000 nuts. That type of neglect, irrespective of the fact that the government provided an 85 percent fertilizer subsidy and other handsome planting subsidies, would lead to a situation within the next few years where Lanka would have to import coconuts. By that time coconuts in the world market would be around Rs. 25 a nut at the very lowest. When a section of the gathering showed their disbelief at this statement, Mr. de Mel told them that it was no laughing

matter. Emphasising the urgency that promoted governments to place agricultural development on a war footing with Rs. 4,500 million budget allocation this year, Mr. de Mel said that development in every other sphere would be virtually negated if there was no corresponding rate of agricultural development. The overall budget allocation for 1980 for agricultural development and irrigation including areas of the Mahaweli scheme was Rs. 23,000 million. Hitherto, other governments had not allocated more than Rs. 7,000 million for this area of development. Ultimately agricultural development would prove to be the backbone of Sri Lanka's economic well-being, he said. The Minister called on the 12,000 farm families in Devinuwara to ensure maximum agricultural development including the areas of minor export crops. Because of a lack of national dedication and a full awareness of current world conditions many of the farmers had yet to apply themselves fully to agricultural development. As a result Sri Lanka had to import food and overseas farmers were earning the millions of rupees. All these millions could be earned by the farmers here if they exerted themselves as foreign farmers did, he said."

Although many think that the Minister's statement is an outrageous attempt to steal a headline, there is no doubt that what he said is the truth. In fact, coconuts will cost Rs. 25 each in much less than ten years from now. Today the price of a coconut on world market prices should be Rs. 6 each, but the local consumer is being subsidised at the expense of the producer by banning exports. This cannot go on for long.

Over ten years ago it had been pointed out that unless a full replanting programme was launched immediately, this country would be compelled to import coconuts for consumption by the mid-eighties. With the massacre and decimation of coconut trees under Land Reform the date for the debacle has been advanced. Admittedly, an effort is being made from 1978-79 to replant in the Coconut Triangle area—the same effort has not been made in other areas.

But in the Coconut Triangle a drought has brought disaster. Drought condition have become a recurring feature. The government

is passively waiting for rain that is not likely to fall at least in certain parts of the Triangle—as the series of articles in the *Tribune* by V. Buvanandaram entitled JETS AND RAIN show. The rainfall belt has shifted—but the authorities have not woken up to this fact. However, the last 3 or 4 years have shown how fickle and uncertain rain is.

The only answer to save the young replanted trees in a substantial portion of what is regarded as the Coconut Triangle are tube-wells. Ground-water is available in plenty in the area. All surveys have shown this. A tube well recently sunk near Marawila is pumping out vast quantities of water everyday.

Why the Government and its numerous agencies (WRB, ADA, Coconut Ministry) have not launched a massive campaign to sink tube wells is difficult to understand. Millions of young coconut trees, many of them planted on government subsidies, are fast dying because of lack of water. These trees could have been saved and many can still be saved if tube wells are sunk and water is provided.

Government should hold someone to task for this act of gross negligence in not providing tube well water in the Coconut Triangle. (The *Tribune* Investigator who had dealt with the Water Resources Board explanations for its total inactivity has been out of the island. On his return soon he will pick up from where we left to show the fraud the Water Resources Board is and how it is trying to cover up its sad defaults by a massive gimmick about IPIL IPIL which certain countries have banned because if eaten in excessive quantities by cattle brings impotency and infertility).

One silver lining has however appeared on the agricultural horizon—viz., the decision of the Trade Minister to regulate imports in connection with a system of guaranteed floor prices for essential subsidiary food crops produced here. If this scheme had been adopted no sooner the government launched its new economic policies of free enterprise—as *Tribune* had often suggested—the cost of living and inflation would have been curbed as domestic production would have grown.

If reasonable floor prices are fixed producers will respond, but if bureaucrats per-

versely continue to make the "mistakes" they have made in working out costs of production, the new scheme will turn out to be one more flop—and this government has already many to its credit. It is time that the government starts restoring credibility in its undertakings. If the Trade Minister's new (and welcome) policies maintain an even-handed balance between consumer and producer, then Government's credibility in several important sectors will improve.

* * *

SRI LANKA CHRONICLE

Jan. 31 — Feb. 03

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

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

THURSDAY, JANUARY 31: Sri Lanka has no alternative but to continue importing crude and refined oil despite the heavy burden cast on the country by these imports, Petroleum Corporation Chairman Daham Wimalasena said yesterday. President J. R. Jayewardene yesterday directed Transport Minister M. H. Mohamed to set up a special committee to examine the working hour of public service employees and their lunch breaks, taking into account representations trade unions leaders made to him at a conference on Tuesday—CDN. The government yesterday decided to subsidise by 75 per cent sails for fishing craft to encourage fishermen taking to sailing boats again; the proposal was made by the Minister of Fisheries, Festus Perera in view of the spiralling cost of fuel and to give local fishermen assistance of re-

verting to sailing boats. The Sri Lanka Army has started a paratroopers unit consisting of over 30 men trained at the Indian Army Training School in Andhra Pradesh—CDM. Leave entitlements of all state sector employees, pruned by the Government recently, will be reviewed by a committee headed by Transport Minister M. H. Mohamed, Cabinet decided yesterday. A special police unit is to be formed shortly to provide maximum security for tourists visiting Sri Lanka. The Government has decided to increase the Employees Provident Fund interest rate from $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent to 10 percent—SU. The Ministry of Trade and Shipping has come to know of a secret trade pact between a group of Indian—Sri Lankan traders; the main function of this group is to see that imported consumer goods are spoiled so that the prices of these items will go up in the country; when prices are up in the local market traders telex their Indian counterparts who delay the shipments ordered by the CWE—DV. The Labour Department has decided to re-introduce the cost of living allowance which was suspended by the government last September; this will come into effect from December—LD. The President has decided to postpone the Cabinet re-shuffle till March as he has not been able to get a number of Ministers to resign from the Cabinet; only limited changes are expected from the forthcoming Cabinet re-shuffle—JD. Minister of Finance, Ronnie de Mel has refused to give a supplementary estimate of Rs. 180 million to the PM for his housing projects; he has pointed out that money must be invested in projects which will give returns in the near future—DK.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 1: President J. R. Jayewardene yesterday directed that historic buildings in Colombo should not be destroyed in the course of modernising the city; the President toured parts of Colombo yesterday accompanied by his wife, Prime Minister R. Premadasa and Colombo Mayor Sirisena Cooray during which he inspected some of the ancient buildings and also some city development projects; Mr. Jayewardene later said a committee would be appointed to advise the Government on the conservation of historic buildings in Colombo. Sri Lanka will have the first floating hotel in the East—and

it will be ready in the first half of next year. The Industrial Development Board is now engaged in popularising five fuel-saving devices invented by it. IDB Chairman Abdul Rahman said yesterday. President J. R. Jayewardene will pay an official visit to the Tangalle electorate tomorrow. The Secretary, Ministry of Agricultural Development and Research yesterday said the Brown plant hopper pest which was reported to be attacking paddy cultivation in various parts of the country was now under control—CDN. In the context of the present international situation, it is highly unlikely that the Dalai Lama, the spiritual head of Tibet, will be encouraged to visit Sri Lanka. Drastic changes in the Fauna and Flora Protection law to conserve and protect the environment and natural resources and sanctuaries will be introduced soon—CDM. The authorities responsible for compelling TV owners to pay a rental of Rs. 250 now want the Attorney General's opinion about the legality of their action. The Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries will push towards reaching a uniform pricing formula for oil for the benefit of developing countries, when it meets in Baghdad in September this year, Iraq's Religions Affairs Minister Nuri Faizal Shahir said yesterday; Mr. Shahir, was in Sri Lanka as the head of a seven-member delegation attending the Hijra celebrations at the BMICH—SU. Action is being taken to institute legal action against the 21 Tamil youths now in custody in connection with the terrorist activities which took place in the North—VK. The government has decided to set up a rice processing development institute to stop the wastage of rice and to produce better rice for consumption; Rs. 180 million worth of rice is wasted or spoiled each year. Experts have predicted that if the present weather conditions prevail for some more time this year paddy harvests will be very much less than last year; officials of the Agricultural Ministry agrees that this year harvest will be less than last year but says the downfall will not be less than 3% because of the irrigation projects all over the country—DV. The Chairman of the Gem Corporation has stated that though sale of "Garuda" brings millions of rupees of foreign revenue to the country it has become a threat to the local gem industry; the

market for local gems had decreased considerably because of the demand for "garuda"—DM. About 3,000 to 4,000 man hours are wasted each day because public officers do not come to work in time. The minister of Industries and Scientific Affairs will spend Rs. 120 million to import machinery to produce the substitutes for LP gas; the Ceylon Gas Company has unable to cope with the demand for LP Gas as more people have converted to gas with the recent price increase of kerosene oil—LD.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 2: Transport Minister M. H. Mohamed yesterday named a nine-member committee to be headed by his Additional Secretary R. V. Rupasinghe to examine the working hours of public servants and review the pruning of leave of government clerks from 46 to 21 days; the Minister's move is a sequel to President J. R. Jayewardene's directive to the Transport Minister at Wednesday's Cabinet meeting to appoint such a committee in the light of the representations made to him by trade union leaders early this week. Sri Lanka is now turning to the European Economic Community for its supplies of wheat flour; already contracts have been signed for the supply of about 86,000 tons this year. Sri Lanka's balance of trade position as at end of November 1979, according to latest statistics, indicates a cumulative trade deficit of Rs. 6,671 million, the highest recorded in recent years. Visiting Belgian Minister of Development Co-operation, Mr. Marc Eyskens said yesterday that his government would set up a resident diplomatic mission in Colombo headed by a Charge d' Affairs and will also give Sri Lanka an outright non-repayable grant of Rs. 50 million in US dollars—CDN. Leaders of Parties represented in Parliament will soon meet to consider the question of MPs exercising restraint in making statements on the floor of the house which affect other MPs, public officials and members of the Public. The Government Medical Officer's Association has written to the Director of Health Services, Dr. H. A. Jesudasan protesting against the appointment of foreign doctors to those stations where there are suitable bungalows with facilities such as electricity, water supply etc.; the Association states that these appointments have caused unrest among its members

particularly because these stations were never offered to them—CDM. The Defence Ministry will call for a full probe into the sudden disappearance from the Port of Colombo of the Pakistani cargo vessel, M. V. Hnglaj; the Police who had planned a swoop on the "Hnglaj" yesterday morning, following last Thursday's discovery of undeclared firearms aboard the ship, found to their amazement that the merchantman had left during the night. The Tamil United Liberation Front will boycott National Day celebrations on February 4—SU. A section of Hindus have objected to marriages being held in Hindu temples saying it goes against the religion; as a result of this propaganda a few temples in Jaffna have stopped marriages being held. The World Bank and many foreign countries have offered to finance the restoration of nearly 3,000 ancient tanks in the country; these will be restored from this year to 1983—VK. It has been estimated that the cost of importing essential food stuffs like rice, sugar and flour will go up three times from this year—DP. The reason for the fuel price increase is said to be because of the clash between Finance Minister Ronnie de Mel and the PM Mr. R. Premadasa; ultimately the Finance Minister has requested a 30% price increase of fuel to find money for the extra allocation requested by the PM for housing projects which was granted by the President—DK.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 3: But for the policy of liberalised imports, tax incentives, controlled subsidies and a development program never before contemplated either by the government or the private sector, it would not have been possible to stop the nation from going under a sea of oil and consumer goods price rises; President J. R. Jayewardene declared at Ranna (near Tangalle) yesterday. Finance and Planning Minister Ronnie de Mel has sounded a siren, warning the higher echelons of the administration that unmanageable budget deficits and uncontrollable inflation would result by 1981-82, unless strong measures were immediately adopted to cut out unnecessary expenditure and waste in the economy. Sri Lanka Christian leadership is taking an initiative in trying to tackle what many people regard to be a rising

tide of communalism and a growing estrangement between the country's Sinhalese and Tamil people—SO. "I feel in many aspects of our economic life, we have to consider placing ourselves on a war footing", said the President, Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, at a mass rally held at Tangalle yesterday following the inauguration of a water supply scheme for Tangalle electorate—ST. President Jayewardene speaking in Tangalle yesterday said it would not be possible to continue paying large sums of money for kerosene, flour and bread neither could the government go on subsidising these items; therefore local substitutes have to be found and the government was taking action in this regard—CM. The government has decided to sell millions of rupees worth of machinery and equipment to the private sector in a bid to get the private sector participation in massive development projects launched by the government; some equipment worth millions of rupees which need minor repairs are lying idle because government laws prevent them from being repaired—SLDP.

X X X

LETTER

Citrus Cultivation

Sir,
The CDN of 4.12.79 carried a front-page article on above which mentioned the citrus rehabilitation programmes in lower Uva viz., Bibile and Moneragala.

There are two JEDB Rubber estates in Moneragala and both these estates put out lime nurseries in September 1979. They did not use any imported seed variety, but the local lime seeds that are common in Moneragala. At present there are approximately 75,000 lime plants 6-8 inches high in polythene bags at these estates and the two estates have spent approximately Rs. 50,000/- on this project. As mentioned in the CDN of 4.12.79 the estates were also under the impression that those lime plants would be used for an estate-village integration programme. Now it is in er.d of first week of December and the Maha Season rains to lower Uva but the lime plants are still at these estates.

The estate authorities say that the ADA will be handling the distribution of these seedlings. Then another says that Mr. Pratt a foreign expert on citrus has advised the ADA and estate that the lime plants are too small for planting in December. Now the situation is that these lime plants will be left behind at the estates neglected and forgotten. By next Maha Season October 1980 these plants will be too big for planting and I wonder what the expert's advice would be then!

It is to my knowledge that so many persons, village societies etc., had requested these lime plants from the estates but the estate was not authorised to distribute them. These experts local or foreign forget the fact that the planting season in Bibile and Moneragala area is October-December in keeping with the Maha rains. It is time the authorities take due note of this "lime" situation in Moneragala and take prompt action to distribute these lime plants to small scale village cultivators for home gardening. There is a rumour that a few big time businessmen of Moneragala and Bibile are making an effort to obtain the entire stock of lime plants by using their influence so that these could be sold at black market prices with huge profits margins. Those of the ADA and JEDB please note, interested parties who care for public money are watching your steps, your plans but people's money, so be careful when handling. Distribute the lime plants immediately to the peasants and village societies, welfare organisations in the district etc.

Loghead

Lower Uva Area,

NEXT WEEK

ARTIFICIAL RAIN

—IN SRI LANKA

MINI HYDRO-POWER STATIONS

—KAHAWITA

AFGHANISTAN

—MORE REPORTS

UPALI WIJewardhana

The Powerful Political Star Rising in the Political Horizon of Sri Lanka

A new and very powerful Political Star is now rising in the Political Horizon of Sri Lanka and he is going to play a very dominant role in deciding the political and economic future of this country. He is no small "Podien" to be easily dismissed. He is yet in his forties and is the proprietor and managing director of a group of Companies. He is the most successful businessman and entrepreneur that Sri Lanka has so far produced. He has even captured the international market with numerous products that bear his name: Upali Products. He is, in fact, the wealthiest capitalist in Sri Lanka today, if not in the whole of South East Asia. He has not only worldwide economic power but he does also possess very strong family traditions and family connections which undoubtedly qualify him to instant rise in the political leadership of this country. He is a very close relation of the late Mr. D. R. Wijewardhana, the founder of Lake House Group of News Papers which played a predominant role in the fight for political independence during the Colonial era. He is also a very close relation of His Excellency Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, the First Executive President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka. He is also very closely related to Mr. & Mrs. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike two former Prime Ministers of Sri Lanka. He also happens to be the Chairman of the Greater Colombo Economic Commission. Moreover, he is the Diyawadana Nilame of the Kelaniya Raja Maha Vihara which sacred place the Buddha, the Perfectly Enlightened Blessed One is said to have visited thrice.

Thus **Upali Wijewardhana** has all the necessary economic power, family traditions and connections and the inborn and inherent fortune to rise to the highest Governmental pinnacle of this country. The people of his birth place—Kamburupitiya—want him as their Member of Parliament. The posters that appeared in the Electorate recently indicated

to that effect. There are bribery charges against the present MP for Kamburupitiya Mr. Albert Silva. The Speaker of the Parliament has allowed the Bribery Commissioner to investigate into the charges. If the Kamburupitiya Seat falls vacant it is very much likely that **Mr. Upali Wijewardhana** would be appointed as the new MP for Kamburupitiya. From then onwards his meteoric rise in the political ladder would begin. No sooner than he becomes a Member of Parliament he would be made either the Minister of Finance or Minister of Trade. And being a highly successful international businessman he has all the necessary qualifications and even more to hold either one of those Ministries or even both of them. It would not be a wonder even if he is appointed Deputy Prime Minister next to Premadasa Ranasinghe by the creation of such a post. **Upali Wijewardhana** may even become the Second Executive President of Sri Lanka after J.R. He is such a fortunate man, indeed.

Bandula Sri Gunawardhana
Founder-President

*World Government Movement
Organizer.*

*Niyama Dharmista Pakshayo
(Real Righteous Party)*

270, Park Road,
Colombo 5.
1980-1-27

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FOR THE PUBLIC GOOD

QUESTION TIME

by *Grassroots*

Grassroots welcomes the decision of this journal to devote a few pages in each of its issues for *Questions of Public importance* similar to the *Questions* that M.PPs can ask Ministers in Parliament. Today, people have very little time to read and even regular readers want the writer to "get to the point" quickly without all the padding or beating about the bush. In this background, *Grassroots* has a few questions to ask in his column in this issue.

Question 1. Can Upali Wijewardene continue to function as the GCEC boss?

It is reliably understood that the Select Committee of Parliament (headed by the Prime Minister Mr. Premadasa) that has to screen and approve all High level appointments to Public Sector institutions has decided that it CANNOT recommend Upali Wijewardene to hold his job as the Director-General of the GCEC. This decision was reached recently. Other members of this Select Committee include Mr. Ananda Tissa de Alwis (Minister of State), Mr. Ronnie de Mel (Minister of Finance and Planning), Mr. Amirthalingam, Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Maitripala Senanayake, SLFP MP, Dr. Ranjit Atapattu MP, Shelton Ranaraja MP etc.

Readers may recall that about an year ago when the GCEC top brass came before the Select Committee for "screening and approval" no final decision was arrived at. At that time it was rumoured that Upali Wijewardene and Mr. Paul Perera "did not see eye to eye" on many matters. The Select Committee postponed their screening and their decision whether to approve or not to approve. When Upali Wijewardene came to bat before the Select Committee on the second occasion he was ruled to be unfit to hold the job as GCEC boss while the other Directors including Paul Perera got the green light.

Now people say that there can be a deadlock. The President is in charge of the GCEC. He has two courses open to him. First to accept the findings of the Select Committee and ask Upali Wijewardene to step down gracefully. Or, he could ignore the Select Committee's findings and ask Upali Wijewardene to continue. If he does this it is reliably learnt, the Select Committee members may have to resign from their job as Members of the Select Committee. It will be an insult to them if their findings are not acted upon. If this happens a credibility gap will be created in the public minds as to the Code of Conduct enunciated by the UNP Government.

The findings of the Select Committee on High Level appointments are published as Parliamentary documents. They constitute interesting reading material. We await the

publication of the findings on the GCEC high level appointees. But until the Report is out we understand that the Select Committee was unable to accept as true some of the answers given by Upali Wijewardene. One of the questions he had been asked was whether he was responsible for the Posters that appeared in support of his candidacy for the *Kamburupitiya* seat. These posters were all over that electorate and even in Colombo—some on the Clock Tower in Fort. Upali Wijewardene had denied any connection with these posters and the Select Committee was unable to accept this denial as a true answer.

It may be remembered that of all the high level appointees that appeared before the Select Committee since its establishment in November 1977, only Two have been rejected and had to gracefully resign their top jobs. One was the Chairman of the Film Corporation, Mr. Marasinghe and the other the then Chairman of the CTB, Mr. Irwin Jayasooriya. Both these two individuals were found to be unacceptable and the recommendations of the Select Committee were upheld by the Ministers in Charge of those institutions and the Two appointees in question resigned their jobs. In Mr. Marasinghe's case, since the State Film Corporation came under the President, there is already an established precedent as to why the President, must abide by the decisions of the Select Committee. We have now to wait and see what the outcome will be. Will the President honour the Select Committee findings and prevail upon Mr. Upali Wijewardene to resign or will he ignore these findings. Only Time will tell.

Question 2. Can Public Officers Engage in Business?

CAN PUBLIC OFFICERS engage in business while holding public office? The obvious answer is "NO". But some appear to be openly doing it—carrying on Regardless of the consequences. One need only refer to a large newspaper advertisement appearing in the edition of the *Sunday Observer* of 13th January—advertising *Seiko Quartz Sports 100 Wrist Watches*. According to the advertisement the sole distributor is *Bogstra & De Wildt (Distributors) Ltd., 3rd Floor, Australia Building, Colombo 1—Telephone 26226*. Is this

not the same BOSTRA who is Chairman of the State owned and State controlled JANA-WASA Commission coming under the Ministry of Agriculture—referred to recently during the Budget debate by several M.PPs. as JARA (dirt) Vasa (place). Also referred to as full of old (retired) planters and businessmen of Dutch Burgher descent. The fundamental question we ask in this connection is whether Public Officers can openly engage in business while holding public office?

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Quidnuncs

Of Cabbages and Kings

A QUIDNUNC, according to the Shorter Oxford Dictionary, is "one who is constantly asking 'what now?', 'what news?' hence an inquisitive person, a gossip. The word comes from the Latin, *quid* (what), *nunc* (now)—*what now?*—and is defined in Websters Dictionary as "one who seeks to know all the latest gossip." Our own era, especially in Sri Lanka, is admittedly the Quidnuncs' Golden Age. Gossip is now a marketable commodity. The stories our Quidnuncs bring are based on a substratum of truth and Tribune publishes them only if the fire from which the smoke has arisen has some kind of reality. Apart from a few kite-flying stories to provoke investigation, most stories in this column are enough for a daily paper to go to town with a banner headline.

*A QUIDNUNC FROM THE FORT IN COLOMBO HAS SENT US A NOTE about a very important matter pertaining to the tea industry. This is what he says: "The expose in the article entitled, *What is Happening in our Plantations* (vide, Tribune, 2/2/80) has alarmed many regarding certain changes that are likely to be implemented on the marketing of tea through arbitrary and unwarranted interference with the structure. It is reliably learnt that steps have been taken to transfer 8% of the value of our teas (from some 50 or 60 estates) coming up for auction to a new firm headed by

a person whose controversial record in the trade has been a matter of comment in recent years. Since the major tea plantations are state-owned it is possible to transfer the teas from 50, 100 or even 500 estates to a new broking firm from the old firms by a mere stroke of the pen—a bureaucratic *diktat*. An attempt just before the 1977 elections by this same individual to transfer half the sales of two leading broking firms to a new company which he had floated in association with certain political interests was stopped as a result of certain legal actions taken by the parties affected and the intervention of His Excellency the President of the new Government. However, this same individual, under a new company is now said to have won high favour in certain official quarters. The argument put forward for giving this individual such favoured treatment is that a greater degree of competition was desirable in order to improve the present marketing arrangements for tea. But such favoured treatment to a particular person or firm appears to be the unhappy consequence of tying business with politics. Competition is certainly desirable but not to give selected individuals a ready-made business through political intervention enabling them to make millions every year and rob firms which have sustained the trade for years through hard work.....

"The marketing of tea is to be taken away from firms against whom there are no complaints. The tea trade, like the tea plantations, does need urgent reform to improve performance. For this the marketing structure must be made more effective. Skills have to be updated and more dynamism injected into a new marketing structure. For this purpose what the tea trade requires is not self-appointed experts with political pull. It would be far better for the Government, so say many in responsible circles, to use the leading firms enjoying the goodwill of the tea trade the world over and built over decades of effort by improving the services through upgrading skills of the management and employees and ensuring that they adopt a more positive approach taking into account the total interest of the country and not by mere private interest motivated through mere profit maximisation. All companies dealing

with marketing State produce should be quoted public companies with shares made available to all interested groups....

"It is also understood that further disruptions to the marketing structure are being contemplated judging from the intrigues of a boastful businessman who is causing a great deal of unnecessary distress to other reputable organisations through sharp tongue-twisting alleging that one firm in particular was guilty of breaches in the code of ethics of trade and business. If this is so, wrong-doers should be punished, rather than be victimised by spreading false libellous tidbits which, even in business, are as bad as witch-hunting in politics. It will be very unfortunate if the glib talk of such Machiavellian elements is accepted in official circles in preference to an effective dialogue with tested and reliable heads of reputed firms. Unless the rot is halted at this stage and there is re-thinking among policy-makers the tea industry will suffer. The damage that would be caused by accepting advice from doubtful elements able to use political pull to pay off grudges on others is great. The Sri Lanka tea trade would, if this is tolerated, suffer a major loss. Production in our estates is already in a bad way. Is this to be followed by disruption of the entire market set-up affecting tea? Let wiser counsel even at this eleventh hour prevail and any wrong measures must be corrected without delay."

Tribune's own Investigators report that what the Quidnunc has reported is an understatement of the apprehensions now entertained not only in the private sector of the tea trade but also in the public sector too!

*OUR QUIDNUNC FROM DEMATAGODA has sent in a note about a new CGR tender for locomotives. It will be recalled, he said, that soon after this Government came to power a tender was called for 16 locomotives. The tender was awarded under a German line of credit for 50 or 60 years to the West German firm by the name of Henchel. Soon after this the CGR bought 16 locomotives for cash from Hitachi in Japan—without even asking the West Germans whether they would supply the 16 additional locomotives under the 50-year line of credit. These 16 Hitachi engines,

it was said, were for use on the up-country run and were therefore of a higher horsepower rating (1650 HP). When the locomotives came to the CGR it was found that they were useless for the upcountry as an additional engine was necessary to haul a train with the usual complement of carriages. These engines are now used on the Coast line where cheaper (1000 HP) engines would have sufficed.

And now the CGR has called for a fresh tender for another 16 locomotives. But there is a "catch" in the whole business, so it is alleged: that the specification have been so drawn up and trained that it fits only with a Hitachi product. No other firm in any other part of the world can tender for this—so it is said in the trade and by all the hawks who wait for these tenders like vultures around a Parsee Tower of Silence.

If this is true, is it not something where the Cabinet should intervene? What is the use of Cabinet and Central Bank scrutiny of tenders if they are "fixed" by the specifications for one firm?

*A QUIDNUNC FROM SEDAWATTE informs us that *Tribune* was mistaken in calling Upali Wijewardene a "nephew" of the President. The fact is, says the *Quidnunc*, that Upali is a first cousin of the President—Upali's father and the President's mother were brother and sister.

*A QUIDNUNC FROM THE HEART OF THE WORLD OF COMMERCE in Colombo brought us an interesting story—which *Tribune* has reason (from other sources) to believe is true. Very recently, the tenders for the Victoria Dam in the Mahaweli Project were received in sealed envelopes. Two internationally known firms had submitted tenders both having high-powered local agents. Let us call the firms X and Y. Within twenty four hours of the submission of the tenders—the local agents of firm X had the photostat copies of every page of the tender submitted by firm Y.

Should Sri Lanka, asks the *Quidnunc*, not be proud of the industrial sabotage capability of its business tycoons? Now when it comes to negotiating for the tender after the proposals and prices have been scheduled, pro-

cessed and discussed by the Tender Board and the Central Bank, firm X will have an advantage over Y and, Y will not know—except if they read this column—that the other side would be negotiating from a position of vantage, knowledge and strength.

All's fair in love, war and tenders!

***A QUIDNUNC FROM THE TEXTILE WORLD** is worried that a firm from Pakistan known as SAIGOL BROTHERS is likely to be appointed as Managing Agents of two or three of our Textile factories. The *Quidnunc* wants the government to check on the record and credentials of this firm before any deal is concluded. Among other matters that need investigation is whether the local agents of this SAIGOL BROS., is a firm composed of some former Directors of the Board of Directors of the National Textile Corporation (NTC) which was compulsorily wound up by the Government a few weeks ago. It is felt that some of the old musketeers in the NTC want to creep back to the control through this firm. It is alleged in textile circles that SAIGOL BROS., had been managing agents in India as well as Nigeria but that accusations were made that they ran down the factories for their own benefit and had not looked after them: that as a result the firm had been blacklisted in India and Nigeria.

This story may be false—spread by rivals and competitors—but in the national interest the Government should scrutinize the record and credentials of SAIGOL BROTHERS and their local agents.

***ANOTHER QUIDNUNC FROM THE WORLD OF TENDERS AND SHIPPING** has raised two important queries on the purchases of the Food Department: (a) Why must the Food Department send teams to supplying countries for emergency purchases of wheat, rice and other food items when at the slightest hint suppliers would rush their representatives to Colombo? Is not such purchasing abroad under the plea of Emergency Purchases one way of by-passing, subverting and circumventing the procedures and rules the Government has laid down for Tenders and Purchases over Rs. 1 million in value:

(b) why does the Ministry of Food call for the Tenders for freight abroad—for which a high-powered official goes abroad? Could not these tenders be called in Colombo and the brokerage of 2½% go to Sri Lanka freight brokers or even the local Bureau?

The question has been raised as to who collects this 2½% commission or whether the shipper benefits owing to the anxiety of our bureaucrats to make trips abroad at state expense to conclude such contracts?

TODAY'S

Darkness at Noon

by V. Buvanasundaram

TODAY, 16th February 1980, it will be night at noon in Africa. It was on a day like this in 1916, emerged the second proof of Einstein's curved space-time continuum.

The first was the relativistic precession of the perihelion of planets. This needed no proof since astronomers were already breaking their heads to explain the rotation of Mercury's orbit by an extra 43 seconds per century, than could be explained by the perturbations due to other planets. Einstein calculated it to be 42.9 secs. per century.

The second proof was the bending of light from distant stars, when it passes close to the Sun. A special British expedition was sent to observe this on that occasion, the Germans nor Einstein could not join since they were at war in 1916. Photographs of neighbouring stars confirmed the bending of light near the Sun. When Einstein was asked, what he would say, if his prediction went wrong, his simple reply was, "I would have been surprised."

The third consequence of his theory was that all processes physical, chemical, biological etc., in places of higher gravitational potential must go at a slightly lower rate, or in other words time must flow slower at places of higher potential. On the surface of Sun, the atomic vibrations should be slowed down by 0.000212% and on the tiny Moon increased

by a millionth percent. This expected change in the frequencies of light coming from the Sun is so small that it was difficult to measure, different observers disagreed and some even doubted its truth. White dwarf stars have great mass and small size. A study of the spectral lines of a white dwarf star Sirius B definitely showed this change in frequency and supplied the third proof to Einstein's General Theory of Relativity. This is only an extension to the centuries old, misquoted in philosophy and movement of cyclones Newton's laws of gravitation. He thought them out, when he saw an apple fall in an English Park and Einstein came not to destroy but to fulfil his dreams.

noon at 14.25 hours and will last for about 2 hours but we will hardly notice it, unless we view the Sun through a sooted glass to cut off the glare of the uncovered Sun. No Sri Lankan bird will go to roost in the afternoon. It would be mistaken for a cloudy day.

IN A TOTAL SOLAR ECLIPSE, Moon's disc completely covers Sun's disc, called the photosphere. It is one of the cosmic coincidences, like Bode's numbers that led to the discovery of Asteroids, that the Moon's disc is just the size to cover the disc of the Sun. Bode's numbers are 3,6,12,24,48 etc. double them, add 4 and divide by 10. The results will give the average distance of planets from the Sun in astronomical units. That is taking the distance of the Sun from earth as one.

Today's darkness at Noon will speed out of Africa, across the Arabian sea into Goa in the afternoon, through Hyderabad and leave India at Puri on the east coast. Then through the bay of Bengal into Chittagong in Bangladesh, Gangaw in Burma and Kun Ming in China. There it merges with the darkness of the night. As all eclipses do, it will cover a length of 130 miles and the duration of total darkness will be 2 to 4 minutes. The duration of the last total eclipse seen by us in the morning of June 20th 1955, lasted a little over 4 minutes. This same eclipse in Phillipines on that occasion lasted 7 minutes. That was a rare eclipse that occurs only once in 1200 years. The eclipse that is to occur on 6th July 2163 will even this totality of 7 minutes. That too will not be visible in Sri Lanka as a total solar eclipse. An eclipse repeats itself at a place only once in 365 years.

Number	—	Distance	—	Planet
0.4		0.387		Mercury
0.7		0.723		Venus
1.0		1.000		Earth
1.6		1.524		Mars
2.8		—		Missing
5.2		5.203		Jupiter
10.0		9.530		Saturn
19.6		19.191		Uranus

At the turn of the 19th century, when Bode made this strange discovery, Neptune and Pluto were not discovered. Astronomers, now started looking for the missing planet, between Mars and Jupiter, which should be at about 2.8 astronomical units away from the Sun.

TODAY'S eclipse will also be seen as a partial eclipse in Sri Lanka with 70% of the Sun's disc covered. It will be a similar sight to those who viewed the '55 eclipse from KKS or Matara that time the totality was from Kalutara to Pomparipu in the west and from Timitar to Triyai in the east or better still, the total eclipse that passed over Maldives on Sept. 29th, 1922. Today's partial covering of the Sun's disc will start for us in the after-

On 1st January, 1801, that missing planet was discovered, but it was not much of a planet, only 480 miles across and was given the name Asteroid. Within a few years, three others were discovered and were called Pallas, Juno and Vesta. They all followed a similar but not the same path. Now over 1500 have been discovered and Greek mythology is unable to supply them their names. They are said to be the remnants of a broken up planet that stood in the way of a Comet that had wandered into our solar system. Another of these cosmic coincidences, discovered by Kepler is that the square of the periods of revolution of different planets around the Sun stand in the same ratio as cubes of their distances.

Once accident, twice coincidence, thrice! It is coincidences like these that made Sir. James Jean remark in his book *Physics and Philosophy* that there is a better order in the Universe than on Earth.

THE ORBITS of Earth round the Sun and Moon round Earth are not circular but elliptical and therefore the Moon sometimes appears a little bigger and sometimes a little smaller. If it appears bigger then the total eclipse lasts longer and if it appears smaller then the bright rim of the Sun could be seen and then it is called an annular eclipse. The plane of Moon's orbit does not lie on the plane of the ecliptic, which is the plane on which we and all planets go round the Sun. If it lay on this plane, then we would have a lunar eclipse and a solar eclipse every month. On new moon days, the moon will come between us and the Sun, causing a solar eclipse and on full moon days, we will get between the Sun and the Moon and cause a lunar eclipse.

These two planets do not coincide, they are tilted to each other by an angle of 5 degrees and 8 minutes, so that twice in its orbit taking 28 days, the Moon cuts the plane of the ecliptic at two points. These points are called Nodes, the Node and the Antinode or the ascending Node, when the Moon comes up to cut the plane of the ecliptic and descending node, when it cuts and moves away. Moon's orbit round us remains parallel in space, so that twice an year, these two points of intersection point towards the Sun. It is only then, the Sun, Moon and Earth, all lie in a line and an eclipse can occur. Solar eclipse occurs, when Moon gets in between Sun and Earth and it is a New-Moon day. Lunar eclipse occurs on a Full-Moon day, when we get in between the Sun and the Moon. These two points rotate with respect to earth at the rate of 0.055 degrees per day and would take 18 years to face each point of the zodiac. Being merely points in space and not planets with mass, they are not pulled about by other planets. Their movements are regular, unlike the planets, which at times have relative retrograde movement.

THE CHINESE must have called these points, *Dragon's Head* and *Dragon's Tail*. In Hindu astrology, they are thought of as planets and called *Rahu* and *Kethu*. The founders of Hindu

astrology, they say were the Sun to begin with, followed by Brahma and then 16 Rishis, inclusive of Vyasa, Agastya, Parasara etc. They saw the Universe and the Solar System with the mind's eye, unlike the astrologers, who cannot see, even the ultraviolet and the infra-red rays with their eyes. They saw with their naked eye only Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn and of course the Sun and the Moon.

Uranus was accidentally discovered by Sir William Herschel on 13th March 1781. "This event broke with immemorial traditions and showed astronomy as still young and full of unlooked-for possibilities". The orbit of

ON QUESTIONS

Sir,

Thanks for all the publicity about the letter I wrote concerning "Questions for Ministers."

But you did not emphasize the point that I considered important; namely, that the questions be asked in Parliament. The Minister is bound (by custom, if not by law) to answer questions asked in Parliament—and what he says has to be true.

As you mention in your *Notebook*, journals such as yours can ask all the questions they please and the several Ministers ignore them.

One problem is that according to the practice here only members of the Opposition ask questions in Parliament—and they are so few that the people at large will have difficulty getting in touch with one of them. However, you have contacts, and you may be able to persuade the responsible leaders to do the asking or see that it is done. Perhaps they could appoint a permanent questioner (or Inquirer or Inquisitor).

We shall see how your readers react to your invitation.

Claude R Daly SJ

31, Clifford Place,
Colombo 4.
3 February 1980

Uranus, which was incidentally nearly circular and nearly satisfied Titius-Bode's numbers did not follow Newton's gravitational theory. The perturbations in its orbit could be explained only by postulating the existence of another planet beyond Uranus and Neptune was discovered by J. G. Galle of Berlin on Sept. 23rd 1846. Pluto was discovered at the Lowell Observatory in 1930.

There is no better way of telling astrologers about these undiscovered planets than to postulate planets at these points of intersection and attribute to them, the qualities of these undiscovered planets and modulate them according to their movement and distance. The Rishis never thought Rahu and Kethu were planets like Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn or even as the Sun and the Moon. They did not assign to them any portion of the zodiac as their places of exaltation or ownership. In fact, the five planets, each have two 30 degree divisions for ownership, leaving one each, Leo and Cancer for the Sun and the Moon. The Rishis are said to have done something similar about the Asteroids too, but since Asteroids are comparatively insignificant, it has gone out of Vogue.

LETTERS

:: Medical Examinations

Sir,

In the *Ceylon Daily News* of Friday, January 18, 1980 it is stated under the heading "Setting up of Post-graduate Institute of Medicine Lanka has acted correctly—foreign medical examiners", Professor Ivan Johnston has said that earlier Sri Lankan examiners went to the UK to help on conducting the examinations. I presume that Professor Johnston, if he made such a statement, was referring to the Primary Fellowship Examination of the Royal College of Surgeons of England.

I have been an examiner in Anatomy for the Primary Fellowship Examination of the Royal College of Surgeons, in Sri Lanka, from 1969. In 1974, I examined with Mr. Alan Green, M.S., F.R.C.S., as a Co-examiner in Anatomy in Colombo. Mr. Alan Green on his return to Britain recommended to the Council of

the Royal College of Surgeons that I be invited to examine in Anatomy, to Britain. In January 1976, I had the pleasure of examining in Anatomy with Professor Ivan Johnston and although he too agreed that examiners from Sri Lanka should be invited to UK to examine at the Primary Fellowship Examination of the Royal College of Surgeons of England, this never materialised. To my knowledge no examiner in Anatomy, Physiology or Pathology has been invited to Britain from Sri Lanka since 1969; the first time I was an examiner in Anatomy, to examine at the Primary Fellowship Examination conducted by the Royal Colleges of England, Edinburgh or Glasgow.

Professor Johnston is also alleged to have said that those who 'passed the second primary examination' here, whatever that may mean, would be eligible to sit for the Final Fellowship Examination of the Royal College of Surgeons. As I understand this, it means that anyone who is successful at the Final of the M. S. Examination conducted by the Post-graduate Institute of Medicine of Sri Lanka would be eligible to sit the Final Fellowship Examination of the Royal College of Surgeons without being successful in the Primary Fellowship Examination conducted by the Royal Colleges of Surgeons of England, Edinburgh or Glasgow. This has not been the position so far.

For the benefit of young doctors who are aspiring to becoming Surgeons, it would be useful if Professor Johnston would clarify the position regarding this point of the Final MS Examination (Sri Lanka). I shall be writing myself to Professor Johnston to verify the truth of this.

I shall be most grateful if this letter is published in your esteemed journal so that the correct position would be revealed to the public at large.

Prof. A. D. P. Jayatilaka

47/17, Louis Peiris Mawatha,
Kandy.

21st January 1980.

:: A Day In Court

Sir,

The other day, I, with perhaps two hundred others, were the "accused" in court. Some of us had exceeded the speed limits, others had made too much kass ppu, a few had been caught smuggling stuff out of the country, or into it. Anyway, whether behind iron bars—just a few de perate looking chaps—the rest of us I think were for a sample of quite ordinary—and decent chaps—thee were of course a few ladies too, young, middle aged, one of 80 vintage. Most of us had come to court around nine in the morning, the majority of us succeeded in getting away around four in the afternoon. One must admit there were few unnecessary delays in the administration of justice. It moved swiftly and with dignity. One felt rather like the chaps in an OPD queue must feel as they pass swiftly through the hands of the doctor, who, poor unfortunate chap, can hardly do more than venture a guess at the complaints, and administer some well tried medicine. In the courts too, one felt that no one really was trying to deal with the human problem we all presented. Indeed, all or most of us pleaded guilty and all of us with monotonous regularity were told to pay up—in fines rising from Rs. 75 to near Rs. 800. All one had to do was to pay up and perhaps be naughty again—for actually what would the poor lawyers do if there were not sufficient numbers of us, errant citizens, on whose behalf they plead guilty with steady regularity, and collect perhaps Rs. 25 from each at the end of the day.

There were of course the sadists among the innocents representing the law. One of the men who had to collect the fines from us guilty chaps, announced twice, between the hours of 12 and 2 that he was going to have his lunch and disappeared behind some impenetrable partition—to enjoy, presumably two meals in this period of time. Large numbers of us, stood around and waited. This was part of the ordeal. In between dealing with one or two of the guilty, there were fairly long telephone calls mostly dealing with the most cacuous of subjects—but it all helped to prolong our agony. Most of us, for fear of being called whilst away, hung on through the long hours without anything to eat or drink.

One left the court with mixed feelings. All our offences had been reduced to simple rupees and cents—no cents in any of the fines imposed incidentally. Providing one had enough spare money around, all one had to do was to pay up and do it again. Unless of course the prolonged confinement to staying in court to watch the law at work was punishment adequate to keep us sinners reformed.

Prithipura,

Hendala.

10.1.80

Bryan de Kretzer

:: A Dairy Project

Sir,

I am trying to establish a dairy project here in Sri Lanka for Prithipura Infant Home. This could be considered quite a difficult task when one considers the dearth of suitable livestock, skilled labour and building materials, but even when you have obtained all these items plus a suitable supply of fodder it does not mean that your dairy enterprise will be a success.

What is it we want from a dairy enterprise? I would say first and foremost milk. Now to ensure a constant supply of milk from our dairy cow we must ensure that the animal is mated at regular intervals giving us a calf each year, and in doing so, supplying us with milk. Without this calf we cannot hope to achieve the milk yields necessary to ensure a profitable enterprise. To get your cows mated at the correct time the farmer has two choices firstly, he can maintain his own stud bull, who will if fertile, be available to mate with the cows. The second method, which is the method we have chosen to ensure a calf a year and therefore a profitable supply of milk, is Artificial Insemination (AI). A.I. has many advantages over natural service; it allows the maximum exploitation of the best sires, the fullest use of a selected sire and a consequent reduction in total number of sires that have to be maintained. Thus when A.I. is properly organized there can be a real reduction in breeding costs; A.I. also minimizes the spread of venereal and other diseases. I believe that most dairy farmers here and

abroad would agree that in economic terms A.I. is the answer to their breeding program, if it can be depended on.

The Sri Lankan government runs an A.I. service, which I was assured would be the answer to our breeding program at the Anandapura Farm Project. I am afraid to say it is not the answer, in fact in economic and development terms it has been a disaster. Since we started using the government's A.I. services on 31.1.79 it has failed to appear when requested on several occasions. One particular animal has been missed for three consecutive heat periods. I think it is also worth pointing out to the powers that be that *Bos indicus* and *Bos taurus* do not stop functioning on Sundays or other public holidays, and their metabolism does not function like a machine it can be very variable; for example the Castral cycle (days) 16: 26, duration of heat (hours) 14:22, Time of ovulation (hours) 2:22 after end of oestrus.

The only way to improve the dairy industry in Sri Lanka is through an effective and efficient breeding program. This can be done through A.I. but it must be dependable that means seven days a week.

P. S. Hitchman

Anandapura Farm Project,
Kandawala,
Katana.
25.12.79

We have referred this letter to one of our special investigators and his report will be published shortly—Ed.

∴ Ceylon — Australian

Sir,

After the customary shuttle to visit my parents, please allow a humble Poultry Breeder to pen a few points. Having been born and educated till the end of the secondary stage in Ceylon, but having spent almost equal lengths of time in both Sri Lanka and Australia, I consider myself to be a Ceylon-Australian, in that order.

This visit of five weeks, was a tremendous experience, since my Australian wife and son and daughter were able to see and hopefully, comprehend the change of language/s, reli-

gions, social values and such—the first two having this pleasure for the second time. Due to a previous nasty experience at Katunayake, self will only get this letter posted once our flight has commenced for Singapore and Sydney. (It was dated January 16, 1980—Ed.) Once, only the fact that a Quantas Captain honoured his company's contract and refused to take off without his scheduled passengers, forced Customs and Immigration to stop harrassing self and allow our family to board the aircraft. Whatever is said and done, since, we never take chances now.

The last visit by self, was in September 1978 and we all arrived 14 months later. The availability of all manner of goods (at a price) the thankful ending of long and continuous queues, the accelerated Mahaweli Scheme and the sense of urgency and purpose, is tremendous to observe. Naturally, inflation, following world-wide trends is galloping merrily along. But the present Government seems to have catered for this problem, with the system of food coupons for those earning less than a certain income.

Hastily, I retreat from the world of politics, economics, social sciences and engineering to my own of Research and Development in Poultry Genetics & Husbandry. I mention one last paragraph and leave your readers to judge for themselves the verdict. Being still a student searching for the ultimate truth, I have no answer.

We did a most comprehensive tour of our ancient heritage and of things to come, covering Kandy, Dambulla, Sigiriya, Aukana, Minneriya, Giritala, Polonnaruwa, Mihintale, Anuradhapura, Yapahuwa, of the old world and the Gannoruwa Soya Bean Project, Nalanda and Rajangane, of the new. I was seeing this area after 30 odd years and my family for the first time. One aspect of tourism struck a sense of shame in our eyes. At most of the ancient cities, blatant materialism and non-religious acts are the norm and not the exception. Gautama Buddha, I am certain never thought his Clergy to go all out for the Dollar, Franc, Yen or Deutsche Mark. The ultimate insult, was the open advertising, on boards to turn on the lights for Rs. 200/- at certain dim caves for one to view the inscriptions, see the works of ancient artists and such

common practices. This may be alright for a country whose "culture" stretches for the whole of 200 years. Should a country with a recorded heritage dating back to the 3rd and 4th century B.C., act in such a disgusting manner? The acts of the blue paint throwing vandals at Sigirya in the 1960's pale into insignificance, when such immoral acts go on, all in the name of The Great Teacher.

Farewell,

Aruna M. W. Fernando

Steggles Breeding Unit,
Wallalong,
Via Maitland,
N.S.W. 2321
Australia.
16th, January 1980



HAVANA DIARY—20

Afternoon Session

— Seventh

by S. P. Amarasingam

The afternoon session, which was to begin at 4.45 p.m. actually started half an hour later at 5.18. Maurice Bishop, Prime Minister of Grenada continued to preside. FLORENCIO MAYE ELA, VICE - PRESIDENT OF THE SUPREME MILITARY COUNCIL OF EQUATORIAL GUINEA denounced that the poverty the peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America suffered, due to imperialism, colonialism and neo-colonialism. His first words were on behalf of the Supreme Military Council of Equatorial Guinea and were greetings to President Fidel Castro and the Cuban people and thanks to Cuba for all it had done for the countries of the so-called Third World. Vice-President Maye Ela gave a detailed analysis of the situation in his country up to August 3, the date when the government of President Francisco Maclas N'guema was overthrown. He assured everyone that Equatorial Guinea had been devastated by the former regime, and he enumerated the evils left behind in the economy, public health and other sectors. He offered a detailed picture of the many diseases found by the present government

which had been undermining the lives of thousands of children, old people and many others. He told the Summit that ex-president Maclas was not present under arrest and would be tried. Various personalities and the press will be invited to attend the trial. On international affairs, both economic and political, he proclaimed his country's solidarity and support for all those peoples fighting in Asia, Africa and Latin America for their independence and better conditions. He warned that this struggle was not free from dangers, due to problems that exist within the Movement itself, and he called for unity and cohesion, which would allow the Movement to accomplish its goals. The main highlights of his speech were his support for and solidarity with the peoples of Namibia, Zimbabwe, Palestine and others of different continents; his congratulations to Nicaragua, Angola and others already liberated. He concluded with a promise that the Supreme Military Council of Equatorial Guinea would devote its energies to maintaining the basic principles of the Non-aligned Movement.

HENCK ARRON, PRIME MINISTER OF SURINAM began his speech by thanking all the delegates for admitting his country to full membership in the Movement and, in particular, Guyana and India for having sponsored Surinam. Then he congratulated Bolivia, Grenada, Iran, Nicaragua, Pakistan and the Zimbabwe Patriotic Front on their membership and expressed Surinam's pride over being in such good company. He said that Fidel's election to the chairmanship of the Movement honoured both Cuba and the Caribbean. He also expressed his thanks to Junius Richard Jayewardene and praised his work as outgoing president. He analysed the international situation, which he described as "poisoned by hatred". He spoke of Surinam's joy over the victory in Nicaragua, led by the "heroic Sandinistas", and he offered support for the sister Central American nation. On southern Africa, he said that the South African Government was trying to block the liberation of Namibia and that the situation in Zimbabwe was becoming more and more complicated. On Zimbabwe, he said the so-called internal settlement was not that at all and that Surinam opposed recognition of Salisbury and would support

SWAPO and the Patriotic Front until Zimbabwe and Namibia were completely free. On the Middle East, he said that his country gave broad support to the Palestinian people. Then he spoke on the arms race and said that, while thousands of millions of dollars were being spent on armament, poverty and unemployment were rampant. Among the other things that concerned Surinam, he mentioned the unjust international economic order, economic and financial relationships; the failure of the 5th UNCTAD, where he added that what developed countries "give with one hand they shouldn't steal back with the other." We don't beg or ask for charity; we want our rightful share of world production, he said.

IRAN'S FOREIGN MINISTER DR. IBRAHIM YAZDHI said "The final victory of the oppressed peoples of the world is inevitable." He greeted the Conference of Heads of State and Government of the Non-aligned Countries on behalf of the leader of the Iranian revolution Ayatollah Khomeini. At the start, Yazdhi asked for a minute of silence to honour the martyrs of the Iranian people's struggle for liberation. On the overthrow of the Shah he said, "After 30 years of struggle against a tyrannical regime we have ended imperialist domination in our country. We trust that this victory will be a clarion call for other peoples fighting for liberation." Yazdhi reiterated that Iran, which is one of the new full members of the Movement as of the 6th Summit gives its full support for the Palestinian cause and the only genuine representative, of that people, the PLO. He condemned those responsible for the suffering of the Palestinians and Lebanese. He reviewed the historical conditions and the ideological orientation which gave rise to the revolution in Iran, stressing the egalitarian and humanitarian nature of Islam. Fidel Castro was much closer to Islam than many Muslims, he said. After denouncing the racism which prevails in South Africa and expressing support for the liberation of that people, he reiterated the commitment of the revolution in Iran to the noble struggles of the oppressed of the world. He stressed the personal and humanitarian qualities of Ayatollah Khomeini and said that the Shah's regime was the culmination of US imperialist policies in Iran. He

went into some detail on US support for the Shah's bloody regime, which had jailed more than half a million people since it came back to power in 1953 and murdered more than 15,000 of its opponents. Iranians were not indifferent to imperialist designs. While the imperialists spoke of human rights, he said, many torturers of the peoples were still getting arms and advice from the United States. He opposed the dangerous arms race, and the trade which provided big profits for the arms industries while making it possible for tyrannical governments to repress the people's struggle for justice. He called for an effort in the countries of the so-called Third World to "cast off the chains of cultural domination," of the mental enslavement by imperialism which it imposes to assure its international domination. The struggle should be continued, he said, as long as injustice prevailed anywhere, or oppression, imperialism, colonialism, Zionism, racism and exploitation. "The revolution in Iran will never compromise on its revolutionary duty because that is priceless," he said in conclusion.

FOREIGN MINISTER H. E. O. ADEFOPE OF NIGERIA said that the choice of Cuba as the site of the 6th Summit was also recognition for Latin America and the Caribbean. He mentioned the pressure which had been exerted against the movement and called for maintaining the cohesion of member states. His country would continue to aid the African liberation movements, he pledged, adding that no scheme of the South African racists could prevent the liberation of the peoples of southern Africa. Adefope criticized the puppet government of Bishop Muzorewa and expressed backing for the Front Line states, "in view of the great sacrifices they are making." He also criticized Morocco for its continued occupation of Western Sahara. He noted that the Palestinian issues was still at the heart of the conflict in the Middle East and called for the adoption of effective measures in the UN Security Council against the Zionist state of Israel. Nigeria understood the tragedy of the developing countries. "We must devote more time to economic integration and less to the misunderstandings that undermine our Movement." Finally, referring to the process of institutionalization in his country, he announced that a civilian

government would take power there in October.

EGYPTIAN MINISTER OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS BOUTROS GHALI, began by greeting the delegates and outlining the fundamental principles of the Movement. He then mentioned the close relations that had existed between Egypt and the Soviet Union, without mentioning the aid the USSR had provided for the development and defense of Egypt against Zionist attacks. This situation (relations with the USSR) had been "corrected", he added. He discussed the institutional infrastructure of the Movement, going back to the 1961 meeting in Belgrade where the ideas of setting up a permanent diplomatic instrument was first outlined, an idea which took shape in the present Co-ordinating Bureau. He then attacked the Bureau, which he said was an instrument for the domination of a group. This was a charge which had never before been made by Egypt or any other country. Regarding the Middle East problem, Ghali tried to justify his government's "betrayal" of the Arab world and spoke of Sadat's "efforts" to bring peace and justice to his region. He described this as "a revolutionary act, despite what some people claim." Egypt supported discussions between the Palestinians and Israel over their future state, he said, and that "before this assembly, before all of you," Egypt stretched out its hand to the PLO "to reaffirm Egypt's intention of restoring a Palestinian state." Ghali was unable to hold out his own hand to the PLO because its top leader, Yasser Arafat, had walked out along with other Arab representatives to express their repudiation of Sadat's MYINT MAUNG, THE FOREIGN MINISTER OF THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF BURMA, spoke very briefly, saying that his delegation had changed the speech it was going to deliver and that he simply wanted to make a proposal to the Conference because "the Movement is divided and torn asunder." The proposal was that a Commission should be set up to prepare a character for the Movement and that when this had been done it should be submitted for discussion. He said that although Burma was a founder of the Movement it was not demanding a seat on the Commission. Thereupon he left the rostrum.

TENGGU AHMAD RITHAUDEEN, THE FOREIGN MINISTER OF MALAYSIA, welcomed the new members of the Movement and the countries that had been given observer status, especially his neighbour, the Philippines. Referring to the situation in Southeast Asia, he reiterated his support for the Pol Pot-Ieng Sary regime, defending the "just rights" of this clique, which, he said, should participate in the Movement since it is a member of the UN. Among other international questions he spoke of the problems in Palestine, Zimbabwe and Namibia. He concluded by urging that differences be settled in a friendly manner.

THE FOREIGN MINISTER OF THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES, RASHID ABDULLA ALI AL-NOAIMI began with a call for the unity of member states in the face of internal disputes which were always a threat to the stability of the Movement. He said that his country would work hard to promote peace in the Gulf region and he welcomed Pakistan's entry into the Movement. Regarding the situation in the Middle East he said that the Palestinian people and the PLO—recognized by nearly all countries and international organizations—were the only ones that could undertake any efforts aimed at peace. He criticized Egypt's position on the issue and the Camp David agreement. He said that his country would "maintain this position until the Palestinian people have achieved their rights." He denounced the genocide carried out against the Palestinian people by the Zionist state of Israel and the barbarous attacks unleashed against southern Lebanon. He said the UN Security Council should be urged to make Israel respect the measures agreed upon regarding peace in the Middle East. The Foreign Minister expressed support for the liberation movements in southern Africa and said that his country opposed the deceitful government formula the racists had imposed in Zimbabwe. "We must give more moral and material aid to the liberation movements in Africa until the people there obtain freedom. In the economic field he said, "The poor are constantly getting poorer and the rich are constantly getting richer." If present economic policy did not serve the interests of member states then new solutions must be sought, he said.

INDIRA'S POLICIES

by R. Varadachari

Press Trust of India Correspondent in Colombo

MRS. INDIRA GANDHI has outlined her new government's action programme and the priorities through the customary annual address of the President, Mr. Sanjiva Reddy, to the joint session of the new Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha which is a continuing upper house. The President's address, drafted and approved by Mrs. Gandhi's cabinet, spells out the political and economic philosophies of the new government and its precise approach to the current national and international problems. Restoration of law and order, infusion of confidence and sense of security among the minorities and weaker sections of the society like the Harijans, stern handling of black-marketeers, hoarders and smugglers, control of the price spiral, energetic steps to intensify both agricultural and industrial production and systematic expansion of exports to boost the foreign exchange reserves get pride of place in the address which has the imprint of Mrs. Gandhi's personal touch.

Significantly Mrs. Gandhi has reiterated in the President's address, the need for mutual respect on the part of the Government and the Opposition and has expressed her desire to work for "harmonising of differing points of view in a spirit of accommodation and conciliation" and eschew conflict and confrontation. She has extended this olive branch to the anaemic opposition in what she calls a "spirit of co-operation and harmony" with a view to mobilising the maximum support on a national scale to tackle the multi-dimensional problems confronting the nation at the present moment. Mrs. Gandhi has specifically expressed her commitment to uphold the freedom of the press. Coming in the wake of severe criticism of Press Censorship imposed during her previous emergency rule, this assurance should allay the apprehensions of the opposition parties in this regard. Mrs. Gandhi had also been assailed for allegedly interfering with the judiciary during the emergency era and eroding its independence. She has obviously taken note of this criticism

also and has stressed that "an independent judiciary is a necessary concomitant of the democratic process." Family planning also does not find a special mention in the President's address. This crucial measure will of course be pursued but one can expect caution and restraint and no compulsion in its implementation in view of the public anger over the forced mass sterilisation allegedly undertaken during the emergency rule under the direction of her son, Sanjay.

THE ESCALATING ENERGY CRISIS also did not escape her attention. She has promised to evolve a comprehensive national policy on energy, with emphasis on fuller utilisation of renewable energy resources, both traditional and non-traditional. For the first time environmental pollution which has become a major health hazard throughout the world in the wake of man's zest for industrialisation and quick economic growth has become one of the major concerns of the government of India. The President's address promises urgent measures such as afforestation, flood control, soil conservation, preservation of flora and fauna, proper land use, planning, water and air pollution controls and judicious location of industries to tackle this growing menace.

The President's address also reflects, Mrs. Gandhi's deep concern over the fresh threat posed to India's security by the anti-national forces which are gaining ground in the border areas particularly the Northeastern sector. The address also observes: "Communal and other divisive forces have also reared their ugly heads in different parts of the country causing serious prejudice to our ideals of national integration and national unity." Mrs. Gandhi has already initiated measures to tackle this priority issues by opening a dialogue with student agitators of Assam who want all "foreigners" to be removed from the electoral list of the State. She is due to visit very soon this Northeastern state where parochialism, linguistic chauvinism and secessionist tendencies have gained momentum. She hopes to deal with this sensitive issue pregnant with grave implications with a spirit of understanding and accommodation. This is the right approach. Harsh crackdown and repressive measures would only be counter-productive.

In the international affairs, re-emergence of the cold war close to India's northwestern borders in the wake of recent developments in Afghanistan has naturally been projected as the Government's special and immediate concern. The President's address spells out the new government's assessment of the situation and the steps it proposes to take to de-escalate tension in this region as follows:

"The intervention of outside forces and the induction of armaments in the region as well as in our neighbourhood have created a dangerous situation not only for ourselves but for the entire area. Recent developments in Afghanistan highlights the re-emergence of the cold war. This is a matter of grave concern. The countries of the region should be allowed to devote their energies to the promotion of regional stability and co-operation with one another. The resources of the region are enormous and should be utilised for the welfare of the people there. To subject these countries to big power rivalries is totally unacceptable to us".

Mrs. Gandhi has been canvassing this point of view with the high-ranking foreign dignitaries who had recently visited India, including Dr. Kurt Waldheim, the UN Secretary General, Mr. Giscard D'Estaing, the French President, Lord Carrington, the British Foreign Secretary, Dr. Bruno Kreisky, the Australian Chancellor and Mr. Clark Clifford the special envoy of President Carter. She will project the same line to Fidel Castro of Cuba and Mr. Andrei Gromyko, the Soviet Foreign Minister who are scheduled to come to Delhi soon. The Government of India has initiated consultations with the like-minded nonaligned countries on the crisis situation. Mr. S. K. Singh, India's ambassador to Afghanistan until last year and presently additional secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs, has flown to Kabul for talks with Afghan leaders. Mr Singh's visit follows closely the just concluded visit of Mr. R. D. Saxe, the Indian Foreign Secretary to Islamabad. A special Iraqi envoy Mr. Hamid Alwan is also in New Delhi. These vigorous diplomatic initiatives by India are

aimed at evading a common regional approach for securing the early withdrawal of the Soviet troops from Afghanistan which would bring in its wake moves by other big powers to defuse the mounting tension. Mr. Eric Gonsales, a senior foreign office official is now having talks in Colombo and will fly to Dacca afterwards.

WITH THE INDIAN AND UNITED STATES PERCEPTION on the Afghan issue different. Mr. Clifford's recent visit to India, as that of the earlier trip of Lord Carrington, has not been much of a success. According to Indian newspaper reports, Mr. Clifford could not sell the idea of arms aid to Pakistan to block further Soviet expansion in the region. The Indian focus was different. It was on the danger the US arms aid to Pakistan would pose to the peace and stability in the Indian Sub-continent and the adjoining region. India holds the view that dumping of arms in Pakistan would only add to the tension and would not pave the way for the Russian pullout from Afghanistan. It believes that this could be achieved through persuasion and quiet diplomacy rather than by confrontation while the US feels that it should use every means at its disposal to exert all possible pressures for the pullout. Mr. Clifford tried to convince Mrs. Gandhi that the 200 million dollars worth of US arms aid to Pakistan was aimed at boosting the defence capability of Pakistan to withstand the Soviet threat to its security and would not be of an order which would endanger India. Mrs. Gandhi did not agree with this line of reasoning and told Mr. Clifford that induction of arms to Pakistan had in the past led an amount of adventurism on its part. It had also not hesitated to use the US arms supply in the past against India. Even though the Indian and US perceptions thus differ in many respects, Mrs. Gandhi will use all her persuasive power on Mr. Gromyko to get the Russian troops out of Afghanistan at the earliest. Whether the Soviet Union will give head to Mrs. Gandhi's advice is a different matter.

TO TURN TO DOMESTIC AFFAIRS AGAIN, the leftists have once again established their hold on the southern state of Kerala. In the midterm assembly elections held in the end

of January close on the heels of the Lok Sabha elections, the Marxist-led seven party Left Democratic Front won a decisive victory, winning 93 out of the 140 seats in the State assembly. Only 41 seats were shared by the parties of the United Democratic Front led by the Indira Congress. The Kerala assembly election results have clearly proved that the Indira wave which swept most of the Indian states had no impact in Kerala, the traditional stronghold of the leftists. Though in the Lok Sabha poll the Marxist-led front bagged 12 out of the 20 seats in Kerala, its majority in many election segments was slender. Hence there was a general belief that the national landslide in favour of the Indira Congress might tilt the balance in favour of the Democratic United Front led by the party; with this hope, Mrs. Gandhi had undertaken an intense election campaign in the state in spite of heavy pressure on her time with her assuming office as Prime Minister. But her hope did not materialise. For the Marxist front it is a flattering comeback after having seated out in the opposition for eleven years. A seven-member ministry headed by Mr. E. K. Nayanar, State Secretary of the Marxist Party, has been sworn in the State.

However in many other non-Indira Congress ruled states, the going seems to be good for Mrs. Gandhi. In Karnataka her party has gained control with large scale crossovers from the Urs Congress to her party after the resignation of Mr. Davraj Urs from Chief Ministership in the wake of his party's rout in the Lok Sabha elections. In Haryana State in the North, the Chief Minister, Mr. Bhajan Lal, who was heading a Janata Party-led ministry, has crossed over to the Indira Congress along with 37 Janata legislators. The Indira Congress is likely to gain control of some more seats soon due to defections of legislators to her party, but some states like Bihar and Uttar Pradesh may hold on. Mrs. Gandhi has to decide soon whether to dismiss such ministries and order fresh elections. The Janata Party took recourse to this step and dismissed the Indira Congress dominated state assemblies on its coming to power in 1977. She is apparently waiting for the fluid situation to crystallise before taking the plunge. All the opposition parties in Parliament are deter-

mined to resist jointly the dissolution move. They have even managed to incorporate in the motion of thanks to the President for his address their apprehensions in this regard when the motion was voted upon in Rijya Sabha where they have a majority. In spite of their determination, the Opposition parties are helpless as they do not have much political fire left after their rout in the Lok Sabha elections. Mrs. Gandhi will have the final say in the matter.

—SLBC talk 8.2.80

WORLD PRESS

U.S. SELLOUT

Shah To Khomeini

London,

The long and shoddy list of betrayals of its friends and allies by Washington appears to have reached its sordid climax in an American-Panamian conspiracy to hand the former Shah of Iran and his family, bound hands and feet, to the Khomeini Government of Teheran for almost certain condemnation and execution. According to repeated statements made by Iranian Foreign Minister Ghotbzade, he has received assurances from Panama as well as the US assuring him of the monarch's extradition. The Foreign Minister claims that President Rojo of Panama personally telephoned him to state that "in response to the Iranian request, the Shah has been placed under arrest and the Panamian authorities are waiting now for formal extradition papers." According to Ghotbzade, "the arrest has not come about suddenly, but has been the result of some weeks of negotiations." In fact, the Foreign Minister revealed that a delegation had been moving between Washington, Panama and Teheran for this purpose. All this and more appears in the *Daily Telegraph* and other British newspapers, which have quoted an interview given by Ghotbzade to *Kayhan*, Teheran's leading newspaper, in which he quotes President Rojo assuring him, that "a court would be set up as soon

as the extradition request arrives in Panama. When the Court decided that there is sufficient evidence that the Shah was a "murderer and a thief", it would issue a verdict to the effect that he should be extradited.

These revelations point to the conclusion that the plan to hand the Shah and members of his family back to Teheran was conceived in Washington when President Carter found his Government on a collision course with the Ayatollah regime over the American hostages issue. The US found a way to wash its hands off this problem by handing over the Shah to Panama, with an agreement that the latter should find ways and means of extraditing him to Teheran after setting up a Court to marshal prima facie evidence to the effect that he was a "murderer and a thief."

Thus, a controversial issue which had become a hot potato in the hands of President Carter was conspiratorially transferred to his Panamanian parallel, with the secret understanding that ultimately, the Shah would be delivered to Teheran for his final trial and execution. Once this is done Teheran would join Washington in NATO's cold war against the Soviet Union.

While nobody can dispute the right of the Teheran authorities to judge and punish a monarch for the crime alleged against him, the world shudders at the treachery of his American and Panamanian hosts.

Here is one more case of a world leader who was put up to enact the role of America's gendarme in West Asia, only to be betrayed and handed over to his foes. Let the Zia-ul-Haq and Rahmans beware of the "American kiss of death."

—Blitz

x x x

WITH NEWSWEEK

The Ex-Shah's Man

Teheran, Dec. 30,

He used to make regular visits to Teheran, where he would find a customary warm reception. A Hilton suite royally furnished for

his comfort and convenience. A special Lincoln limousine would call for him and take him to Navaran Palace, where he would have a cozy chat or two. And, of course, private helicopters and the whole of the imperial stock of paraphernalia was at his disposal—to take him wherever he liked—to Kharg, to Kish to the ends of the Pahlavi world. Once, Mohammed Reza was so pleased with his interviews that he had a special gift of two lavish Na'in carpets delivered to his Hilton pied a terre. Now Mohammad-Reza is gone, Navaran and Kish are shed of their pretentious occupant. And Newsweek's fair-haired boy, Arnaud de Borchgrave has to find other pastures for making mischief—with handsome dividends.

And he has found them, indeed. As his recent privileged nearly full page box in Newsweek's Christmas issue gives full indication. Entitled "The Soviet Equation," the piece conveys the message that De Borchgrave seems to be currently in the pay of another monarch, Saudi Arabia's King Khalid, in addition to whatever stipendium he may be getting from Texas oil barons and/or the Central Intelligence Agency. Despite voluble protests by Newsweek reporters in Teheran that they have been prevented from "getting the facts" in order to "tell the whole story", De Borchgrave seems to be blithely unaware of Newsweek's rigorous policy of preparing news stories founded on sound factual evidence. De Borchgrave's article is nothing but a continuous succession of sentences expressing one unfounded declaration after another. The basis for these sloganeering assertions seems to be twofold; (1) provision of public relations support for King Khalid (since Saudi Arabia doesn't produce carpets, what form do De Borchgrave's bribes take: barrels of goosy petroleum?), and (2) connections with either US private oil interests and/or the CIA. Evidence for the first: De Borchgrave dismisses, out of hand, the indication of the world press that the attackers of the Grand Mosque were part of Mahdist, or Messianic, Islamic movement. For the writer, they are agents of, in De Borchgrave's own words, "South Yemen, the Mideast only Marxist state, and from Libya, another Soviet surrogate." The ex-shah's man at Newsweek also

maintains that South Yemen and Libya, supposedly acting for their Soviet masters, generated the seizure of the US embassy in Tehran. This allegation, for which de Borchgrave, who seems to feel is above the strictures of professional journalism, provides not one iota of evidence. (And, by the way, what is a Libya which supports anarchistic and unideological elements like Idi Amin and Bokassa doing as "A Soviet surrogate"?)

De Borchgrave's distortions in named support of Khalid are equalled only by his blustering ignorance of Islam. His fantasizing propaganda tale depicts a scenario in which the South Yemen-Libyan agents overthrow the Saudi family monarchy and establish what he calls "a puritanical Islamic state" which would be the first step on the road to Communist takeover. To begin with, whatever would be overthrown would be as close as Islam comes to puritanism for the Wahhabis, the set run by the Saudi family, have inflicted an uncompromising "puritanism" on their people, forcing a strict sequestering of women from any kind of social participation, while

the leaders hypocritically maintain harems which they truck with them to Hilton suites all over the world, maintaining a life style which approaches the luxury of Texas millionaires rather than "puritan" frugality. Whatever sources De Borchgrave designs to indicate are woolly references to intelligence information. Either de Borchgrave is making it all up to promote the interests of the ex-shah, the Saudi Family and Texas oil millionaires, or else he has an inside track with the CIA—or both. "The KGB" boldly claims the PR man (he can hardly be dignified as a journalist), "according to several Western intelligence chiefs"—real ones with whom he has contact, or made up ones to make his story look good?—"also has been exploiting the Iranian revolution. These sources they say have more than circumstantial evidence that Moscow decided last year to harness the Moslem revolt to Soviet Strategy in the Persian Gulf region. The American Embassy takeover in Tehran, they have told me, was a well-prepared operation to move the Iranian Revolution into a final Marxist phase."

So much for Mr. de Borchgrave's scenario, designed to win US government friends and influence powerful people to generate US military activity in Iran. So much for irresponsible fantasizing and self-serving public relations in the name of journalism. It is this kind of malicious misuse of the media against which the Iranian Revolution is pitted.

—News & Views, Iran Information,
of December 30, 1979

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

Reference No. 3/2/4/14/75

It is intended to acquire the land described in the schedule below. For further particulars please see the Gazette No. 76 (Part III) of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka of 15.02.1980.

Schedule

A.G.A.'s Division : Weke
Village : Meetirigala
Name of Land : Kelagahawatta, Kapugewatta
Galabodawatta, Durumadalagahawatta,
Dunumadalagahawatta alias Kajugahahena
Lot Nos. : 1 to 9
Plan No. P.P. Co. : 4776

A. L. S. Malwenna

District Land Officer of Gampaha Distr.ct.
The Kachceri,
Gampaha.

COLD WAR HYSTERIA

Backlash For Carter

by Roy Bennet
London, Jan. 25.

It is very hard to describe the semi-hysterical atmosphere here during the past week. Television and newspaper headlines have blared stories of massing of Russian troops on the Afghanistan-Iranian border, on the Afghan-Pakistan border and on the Yugoslav border preparatory to invasions, in the

event of the death of Tito. The White House and the State Department were chief among the unofficial sources for the scare rumours. It is easy to understand why the President was fanning this extremist cold war propaganda on the eve of an indirect Democratic primary. What is hard to understand is why such a high-pitched confrontation was deemed necessary when the possible negative consequences are taken into account. Twelve hours before the voting in Iowa, everyone knew that it would result in Carter victory.

The administration, the press and television have the American people in a state of near panic. People are asking one another when, not if, they believe that war will come. It is not the fate of Afghanistan that concerns them, but the conviction they have gained from the current campaign that the Russians are on their way to take over Iran, drive to the Indian Ocean or occupy Yugoslavia—or all three. If nothing happens, there is going to be an anti-climax. The exaggeration of the present campaign will make the invasion merely of Afghanistan look small.

What the President may be left with is the hostages still being held in Iran with an increasing demand that something be done—including even something stupid. It is safe to say the Soviet Kremlin hawks miscalculated the outside reaction to their move. But equally one must question the Carter administration's judgement in its response. Unless Moscow is going to accommodate Washington by committing one or another of the many projected invasions, there could well be a backlash. In addition to overdoing the revival of the Red menace, other miscalculations are being made. The administration, in public statements, assures the country that our allies are totally behind our punitive proposals.

The *New York Times* European Correspondent, Flora Lewis, writing from Paris this week, asks, "How critical a crisis?" She writes....."underneath all the arguments.....it is evident that there are real differences on just how much danger the move (Afghanistan) represents.....the decision makers (West Europeans) do not exactly share Washington's view of how much the West is now threatened.....there has been some criticism, especially from the Wes

Germans and the French, that the American Government is making its views and its requests for co-operation much more drastic in public than in private."

Lewis' views were echoed in even sharper terms by the papers columnist, James Reston. The dean of American columnists underlined the differences in reaction between the West European Governments and America. Reston also regards the current propaganda as one of "nightmare scenarios" inspired by the election campaign. *The substance of the question is whether America is successfully isolating the Soviet Union or whether, by a mindless coldwar campaign out of proportion to the event, Washington will succeed finally in isolating itself.*

There is nothing to commend itself in the way Moscow handled its crisis in Afghanistan. But Washington is fast creating a situation in which support for its position will be difficult to obtain, however much hysterical following it drums up in the short term.

—Tribune, U.K.

MOSCOW OLYMPICS

New Delhi,

Lord Killanin, President of the International Olympic Committee, has taken a firm stand this year's Olympic games will take place in "Moscow or not at all". One of the reasons given by him is purely organisational; it is physically impossible to change the venue after the prolonged preparatory work involving millions of pounds. His second reason reflects the essential spirit in which the Olympics games are held: hosting of the games was organised independent of all political considerations. A look back into the history of the games shows that ever since their inception 2,756 years ago the Olympic was linked with peace. A sacred truce was declared and enforced by the Greek cities to allow the participants to reach Athens and an olive branch, the symbol of peace, was awarded to the victor. When the games were revived in modern times, in the 19th century, it was written in the rules that no discrimination

would be permitted on grounds of colour, religion or politics and that competition would not be between countries but between individuals and that the honour of holding games would be given to a city and not a country. The flag and motto of the Olympic are the exclusive property of the International Olympic Committee. These are all different aspects of the peaceful and non-political nature of the games. The Olympic is concerned neither with Soviet and American policies nor the events in Afghanistan. Led by the American cold warriors, many politicians have been trying to debate the value of Olympic which is the game of peace and friendship among human beings, irrespective of their politics. If the US or any other country puts obstacles in the way of its Olympic sportsmen it will be doing a disservice to its own people and the people of other countries.

—Editorial, *Patriot*, 19/1/80

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OPPOSITION IN WEST TO ARMS AID TO PAKISTAN

Brussels, Jan. 23,

The wisdom of American and West European plans to pump arms into Pakistan ignoring India's pleas is being questioned on both sides of the Atlantic. Former British Prime Minister James Callaghan, who was on a private visit to the United States, told the American leaders not to antagonise India which "is the pre-eminent power in South Asia." He noted that India has a stable democratic system. Mr. Peter Shore, Britain's Shadow Secretary for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, in a BBC "World Tonight" programme warned the western nations against supplying excessive quantities of arms to a country governed by the military.

Mr. Selig Harrison of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace also feels that the Carter Administration should not ignore India while resuming military aid to Pakistan. "In seeking to shore up Islamabad, the United States should consult closely with Indian leaders recognising that India is the pre-eminent power in South Asia," Mr. Harrison says "a mis-

conceived, oversized military aid package would not only fly in the face of congressional restrictions, but would also have self-defeating consequences." Mr. Harrison said that supply of large quantities of arms to Pakistan would "needlessly arouse Indian fears that Islamabad is seeking to use the Afghan crisis to bolster its power position vis-a-vis New Delhi."

The *Wall Street Journal's* defence correspondent Kenneth Bacon saw the American decision as a "collapse" of President Carter's foreign policy. "Mr. Carter's decision to boost arms sales to Pakistan and resume economic and military aid despite his opposition to Islamabad's efforts to develop the atomic bomb shows how the US desire to contain the Soviets has overtaken foreign policy goals". According to Mr. Bacon, a more aggressive American military policy increases the possibility of regional conflicts in South-East Asia and West Asia.

—UNI

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ECM ON AFGHAN CRISIS

Brussels,

The following is the official text of the Declaration of the Nine Countries of the European Community on the Afghan crisis, issued on the 15th of January 1980. "The foreign ministers of the nine countries of the European Community have focused their attention on the Afghan crisis, in the light of its dramatic developments, the debate in the Security Council and the resolution adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations. The nine ministers have reaffirmed their grave concern with regard to the crisis created by the military intervention of the Soviet Union in Afghanistan, which represents a serious violation of the principles of international relations enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. They have emphasized that the explanations given by the Soviet Union to justify its intervention in Afghanistan are unacceptable. They take the view that the Soviet intervention constitutes a flagrant interference in the internal affairs of a non-aligned country belonging to the Islamic world and constitutes furthermore a threat to peace, security and stability in the region, including the Indian Subcontinent, the Middle East and the Arab world.

"It is with great concern that the foreign ministers of the nine countries of the European Community have noted that despite the almost universal protests against the Soviet military intervention, the Soviet Union has vetoed a resolution on the Afghan crisis sponsored by non-aligned countries and supported by a large majority of members of the Security Council. They urge the Soviet Union to act in conformity with the resolution on the Afghan crisis adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations with an overwhelming majority, which calls for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all foreign troops from Afghanistan. The nine countries of the European Community have devoted continuous efforts to the cause of detente and they remain convinced that this process is in the interest of all members of the international community. They are, however convinced that detente is indivisible and has a global dimension. They, therefore, urge the Soviet Union, in conformity with the standards

and principles of the United Nations Charter, to allow the Afghan people to determine their own future without foreign interference. In formulating their position on this important question, the foreign ministers of the member countries of the European Community have also been keenly aware of the sufferings borne by the Afghan people as a whole as a result of the crisis, including those Afghans who are being forced to leave their country."

—Released in Colombo by the Italian Embassy
583, Galle Road, Colombo.

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BATTICALOA — RELIEF & REHABILITATION

FEW QUESTIONS

posed by K. Kanapathipillai

Batticaloa appears to have come under the hammer of a relentless fate: harsh and cruel. It is well over an year since the cyclone ravaged this unhappy land, and still the blows are being dealt, and that with a difference; and still the scars have not healed. The wounds are suppurating and tending towards an infinite regress—a gangrenous condition

After the cyclone left these shores much lamentation has gone on both in the private and public sector. Torrents of words have flowed from public platforms; pools and puddles of ponderous thoughts and suggestions and homilies and pious promises have been formed into pretentious schemes at many a conference headed by ministers and powerful bureaucrats and rehabilitation officials. And the malingering voice of many a departmental head has become hoarse and husky and dejected; and yet the people have gone on with their age-old cries of: No food; no proper habitation; no properly organized schools; no clothing of a useful nature; no sufficient aids to resuscitate the occupations of the people: paddy cultivation, coconut industry; fishing, and the many dwindling cottage crafts and small industries.

Whither has vapourized the rehabilitation programme of the cyclone affected area? How much of it had been

The Land Acquisition Act (Chapter 450) As Amended By The Land Acquisition (Amendment) Act No. 28 Of 1964. Notice Under Section 7(1)

Reference No. LD/D. 298

It is intended to acquire the land described in the Schedule below for a public purpose. For further particulars please see the Gazette of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka No. 76 of 15.02.1980 (Part III).

K. B. Wijekoon

Assistant Government Agent,
Kandy District.

The Kachcheri,
Kandy. 21st January 1980

Schedule

Situation : In Kirigankumbura Village, Talagune Grama Sevaka Division, Udadumbara D.R.O.'s Division, Kandy District.

Name of Land : Ambalamagawawatta
Madugodahena

Plan and Lot Nos. : 145 and 146 in V.P. 369

properly planned? How much of it has been done? How much yet remains to be done? How long will it take to bring it to a successful close?

These are questions that a citizen badly afflicted by the cyclone, living in the cyclone affected area, has a legitimate right to ask. The answers to these questions should have been made available to him in some palpable form or other, and in some easily accessible place or another.

The acceptable fact is that he has the right to pose these questions in his own interest and in the interest of the State of which he happens to be a law-abiding, useful member. And he has the right to expect the right type of answers. 'Pray', it may be intercepted, 'Which are the questions that the citizen would like to be answered?' They may be put in a direct form, with the least of circumlocution.

(1) What are the aids that have been contributed to the cyclone rehabilitation programme, and in what form have they been made by the various benefactors in Sri Lanka and outside Sri Lanka? (2) How much has been contributed from the President's Fund? (3) How much has come from the State coffers? (4) Which Departments and personnel have had the courage and good will to come forward and help the cyclone victims in the immediate wake of the cyclone? (5) Have they been publicly thanked for their selfless service? (6) What is the cyclone rehabilitation programme like? (7) Have the damaged habitations been re-structured? (8) If so, how many; and at what expense; and by whom? (9) What sums of money were spent; and what is the extent of the aid allocated to the various affected areas? And how were these disbursed or utilized? (10) Have any cyclone proof buildings been erected? If so, where; at whose cost; and at what cost? (11) What steps have been taken to make use of the fallen coconut and other tree stems and to turn them into useful timber? (12) How many cubic feet of this timber has been cut, sawn, and taken possession of by the State Timber Corporation? And how much worth of timber has gone out of this District? (13) Has

any effort been made to re-plant the damaged forest areas with useful quick-growing timber trees? (14) Have the people been given the necessary impetus to plant trees and bring back the green cover? (15) How many acres of coconut estates have been ravaged by the cyclone? How many trees have been uprooted? (16) What is the extent and scope of the aid given to coconut growers? (17) How many acres have already been replanted? And how many seedlings have been used for this purpose? (18) What losses have paddy farmers sustained in each of the cultivation seasons that followed the cyclone? (19) What is the extent of damage caused? (20) What aids have been given by the State? (21) And to which areas? (22) What are the prospects of the present (a) Wet season cultivation (Munmari) (b) Dry season cultivation (kalapokam)? (23) What steps have been taken by the state to provide such essentials as rice, coconut, kerosene, dried fish, dhal etc. at reasonable prices to the people of the affected area? (24) What was the cattle population of the area before the cyclone? (25) After the cyclone? (26) How much loss has been sustained by cattle owners? (27) Have any steps been taken to rehabilitate this very important occupation? If so; what is the extent of the aid given? (28) What losses have been sustained by the fishermen of the area; (29) What is the extent of this loss? (30) What steps have been taken to restore this industry? (31) How many toddy tappers have been thrown out of employment by the cyclone ravage? (32) What steps have been taken to teach them other crafts, say carpentry, bricklaying etc; And thus to provide them with some means of livelihood? (33) To what extent has each of the following small industries been affected; and how have those employed in them, been, re-habilitated? Textile weaving, Calico-printing, mat-weaving, basket-making, making of brassware, pottery lime-burning; carpentry, wood-work; cadjan-weaving, coir work; net-making, vegetable and fruit growing; sewing and needle work etc. (34) What steps has the state taken to make good the losses sustained by the middle-class house owners who have re-structured and repaired their houses at their own expense from their own savings or from loans from the state

mortgage Department? (35) What has happened to the much-expected Town-re-structuring—plan and re-building programme of the Town of Batticaloa? (36) What is the delay due to?; (37) Why hasn't the two million rupees promised for re-habilitating the damaged town of Batticaloa been given to the municipality?.

Here, in the cyclone devastated Batticaloa District, the common man, placed still in an enigmatic predicament, knows not where to go for aid; what to get; and in what manner or form to get it. He is like unto a barque drifting on a storm beset sea. **It is, therefore, most incumbent on the part of the leaders of the people, their representatives in parliament, and the welfare state to find an answer to everyone of the questions posed above, and to, shall we say, mobilize adequate solutions with the least delay.**

The State shall have to bear in mind that the longer the people are kept in the dark with regard to these matters of vital interest in their life, and the longer the delay entailed in the carrying out of the cyclone rehabilitation programme the denser the cloud of misunderstanding that might gather in the heavens of the social order in this region, and the lesser the quantum of confidence that the people may have to repose on their leaders and the party in power.

Already there are rampant all sorts of cock-and-bull-stories on a variety of subjects; and the time is ripe for the authorities to see to it that the people are not suffered to be tossed from the frying pan into the fire. A peace-loving, docile, voice less and dumb people like the citizens of

OFFICIAL EXCHANGE RATES

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

CURRENCY	PER 100 UNITS	
	Buying Rate	Selling Rate
U.S. Dollar	Rs. 1552.00	Rs. 1555.00
Sterling Pound	Rs. 3575.45	Rs. 3581.45
Deutsche Mark	Rs. 892.20	Rs. 893.80
French Franc	Rs. 381.15	Rs. 381.85
Japanese Yen	Rs. 6.4355	Rs. 6.4505
Indian Rupees	Rs. 197.30	Rs. 197.70

-Batticaloa should not be expected, to be kept in the dark and in silence for ever. They should be given a fair chance to speak, and that, at the right places where they may convey the right meaning; and not given the opportunity to make, what might appear to be, irresponsible statements at market-places, bus-stands, and street corners.

It is a dangerous sign, especially when people begin to talk in riddles, and ambiguous terms, and in terms of shady monetary deals linked with jobs and job banks; of promises made and not kept; of contracts entered into and fulfilled more in their breach than in their observance; and of fallen mighty Mara trees that shall not dare to rear their crowns again and stand erect in all their pristine glory. *Arn't these sneaking omens? The Batticaloa man is too good to indulge in such desultory hobbies as participating in under-the-table, table-talks.*

32, Angle Road,
Batticaloa.



POEM

The Hunt For Blunt

Now starts the hunt of Comrade Blunt
The Don who served his Queen
Preserving art, he won her heart,
Bud did not act quite clean.

They question why, a confessed spy
Has not to face the fire;
A bolted knight need not take flight
But may on terms retire.

A great career was no barrier
For no frontiers has art;
He says he met the Fascist threat
And conscience played its part.

Mine is no stunt, says Tony Blunt
I am no common spy,
My high ideal may not seem real
So probe the mess say I.

Mervyn Casie Chetty

7.2.80

Confidentially

● Brown Hopper Pest

IS IT NOT TRUE that the brown hopper pest has devastated vast acres of paddy in the East and South? That there have been conjectures that the area affected is over 23,000 acres? That a Departmental circular (over the SLBC and in the media) pretends that mischievous anti-government circles were seeking to make a mountain of a mole-hill? That mountain or mole-hill the brown hopper is a reality that cannot be hidden behind special departmental communiques? That *Tribune* Investigators have learnt from agronomists and scientists in the Department that the outbreak of this pest this year is the direct result of the indiscriminate use of unrecommended insecticides that have been imported into the country following the liberalisation of trade? That these insecticides were either not effective or killed all the predators that biologically kept pests under control? That these specialists assert that if the liberalised trade policy is followed in the unregulated importation of insecticides and other agricultural inputs, there would be repeated recurrences of similar outbreaks in the near future? That there is no doubt that the Brown Hopper Pest had been successfully controlled biologically and it was the indiscriminate, incorrect and repeated use of unknown insecticides that had resulted in the elimination of the biological control agents leading to the resurgence of the Brown Hopper Pest? That Sri Lanka has now become the dumping ground for manufacturers of drugs, chemicals and insecticides in Western countries? That some of them have also made this island the testing ground for new agro-chemicals and other drugs? That Sri Lanka is one of the few countries that permits the free imports of insecticides, agro-chemicals and all kinds of drugs that claim to be curative? That the Government does not seem to realise that such indiscriminate imports constitute a major threat to the health of the nation? That it has become absolutely essential to control and regulate the import of drugs and agro-chemicals? That, in the

meantime, the relevant question of the day is to know what constructive steps the Ministry of Agriculture has taken to stem the spread of the fast-spreading Brown Hopper Pest moving to other areas? That pronouncements over the SLBC, belatedly naming recommended insecticides, that could safely be used, are not enough? That apart from anything else many farmers cannot afford to purchase these insecticides? That farmers are at the very end of their liquidity tether as the harvest nears? That a 16 oz., bottle of one of the recommended insecticides, which had cost just under Rs. 20 a year ago, is now priced at Rs. 47/50? That it would cost a farmer very nearly Rs. 200 to spray an acre? That in the national interest the Department should ground halt its heavy-vehicles—which run around aimlessly for private transport—and to use the money to take proper measures to bring the Brown Hopper Pest under control? That the favoured Departmental chiefs seem to think that if the proper handouts come over the SLBC and in the media—their job was done? That they didn't seem to care what happened to the Pest—most of them were only interested in claiming travelling and subsistence allowances for making trips to the affected areas? That the more areas they could visit and the more days they were on circuit the better for them?

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MISTAKE

Last week's cover was mistakenly described in our note as stone-carvings from a Buddhist temple built by Tamils in the Eastern Province near Trincomalee. This was due to a mix-up. The picture we used depicted stone-carvings from Dedurugala temple near Wellawaya. This is said to be one of the few and rare specimens of Mayan Buddhist art. The picture of the Tamil Buddhist temple at Thirivagi on the East will be used on our cover in a future issue. This mistake about the caption does not detract from our arguments about and plea for national unity.

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A QUESTION OF INCENTIVES

".....Today unfortunately, we have been plunged into a sea of oil and consumer goods price rises. As a result of these factors the cost of living, building, and other requirements of civilized living have escalated every day at a speed never known before I feel in many aspects of our economic life we have to consider placing ourselves on a war footing..... "Let us ask ourselves can we keep on paying more and more for kerosene; can the State continue to subsidise kerosene at the expense of all other expenditure or can we do without kerosene. If so what alternative sources of energy can we find. Can we produce some other cereal than flour and bread. If so let us put the whole nation to work to achieve that object....."

*President J. R. JAYEWARDENE
in Tangalle on February 2, 1980.*

IS IT NOT TIME

**TO OFFER INCENTIVES
TO LOCAL PRODUCERS?**

IS IT NOT TIME

**TO CURB IMPORTS THAT
UNDERMINE DOMESTIC PRODUCTION**

SPACE DONATED