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Editor. S. P. Amarasingam

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Letter From The Editor

ON THE COVER we have a picture of a young woman of Indian origin plucking tea on a plantation in the hill country. This picture is intended to focus the attention of our readers on a Seminar in 12 sessions sponsored by the Centre for Society and Religion from June 18 to September 2. The meetings are scheduled once a week every Wednesday. An impressive list of speakers and an even more impressive list of chairmen have been brought together on one platform (a) to study the negative and positive structure and functions of the tea industry today; (b) to evolve a strategy of political, economic and social development concerning tea; and (c) to bring about a change in values and mentalities for carrying out radical changes needed for the integral liberation of tea. The Centre for Society and Religion, organised by Roman Catholics who think that the Church and its teachings must be able to cope with the problems of today in a way that they will attract thinking people of all creeds and ideologies to influence their thinking, has in recent times spotlighted a number of evils in the exploitative society which envelops the world we live in. Logos, the journal published by the Centre for Society and Religion, had sometime ago published a special number on Multi-national Corporations and the octopus-like grip Multinationals have on exploitative society. More recently, Logos, published a special number (Vol. 14 No. 1, February 1975) entitled Liberation of Tea. The volume contains, apart from guide lines from the Editor, eleven articles by writers who have something to say and say it well. This number of Logos merits much greater attention that it has received so far.

The Editor's Notes which is called an Introduction and Some Possible Lines of Action Towards the Liberation of Tea, sets the pace in a lucid and striking way: "Tea is still the life blood of our economy. It is also the deepest and widest area of exploitation in our society. Most of us are involved in the perpetuation of this situation. There is yet far too little information and awareness of the nature and extent of this exploitation. There is large scale ignorance of this among people of goodwill both in this country and in Britain which mainly benefits from this colonial economic relationship. Even the research bodies in Sri Lanka, be they of the Central Government, Tea Industry, Universities, Churches, Trade Unions, Newspapers, neglect the socio-economic aspects of Tea. Extremely little has been published about this world-wide network of mass exploitation. We present some data from the few published works. This is only a preliminary survey. It can help others to probe deeper.

"THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF SRI LANKA is intimately tied to the tea industry. It has been so in the past 100 years and will continue to be for the next one or two decades. A study of action for the liberation of tea in Sri Lanka can indicate to us the nature of the domination and dependence relationship among the different social classes of the country and between Sri Lanka and the dominant imperial power, Great Britain. Though Sri Lanka has been politically free for over 25 years, her economic dependence on Britain particularly on the British Tea Industry has continued up to the present times. In the consideration of the entire industry we see a line of exploitative relationship between the hardworked producer on the plantation, principally the labourer, and the consumer who buys the tea. The labourer on the estates works, under conditions of semi-slavery with very low wages—receiving a very small portion of the value of his product. As the product moves from the field to the factory, the port of Colombo, the distributors in Britain and the retailer, a certain value is added to it; but most of the earnings from tea are taken by persons as the estate superintendent, broker, tea taster, accountant, lawyer, shipper, insurance agent and specially the whole sale distributors. There is exploitation in that those who work the hardest throughout the year under difficult conditions in producing the tea receive the least for their contribution; their position has hardly improved over a 100 years. On the other hand, the supervisory category and specially the big shareholders of companies, major distributing houses and shipping companies etc. have improved their financial position several fold even over the past few decades.

"HOWEVER, at present there is a rather favourable atmosphere for concerted action in order to remove, or at least reduce, social injustices connected with tea. In Sri Lanka itself we have a government pledged to a more or less socialistic policy, and a growing consciousness among the people that we should be more self-reliant in our country and ensure a fairer deal for the plantation workers of Indian origin.. These efforts by the Centre for Society and Religion to educate people about for the need to emancipate the tea industry from the grip of exploitative relationships is worthy of the widest public support.

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Govt. Action Welcomed: Campus Ragging Must Be Eradicated

THE GOVERNMENT must be congratulated for the realistic and firm action it has taken in regard to the ragging at the Peradeniya campus. The Government must persist in this policy of firmness without being deterred or distracted by the subtle and insidious campaign by certain interested groups with an oversize influence in the mass media of the government propaganda machine. Ultra-ist hardline caucuses, operating under different party labels, have initiated campaigns to pressurise the Government to remove the Police completely from the campus area in Peradeniya, to re-instate students who have been sacked or suspended at the different campuses, to negotiate with the Student Council at Peradeniya and thereby appease the rowdy elements responsible for the terror in on the campus, and to accept as true the political apologia that "reactionary conspirators", inside and outside the campus, were responsible for the unnecessary *furor* about the recent ragging at Peradeniya.

The patrons of these student terror groups had made it known by various devious means that the Cabinet at its meeting of June 18 would be persuaded to back the Peradeniya Student Council and appoint a Campus President who would "co-operate" with it—and that apart from sending the Police back, the Government would endorse the line that the "running dogs" of reaction (seeking to denigrate the UF government by besmirching the good name of the students) were at the bottom of all the trouble.

Many people had lived in trepidation that the Cabinet might be persuaded to restore, in Peradeniya, the *status quo* of terror intimidation and primitive sex fashioned by political hooligans inside (from among the students and the teaching staff) also certain *avant garde* patrons and neo-politicians outside. But, the Cabinet and the Government does not seem to have fallen for the customary witch-hunting blackmail which had succeeded on many occasions in the past when the magic formula "reactionary conspiracy" has worked political wonders.

No official or formal announcement was made about the Cabinet decision on this matter, but the statement made by the Deputy Minister of Education, Tudawe, in the Assembly on Thursday, June 19, was clear indication that the Government, while being appreciative of student sentiments (by removing the Police to the periphery of the campus), was firm in its determination to end this menace of ragging at any cost.

The manner in which the four English language dailies on June 20, 1975 reported this official state-

ment by Tudawe was most revealing. The headlines were indicative of the manner in which the different papers have so far handled this subject: The *Daily News*, which has played down the ragging (together with the *Dinamina* and the *Thirakaran*) and which has indirectly been pleading for "support" for students against the "reactionary conspirators" had a mild headline (in keeping with the "mild ragging" as claimed by the Student Council) and ran the story in a rather crowded and insignificant place on the front page under the heading RETURN TO CAMPUS APPEAL BY DEPUTY MINISTER. The *Daily Mirror*, which has been doing yeoman public service in exposing the ragging in the different campuses, had a more stirring headline RETURN TO CAMPUSES OR FORGO EXAMS: TUDAWE, and its sister paper, the *Times of Ceylon* that evening had followed suit STUDENTS WHO WON'T RETURN CAN'T SIT EXAMS. The *Lake House* paper *Observer*, which had earlier published realistic reports about the ragging but which seems to have made made to toe the current *Lake House* line to play down the ragging, had this Tudawe story at its top lead story with the appropriate heading: "STEPS TO REMOVE THIS CANCKER". RAGS:

WE MUST BE ASHAMED—TUDAWE.

IN ITS REPORT the *Daily News* published what was said by the Deputy Minister in a mild and restrained manner and we reproduce below the text of the *Daily News* report as a splendid example of "managed" and "slanted" news reporting.

Deputy Minister of Education Mr. B. Y. Tudawe in Parliament yesterday appealed to undergraduates of the Peradeniya Campus to return and resume studies and become partners in the development of the country. "Give up this mad ritual, ragging, which is alien to our culture and social thinking", the Deputy Minister said. Mr. Tudawe said the police were moved into the campus because it was absolutely necessary. They will be moved out only when the necessary climate was created for it. Very soon the police will be posted at a place which will be out of the view of the students, he said. There had been ragging at the Campus when freshers trooped in and a new President was appointed. Persons who had helped a commission of inquiry with evidence were intimidated. The house of the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine was stoned. It was the responsibility of the Education Ministry to maintain peace and order at the Campus to avert a clash between the students and others.

The situation had not changed yet. Students were afraid to come back. They feared for their lives and threats continued to be directed at various people. How could the government move the police out in those circumstances? There was no clash between the students and the police leading to bloodshed, he said. "We will take all steps to remove this canker—ragging—from our society which does not condone it", the Deputy Minister declared. He said: "Are we not ashamed that such ugly and brutal acts take place in the highest seat of learning in this country. This so-called 'rag' is nothing but a relic of an obsolete system in which a *raddala* society dominated. Today it is getting worse. You don't hear of rags in socialist countries. We can't allow this. Parents are dissatisfied. On the one hand their children's education is stalled and on the other, there is worry whe-

Ragging

ther they should be sent to a university or kept back at home. It's the government's responsibility to relieve the parents of their worry. If the students do not respond we will be reluctantly compelled to disqualify them from sitting their examinations".

We publish below the Daily Mirror report to give our readers an opportunity of knowing how the same can be reported differently.

Readers will realise that the Daily News had misplaced the emphasis and ignored some of the pointed remarks made by Tudawe.

All University students boycotting lectures are to be instructed to return to their Campuses or face the risk of not being allowed to sit their examinations. Presidents of the Campuses of the University of Sri Lanka have been instructed by the Ministry of Education to send final notices to the students to this effect. The Deputy Minister of Education, Mr. B. Y. Tudawe, disclosed this in the National State Assembly yesterday when he replied to a series of questions asked during the adjournment in the National State Assembly yesterday about the situation in the Peradeniya Campus and certain other Campuses. The question was asked by Mr. Sarath Muttetuwegama (Communist Party—Kalawana) who said that students at Vidyalkara, Peradeniya, Heywood and the Maradana Technical College have boycotted lectures in support of two demands they have put forward.

The two demands are the withdrawal of the Police from the Peradeniya Campus and the reinstatement of the three student leaders of the Vidyalkara Campus who have been sacked. Mr. Muttetuwegama urged that an amicable solution be found to this problem soon. Mr. Tudawe said that the Government decided to move the Police into the campus because of certain incidents and inhuman ragging of freshers that had taken place at the Peradeniya Campus.

He said that the necessary climate to warrant the removal of the Police from the Campus has not been reached yet. The President of the Campus has been threatened and several lecturers have even expressed fears about their personal safety and their lives. Mr. Tudawe further said that certain

students who had given evidence regarding ragging have been threatened and the house of a Dean of Faculty had been stoned. "As a responsible Government we are duty bound to safeguard the peace loving students and afford them protection," said the Deputy Minister.

Many students, he said, are now returning in groups and they would be afforded full protection. There had been no clashes between the police and the students. However the police will be moved to a place within the Campus away from the gaze of the students. Commenting on ragging Mr. Tudawe said that they must eliminate ragging from the Universities forever.

"Ragging has no place in our culture and in the modes of life of our people" he said. He said that ragging was resorted to in the olden times in good humour to enable the affluent and poor students to live as equals at the universities. But it was not carried out in the indecent and degrading manner as done now, he said. Today the biggest worry of the parents was whether to send their children, whom they have educated suffering sacrifices, to the Universities even if admitted. As a responsible government they are duty bound to instil a sense of confidence in the parents that their children are safe, Mr. Tudawe said. They have appealed to the students to return to their Campuses and he hoped that they would return if not, the University will strictly enforce the rule that students who do not attend at least 75 per cent of the lectures would not be allowed to sit for their examinations.

The Times of Ceylon followed the Daily Mirror version, and although the report was shorter, had brought out the gist of Tudawe's statement:

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Mr. Tudawe said that the Government decided to move the Police into the campus because of certain incidents and inhuman ragging of freshers that had taken place at the Peradeniya Campus. He said that the necessary climate to warrant the removal of the Police from the Campus has not been reached yet. The President of the Campus has been threatened and several lecturers have even expressed fears about their personal safety and their lives.

The Observer, in a short report, focussed attention on those aspects of ragging which have caused the greatest public concern.

"We will take all steps necessary to remove this canker (ragging) which is not in keeping with our culture and traditions. We must be ashamed of recent happenings at our Universities. But, this type of indecent behaviour is unheard of in Socialist countries."

This is what the Deputy Minister of Education Mr. B. Y. Tudawe told the National Assembly yesterday. He asked undergraduates to abandon the boycott of lectures and resume their studies. He warned that those who did not follow 75 per cent of the lectures would be disqualified from sitting their exams. Answering adjournment time questions by Kalawana MP Mr. Sarath Muttetuwegama and Habaraduwa's MP Mr. Prins Gunasekera, Mr. Tudawe said that it was necessary to move the Police into the Peradeniya Campus to

maintain law and order. Steps were now being taken to move the Police Post to a place away from where the students were. Because of the presence of the Police they had been able to avert a breach of the peace.

"There was evidence that freshers were subjected to indecent ragging. They had thrown stones at a Dean's house at night, and also had intimidated those who had co-operated with the investigators." He said this so-called 'rag' was a relic of a by-gone era which was dominated by the privileged classes. It was most unfortunate to see it in a worse form now. "Parents are now in a quandary. On the one hand they are concerned about the education of their children. On the other they are undecided whether to send their children to universities or keep them at home. The Government has a responsibility to relieve this anguish of the parents and if the students do not respond to the government's call it would not hesitate to take drastic action."

IT IS SIGNIFICANT that the *Daily News*, in its report, made it out that the Deputy Minister "had appealed to undergraduates to return and resume studies and become partners in the development of the country". The *Daily Mirror* and the *Times* stated that Tudawe had declared that the Presidents of the different campuses had been instructed by the Ministry of Education to send "final notices" to the students to the effect that they will be disqualified to sit for the exams if they failed to attend lectures forthwith. It will be noted that the *Daily News* slant was that these hooligans who were responsible for the ragging and the compulsory sex rituals should become "partners" in the development of the country.

What the *Daily News* seems to forget is that these hooligans (we use the word advisedly) should be dealt as juvenile delinquents in a mentally diseased condition; and only after they are pronounced to be normal after due medical or psychiatric treatment should they be even considered, (for a beginning), for semi-responsible positions in the development plans of the country.

The more politicalised hooligans and their patrons should be sent to special political kin-

dergartens as Lenin had suggested when he was confronted with such juvenile infantilism immediately after the Bolshevik Revolution. He had adopted a stern view against licentious free sex (voluntary and not compulsory as in the case of our campuses). Persons who still read Lenin should to read what he had to say about this in a historic article on the "glass of water" theory on free love and free sex. He had condemned even voluntarily unrestrained sex permissiveness in no uncertain terms. What he would have to say on compulsory sex rituals as practised in some of our campuses can be imagined.

LAKE HOUSE pleading for student hooliganism and campus sex perversion did not end even after Mr. Tudawe made the statement in the Assembly. On Saturday, June 21, the star political commentator of the *Dinamina* (and one who seems to set the pace for all Lake House publications), using the pen-name Arjuna (woe betide the Mahabharata!) delivered himself of a political sermon on how the country and the nation should look upon the ragging problem at the University campuses. It was a cunning appeal to the nation using the hackneyed and flogged-to-death witch-hunting formula hinting at dark and reactionary anti-UF conspiracy—which was only a smokescreen to permit the students to continue as the spearhead of the Revolution (pretending they were for the Bandaranaike-led United Front). Below we set out a free transliteration of Arjuna's logic and purport in the article in question.

It was argued that the present university students had become eligible for admission to the university as a result of the emancipation in education brought about by this Government and the Minister of Education who had struggled so hard and had nationalised the schools. For this reason the parents and the students were behind this Government. This Minister and the Prime Minister had even opened a campus in Jaffna. This Minister was the pioneer in national education. Therefore, the responsibility towards the students was a national responsibility.

In these circumstances it was our responsibility to see that they

are not misled by others. It is our national responsibility to make them useful citizens because these are people who will carry forward the United Front in the future. They must be moulded to carry forward the UF's responsibilities. Since the majority of the students view the matter in this manner it will not be difficult for us to do the same. The problem at Peradeniya must be viewed with this mind. Everybody must think that this matter is very important and there was nothing more important than this at the present moment....

Arjuna's message is clear. The students (at Peradeniya and in the other campuses) were the products (and by-products) of United Front policies. These students, Arjuna asserted, were ardent followers and supporters of the United Front. Therefore, he said, that everything must be done to make them useful citizens, because, by implication, they were the present and the future of the UF. Arjuna argued that our attitudes towards these

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Welcome Statements By Dons

students should be fashioned by the overwhelming political need to safeguard these students. In fact, everything else should be subordinated to this need to regard them as part and parcel of the United Front.

IT WAS A CLEVER though simplistic message. In fact, it was an oversimplified message intended to draw attention away from the real crux of the problem, viz. the inhumanly barbarous physical excesses and the primitive sexual rituals which had made ragging at Peradeniya and in certain other campuses a blot upon the good name of this country. *Arjuna* did not say one word to condemn these practices. He seems to be one those willing to woo these hooligans by letting them have their way in their crude ragging and compulsory sex (rape) they had imposed upon university life.

Readers of *Tribune* will recall a report we had published in the last issue of *Tribune* (21/6/75) about a broadcast over the SLBC in its Sinhala service on Tuesday, June 17, which was one of the series in which the virtues of the "progressive trends among the youth were spotlighted. Such broadcasts are now a regular feature over the SLBC and if responsible leaders if the UF had listened to these broadcasts regularly they would have shut down the SLBC a long time ago. In the broadcast on June 17 there was radio dramatised defence of the student ragging at Peradeniya which the Student Council claimed was "mild" and one which should not have caused any serious concern to any body.

The broadcast first tried to establish the credentials of the students, but in doing this the broadcast let out a cat out of the bag. The opening scenes were rowdy, probably realistically recorded from actual crowd scenes on the campus. In this, all those who spoke about democratic socialism were hooted, jeered and abused. The students had no use for such politicians. The students wanted real and revolutionary socialism—probably of the April 1971 variety. This was unsaid but the implication was clear. After thus establishing the revolutionary tempo of the campus students, stoutly opposed to the humbug known as "democratic socialism", the broadcast had laun-

ched into a defence of the "mild and innocent" ragging at Peradeniya. All the noise and hullabaloo about ragging was said to be the foul work of a sensation-loving (reactionary) press which had been induced to indulge in libel and slander of the students by a "conspiracy" of reactionary elements determined to undermine the popularity and prestige of the UF government.

What the broadcaster did not realise was that the ragging which the students had been permitted to indulge in for some years now had done more harm to the government than anything which reactionary politicians were able to do so far.

It is likely that the leaders of the Government and the United Front are now aware that the most vociferous and violent experts in ragging on the campus lead a Jekyll and Hyde political existence where they pretend, when the occasion demands, to be UF loyalists but in reality proclaim and preach sloganised dicta against Bandaranaikeism coupled with filthy innuendos against the majority of the UF leaders.

If *Arjuna* will only take the trouble to find out the truth about the political sentiments of the noisy and rowdy student leaders on most of the campuses, he will not say that they are the products of United Frontism. While it is true that most of the students now in campuses have found admission owing to the educational policies of the UF (some of them misconceived and others mistaken), the political thinking among them which is against democratic socialism, the sadistic mental aberrations which has led to physical torture in ragging and the sex perversities allegedly for emancipating rural students from village petite bourgeois inhibitions and urban students from bourgeois rigidities, were certainly not the outcome of the ideological content of the Common Programme of the UF. The truth is that such debased thinking among a hard-core minority of the student *ultras*, who through ragging, rowdiness and terror have assumed the leadership of the campus students, world, is an illegitimate introversion of pseudo-anarchist cum power-from-the-barrel-of-a-gun red revolu-

tionary sermonising cum an eclectic hotchpotch of pseudo-marxian philosophical speculations. If commentators like *Arjuna* seek to befriend this kind of student politics, they will only be providing a smokescreen for the grave diggers of the United Front (and all sane political activity in the island) to thrive.

MANY OF OUR READERS have urged us to probe deeper into the canker of ragging at the university campuses. In recent weeks there has been a welcome outburst from university teachers like Dr. Brian Seneviratne of the Faculty of Medicine and Dr. Michael Roberts of the Faculty of History. The *Sunday Times* and the *Times of Ceylon* have published the personal statements of these two dons. We now find that Dr. Robert's statement had been abridged in the *Times* probably because of the lack of space. We shall, therefore, publish the full text of Dr. Robert's statement in instalments because it is one of most important socio-political analysis of the malaise that has overtaken our campuses. We do not as yet know whether Dr. Seneviratne's statement had been similarly abridged, and if there has been such cutting, we shall seek Dr. Seneviratne's co-operation to have his statement in full for publication. We will also publish everything else which is relevant and important in regard to the canker which is eating into the student life in our campuses. In addition, we shall endeavour to find out more about the root causes that have led to the present distressing situation in our university life.

It is also important that the report of the one-man commission on the ragging at Vidyalkankara should be published in all three languages as early as possible. There is no reason why the Government should withhold or delay the immediate publication of this Report. Once the Government has released the Report for publication, the SLBC should be called upon to broadcast the full *verbatim* text of the Report in instalments—without the Report being twisted or slanted under the excuse of abridgement, or through the sly remarks of announcers. The Government must also insist that all Lake House papers should publish the full text of the Report in ins-

talments without trimmings or slanting.

If anybody wants to comment on the Report and the findings of the Commission he should be given the time on the SLBC and space in Lake House papers to do so, provided equal time on the SLBC and equal space in the Lake House publications is given to those who are *against* as much as those who are for the Report. It is also essential that misleading and mischievous comments in the form of a subtle campaign should not be permitted to precede the publication of the Report either over the SLBC or in the Lake House papers. Any comment should be made after the publication of the Report—that is, if freedom of opinion and expression is to be allowed on the state-controlled radio and in the Lake House papers.

It is a hackneyed truism to say that the university students are the future of the nation. But if this concept of ragging

and the political ideologies that have sprouted therefrom (or been the cause thereof) will impregnate the thinking of this "cream of our youth", the future leadership of the country must come from some other quarter. All the money now spent on university education will prove to waste.

There is no doubt that Government will receive widespread support for the determined effort it is making to eradicate ragging and hooliganism from our campuses. If it does persist in these efforts it will receive solid support even from quarters which had been critical of many actions of the government—among which can be counted the laxity shown to the *ultras* who have made university campus life a hell for the majority of the students. The Government will also earn the gratitude and support of the majority of the students who are now sick and tired of the terrorism and intimi-

dation to which they have been subjected by the student "leaders" who had made torture, rape, hooliganism a method of imposing political control.

The Government has at last realised that it should no longer appease the *ultras* who have secured control of the Student Councils through devious means. In any case these *ultras* have no use for democratic socialism or parliamentary government. In permitting these *ultras* to flourish, even by negative inaction, the Government had lost the goodwill of sane and right thinking people who believed that the normal decencies of life should exist even among students on the campuses. The Government will receive unqualified support from all sections of the community if it persists in its present determination to eradicate the evil of ragging, hooliganism, terror, sex perversities and other anti-social practices that today obtain in our campuses.

CHRONICLE

JUNE 14—20

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

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

SATURDAY, JUNE 14: The President of Switzerland, Mr. Pierre Graber, met the Prime Minister Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, in Berne yesterday at a luncheon given in honour of the Sri Lanka Prime Minister—CDN. Yesterday and the day before nearly 2,000 students of the Peradeniya Campus left for their homes: President of the Campus Professor P.W. Vithanage said that it was usual for the students to leave the Campus on weekends and it was still too premature to comment—CDN. Students who left for their homes said that they would return to the Campus only if the Student Council requests them to do so: meanwhile a section of students have requested the authorities to provide them with Police escort as they are willing to attend the lectures; the authorities have instructed the Police to protect all students who attend the lectures defying the Student Council orders—VK. Following complaints by several MPs in the plantation sectors the Minister of Social Services, Mr. T. B. Tennekoon, has proposed to the Government to set up special camps to accommodate those people of Indian origin who are suspected to be evading repatriation—CDN. Mr. J.R.P. Suriyap-
peruma, in a statement to the press after paying his

deposit to contest Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, at the forthcoming Colombo South by-election said that he intended to contest to safeguard the country from fascism: he further said that the only opportunity of forming a new democratic Government after the death of Mr. Dudley Senanayake is now spoilt because of the actions of Mr. J. R. Jayewardene and the UNP has now become a 'dining table' of the friends and relations of Mr. Jayewardene: Messrs J. R. Jayewardene, Gamini Fonseka and Sarath Wijesinghe are others who have already paid in the deposit to contest the Colombo South by-election—DM. The C.T.B. annually loses Rs. 36 million owing to fraud including ticketless travel and other misappropriations according to the Board's Controller of Operations—CDM. Speaking at a reception accorded to him in Mannar, Dr. Badiuddin Mahmud, Minister of Education, warned the Federal Party that their efforts to divide the country cannot be achieved without the co-operation of Muslims and said that the Muslims of this country will never allow the country to be divided—VK. On the recommendations of a special Ministerial Committee appointed to go into the rift in the Sri Lanka Independent Trade Union Federation an executive committee will soon be appointed to function as the administrative body of the Federation—LD. The Government has decided to allocate Rs. 1/2 million to those residents along the Colombo-Katunayake road and whose houses were demolished for the widening of the road in view of the Non-Aligned Summit Conference to be held in Colombo next year: the compensation will be paid before the end of October this year—JD. With the Opposition pressure mounting on Mrs. Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister of India, she told a rally that with the support of masses she would stay to fight many more elections: an emergency Cabinet meeting backed Mrs. Gandhi to continue as the Prime Minister until the appeal is decided. In Gujarat State Assembly

elections the ruling Congress Party of Mrs. Indira Gandhi suffered a severe blow when the Janata Front a joint Opposition of five parties, won 87 seats out of 182: the ruling Congress won 74 seats. At the end of American-Israeli Summit Dr. Henry Kissinger, US Secretary of State, said that Egypt and Israel might be moving towards resumed negotiations for a new Sinai agreement.

SUNDAY, JUNE 15: According to the President of the Peradeniya Campus the Police force presently inside the Campus will be shifted to the edge of the Campus: meanwhile the Police have completed on-the-spot inquiries into certain incidents at the Campus—CO. Dr. Brian Seneviratne, a senior lecturer in medicine in the Peradeniya Campus, has told the *Sunday Times* that there is evidence that other institutions such as some schools have also taken the lead given by the University and the ragging disease may spread: he has further said that a girl had to break her spine to make the country aware of the situation in the Campus and the University authorities to wake up and act. A memorandum signed by several youth leaguers including two vice presidents of the UNP youth league organisation has been sent to Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, President of the UNP, accusing him of planning to destroy the party—ST. With the Colombo South by-elections the rift between the JR faction and Rukman Senanayake faction in the UNP is very likely to deepen and political observers firmly believe that several closely guarded secrets inside the party in the recent past is likely to surface on the by-election platforms—SLD. With the possibility of Messrs J. R. P. Suriyapperuma and Gamini Fonseka contesting the Colombo South by-elections anti-JR slogans within the UNP are gaining momentum—JD. Speaking at the convocation of the new President of the Bar Association, Mr. H. W. Jayewardene, at the Navarangahala, Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike, Minister of Local Government, Home Affairs and Justice, said the Government would take all steps to ensure the independence of the judiciary—CO. Mr. Anura Bandaranaike, Chief Organiser of the SLFP Youth League, presently in the US, addressed the State Legislature of Massachusetts in Boston: in his 20 minute address Mr. Bandaranaike outlined the problems of the Third World developing nations consequent to the international price hike of essential commodities—ST. Addressing a meeting in Mannar Dr. Badiuddin Mahmud said that Muslims in the country have made enough sacrifices for the Tamil language and they will continue to do so—VK. Following the Congress Party's defeat in the Gujarat State Assembly elections and the court order making Mrs. Indira Gandhi's election to the Delhi Parliament illegal, the Prime Minister is being constantly pressed by the Opposition to resign from the premiership: leaders of the five-party alliance which defeated Mrs. Gandhi's Congress party in Gujarat election have called on President Fakruddin Ali Ahmed to dismiss her if she does not resign.

MONDAY, JUNE 16: Addressing the now disbanded Land Army, Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, said that his sole intention was to cleanse the party by "removing the rubbish" found within the party—CDN. The *Aththa* has editorially commented that Mr. J. R. Jayewardene resigned from the NSA to seek re-election in an attempt to show the country that the NSA is now illegal and thereby to make the Government vulnerable to the

criticism, but with the expulsion of Mr. J. R. P. Suriyapperuma from the party the latter has come out with several accusations against Mr. Jayewardene whereby the leader of the UNP has now become the "accused": Mr. Suriyapperuma in a statement to newspapers posed the question that while not in power if Mr. Jayewardene can be a dictator to this extent, won't he make this country a cemetery if he gets power to his own hands?—ATH. Professor P. W. Vithanage, President of the Peradeniya Campus said that in spite of the exodus of students, the Campus will not be closed: the Vidyalankara Campus open for freshers tomorrow and the date of commencement of lectures for senior students will be notified later: the report of the Commission that inquired into incidents of ragging at the Vidyalankara Campus will be handed over to the President, Mr. William Gopallawa, today: Udawalawe and Koggala were most likely to be sites for the proposed new Campus in the Southern province—CDN. The President of the Student Council of the Peradeniya Campus has stated that the students were not prepared to allow room for the reactionaries to use the students as weapons against the UF Government and to make the Government frustrated towards the entire student population: Professor Vithanage stated that soon the Police post will be removed from the Campus: the Kandy branch of the UF had welcomed the decision of the students to protest against the presence of Police and desert the Campus—DM. The *Janadina* editorially stated that ragging should be banned, but protested against the deploying of the Police to eradicate ragging in the University: the *Janadina* commented that the Government should understand the difference between deploying Police for security purposes and in using the Police for the purpose of eradicating ragging in the Campus. In a message to Mrs. Indira Gandhi the Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, has said that she was deeply shocked to hear the verdict of the court making her election to Parliament null and void and has expressed concern at the turn of events—CO. The CIC (exchange Frauds) this morning sentenced Rev. Brother Lawrence Jayasinghe to two years rigorous imprisonment and a fine of Rs. 20,000 for exchange offences—TOC. According to the Department of Exchange Control only one percent of the holdings in Convertible Rupee Accounts has been utilised for the import of cars—CDM. The Central Bank has withdrawn the ceiling on Bank Credit imposed on May 27, 1974—CDN. An LSSP Member of the Colombo Municipality has alerted the Council on the alleged presence of CIA agents among the employees of the Council—JD. Mr. Bernard Cabanes, Editor-in-Chief of the News Agency Agence France Presse, died in Paris yesterday of injuries sustained in a bomb attack: according to Police sources Mr. Cabanes has been mistaken for another journalist with the same name. Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said that his Government was still not prepared to accept the Egyptian condition for an interim peace agreement which Israel rejected last month.

TUESDAY, JUNE 17: President of the Peradeniya Campus has announced that all undergraduates who left the Campus must return immediately or else they will not be permitted to sit for their examinations: the President of the Campus Students Council replied that the students will not return unless their demands, viz. (1) the removal of Police from the Campus premises,

(2) the removal of suppressive regulations that are being enforced, and (3) the taking of steps to surface the conspiracy alleged to have been hatched against the students are exposed: the Inter-University Students Federation yesterday decided to boycott lectures in all the campuses until the problems in the Peradeniya and Vidyalankara campuses are solved—CDN. Miss Rupa Ratnaseli, the student of the Peradeniya Campus who is presently in the hospital with a broken spine after alleged incidents of ragging, in the course of her statement to the Police, said that she preferred death to losing her chastity and virginity; she admitted that she attempted to commit suicide after incidents of ragging and appealed to fellow students to desist from ragging innocent and rural students like her—CDM. Leaders of the student unions of the Peradeniya Campus have sought an interview with the President this morning; yesterday, everything was quiet at the Vidyalankara Campus when it was opened for freshers only and a few senior students who were seen near the road were dispersed by the Police—CO. Two prominent members of the UNP from the up country area are likely to be expelled from the party in the near future—JD. The *Aththa* editorially commented that Mr. J. R. Jayewardene had Mr. R. Premadasa, First MP for Colombo Central, in mind when he said that there was still some more dirt to be cleaned from the UNP: the paper further stated that Mr. Jayewardene will seek revenge on Mr. Premadasa who is supposed to be an anti-JR inside the party. Several members of the executive council of the UNP youth league have written to Mr. J. R. Jayewardene that until Mr. Cyril Mathew is removed from the organisation work of the party they will not participate in any activities of the party—ATH. Mr. Gamini Fonseka has announced that he will seek elections to the Colombo South seat—LD. Consequent to the signing of an agreement between the Estate Employers Federation and Estate Staff's Union from the beginning of next month all employees in the non-labour grades will receive bigger pay packets—CDN. The CJC (Exchange Frauds) this morning ordered a fresh inquiry in the case against Mr. Razeen Sally and his brother Farook Sally—CO. Britain's Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, Mr. James Callaghan, announced in the House of Commons that the 1955 Simonstown agreements with South Africa have been terminated. Mr. Neslon Rockefeller, US Vice President, announced that ex-President Kennedy and his brother might have been victims of a CIA plot. Indian Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, will decide about her staying or quitting office only after the verdict of the Supreme Court of her appeal.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 18: The Political Authority for Kandy District and the Junior Minister of Agriculture and Lands, Mr. H. M. Navaratne, yesterday met the President of the Peradeniya Campus, Mr. P. W. Vithanage, along with some student leaders to bring about a settlement in the current dispute between the students and the authorities: a further meeting is scheduled for today—CDN. Students in all other Campuses boycotted lectures yesterday and in Colombo Campus while lectures for a category of science students were on, there was continuous hooting outside the lecture halls—CDN. Dr. Badiuddin Mahmud will submit a full report on the University dispute at the weekly Cabinet meeting today: the Cabinet is expected to come to a final deci-

sion on this subject—JD. Students of Technical Colleges in Maradana and Dehiwela and the Government College of Music also joined hands in support of the boycott of University students—VK. Police will prosecute several students alleged to have ragged the freshers in the Peradeniya Campus: the freshers have identified the seniors who ragged them from the pictures in identity cards shown to them—LD. Eight candidates including Mr. J. R. Jayewardene have paid in their deposits to contest the Colombo South by election for which nominations will be received tomorrow—CDN. A powerful section in the UNP was trying to patch up the differences inside the party and bring together the split groups: the Secretary of the UNP, Mr. Ananda Tissa de Alwis, said that the Executive Committee of the party headed by Mr. J. R. Jayewardene will consider taking back Mr. J. R. P. Suriyapperuma to the party if the latter gives up the campaign against the UNP leadership and agrees to abide by the party policies—LD. Following the instructions given by the Tourist Board to foreign tourist agencies not to send tourists to Sri Lanka next year during the Non-Aligned Summit Conference period, tourists circles have expressed fear that this will result in a major blow to the industry: several economists too have expressed opinion that such a move will result in the country losing several millions of rupees in valuable foreign exchange—JD. Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike, unveiling a portrait of Mr. A. H. M. Fowzie, Mayor of Colombo, said that in the entire history of the Colombo Municipality it was only during this period real service was being done—VK. Since the 1970 general elections the electoral list has increased by a million voters—CDN. According to Dr. Colvin R. de Silva concrete proposals for the implementation of the Agency Houses Report are now proposed for consideration by the Ministerial Planning Council before being submitted to the Government—CDN. President of the Indian Congress Party, Mr. D. K. Barooah, in a statement says that there was no political, legal or moral justification at all for the Indian Prime Minister to resign and on the contrary only on two technical points the judgement had been delivered: Mr. Zail Singh, Chief Minister of Punjab said that Mrs. Indira Gandhi offered to step down but is now continuing in office in defence to the wishes of her Cabinet colleagues and party leaders. The Bangladesh Government on Monday closed down 16 of the country's 20 daily newspapers and took control of the balance papers.

THURSDAY, JUNE 19: Mr. D. W. Wanigasekera, a former Director of the Bank of Ceylon, and Mr. Lancelot Fernando, a former Vice Chairman of the Insurance Corporation, were sentenced to seven years rigorous imprisonment each for offences under the Bribery Act yesterday: Mr. Wanigasekera was sentenced by Mr. C. Manohara, District Judge presiding over the Special Bribery Court to seven years imprisonment, and fined a total of Rs. 359,375.51 and was also ordered to pay a penalty of Rs. 354,375.51: Mr. Lancelot Fernando was sentenced by Mr. Vimal Wickremasuriya, Additional District Judge of the Additional Bribery Court, to seven years rigorous imprisonment and fined Rs. 340,200.00: in default of the fine seven years rigorous imprisonment was imposed and he was also ordered to pay a penalty of Rs. 340,200.00: the two were charged under the Bribery Act with having within a period of time acquired property and money which could not

have been acquired with any part of their known incomes—CDN. The *Aththa* editorially praised the judgement given to both these accused and reproduced portions of news items that appeared in *Aththa* on December 15, 1970 and December 24, 1971 protesting the appointment of these two accused to their respective posts. The Inter University Students Federation in a statement issued yesterday said that the students of all campuses of the University will continue their boycott of lectures until their demands were met—ATH. The discussions between Mr. H. W. Navaratne, Political Authority of Kandy District and the President of the Peradeniya Campus ended in a deadlock and it is likely that the dispute of the Campus will continue—DM. The CJC (Exchange Frauds) yesterday allowed an appeal by Counsel for Sir Oliver Goonetilleke, a former Governor General of Ceylon, to dispense with the presence of Sir Oliver and to allow Counsel to defend him in his absence: the CJC allowed this appeal following a medical certificate submitted to the Commission regarding Sir Oliver's health—CDM. The Principal Collector of Customs announced that in future gold smugglers will be reported to the Controller of Immigration and Emigration and the passports of those found guilty will be impounded and will never be allowed to leave the country in future—CDN. The Supreme Patriarch of Thailand, the Sangharajah, arrived in the island yesterday and was received at the airport by the President and the Acting Prime Minister—CDN. The assassin of King Faisal of Saudi Arabia was executed in Riyadh yesterday. Ruling Congress party members gave a massive vote of confidence to Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. The US Senate Armed Services Committee yesterday defeated a resolution aimed at blocking construction of US Navy base on the Indian Ocean island of Diego Garcia.

FRIDAY, JUNE 20: Nine persons handed in their nominations at the Registrar General Office yesterday to contest the Colombo South by-election: Except for Mr. J. R. Jayewardene all other candidates will contest the seat as Independent: after the nominations Mr. Jayewardene was garlanded by supporters and was taken in a procession followed by very large crowds to his residence—CDN. The Ministry of Education has been instructed to send final notices to all University students boycotting lectures stating that if they fail to return immediately they will face the risk of not being allowed to sit for the examinations: Mr. B. Y. Tudawe, Deputy Minister of Education disclosed this in the NSA yesterday—CDM. Eight senior undergraduates of the Peradeniya Campus were yesterday arrested and produced before the Kandy Magistrate for alleged ragging: The Magistrate allowed bail in a sum of Rs. 500 for each suspect—CDN. The *Janadina* editorially requested the Government to probe into the University dispute following allegations made by several student organisations that a UNP leader was found in the Peradeniya Campus a few days before the incidents of ragging several trade unions requested the Government to remove the Police from the Peradeniya Campus of the University: nearly 400 freshers of the Vidyalandara Campus of the University too will join the boycott of lectures along with students of other campuses—ATH. Professor P. W. Vithanage, President of the Peradeniya Campus, expressed the opinion that several students will return to the Campus for lectures by next week—DM. The Prime Minister,

Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, met Mexican President Luis Echeverria in Mexico City yesterday and discussed an increase in commerce between the two countries—CDM (Reuter). Mr. D. W. Wanigasekera, and Mr. Lancelot Fernando convicted on Bribery charges appealed to the Supreme Court for bail pending their appeal—CDN. The Department of Inland Revenue framed new regulations to prevent private companies seeking tax relief on illegal expenditure including expenditure for the advancement of political parties—CDN. The British Overseas Development Ministry announced that in future all aids to Sri Lanka will be in the form of grants instead of loans—CDN. The *New York Times* reported that the CIA organised an attempt to poison Cuban Premier Fidel Castro, his brother Raul and Che Guevara as a prelude to the Bay of Pigs invasion. By the end of this month America will withdraw another 87 aircraft from its base in Thailand.



INDIRA GANDHI

The *Far Eastern Economic Review*, in its issue of June 27, 1975, had an interesting piece on the Indian Prime Minister. "Almost unbelievably", it said, "India's Prime Minister Indira Gandhi—probably the most powerful woman in the world—has suddenly found herself fighting to stay in office. Her battle is not being fought in any political arena, but in the law courts...." After pointing out that on June 12, within a period of nearly 12 hours, the ruling Congress had to face the unexpected decision of the Allahabad High Court and the results of the elections in Gujerat where the Opposition parties were jointly able to defeat the Congress (though no single party has a majority), the FEER stated that India now faced the greatest constitutional crisis in its 28 years of independence. On the judgement itself, the paper said: "Even the Prime Minister's most inveterate enemies conceded that the judgement was a bolt out of the blue. It was generally expected that while the Judge might pass *obiter dicta* (expression of opinion) on the special advantages enjoyed by the Prime Minister, for that matter, others holding office—it was never thought that she would be unseated or disqualified...." Today, a major legal cum political battle is waging furiously in India in which the political forces on the Right are ranged against the forces of the Centre and the Left. Sri Lanka's Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike has unequivocally indicated that her sympathies are with the Indian PM and in a message from Geneva had hoped that she would win her appeal in the Supreme Court. As we go to press, it is learnt that a State of Emergency has been declared throughout the whole of India and that the majority of the Opposition Leaders have been taken into custody.

OPEN LETTER IN SELF-CRITICISM

Ragging at the Peradeniya Campus

BY DR. MICHAEL ROBERTS
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AS IN THE PAST FEW YEARS, severe ragging has taken place at the campus in Peradeniya. If one is to rely on rumours, whispers from the freshers, and the cases that have come to light, the scale and severity of this atrocious practice has increased. Apart from this development in scale, three new features can be pinpointed: (i) the intensity of ragging within the women's hall of residence appears to have degenerated to the levels of degradation in male halls of residence; (ii) unlike the past few years, several administrators have been trying to curb the practice and indications have been provided that deterrent punishment will be actually implemented; (iii) partly for this reason, unlike last year, there has been relatively little ragging outside the halls of residence, e.g. in the corridors of the buildings used for teaching. Ironically, the second and third features noted above may have contributed to the increase in the severity of ragging within the halls of residence.

Those public-spirited persons who castigate the University authorities for not preventing ragging often do not have the faintest notion of the complexity of the problem and the enormous difficulties in bringing the culprits to book. To punish any culprit or criminal one must (1) catch him in the act and/or (2) be able to provide conclusive evidence, with positive identification, that such and such person was responsible for a particular crime.

In most instances of ragging, this is very difficult. Let me explain why. Let's take a hall of residence: a few have about 80 rooms and about 240 residents. Others have much larger numbers, even perhaps 800-900 residents. To prevent ragging in one hall one must be able to visit every room every hour. A massive deployment of manpower would be needed for the purpose. Even such a force would not be certain of catching

senior students in the act of ragging. The doors of rooms can be locked from the inside. By the time you get them open, in most halls it is possible for the ragers to scoot from the back along the balconies. To add to the problem, much of the ragging occurs at night, and as a "patrol" enters a hall, all the lights are switched off. Knowing the "terrain" of their hall better than anyone else, the seniors therefore have scope for evasive action which can nullify the best-intentioned efforts.

But the greatest difficulty is the unwillingness of freshers, except for a few rare cases, to give evidence against the seniors. Even if they are ready to describe the rag or the atrocities committed they refuse to identify those responsible. The *Times of Ceylon* report of the 1st June was correct in stressing this point. The reason is simple. The freshers are frightened. They have to live in the unfamiliar environment of the campus for the next few months and live in fear of subsequent intimidation (which could range from assault to the destruction of their lecture notes to having water, urine and/or faces thrown into their room.) What is more, the freshers are brainwashed into thinking that the giving of evidence against other students is "not done". Thus, in the end, the authorities are left without any means of identifying the culprits and meting out punishment.

INTIMIDATION is not limited to that against the freshers. It is insidious and widespread in its operation. The members of the faculty, the marshals, and the watchers are subject to these pressures of intimidation. Last week, in one of the few instances of ragging within the teaching buildings, a member of the intermediate technical staff and a lecturer who intervened were subject to threats. Staff members who have houses in the vicinity of halls are particularly vulnerable because their families can be subject to abuse (at night and in gangs; no identification possible). Those who have cars are particularly vulnerable and might be subject to the same treatment that Dr. Brian Seneviratne received during his contretemps with the attendants and

minor staff in Kandy Hospital. Anonymous threats are made; or insidious pressures generated, as they were this last week, by branding specific lecturers as this, that or the other.

And until this year, lecturers who intervened were never certain that they will receive the backing of the administrative authorities in Peradeniya and Colombo. A recent instance in which the Vice-Chancellor has actually reduced a relatively light sentence (by Peradeniya Campus Senate) on some students caught copying at the final examination at one stage even left the latter possibility in doubt.

Let me relate an incident from the year 1973 to illustrate this point and to underline the difficulties involved in the prevention of ragging. Year before last, when a few cases of freshers with damaged testicles came to light, a few earnest and right-thinking, but naive dons from the Medical Faculty decided to patrol one of the halls. The lights were knocked off when they came. They were abused in the choicest filth (a tool which the Sinhala language is not lacking in). There was even a scuffle. Eventually, these dons ended up in the then President's bungalow with a batch of senior students from the hall in question and the members of the Students Council in a "session" which went late into the night. The students wanted an apology from the dons. A statement was made by the latter (interpreted by them as a statement and by the students as an apology). Needless to say, the patrolling stopped. Ragging continued. Even the limited authority available to dons was reduced still further.

The public would be foolish to think that such forms of intimidation are restricted to the campus. The students reflect, in outside form perhaps, a general practice in our society. Intimidation is part of our political culture. All the major political parties resort to it whenever they think they can get away with it.

For various reasons which cannot be elaborated here, such practices are held in check in Sri Lanka society at large. Not so on the campus. The last decade has seen

a progressive deterioration in the authority and power of the University administrations. Student power has increased by leaps and bounds as their number increased and as they discovered that the major political parties were wooing their support. Having become a political force, and having links with the highest levels in most of the political parties, they have converted the University campuses into a special *sanctum of privilege* in which the ordinary laws of the land do not apply.

As Dr. Chandra Dharmawardena stressed in a recent article, the campuses have been made into an "area of no law". The campuses have become an imperium in imperium, a *sanctum of privilege* in which the student law is dominant and sometimes even inviolable. During the first few weeks of each academic year, therefore, Peradeniya Campus becomes a wild life sanctuary—a wild life sanctuary in which the predatory instincts of some seniors are let loose and the law of the jungle operates in its most horrendously degradin force.

FOR THIS STATE OF AFFAIRS, of course, those political parties which have substantial support in the campuses must take part of the blame. For many years several party leaders and several political dons have encouraged the students to think that the police should not enter the campuses. For many years, these men have protected some students who were guilty of transgressing the ordinary laws of the land. In brief, they have helped to create a special sanctuary of privilege. The freshers, every year, are among the victims of this creation—this monster; for, in socialist terminology, in any terminology, all privilege of this sort is monstrous.

I CAN ASSURE the public that several dons have felt deeply about the practice of ragging. Their depth of opposition has been matched by the sense of frustration at their helplessness in being able to prevent it. As my subsequent remarks will reveal, this does not absolve any of us from the responsibility for permitting this horrid practice to continue or for remaining silent about its magnitude. On these aspects the dons must share the burden of guilt. Notwithstanding the lack of support from above, our failure

in the past to bring to public attention the actual dimensions of this practice and the depths to which the rags had degenerated was utterly indefensible, for it has permitted a social crime to continue year in year out.

There have been a few lecturers who bravely sought to expose the true state of affairs in the past; till this year, their efforts have not been very effective. These efforts were often nullified by those in authority, e.g. Presidents and wardens of halls, and other lecturers, who have dismissed these reports as exaggerated and swept matters under the carpet. Among the dons, therefore, the greatest blame for the continuation of ragging and the refusal to reveal the true state of affairs must be laid at the door of those individuals who served as Presidents, Directors of Student Welfare, Student Counsellors and wardens of halls during the last three or four years.

The question whether the medical officers of health on the campus, who invariably came to know a great deal about what was going on, ever submitted reports to the higher authorities must also be raised. If distinctions can be drawn in the degree of responsibility in this way, nevertheless, there is a strong argument for the condemnation of almost all the lecturers on the campus for their failure to abide by their moral responsibilities to society—responsibilities which cried out for an expose of the brutalities that were known to be going on within the campus.

One might understand how the "environmental circumstances" prevented all but the most intrepid dons from taking positive preventive action; but one can provide few excuses for the general apathy and faint-heartedness which obscured the true dimensions of this social crime (ragging) from the public eye (till 1975). It is a fact that there was little support (till 1975) from those higher-up. It is true that some persons in authority turned a deaf ear to the entreaties and representations that reached them.

In such circumstances it was the duty of the university lecturers, as articulate members of our society, to circumnavigate these obstacles and mobilise public opinion against the practice of ragging and the obstinate

blindness of those responsible for University administration. The campus is not a social isolate. Its students are drawn from all parts of Lanka. The national interest demanded an exposure of the atrocities committed on the freshers every year. The national press exists for such purposes. Whatever its motives, whatever its occasional inaccuracies, the press is to be commended for its purposeful role in this regard this year (a bouquet which should not obscure the fact that some lecturers were the agents who initiated this process of exposure).

My next instalment will be partly devoted to an elaboration of the contention that ragging is an atrocious practice and a crime against society; but the main purpose of this letter has been that of focussing attention on the need for a well-thought out scheme of remedial measures for the next year. For such a scheme to have any chance of success, however, everyone, irate parents and indignant public alike, have to realise the magnitude of the problem, its highly intractable nature, and the difficulties in which the President of the Campus, the wardens, the lecturers, etcetera are placed in during any effort to eradicate ragging.

Obviously, drastic measures are called for. But however drastic the deterrent measures, they will fall short of the requisite effectiveness unless a substantial number of senior students are made to realise that ragging is oppressive and inhumane in principle and a grave social crime which they themselves must actively fight against.

(To Be Concluded)

NEXT WEEK

A SPECIAL ARTICLE on the political crisis in India which has arisen as a result of the judgement of the Allahabad High Court disqualifying the Indian PM from holding elective office for six years. The vacation judge of the Supreme Court in New Delhi has given her a conditional stay order to continue in office pending the appeal. A veritable MAHABHARATA of verbal, polemical and legal battles have begun between Right and Left with political skirmishes which threaten to tear India apart.

BUILDING A VILLAGE HOUSE—38

Housekeeping In The Vanni—3

By Herbert Keuneman

A SQUARE KANDYAN MEAL—I keep repeating this because I am rather fond of my oxymoron—has five corners. (It was to be the Vanni I had to come to learn this; for the Vanni, not 'opened up' until well into the present century, a hundred years after the fall of the Kandyan Kingdom, preserved many Kandyan traditions and institutions intact while they vanished from the geographical Kandyan regions. Now they are vanishing—many have vanished—from the Vanni too. Even here hardly anybody any longer serves the Kandyan meal in *puris naturalibus*; yet is worth serving, not only as a curiosity or a sentimental revival but as a valid culinary—so to say—schesis.)

Which is all to say: the kind of meal I speak of is not as in the contemporary style just a haphazard association of rice (or whatever) with several curries and other relishes which may be most tasty in themselves yet do not belong together in a logical device. These formalized *escriteaux* surviving from more deliberative epochs do, whether Chinese or Indian or, for that matter, Louis XIV French. The logic may not be faultless, the premises unproven or the conclusions false, and as a consequence the device seemingly arbitrary. But the device is there. Not a menu, as such, but, as I have called it, an *escriteau*. It is like the pictures in those old-fashioned colouring-books for children; the design is already clearly set out and recognizable, but only after the colours are filled in does a real picture emerge.

FOR EXAMPLE, there was the ancient Sinhalese convention—which seems to have been based, unusually enough, primarily on texture—which laid down that an elegant meal should provide elements *khajja-bhojja* (solid, or chewy; and tender) and *leiya-peiya* (sip- or sup-pable; and drinkable.) An ancient Jaffna tradition; or is it a, more general, Tamil tradition? emphasized six basic tastes, the *aru varsi*, which must all be

represented in a well-devised repast; sour and salt, bitter and sweet, hot, and astringent. The Chinese to this day arrange their banquets—it is possible to speak of banquets, only, for the patterns of family meals vary so greatly from region to region—like a boxing tournament: the courses, generally four dishes to a course, run as it were 'light', 'welter', 'middle' and 'heavy'. It is interesting to note that the other great culinary nation, the French, at its XVII Century height, shared this convention of four (or 8 or 16 or 24!) dishes to a course; but also shared a Vanno predilection for the number five, there were five essential courses to a banquet.

Were these formal canons, particularly the mathematical ones, purely arbitrary? or incidental? or did they represent some forgotten augury or even philosophy? One longs to know.

The Kandyan canon certainly seems to embody vestiges, at all events, of cerebation! There is the practical acknowledgement of the fact that sour agents—considerably more than the salt which, far inland, was comparatively rare or costly—were more readily available in the form of long-keeping *anugas* of limes (such as Knox describes) or of *Schleichera oleosa*: *kon* berries. There is probably concession to the mysterious Ayurvedic principle of *sitala* vs. *giniyama* (villagers today deny that a culinary process can convert a *sitala*, or coolness-inducing, substance into a *giniyam* or heat-inducing, one, or vice-versa, yet the same villager will assure you that ice is *giniyam* but water melted from it is *sitala*, and what is that but a culinary process?) And what numerological secret, if any, does the canon's prescription of five accompaniments to rice preserve?

THE FIVE ACCOMPANIMENTS list five types of preparation, of course; not five ingredients. Indeed, the 'canonical' way to make a feast, a banquet, of the bourgeois meal—it is likely that some Vanni dwellers went habitually without one or more of the prescriptive constituents: to this 'progressive' and 'prosperous' day numerous families make do with a *mallun*, a *hodda*, and a more or less exotic relish, a *sombal*, whose name is Indonesian—the way I was saying, to make a feast within

the Kandyan canon is to multiply each constituent; a couple of *ambula*^s and *badumas*, say, and two or even three or four *mallumas*. (A charming custom upon an especially joyous occasion, such as a wedding feast, is to make one of these extras a *terum kama*: a puzzle dish, where the main ingredient is a highly unusual one or better still a familiar one ingeniously disguised).

The five Main Dishes that go to a Kandyan Rice and Curry are:

the *ambula*,
the *baduma*,
the *niyambalava*,
the *malluma*,
the *hodda*.

It is the method of cooking—whether fried or boiled, and to what degree, and with what proportion of what liquid—that chiefly distinguishes these dishes, not the sophisticated combinations and variations of currustuffs and spices that are typical of the curries—largely Indonesian in origin—left Ceylon as a legacy most notably by the Portuguese and Dutch. The Kandyan curry-paste (it is now, and for the worse, usually a curry-powder) has a pretty standard composition:

for three teacupsful of materia prepared and cut up,

Coriander: 4 tsp. powder
'White' Cummin: 1 tsp. powder
'Sweet' Cummin: 2/1 tsp. powder
Turmeric: 2/1 tsp. powder
Fenugreek: 1 tsp. seeds
Chili: *ad lib.* (up to 2 tbsps!)
all measures level.

The AMBULA is the favourite village curry of the lot. With that and a *malluma* to go with his rice no villager would consider himself really ill-fed (it is another thing to be ill-nourished; but 'health' lessons and balanced diets are strictly for school). Prince Sali is the regional hero of the villages around Ehetuwewa and his romance with the *radi* beauty Asokamala their most popular legend, and it is an *ambula* that local belief insists is still simmering on the hearth in a cave in Galgiriya-kanda—if one could only find it—lit by a still shining *pana*: as Asokamala left them in order to face King Gemunu's judgement. Should you wish to try your hand at and your palate on this simple but most tasty dish, here is the recipe (begged of Dinga, like the others below).

THE MATERIAL for an *ambula* should be of an acid nature on its own: such as *kakiri*, or tender tamarind leaves, or tomatoes ripe or green. To it should be added sufficient of one of the acid flavouring agents—*goraka* (gamboge, usually dried) tamarind, lime: lime especially for leaf *ambulas* but not of course for tamarind leaves, which are sour enough to begin with—to suit the flavour of your material and render the finished curry distinctly but not excessively on the sour side. So.....

Into enough not-too-thick coconut milk to cover your material to the depth of about a quarter-inch in, say, a 7" pan add the above mixture of currustuffs (collectively called *sarakku*: note the Tamil provenance of the name) and the acid principle of your choice. Add also: 1 tbs of sliced Red Onions, 1 sprig of 'curry' leaves, and—though this, I suspect, is a late refinement—a generous pinch (use all five fingers) of Maldive Fish. Add the main material. Bring to the boil, then simmer until the material is cooked—a *polos ambula* is often left over coals overnight—and the sauce is beginning to thicken.

The *BADUMA* uses precisely the same subsidiary ingredients as the *ambula*—but minus any acid—and in precisely the same proportions, but uses them differently. *badumas* are usually made of somewhat farinaceous material—*tikak pitiyena jati*, Dinga says, and I suppose this is generally true—but the varieties of brinjal, down to the smallest wild ones, do excellently; and mushrooms make the best *baduma* of all, and they are hardly farinaceous. On the other hand, potatoes certainly are, and they make an excellent *baduma*; and so do beans (but see note* to recipe under) and so are they.

To make a *baduma*, mix the material with all the ingredients saving, only, the Onions, 'Curry' Leaves, and Maldive Fish. Fry these last three in 4—or even more—tbsp. of oil: coconut oil, if you can take the taste. When they are beginning to turn brown in the mixture and stew in the oil, rather than fry it, as for a *ratatouille*, employing a very moderate fire which you increase only towards the end if you wish to colour the material slightly. No other liquid—and no acid—is to be added.

Note *: for a bean *baduma* (alone) it is necessary to add, as the liquid from the material dries out, 2-3 oz. thick coconut milk.

The *NIYAMBALAYA* is a very characteristic and quite delicious, though quite little known, white vegetable curry. Make it of almost any vegetable you are accustomed to turn into a white cury, and use the ingredients to which are accustomed, too; but omit Maldive Fish, omit ginger, omit garlic until the stage I am about to describe, and first cook the vegetable until almost done in plain water. At all but the end add 3-4 heaping tbsp. grated Coconut ground in water with 2-3 large cloves of Garlic and $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. Pepper Corns to a very fine paste. Stir thoroughly over the fire only until once more well warmed through.

DINGA AND ALL HER ILK have rigid rules as to what may and what may not be turned into a *niyambalava* which, I confess, I cannot find the thread of: *talana-batu* may be used; but not *vambatu*. The operative idea seems to be however that anything is permissible that cooks really tender. *kakiri* is typical. Jak seeds, thank goodness, are allowed and taste very well. Lima beans are a village favourite, and I don't like them. I have never dared to scandalize Dinga with the idea; but I was once served—in Jaffna! if you please—a veritable *niyambalava* of sweetly ripe tomatoes. Try it! But the *niyambalava* for my money

(though the village doesn't go for it) is of cashew-nuts. Boil them soft.

MALLUMAs (those cooked salads of—usually—shredded leaves, grated coconut, sliced red onions and green chillis; cooked only to wilting point) and *HODDAs* (more or less thin sauces, of which the *pol hodda* is the type and in some ways the triumph, are today standar one might say, through Sinhalese Ceylon. They need no rehearsal)

I have not specified anywhere that you add salt to taste. You nevertheless add it, of course.

Does it seem as though I must live on the fat of the land? Alas! no. I suffer—and much more markedly—from the village failing of running after exotica. After 66 years of pre-conditioning it takes a great deal to re-condition a palate to the point where it can accept the same curries made with the same *sarakku* day after day (which is how the villager likes it). I, truth to tell, long for a change from Rice and Curry even of the rarest creation: wouldn't even Albert Schweitzer have tired after three years, of no music but Bach? and for this I need meat or fish and occasional indulgences of *ingirisi elavalu*.

The villager does get meat and fish at reasonable intervals (for a few village guns do exist; and a few local Muslims are professional fisherman) but these prizes are offered to the village—and snapped up—which is as it should be.

Review:

GENERAL INTELLIGENCE EXERCISES AND TESTS

by S. Thilaganathan, published by *Virakesari*, Colombo, Price 6.50.

Next week the Navodhaya Scholarship Examination for grade 5 students will be held and a good number of them will sit for this from all over the island. With a view to help the Tamil medium students, the author has written a very useful book filled with Intelligence tests and exercises. The book consists of two parts. The first part comprises twelve kinds of tests. They are based on abilities in Number, Language, Vocabulary, Reasoning, Logic, Mathematics and Visuals. The second part has five model tests. The main purpose of this book appears to be, is to help the students preparing for this examination and also others to gauge their I.Q. Besides the model test papers, the book also gives answers questions set, plus footnotes explaining certain complications. Written and designed in simple language this book will be of great assistance to students familiarising examination techniques. As pointed out by Dr. S. Muthulingam of the University of Sri Lanka, the author has made good use of his experience gained in learning books on the subject. Evidently a lot of labour has gone on this.

K. S. Sivakumaran.

because the villager was here first. But it means I must rely on weekly supplies of dog-meat from Galgamuwa or on frozen from Colombo when somebody's car comes my way; and for this I need, and main tain, a frig. Kerosene-operated, naturally.

We used to be told (when I was building a house—now long sold—in Colombo, in 1957) that we should reckon on spending no more than 10% of our incomes to repay our rent-purchase Government loan.

With the Government black-market price of oil it now costs me 10% of my income to keep my frig going!

K A Z I — 12

On Pawned Tools & Difficult Labour

By ANATORY BUKOBA

April 19,

My farmer-friend's patron was away nearly a fortnight, and he arrived one night to find the the lad saying he was ill. There are two houses on this land. A family occupies the first, and the family seemed to the visitor to be in good spirits that night. There was a light on in the second house, and the family said they had sent food over to that house, and that there was a visitor over there now. He was a young man from a boutique. My friend's sickness turned out to be one of the spirit rather than aught else. He had literally hit the bottom of his fortunes. He had no reserves left. His patron felt that he had come back not a day too soon; but, I am anticipating events, for this only became apparent as he gradually unfolded his story. At no time was it completely coherent.

First, although the hour was nearly 9 p.m., my friend's patron went out shopping. He bought two loaves of bread, a packet of tea, ten tiny pieces of jaggery for a rupee, and some disprin. It all came to ten cents short of Rs. 5/-. There was literally no food in the house, except what was left of a little water in two Kallageddis. My friend's explanation of this the next morning was that

he had been feeling too ill to go and fill them. He said that he had long since given up tea; this he had said the previous night, before his patron had gone out shopping. On his return, the visitor had gone. After they had brewed some tea and partaken of some of the bread with the family, more of the story unfolded itself. My friend did not come straight to what I am going to say next, but he touched on other matters, to do with the neighbours as regards the farm. Then he went on to say and I quote him, or rather his words, that he had done something really stupid, that he had pawned all the tools; and a quick sweep round with the torch revealed that he had indeed done this, even to the kitchen knife. He had no knife even to help him cook. He had even given up cooking.

Fortunately all the tools belonged to my friends. His patron, having no more money to support my friend as had been his wont, had given him ownership of everything, except a few articles of sentimental value, trifles all but one. This was to let my friend go off with a good conscience, should he have to do so. He had pawned everything but he had not gone yet. He was still there. His patron came to a decision that night; it had hardened by morning, and then he changed it in one respect. As the night spent itself, and dawn came, my friend asked his patron, told him, tell me what you wish me to do, and I shall do it.

The night had already revealed that things had grown on the farm even in a fortnight. Maize, which had been barely visible before, was now a good height. Capsicum had been planted out from the bed the seed had been sown in and it had been planted extensively and profusely and was doing well. The manioc had grown, and the pumpkin was doing well. Tomato plants were growing. The other chilli plants were large, and the coupea. There were probably more vegetables growing than at any other time, vegetables that would contribute in a short time to the support of the people there.

The patron had very little money, a mere Rs. 50/- to the end of the month. He decided he would give my friend Rs. 10/- of this. He

had a spare mammoty, and also an axe that had never been used on the farm tucked away somewhere. He had decided that my friend would need the mammoty. He now included the axe, after his morning's meditation. It would at least serve as a kitchen knife, and he said as much when he laid it down. All the tools had been pawned, my friend said for a mere Rs. 20/-. To retrieve them, he would have to pay Rs. 30/-. There was a time limit, he said, to getting the mammoty back. On reflection, I think there was only a day more to run. In answer to my friend's statement that he would do whatever his friend and patron required of him, he was told to try and hold on for a fortnight if he could; the end of the month would see a replenishment of his friend's reserves, and then life would be easier, but patron would still have to be tight about money. If he could not hold out well; it would be just too bad.

April 22,

Six months at a farm school and six months of supervising other men's work, would seem the worst sort of preparation for a young man aspiring to be of some practical value on a dairy farm in a coconut estate; for, nowadays, superintendents do what conductors would not have done ten years ago, and that is, involve themselves in some of the manual labour that their labourer do. Notebooks, crammed with what a man has taken down at a class, seem out of place when there is some labour to be done—pottering around from one field of endeavour to another. What is called practical work at an agricultural college, does not go down well, when there is a job to be done, and done quickly. The yokel is more of a handyman when confronted with a situation that requires guts, than is the tutored one, who did not learn the hard way, working for a living. Often a man has to unlearn much that he learnt if he wants to be a success. All this was borne in on me when a man tried to put his talents as a stockman to the test. I hope he comes out of it well, but time alone will tell.

Men know instinctively when their betters are up to the task or not. The wise man lets the expert do the job, and you do not need qualifications for that. All

this is a part of man management, which you either have a gift for, or you have not. No estate owner can pick his own nuts. Very few can hitch a bullock to a cart. Not every carter can train a bull. We all have various gifts, acquired or inherited. It is the mutual combination of these, the getting together of these various men that makes life. It is the old tale of: no man is an island. I am tending to be very philosophical in today's Kazi. Perhaps it is that I have nothing much else to say. I have started out, as it were with a blank sheet, no preconceived thoughts, or ideas on what to write. When one gets enmeshed in facts, one sometimes cannot see the wood for the trees. They say that to acquire wisdom, you need leisure. One thing I am sure of, is that wisdom is not acquired through the written word alone. All nature is a book, if you only know how to read it.

The estate had had more than its share of deaths among the animals. the tree-planting programme, started on, and completed so far as the planting went, had gone adrift, most of the work undone. Some more effort was called for. The answer seemed to be additions to the staff. Now, it is not easy to summon estate labour these days, and yet, among the educated youth, there are some clamouring for jobs on estates. They want conductor-Kangany jobs. The agriculturally-trained youth are prepared to lend a hand on some menial tasks, but unless a man has been broken to these tasks from his tender years, he can rarely shoulder the full responsibility, unless he has the gift; he needs to lean on men who have done these tasks all their lives, as the proud elephant owner needs the keeper or mahout.

Short as some estates are of labour these days, this estate has had to do the best it could. We can only hope that the enthusiasm of the aspirant makes up for their apparent drawbacks or differences, and that their fortitude matches their enthusiasm. Estate life seems to be coming more lively. Perhaps it was so in what are now termed the good old days. Perhaps in those days people mixed more freely precisely because all thought they knew their place and kept it. Then, perhaps, in the minds of men, these divisions become blur-

red, and so men, or classes, became more insular, a kind of protective mechanism. Now the artificial barriers are coming down again, because men are more conscious that there will always be these divisions, no matter who are the masters.

This is a great stride forward. Old corrugated iron enmeshed in

grass and a danger to cattle; fences overgrown and heavy with creepers; barbed-wire lying for ages where it fell; it may be that all these require eyes that can see them, for some eyes that see are blind, and some see better by torchlight than by daylight. It may be that it is only the unfamiliar that men notice; and it is time a halt was called to these musings.

THE CEYLON RAILWAY

Station Master's Union —early history—

By K. Ramachandra

This article was written for the Golden Jubilee Celebrations of the Ceylon Railways Station Masters Union held in 1973. We reprint it because it throws revealing light on one aspect of the contemporary history of the island, viz. the early efforts to organise trade unions in a government public utility undertaking. The writer, K. Ramachandra, was the Office Assistant to the General Manager of Railways and after his retirement was the Editor of the *Religious Digest* for 16 years from 1955 to 1972.—Ed.

IT IS A GREAT JOY AND HONOUR for me to be invited to give a message on the occasion of the Golden Jubilee Celebrations of your Association founded in 1923. I must confess, at the very outset, that my joy is mingled with a feeling of pain on hearing the fact that the original Association has been split into three Unions. It is a great pity. Possibly, this splitting is due to political influence and patronage,—the very thing the organisers vehemently opposed from the start. If certain members of your Union lean towards a particular party, it is only natural that some other members would extend their sympathy and support to other political parties. This has been the bane of trade Union movements in certain Asian countries. As public servants, you are expected to loyally and faithfully serve the interests of the country as a whole, and help in efficient and honest administration, and not help to advance the interests of a particular party. In a democratic set-up, parties and politicians come and go, but the administration of the country remains permanent.

The idea of unity is not a mere precept, but actually a concept in life. We rise when we express that concept in practice and we fall when we do not. This is a fact proved historically. You should also remember that this concept interrelated to our culture and religious traditions. It is my fervent hope and prayer that the three Unions will soon join together for the common good of the service. I am aware that some of you have suffered, and are still suffering as a result of this disunion. You have given me the title of this message in a question form, "as to how, why and under what circumstances the Association was formed?". To make my answer to this question understandable by the junior members it is essential for me to go into some his-

torical details which will naturally lengthen this message.

Though the Association was registered and recognised in 1923, its real foundation was laid seven years earlier. The movement for the improvement of the pay and prospects of the services and for the amelioration of the conditions of work commenced in 1916. We started the practice of sending memorials to the Government signed by hundreds. The first such memorial was in 1916 addressed to Sir Reginald Stubbs, who was Colonial Secretary, acting as Governor, pending the arrival of Sir John Anderson in April 1916. The procedure of getting signatures for this memorial was irksome and troublesome. One officer had to travel all over the line to collect signatures. To our dismay we found that this particular

officer was penalised and transferred from Colombo to Anuradhapura at 24 hours notice. That officer was not due for malarial service till three years later. A long telegram addressed to the new Governor, Sir John Anderson, put a stop to such a cruel and autocratic action for the time being, but the whole service felt this humiliation and injustice, and decided to send another longer memorial to the Governor demanding a Railway Commission to inquire into the conditions of work, mode of transfers and promotions and the system of penalties for the smallest error or neglect. This involved considerable consultations with the staff spread all over the country for collection of facts and figures. The opening of the Talaimannar line and running of night mails had made the rigours of night duty and malarial service almost unendurable.

THE SECOND MEMORIAL was of 16 foolscap size pages (11 points printed matter)—first part of 8 pages dealt with the hard conditions of living in jungle areas, in certain stations even without water for bathing purposes (only drinking water being supplied in barrels from Chunnakam or Colombo),—second part dealt with the system of debits, fines and stoppage of increments etc.

The first part ended and the second part commenced with the following significant paragraph from the able pen of Mr. Armand de Souza, then Editor of the *Morning Leader* and the inspirer of Independent journalism in Ceylon:—

"Deterioration of efficiency inevitable in these circumstances has met with a rigorous system of penalties as though human intelligence could be sharpened by and human endurance could be stimulated by the application of the lash."

It is unfortunate that a copy of the whole memorial which was carefully filed and preserved in the Association office is not available now for you all to read. As usual in such movements, there were traitors to the cause who took a particular delight in destroying documents to gain their own ends. The second memorial in 1917 witnessed the advent of many such treacherous acts and even some of those who signed the memorial, subsequently withdrew

their signatures through fear of being punished by the Dept. However, the memorial reached its destination as planned, and received sympathetic hearing from the Govt. In order to achieve the main aim of getting a Commission appointed, we had to seek the aid of organisations like the National Association of Ceylon and the news papers in general. The then President, the late Mr. H. A. P. Saundrasekera, of the National Association, read the memorial with sympathy and promised his wholehearted support, gave notice in the papers of his intentions to move a motion demanding the re-call of Mr. G. P. Greene as General Manager of the Railways. On reading the above notice, the Railway employees crowded the hall where the National Association was to have its meeting, but to their dismay and utter disappointment they discovered that the President was influenced by a member (the late Mr. K. Balasingham, to whom we gave an advance copy in good faith and trust in the presence of H.A.P.S.) of the "Legislative Council" at the instance of the General Manager and his friends, to withdraw that motion at the last moment.

However we had the whole hearted support from the Ceylon *Morning Leader*, whose renowned Editor had almost become a Patron Saint of the movement as an Ex-Railway Officer. The *Ceylon Independent* also lent its occasional support, particularly when Mr. Staples was its Editor and Mr. Weiman, a retired Station Master, was its regular contributor. We had frequent and intimate contact with the *Morning Leader* and when any officers were harassed by the Railway Management for active participation in the movement, its news columns exposed such tactics. Such exposures did plenty of propaganda for the appointment of a Commission of Inquiry.

AS A RESULT of this persistent agitation, Mr. R. R. P. Glover, an official of the British Railways, was got down as the Railway expert. Within a couple of days of his preliminary investigation, he found the task entrusted to him too heavy for a single individual. On his representation and in response to our original demand, a Railway Commission was appointed with Mr. M. J. Cary as Chairman and Mr. B. Belleth as Secre-

tary. Sir H. L. de Mel was one of its members. He had already been acquainted with the hardships of the Railway employees. Naturally, his sympathy and support contributed considerably towards the favourable conclusions of the Commission, so far as the amelioration of the service was concerned. They benefitted all ranks of the Railway Dept.

In this connection, I must mention that the *Lake House Press* extended no help of any kind. Its proprietor was more concerned with Kingmaking in Ceylon and was not interested in workers' welfare. His heroes were Beaverbrook and Northcliffe, the Press magnates of England. He was trying to be a pocket Edition for those two Lords, and was like them, interested in building up a monopoly in Journalism, which is the greatest menace any country can face. In fact the *Lake House Press* was at that time extremely busy in crushing Mr. A. E. Goonesinghe's Labour Movement, through fear that his activities might slowly creep into its own Establishment. At this time Mr. Armand de Souza's constant and fatherly advice to us was that under no circumstances should we seek the aid or patronage of Mr. Goonesinghe or any other active and professional politician. His frank and candid opinion was that as intelligent and educated men we should be able to manage our own affairs. He had seen from the draft memorials (1917 one) given to him for due corrections in a collected form that we had the needed talents.

We had for many years strictly adhered to the above valuable advice given by our well wisher, but circumstances forced us to make the following three significant exceptions to that rule:—

(1) In 1923 we had to approach Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan for the favour of putting a word to Sir Wilfred W. Woods, Chairman of the Salaries Conversion Committee, so that he may study our case personally and do justice. Sir Ponnambalam had the patience and kindness to read our memorandum in our presence. After pursuing the annexures which showed the anomalies on comparative basis, he was amazed that the Salary Commissioners had done such grave injustice. Turning to me he asked: "Is it not likely that incorrect

data had been supplied to them relating to the Slater and Stephenson Salary Scheme of 1912?" I replied that we had not so far suspected it, and could make all possible efforts to verify it. Thereupon he said "To the best of my memory, a Sub-Committee of the Legislative Council made some amendments to the proposals of Slater and Stephenson. I was not a member of the Committee, Sir Ambalavanar Kanagasabay was a member, you can verify from him." Thereafter Sir Ponnambalam summoned his typist and dictated a letter to Sir Wilfred W. Woods in a semi-official form. This was to be sent as a sort of a covering letter with our memorandum. In his letter Sir Ponnambalam requested the latter to make a close study of the schedules annexed to the memorandum.

The above letter and our documents were duly forwarded by registered post, and for six weeks we patiently waited for at least an acknowledgement; no such letter was forthcoming. Our enquiries revealed that even the courtesy of an acknowledgement was not extended to Sir Ponnambalam, and the Chairman of the Conversion Committee had merely made an autocratic order "No action, file" On hearing this information we were greatly pained that we had placed the greatest leader of Ceylon in such a humiliating position and we vowed to carry our fight to the Secretary of State for the Colonies at any cost.

WE FEEL IT NECESSARY to give here a few details of the career of Mr. Wilfred. Woods, so that the readers may understand why he was so autocratic. He was not a member of the Ceylon Civil Service, nor had he been qualified in Accountancy. Having served as a Clerk in the Colonial Office, he found a big job in Gold Coast and North Nigeria. After some years of autocratic rule, he arrived in Ceylon in 1908 with a severe dose of African Colonial fever, and found a cosy and comfortable post as an Assistant Auditor. As he kept on rising in the official ladder step by step, his arrogance also kept on increasing. This accounts for his insult to Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan and his total dislike to Trade Union activities in Ceylon. Possibly, Sir Ponnambalam's condemnation of the conduct of

Britishers in Ceylon during the 1915 riots also influenced his very unfair treatment of Ceylonese.

Accordingly, we prepared a new memorandum annexing all the original schedules. In the meantime as advised by Sir Ponnambalam we contacted Sir Ambalavanar Kanagasabay who was kind enough to hand to us the Sessional Paper in which the Legislative Sub-Committee had made certain improvements in the top salaries of the 1st and Special Classes of the Railway Station Masters. This was a trump card to make a definite charge against the Treasury officials for supplying incorrect and incomplete data to Wood Renton and Fernando Commission. We made capital out of the above serious commission in our memorandum to the Secretary of State, which was in due course submitted to the Colonial Secretary to be forwarded to London as addressed.

(2) Secondly we had to seek the assistance of Sir Gerrard Wijeyekoon M.P. for Central Province in the old Legislative Council. On hearing that the memorandum to the Secretary of State was referred to the Treasury and unduly held up there, we approached Sir Gerrard who was about to leave for England on a holiday and inquired whether he would be pleased to do something on our behalf at London. He immediately asked for 10 copies of the memorandum so that he may call on the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies and hand them over to him for suitable action. He also promised to inform him of the grave injustice done to a large section of the Public Service. After waiting for further four weeks for the arrival of the original documents, the Colonial office called for the original documents. After due consideration it ordered, as a measure of temporary relief to give 1st. Class promotion to all officers who had reached the scale of Rs. 2440/- which was three increments below the maximum of second Class (Rs. 2,800/-) fixed under the 1923 scheme.

(3) Thirdly, we come to the public reception given by our Association to Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike in January 1926. Under Colonial administration, the Public Servants were prohibited from communicating to the Press or attending any political meetings.

On reading in the News Papers the Agenda of the National Congress which was holding its Annual Sessions at Kandy during the X'mas week of 1925, we discovered that Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike who had just returned from England was to second the resolution requesting Dominion Status for Ceylon and freedom from Colonial rule. We braved to attend the Sessions and specially to hear the new leader for the first time. Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike got up and posed the question as to what was meant by Dominion Status and to whom and answered it himself by emphasising that the Dominion Status in a Democratic set-up implied full representation of people of all races, professing different faiths and all social groups such as professionals, workers in industries and the peasants employed in Agriculture,—all those who claimed Ceylon as their motherland. After this preliminary remark he seconded the motion as scheduled. We were not only thrilled by his eloquence but also inspired by the thoughts and ideas he expressed. On reaching home we contacted some important members of the up-country branch of the Association and decided to invite Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike to Nawalapitiya, where the meeting was held at the new Railway Institute. Mr. W. L. Bartholomew, a senior member of the Association and then acting Asst. Transportation Supdt. occupied the chair and made a brief speech welcoming the lecturer.

THE MODERN AGE has been described by different people in different ways. Having been, during his University career in London, a witness to the gradual evolution of democratic socialism in Great Britain, Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike characterised the modern age as an age of Man—the common man struggling for equitable treatment and justice, in pay and prospects educational, medical facilities and improved housing conditions etc. etc. Blessed with a farsighted vision, he was able to interpret correctly "the signs of the time". At the outset, he remarked that he was particularly delighted to receive his first public reception in Ceylon from the Railway workers. He said that he had returned to Ceylon after seeing ex-Engine Drivers of the Railway and such

other workers serving on the Cabinet of the British Govt. under the Labour Party presided over by Mr. Ramsay Macdonald as Prime Minister. We had the correspondents of the different news papers in Colombo at the meeting and even furnished them with verbatim report of the meeting as recorded by our own stenographer. All of them did send their reports to their respective papers. *Morning Leader* and the *Ceylon Independent* published fully the proceedings—the three speeches (i.e.) by the Chairman, Chief Guest and myself, proposing the vote of thanks as Secretary of the meeting. Lake House did not show much enthusiasm, and briefly made a news report. For saving space I have made the reference to the third exception to our cherished principles as briefly as possible. Cuttings from all news papers relating to this meeting were systematically filed and safely kept with the other documents of the Association. I am sorry to learn that all these files are not available today. Any of you who is keenly interested in the matter can go through the old records of those news papers. I must here add a personal note. The contact I made at the Nawalapitiya reception with Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike lasted from 1926 to 1956 with mutual respect and occasional exchange of letters.

In conclusion I must say that at my advanced age of nearly 80. I am delighted to see his principles and policies being respectfully honoured and followed by his successors in office. He was an original thinker who advocated the political evolution to the spirit of our ancient culture and religious traditions and not a follower or imitator of any foreign ideology or system of Govt. It is gratifying to note that this fact was made clear by our lady Prime Minister in her eloquent address to the United Front Rally held at Minneriya on 17.8.74.

Before concluding, I must refer to another very important achievement of your Association. When the Pereira Commission Salaries Report threatened to perpetrate a grave injustice to the whole Public Service, it was your Association and its founder who took the initiative to organise a mass

protest from all branches of the Ceylon Public Service and from all parts of the country. Thousands assembled at the Secretariat travelling long distances. The meeting was presided over by Atapattu Mudaliyar Walter Samarasinghe who proposed my name to function as the Secretary to explain to the vast gathering the objects of the meeting and to record its proceedings to be forwarded to the Governor. Never before was such a representative meeting held in Ceylon and never again is one likely. I still recall with great pride the part played by me in that connection.

I repeat my prayer, already mentioned, that all the three Unions would join together and work in harmony for the common good of the whole service. Such a harmonised organisation is also sure to contribute towards a better and more efficient Railway service to the travelling public. I thank you, in conclusion, for giving me this opportunity to answer your question as to why, how and under what circumstances the Railway Station Masters' and Clerks' Association was inaugurated, and I feel confident that I have answered your question to your full satisfaction, basing it entirely on my memory with no old records or documents to guide me.

TOPRINA

British Protein Technology

London.

The award-winning technology developed by British Petroleum (BP) for producing proteins on a commercial scale from oil is beginning to make a significant contribution to world food problems. The latest advance in the international adoption of BP protein technology is the plan to establish an integrated plant in Saudi Arabia to produce 100,000 tons a year of protein as a joint venture with Saudi's state-petroleum and mineral organisation.

If, as expected, the BP-Saudi study group complete their work in six months, the plant could be

in production by 1978, making Saudi Arabia the second major oil state to opt for BP protein technology, the first outside the US to receive the Kirkpatrick Chemical Engineering award for advances in commercial applications of biochemical engineering. Venezuela is constructing a plant to produce 100,000 tons of protein a year, while a similar plant run jointly with Italy is expected to come "on stream" this year. BP has itself been operating two development plants—one producing 4,000 tons of protein a year at Grangemouth, Scotland, and another for 20,000 tons at Lavera, France.

The BP product of high protein yeast from hydrocarbons to complement animal foodstuffs has satisfied the tough regulations governing the safety and nutritional value of the agricultural departments of all Western European countries and South Africa. BP says that their technology satisfactorily answers the three key questions in the biochemical production of new food sources—safety, nutrition and environment. Because the production of high protein yeast from hydrocarbons on a commercial scale was novel, BP scientists worked with two Dutch research institutions to devise what they claim to be the most stringent tests ever applied to a new foodstuff for animals.

The eight-year test programme proved that the BP proteins had no cancer-producing effects on animals and no side-effects on the fertility of male animals, nor caused any deformities in stock bred from animals fed on the "oil" proteins.

The programme has also established the nutritional value of the BP product—marked under the trade name of *Toprina*—can be used as a replacement for natural protein with no loss in animal performance. Poultry produced as many eggs, conversion of food into flesh by broiler birds and pigs was unimpaired and size of pig litters remained unchanged. BP say the test programme, which has been advocated as a model for new foodstuffs produced by technology by both the UN's Food and Agricultural Organisation and the World Health Organisation, shows that *Toprina* compares favourably with the protein standards of fish and soya bean meals, regarded as the best natural sources of protein.

Toprina can be used in fish farming where protein content in foodstuffs has to be high and accurately controlled. Though the heat released by a 100,000-ton BP protein plant is equivalent to that of a 150-megawatt power station, BP say that their technology allows for cooling and recycling of a large proportion of the water so that the plants comply with the strictest environmental control laws. BP say "On present estimates, proteins from traditional agricultural methods will become increasingly in short supply, possibly by some 20 million tons by the year 2000. We believe that our technology in producing a high protein yeast from hydrocarbons on a commercial scale offers a major new animal feed source, which will help to relieve the pressure on the traditional food crop sources of protein and allow the crops to be used to feed people rather than animals."

Cabin-Lift For Himalaya Hindu Pilgrims

London,

Professional market research has obtained a cabin-lift for Hindu pilgrims and tourists to the Mansa Devi temple at Haridwar, Uttar Pradesh, northern India. On the advice of India's Market Research Corporation, the Haridwar local authority has ordered a cabin-lift from the associate Calcutta company of British Ropeway Engineering, Sevenoaks, near London, capable of transporting 800 pilgrims and tourists an hour to the temple. The cabin-lift will enable pilgrims to make the journey in comfort for Rs. 2.00 in 14 minutes compared with an arduous journey on foot taking an hour. It has 38 cabins travelling up the mountain-side at 145 yards a minute.

The market research association say that the cabin-lift can be operated profitably and will increase the number of pilgrims and tourists visiting the Mansa Devi temple, which is on the pilgrim route to many important Hindu shrines in the foothills of the Himalayas. British Ropeways, which has several ropeway cabin-lifts operating in quarries and coalfields in India,

has recently developed a twin-rope system to enable passenger-carrying cabin-lifts to operate safely in strong winds. The company expects the cabin-lift to the Mansa Devi temple to be in operation this summer.

BAZAAR TALK

• Postal • Tourist

IS IT NOT TRUE that the main reason why so much public attention has recently been focussed on the affairs of the Postal Department is because of the deplorably poor service the ordinary people obtain—in spite of the bumped-up and boosted charges that are now levied (under the new dispensation)? That whilst rates and charges have been pushed up three and four times, the service is a hundred times worse? That many subscribers in Colombo find that whilst they pay rent in (advance) for the telephones for 365 days a year, the phones are out of order for over 100 to 150 days in the year? That the rent charged is really for a one-third non-service? That in addition to this, the line connections are so bad that it is often disturbed by a continuous jarring sound that makes conversation impossible? That when the jarring sounds are not there, the lines are so faint that the telephone service is of little use in the matter of communication? That a similar list of grievances can be made in regard to any aspect of the postal setup? That letters are delayed? That they are often lost? (One can discover a lost letter only months later when the two correspondents meet?) That there is a great reluctance to entrust cheques to the post? That *Tribune* has pointed out, in the course of the current *furor* in the Postal empire, that the Minister had a Herculean task in cleaning up the Augean stables in the place? That it is to be hoped that he will be soon able to resume the fight he is waging against inefficiency and corruption in the Postal set-up? That the Minister will soon be well and out of hospital (where he was warded this week for a medical check up)? That *Tribune* wishes him a speedy recovery so that he could soon be out

on the battlefield to provide this country with a better postal and telecommunications service?

IS IT NOT SIGNIFICANT that Japan and the Japanese have now come on to the tourist map of Sri Lanka in a big way? That press reports indicate that the 1000th Jap tourist for the month has already come to the island? That the incoming Jap tourist traffic is handled entirely by the public sector organisations? That this is a feather in the cap of the public sector tourist organisations? That though no statistics are yet available there is no doubt that even many of the package-organised Jap tourists are big spenders? That they seem to be buying up local handicrafts and other local products with relish? That the Japanese now have so much affluence that they have earned the reputation throughout the world of being the foremost purchasers of valuable curios, art works and the like? That even in Sri Lanka, Japanese visitors have acquired a reputation for paying fancy prices for antiques and the like? That there the story is going the rounds that a Japanese had outbid an American for a early eighteenth Swiss musical box (which had been in the possession of a Ceylon family as a heirloom)? That the Japanese had paid Rs. 20,000 for it when the American had found it hard to bid more than Rs. 5000 or so? That the Japanese are among the largest buyers of our gems? That they also buy as many of the antiques in this country as they are able to purchase? That in addition to tourists, there is a small invasion of Japanese priests? That the latter are anxious to bring about greater religio-cultural contact between the two countries?

FOR NEWS

BEHIND THE NEWS

read

TRIBUNE

regularly

TRIBUNE, June 28, 1975

Confidentially

Passion Fruit Cordial Fiasco

IS IT NOT TRUE that there is a great big story behind the excess of passion fruit juice cordial stocks which are now deteriorating in the stores and godowns of the Marketing Department? That readers will remember that the Ministry of Trade had made an announcement that the price of a bottle of passion fruit cordial was being drastically reduced from Rs. 8 odd to Rs. 5 odd? That comparable brands of passion fruit cordial made by other producers like the Elephant House, Kist and several others were still priced in the Rs. 8 to Rs. 9 range? That with the price of sugar in Ceylon at present (from stocks bought when world prices were at peak) at Rs. 7.50 a lb, it was impossible for any producer of passion fruit juice cordial to sell a bottle at less than Rs. 8.00? That unless the Marketing Department (MD) was costing its cordial on old prices or future prices—of sugar—it was impossible to sell a bottle at the price the MD wants to dispose of its excess stocks? That, it will be remembered, that as an act of grace the Ministry also relaxed the rule about the ceiling of 150 guests at any reception provided only MD passion fruit cordial was served as the sole liquid refreshment? That everybody had wondered how the MD had acquired such huge stocks that it had to resort to dumping of this kind to sell its stocks? That it was unimaginable that MD production of this cordial would have been increased (or even maintained at its old level) knowing that there would be consumer resistance because of the price hike as a result of the five to ten fold increase in the world price of sugar? That as no information was forthcoming as to why there was such an excess of stocks and as press reports began to appear that the existing stocks had begun to deteriorate and go bad, a *Tribune* investigator was put on the job of finding out just how and why it had happened? That the investigations have brought to light some facts which reveal

a sordid story of inefficiency, carelessness, and mismanagement? That officials were tight-lipped and uncommunicative? That they tried to say that it was all due to consumer resistance which had stemmed from the increased price of this kind of product? That these answers were unsatisfactory? That furthermore no information was forthcoming about the quantities manufactured in the last five years nor even about the quantity produced last year and during the current year? That no information was available either about the average sales during the five years or about the drop in the sales registered after the sugar price hike? That it would appear that all such information was regarded as confidential and highly classified? That hints were dropped that rival producers should not have access to these statistics? That these explanations were even more unsatisfactory than the tight-lipped secrecy which enveloped the basic raw information required? That in these circumstances there was no alternative for the investigator but to piece a story together from the circumstantial information available and also information gathered unofficially from sources which were anxious that their identities should not be revealed? That *Tribune* has every reason to believe that the facts disclosed are true? That if the Ministry or the Marketing Department think that we had been led up the garden path to set out herein inaccurate information, *Tribune* will be happy to print disclaimers as long as information sought above is also revealed?

IS IT NOT A FACT that these excess stocks had arisen because of a vast order for passion fruit (no doubt under the miasma that foreign exchange would be earned) that was executed for a rich and affluent foreign country? That the order was in astronomical terms in so far as quantities were concerned and that the prices too were fantastically attractive? That the MD had therefore stepped up production of bottled passion fruit juice cordial? That producers were called upon to increase production of passion fruits by millions? That everything went on swimmingly until the shipments were due to be sent? That at that time the buyer refused to take delivery

because the passion fruit juice cordial was not what he had wanted? That the order was for passion fruit suitably deep frozen for transport to the foreign country? That some bright spark (or sparks) in the Marketing Department had thought that it would be easy to put one over the ignorant foreign buyer by supplying the cordial instead of the fruit? That the truth is that the MD does not have the facilities or equipment for deep freezing the passion fruit? That instead of making sure that the buyer would agree to the switch, the MD had proceeded to make tons of passion fruit cordial and had bottled them? That when the buyer refused to take delivery, the MD was left with an unmanageably large stock of passion fruit juice cordial? That the blue-eyed boy who was responsible for this mistake (which in any other country or setup would have earned him a standing sack together with the forfeiture of provident funds and other financial reserves he might had in order to make up the loss) is likely to be given a promotion for his efforts to earn foreign exchange through the export of non-traditional goods? That, if this story is true, the Ministry should tell the public the real extent of the loss to the State? That if the story were untrue, the public should be told as to how the excess of passion fruit cordial stock had accumulated? That now the bottles of passion fruit cordial in the MD stores and godowns have begun to turn colour indicating they were going bad? That even to destroy the stocks, whilst saving the bottles, will also cost a fortune in labour charges? That some explanation is called for the Ministry and the MD as to how this passion fruit juice cordial fiasco occurred?

NEXT WEEK

GROUNDWATER, EXPLORATION AND EXPLOITATION

— by A. Denis N. Fernando

ON VARSITY RAGGING (2)

— by Dr. Michael Roberts

THE MIRACLE OF MADHU

— by R. C. Thavarajah

THE SRI LANKA RUPEE

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