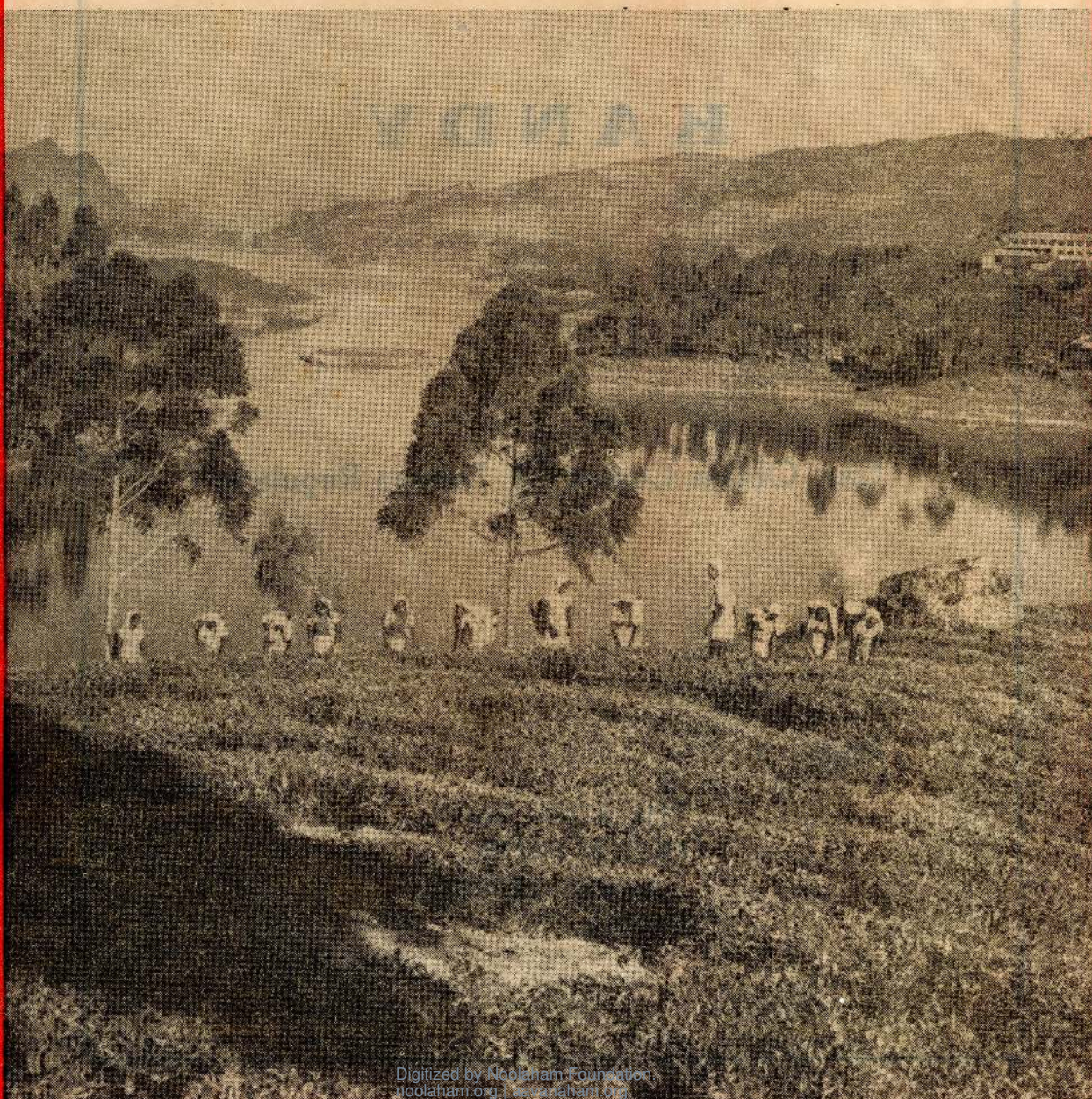


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Letter From The Editor

CEYLON, now Sri Lanka, until very recently was the tea garden of the British. For over one hundred and fifty years it had been a British Planters' Raj. The Government and the Administration had existed mainly, if not wholly, for the benefit of the plantation owners, of tea, and also of rubber and coconut, with the lesser planters of cocoa, cardamon, pepper, citronella and the like trailing behind. Until the twenties, (until the politico-economic impact of the Bolshevik Revolution and the National Liberation upsurge had set in motion an unparalleled transformation in the world at large), the hill country of Ceylon was a White Man's preserve. No non-white had owned any land (or was allowed to own any land) above the 3000 to 4000 feet elevation. All the estates in the hill country, medium and high grown were European-owned. The brown comrade, British commercial colonialism and imperialism had spawned, had crept only into the low-grown teas, rubber and coconut lands. Right up to the middle of the 'twenties, it was all White Planters' Raj. Governors could be removed if the Planters' Association so desired. Government Agents, Doctors, Public Servants and the like could not afford to displease the Planters' Establishment—if they did, they were punished (the least being transferred to malarial stations in the lowlands where the jungle had crept in). The Planters' Association was more powerful *de facto* than the Legislative Assemblies the British had set up in order to teach the natives to rule themselves. Not many in Sri Lanka today, especially those who have grown up in the Donoughmore and Soulbury eras, know the realities of Planters' Raj. Not many realise the true implications of the manner in which planters had acquired lands and how they had developed them with the assistance of bonded and indentured labour from South India. Sentimental speeches are made about the dispossession wrought under the Wastelands Ordinance and the exploitation of the local peasantry, but it is essential that the true story must be correctly unfolded without oversimplifications if chauvinistic overtones and undertones are not to be displayed towards the group of Indian plantation workers who have been even more ruthlessly exploited (lakhs of them had died prematurely from malnutrition and disease during a century of Planters' Raj) than the Kandyan peasants. It is no doubt true that after the 'twenties a breed of abominable comrade henchmen of white planters had been created out of the Indian head kangany and supervisory class and many of them had become big and small estate owners (exploiting their own compatriots even more ruthlessly than the British) in the twilight of European planterdom in this island. Sinhala and a few Jaffna Tamil comrade elements had also bought some of the estates of the British who were slowly departing from our shores and these new rich plantation owners were as bad or even worse than the head kangany class of planters. **All this has now ended.** Under the Land Reform Law of 1972 and the Amending Law of 1975 all privately and publicly owned (by companies) estates have been taken over. Some of them have been parcelled out to the land-hungry "landless" Kandy and Sinhala "peasants", but the landless among the Tamils (both indigenous and those of more recent origin from plantation labour) have been ignored (thus laying the seeds for a future upheaval). Many of those who have benefited by the fragmentation of developed plantation land—in tea, coconut and rubber—are not "peasants" by any stretch of imagination but are only the political hangers-on of the Party in power. The plantations, (not fragmented in order to satisfy the political imperatives of the next general elections), have been divided between the Ministry of Plantation Industries and the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands. The latter has created a new management hierarchy called the *Janawasama* as a replacement for the Agency Houses which have now been wound up. The Ministry of Plantation Industries has set out to administer the estates now in its charge through Regional Offices and a Committee of Experts to perform the functions of the Agency Houses. All this is being done in a serious bid to sustain the plantation industry (and economy) so that Sri Lanka could continue to derive foreign exchange through exports. There is no reason why this cannot be done. But there are ominous signs on the horizon that the over-politicalisation, on a sectarian (parochially partisan) basis, of the administration of the plantations taken over by the Government (ignoring the economic and commercial imperatives essential for success) might lead to a deterioration of the biggest economic undertaking in the country today. The picture on our cover was taken in the heyday of British Planters' Raj. What will our plantation industries turn out to under the new ownership and control which can be best bedescribed as State Capitalist enterprise?

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EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

* Adam's Peak * Press And Propaganda * Land Reform

IN A COUNTRY where people still pay so much attention to superstition and astrology, the recent fire in the Sri Pada region has generated the most pessimistic thoughts even among people who should know better. What has made it worse is the virtual news blackout which has been imposed on the event. Apart from references in the *Daily Mirror* and the *Daily News*—very small and very insignificantly displayed—there has been a total blackout about the rather big fire that has swept over the northern and western slopes of Adam's Peak. Pilgrims were told that they could not go up via the Hatton-Maskeliya route: that the fire which had started about March 21 (the day the Sun was over the Equator) had raged for several days: that several (hundreds or thousands) had been trapped in the fire-swept area: that intending pilgrims should go by the alternative route via Ratnapura. These were the only snatches of news that have appeared in the papers. The rest has all been gossip, rumour and conjecture. In the polite circle of the elite in the metropolis, the number of dead is not talked about, but in the street corners of Colombo and in the trains and buses, the "ordinary" man believes that the number runs into several hundreds (700 is the figure mentioned). This kind of unhealthy gossip need never have arisen if there had been proper news reporting about the fire, if reporters and photographers had been sent to the scene and truthful official bulletins published about the disaster. There are today scare stories about burnt buildings and destroyed installations—all built round the official suggestion that new road and route would be prepared for the trek to the Peak from the Hatton-Maskeliya end.

It may well be that the Sri Pada fire was nothing more than a small bush fire in which a few bridges and culverts were destroyed and which therefore necessitated a new route. But the news blackout has

given rise to speculations of the most varied kind. People who claim to have long memories recount what previous fires in the Adam's Peak region have brought. They also whisper with awe that this fire had come hard on the heels of West's comet which had hung over the western sky in Sri Lanka for some weeks. The zodiacal movements of Saturn and Jupiter have been jumbled together to produce a dismal picture of the things to come. There are also dark and ominous hints about the solar eclipse on April 29 and October 23 and the lunar eclipse on May 13. What is talked is senseless airy-fairy banter, but even such small talk has a way of gripping public attention.

The reason why we are stressing all this is that it has become necessary for the powers-that-be to restore news-reporting in the daily papers and the the SLBC to what it was a few years ago. One looks for news today only in such maverick party dailies like the *Janadina*, *Aththa* and the *Dinapatha*, but it is a tiresome business to unearth the political slant which always envelops news reports in these papers. *Lake House* papers, the *Times* group of newspapers, the *Virakesari* and (the defunct) *Dawasa* newspapers—as nominally independent national newspapers—had once reported all news fit to print. But today the situation is different. *Lake House* papers are just an expanded version of the *Government Gazette*. The *Times* group does better, but it is so wholly SLFP in its news slant that the public have lost confidence in its news reporting. The *Virakesari* does not seem to have the range or the scope for adequate all-island reporting. The SLBC news service is in shambles—it has no Director of News and no proper news reporters (many of them are misfits appointed to the news room for reasons best not talked about.)

It is in this sad state in which we find the Fourth Estate and the SLBC today. The Sectoral Committee of the Cabinet has produced learned memoranda about the wrong kind of image that has been created abroad by inadequate and often mischievous reporting. It is time, however, for the Sectoral Committee to pay some attention to the

local situation. With the Non-aligned Conference and Summit just around the corner, it is necessary to streamline and re-vamp our newspapers and newsreporting if Sri Lanka is to present an image as a vigorous little democracy to the non-aligned world which is expected to descend upon the island in August—and probably for some weeks before that.

Already visiting non-aligned delegations have (privately) complained about the inadequacies of the local press: that foreign news had become a kind of "rara avis" in our news columns: that local news did not seem to reflect developments in the country in a realistic manner: that advertisements, mostly of government origin, seemed to crowd out all news from daily papers: that news blackouts and slants seem to be order of the day: and so on and so forth.

The news bulletins of the SLBC have become a farcical joke: that the "Behind the News" jabber was controversially partisan in the most peculiar way: and that the SLBC was ineffective as a weapon of mass media communication in the armoury of the government—news had to be presented, fairly, factually and objectively to give the radio the necessary degree of credibility to serve any purpose.

The Adam's Peak fire is not the only event of recent times which has not been adequately, properly and truthfully reported. Slanted and distorted news do harm, but news suppressed or blacked out give rise to speculative gossip and rumour that inhibit correct political thinking. It is time, we repeat once again for people in authority to wake up to the realities of the day. *Lake House* papers are devoid of news, but the papers like the *Aththa*, *Janadina*, and *The Journal* (UNP's) are full of news about unsavoury goings-on in *Lake House*, about wasteful expenditure by the Directors and Rs. 1 million odd of petty cash expenditure for which vouchers were not available for audit checks.

LAND REFORM AND MAHA-WELLI, however, have had more

than their fair share of headlines and columnage in the pro-government and government-controlled papers. The SLBC has also overreached itself in the propaganda about Land Reform and the Mahaweli—with the result that the credibility gap, that had earlier submerged SLBC, has now completely overwhelmed it. This propaganda fantasia, however, does not mean that significant developments have not taken place in regard to Mahaweli and Land Reform.

The waters of the Mahaweli have begun to flow from the diversion at Polgolla to the northeast to augment the tanks in the Polonnaruwa area and also northwards to reach Kalawewa. This water will help the farmers who have suffered from the after-effects of three years of drought and might make possible a limited Yala this year where none was possible otherwise. But without a full quota, this year, of the Southwest Monsoon (to swell the waters in the Mahaweli) and a fuller Northeast Monsoon (to fill the tanks and make up for the drought and semi-drought conditions during the last six to seven years in different parts of the paddy-producing dry zone), no miracles in the long-awaited and much publicised Green Revolution are likely to occur immediately. The benefits of the Mahaweli diversion schemes would, in any case, be felt only by 1978-80, if the drought is broken this year after the seven-year period.

For the 1977 General Elections, Mahaweli is at best a promise of things to come with waters already diverted from Polgolla. Mahaweli will certainly be a better talking point than Pesalai oil which has now been pushed into the limbo of forgotten matters—this need not have happened if the initial propaganda had been realistic and people had been told that oil extraction was a long-term project (instead of promising oil for the "next" New year).

At the moment there is a great amount self-congratulation in the way Land Reform has been carried out. The old landlord class has been wiped out. The old plantation owners have been liquidated. New landowners of the one to three acres variety, of five-to-fifteen acres variety, and the up-10-50 acres variety have taken the place of the old big time landowners.

The conservatism of the old landlord class will be replaced by "petite bourgeois ideological vacillations of the new small landowner, and this is likely to have a tremendous impact on the elections in 1977. The LSSP and the CP, which had derived much support from the agricultural "proletariat" employed ("exploited") by the big landlords will now find themselves confronted by a "petite bourgeois" mass of small landowners to whom, the emotional, chauvinistic, jingoistic, demagogic and populist policies of the SLFP and the new UNP will appeal. The UNP, even more than the SLFP, seem to have woken up to the changing character of the new classes of voters and for this reason perhaps that the UNP has extended its support to Land Reform and formulated a "beyond Marxism" manifesto.

Sections in the SLFP, and the CP and the LSSP, however hope that the collective, co-operative, and state capitalist enterprises, revolving around the Ministry of Plantation Industries and the Janasama organisation, would help to create a new class of agricultural working class amendable to union organisation and leftwing politicalisation.

The Agency Houses have gone and British interests have gracefully bowed out for a compensation of £ 5½ million payment to be made in rupees, spread out over five years with interest at 4 percent. This compensation of £5½ million (about Rs. 75 million) was for the sterling estates taken over recently. The total acreage involved was about 136,345 acres and the payment of compensation will start from 1977 "under the normal laws of the land" and will be spread over a period of five years at an interest rate of four percent. Payment will be in rupees, but the compensation per acre works at about £42.50 per acre. The liabilities of estates taken over will be a charge on compensation payable.

FOR ALL THE OTHER LANDS taken over (the non-sterling owned), the Minister of Agriculture and Lands has appointed a five-

member Compensation Board to arrive at negotiated settlements in respect of lands vested in the Land Reform Commission. The Minister has also in his statement set out the manner in which compensation can be obtained. This is set out below for the record: "All declarants in respect of whom statutory determination have been made in terms of Section 19 of the Land Reform Law and duly gazetted in terms of the said Law, are hereby informed that if they are desirous of arriving at a negotiated settlement and receiving compensation in cash, are free to appear before this Board. Declarants who are not interested in a negotiated settlement or who fail to arrive at a settlement, or who do not appear before the Compensation Board when invited, are hereby informed that the determination of compensation in such cases will be made in accordance with the provision of the said Law.

"The Land Reform Commission will from time to time publish notices in the Government Gazette calling for claims in terms of Section 29 of the said Law. All declarants and claimants are hereby informed that irrespective of any application they may make to the Compensation Board, they should within a period of one month, reckoned from the date specified in the Section 29 notice, submit claims to the Land Reform Commission, so that they may have the option of pursuing their claims for compensation under the Land Reform Law in the event of the failure of a negotiated settlement, or in event of having to settle the claims of other claimants who may have submitted their claims in response to the section 29 Notice.

"The declarants in respect of whom statutory determination have been gazetted, will in due course receive from the Secretary to the Compensation Board application forms to be filled in and returned to him within the period stipulated therein under registered post. These applications need be duly completed and returned under registered post, only if declarants desire to arrive at a negotiated settlement.

"After examination of these applications and when the Compensation Board is ready to deal with individual applications such applicants will be notified per

registered post of the dates places and times on which they should appear before the Board.

"All communications in regard to matters pertaining to the Compensation Board should be addressed to the Secretary Compensation Board."

A columnist in the *Times* had stated that a "parasitic class" will disappear with the liquidation of the Agency Houses. True, but what guarantee is there that the Janawasama and its branches and the Plantation Industries Management Units will not spawn a new breed of parasites?

* * *

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

BY KAUTILIYA

World In Turmoil—1

Egypt

THE WORLD continues to be in turmoil. The war in Angola has ended, but a new war may erupt in Rhodesia. In Lebanon, fighting has flared up again, more bloody than ever. Beirut is being devastated. Heavy weapons are being used by rival groups in the centre of the city. Naval ships have been shelling some parts of the city. The Syrian President's efforts to bring peace between the Muslims and the Christians by devising a new Constitution have so far not met with any success. An attempt to remove the Christian President Franjeh by force by rebel Arab troops led by Lt. Khatib was prevented by other Arab troops favouring the Syrian plan for peaceful negotiations with the Christians.

Lebanon has today become a jumble of complex contradictions. Lebanese socialists, led by men like Mr. Jumblatt, have shown resentment against Syria's intervention in Lebanese affairs. It also seems ironical that whilst the Lebanese Muslims, including Army rebels, seem determined to use violence, the Palestinian guerillas want to settle the political problem by negotiations. To make matters worse, the Lebanese Army has become totally incapable of maintaining law and order especially after the defection of some Muslim troops.

One way to change the situation, it has been suggested, was for Syria to intervene massively in Lebanon—the latter's military forces are small in comparison with Syria's. But, such a Syria-imposed settlement would imply that Lebanon was no longer "sovereign" and this might invite counteraction by neighbouring Israel. Another way suggested was for the controversial President Franjeh to step aside to enable others to negotiate a settlement. But he so far been adamant in not wanting to move out. Unless some settlement is arrived at soon, Beirut, which was once the greatest commercial centre in West Asia, will be in total shambles. It is today a market only for arms for the conflict between Christians and Muslims.

WHILST THE FIGHTING in Lebanon has reached a new peak of intensity, and whilst the quarrels between Libya and her neighbours Egypt and Tunisia have reached a pitch of feverish acrimony (Egyptian and Tunisian sources accuse Gaddafi of organising murder squads to kill Sadat and Borguiba respectively), the most significant development in West Asia is the sensational break Sadat has effected with the Soviet Union.

A *Reuter* report from Cairo datelined March 15 had stated: "President Anwar Sadat last night asked the Egyptian Parliament to nullify the 15-year treaty of friendship and co-operation with the Soviet Union because of what he called Moscow's refusal to supply arms and spare parts for the Egyptian army. 'In a year to 18 months, all the weapons in Egypt will be mere scrap,' Mr. Sadat said in a lengthy speech. 'They are putting Egypt under intense economic and military pressure, but I will not bow.'

"Mr. Sadat personally drafted the law which would cancel out the treaty, signed in May 1971. He deposited the draft law with the Assembly Secretariat for quick action. Parliament is expected to approve the draft in a few days. Mr. Sadat's action culminated several years of worsening relations between Egypt and the Soviet Union centring on what Mr. Sadat said was Moscow's unwillingness to supply new weapons or to reschedule Egypt's debt. 'They even demanded that I pay interest

on the military debts, even though it is common for war debts to be cancelled,' Mr. Sadat said. He saved his bombshell announcement for the very end of his three-hour speech, in which he also dealt with political reforms in Egypt and the current disunity in the Arab world.

"President Sadat had himself negotiated the 15-year treaty and signed it with President Nikolai Podgorny in Cairo. In what was then described as an 'historic document in the relations between the two countries,' the Kremlin pledged military aid to its West Asia ally. The agreement provided specifically for training of Egyptian personnel to man Soviet-supplied weapons. The Presidential action in fact contravenes the terms of the agreement, which says that if either country wishes to withdraw it must give a year's notice. Mr. Sadat, less than a year after the treaty was signed, expelled 15,000 Soviet military advisers and combat personnel whose heavy pressure was resented by important factions in the Egyptian military.

"Mr. Sadat said in his speech that the deterioration in relations began in the days of the late President Gamel Abdul Nasser and following the 1967 Arab-Israeli war—again because of Soviet refusal to meet Egyptian arms requirements. He said it was for this reason that Mr. Nasser accepted an American-proposed ceasefire with Israel in August 1967 following a lengthy war of attrition across the Suez Canal.

"Government officials said Foreign Minister Ismail Fahmi summoned Soviet Ambassador Vladimir Polyakov, a few hours before Mr. Sadat spoke to inform him of the decision to terminate the treaty. While accusing Moscow of duplicity in its dealings with him, Mr. Sadat defended his rapprochement with Washington, against criticism by radical Arab regimes that he has sold out the Arab cause."

THERE WERE immediate reactions to Sadat's action in many places. China welcomed the break. *Hsinhua* promptly reported that the Chinese Foreign Minister Chiao Kuan-hua had told the Egyptian Ambassador in Peking that his Government supported the stand of President Sadat in defending national independence against "big power hegemonism." Mr. Chiao had also said that the Arab people

Egypt And USSR

as long as they remained united, would win the final victory in their struggle against "imperialism and Zionism."

It is interesting to read the comments emanating from a "radical Arab regime." We cite below a background comment from Iraq—one of them consistent critics of Sadat's pro-west policies.

"Egyptian President Anwar Sadat last gamble in the form of abrogation of the Egyptian-Soviet friendship treaty unilaterally has already caused considerable anxiety among progressive Arab circles. Many organs of Arab mass media reject Sadat's anti-Soviet allegations. Even in Egypt itself Sadat has not been able to silence all progressive voices. During the debate in Egyptian Parliament on Sadat's proposal to abrogate the treaty, many a speaker expressed the hope that the Egyptian-Soviet co-operation will not be impaired by what has happened.

"Ahmad Taha, one of the MPs who voted against the abrogation of the treaty stressed in his speech that 'Egyptian-Soviet relations' are a model of international relations. We should not forget about the Soviet weapons made available to us as a gift in 1967. That was the most real help. Nor should we forget that but for the economic and technical co-operation with the Soviet Union, we would not have had a heavy industry, the basis of our economic development. I reject the report of the foreign affairs commission proposing to cancel the treaty with the Soviet Union because it fails to give a profound analysis of Egyptian-Soviet relations. I also oppose the abrogation of the treaty because I think that we should take into account the real position of the U.S.A."

"TASS had reported that inside Egypt the new move by Sadat has met with support among those bourgeois circles who are profiting by the 'open door' policy proclaimed by the President envisaging opening of the floodgates to the influx of foreign private capital into the country and granting all sorts of privileges to western investors. It also means a departure from the socio-political gains of the Egyptian revolution, Tass said.

"The reaction in the Arab world has been one of open anxiety and alarm. Syrian press and radio view the move as rash and damaging not only to the national interests of Egypt but also to Atabunity. The

paper **Al Baath** said that Sadat's speech was studded with slander and vicious attacks against those who are contributing in every way towards strengthening Arab solidarity which is the only road for liberating Arab lands, and resorting to the rights of the Palestinians. 'Sadat has aligned himself in this matter with the Israeli enemy and with his new friends, as represented by the USA, ignoring the question of occupied Arab territory where the Arab people are languishing under Israeli oppression and waging a courageous struggle against Zionist expansion,' the paper says. A Damascus radio commentary said that Sadat praised the USA as if it has changed its stance towards the Arabs, oblivious of the fact that the USA vetoed the resolution in support of the just cause of Palestinian struggle in the Security Council, and it was the USA which this year alone granted 1,800 million dollars worth of weapons to the Israeli aggressor while it is just planning to sell to Egypt six transport planes!

"Many papers rejected Sadat's absurd allegations that the Soviet Union has been working against him in the Arab world. These papers remind him that the Soviet Union has been doing everything to contribute to the cohesion and unity of the Arab people and states to strengthen their concerted actions against aggression.

"The Jordanian paper **Al Dastour** said that the Soviet Union all these years stood on the side of Egypt and the other Arab states and that it continues to support the Arabs on the Palestinian issue which is the main problem in this region.

"Comments in the Soviet press emphasise that the Soviet Union will continue to carry out a principled and consistent policy aimed at developing friendly relations with the Egyptian people. But inter-state relations and co-operation are a bilateral matter and cannot develop if one side conducts a premediated line of undermining them. The Egyptian side carried full responsibility for the consequences of both the policy carried out by Egypt's leadership towards the Soviet Union in recent years, and of the abrogation of the treaty of friendship and co-operation, it is pointed out. As expected the unilateral abrogation of the treaty by Egypt has caused jubilation among those circles in Washington and Israel whose main

aim is to undermine Arab unity and Soviet-Arab friendship.

"The **Daily News** of New York hailed it as a fresh manifestation of unfriendly policy towards the Soviet Union and says that it is 'good news for Israel.' **New York Times** correspondent from Jerusalem writes 'Israeli government circles welcome such developments', and an article in the paper emphasises that the abrogation of the treaty draws Egypt into the western orbit. 'Kneeling before Washington, is the heading of the commentary by French paper **Figaro** which says that judging from what Sadat has done since 1970 he has not ceased to be a 'western man'.

"**Washington Post** in an editorial headlined 'Sadat's last gamble express the hope that this move further reduces the possibility of Egypt's direct confrontation with Israel. The decision by Sadat undermines Egypt's military potential and in material terms makes more remote the prospects of Egypt's participation in a new Arab-Israeli war.' The American promise of 695 million dollars this year and Saudi Arabia's promised loan are shown by the western press as the main reasons for Sadat's move. Comments also point out that king Khaled of Saudi Arabia made two conditions before promising aid: one, the treaty with the Soviet Union be abrogated, and two, the representatives of the rightwing reactionary organisation 'The Muslim Brotherhood' be admitted into all government bodies in Egypt. One has to wait to see what further developments take place in Egypt under Sadat's stewardship and how the people of Egypt react to these steps."

WHILST Syrian, Iraqi, Libyan and Algerian papers have been critical of Sadat's action, a leading Cairo daily warned Soviet bloc newspapers not to interfere in Egyptian internal affairs saying this could aggravate differences in relations between Egypt and the Soviet Union. The mass circulation **Al-Akbar** was responding to criticism in the Soviet, Polish and Czechoslovak press of President Anwar Sadat's decision last week to terminate the Soviet-Egyptian friendship treaty. In a front page article, it said: "It seems Moscow assumes that the Egyptian people have a special allegiance to the Soviet government."

A Reuter report from the Egyptian capital stated: "Less than 24 hours

after Mr. Sadat presented his proposal, the Egyptian Parliament cancelled the five-year-old treaty and accused the Kremlin of interfering in Egypt's internal affairs. The Peoples Assembly, or Parliament, voted overwhelmingly in favour of terminating the 1971 pact. Only two votes were recorded in opposition to this major rebuff for the Soviet Union.

"In a memorandum to the Assembly's Foreign Affairs Committee, the Egyptian Foreign Ministry accused Moscow of interfering in Egypt's internal affairs and of violating a treaty clause providing for Soviet assistance in strengthening Egypt's defence capability. The memorandum said the Soviet Communist Party leader, Mr. Leonid Brezhnev's speech to the 25th party congress in Moscow last month had been considered by Cairo as an interference in internal Egyptian affairs. Mr. Brezhnev had told the Congress that the present Egyptian leadership was attempting to dismantle the social economic and political achievements of the Egyptian revolution."

Reactions in Moscow were understandably sharp. A report from Moscow dated March 16 by the Indian News Agency *Samachar* read as follows:

"The Soviet news agency *Tass* last night accused President Sadat of Egypt of pursuing an unfriendly policy towards the Soviet Union and warned that Egypt would be responsible for the consequences of ending its friendship treaty with Moscow. In a statement, *Tass* said, 'This action by the Egyptian President is a new manifestation of the unfriendly policy in regard to the Soviet Union that he has been actually pursuing already for a long time now.'

"*Tass* said it had been authorised to state that the responsibility for the consequences of the Egyptian leadership's policy as a whole in regard to the Soviet Union in recent years, and for the abrogation of the treaty rests entirely with the Egyptian side. The abrogation of the treaty puts a juridical seal on a situation when, as a result of this policy, the operation of the treaty has been, in fact, paralysed.' The Soviet Union has pursued and will continue to pursue in the future a principled, consistent policy aimed at developing friendly relations with the Arab Republic of Egypt and with

the Egyptian people", the statement added.

"The United States is preparing to lift the embargo on arms deliveries to Egypt with three principal aims in view, according to Soviet specialists here. The first is to undermine Soviet-Egyptian relations; the second, to entrench Egypt more deeply on the path of separate and partial deals with Israel to the detriment of Arab unity; and the third to use it as cover for new major deliveries of latest offensive weapons to Israel. Referring to the present round of talks in Washington on lifting of the embargo, a *Tass* commentator said this involved sale of six C-30 military transport planes besides deliveries against cash of helicopters, radio and other communications equipment, lorries and mine detectors.

"Obviously Moscow is unhappy with the policy trends in Egypt but it had avoided direct criticism of Egyptian leaders and had instead concentrated fire on Washington. It is with the same constraint that the current anti-Nasser campaign in Egypt is also viewed here."

THOUGH THE SOVIET UNION has recently scored many successes in the Arab world and in Africa, she has suffered a major setback in Egypt. Relations with Sadat were never as cordial as they had been with Nasser although it was Sadat who had entered into the Treaty of Friendship and Co-operation in 1971. It was no doubt Kissinger's subtle policies which pushed Sadat into a position which has led to the present break. The Soviet Union has always wholeheartedly supported the Arabs against the Israelis, and there is not the slightest doubt that without Soviet diplomatic, political and military support, the Arabs could not have been able to fight Israel in the way they have done.

Sadat's action makes it clear that he is no longer in favour of his earlier policy of force to secure a West Asian settlement. There are apprehensions in radical Arab quarters that Sadat has long ago given secret assurances to the Americans that he would never use armed force against Israel. Another Egyptian-Israeli war will militate against American overtures to the Arabs,

and the present nullification of aggressive Egyptian policies towards Israel is a necessary safeguard for US interests in the region. The question has now been mooted whether all oil rich Arab States will continue their financial assistance to Egypt in view of Sadat's policies of non-confrontation with Israel. The Sinai agreement had brought Sadat into a kind of political isolation in the entire Arab world—not merely in the radical Arab world. Algeria, Morocco, Syria, Iraq and Libya have sharply criticised Sadat for his unilateral Sinai agreement. With this a major propaganda war had erupted between Egypt on the one hand and the other Arab countries on the other, especially Libya and Syria.

It is also interesting to note that one reason adduced by Sadat for terminating the Agreement with the USSR was that the Russians were responsible for the poor technical condition of the Egyptian Army. This, Sadat said, was responsible for Egypt's inability to stop by armed strength Israel's advance into Egyptian territory. Whatever view one takes of Sadat's break with the USSR, there cannot be the slightest doubt that Egypt is no longer willing to participate in any armed action to check any future (or possible) Israeli military action against other Arab states. It is also clear that Sadat wants to get western assistance, financial and otherwise, on account of the break he has staged with the Soviet Union. Some Arab states will now dub Egypt a "friend of Israel."

IN THIS CONNECTION, the editorial comment in *The Economist* of March 20, 1976 entitled BURNED BOATS: WILL THE WEST HELP SADAT TO CROSS THE RIVER? It read: "The last time Egypt's President Sadat cast his bread upon western waters, it sank. This could happen again. Mr. Sadat's abrogation, early this week, of the 15-year treaty of friendship with Russia that he signed in 1971 is a gamble for western and Arab help. So was his expulsion, in July, 1972, of some 20,000 Russian military experts. In 1972 he wanted the United States to jog Israel into thinking about withdrawal as part of a first step towards a political settlement. The Americans,

surprised and gratified by Sadat's move, failed to spot the urgency; they received it like manna from heaven but did nothing in return and the result was the 1973 war. Only then came the American initiative. Now Mr Sadat, no less urgently, wants western money and western arms. But with America tied hand and foot by its election and with western Europe feeling poor and sore, the response may yet again be a lot less than he wants.

"So what? If Mr. Sadat's call goes unanswered, or answered inadequately, a lot of Egyptians will go hungry and Mr. Sadat himself could be mortally discredited. The third world, which has already seen from the Angolan civil war what Russia can do for people it considers its friends, will have had a striking example of what the west cannot do, or is not willing to do, for a country that has turned its back on Soviet help and sought it from the west instead.

"Abrogation of the treaty completes Egypt's backturning on Russia. The treaty was symbolic from the start. It was signed very soon after Mr. Sadat had swooped against his left-wing, and conspiratorial, colleagues; a year later he expelled Russia's military men. But when two countries have worked together as closely and as long as Russia and Egypt have, there are bundles of loose ends—including the awkward fact that Russia is by far Egypt's largest trading partner (a two-way trade agreement for 1976 worth \$640m was initialised in December). This will resumably have to continue until Egypt makes a big hole in the reported \$6 billion it owes the Soviet Union.

"The Russians have taken the new move hard. For years they turned a publicly bland face to the insults and worse hurled at them by their ungrateful Egyptian protege (Mr. Sadat in his speech on Sunday underlined the continuity of ingratitude by describing Nasser's spats with the Russians). Now, for the first time, the Russians are beginning to say what they really think about Mr. Sadat. A rather stately *Tass* statement on Monday said that the treaty's abrogation merely legalised a relationship 'paralysed' by Mr. Sadat's consistent unfriendliness. It went on to reprove the president for distorting history (and, indeed, the

Egyptians are always marvellously selective when they get going); to remind him of the 148 industrial project built with Soviet aid (all Egypt's major industries, except oil, are Russian-created, and many, notably steel, depend on Russian help to complete their current expansion plans); and to warn him that 'national and progressive circles' in Egypt would not take kindly to his reactionary manoeuvres.

"Mr. Sadat can live with 'progressive' discontent if his new bid works. If it does not, he could well be for the chop—with Russia handing his opponents the axe. So far Egypt's economic liberalisation has been a dismal failure. Mr. Sadat set out to match the crossing of the Suez canal, in the 1973 war with a no less significant economic 'crossing'. A capitalist world that was then just entering its own economic crisis welcomed his liberalisation measures but did not, as Mr. Sadat had hoped, flesh out this welcome with industrial investment. Property and currency speculators made a killing; so did the middlemen cashing in on the new freedom to import luxury goods. Industrial capital was held back, and only partly for political reasons. Far more important was the fact that Egypt—insolvent, bureaucratic and sleepy, with tracts of its consumer economy hooked to years-old subsidies paid from the state purse—seemed a vast drain, swallowing anything given it. The characteristics that make most visitors like Egyptians are a bane to businessmen. But the stress now is on accountability; donors and investors are insisting, correctly on international supervision of how and where their money is spent.

"Mr. Sadat needs three things. He needs cash to help him fight his way out of foreign debts, which could be as high as \$14 billion, and to save him from the expensive expedient of short-term borrowing from commercial banks. The World Bank has been trying to work out a rescheduling of all Egypt's debts to the non-communist world. Mr. Sadat's recent swing through the Arab Gulf states raised only some of the emergency money he needs but the hazy notion of an Arab fund for aid and investment grew slightly more substantial. Saudi Arabia's generosity was checked when Mr. Sadat failed to link his second

disengagement deal with Israel to similar moves on the other Arab-Israeli fronts. But the bitterness this caused is losing its edge, if only because of the Saudi fear that Saudi, unsuccessful, could be superceded by men who would reverse his westward turn.

"Second, he needs labour-intensive projects to provide jobs for a people whose low expectations droop with each passing year. Egypt's hope is still for an investment consortium—America, Japan, Germany and as many west European countries can be persuaded to join the Arab monarchs—to provide \$4.5 billion a year. Hence his forthcoming swing through France, Germany and Yugoslavia. The need for such a massive injection of capital on economic and political ground is unquestionable; Egypt's ability to respond in the way would-be investors demand is not.

"Third, Mr. Sadat is looking for western arms to replace the Russian ones that have stopped coming or are falling to pieces for lack of maintenance and spare parts. Russia's ban on spares—extended, as he revealed on Sunday and the Indians confirmed on Wednesday to the help he hoped to get from India's Mig factories—is swiftly reducing the effectiveness of his air force and air defence system. Yugoslavia can provide only limited help; there are even narrower limits on the extent to which western bits can be fitted into Soviet equipment. The need is for new, substitute western weapons.

"Mr. Sadat's abrogation of the Soviet treaty will help Mr. Henry Kissinger to persuade congress, despite the Israeli counter-blast, to let Egypt have its six promised military transport aircraft. But Mr. Kissinger, who has said that this is about all America can provide until after its election, is looking to western Europe—France and Britain in particular—to take on from there. Some of the items on Egypt's shopping list, the Hawk anti-aircraft missile for instance, have no European substitutes. Others, including the F-5 fighter-bomber, have; and the Egyptians are negotiating with France for the sale of the Mirage F-1. Other possibilities include the Jaguar attack aircraft, helicopters, short-range anti-tank and anti-aircraft missiles, tanks, and communication and electronic equipment.

"Any changeover from Russian to western weaponry will have to be a changeover, not an addition to Egypt's total strength. It will also take time, and during this time Egypt's armed forces will be very weak. For Mr. Sadat, with his boats across the Volga burnt, it looks as if there is now no other way. The west may, and indeed should, have qualms about sending weapons into the smouldering Middle East. But look at the alternative. President Sadat would have to face his officers, who alone have the power to change the regime, and tell them they must make do with what he has already described, over-dramatically, as a load of scrap iron. What would they do then?"

The *Economist*, has posed the dilemma facing Sadat in admirable terms. What next? Will the West, especially the USA, go to the rescue of Sadat, after he has burnt his Russian boats?

Or is this the beginning of the end for Sadat?

THIS QUESTION can well be posed because it is today a concrete reality in many Arab countries growing more and more critical of Sadat's policies. Radical Arab commentators have described Sadat as a friend of the Zionists and the Americans who supported the Zionists. Moderate Arab states are appalled by the growing split in the Arab world as a result of Sadat's actions. Such a split, it is stressed, will only help to divide the Arabs into two major camps and thus help the Western Powers in the Middle East.

But what is considered of even greater importance is that Sadat's policies will endanger the unity of the Third World on the eve of the Fifth Non-aligned Summit to be held in Colombo in August—a summit charged with the objective of "strengthening non-alignment and the common action of non-aligned countries in international affairs." One question that is being asked in political circles in Colombo is whether President Anwar Sadat is not trying to build a bloc of "reactionary" Arab states to subvert the interests of the Western Powers and thereby influence the entire non-aligned movement.

It has been mentioned by political quarters in Colombo that Sadat's recent actions tend to run counter to one of the main agenda objectives of the forthcoming Non-aligned Summit Conference which is defined thus: "strategy for strengthening peace and international security and measures to reinforce solidarity and mutual assistance among non-aligned countries in order to cope more effectively with threats, pressures, aggression, etc..." It has also been pointed out that during Nasser's time Egypt had played a leading role in the national liberation movement. Radical Arab sources have been sharply critical of Sadat's attitude towards the Angolan issue and his opposition to the Palestinian Liberation Organisation especially their role in Lebanon. Sadat's policies have no doubt generated a new cold war in the Arab world which are likely to have far-reaching repercussions.

There is also no doubt that the US has much to crow about in what it has achieved in Egypt, but as *The Economist* points out that unless the US and the Western countries are able to rush gifts, aid, loans, food, consumer goods and military hardware in massive quantities to satisfy the demands (more often than not, totally unrealistic) of the Egyptians, Sadat will soon find himself in a difficult position. The problem for the West and the US is to make a second Israel of Egypt in the Middle East, but whether this can be achieved is the crucial question of the day. Will the US Congress vote enough funds for the purpose? Can this be done in an election year—or can Sadat afford to wait until the US Presidential election is over? Can France, West Germany and Japan—the only other solvent and rich Western countries indulge in such adventures—to assist in the costly game of building Sadat's Egypt into a new western bastion in the Arab world?

And there is yet another aspect of the new cold (and possibly hot) war in the Arab world. Are the conservative group of Arab countries led by Saudi Arabia and

some of the oil rich countries in a position to fight and subdue the aggressive rhetoric and populist policies of the Arab States which are now called the radical bloc? Will Sadat's Egypt, without oil riches, be caught in a grinding grip between these two forces and be rendered helpless? Will Sadat's Egypt become a casualty in the new conflict that has arisen in the Arab world?

These are questions for which there are no ready answers. Only Time can provide the answers. But Time (and history) move fast nowadays and a great deal may be unfolded in the march of events in the coming months.

NEXT WEEK: *World In Turmoil—2*
Argentina, Britain

LETTER

ASOKA

Sir,

One admires the golden age of Asoka who was a Buddhist administrator and Emperor in ancient times. Lankians are indebted to him for their state religion—Buddhism. Keynote of his administration was Ahimsa—Service. Arthasastra which contains the political science of that day says about the king, "in the happiness of his subjects lies his happiness. In their welfare whatever pleases himself he shall consider as not good but whatever pleases his subjects he shall consider as good."

Lanka prides itself in preserving Buddhism in its pristine purity as practised in the days of Asoka. Was it not Mahinda who brought the Dhamma to this land? So why not take a leaf from the Asokan administration and serve the masses instead making them serfs to entrench themselves (rulers) in the seat of power.

Power corrupts, corrodes and deludes one to the sufferings of the masses. There is a quotation in one of Asoka's stone edicts, "all sects deserve reverence for one reason or another. By thus acting a man exalts his own sect and at the same time does service to the sects of other people."

E. S. Thambirajah

Ratmalana,
10.3.76

CHRONICLE

Mar. 23 — Mar. 26

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

CDN—Ceylon Daily News; CDM—Ceylon Daily Mirror; CO—Ceylon Observer; TOCSL—Times of Ceylon Sunday Illustrated; DM—Dinamina; LD—Lankadipa JD—Janadina; VK—Virakesari; ATH—Aththa; SM—Silumina; SLD—Sri Lankadipa; JS—Janasathiya.

TUESDAY, MARCH 23: Mr. Pieter Keuneman, Minister of Housing and Construction and the General Secretary of the Sri Lanka Communist Party (Moscow wing), addressing a meeting at Hikkaduwa said that the Communist Party would not break its alliance with the SLFP, and both parties, united as twins, would fight the next general elections—CDM. The Representatives of Railway guards who met the General Manager of Railways discussed their proposed strike action from midnight tomorrow: Mr. Navaratne, GMR, explained to the representatives, the lack of funds to improve the services: the representatives said that they would put the proposals of the GMR before the general membership and would decide whether they should work in defective brake vans or not—CDM. A major fire broke out on the slopes of the Sri Pada and according to the *Daily Mirror* nearly 5000 pilgrims who went to the mountain have been trapped: top Police officials rushed to the spot and Police have warned pilgrims not to proceed to Sri Pada Mountain until further notice. The Chairman of the Janata Estates Development Board (Janawasama) said that the services of all categories of employees on estates taken over will be retained under the same terms and conditions that the employees now enjoy—CDN. According to a statement by Mr. P. B. G. Kelugalle, Minister of Shipping, Tourism and Aviation, Air Ceylon will not have any connections with Lockheed in view of the present worldwide publicity about the "Lockheed Scandal"—CDN. According to the *Aththa*, *Dinamina* has carried the views of Chairman Mao-Tse-tung regarding the current wall poster campaign in China under the by-line of a Special Correspondent: *Aththa* further says articles in the *Dinamina* are a summary of *Hsinhua's* articles on the subject and this kind of publicity makes one to think what line is followed by *Dinamina*: *Aththa's* comment on this is entitled "Dinamina's China Line". According to the *Janadina*, after the removal of new recruits from doing any work in the Government Press yesterday, employees attended to the normal work. The State Trading (General) Corporation cancelled the licences of 230 dealers inclusive of 84 motor spare parts dealers, for alleged profiteering in imported goods: the Corporation found that these traders have obtained large sums as profits by disposing these articles at blackmarket prices—DM. According to the *Lankadipa* (till yesterday) doctors of the Galle Hospital did not return to work and according to the *Daily News* they are expected to resume duties today. The 24th commemoration of the death of late Mr. D. S. Senanayake, first Prime Minister of Ceylon, was celebrated yesterday—VK. The Soviet Press accused President Anwar

Sadat of Egypt that he ended the Treaty with the USSR in return for financial aid from the United States and Saudi Arabia: a leading Cairo daily, *Al-Akbar* warned the USSR newspapers not to interfere in the internal affairs of Egypt failing which this could aggravate the differences in relations between Egypt and the Soviet Union: China described the breaking of the USSR-Egypt treaty as a step towards national independence against "big-power hegemonism": Lebanon's war-scarred capital exploded in its worst-ever violence yesterday as rival forces battled with shells, mortars and gunfire over the demand for the resignation of President Sulaiman Franjeih: President Franjeih has called an emergency meeting of the Cabinet.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 24: A strict code of conduct will be introduced for the functioning of Janawasas and Mr. Hector Kobbekaduwa, Minister of Agriculture and Lands, will soon introduce the necessary legislation in the NSA: the proposed law will make Janawasas and the Janawasa Commission, a "Scheduled Institution" which means an institute within the meaning of the Bribery Act—CDN. India and Sri Lanka yesterday signed a pact in New Delhi setting out the maritime boundary between the two countries in the Bay of Bengal and Gulf of Mannar—CDN. Owing to the severe restrictions imposed on the import of goods on CRAs Rs. 84 million in foreign exchange belonging to the Convertible Rupee Account holders are lying idle—CDM. By noon yesterday 14 doctors including seven specialists and 75 nurses returned to work at the Galle hospital: by evening it was expected the balance too would return to work: Police have strengthened their guard at the hospital and as a temporary measure hospital administration will allow only two visitors to a patient—CDM. Sri Lanka signed a postal agreement with the Republic of Vietnam yesterday—DM. President Ford of America in a letter to Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, explained the reason why America could not join the Indian Ocean Peace Zone proposal: Mr. Ford in his letter said that the main reason for US ships to use the Indian Ocean area was because it was the shortest sea route and he assured the Prime Minister that this will not do any harm to any other country: Mr. Ford in his letter has also said that in view of the efforts by the Prime Minister to maintain peace in the world he was convinced that there will not be a world war in the near future—LD. Police informed that the fire which broke out on the slopes of the Sri Pada Mountain has been brought under control but requested pilgrims not to use the Hatton route to the mountain until further notice: Police also informed no lives have been lost owing to the fire—LD. Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, will soon introduce necessary amendments to the planning and economic affairs of the country by which ordinary masses could participate in such activities: the Premier will soon introduce the necessary legislation in the NSA for this purpose—ATH. The Trade Unions of the LSSP will hold a rally today at the New Town Hall to decide on future actions regarding the eight demands put forward to the Government—LD. Japanese film actor, 29 year old Mitsuyasu Maeno, crashed his plane into the house of right wing Parliamentarian, Yoshio Kodama, a key figure in the Lockheed scandal: Police later discovered the body of the suicide pilot's body: Mr. Kodama escaped unhurt. Nearly 100 people died in the clash in Beirut on

Monday between Left and Right wing forces. The USSR denied Egyptian President Anwar Sadat's charges that Moscow broke promises to Cairo on arms supplies: USSR further said President Sadat has grossly distorted the facts. British Foreign Secretary, James Callaghan, is highly fancied to become the choice of the Labour Party and Prime Minister of Britain.

THURSDAY, MARCH 25: Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, Leader of the UNP, speaking at a meeting of the Colombo North Rotary Club, said if UNP returned to power at the next general elections the Government will have about 50 Ministers: he also said that he would adopt the system in China and Russia and would appoint a Minister in charge for one particular aspect such as Minister for Textiles, Minister for Cement, Minister for the Ceylon Transport Board etc: according to Mr. Jayewardene this will make them to function more efficiently and an increase in their pay would make them not to indulge in corrupt practices: he further said that the UNP proposed to amend the Constitution to elect a President by polls and the Prime Minister and other Cabinet Ministers by the Parliament: he explained this system as a combination of the British and American systems—CDM. According to the UNP's Sinhala daily *Dinapatha*, youth leaguers of UNP want Mr. Rukman Senanayake, MP for Dedigama, expelled from the party: at an Ex Co Advisory Committee meeting of the Youth league it was decided to request the party to expel Mr. Senanayake from the UNP because it has been deeply felt that the MP for Dedigama has acted more as a foe than a friend during the No-Confidence motion against the Minister of Finance debated in the NSA recently—CDM. According to the *Daily News* the Government will shortly consider introducing a series of measures aimed at preventing the erosion of national unity: the proposal was to strengthen the laws designed to deal with disruptive and divisive forces that threaten national unity: the proposed measures were aimed at creating a climate to solve the problem of the minorities—CDN. Government has given serious thought to a proposal to bring all liquor business now done by private traders under the State Distilleries Corporation from the beginning of next year—DM. First meeting of the JCTUO since the February 20th strike will be held today to decide on various future actions including the role of trade unions during the Non-Aligned Conference to be held in Colombo in August: trade leaders of LSSP, SLFP and CP will participate at today's meeting—VK. According to the *Janadina* LSSP Union leaders will confer today with leaders of LSSP-oriented trade union in the co-operative sector to decide on the future action regarding the 14 demands of the employees of the co-operative sector. A sum of Rs. 15,000 has vanished from the main vault of the Central Bank which is heavily guarded day and night: according to the *Aththa* CID has been called into investigate the loss—ATH. Mr. K. B. Ratnayake, Minister of Transport, has instructed the General Manager of Railways to stop carrying mails by trains if the Postal Department fails to settle a sum of Rs. 12.1 million by end of March: Postal Department has not paid it dues for the transportation of mail to Railways since 1965—LD. All doctors and nurses at the Galle hospital returned to work yesterday and normal services are being carried out—LD. Mr. H. N. G. Fernando, former Chief Justice, died yesterday at the age of 65—CDN. In a coup by military forces President Maria Estela Peron of Argentina has been overthrown: Air force officers detained her when she attempted to escape

from the country abroad a Presidential helicopter. Former California Governor, Ronald Reagan, won the North Carolina primary election, beating President Ford for the first time in the fight for the Republican Presidential nomination. Britain's national military hero of World War II Field Marshal Viscount Montgomery of Alamein, died in England yesterday.

FRIDAY, MARCH 26: According to the *Daily News* agreement was reached yesterday between British and Sri Lanka delegations on the terms of compensation for sterling estates taken over by the Land Reform Commission: payments will be in rupee at the rate of £42.50 per acre spread over a period of five years at an interest rate of 4 percent: total acreage involved is about 136,345 and the amount payable in compensation will be about £5½ million or Rs. 75 million. From April this year all Indian repatriates under the Sirima-Shastri pact will be paid their provident fund dues in India—CDN. Mr. George Rajapakse, Minister of Health, told the NSA yesterday that every step has been taken to provide security for doctors working in state hospitals—CDM. Referring to the remission of sentence given to an accused in a foreign exchange offence case, Mr. T. D. N. S. Wickremasinghe, tried before the CJC, Mr. Ratnasiri Wickremarajapakse, Acting Minister of Justice, told the NSA that the remission was granted by the President on medical grounds—CDM. Mr. T. B. Ilangaratne, Minister of Public Administration, told the *Virakesari* that he has informed the Ministry of Defence and External Affairs to take necessary steps to take down complaints in Police stations in the language understood by the complainant. The Preliminary surveys revealed that 25 per cent of employees in the state sector absent themselves daily—DM. Mr. Pieter Keuneman, Minister of Housing and Construction, and the General Secretary of the Communist Party, in a statement to the *Aththa* referred to a speech by him at Hikkaduwa recently which the *Daily Mirror* reported as the main story a few days back: Mr. Keuneman said the *Daily Mirror* has reported that he said the Communist Party and the Sri Lanka Freedom Party would fight the next general elections unitedly as twins but in fact at Hikkaduwa he spoke only for about ten minutes and his entire speech there was only confined to housing matters—ATH. The Joint Trade Union Council of the Government Press informed the Acting Prime Minister, Mr. Maithripala Senanayake, that the Minister of Information and Broadcasting and the Government should take full responsibility for any consequences that may arise in the Government Press by continuing to keep the new recruits in the Press: the union requested the Acting Prime Minister to afford them an opportunity at an early date for a discussion—JD. Ven. Halyale Sri Sumanatissa Thero has been elected the Anunayake of the Malwatte Chapter—LD. Mr. Michael Foot, Britain's Employment Secretary, topped the first ballot in the election of a new leader to the British Labour Party: election is not yet over and there will be another ballot before the final selection: Mr. Foot pooled 90 of the 314 votes and Britain's Foreign Secretary, James Callaghan, got 84 votes. President Suleiman Franjeih of Lebanon abandoned his palace and left under heavy guard to a building 13 miles north of Beirut: President's palace came under heavy shell and rocket fire: meanwhile Pope Paul appealed to the sides involved in the civil strife in Lebanon to lay down their arms and observe a new ceasefire.

The U.S. Role In The World Economy

By Marina v. N. Whitman

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The world is in transition from an old economic order to a new one. The broad question of how to construct a durable framework for the new order is divided into four areas—international trade, international investment, the international monetary system and relations between developing and developed nations. The views of the United States on each of these differ significantly from those of other major countries and the ways in which these divergences are reconciled will be important in shaping the U.S. role in a new international economic system.

TODAY the postwar international economic system, created under the unchallenged leadership of the United States, grounded in the American principle of economic liberalism, and dependent on the special roles played by this country in several different dimensions, appears to be in disarray. There are pressures for the United States to forswear not only dominance but leadership as well, and for the reconstitution of the international economic system along strictly symmetrical lines, in which the United States would occupy no special roles, enjoy no unique privileges, and take no particular responsibility for the viability of the system as a whole.

Yet careful reflection suggests that one extreme is as misguided as the other. No other country or regional bloc appears able or willing to assume the responsibilities of international economic leadership, and the existing international institutions are far too undeveloped to provide a coherent framework for international economic relations in the absence of such leadership. The world-wide economic agonies of the 1930's were almost certainly aggravated

and prolonged by American reluctance to assume the responsibilities of economic leadership which Britain could no longer carry; the economic difficulties of the 1970's and the 1980's could very well be exacerbated by our premature abandonment of such responsibilities. But any special U.S. role must be grounded in a clear understanding of the changed international realities; a leadership position created under conditions of military and economic dominance can continue effectively only if it can be successfully adapted to an environment in which more and more countries have made the transition from dependency to partnership, and to partnership's other face, rivalry.

THE DECLINE OF AMERICAN HEGEMONY. With the thawing of the Cold War, symbolized by our "detente" with the Soviet Union and China, U.S. foreign economic policy is no longer dominated by national security considerations, although they remain an important factor. This shift is manifested not only in our initiation of commercial relationships with the Communist-bloc countries themselves, but also in our changing economic relations with other industrialized nations and with the countries of the developing world. In the past, the United States was frequently willing to subordinate its short-term economic interests, narrowly conceived, to the long-term political and economic advantages of strengthened economies in other free-world nations and a viable trading and monetary system linking those nations. Other countries, in turn, were willing to accord the United States certain special privileges (primarily that of printing international money) as a concomitant of the special responsibilities we took for the economic stability and military scarcity of the non-Communist world.

More recently, however, as Cold War concerns have diffused and domestic economic problems have become more urgent, the United States and other major countries have both, for somewhat different reasons, grown impatient with our special position, particularly in the monetary sphere. Other countries have increasingly urged a system in which the United States behaves and is treated "just like everyone else". And we, increasingly reluctant to sacrifice immediate economic interests at home for the sake of international stability, have given disturbing indications that we might be only too glad to comply.

This reduction in the economic leadership of the United States has recently been spurred by detente, but it has its root in a much more gradual decline in the importance of the United States in the world economy over the past quarter century. While the United States remained the world's largest economy in 1975, with a gross national product (GNP) accounting for nearly half that of all the OECD countries together, its share of the world GNP had fallen from 39 per cent in 1950 to 27 per cent in 1974.

While the relative importance of the United States in the world economy has been declining gradually over the postwar period, the role of the U.S. dollar in international financial transactions has expanded. Over that period, the dollar has come to serve not just one but several special functions, both private and official, in the international monetary system. As of the end of 1974, private and official foreigners together held more than \$250 billion of liquid dollar-denominated assets (something over \$110 billion in the form of direct claims on the United States, the rest in the form of Eurodollars, which are the liabilities of banks outside the United States), as compared with \$100 billion in 1970 and \$40 billion in 1965. Even the major upheavals in international financial markets in the past few years have so far had only a marginal impact on the importance of the dollar.

THE FRAMEWORK OF THE TRANSITION. At present, the world economy is in a state of transition in which the formal framework of rules has broken

down, and although the system continues to function on an ad hoc basis, no agreement has been reached as to what the new ground rules will be. Clearly, these three major developments—the end of our Cold War hegemony over the non-Communist portion of a bipolar world, the gradual reduction in the United States' importance in the real (as opposed to the financial) aspects of the world economy, and the continued international financial importance of the dollar despite the collapse of the dollar-centered Bretton Woods system—must be taken fully into account in any effective reconstruction of the world economic order and in the determination of our role within it.

The international economic system born of World War II functioned effectively for roughly a quarter of a century. It underlay the rapid recovery of the war-decimated economies of Europe and Japan, the impressive growth of output and improvement in living standards, and the even faster expansion of trade and investment among the non-Communist nations. It also contributed to the maintenance of an uneasy stability in the postwar world.

But during the 1960's cracks began to appear, and by the beginning of the 1970's some of these cracks turned into fissures that ultimately broke the system apart. In the area of trade, the nondiscriminatory global approach to trade liberalization which underlay the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) was being threatened by the increasing importance of regional economic blocs and by the network of preferential arrangements being negotiated between the members of the EEC and an expanding number of associated countries. Furthermore, GATT's tariff-centered approach to negotiated trade liberalizations has fallen victims to its own success. As tariff levels have fallen, a wide variety of nontariff barriers to imports and threatened or actual restrictions on exports of food and other strategic materials have emerged as the major obstacles to trade, and the GATT rules and negotiating mechanisms are poorly suited to dealing with such impediments.

In the monetary sphere, the United States' formal termination on August 15, 1971, of its commitment under the

Articles of Agreement of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to maintain the parity of the dollar by converting dollar balances held by foreign official institutions into gold at a fixed price on demand ended the postwar international monetary system established in 1944 at Bretton Woods. Since that time, virtually every major country has allowed its exchange rate to float. And, finally, principles of behaviour toward less developed countries (LDCs), established on the basis of a donor-dependent relationship within the framework of the Cold War, are proving increasingly inadequate.

Whereas some intergovernmental institutions need to be modified and strengthened to deal with a new range of problems, major issues have also arisen which do not fit naturally anywhere in the existing structure. Two of the most critical are the need for an agreed framework for national policies regarding international investment and the multinational corporation, and for means of dealing with the intensified international transmission of inflation and recession.

Any successful reconstruction of the international economic order must be solidly grounded in a recognition of the enormous increase in international economic interdependence over the past three decades as the barriers to international transactions have been progressively lowered, as international trade and investment have grown in relative importance, and as markets of all kinds have become increasingly integrated across international boundaries. While this increased interdependence has been accompanied by the rapid expansion of output, productivity, and improvement in living standards, it has also brought increased vulnerability to external disturbances and a concomitant reduction in the effectiveness of domestic instruments of economic policy.

At the same time, the governments of the advanced nations have undertaken—or had thrust upon them—vastly expanded responsibilities for the achievement of domestic economic and social goals, for high rates of employment and real economic growth for the achievement and mainte-

nance of price stability, for the reduction of disparities in income between different regions or different individuals, to name only a few of the most obvious ones. Under these circumstances, it is hardly surprising that governments should from time to time feel threatened by the increasing sensitivity of their economies to disturbances originating beyond their borders and therefore beyond their control, and should seek some form of insulation.

(To be concluded)



BUILDING A VILLAGE HOUSE—74

More News From Kantalai

By Herbert Keuneman

Kantalai, 20 February

Every good wish!

To our kind mahatmaya—

We had your letter (to Gannoruwa) and thank you heaps for the heap of news you sent us. I posted you a letter that very day, too: I trust it has reached you. There was not much news in mine, but don't be angry!

We reached here and then, on the 15th itself, began work... We rise at 4.30 a.m. and have a cup of tea first thing. Then about 5.30 we go to work. At seven we eat: bread or sweet potatoes or something of the sort. At 10.0, work for the morning being over, we return to our quarters and are given another cup of tea. At 12.30 lunch: rice & curry. We have tea again at 2.0 p.m. and after that return to work about 3.0. We work till 5.30 and then get back to quarters. Dinner—rice & curry—is at 8.30. That's how our day goes.

Kantalai is terribly drought-stricken; but what's to be done!

The only drawback here is the lack of transport. From Kantalai there is a bus to the Allai Ferry. One can come in that and get down at the Tobacco Corporation building; from there Corporation vehicles run to the various quarters and it is usually possible to find a place in one of them. We are terribly grateful you wish to come and see us; but because it is so far

Kantalai

and transport is so unsure and you aren't so well you must not put yourself greatly out: you can get Nilhan-mahatmaya (v. last week's article; and, Nilhan-mahatmaya, please note!) to give you a lift if he will come some day. We wrote a letter to him as well, giving him news of ourselves.

We are so glad Kusum (a neighbour and close friend) and Podi (their younger sister) come and help you in the kitchen.

We have been given a radio for our entertainment during spare time, and also a sewing machine for private work. Our matron is sweet: most kind. There are also two veterinarians, who are also very nice.

We are very sorry Nilu-duva (Dinga's baby) has not all the milk she requires, very sorry indeed. We long to see her. But, again: what's to be done! It will be the New Year when we can hope to come. Our fond love to Pema-malli (my very faithful factotum).

I think this is enough for now. We are very well; the gods bless you in the same way.

To this

Your loving daughter
Ukku Amma

P.S. It was only after I wrote this that your latest letter ('posted 13 or 14 Feb.) reached us. Thank you for all the news. Shall write more news myself, later.

Ukku Amma

Kantalai, 26 February

Well-being and achievement!

My dearest Parents both, and darling Brothers & Sisters

We have had the letters Father and P.B.-malli wrote; thank you so much for them. Kapuru-malli had sent us a letter, too, which reached us yesterday.

We were a little sad to see our results (in the SSC; both, alas, failed! but perhaps the Tobacco Corporation/National Institute of Management—not, I think, unjustifiably—takes little account of examinations, after all, these girls are in Kantalai to work, and damned hard, not just slop about office desks, for our girls were summoned to their interview bang in the middle of their papers, of which, with train services as they are, they were as a consequence compelled to miss two and answer

another after a sleepless night on the journey back). But we didn't study terribly hard this time, did we? We were greatly cheered by P.B.-malli's results, however (passed 7 subjects, with 5 credits). malli, you can sit for your HSC now; so re-enter school and study for it: we shall help you all we can, to buy text-books, &c. Take the Arithmetic paper over again; get help in the subject, and really cram; we shall pay for the tuition. For our part, we shan't take the exam again: there is simply no leisure for study.

What is wrong with D.A.-akka that she isn't well? Where is aiyā (Banders) stationed at the moment. Colombo? or still Galle? We don't even know where to address a letter to him. It's his birthday on the 29th, isn't it? He will be only six birthdays old! If we had been at home we could have wished him in person. (I think I must take time and space to digress. Birthdays are not celebrated—not even remembered—in the village; their celebration (by congratulations, the serving of a favourite meal, if possible by a gift was one of the few innovations my wife and I deliberately set out to introduce. And with moderate success. It seemed to us so important that once a year at least even the humblest member of a family should be reminded that he matters.)

There has been no drop of rain even in this area; the dryness is even fiercer than at home. What to do! Anyway, here there is enough water available for our needs. We work as I have described before. The work in animal husbandry is beginning to go forward too. We have received 150 head of cattle—worth 12 lakhs—from Pakistan! They have not yet been brought here—they are now in Colombo—but grass for them is sent from here. We have to gather that too. We girls have divided ourselves into groups and divided the work amongst us. They will soon be bringing poultry and pigs in, also.

It may be that we shan't get to come home even for New Year's Day. We get just a week's holiday for the year. Our holidays fall between April 1 and May 15 and only 15 of us will have leave at one time. We shall be drawing lots. We shall come only if all three of us get one and the same week off. Possibly after New Year's Day

is past. But even so, what to do! (I must interrupt again. You will have noticed the reiteration of this phrase. But make no mistake: it is not a passive acceptance of disappointment or disaster: measure it against the girl's so often expressed longing for home—remember this is their first time in their lives away—and you will see the sigh for what it is: a steeling of fortitude. There is, at some times, nothing to do but grin and bear it.)

To every one of you the blessings of the Triple Gem.

To this

Your loving daughter
Ukku Amma

Kantalai, 26 February

Well-being and achievement!

My whole darling Family

We have had both your letters, the one Father sent and the one Malli sent. Thank you. There is not much that is new to write about from here. We are still reaping paddy, but we are also raising vegetables—we do eight full hours of work a day, but it is most gratifying work—and at the moment we cut grass as well. About 150 cattle have been sent us from abroad, they are still in Colombo because the sheds for them are not yet quite complete, and we cut grass for them and send it by train. Groups of us take it in turn to do all this, we all work equitably and as one.

We are all quite accustomed to the labour now. The sun here is dreadfully strong; but now we don't feel it, we are so used to it. We do not work during the worst heat of the day: at that time we have our 'off'. Since we have so much resources at our disposal we have no difficulty. Clothes aren't a problem: while we are at work we wear anything we like: a redda, just as we do at home, all of us do. We throw on a long-sleeved jacket (against the sun) and wrap a bit of cloth around ourselves, and that's that: no humbugging swank. This is just as it should be: because we are all equal and alike there is no status conflict: even if some of us think any differently there is no opportunity to show it, for we are all at work on one and the same job; as I say, this is just as it should be, just as it would be at home, no way different.

What else? Elephants turn up nearly every day. There is no reason to be afraid, we are quite used to them. They are not afraid of us, either. Evenings we climb into jeeps and go off to have a look at them. We have seen things here we have never in our lives seen before: when did we ever see forest as heavy as this before?

More dormitories, kitchens, fowl-houses, cattle-sheds are still going up. Everything should be complete by April. It is joy just to think what this place is going to be even in only a few months more. We can now say to ourselves that one of our dreams has come true. Father and Mother, you know how we longed to work however hard in some place where water rewarded us? Well, by some good fortune, for us that has come to pass. Our hopes have now so much been realized. We still have dreams for the future; but now we have reason for faith that that they will be fulfilled too. The future has no fears. We can be confident that this scheme that has begun is destined to succeed when we consider what has already been accomplished. So much work has been done so quickly, in so short a time. Some day when you can come you will see how much labour has gone into all of this. One must be filled with gratitude to all who have worked to bring the reality about and to the Corporation and to all who planned it. To them all, in return, it will be a satisfaction that we, too, put in all the effort we can. When we tell ourselves how we are working for all of you and our home and our village and our *palata*—when we think of that—tired is something we just don't feel.

Tell *mahatmaya* we send our fondest love. We are not sure that we shall be home for New Year's Day, because if everybody leaves the work would come to a standstill, so groups of us will be given leave by lot. We are not downcast, though, when we recollect that each one longs as we do; and some day we too will get our turn. Till then let us be patient. There are no exceptions here, we all do what needs to be done. Those in charge of us are capable and honest men and women, and we too will do our duty with fortitude.

When *mahatmaya* comes (alas, when?) Father or Malli, at least

one of you, do come too. But don't attempt to come by bus: to do so is very troublesome. Tell *mahatmaya* I shall soon write to him; only a promise so far, because I must then write so carefully and correctly!

This is

Biso

Kantalai, 26 February

Lasting Prosperity!

Dearest Akka

Akka, you must hardy have time for anything now that two must get done the work three used to do? We have, anyway, some time off: from 10.30 to 3.0 daily, and a holiday Sunday.

We run into Aruna Munasingha & Co. every day; we twice met the other two also. Herat (a neighbour, from this village) sent a message by the tractor driver that he would come our way, but he hasn't yet been, I am sure he soon will.

Accommodation for guests is not yet complete (when the work is done I shall let you know) so you will be hard put to it if you come just now. It is 15 miles to Kantalai. But when our own transport is provided there will be no difficulty.

A few here have written home a whole lot of lies; but the newspapers carry all about us and all the lies will be exposed.

We hear there will be another recruitment in May. However, there are 7,000 in the queue! Has that girl Leela sent in an application? if so, she may be chosen; A.B., Bandara Menika, and the rest will probably get in I should think. Shall let you know if I get to know anything.

Tell Mr. Keuneman I asked after him. All of us are very well....

I am your fond Nangi
Ukku Menika

SAFARI—FEB. 23-28

Coconuts, Cattle

By Alkardi Mugana

February 23,

Two men came here today to cut rafters and beams from felled coconut trees, and a fine job they made of the ones they did; rose tinted, and so smooth that you can run your finger along it. Their work for the day cost twenty-

four rupees, and there were four beams and three rafters. It was a joy seeing the men work. Young, they said they had been four years at the job. It was the only work, they did, they said. They had come two days before to ask if we wanted them. Then came a cloud. It was a request, a warning that we do not take them on. So we arranged for a confrontation; the man who uttered the warning was to meet them, identify them. It appears they passed the test.

Coconut logs, pieces no good for *yata lea*, *parala* or *kanu*, cut into sections five feet long and sold for fifty cents a piece. The buyers did the work of cutting the fallen trees up. We learnt they had cut over three hundred pieces, but they wanted to fell some dead trees, eight of them. The senior *parala*, coconut, rafter man, came along to see if the trees were any good for his work. Five of the standing dead trees were rotten. The other tree had sections which could be used for rafters. The log men promised to leave these and to only take the rest. One of the trees, they felled, damaged a young palm, a young coconut tree, shearing off some of its leaves.

Feb. 24,

An area, replanted with coconuts, had its ground covered with fallen coconut leaves. Some casual workers were set to clear this, and they made three piles or heaps of three different sorts. Branches good enough to be woven into *cadjans* were cut top and bottom in the approved way and stacked ready for carting to the river. Then, *pol pitti*, the large stem of the coconut branch, were shorn of their leaves and put into convenient heaps, to be carted away to a more convenient place, where they would be sold at Rs. 5/- per hundred for firewood. Last, all the rest, those parts and those branches, not good enough to be either *cadjans* or firewood, were put in other heaps between the trees, as this was a place where cattle were tied at night, tied to the trees.

As I walked about, I noticed that the cattle seemed to have nothing to eat, so parched was the grass, so bare was the ground with grazing, and, yet, they did eat, and some of their ribs showed I would not have believed there was no grass for them, if I had not

seen similar ground in Trincomalee District, ground over which buffalo grazed. We had lost a lot of our fodder grass through cultivations for subsidiary crops.

Feb. 25,

As I was about to pack, to leave the estate, a small boy came with the news that a calf had fallen and could not stand up. So the small cart was sent across the main road to get the calf. Coconut branches were put on the boards of the cart, and the calf was lifted in and placed on top of these. Where it was unloaded, the cart was just tilted up, and the calf slid out with the coconut leaves and was laid on the ground. The native veterinary had already been sent for. A man, who came from the estate today, said that the *vedamarthiya* had not arrived by last night, but that, the calf had been eating *poonac* and although it could not yet stand up, it was better.

Someone and I had a chat today. We agreed that the difference in our outlook was one of where the emphasis was to be laid in our mutually agreed ventures. With him it was the project that was important, with me it was the community. Projects were important, so far as they subscribed to keeping the community together and helped it to subsist. With that other outlook, the community had to give way if it became a matter of ensuring the success of the project. Projects require capital, borrowed money, and they have to be started with a debt. With communities, their chief aim is to keep out of debt and yet subsist. When people are community minded, they stand by their smallest member.

Feb. 26,

Reading a life of Stalin by a Pole, Isaac Deutscher, I forgot I had to write this, and I start often at midnight. Water is impossible to get at times during the day and I have still to fill the bath-tab up, but I shall find it a distraction having the tap running while I do this. I find I have a routine in Colombo, and that is running in the morning and exercise of another sort in the evening. I find I have not been able to sprint after a major illness four years ago, but I was never a sprinter of any good even then.

We have really come to the end of our ways, or to the beginning of new ones, of new ways of asso-

ciation between employer and employee. There is a last-ditch battle to defend the old way of doing things, the old form of association. The matter flared up quite accidentally in that it was not intended to be a doctrinaire matter at all. It was strict utility. We shall have to wait and see what the morrow brings.

Meanwhile, we have to come to Colombo to know what mosquitoes and mosquito bites really are. Now Colombo had mosquitoes in my youth, or at least certain parts of Colombo. I seem to remember that Cinnamon Gardens was free of them, but it is not so now.

My chore today, my stint, this piece of writing, seems no bother at all. My poor dog has spend a part of his night sleeping in the blaze of an electric light, and it, hurts my conscience that he has always to do so whenever his master is here.

Feb. 27,

One of the watchers had not shown himself this evening on my return and, I went out at 11 p.m. to see if he was at the byre. The other watcher went to look at a calf that was weak, and it seemed very poorly. It could not drink milk from its mother, and we had to give it its mother's milk in a bottle. Then we gave the cow water and hay while its calf decidedly looked better. The cow has even cleaned or warmed the calf by licking it. What a contrast this is to politics or accumulating money. In both these, no individual is allowed to stand in your way. Bump him off, someone says, and you give way, allowing a poor, fellow to be bumped off. Augustus Caesar is said to have spent three days trying to save Cicero's life, and in the end he gave way. Trying to save his life was like jeopardizing his career. Here we were six people, the two watchers, the three cattle keepers and milkers, and I. It turned midnight, and I advised the cattleman to get up often to see to the calf. I am fighting to keep off sleep. I lay down for a short time and I hoped I would not fall into a deep sleep, and here am I back.

Business is so ruthless, it sweeps aside anybody who gets in its way. Socialism, or socialist governments, do the same I am so tired, I cannot get on with this. I am just stuck, seized up. It is nearly two

o'clock, but, oh! lost time in bed will never be made up.

Feb. 28,

My handwriting may be illegible, but my script looks neat, not so yesterday; so many corrections. The hand holding the pen just ran away with the sleepy man, and he had no control over it. I hope what I wrote passes muster with the Editor.

The hour of reckoning had come, and so I just dawdled and they went along to my execution. I sat on a rock and I did what I usually do when I sit on a rock, especially the rock at Mihintale when the wind is not trying to blow me off. Then, in the precarious state that I was in on my last visit, it was a case of holding on with both hands, and hoping that the wind would not knock my breath away, as well.

As to what I did on my rock, the shades of Fatima will know, or, should I have said, the devotees or pilgrims. It worked, but it took a long time for me to know that. I got a reprieve while the rope was round my neck and so life became normal, but the problem still remains. What to do with the body, bodies animated with living souls. I hope all this is not too much of a riddle. There are things about which one cannot write about, hence riddles and paradox. The time near twelve, it is about time I had a look at the calf. All is still, all asleep, some deep, some ready to waken in a flash.

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MURDER AT ETILLWEVA—4

Before The Supreme Court

— Recollections —

by R. C. Thavarajah
Retd. Supdt. of Police

My father, who was a Notary Public of Chenkalady happened to serve on the Jury and was chosen as Foreman, — probably because he had a fair knowledge of the English language.

He had not expressed much disapproval of my "cutting" school to witness the Ceremonial Opening of the Sessions of the Eastern

Circuit of the Supreme Court of Ceylon. His Lordship Justice AKBHAR was to preside. This eminent Judge and Jurist belonged to the Grand Galaxy of our Legal Luminaries of the past who most jealously cherished and guarded the priceless jewel of Democracy—the Independence of the Judiciary. They did more—they made lasting contributions to the development of our Legal Systems.

Dr. H. W. TAMBYAH, Q.C. the present High Commissioner for Sri Lanka in Canada in his book "The Dominion of Ceylon" states:— The Law of marriage was in a very unsatisfactory state and led to abuses. Through the enterprise and energy of the late JUSTICE AKBHAR, legislation was passed to reform these abuses. The Muslim Marriages and Divorce Registration Ordinance was proclaimed on January 1st, 1937. It repealed sections 64 to 102 (the first paragraph) inclusive of the Mohamedan CODE of 1806 but it stated that the repeal should NOT affect the MUSLIM LAW of Marriages and Divorce and the Rights of Muslims thereunder."

The Batticaloa Court House opposite the Old Dutch Fort, used as the Kachcheri, was packed. The Late Chief Inspector PHILIPPIAH, Officer-in-Charge of the Batticaloa Police Station, imperi-

ally tall, broad-shouldered, immaculate in spotlessly white ceremonial uniform complete with white helmet, burnished brass helmet spike and chin strap with constables in black serge tunics and pantaloons—all perfect specimens of the male species were standing erect to attention like ramrods. The liveried Court Crier in his stentorian voice commanded all those present to be SILENT, or else suffer the "pain of imprisonment". I was already imprisoned in a boarding school and I was certainly not going to be incarcerated. Tight-lipped, I saw the Judge, clothed in SCARLET silk, wig, Opera Collar from Saville Row, bands, enter and immediately the Bugler's shrill notes rent the stillness void even of a whisper. Chief Inspector Phillipiah's command "GUARD OF HONOUR—PRESENT ARMS" followed with a smartly executed Sword Salute held me in breathless awe.

I was so ecstatically impressed. I managed to sneak out because the rest of the proceedings were too ponderous for a seven year old. As I walked back to school I had made the irrevocable decision. My earlier ambition to man the controls of a Railway Engine was instantaneously abandoned. I was convinced, after seeing the Guard of Honour, that being an Inspector

of Police was indubitably better than pushing the lever of a HORNBLY locomotive.

My moments of exhilaration were, most unfortunately, short-lived. I had erroneously presumed that my absence from the classroom would pass un-noticed. It was not so for the efficient School Principal, Miss Croft. Lo and behold—there at the entrance stood the resolute lady with a thick flat foot ruler, an instrument which she used for many purposes, ominously gripped in her right hand.

(To be Continued)

* * *

KAZI-43

Around Kalutara

By Anatory Bukhoba

Kalutara, or as I used to call it, *Kalura*, although it was never spelt that way, is a rupee and fifty cents ride from Colombo. I prefer the anglicised pronunciation, which I have spelt, Kalutara, but I cannot use it, as no one seems to recognize the sound or the name any more. I can still get away with *Kurunegalle* for Kurunegala, just as I insist on writing Ceylon for Sri Lanka. I suppose I could no more be prosecuted for that than if I wrote Taprobane, but I always use *Lanka* in Sinhalese, just as I would, I suppose, say *Ilankai* in Tamil. The Sinhalese use *Lanka* in conversation. After all, one can still use Britain, U.K., or British Isles indifferently for England.

I went to Kalutara as I wanted to be near Colombo for the Diamond Jubilee of an ordination. There was also a wedding, which I did not make, and I was sorry about that. While on names, the word which is always pronounced *Nu-raylia*, is nearly always spelt *N'Eliya*, which is short for *Nuwara Eliya*. Nearly every Sinhalese calls Kandy, *Maha Nuwara*, when he speaks Sinhalese. Popularly, the Tamil word *Trincomalee* is preferred to the Sinhalese, *Malay*, and so, too, the Tamil, *Batticaloa*, to the Sinhalese word, *Madakalapuwa*, if I have it the right way round.

After I was born, Kalutara, was thought too malarial for me to be taken there. When I saw the

55/5, Fatima Mawatha,
Kandana, 1976 March 11th.

Editor,
TRIBUNE,
83, Dawson St., Colombo 2.

Dear Sir,

TRIBUNE vs. SLBC

The show piece of SLBC National Service is its "Pravurthi Pasubima" which follows immediately after the 9 p.m. news. This choice tit bit is dished out to listeners as timely, original and solid material. No wonder it ends up with the revelation of the names of its compilers for all the Island to take notice. My copy of *Tribune* (6.3.76) was in my hands at 4 p.m. on 5.3.76 and while travelling home in the bus I read up its editorial avidly. When the "Pravurthi Pasubima" came over the air at 9.10 p.m. on 5.3.76, I could scarcely believe my ears because it was entirely a faithful precis of that same *Tribune* editorial. Is this a case of coincidence, intelligent anticipation or downright copying? Of late the SLBC has been losing face by putting over the air news a la lord Haw-Haw. It is bound to regain its image somewhat if it continues to copy *Tribune* as on 5.3.76.

More strength to your elbow.

Yours faithfully,
D. S. Nakandala

Copy to: Director-General,
S.L.B.C., Colombo 7.

city, or rather, town, after my return from abroad, I thought, it reminded me of Keswick, a sort of playground, among towns, for the English Lake District. It was the way the main throughfare is laid out that gave me that idea. There the gaiety as regards the similarity of the physical appearance ends, but not the similarity itself, for just as I thought I had been given unwashed sheets to sleep on my first night, in Keswick, so the flies in the eating houses in Kalutara, as one got nearer the busiest part, seemed almost to take over the restaurants, and makes eating for a finicky person like myself impossible. Of course they said it was the time of the year, but I knew better, it was just plain dirt. I remember being told in the army that flies were bred in the lavatories, and that they flew up to two miles away to the kitchens.

If most of Ceylon's population is youth, that is to be seen very plainly in Kalutara, wherever you go off the main throughfare, which is the Galle road, there are fine houses to be seen everywhere, where every house is fine, and as the entire fly population seems to live in most of the eating houses on the Galle Road there seem none to be found elsewhere. The prices of plantains sold in the back streets and country roads quite near the town were half the price of those sold on the Galle road.

A mudalali was bitten by a scorpion. They had been quite quick about applying the green poultice that usually goes on when there has been a poisonous bite, but they took it off to let the snake stone made by Fr. Cyril Edirisinghe go on. A little blood had to be drawn first, and the lad who made the incision was a long while doing so. As the snake stone would not stick, it was bandaged on, and when the bandage was removed not so long later, it was found, when the leg was tilted over, that the stone had stuck on. The man was given some ghee more that once, and we went home. In the morning we learnt that the stone had fallen off at what must have been an hour later. There was a slight smelling round the ankle, but the man was all right. As soon as the stone had been put on, the pain began to travel down the man's leg, back to where the bite was. There was no pain in the morning, only the swelling. Finding milk to put

the stone in was not easy. I was keen to do it without delay so as to have the stone ready for use. In the end, we tracked down a man with a cow in milk, and the cow was fetched in from the field. The cows' calf had died, and the owner had reprieved a young calf from the butcher where it had been sent to be slaughtered with its mother. The cow took to the calf. He paid Rs. 75/- for it.

It was at Kalutara that I really came up against unemployment. Some lads were quite plainly staying at home. In the true countryside, this is not so. I know of a place elsewhere which had recently just about doubled its labour force, and then it decided that it just could not carry so many and that a reduction by nearly a third was necessary. This meant laying off some of the finest workers. Casual work was offered them, a few days in the week, to the extent that income from supplementary sources was available, but most, all young men, elected not to go along with that and to stay away altogether. Others were quite content as long as they were fairly certain of a few days work a week. Some of those who had themselves off were not long in going far afield to jobs they were certain of. A few of the ones who persevered hanging about, found that in a very short time they were needed to fill vacancies. It would seem that the labour laws are the greatest single drawback to full employment, under the guise of giving labour a fair deal. This might have been all right when people were not socially conscious and thought they were conferring a favour by employing labour. These days when the opposite feeling prevails, and employers

know they can employ more for there is so much more to do, they are completely hamstrung by the labour laws.



"THOSE WERE THE DAYS"—3

V. T. Dickman

by R. C. Thavarajah
Retd. Suptd. of Police

THE SHOCKED AND ASTONISHED CONSTABLE, shivering from from the Black 'Kiwi' shoe polish of his boot heels to the King Coconut oil on top of his head, saw the angry face regain its usual cherub countenance. A single word —'Fool'—uttered 'sotto voce', and the great man was out of the Charge Room—much to the relief of the P.C.!

A lesser man, with not even a modicum of the qualities of leadership and man-management, would have rolled up his sleeves for the time consuming and 'soul-satisfying' task of launching disciplinary action against subordinate officers for comparatively minor lapses.

During the period he was Superintendent in charge of Northern Province from 1934 to 1937, he endeared himself to the people of Jaffna irrespective of their social or economic standing 'walking with Kings but NOT losing the common touch'. He formulated effective means of preventing and detecting crime without wasting precious time in organising bicycle races, beauty contests and 'propaganda campaigns'.

The Ceylon Police Gazette No: 4,248 of Wednesday, February 20, 1935 contains the reproduction of the letter of appreciation addressed by the Private Secretary, Mr. A. C. M. HINGLEY which reads:—"I am directed by His Excellency the Governor to bring to your notice the thoroughness of all the arrangements made by the Police during his tour of the Northern Province and the smartness and efficiency with which they were carried out.

His Excellency wishes me to add a SPECIAL WORD of Commendation upon the work of Mr. V. T. DICKMAN, Superintendent of Police, Northern Province, who

LETTERS

The Tribune welcomes letters from readers. Short letters have a better chance of being published. All letters are subject to condensation for space reasons. Anonymous letters will not be considered for publication. Writers may request that their letters be signed only with initials or a pseudonym but preference will be given to those fully signed and bearing the writer's complete address.

took much personal trouble to ensure the success of His Excellency's tour and who did all in his power to assist." Another treasured possession of V. T. Dickman, Jr. is the Certificate of Award—Medal in commemoration of Their Majesties' Silver Jubilee. The KING'S Jubilee Medal as a personal souvenir from His Majesty to commemorate the 25th Anniversary of His accession to the Throne. In a letter dated 8th May, 1935, Mr. Philip Norton BANKS, the then Inspector-General of Police Mr. Dickman, Sr had been commended for being awarded the Medal to those members of the Public Service who had shown DISTINCTION in their careers during His Majesty's reign. The I.G.P. had added his own appreciation which reads:—"I desire to congratulate you very heartily on being included in this category and to say how glad I am that your long and efficient work as a member of this Force has met with due RECOGNITION."

"During the latter part of 1942 when large quantities of Admiralty Stores were pouring into the island, it was found necessary to raise a Naval Police Force for the purpose of guarding these Stores as the Ceylon Police found it impossible at the time with the limited strength at their disposal. Mr. P. N. Banks, the then Inspector-General of Police recommended Mr. V. T. Dickman, a Superintendent, Grade I of the Ceylon Police who had just retired and his appointment was approved by the ADMIRALTY in December, 1942.

He was entrusted with the organisation of a Special Police Force for the explicit purpose of guarding Naval Stores of all descriptions at various points in Colombo, Katukurunda, Palavi and Puttalam. Mr. V. T. Dickman retired from the Royal Naval Special Police in August, 1945 when Lieut. Colonel BLANDFORD took over command. He was a very popular officer and his previous experience of some 34 years in the Ceylon Police stood him in good stead in his handling of the Royal Naval Special Police. "This is an extract of the Report signed by the Captain Superintendent of the Royal Naval Yard, Trincomalee dated November, 22nd, 1951.

After a distinguished and a brilliant career in the Public Service, the Sportsman 'Par Excellence'

closed his innings with an unbeaten record. "If Socrates died like a philosopher, Jesus Christ died like a God" was Rousseau's encomium. It is strangely significant that V. T. Dickman Sr shuffled off this 'Mortal coil' on Christmas Eve when Death, the inevitable corollary to birth, released him from the "tangled web—the hollow bubble". Those of us who knew him realised the wisdom in the philosophy of Henry Wordsworth Longfellow who wrote:—"There is no Death! What seems so is TRANSITION; This life of mortal breath is but a suburb of the life ELYSIAN, whose portal we call Death". Viewed in the correct perspective, how tunelessly consonant are these sentiments with the words of the Bagavad Gita which says:—

"Deathless, Birthless
Unchanging forever.
How can it die—
The Death of the BODY".

The obsequies when he was laid to rest did not have the glitter and the grandeur of Military Honours, empty plaudits and panegyrics of long-winded orators, some of them, slimy sycophants who 'graced' the occasion,—only to mark their attendance. The true Christian that he was, he had acquitted himself to earn the supreme appreciation—to quote from the Holy Bible—

"WELL DONE—my Good and Faithful servant
Enter Ye into the GLORY
of the MASTER."

I have a strong feeling that when "Life's little day was ebbing", he must have mused on the words:—

"The Home of the FATHER
draws me from the earth
The home of the father is
mine by Re-birth.
Here naught stills my longing,
my heart's fill'd with care.
I long for my father and
Home over there."
(Concluded)

POEM

Her Majesty The Palmyrah Palm

by Sam D. Thampoe

Sir,

Herewith is a poem composed by the late Mr. Sam D. Thampoe, Advocate, Jaffna, well over quarter of a century ago, on the intrinsic virtues of the stately Palmyrah Palm.

In this year that has been consecrated for productivity and plenty but which has recorded all types of shortages, scarcities and price hikes, it will be refreshing and soothing indeed to publish this piece of poetry in your esteemed Journal.

I am sure the solace offered by the bounties of this celestial palm, as depicted in the lovely lines of this poem, will interest your readers.

Dr. R. E. W. Jehoratanam

133, Bankshall Street,
Jaffna.
20.2.76

"These humble lines to dedicate,

I invoke the Muse to vindicate,
The virtues of the Palmyrah,
The Wonder Palm of Asia"

Sam D. Thampoe.

1. Sing O muse' of the queen
Majestic;
The Royal Palm, so dietic,
Life-giving Balm diuretic,
Boon to all, hale or hectic.

2. The beauty palm of West Indies,
The oil palms of Africa,
Are nowhere to the Palmyrah,
The Stately Palm of Jaffna.

3. In desert, farm, or open moor,
With no mortal's tending care,
In soil bleak, or ever bare,
She sprouts and grows so secure.

4. In infant stage a Vadaly,
Her leaves and stalks make
Visiry,
Or Elephant toys with Jaggy,
And pretty wicket Moodaly.

5. Her early age is foliage,
A child-hood of some years;
She makes up for all arrears,
By varied yield in after age.
6. The osiers dyed in rainbow hue,
Adapt to Woman's subtle art,
Weave goods for any mart,
Pais, petties, and the Sulahoo.
7. The facial hair the man proclaims,
Blossoms of this palm in pubes,
Indicate the male in species,
While the lady-palm the
Nonke claims
8. In clusters hang the green
nonkus,
Till mellowed to a goldenn tint,
Jelly full, the fruit does hint,
'Tis time to pluck, or I go loose.
9. Her rawish taste all folks detest
Just try her in a hotter mood;
As Paniyaram in flower mold,
Or simple Kardy with native
zest.
10. In Pinatu form she is rich and
tasty,
In Pany hot right for Kanchy,
Expelling all morning Kanchee,
Though nudely eaten, rather
pasty.
11. From flower-stalks come
toddy sweet,
Fermented ones are stimulant,
Distilled toddy is arrack-arrant,
With rakish flavor, taken neat.
12. Toddy sweet is harmless food,
So says Paul our surgeon great,
Though Jameson swears on
his pate,
For man or woman 'tis never
good.
13. Jaggery snug in olai-kuddans,
Pottage made of Karuppany,
Country sugar with golden
sheen,
Is fit for Rajahs yea for Sultans.
14. Each tree can bear a hundred
nuts,
From each one drops a pier-
cing root,
Down the soil heard or soft,
To grow as palms or food to
glut.
15. Split the root for boiling ordeal,
For your dish of Panankilanku,
Dried in sun makes Puluk-odial,
The raw ones dried are odials,
16. Boiled or dry, pound it fully
For piquant thuvial or pungent
kool,
Mixing up each in its vial,
With coconut milk, spice or
chilly.
17. The nut minus root needs a
splitting,
In the kernal is sweet Pooran,

- Food for kids or aged paran,
To cool the bowels, weather
permitting.
18. The trunk is straight and
timber lasting,
For huts or castles or any orders,
Beams and rafters, sweeps or
ladders,
Like posts of iron-tarred
saves wasting.
 19. From the bark make brushes,
From their ashes, a dentifrice;
Forget not the taddy for polrice,
And juice fresh for kidney
flushes.
 20. Palm leaves serve a hundred
purpose,
Thatching, fencing or for buckets;
String and ropes or peasant
helmets,
For the learned, precious Endoos.
With every bit you may
something do
- Not one part, can you eschew,
From the Soaththie comes the Sage
From the Kungu a Cherupu
Olas make good fodder,
Decaying leaves, for fields manure
With the oomal heat your iron,
Nonku-Kolass are food for cattle
Ruffians with the Karukus battle,
Children play with ola rattle
Women weave winsome wattle,
Spin out the rest in your tattle,
The Muse delights not in idle prattle.
- December 1937.

* * *

LETTER

Compulsory Sterilisation

Sir,
The Indian Premier has decided that compulsory sterilisation after the second child is essential for India's stability and progress. The flood gates to starvation and poverty must be closed if mankind is to survive. The population explosion that we all talk of is not something that is to come. It has already arrived. The world wide shortages in consumer items and the daily rise in world prices are ample proof of this. The danger to mankind from the population explosion is far worse than the cumulative effects of the nuclear weapons in the hands of the big powers. Family planning is commendable but it cannot halt the population explosion. Drastic situ-

ations call for drastic remedies. Only compulsory sterilisation can save mankind from certain disaster.

The UNO as a world body interested on the welfare of mankind should pass immediate legislation for the compulsory sterilisation of all mothers after the second child birth. This legislation which should be in force for a specified period (say 15 years) could be reviewed at the end of such periods. Mothers may pose the question as to why they and not the fathers should be picked on for this piece of legislation? The answer is a straight forward one. No man worthy of his name will want to carry another man's baby. The fear that sterilisation would affect the population strength of a particular race or community is unfounded because the suggested legislation will not affect youth which is the flower of any nation. Besides the legislation would apply equally to all races and communities.

If man could resort to vaccination and innoculation for his protection, there is no reason why he should object to sterilisation which is preferable to MURDER, RAPE, STARVATION AND CIVIL STRIFE which are the direct outcome of an unrestricted growth in population. Smaller families would mean healthier and happier homes, healthier nations, and a happier and more contented world. By eliminating the cause of starvation and poverty we would also see illuminating the cause for the current race in arms build-up among nations.

The sea and the jungle have their own laws to keep their population, in check. Famines, pestilences and wars helped mankind in the past. The absence of wars and the great advances made by science have opened the flood gates to starvation and poverty. Compulsory sterilisation is a 'must' for man's survival. The Indian Leader has given the right lead to the world. She would be the Saviour not only of India but the whole world.

D. J. Thamotheram

9, Vivekananda Avenue,
Colombo 6.
8.3.76



Confidentially

Grave-Diggers?

IS IT NOT SURPRISING that the Directors of Lake House should continue to dig their own graves? That it was a dictum of Karl Marx that capitalism created its own grave-diggers to bring the system to an end? That it has now become clear that the Sri Lanka variety of "socialism" (mainly *a la* SLFP) has also spawned its own grave-diggers? That foremost among the grave-diggers of the present system stand the Directors of Lake House? That one of their latest feats which was the front page story in UNP's *The Journal* of March 26, 1976 under the heading LAKE HOUSE BOOZE FLOODS SACRED CITY? This is how the story read: "Lake House booze is flowing-freely. On 17.1.76 it flowed more freely than the Mahaweli through the sacred city of Anuradhapura. That day, the new Lake House bosses held a booze party at the Mahaweli Asiri at Anuradhapura, where they appeared to have eaten like pigs and drunk like fish. Their total bill was as follows: 45 dinners 1,012.50; 47 Foreign Whisky 669.75; 26 Foreign Brandy 513.50; 21 Bottles aerated water 34.65; 10 arrack V.S.O.A. 50.00; 2 Sherry pegs 14.50 6 Passionas 24.00; Occupation 22.50; 10% surcharge 229.50; Extra fees 90.00; Ceylon Transport Board bus hire 1,350.00; SEAC entertainment 6,150.00; Parakrama Radio 2,100.00; Sundry expenses 706.50; Total 12,966.40; Quickshaws—Lake House 2,660.55; Petty cash drawn by Director W. Siriwardene, 2,448.80; Grand total 18,075.75.

THEY FOLLOWED THIS UP by another booze party on 5.2.76 at the Havelock Tour Inn, Dickmans Road. The total bill was as follows: 3 Hanappier 15.00; 1 B.H. Coke 3.50; 2 L. Brandy & Whisky 36.00; Service charges 5.45;—(59.95); 8 Brandy & Whisky 144.00; 1 Pkt. Bristol 2.20; Service charges, 14.60 (160.80); 2 Martel 44.00; 48 Brandy & Whisky 864.00; 21 Passionas 63.00; 17 Soda 34.00 4 Brandy & Whisky 36.00; 3 Rockland Anadu 25.50; 1 Soconners 14.00; 3 Lime Juice 9.00; 8 bots. Coke 28.00; 9 Hanappier 90.00;

1 Pkt. Gold Leaf 2.50; 4 Pkt. Bristol 8.80; 1 Gingenette 3.00; 2 Martel 22.00; 1 Bristol Cream 14.00; 2 Hanappier 10.00; 1 Lime Juice 6.00; Service charges 127.40 (1401.20); 39 Dinners at 32.50 1,267.50; 9 Dinners at 27.50; 47.50; 3 Hanappier 15.00; 1 Bot. Coke 3.50; 2 Brandy & Whisky 36.00; Service charges 156.50 (1716.00). That Rs. 1401.20 plus Rs. 1715 makes a grand total of Rs. 3117.20. The *Journal* continued: "The new grandees appear to be wasting public money as no body's business these days. There are apparently many more such instances of such abuses under Lake House administration. The Government must take the blame for this because it has avoided answering questions about Lake House raised by the Opposition in Parliament on the grounds that it is a company and therefore an independent body. In consequence, any check that the government could have imposed has now been removed, and so Lake House bosses appear to be doing what they like with public money. A special entry needs attention in connection with the Anuradhapura frolics, i.e. petty cash drawn by Director W. Siriwardene of Rs. 2448.80. Director Siriwardene is the present Finance Director of Lake House whose duties include the prevention of expenditure on such vague items. His duty is to ensure that all monies spent are properly accounted for and detailed receipts obtained. A Finance Director is the last man, who should have drawn money in his way. In this connection, in the audited accounts for the year ended 31.12.74, the Auditor General stated on a test audit it was observed—"that 47 payment vouchers to the value of Rs. 1,43,722/- were not available for audit." All indications are that the financial administration of Lake House needs careful supervision both by the Government and by Parliament."

That the same issue of *The Journal* had another item of news regarding *Wasteful Expenditure—To Bid Farewell to L. H. Director?* That it stated "The way in which Lake House Directors waste public money through privileges conferred on them has been spotlighted by the *Aththa* in its edition of March 19, 1976. The occasion had been a farewell to an outgoing Director Mr. A. A. de Abrew, held at the Hotel Lanka Oberoi, on February 21. Although 14 people had atten-

ded the farewell including the outgoing Director, five other Directors, the Secretary of the Company and their wives, for which the total Hotel Bill had been Rs. 2,046.10. It had been paid out of the General Welfare Account meant for employees of the Company. The *Aththa* story which is supported by photostat copies of the hotel bill and letter authorising its payment out of the General Welfare Account. It also gives the following break-up of the bill. The liquor served including 22 whiskies, 8 sherries and 6 brandies Rs. 921.15 Aerated waters Rs. 46.20; The food bill which totalled Rs. 1,051.05, included the following: Courses (sea food cocktail) 14 portions Rs. 196.00; 14 Cups of chicken soup Rs. 150.50. Dinner for 14 people, which included chicken curry Rs. 378.00; Dessert 7 portions Rs. 175.00; 14 Cups of coffee Rs. 56.00 Ten percent service charge Rs. 90.55. The *Aththa* states that this was not the first instance where public funds had been wasted on lavish food by authorities of the Company. On an earlier occasion too, similar spending had been done during the island-wide campaign held to promote sales of the 'Tharunee' paper. When this was divulged, even the Prime Minister questioned the authorities. However, the authorities managed to camouflage the affair by giving false explanations to the Premier, states the *Aththa*. The *Aththa* further states that this type of wastage is done at the expense of Lake House employees, whose overtime payments and travelling allowances had been curtailed in an effort to save funds. At a recent meeting of editors and executives of the company they had lodged a strong protest with the chairman for the manner in which these benefits had been curtailed. The employees are of opinion that this type of wasteful expenditure would eventually result in bankruptcy of Lake House, which is now run with the help of advertisements sponsored by, state institutions the *Aththa* adds. That the present directors were better off than Messrs Ranjit Wijewardene and Esmond Wickremasinghe? That it was conduct of this kind that brought "socialism" and the government into disrepute? That if the SLFP and the 2-party UF lose the next elections it will not be difficult to identify the grave-diggers?



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