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Tribune

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Letter From The Editor

THE GOVERNMENT'S DECISION to remove the ban, imposed by Emergency Regulation on February 18, 1974, on the sale and transport of paddy and rice, effective as from October 8, 1975, is one of the most welcome measures adopted by the Government after the exit of the LSSP. At the time this ban was placed, under a Presidential fiat, *Tribune* was one of the few papers which had strongly condemned it on the ground that it will inhibit productive effort and create more (and worse) evils and malpractices than what the Regulations were expected to eliminate. The Regulations were introduced at a time when it was found that farmers and other producers (including middlemen who had bought stocks of paddy and rice) were reluctant to sell to the PMB. The Government had, very unwisely, made the PMB the sole purchaser and distributor of paddy, although the PMB was not equipped to handle the entire paddy trade as a sole monopoly. Apart from everything else, the PMB did not have the liquid cash resources, even with the support from the two State Banks, to finance the purchase of the entire paddy produced in the country. Furthermore, the PMB was not organisationally and administratively equipped to cope with the problems of buying, milling and distributing all the paddy produced in Sri Lanka particularly because the intake points and retail outlets through the multi-purpose co-operative unions were inadequate and also corrupt. *Tribune* had persisted ever since in its criticism of the ban on the transport and sale of paddy (and rice) because we knew that it would not only have a dangerously depressing effect on the production of paddy but that it would also lead to malpractices of a serious kind. Time and experience have shown that our fears were more than justified. But at that time, the LSSP-run Nation and others similarly motivated within the UF Government had been nastily critical of *Tribune* accusing us of supporting the mudalalis and middlemen in the paddy and rice trade. Our position was that until the PMB was able to handle the entire paddy trade of Sri Lanka and the country was ready for a nationalised PMB as a sole monopoly, it was better to utilise the mudalalis in the paddy trade—and that these were not half as dangerous as the gem mudalalis, CRA mudalalis and the like whom the LSSP favoured and who had begun to create serious problems for the country. Unfortunately, all that we said, and all that many realists said in the National State Assembly and outside did not have any effect on the Government. The farming community thereafter grew less and less paddy, and switched to other crops they were able to sell on the open market. In the meantime, the officials—kachcheri clerks in charge of issuing permits, the paddy-barrier gate-keepers, the police (and even the army) checking on transport and a whole lot of other minor and major bureaucrats—made hay (and money). The mudalalis and the middlemen, who knew their way around, did not have much difficulty in flourishing as of old, only adding the big bribes they doled out as an additional premium on the selling price of the paddy and rice. It was the lowly farmer and the peasant, however, who really suffered by this ban on the transport and the sale of paddy. He could not operate on the open market (freely) and was more than ever dependent on middlemen who increased exploitation in a way never known before in the days of the free market. Furthermore, shortsightedly stupid way in which Land Reform was carried out coupled with this ban on the transport and sale of paddy and rice made the decline in paddy production inevitable—and the weather (and the drought) only made matters worse. For a long time now we have been pleading with the Government that practical measures must be adopted in order to induce paddy production. We are happy that the Government has woken up to grim realities and has repealed the Regulation which had imposed the ban on the sale and transport of paddy and rice. We hope that the Government will offer other inducements to the farming community, (at least to what is left of it after the devastation it has suffered after 1970), in order to persuade farmers to plunge headlong into production. Sowing for the Maha in the main paddy producing areas in the dry zone have now begun. The northeast monsoon has not yet brought its rain in full measure but peasants and farmers are hopeful that mother nature will be more helpful this year than in the past three years. On the cover, we have a picture of a group of rural peasants transplanting paddy with a kind of enthusiasm that has not been seen after the ban on the sale and transport of paddy (and other restrictions) had been imposed. Once again, we hope, that the peasants in our rural countryside will sow, transplant and harvest their paddy with spontaneously unrestrained enthusiasm. It is time that politicians and bureaucrats realised that the mere distribution of small allotments of land together with so-called radical measures on a national scale (really helping elite groups) will not generate enthusiasm for paddy production.

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Nationalisation Of Estates

WITH THE LSSP QUITTING OR BEING OUSTED from the United Front Government, the proceedings of the National State Assembly had acquired a new significance. On September 4, Dr. N. M. Perera had made a statement about the split. On September 18, the Prime Minister made her statement, on the same subject and Dr. Colvin R. de Silva had begun his statement as to why the split had occurred. On October 8, Dr. Silva had completed his unfinished statement and then Mr. Leslie Goonewardene and Mr. Ronnie de Mel (who had resigned from the SLFP in the meantime) also made statements. On October 9 the PM's statement of September 18 was debated.

And, on October 10 Minister Kobbekaduwa moved the adoption of the amending Bill to extend the Land Reform Law to the plantations owned by public and foreign companies (with powers to take over Agency Houses which, the Minister said would be permitted to run the estates for 2 years until perhaps the State had developed organisational capability to run the estates and was in a position to pay the the acquired compensation — this was implied and not said). With every party and practically every MP wanting to place his thoughts on record about the historic takeover of the big plantations, the debate on the amending Bill could not be completed even past midnight on October 10 (Standing Orders having been suspended), and the debate was adjourned until Tuesday October 14. Once again, as when the Land Reform Law was adopted in 1972, Minister Kobbekaduwa and the majority of the government spokesmen made highly emotionally politicised speeches (without—it has always been our complaint—paying due consideration to the much more important economic implications inherent in any land reform).

On this occasion, the economic consideration were partly dealt with by stating that the old Agency Houses would continue to manage and run the estates—and this will no doubt prevent the tragic spec-

tacle of the cart being placed before the horse (or the bull), as in the case of land reform of 1972, being re-enacted again. Minister Kobbekaduwa in a sentimentally overcharged speech referred to the methods which British Imperialists, administrators and planters had adopted to acquire land cheap in Ceylon and in this process they had not only expropriated jungle lands in the hill country (most of which should have remained jungle in the interest of agriculture in the plains) from the Kandyan chieftains but had also unjustly dispossessed Kandyan peasants of their cultivable and arable land. The Wastelands Ordinance, the Grains Tax and other legislative and other dubious devices utilised by the British to bring about a major change in the ownership of land and in the system of land tenure, following their conquest of the island, was referred to by Minister Kobbekaduwa and other speakers with all possible vehemence against the iniquities imposed by the imperialist-colonialist rulers of this island.

Dr. Colvin R. de Silva, speaking on behalf of the LSSP, did not want to be any less emotional than the SLFP speakers and with his characteristic rhetoric spoke about the historic significance of the takeover of the big-company and foreign owned estates. He also took the opportunity to insist that the LSSP would still—in spite of the historic injustice it had suffered at the hands of the Prime Minister by being thrown out—extend responsive co-operation to the Government on the "progressive" and radical measures it sought to implement which the LSSP thought would benefit the common people. Dr. de Silva was "mild" when he uttered warnings that it would be unwise to permit the Agency Houses to run the estates, but it is significant that he neither damned the Bill nor the Government for wanting to permit the Agency Houses to run the estates on an interim basis. He also wanted compensation (if any) to be paid in Sri Lanka rupees and not in foreign exchange. He, on behalf of the *sama samajists*, (distinguishing themselves from the UNP which had been described by its leader J. R. Jayewardene as a socialist party), showered praise upon Mr. Kobbekaduwa for his contribution to Land Reform. (Mr. Kobbekaduwa had paid compliments to Dr. Silva as the Minister of Plantation Industries for 5 years).

There is no doubt that Mr. Kobbekaduwa will go down to history as the chief architect of land reform in Ceylon in this century—changing a pattern and system imposed by the British in the early and middle of the last century. He took the opportunity to praise the Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike, for the role she had played in implementing land reform and also the Minister of Justice, Mr. Felix R. Dias Bandaranaike, for the speed and manner in which the legislation had been drafted.

(This was indirectly a reply to the LSSP charge—going around in whisper campaigns—that the Prime Minister and Mr. Felix R. Dias Bandaranaike were opposed to land reform and the take over of company-owned and foreign-owned plantations and that Minister Kobbekaduwa had serious political differences with them and that he was on the verge of crossing over to the LSSP. Mr. Kobbekaduwa's categorical declarations about Mrs. Bandaranaike and Mr. Felix R. Dias Bandaranaike is a further blow to LSSP calculations that a "split" between Kobbekaduwa as the spearhead of the SLFP Left and the Bandaranaike-Ratwatte Establishment would help to lay the foundations for the LSSP plans for a United Left Front, now re-named United Socialist Front. *The Times of Ceylon Sunday Illustrated*, 12/10/75, in a new and well-written political column by Narada paid handsome tributes to Kobbekaduwa and this has made observers who are alive to the finer nuances of political under-currents and cross-currents in Colombo to think that LSSPs wishful hopes about a split in the SLFP were vanishing one by one).

For the record, it would be relevant to reproduce extracts from the *Daily News*, (11/10/75), report of Minister Kobbekaduwa's statement in the NSA.

Mr. Hector Kobbekaduwa, Minister of Agriculture and Lands, moving the second reading of the Land Reform (Amendment) Bill in the National State Assembly yesterday said that three years ago he had the rare privilege of introducing the first bill under the new constitution of Sri Lanka—the Land Reform Bill of 1972. He said the amending bill

Kobbekaduwa's Statement

was in effect the nationalisation of estates of public companies. With the passage of the bill lands owned by public companies both local and foreign will be vested in the Land Reform Commission. The lands affected will cover 415,000 acre of tea, rubber and coconut. The Lands Minister was applauded by both sides of the House when he stood up to introduce the amending bill. Craving the indulgence of the Speaker to strike a personal note, Mr. Kobbekaduwa said "To me this is the most glorious moment of my life. It is a dream come true... to me it is a mission fulfilled." The Minister added that the country should be grateful to the Prime Minister for the momentous and historic decision to take over land belonging to public companies following the successful talks with the British Prime Minister and maintaining the good relations between the two countries.

The people of this country, especially the peasants, will remember the Prime Minister for this action. Mr. Kobbekaduwa said three years ago he had the rare privilege of introducing the first Bill under the new constitution—the Land Reform Bill of 1972, which sought to fix a ceiling on the ownership of land and for the re-distribution of land held by a few. At that time 5,600 persons owned 1.2 million acres. Through the operation of that Bill he was able to take over 5500 acres for the peasants of this country. The operation was completed in two years without any dislocation or bloodshed. Certain countries had marvelled at this achievement. The credit for it should go to the Land Reform Commission and its members. From that Bill the land owned by public companies—local and foreign—and land belonging to religious bodies were excluded for good reasons, our foreign exchange situation was not too good. The UNP questioned about that exclusion then. He hoped the UNP would now vote with the Government on the present Bill which meets the UNP demands. He said he hoped the UNP would support the Bill especially under its new leadership which had promised to usher in a new social order.

Mr. Kobbekaduwa said the time agriculture was directed by whisky-drinking clubs was over. Then the Leader of the Opposition had then questioned about London clubs. He could not reply to him then. But today he could assure that agricul-

ture directed from Johnny Walker clubs in London too had come to an end. In the preparation of the Bill he must thank the Minister of Justice and the Minister of Finance for putting into legal shape the ideas of the Government. Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike had spared no pains in drafting the Bill with his characteristic capacity for hard work. Thanks were also due to the Member for Agalawatte for the memorandum he had sent and also to the British High Commissioner for the realistic understanding of the points of view of Sri Lanka and officials of the Plantation Industry, Ministry and the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands.

The nation should be grateful to the Prime Minister for the momentous and historic decision she took to take over land belonging to public companies following her successful talks with the British Prime Minister and for maintaining good relations between the two countries. People of this country especially the peasants will remember the Prime Minister for this.

Mr. Kobbekaduwa then set out the position very clearly with a wealth of statistical detail that provided total justification for the nationalisation.

The amending bill was in effect the nationalisation of estates of public companies. With the passage of the Bill lands owned by public companies both local and foreign will be vested in the Land Reform Commission. Those who managed them prior to the take over will become statutory trustees for a period of the estates, responsible to the LRC for their maintenance. The Bill also provides for the take-over of Agency Houses and will have the power to remove or appoint directors to those companies and deal with matters pertaining to compensation. He said 396 estates were owned by 232 public companies; 87 of these 232 were sterling companies and 145 rupee companies. The 87 sterling companies owned 191 estates. The 145 rupee companies owned 205 estates. Their total acreage was 415,508. Of this 292,126 was tea; 110,021 rubber and 8036 coconut and other products 5325 acres. Of the 396 estates 376 were controlled by 22 agency houses and the balance 20 by owning companies. The largest concentration of estates was in five districts—Nuwara-Eliya; 82,171 acres; Kandy; 76,963 acres; Badulla; 77,837 acres; Ratnapura; 50,352 acres and Kegalle;

42,764 acres. In Colombo there were 9418 acres; Kalutara: 27756 acres; Galle: 21288 acres; Matara: 4819 acres; Puttalam: 911 acres; Kurunegala: 6021 acres; Matale: 13167 acres and Monaragala 2031 acres.

How did these estates come to be owned by the British companies? It was worth going into the history when the worst aspects of British rule here come to light. Governors, army commanders, colonial secretaries were engaged in a mad rush to make a fortune by grabbing the land that belonged to the peasantry. They enacted laws to deprive the poor peasantry of their land. With the various ordinances enacted they gave legality to this robbery

After the British captured full economic power they went on to capture political power too. Legislation was passed against the peasantry. The NCP which was the rice bowl of Sri Lanka was turned into a home of mosquitoes by them. The peasant economy disappeared and the country became hopelessly dependent on foreign food.

The first local political agitation began in 1931 and with the help of Indian votes big Tamil personalities took over the rule. The peasantry had no representation in the legislature. Meanwhile the Wijewardene press began a campaign saying that the Kandyans had never learnt the lesson. The struggle of the Kandyans was an economic struggle; they wanted to be free. The Wijewardenes were busy making national heroes in Colombo. When he tried to take over land for the peasantry he was called in the House Idi Amin.

Mr. J. R. Jayewardene (Leader of the Opposition) I did not say he was Idi Amin. But that he (Mr. Kobbekaduwa) behaved like him.

Mr. Kobbekaduwa continuing: "I called the bluff of Thendaman that big land owner who is masquerading as a trade unionist. He did satyagraha once to prop up the tottering capitalist class, I have even done to Indian labour what most big unionists could not do. After the take over of lands the estate labour is getting a living wage. Now they accuse me of having deprived them of trade union rights that I am anti-trade unions. This is totally false. The LRC has not denied them their rights. There is no communal politics, I want to fight on behalf of the poor peasants to regain the land

robbed from them whether they are in the south, north or west because in this exercise alone lies our salvation.

"In 1956 for the first time the common man was put on the march. In 1970 those masses gave us the mandate to do what we are doing today. Then the plantation raj—the White Sahibs—ruled the villages, estates that belonged to the Kandyan peasantry. The peasants were ruled by the gun and horse whip and were denied access even to roads. The white sahibs were engaged in debauchery. In 1947 that community left our shores. The mantle then fell on the native counterparts. The local counterparts were only trained and selected to be the lackeys of the white sahibs of the invincible British empire. They were more British than the British themselves. Of course they could not change their colour so they became to be known as Brown Sahibs. They were picked for their brawn not brains. Rugged was considered a qualification to become a planter. I do not know what rugged they could play with the labour on the estates. To them rural institutions were something fit only for the natives. MPs were rabble rousers and bhikkus a nuisance. The cloth and the banian were the garb of the cooks. This honeymoon had to end. And now it's over, I hope, they will not remain as fossils. I hope they come back to the main stream of the nation so that we could either push them forward or push them out. Another tragic epoch in our time goes into history. A new chapter of friendship had begun between Sri Lanka and Britain. But freedom means responsibility."

Mr. Kobbekaduwa said with the enactment of the Bill the time had come—the magic moment when all should be united for the betterment of the country.

"We have mountains to climb. Let us proceed and progress fast drawing strength and courage and placing our faith in the peasant and the worker. Sri Lanka was now alive with energy and shaken with new forces." It was a time to strive towards to goal of social equality, justice and economic plenty be added.

There is no doubt that Mr. Hector Kobbekaduwa has achieved a great deal in the time he was the Minister of Agriculture and Lands. It is not that he restored the lands to those from whom they had been stolen by the British

planter's Raj or the (plantation) landowning class created by the British because the original owners are no longer there to receive them. But symbolic heirs and successors, and the State representing the "sovereign people"—a concept regarded as the acme of twentieth-century egalitarianism—have now taken over the lands and thus remedied a grave injustice.

Tribune had envisaged land reform as an essential measure of economic (and political) change long before it had become a practical proposition in election manifestos. But Tribune has been critical of the manner in which Land Reform has been implemented since 1972—that short-term political considerations had outweighed far more important economic considerations in the manner in which the take-over was effected with the result that production and productivity have suffered in a manner which would have long-term consequences on the economy of the island. The attempt to now cushion the takeover of the big tea and rubber plantations by allowing the Agency Houses to manage them for an interim period of two years is a realistic move which may save the situation—unless political interference by arrogant bureaucrats will nullify the possible benefits of this compromise arrangement. If the big plantations are not managed as well as they been so far (or even better), the economy of this country will be thrown into jeopardy. There is no doubt that Agency Houses have been guilty of various acts of inefficiency, corruption and anti-national conduct, but unless something better is evolved and is tried out it is better to let the known devil bring revenue to the country than let unknown devils rush the country into economic bankruptcy.

THE UNP SUPPORTED THE AMENDING BILL without any reservations. The Daily News report of Mr. J. R. Jayewardene's speech set out the current position of the UNP very clearly:

LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION, MR. J. R. JAYEWARDENE said that his party would support the Land Reform Amendment Bill. As the leader of the largest Opposition party in Parliament and as the leader of the party which polled the highest number of votes at the last General Election he said that his party will

fully support the government in the implementation of the bill. Mr. Kobbekaduwa had taken a few jibes at him in his speech but he was willing to forget and forgive as obviously Mr. Kobbekaduwa was speaking under the stress of emotion at the greatest moment of his life.

Mr. Jayewardene said that he was not supporting the bill because the political situation had changed. He had supported the take-over of foreign estates even in the State Council. Today there were only four members who had been in the State Council Doctors S. A. Wickremasinghe, N. M. Perera, Dahanayake and himself. Dr. Wickremasinghe and Dr. Perera had advocated the take-over of foreign owned estates because as Marxists they believed that land should be the property of the state. Dr. Dahanayake too had advocated the take-over.

To ask why, if he had advocated the take-over of such estates, he had not implemented the decision was not the question. Even the late Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike had wanted the estates to be taken over but was not able to implement the decision. Such decisions could not be implemented because of various factors such as the state of the economy at that time, relationships with other countries etc. At times some people were ahead of the times. He then quoted from Hansard a speech he had made in the State Council in 1943 where he spoke for the take-over of British owned estates. It was similar to the speech made by Mr. Kobbekaduwa yesterday. He was happy that Mt. Kobbekaduwa presented the bill.

His party had opposed the Land Reform Act when it was introduced in 1972 because all public companies, which included foreign owned estates, were exempted from the ceiling on lands. The UNP had moved an amendment seeking to include public companies to come under that law and, had the minister accepted the amendment, the UNP would have voted for it. This bill indicated that the Minister had accepted his party's amendment in 1972.

Mr. Kobbekaduwa though that his party had opposed the law in 1972 on principle. It might be that some members in his party opposed it, but he simply could not have done that as he had spoken for the principle of take-over earlier. Mr. Kobbekaduwa had said that he (Mr. Jayewardene) had been looked upon as a

Communist Party Support

messiah by the Planter Raj. It might be that the foundations of his party had been on a capitalist base. But ten years ago the UNP decided to adopt democratic socialism and it means to go ahead with that ideology. However, he was not in any way in favour of socialist democracies of the East European type.

The UNP was no longer subject to pressures of the capitalist class. It was not subject to the pressure the mudalalis exerted on the government as stated by the LSSP. The only pressure the UNP was subject to was the pressure of the hungry people of this country. The people of this country whichever their race should be treated fairly.

Mr. Kobbekaduwa had not been correct in his criticism of earlier leaders. It might be that despite enacting legislation of this type the present leaders might be called reactionaries by a future generation.

Mr. Jayewardene had then very correctly stressed that the management of the estates taken over was more important than the mere fact of ownership. This is just what Tribune has always been saying: that what was more important than the takeover (and the change of ownership) or even the arithmetical ceilings which curbed ownership, was the utilisation of land. Adequate measures had not been taken to ensure sustained production in respect of the 550,000 acres of land taken over under the Land Reform Law of 1972 and this already had a deleterious effect on production.

Mr. Jayewardene said that while the ownership of the estates should be with the people, the estates should be managed with the twin objectives of increased productivity and employment. The question of management was more important than the question of ownership which would be settled by the bill.

It should be borne in mind that the Sri Lanka plantations were the best agro-industrial ventures in the world. Despite the small acreage under cultivation it was the world's largest producer of tea, the second biggest producer of rubber and the third of coconut. These plantations had competed with the output of countries such as India, China, the Philippines etc. In this respect one had to consider how the estates which have already been taken over have been managed. He had heard on many occasions that the estates of the State Plantations Corporation were

the best managed of the estates that had been taken over. The planters were hailing Dr. Colvin R. de Silva as their Messiah although Mr. Kobbekaduwa said that he (Mr. Jayewardene) was the Messiah of the Plantation Raj. He (Mr. Jayewardene) was the coming Messiah.

Of the estates that had been handed over to MPCSS, however, he had heard that some MPs were the chairman of these societies or have nominated their friends and relations as chairmen. He had heard that in the case of one MP he had withdrawn Rs. 5 lakhs from a bank on behalf of the MPCSS. It was not known what had become of the produce of the estates under the MPCSS. PRIME MINISTER: Why don't you give information to the Minister?

Mr. Jayewardene quoted the Peking Review and said that in an article in that journal it had been said that the management of state farms, some plantation managers under the Soviet Revisionist Clique' behaved like Capitalists. The same fate might befall the estates managed by MPCSSs he said.

With this speech and the support for the takeover of the big plantations, Mr. Jayewardene has taken a major stride to give a new dimension to the new image he is seeking to give the UNP—that it is really a democratic socialist party which was chiefly concerned with getting things done.

MR. PIETER KEUNEMAN ON BEHALF OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY welcomed the Bill and sought to show the economic benefits that would accrue to the country if the estates were well managed and the profits made for the welfare of the nation. He admitted that some of the MPCSS unions were not discharging their duties in the management of the estates well, but these according to him were only teething troubles that could be easily overcome. He paid handsome tributes to Minister Kobbekaduwa and also to Dr. Colvin R. de Silva for the work he had done as Minister of Plantation Industries when he was in the Government. Mr. Keuneman was in a reminiscent mood when he said:

Once when he asked the late Mr. D. S. Senanayake why foreign estates could not be nationalised the reply had been that he (Mr. Senanayake) did not want to kill the goose

that laid the golden eggs. As a result of that policy the goose had fattened through four decades but the golden eggs were laid in U.K. The people of the country saw the goose but never the eggs. The foreign companies operating in Sri Lanka had not done too badly. On earlier occasions he had pointed out that the companies had every ten years recovered the value of their investments. This estimate was on the basis of the figures declared officially. Governments of the day were not prepared to ask questions and the Central Bank had supported and justified the robbery.

To keep the estate economies of the plantations going the people of the country had to pay enormous subsidies—subsidies such as those given for replanting. The low wages paid to workers was another subsidy. Although hankers from abroad had asked the country to cut subsidies in food, education and health there never had been a call to cut these subsidies. The subsidy voted by parliament to keep the plantation economy going had been about Rs. 282 million for a year. In addition to this subsidy there had been rebates, foreign exchange given for plantations to send their representatives abroad in the name of finding new markets and grant of foreign exchange for directors of foreign companies to fly out here to find out how their companies were doing.

But in response to all these subsidies the owners of the estates had responded adversely. As far back as 1948 he had pointed out that they were preparing for a long term pull out. The profits made from our plantations were being ploughed into tea plantations in Kenya and the like whose produce Sri Lanka tea would have to compete with. In addition to this, profits made from plantations were never invested for maintenance of plantations. Plantation workers got only two to three days of work per week. Some of these people were forced to beg on streets and land reform was held to be the cause. The television films about conditions of workers in British-owned plantations aimed at throwing mud against the government boomeranged as it pricked the conscience of the British people. It was a strange quirk in history. On the other hand, the conditions of workers in the State Plantations Corporation was quite different—they were given better wages and 5 to

6 days a week which at least the bigger foreign-owned estates could have afforded.

Mr. Keuneman said that his party considered it extremely essential that publicly owned estates should be efficiently managed as they were, at least for the time being, the mainstay of the economy. The leader of the Opposition had alleged that some of the estates managed by MPCs were mismanaged. He did not say that the estates under the MPCs were being run efficiently as they should be run. But was it an exception or a generality? Given the limited expertise—considering that some who possessed the expertise left and the others who had the expertise were so opposed to land reform—the LRC had not done too badly. Mr. Kobbekaduwa, he was sure, could eradicate corruption as he was a person who had not tolerated the rantings of knaves and rogues. The bill provided for the use of institutions of management of estates for two years as statutory trustees. These institutions were being used not because they were particularly liked but because the LRC was not yet prepared to undertake such a vast task. The Bernard Soysa Report had made many revelations which many suspected but were not able to prove. Mr. Keuneman said that if one was to talk of compensation on profits made by the plantations there would be no case for compensation at all. However one had to be realistic. Were theoretical arguments needed or was it the question of taking over the estates? He said that the bill was a collective effort of the whole government led by the Prime Minister. It was the result

of years of agitation by many people. The role played by Mr. Kobbekaduwa earned him a tribute from all and he was sure that considering the manner in which Mr. Kobbekaduwa pushed through the first stage of land reforms he would be no less vigilant in the second stage.

He also thanked Dr. Colvin R. de Silva, former Minister of Plantation Industries, who had played a very great role but who was no longer with the government much to his (Mr. Keuneman's) regret. Dr. de Silva in addition to the assistance he had given in the drafting of the bill had reorganised and rejuvenated the plantations which had been a wasting asset. The norms set by Dr. de Silva and the improvements he tried to bring about in the conditions of the plantation workers would be remembered, Mr. Keuneman said. MR. V. DHARMALINGAM SPOKE ON BEHALF OF THE FEDERAL PARTY, and though it appeared as if the FP did not oppose the Amending Bill, his speech was so lost in circumlocutory argumentation about the plight of the stateless Tamil estate population that it was difficult to find out if the FP was supporting the Bill at all. Mr. Dharmalingam propounded various categorical assertions about socialism (about which there can be no quarrel), but he failed to make a categorical statement about the position of the FP vis a vis Land Reform, or Nationalisation of the big estates.

It is one thing to point out the discrimination suffered by the estate Tamil workers or Tamils anywhere else, but it is another matter to adopt a principled

and unequivocal stand on a question like Land Reform, Nationalisation etc in terms of the country as a whole. This inability of the FP to formulate a policy outside the narrow limits of Tamilist emotionalism is its greatest drawback and it stems from the fact that the FP never had a well-defined policy on economic matters even for the Tamils. Its success at elections and among the Tamils was based on emotional, jingoist and often chauvinist appeals, but this was never backed with concrete economic policies which could invest the emotionalism of the FP with even a semblance of practical reality.

The impact the FP will make on the country as a whole and even among the thinking sections of the Tamils (who are not carried away by emotionalism or refuse to emigrate in frustrated desperation) would be much greater if the FP, in this instance, said that it was with the Government on the amending Bill and the nationalisation of big company and sterling estates—and if thereafter the problems about the estate workers of Tamil origin were discussed it would have received more favourable reception in all quarters. With the UNP doing its best to give itself a new "socialist" image, the FP must awaken from its Rip Van Winklism if it hopes to play any significant role in politics in the coming period.

Among other MPs who spoke on Friday, October 10, Mr. W. Dahanayake supported the Bill and insisted that no compensation should be paid.

CHRONICLE

Oct. 3 — Oct. 7

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

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

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 3: The Government yesterday announced an increase in the price of petroleum products: a gallon of petrol and kerosene has been increased by 80 and 48 cents respectively; auto diesel, heavy

diesel, furnace oil and bitumen has been increased by 50 cents per gallon: the increases are a sequel to the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) raising the price of petroleum by 1.05 U.S. dollars a barrel from October 1: the local price increases were effective from midnight yesterday: OPEC's increase will cost the Sri Lanka Government an additional Rs. 150 million in foreign exchange—CDN. In a joint communique issued yesterday by Sri Lanka and Yugoslavia following talks between the Yugoslavian Prime Minister, Mr. Dzemal Bijedic and Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, the importance of holding the Non-Aligned conference next year in Colombo has been emphasised: it was stated in the communique that non-aligned countries represent today an irreplaceable instrument of the struggle of peoples for safeguarding their independence, for radical changes in the existing inequitable economic and political relations among States, and for peace and security in the world—CDN. According to the Daily Mirror the LSSP has resolved to form a

Socialist Left Front and not a United Left Front as the party announced earlier: in a press release issued yesterday the LSSP announced the new front will compromise the LSSP, CP and the "crystallised left in the SLFP." In a re-organisation of the Ministry of Finance Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike has announced the establishment of two new departments known as the Department of Treasurer and the Department of Controller under the Ministry of Finance—CDM. Several Tamil and Muslim leaders sent messages of condolence to India when news reached Colombo last night on the death of Mr. K. Kamaraj Nadai, he was described as the king maker of Indian politics was one time President of the ruling Indian Congress Party and was First Chief Minister of Tamilnadu: he was the chief architect behind Mrs. Indira Gandhi's appointment as the Prime Minister of India soon after the death of Mr. Lal Bahadur Shastri—VK. *Janadina* editorially criticised the SLFP for making use the *Lake House* and *Times Group* of newspapers to announce that the M.P. for Devinuwara was sacked from the SLFP: the editorial further said before the SLFP got these newspapers to announce the removal of Mr. de Mel, the same group of papers on the previous day had published the truth that Mr. de Mel had resigned from the SLFP because he was against the capitalist policies of the SLFP—JD. Mr. Ronnie de Mel, M.P. for Devinuwara, addressing the Chinese National Day meeting held in Colombo appealed to the C.P. (Moscow wing) and to all socialist-minded politicians in the SLFP to resign from the SLFP and join the main stream of socialism—JD. The *Aththa* editorially commenting on Mr. de Mel's resignation referred to an earlier editorial in the *Janadina* which said that Mr. de Mel resigned because he clearly understood that this government could not be expected to follow the path of socialism: the *Aththa* editorial further said that it would have been wrong for Mr. de Mel to have expected socialism from this government even at the early stages. If the American Congress did not agree by Sunday to U.S. technicians manning early-warning systems, Israel may ask Egypt to delay next Sunday's implementation of their interim peace agreement with Egypt. North Vietnam yesterday denounced the United States for using its veto in the United Nations Security Council to bar U.N. membership to North and South Vietnam. USSR President Podgorny proclaimed Kremlin support for what he called 'vanguard political forces' in Portugal but declared the Soviet Union was against any interference in Portuguese internal affairs.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 4: The recommendation of the Sectoral Committee on Social Overheads and Mass Media headed by Mr. Pieter Keuneman, Minister of Housing and Construction, amounted to a complete reversal of the earlier policy on university admissions and called for the dropping of the standardization of marks media-wise and recommended that students be admitted to the six campuses on the basis of 70 per cent on merit and 30 per cent for depressed areas on a district quota basis: from 1973 until this year the intake to the university was on 70 per cent on district quota basis and 30 per cent on merit basis—CDM. Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike, Minister of Finance, yesterday broke with tradition and addressed the delegation of the IMF which is in the island for discussions with Sri Lanka: the Minister said that he was also a member of the team for discussions and will actively participate

in the talks: Sri Lanka is qualified for two stand-by credits amounting to Rs. 910 million in foreign exchange—CDN. The Ministry of Plantation issued a stern warning to superintendents not to flout the Emergency regulations regarding the take-over of company owned estates in the disposal of estate properties—CDN. Mr. J. C. T. Kotalawala, Chairman of the CTB, and Mr. V. T. Navaratne, General Manager of Railways, told the *Lankadipa* yesterday that there was no truth in rumours that the bus and rail fares will go up following the increase in price of petroleum products. According to the *Janadina* the Minister of Agriculture and Lands will have to get the approval of the Minister of Finance, Minister of Trade and the Minister of Planning and Economic Affairs if he has to take-over an Agency House: the paper further said according to instruction to the Minister if any of the above Ministers protest against the take over of the business of a particular Agency House it will not be possible for him to lay his hands on that agency House. It is understood that the Minister of Finance will soon introduce a new bill which will guarantee foreign businessmen the right to continue their trade in the country: it is also expected that the Minister of Finance will soon make the Business Acquisition Act introduced by the former Minister of Finance null and void: these measures are expected to be taken in an effort to encourage foreign investors to open up new undertakings in the country—ATH. The 18-nation Council of Europe roundly condemned Spanish General Franco's decision to execute five urban guerillas last weekend and called on member governments not to increase co-operation with Spain: Indian Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi, in a West German television interview said that there is complete peace in the country following the state of emergency imposed last summer.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 5: Following recent defeats for members and relations of Ratwatte families in the election for Diyawadana and Basnayake Nilames at ancient temples in the Kandyan district, the *Janasathiya* posed the question whether Divisional Revenue Officers in the upcountry who are eligible for voting at these elections and most of whom are said to be against the Ratwatte families will be made not eligible to vote at these elections: the paper editorially commenting on this news story said the Buddhists of this country must be vigilant against the national capitalists of the Kandyan areas who would be prepared to indulge in "mean" things just to protect their family powers which they had been enjoying for a long period of time. The Sinhala Youth Organisation in a memorandum addressed to the Prime Minister said that the recommendation of the Keuneman Committee in university admissions had put the Sinhala medium students in a very unjust position and therefore to reject the recommendation of the committee which wanted admissions to the university on 70 per cent merit and 30 per cent on district quota basis—SLD. The SLFP Youth League led by Mr. Anura Bandaranaike has formed a Front to rehabilitate the youths who were misled during the 1971 insurgency: the Sinhalese weekly *Adha* has published the application forms and invited youths who wish to become members to make their applications—ST. From tomorrow the Department of National Housing will launch an island-wide campaign and will receive complaints to rope-in owners of surplus houses

who failed to furnish correct particulars to the Department when they declared their surplus houses—SM. Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, addressing a meeting at Attanagalla yesterday said that the District Development Council Program is seeing a new resurgence in the rural sector and is contributing to the industrial development of the country—CO. Bangladesh President Mustaq Ahamed announced that the next General elections will be held on February 28, 1977: he further said that he is prepared to fight against section in the country which opposed socialism.

MONDAY, OCTOBER 6: Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, President of the UNP, addressing a meeting at Ja-Ela over the weekend said that there were doubts in the past whether elections would be held at all but now with the people who were opposed to democracy and holding of elections out of the UF, and the assurances by the Prime Minister to hold elections those doubts do not exist any more—BDN. The Sectoral Committee on Social Overheads, Housing, Mass Media and Transport, headed by the Minister of Housing and Construction, Mr. Pieter Keuneman, in its report on "Standardisation of Marks and District Quotas in University Admissions" said that it would be unwise to persist in formulae which have little or no jurisdiction educationally and are based mainly on fears and suspicions: in its recommendation the Committee said that great care must be exercised not to subordinate the cardinal principle of merit in the selections—CDM. The Sinhala Tharuna Sanvidhanaya led by Dr. Seevali Ratwatte has written to the Prime Minister not to implement the Keuneman Committee's recommendations on university admissions and has shown the recent statistics which shows that media-wise standardisation of marks has helped the Tamil medium students—CDM. Failure by the Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs to provide the necessary foreign exchange for Government Corporations and private establishments to import necessary raw materials has resulted in big losses to these institutions—JD. 130 bribery cases were disposed during the first 9 months of this year and another 187 cases are still to be heard—JD. The Christian Workers' Fellowship of Sri Lanka in a memorandum to the British Prime Minister has said not to accept compensation for foreign owned company estates to be taken over and instead such compensation should go to the exploited villagers in the plantation sector and to the estate labourers—ATH. The Tamil United Front will soon request the National State Assembly for the formation of a separate state in Sri Lanka for the Tamil speaking people—ATH. Mr. K. B. Ratnayake, Minister of Transport will soon appoint a committee to report on the Ceylon Government Railway with a view to give a better deal to its 600,000 daily commuters—CDN. In a second stage of campaigning the LSSP will soon hold propaganda meetings in constituencies represented by SLFP MPs—VK. The Bangladesh Government released more than 1000 political prisoners following President Musthaque Ahmed's announcement that a general election will be held on February 28, 1977. U.S. President Ford's plan to station American technicians between Israel and Egypt was approved yesterday—with conditions—by the House of Representatives International Relations Committee. Soviet Leader, Brezhnev, accepted an invitation from Portuguese government to visit Portugal at a date to be decided later.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 7: The SLFP—sponsored Sri Lanka Independent Petroleum Employees Union in a lengthy memorandum addressed to the Prime Minister said that the announcement of the discovery of oil in Pesalai in Mannar was a fraud and amounted to an act of treason against the state: the Union stated that the crude oil sample said to have been obtained from the first test-well drilled at Pesalai last year was tested at the Sapugaskande Refinery Laboratory and showed that it was not crude oil but it contained only some used lubricating oil mixed with mud and water: the Union further said that at nowhere and at no time the Soviet experts engaged in exploration work tested the sample and reported to the Corporation that what was discovered in Mannar was crude oil—CDM. The Minister of Agriculture and Lands last week served a vesting order on the premises of the 121—year old Planters' Association of Ceylon—CDM. The Department of National Housing yesterday announced heavy cut-backs on the various category of loans it had been granting: according to the Commissioner of National Housing there is a backlog of Rs. 25 million unpaid which was given as housing loans and this is the main reason for the Department to cut back various loans—CDN. A series of regulations have been promulgated by the President under the Public Security Ordinance to expedite the payment of gratuities and other dues to would-be Indian repatriates—CDN. Several educationists welcomed the Keuneman Committee's report on varsity admissions and warned the organisations which opposed the Keuneman Committee's report, to restrain from mixing education with politics—VK. The Sinhala Tharuna Sangvidanaya in a press release expressed regret that such an important decision of this nature which involves the future generation of this country had been handled by a Committee—CDN. The Government Clerical Service Union has informed the Salary Anomalies Committee of the Ministries of Public Administration, Home Affairs and Trade that the L. B. de Silva Salaries Commissions' Report has added more problems to the state employees instead of easing their problems—JD. The *Aththa* editorially commenting on Mr. J. R. Jayewardene's speech last weekend where he said that he will not seek the support of any other political party to form a government said that under the present political situation there is nothing to doubt that a UNP government will be returned to power and further said that a victory for the progressive forces will depend only on what course of action this Government will take during the next two years. The EEC Foreign Ministers' Conference which begins on Monday in Luxembourg is expected to grant 100 million dollars in urgent EEC aid to Portugal. Yugoslav Prime Minister Djemal Bijedic is currently on a tour in China.

NEXT WEEK

- * DR. UDAGAMA'S CONCEPT OF EDUCATION
 - * TRIBUNE AND THE BAN ON SALE AND TRANSPORT OF PADDY AND RICE
 - * THE TRAGEDY OF THE PALMYRAH REPORT
-

SELF-SUFFICIENCY IN FOOD

Can We Achieve A Breakthrough?

Consolidation Not Fragmentation

by R. Kahawita

THE CRY TODAY is self-sufficiency in food all over the world, the loudest cry is from the United Nations' Organisations. This has been the theme right along the centuries ever since man realised that he must grow food to stave off famines.

It was so important to him that among the Aryan races, the men who cultivated the soil became an important, if not the premier, caste in his social organisation. Cultivator caste got integrated into the cultural and religious activities of the people. What is called culture and which gave vigour to the society became its backbone, so agricultural development even today must be integrated with the social and cultural aspirations of the people and must grow with it.

Countries where such natural aspirations of a people were interrupted by new ideologies has failed to feed their people. The worst has been in those countries where people's forward march has been experimented by these ideologies, with no understanding of human nature. Over the last four decades, the countries which experimented with these ideologies have failed miserably and at great cost of human lives. It is still happening in those countries, but the theorists do not want to admit failure because the theorists' very existence and the comforts they enjoy at the misery of their fellow beings is threatened.

To save face the theorist has accepted a permissive corollary to their theories without admitting and abandoning the theories, and allow the natural aspirations of a people to seek their level of contentment and well being. This kind of permissiveness is accepted in those countries which tried the theory but failed. The diehards without admitting defeat they are now turning to their erstwhile enemies to keep them above the starvation line.

While all these are happening around us, many in this country are yet extolling the virtues of Collective farms, Community farms, Co-operative farms etc. Of course all these are to their advantage in electioneering and not to the people whom they govern.

Today, farming is capital intensive.

The country's agriculture has to break away from subsistence farming which is labour intensive where what is produced is hardly enough for the peasant, and there will be no surplus to feed the non-agricultural population. The break-through can never be achieved by fragmentation of land with the object of making farming labour-intensive. There is the convincing example of America and U.S.S.R. The former employs 4% of its labour force in Agriculture and the latter 31% of its labour force. Yet it is U.S.A. that is feeding Russia today—in spite of the fact U.S.S.R. has made tremendous advances in Technology, yet in agriculture she has failed due to her farming systems though she does not admit it to be so.

When politicians enter the arena they do not know what truth is nor what is right and what is wrong. They rave at everybody around them for their incompetence and their blundering policies. However, in the midst of this raving there was a streak of sense in our policies, when the P.M. said that all reforms must be based on our cultural and social aspirations. What this is, do not ask ranking revolutionary but ask the people. They know what they want. They are the best judges to give the verdict.

To be self-sufficient in food, agriculture must be capital-intensive, if that self-sufficiency is to be achieved by producing a surplus.

A peasant working on a fraction of an acre cannot achieve this. A peasant must be replaced by a full time farmer who with his family and outside help must have enough land to do a twenty-four hour job. This can be done only with larger holdings and diversification of agriculture.

So what is needed in Land Reforms is not fragmentation but consolidation so that the farmer can plan and intensify his activities throughout the year. He cannot

do this on a postage size holding; 84% of the wet land holdings in Sri Lanka are in this category. This has further increased since Land Reforms came into operation. Whoever devised the Land Reforms has done it not with intention of freeing the country from economic bondage, but to fetter us more securely to it.

REFORMS should have been in the interest of the economic life of the people, and the correct step should have been to consolidate the postage stamp size holding to an extent that would give the owner full time employment and a challenge to get the most out of his holding. This is "Land Reform" and not fragmentation of the larger blocks into tiny units to replace capital intensive farming by peasant holdings. Our planners and policy makers have done this since 1932 without a substantial impact on productivity.

The five acre wet land and three acre highland in the dry zone planned by that friend and father of the peasantry—D. S. Senanayake—has, under revised policies, been reduced to one acre wet land and half acre of highland today. On this plan millions of borrowed money are being spent by the Government to settle the unemployables. The cure has become more serious than the malady.

We are still starving—Why? THERE IS no continuity of policies. Policies have been parochial since the death of D. S. Senanayake who only had the correct perspective as to how this country could be self-sufficient in rice. He was followed by his son Dudley who engineered the "Green Revolution" in 1965. The success of his Agricultural perspective is witnessed not by what he and his supporters said but by the massive purchases made by the G. P. Scheme. The success story was belittled and ridiculed by the present policy makers. In spite of the blatant lying by them, the millions of peasants who took up his challenge bear witness to the wisdom of his Agricultural Policies.

The present policy makers changed his pattern and method of approach to encourage the peasant to be a self-respecting citizen by releasing an army of petty bureaucrats and obnoxious menials to dominate the peasants and frighten them out of their wits.

What happened? The United Front broke up and has commenced laundering their dirty linen on public platforms while the people of Sri Lanka are feeding of the garbage bins; and the Paddy Marketing Board is putting down their shutters with no paddy to purchase.

What the unit of land should be to produce a surplus is still vague. It is a changing unit according to market fluctuations of inputs and what the owner desires for his and his family's well being. The Land Reform Law has decreed that the wet land unit permissible is 25 Acres of wet land. On what basis it was arrived at, I am not interested in now. However assuming that a lot of thinking, computations and permutations have gone into it before they arrived at this figure, we accept this theoretical unit of land can produce a surplus. Then what is the argument the Land Reform has to perpetuate over a million acres of fragmented small holdings each not exceeding one acre?

IF OUR POLICY MAKERS are serious and know how to lead this country to prosperity, then the first issue they should have settled was what to do with the small holdings to increase productivity. Any kind of land reforms must have that objective as the guiding principle. For only from the produce of the land a people can be fed, not on slogans like *Bangawewa*, destroy the land owners etc. It is a slogan to feather their nest when the going is good. Our Land Reforms, has done just that and nothing more.

If our targets and objectives are self-sufficiency then the first step in Land Reforms should have been to consolidate the mini-farms. If 25 acres is the ideal, then take steps to amalgamate the small units into 25 acre units. This was the object in 1932 when the first Colonization schemes in the Dry Zone were started. This would displace, may be ten units. Their homes were to be in the new development schemes. This process would have increased production and created new wealth. This is what is required in this country if we are to achieve better standards of living for the masses and push them above the starvation line.

But our planners and policy makers think in terms of the five loaves and three fishes to feed the multitude *without the miracle*. If not for the miracle the multitude would have starved, and that is what is happening to us in spite of the Land Reforms.

WHAT IS NEEDED is new wealth to distribute among the ever exploding population; abortion and murder of the innocents, or reducing everyone to starvation level is not the solution. (Like the robber it is easy to take away what his victim had built up over the years, but it is damned difficult for the robber to create what he has robbed. It is the same with our planners and policy makers, they do not know how to create new wealth or to build a prosperous society, but they have done what a common robber would do, or in terms of our own Prime Minister's words—"They build their party, policies and comforts on the blood and sweat of the workers.")

If our policy makers had a genuine desire to develop this country

and secure for the common man "a place in the sun"—as they claim they want to do when they came into power, their primary task should have been to create new wealth so that the road to prosperity is secured.

How can one do it? If the people or groups of people who owned more wealth than they should, were by law required to generate an equal quantum of wealth as they owned if they wished to retain their wealth, the country may have doubled the present wealth within a reasonable time.

This was precisely what the *Special Land Leases* policy was to do. The land, given on a short term of 12 years, was to be developed by the lessee and hand back to the Government at the end of the lease period to be parcelled out to the landless or even to peasants in economic units. If this process continued there would have been over 100,000 acres of new land available for distribution in 1977. Then the Government

UNIVERSITY ADMISSION

The Pieter Keuneman Sectoral Committee had made an excellent job in recommending that media-wise standardisation should be scrapped and that 70% should be chosen on merit and that only 30% should be on a district quota basis. The main long-term political motivation for this was to make it possible for the Government to bring about national unity on the basis of consensus whilst the short-term objective was to remedy grave injustice that had been imposed on students best equipped for university education. The Cabinet has, unfortunately, under pressure from Sinhala and Buddhist nationalists (whom history will adjudge chauvinists) rejected the Keuneman Committee recommendation about scrapping media-wise standardisation, but has accepted the recommendation of 70/30 basis for merit and district quota selection. The continuance of the media-wise standardisation *de facto* nullifies the 70% merit selection; and what it means is that the whole of the Keuneman Committee recommendation has been virtually rejected. What the Government and the short-sighted Sinhala nationalists do not realise is that this rejection of the Keuneman Committee recommendations will pave the way for a media-wise separatism to develop in this country in a manner which, in less than two decades, no political or military power can contain. The political unity which the British had established in Ceylon was first undermined by the introduction of three (now two) language streams in education. The logical culmination of this policy was media-wise standardisation and selection on a district quota basis. The two (three) language streams were unnecessary to introduce and enthrone the mother tongue, but with that fateful decision the die was cast against real and genuine national unity. The Keuneman Committee made a heroic attempt to reverse the process and bring the growing mediawise and districtwise separatist trends under control. But this is not to be. The present supreme oneness of political power from Point Palmyrah to Dondra Head will be corroded mediawise and districtwise if the Government does not quickly develop second thoughts about adopting the Keuneman Committee recommendations in toto. The juggernaut of history will move inexorably on—notwithstanding the wishful hopes of the myopic makers of small time history.

Manipulation of Prices

would not have spent a cent in developing the new land but on the other hand, the present Government would have collected Rs. 2,000,000/- annually in the way of rental.

At the end of 12 years i.e. in 1977 at least 20,000 families—may be 60,000 heads could have been settled in far better economic conditions than they are today under the land Reforms or any other kind of reforms.

But our socialists or communists suspected a trap in the scheme and ridiculed the Project as a scheme to fatten "the Mudalalis"—a new word now banded in the State Assembly to sling mud at the split groups of the erstwhile "United Front", who banded together to destroy the special leases Mudalalis of a previous Government.

Such being our Politics and Politicians, we can never achieve self-sufficiency in food. Instead we will be hanging from a longer life line from the starvation line. So, say good-bye to prosperity and get ready to starve—have and have nots, all and sundry.

* * *

FOR THE THIRD WORLD

The New International Economic Order

by Paul Caspersz

One of the most significant and potentially far-reaching events of the 1970s took place on 1 May 1974 when the Sixth Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly made its Declaration on the Establishment of A New International Economic Order. The ground for the NIEO was prepared by a series of international meetings covering various issues of trade and development, culminating in the Fourth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Algiers, in September 1973. The sixth Special Session was summoned as a strategic follow-up of the Fourth Conference.

RESPONSES. Since then there has been a steadily increasing flow of discussion in the Western World on the proposed New Order. The US proposals of Henry Kissinger published in recent issues of *Tribune* are an example of high-level re-

action to the Declaration of the NIEO. In June 1975 the British journal, *World Development*, published a long article written by two developmentalists of the Institute of Development Studies at Sussex with the collaboration of several well-known British and American development analysts. In subsequent articles the present writer proposes to view critically some of these responses to the NIEO.

However, it would be both illogical and premature to discuss the responses before discussing the Declaration itself, especially since several responses, as will be shown in future articles, dilute the original NIEO to a state in which it can barely be recognized.

The present article merely proposes to place the NIEO in its world context, to examine briefly some of its major concerns, and to stimulate our own Sri Lankan response to the Declaration of 1 May 1974. It is indeed unfortunate—and is in itself an indication of the present disadvantage of Third World countries even in the field of developmental research—that Third World response to the NIEO is lagging far behind the response of the Rich World. And if this continues, the NIEO as envisaged by the 1 May Declaration will never become a reality.

THE WORLD CONTEXT.

The socio-economic picture of the world is a dreary one. The less developed countries or the countries of the Third World comprise by far the greater part of the world's population, yet have access to by far the smaller part of the world's wealth. Affluence is the condition of most in the Rich World; poverty, malnutrition, even hunger are the lot of most in the Third World. Our World is really two worlds: one for the haves, the other for the have-nots. Our Humanity is really two humanities: one that enjoys the basic human rights to economic well-being, the other that is deprived and dehumanized.

Faced with this picture of the world, the Sixth Special Session, under heavy pressure from the numerically more important Third World countries, set itself two tasks: first, to express unequivocally its determination to overthrow the Old International Economic Order and to establish in

its place the NIEO (to quote the Declaration) "based on equity, sovereign equality, interdependence and co-operation among all States...which shall correct inequalities and redress existing injustices, make it possible to eliminate the widening gap between the developed and the developing countries..."; second, to delineate a series of measures that should be taken without delay in certain areas of international relations in order to make the New Order a reality.

The Sixth Session fulfilled its first task by adopting the Declaration on the NIEO and its second by adopting on the same day the Programme of Action on the Establishment of an NIEO.

It is of supreme importance for us in the Third World to realize that out own careful, patient and persistent efforts will be needed at every stage of the process leading to the NIEO. That there has to be opposition will be readily understood by anyone who has minimal understanding of the dynamics of social change in any society, national, regional or international.

INDEXATION OF PRICES.

As an example of an area of concern for the NIEO and the opposition to change that should be expected, we may take the question of the Indexation of Prices. This refers to a matter of crucial importance to Third World countries, namely, the relation between the prices which the Third World realizes for its exports to the Rich World and the prices the Third World has to pay for its imports from the Rich World.

In general, what has been the situation since the end of World War II? Except for the period of the Korean War, and intermittently for some commodities, the prices of Third World exports paid to Third World producers were low. If prices fluctuated, they did so around a low level. On the other hand, the prices of Third World imports from the Rich World rose steadily from a pre-existing high level to still higher levels. In other words, the terms of trade have been consistently and grossly unfavourable to the Third World.

An UNCTAD (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development) study of 30 July 1974 on the Indexation of Prices states:

'On the whole, however, from the mid-1950s to the end of 1972 the terms of trade of the developing countries, excluding petroleum-exporting countries, declined by about 15 per cent, equivalent to a loss, in 1971, of about \$ 10 billion, or substantially more than the total of official development assistance from developed market economy countries to developing countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America (about \$ 8.4 billion in 1972). There was thus a net transfer of real resources from developing to developed countries over this period.'

The terms of trade of the petroleum-exporting countries declined by about 10 per cent from the mid-1950s to the end of the 1960s and it was only in 1971 and 1972 that the petroleum-exporting countries were finally forced to take unilateral action to raise the price of oil.

Indexation is then a proposal to link the prices of Third World exports to the prices of Third World imports in order to ensure that as the prices of imports rise, the prices of exports will rise too. To take a simple example, the price of a pound of Sri Lanka tea should rise at the international auctions at least in the same proportion as the rise in the price of motor spare parts, fertilizer, insecticide sprayers, etc.

Yet what was the fate of the now famous UN Resolution 3083 (XXVIII) of 6 December 1973 asking not yet for Indexation but merely that UNCTAD should sponsor a study on Indexation? While 95 countries, including all developing countries, both Commonwealth and non-Commonwealth, with China, voted for the Resolution, 5 countries—the USA, UK, Germany (FR), France and Greece—voted against it, while 26 countries—including the USSR and several developed Communist countries—abstained.

The NIEO itself was adopted at the UN without a formal vote, but some of the speeches made by developed country delegates after the adoption of the Declaration and the Programme manifested a mixture of opposition, fear, hesitation and very qualified support.

In this connection there is no doubt that the Rich World, both non-Communist and Communist,

will follow with great care the proceedings of the Fifth Conference of Non-Aligned Countries to be held in our own country next year. Not only will they follow the actual proceedings with care, but they can also be expected to seek to influence the outcomes of the Conference.

FOOD AND TECHNOLOGY.

The Programme of Action contains a whole section on food, which continues to be one of the most distressing problems of the world. In the rich countries it is often a question of over-consumption with its attendant evils. In the Third World it is a question of inadequate consumption of calories and protein, consequent malnutrition especially of children, leading to sickness, hunger and death.

In the decade 1962-72 food imports by developing countries rose by 40 per cent. On the basis of past trends, the World Food Conference Secretariat estimated that the cereal import requirements of developing countries would rise from 16 million tons per year in 1969-71 to 85 million tons in 1985, or even to 100 million tons if the year is one of bad harvests.

Two questions have therefore to be faced and answered in the NIEO: the establishment of conditions favouring increases in food

productivity in the developing countries themselves and the restructuring of trade so as to ensure the free flow of food from surplus areas particularly in the Rich World to food-scarce areas elsewhere.

The Third major concern is technological development. This is needed in every Third World developmental area, whether in agriculture, manufacturing industry or the service sector, and is founded on technological research. Furthermore, since technological innovation has to be applied in certain given or only gradually alterable socio-cultural contexts, technological research must be joined to research in the social sciences.

Here again, however, the odds are overwhelmingly against the Third World. In 1971 the UN approved and published a World Plan of Action for the Application of Science and Technology to Development. Since then to quote Hans Singer of the Sussex Institute of Development Studies, 98 per cent of all Research and Development expenditures "took place for the minority of mankind living in the rich countries...only 2 per cent of all R & D expenditures took place in the developing countries."

Drastic change is needed in this field. An example may be taken

MR. RONNIE DE MEL

Mr. Ronnie de Mel who resigned from the SLFP with a fanfare of press publicity made a statement in the NSA on October 8. It was a two hour marathon, but it will not go down to history. He had lashed out at the Establishment but so virulent was his outburst that it left his hearers unmoved. Too much of a good thing is also bad. What was significant was that he announced that he would go it alone as an Independent right up to the next General Elections, and then would decide which side or party he would (like to) join (no doubt on the basis of their manifestos and their capacity to deliver the goods.) Cynics however say that this was only another way of saying that he would join the winning side capable of forming the Government—if they also recognised his mettle and genius. But, the big question which he failed to answer is whether he will be able to win a seat at all at the next elections as an Independent. Those who had thought that he would join the LSSP had felt that Mr. Ronnie de Mel would have a new lease of life in the political arena as a Samasamajist. There are others, however, who felt that Mr. de Mel would gravitate towards the Udegama-Prince Gunasekera "revolutionary" party of Independents, but there does not seem to be any basis for such thinking either. Some LSSPers had hoped that Mr. Ronnie de Mel's defection would be the signal for a mass evacuation of left-minded backbenchers from the SLFP, but this too has not happened. History becomes real only when action is taken at the turn of a tide. But the action by Mr. de Mel has turned no tide. In fact, there was no tide. There might not be even a ripple in the politics of the deep deep south.

of research into the production and marketing of a commodity of immediate interest to us in Sri Lanka, namely, tea. Let alone further research into the types of tea that will be in demand in Western countries before the end of the century, even data as to the present state of the international tea business reaches with difficulty, or not at all, the countries which produce the initial green tea leaves. And, to be almost naively candid, where in the green leaf producing countries do social researchers have easy access to such elementary western research equipment as dictaphones, xerox machines, calculators not yet to speak of video tapes, a rapid communication network, sophisticated computer devices?

It is being increasingly realized by the most perceptive and sympathetic Rich World developmentalists that more and more Third World research should be conducted in the Third World by Third World researchers and that there should be collaboration on equal terms between development research institutes in the West with those of the Third World. If no Third World scientist is considered to be sufficiently qualified, say, to sit on a commission to advise a Western country how to solve its current problems of inflation, unemployment, environmental pollution and traffic congestion, how is there so much uncritical assurance that Western experts will know better what is good for the Third World than Third Worlders themselves?

DEVELOPMENT MODELS. Our own response to the NIEO will involve us sooner rather than later in a more than hitherto serious quest for our own development model. It would be wrong to postulate continuity of these models from the colonial period to the contemporary independent period for two reasons. First, there was no integrated colonial development model; instead, most changes were left to the working of a laissez-faire capitalism. Second, the colonial system was heavily weighted in favour of the rich and strong against the poor and weak.

On the other hand, to import development models from existing centrally planned socialist countries—paying no heed to the weaknesses of these models even in

the countries of origin—would merely re-introduce the former situation of dependence and inferiority. While there should in our view be a ready openness to the alternative socialist model, as responding more closely to the socio-economic needs of the countries of the Third World, there should be at least as much concomitant readiness to re-think the model with as much proud self-reliance as China showed when it drew inspiration from the earlier Russian model and evolved its own.

Fortunately, in nearly every area of the Third World today—East Asia, West Asia, Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean—there is a growing body of Third World developmentalists who have begun to understand the numerous links that inter-relate their separate and several findings.

If discussion on the New International Economic Order promoted the co-ordination of Third World developmental thinking, it may be that we shall soon see arising in the world a model of development that will be so unlike anything the world has yet seen that it could only be called the Third World model.



**ANCIENT CHINESE
ASTROLOGY**

**Moon Calendar
Delineations**

— Concluded —

THE HORSE

1906
1918—1930
1942—1954—1966

Persons born in the year of the Horse are generally quite popular—they make cheerful companions and are adept at paying compliments. They are also impatient, quick in everything they do, hot-blooded, easy to anger, terribly independent, and able to perceive the feelings of others. Though appearing confident and clever, they often fail at projects they consider important. Handsome, lovers of luxury, sometimes showy in dress and manners, horse-year people take keen pleasure

in the world of entertainment. They are always in attendance at plays, concerts and operas, and are drawn to conventions or other gatherings involving large crowds. The Year of the Horse is not a favourable year for girls' births. Horse-year women have come to be mistrusted—they have a reputation for being overly-independent, capricious and cantankerous. Girls find getting a husband most difficult are those born in THE YEAR OF THE WHITE HORSE which occurs once in 60 years. Those born in the Year of the Horse do well to seek Tiger, Dog, or Sheep-year people as marriage partners. Prospects for a successful marriage with Ox, Rabbit, or Horse-year persons are bad, but those for wedlock with a Rat-year person are worse.

THE SHEEP

1907
1919—1931
1943—1955—1967

Tender, kind and timid by nature Sheep-year people are well-loved by associates, are easily stimulated to pity for those less fortunate, and are generous but expect no thanks for generosity. In Oriental lore, the Sheep is a very defenseless creature, and so people born within this year often come to failure, not through their own fault, but through the selfishness of others. Sheep-year people do not partake in the struggles and rivalry attendant to achieving leadership, hence are seldom world conquerors or leaders. Not assertive, they are clumsy in speech and make poor salesmen. Elegant, highly-accomplished in the arts, they may be assured of a good living as their talents will make money for them. Nevertheless they feel uncertain of themselves, and what direction their lives should take. They should endeavour to marry a person born in a Rabbit, Boar, or Horse year. The forecast for marriage with one born in the Year of the Rat would be unfavourable, and that for marriage to an Ox or Dog-year person would be still worse.

THE MONKEY

1908
1920—1932
1944—1956—1968
Clever and skillful in grand-scale operations, adroit when making financial deals, passionate and strong-natured, but lacking

in constancy, people born in the Year of the Monkey are the erratic geniuses of the cycle. Surprisingly inventive and original, they are able to solve the most difficult problems with astonishing ease, and there are few fields in which they will not be successful. Fired with a deep desire for knowledge, they read, see and know a great deal and have prodigious memories. Monkey-people tend to hold other people in contempt. They have a disconcerting habit of agreeing with others—this is a policy tactic. They have to be careful about over-explaining for by talking too much they drive people away. The best marriage partner for a Monkey-person would be one born in a Dragon or Rat-year. A match with a Snake or Boar-year person should be viewed with distrust, and the least favorable match would be one with a Tiger-year person.

THE COCK

1909

1921—1933

1945—1957—1969

Cock-year people are deep thinkers and are devoted to their duties. They have a habit of speaking out directly whenever they have something on their minds and may be unheeding of other people's feelings. Their fortunes may resemble the waves, for at times they are improvident. Sometimes they are wealthy, other-times they are not. The best marriage for one born in the year of the Cock would be with an Ox, Snake or Dragon-year person. They must avoid a match with a Rat, Cock, or year person and shun one with someone born in the Year of the Rabbit.

THE DOG

1910

1922—1934

1946—1958—1970

Dog year people have a deep sense of duty and loyalty, are extremely honest, inspire other people's confidence and know how to keep secrets. They are held in high regard by others who consider them fine persons, yet they can be selfish, extremely stubborn and caustic in criticizing what they think is wrong. They are eccentric not good at social gatherings, and very cold emotionally. Throughout history Dog-year, people have been champions of justice. Not noted for small talk, they make

good leaders in industry, since they are very able in dealing with people. A Dog-year person is advised to have a strong-willed wife, and because of his cool temperament marriage with either a Horse, Tiger or Rabbit-year person is considered best. He should avoid marrying one born in the Year of the Cock and consider absolutely foredoomed such a union with one born in either a Dragon or Sheep-year.

THE BOAR

1911

1923—1935

1947—1959—1971

Boar-year persons have tremendous fortitude, and an inner strength that nothing can deter. Honest, chivalrous and gallant, they always fly the white flag of purity, and there is neither left nor right, nor retreat once their path is set. Though short tempered, they hate quarrels or arguments. They are affectionate and kind, and the friends they make are friends for life. Though well-informed and apparently studious, they are not deep thinkers. Impulsive and honest, they may be victimized by the unscrupulous, and should avoid dealings with them.

A Rabbit or Sheep-year person would make the best spouse for a Boar-year person. He must avoid a match with one born in either the Monkey or his own year. His worst selection as a mate would be someone born in the Year of the Snake.

* * *

BUILDING A

VILLAGE HOUSE-53

Village Scrapbook-1

By Herbert Keuneman

IN THIS and probably one or two following articles I am going to recount a miscellany of village events and problems (not necessarily related, and not necessarily significant) to illuminate aspects of rural life with which a non villager is unlikely to be familiar, at least as phenomena seen close-to. I hope you will find them interesting, even though none of them, despite so great a talent as mine for loquaciousness! will suffice to make a full-length article. I shall try on the whole to refrain from

commenting. (I have promised this before, but perhaps you know how difficult it is?)

MALAY MALAISE?. Rudyard Kipling (who suffered, of course, with the White Man's Burden to be up and doing everybody in sight) once dubbed the Malays the Malazy. He had not met the Ceylonese. But, whether or not he would have called them, had he done so, the Ceyloneasy, he probably didn't have the whole truth. This morning I met a man who has the misfortune (by Kipling's standard) to be both Malay and Ceylonese, and I do not think the factor of sloth enters in any considerable way into the account of his problem. And he has a problem.

MR. RAZIK (call him Mr. Razik) is an ex-Government Servant, once a Land Office Clerk and now—rather unusually for a man that ever held such prestigious status—a simple farmer in a nearby 'colony'. He has seven children, the two elder and another younger one sons, and all but the first two still of school-going age. He has spent thirteen years on the land, nine of them in content; but now, after four years of drought or worse—unseasonable rain, and as long under our new economy of malignant inflation, it has become a matter of immediacy that his eldest son (23) find employment and become a contributing member of the family. It was in this connexion he came to see me.

He had the following rather naive but by village standards not really unreasonable appeal to canvass: I should give his boy a letter to my cousin Pieter recommending that the young man be given a job—any job, stacks of which must obviously be at Pieter's disposal—and *voila*, there, for the time being, would be a respite from his difficulty.

It is true that Mr. Razik and I have not known each other from Adam: nor have I ever met, or heard of his son. On the other hand (a) it is known that I am a fairly obliging kind of person in a diffuse kind of way (b) the boy himself is apparently exceedingly employable—he speaks excellent English, like his father; he is 'a 48-word stenographer'; he has a technical certificate of some sort in Building and Construction—so that Pieter would have a wide

choice of jobs onto which to fit him; and (c) above all, am I not Pieter's 'elder brother'?

It is not all that difficult to explain to Mr. Razik that it is one thing to testify to the desert and ability of someone I personally know and to suggest his fitness for a particular employment but another thing altogether to saddle anybody as busy as a Minister with the chore of matching an unknown applicant to an unspecified post. What is not only difficult but next to impossible is to persuade Mr. Razik to accept this is not nevertheless a perfectly reasonable amount of trouble to expect a younger brother to go to at the request of an elder one. The point is that in the village it is not considered unreasonable at all: the bonds and duties of relationship still (very largely) hold, and Mr. Razik cannot be persuaded that the rights bestowed upon me by primogeniture can be cancelled by any difference in official status or that, for me, any matter of other principle can outweigh the principle of Family Custom.

IN VAIN do I confess the truth—and loth am I to do so; for the legend has its local advantages—that Pieter and I are not brothers, that all we are are brothers' grandsons; for, by village reckoning, if that is so we are brothers—apparently, if Pieter and I had been so ill-advised as to have descendants they, too, would remain brothers, at least for the purpose of negotiating favours, to the end of time—and Mr. Razik is patently put out that I quibble as I do: after all fraternity should count at least as efficacious as a bribe. (So, Pieter, if you read this take it as notice that you may yet hear from me!)

Trying to restore our initial mutual cordiality, I asked Mr. Razik whether his son had not sought employment, up to now, on his own initiative and merit; and he quoted long enough a list to confirm what in fact I had always known: that in obtaining a job today initiative and merit and even luck are too little. 'He even tried to get into the army!' Mr. Razik ended.

'Why "even", Mr. Razik?'

'Why, sir! So difficult to get leave, no?'

'But don't the Army get leave just like other servants of the State do?'

'So, sir, what is that? Once or twice a year he can come home. But now I am getting old, and my second son also soon will be wanting a job, and then who to look after our land harvest time and sowing time and... That is why his mother cried and said not to apply for such a job. But anyway he applied. But for our luck he didn't get it! Thanks be to Allah!' Mr. Razik added after a moment's contemplation of the risk the reckless boy had run.

AND I THOUGHT of Banders and the baby Dinga might easily not have had, with Banders seldom able to spend two nights in a month with her; and of Rum and Dhanapala and the sinecure he had had to give up for a job that gave him more time for Rum and Rum's field; and of Alpin; and of Herat Banda; and of countless others in this village and then thousand others in the same dilemma; and I thought of those few jobs (such as those of

teacher, co-operative clerk, hospital attendant but not nurse) where a deliberate policy of stationing them as near as possible to their home villages proves practicable to carry out; and I thought that, on the other hand, hard thought it may seem, to provide an efficient and single-minded worker in industry or the clerical cadre or the forces seemed possible only by ruthlessly breaking his tie to the land, else you encouraged absentee clerks and absentee mechanics and perhaps AWOL soldiers... or you might end up, again, with absentee landlords but on an impoverished scale.

And I thought that in such circumstances a feeling of malaise amongst the rural population—would-be urban as brutal economics bade much of it be—a feeling of frustration and otiosity, could hardly be avoided; but being Malazy or Sinhaleasy had nothing to do with it.

LIQUOR AND C.G.R.

The Minister of Transport, Mr. K. B. Ratnayake, must be congratulated on his decision to ban the sale of all liquor in the restaurant cars and station canteens of the CGR. One of the main causes for the deterioration of the CGR was the unrestricted availability of liquor. Railway staff, all down the line, spent time consuming liquor—taken off the restaurant cars or the canteens—without doing the work for which they were paid, viz. keeping the track free of grass, keeping the stations clean, washing the carriages and a whole host of other duties. Instead, these railway workers were always loitering round the canteens or just lolling about in convenient sit-ins around the station premises, chewing betel after a tot, or playing cards. If the station master or someone else in "authority" had called upon them to do the work they were expected to—they told him to go to hell because otherwise their "union" would take up the matter with the "ministry" and damn those who sought to enforce discipline (and work) as "reactionaries"—UNPers, FPers and other such anti-UF vermin. This had gone on for the last five years—with a few notable exceptions where the station masters were strong enough to act because they too had a pull at the "ministry". The Railway Catering Service—good under a private caterer and also under the first spell as a nationalised outfit—has virtually gone to the dogs in the last five years. After a fire in a buffet car stationary at the Fort Station, commuters were penalised to go without tea or coffee because the "ministry" did not know how discipline the workers. And the bread and short eats carried even on the long distance trains did not last for more than a few stations—and that for only a fraction of the passengers who wanted them. All that was available in plenty was liquor. The restaurant cars had, in fact, become hell-holes of stink, dirt, vomit and over-drunk tipplers who were nuisance to all other passengers, especially women. There was also no Railway Security Service to protect commuters because it had been castrated, de-energised and virtually disbanded in order to satisfy the inhibited allergies of the puny demi-gods (not Ministerial Olympians) who have ruled the CGR for the last five years. The ban on the sale of liquor is the first streak of silver lining on the horizon of the CGR in the post-LSSP era.

And now we are warned of the spectre of urban starvation. At this point I gave up thinking.

THE L-SENTRY, 'Showshology', said the young man.

It was the first time I had—and the last time I have—seen him. He could have been a fake with some ulterior motive (he didn't seem to know a number of persons, or even their names, that I should have expected him to know) but I don't think so.

HE HAD CALLED on me that day announcing that he was a university student at Peradeniya, where he had never heard of lan Goonetilleke the Librarian nor Ralph Pieris nor Gananath Obeye sekere (but he had heard of William Gilbery and Bryce Ryan and of B. H. Farmer) but what seemed to prove he had some Peradeniya University connexion of some sort was the person I eventually identified as having brought me to his notice. 'I have heard about you', he said; and to this day I cannot make up my mind whether that had been a kind of testimonial either to me or to him or an implicit warning that my activities, such as they might be, were known to All! You see I am simply incredulous that even from a *nava*-Lanka university he could be what he claimed to be and yet be as he was. For this conversation is not a fake.

I could see that 'show'—shology might well be a useful study in this day and age, I am open-minded even about degrees in such arcane disciplines as Business Management or Theatrical Production, but it was clear his subject (which, obtuse as I seemed to be that evening, I had not immediately identified was anything as practical as that, besides, as I say, it was almost beyond my old-fashioned standards of credulity to accept that any graduate student could be quite as unconversant as this. 'What subjects this year', I asked, for clarification.

'Econ', he answered, 'Econ and stashsticks' (rhyming it vaguely with match-sticks).

'Econ?', I could not resist the rather malicious probe, although by now I was aware of what he was talking about.

'Econ', he confirmed. 'Econ—Econ—o—logy—Econ—Mix!' he triumphantly supplied getting it right at last.

DEAR READER, if you don't believe me I have no way to make you. But if you don't believe me or won't believe me you will not realize down to how parlous a condition of disqualification education exclusively in the Mother Tongue has brought some, at least of its products. (If this young man is a product, even an extreme case of one, which I have proposed as open to a faint doubt.) God knows I am not really a snob about the pronunciation of the only language in which I am fluent, though English was never my Mother Tongue either; not anyway nearly such a snob as those snobs-in-reverse who may pride themselves upon a reasonable French accent or on talking High German yet still think it the mark of an imperialist lackey' to speak accepted English. I suppose Sociology is one of those quasifortunate subjects in which within conceited limits the exclusive Mother Tongue can be employed, unlike others that are ineluctably tainted by the necessity to range wider a field. But I confess I was appalled to hear someone who on the strength of such an honours degree could

hardly end up as less than Personnel Manager of a Corporation betray so evidently the lack of even a nodding acquaintance with the practice of so useful a language in addition to an all-but-unaccountable disdain of the leading local practitioners of his science! How would he ever keep in touch? Or would the showshology he would once and for all acquire (on the strength of his lecture notes) last him into an honourable and quite certainly affluent retirement?

I was piqued that he should have had to go so far as Peradeniya to 'hear about me' when his home was only three miles away. I asked him how he had heard. I tired to ask him in Sinhalese, but he was not having any.

'She told me', he said, 'when I go the L-Sentry.'

'She' is Common Gender in village Beginner's English. So that gave me no clue. Neither, by a long chalk, did the place where he claimed to have acquired his information. The L-Sentry: what was that? I could only think of a Police Post, and my suspicions

PESALAI AND OIL

The top bosses of the Ceylon (Sri Lanka) Petroleum Corporation (CPC — or why not SLPC?) have run into a spot of real trouble. A time bomb has exploded under their feet. For the time being it has brought to the surface a cold war that had long been building up inside the CPC. Those who could read the writing on the wall knew that this was coming. The communal clashes at the work site in Pesalai, together with the devastating million rupee arson there last April/May, was a clear indication that something serious was brewing. Insiders were aware that the indiscriminate tilting of the top management to one breed of unionists would sooner or later end up in the kind of situation which has now arisen. The Sri Lanka Independent Petroleum Employees Union had sent a memorandum to the Prime Minister that an investigation should be held into whether a major fraud was not being practised by some interested parties in the CPC that there was oil at Pesalai—whereas in fact there was none in the two sites where wells had been sunk. This memorandum may not have received public attention but for the fact that the *Daily Mirror* and the *Lankadipa* gave it publicity compelling *Lake House* to publish grudging references to it—and also to a rejoinder the Union made to the Chairman's reply to the original memorandum which received wide publicity in all papers. The *Daily Mirror*, apart from a front page first lead story, published the Union's reply almost in full. It is significant that the Union has been at pains not to put any blame on the Russians and has suggested that the top brass of the CPC ignored the Russian experts in many vital matters. With the *Daily Mirror* (and the *Lankadipa*) presently acting as the "watchdogs of the nation", the bosses of CPC cannot now hope to bulldoze public opinion into the mysterious silence of the graveyard security they have maintained about everything Pesalai. *Tribune* has raised many queries about Pesalai which have remained unanswered so far, but now a time for accounting and open-handed information has come.

of his suspicion redoubled. But he said it was not a Police Post.

I pressed him. 'This L-Sentry, he insisted, 'this...this...' Then he capitulated. 'This... ispiritale... this dispensariya-like'.

Now it came to me. It was a 'she' that had betrayed me: a doctor. And yes, she did work at the Sentry (if you pronounce it that way: L for 'eal for Health and cen-tre for a bisyllabicated version of Centre!)

* * *

K A Z I —25

In The Rajangane Area

By Anatory Bukoba

AFTER ELEVEN AT NIGHT, it was, when I came to the house. A light burning, and the sound of someone up; my host was reading. He gave up his bed, and he went on the floor with his wife and child. The wife asked me if I had eaten. I said I had. They had only just had a second dinner they said, on what they had cooked earlier. I felt she would have needed only a little encouragement to have started her making me something.

She had to be up at four, the wife said, to be away early. I asked her how she would know the time; they had no watch or clock. It was apparent to me that they would know by little signs, cocks, I supposed, if there were any cocks within earshot. She would not have to have until it started to get light. They made me some tea. The wife put some cowpea in water ready for the morning. We went to bed.

Someone astir woke me. I was asked the time; four o'clock it was. I kept dozing off. The last time I awoke, the wife was leaving the house. It must have been half-past five, and she had been on the go all that time. Her husband told me she had gone off carrying a bushel of cowpea for sale in a village many miles away. There was a bus to the place, but there was a two mile walk to get to the bus. He would look after the baby till his wife got back.

Their house was a rough and ready one. It was built on a high platform of earth. There was a room, two sides of which was built of mud and water, and one of these sides was only two foot or less high; the roof came right down on that side, the open part of the house had some protection from the wind. There was a wall by the bed, but it only went just higher than the bed. The house was where the paddy fields were, two acres of of them. The high land, where the permanent houe would stand, was a great distance away; one acre in extent, it had not been cleared yet. No rice had yet been sown in these fields. There was no water for it, but some water had, I believe, been given for the cowpea which had been sown.

MY HOST had been here two years now, and he reminded me how when he had first come, his brother in law and he had met me by the river, and shared their meal of rice with me in a house which I ad there then. That was the time they were first clearing the paddy field. He had a lot growing round his house now, mostly manioc, it seemed to me. His father lives in another part of the Rajangane Scheme, and my friend's eldest child, small though her

years were, preferred to live with relatives in the village even further away.

Breakfast over, I repaired to another house not far away. Here there was a family which had once found it difficult to make ends meet. They were not strictly farmers, for they preferred to live by hiring themselves out for the day. Work was uncertain, but they were now financially independent. The woman was a good seamstress, I think the word is, and although they could not buy clothes, they kept themselves adequately dressed.

Both this house, and the other house, had no more goods, or clothes, than what they had on their back, or so it seemed. Their chattels seemed to be the bare essentials of what they needed for their work. Yet, the farmer seemed always to have food in his house. Illnesses seem to come and go easily here. I was concerned about a family which seemed to have members with skin disease on its hands a fortnight before, yet, they had all got over it. Much of the trouble, such as there is, is caused by people not learning to pool their resources and energies. Money I think, has had much to do with it. It tends to keep people apart precisely when it is supposed to be doing the opposite.

SLBC'S PAPACY

Something funny seems to be always happening in the SLBC these days. If it is not funny, it is tragic. And, at all times, it is highly melodramatic. The latest is that a big big boss had shown a rare exhibition of monastic prudery when an unwary announcer had whistled a pop tune whilst he walked down the corridor from the studio. The big big boss—who has been bursting with his own importance for quite sometime now—had heard this whistling and sent for the announcer and had asked him for an explanation for his unseemly and irreverent conduct. The announcer had truthfully stated that he had picked up the tune from one of the latest pop songs he had put on the air a few minutes earlier and had not thought it wrong to whistle it as he went along. The big big boss had then asked him whether he would do such a thing "in a church". The scared announcer had blubbered that he was not in a church but in a corridor. This had sent the blood pressure rating of the big big boss so high that he gave this announcer a dressing-down for well nigh two hours. So far as the big big boss was concerned it was two hours of sermonising to establish a new kind of Papacy in the SLBC—at a time when the Pope in Rome was relaxing all the rules and had neglected the Inquisition to oblivion—but so far as the public was concerned it was two hours' of fruitless and purposeless preaching at state expenditure. Very soon, it is expected, that announcers (both male and female) will tread the corridors of the SLBC only in cassocks or some other similar outfit with eyes turned down and lips firmly shut. And the big big boss will thereafter implant a halo of approval on these (non-whistling) creatures made lesser than angels for having fallen from grace because one of their kind had whistled a pop song in hearing of the Holy Father.

LEFTWING THEORISING

Was The UF A Blunder?

by Jayantha Somasundaram

The statement issued by the Central Committee of the Lanka Samasamaj Party a few days back, is an important reiteration of their policy and refocuses attention to the different approaches that one finds in the Left movement.

There is an interesting contradiction in this statement; which while on the one hand claiming that "the capitalist system has been considerably weakened by the progressive measures of the United Front Government," admits that "the policies of the government" led to the growth of new and very influential sections of the capitalist class."

THIS DICHOTOMY stems from the ambiguous approach that various sectors of the LSSP adopt in their attitude towards the SLFP. The more powerful and by far the more significant trend of thought has characterised the SLFP as a petit bourgeois party which has already taken on a progressive stance due to the pressures of imperialism.

Therefore it was concluded that the rural masses could be reached by further radicalisation of this petit bourgeois party, leading ultimately to a worker-peasant government. In the immediate context, as a tactical concession, the leadership of the entire progressive movement would be abdicated to the petit bourgeois. Historically, the proletariat would emerge as the decisive class.

The theoretical basis for this rested on the belief that British imperialism could not create a viable economic and political climate to ensure capitalist development. The failure of the UNP was seen as a symptom of this. And it was assumed that *ipso facto* the initiative had passed on to Socialism.

The September 3rd debacle prompts one to question the theoretical viability of what has gone before. The United Front was justified in the belief that it would substantially radicalise

the SLFP. Had it done so it is hard to explain how and why the SLFP with few dissident voices and no defections could expel the LSSP from government.

All of this gives credence to the proposition that even the presence of the LSSP in the Front would result in only a limited number of anti-imperialist and anti-feudal measures. The Central Committee resolution itself admits that their expulsion will not forestall the proposed reforms, like the nationalisation of banks and estates.

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BOOK REVIEW

Indonesian Bombshell

THE DEVIUS DALANG—SUKARNO AND THE SO-CALLED UNTUNG PUTSCH (Interdoc Publishing House, The Hague).

A sort of surprise is in store for the tenth anniversary of General Suharto's regime in Indonesia. The Interdoc Publishing House in the Hague has issued a book "The Devious Dalang" subtitled "Sukarno and the So-Called Untung Putsch". The book contains secret records of the interrogations before an investigation committee of Colonel Widjanarko of the Marines, an aide-de-camp to former President Sukarno. Investigators of the Indonesian security questioned him as a witness in 1970 when the deposed Sukarno was held under house arrest and the days of the ailing and elderly "Father of the Nation" were already numbered.

It is not known how these extremely interesting papers have found their way abroad, but it is most likely that this was done without an authorization of the Indonesian authorities because Widjanarko's testimony completely refute the official version of the essence of the dramatic events of September 30, 1965 in Indonesia, of who master-minded the whole thing and who was the "operator" (as a matter of fact the word "dalang" in Indonesian stands for a man who pulls the

strings in puppet shows.) Until this day many, though not all, believe that on the night of October 1, 1965 the Communist Party of Indonesia (PKI) began a putsch seeking power while Lieutenant-Colonel Untung of the President's palace guard, who formally headed the plot and ordered the execution of senior army officers, was just a pawn in the hands of "perfidious communists." As a result literally hundreds of thousands faced firing squads charged with an attempt to overthrow a legitimate government. Over one hundred thousand are still languishing in prisons and concentration camps where they have been sent for life.

The details revealed by Widjanarko has turned this "official" version upside down. For, it was Sukarno himself, the President for life and the Prime Minister, the Supreme Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Indonesia, "the Great Leader of the Revolution", invested with all constitutional and extra-constitutional powers, who ordered the arrest and liquidation of oppositionist army generals. Widjanarko claims that back on August 4, 1965 Sukarno received the commanding general of his personal guard regiment, General Sabur, and also Untung and asked them whether they were ready to take drastic measures against generals disloyal to the President. Untung did not hesitate to indicate his readiness. On September 29 Sabur reported to the President that

G. B. S.

Sir,
In your issue of the 11th instant, you quote a number of sayings of the great religious leaders—Jesus Christ, Lord Buddha, Prophet Mohamed etc. under the headline "The Golden Rule". In this connection, please permit me to quote a saying of that great iconoclast, George Bernard Shaw. In direct contrast to the advice of all these religious leaders, he said: "Do not do unto others as you would that they do unto you. They may not have the same tastes."

Basil Perera

Colombo.
12.10.75

measures to be applied to unruly generals were under preparation. Sukarno hurried his subordinates because he feared that the generals would forestall him and strike first. Next evening during a public rally at the main stadium in Jakarta Sukarno was handed a note from Untung, which specified the date and the hour of the proposed action. Several hours later palace guard units arrested and shot six generals and a lieutenant-seized by mistake for the Defence Minister General A. H. Nasution. On October 2 Sukarno ordered the bodies of the executed generals dug out and destroyed to prevent them from falling into the hands of the army. This last order was not carried out.

Widjanarko's testimony would have probably been of interest only for historians were it not for the fact that it makes the Indonesian government's reprisals against members of left-wing parties totally unjustified. If everything was done on the express orders of the head of state who possessed practically unlimited powers, there could have been no "plot to overthrow the legitimate government". Without going into a discussion of the legality of Sukarno's actions it has to be recognized that all the rest of the cast only carried out his orders. (Even if PKI leaders did take part in the actions—and Widjanarko's testimony on that score is flimsy, unconvincing and unsubstantiated, and he seems to rely only on newspaper reports)—still they acted on the orders of the legitimate head of state. So, the dead "plotters" were innocent as are those who have been imprisoned already for over a decade—such is the cruel truth revealed by Widjanarko in his testimony.

Still there are questions which are not answered by these documents, the main one being—who stands to benefit from the publication abroad of the documents compromising the entire ruling regime in Indonesia and casting shadows on its foremost figures since their true role in the preparation of the events of September 30, can be subject to all sorts of interpretations and suspicions in the light of Widjanarko's testimony. For, Colonel Widjanarko of the Navy remained on active military service at least until the time of his testimony, that is until

1970. Many of his colleagues who had been in the know of the action against the generals but had failed to report their knowledge to their commanders were later imprisoned. Widjanarko escaped this fate and this indicates that he did inform somebody in good time about the preparations and thus earned absolution and gratitude for the future. Today it can only be a matter of speculation as to why his information was not acted upon to save the generals from the execution at the hands of President Sukarno's guards.

The authenticity of the documents have raised no serious doubts, so far among experts on Indonesian affairs. First of all the vocabulary and the form—the papers are reproduced both in the English translation as well as in Indonesian, are similar to those of the records of the trials of Colonel Untung, the former Foreign Minister Subandrio, member of the PKI Politburo Nyono, which were officially released by the Indonesian authorities

in the late 60s. Another, had a rather unexpected proof is provided—strange as it may seem—by Widjanarko himself who has issued a solemn refutation through the *Djakarta Merdeka*. Widjanarko has declared that he had not handed over these papers to anybody but, significantly he did say even one word to doubt their authenticity as a whole or even partially.

The Widjanarko papers are very much a time-bomb. It will provide a new defence for those accused of being participants of "the movement of September 30." But the publication of these materials is even more important because it throws light on the behind-the-scenes squabbles within the "new order" where antagonists are prepared to make public most explosive and delicate documents in order to drown one another.

A.S.

London.
2.10.75

DEBATE ON PM'S STATEMENT

BEFORE THE DEBATE on the PM's statement of September 18 on the exit of the LSSP (and which was also reply to Dr. N.M. Perera's statement of September 4), Dr. Colvin R. de Silva and Mr. Leslie Goonewardene completed making their statements. This was on October 8. Dr. de Silva was as usual longwinded, but unlike Dr. Perera, he was not viciously personal. Dr. de Silva was sharply critical of Anura but tried hard to set the whole matter in a dialectical perspective in marxian jargon. Mr. Leslie Goonewardene was even more to the point: he pinpointed the matters on which there had been disagreement with the PM during the five years. His was a sober and restrained speech which showed that a split had been long overdue. On October 9, Dr. N. M. Perera had opened the debate on the PM's statement. He had nothing new to add except more personal venom. His speech did not add either to his stature as a veteran politician of over forty revolutionary years or cause any serious embarrassment to the PM or the SLFP. Those who had believed that the LSSP had some serious inside revelations were disappointed. Bernard Soysa in his suave and plausible manner tried to denigrate the SLFP and the PM, but there was nothing he could ask more serious than an investigation into the PL 480 fund withdrawals. The Government took this full square when Minister Ilangaratne stated that the PM was willing to have a Select Committee of the Assembly to investigate this matter. The LSSP will now have to place all information it can muster before this Committee, but many think that the PM has successfully called the LSSP bluff by this referring the matter to a Select Committee. The debate saw the emergence of Mr. Felix R. Dias Bandaranaike as a parliamentary debater of skill and subtlety and with calm logic he made mince-meat of Dr. Perera's vindictive outbursts. Political observers have noted that a new FRDB has come into the political scene with a welcome capacity to resist the temptation (to which he always feel victim before) to indulge in jibes and rapier thrusts on an-eye-for-an-eye and a-tooth-for-a-tooth basis and which had confined earlier his parliamentary repertoire to scoring debating points. In this speech he showed rare restraint and gave a new dimension and meaning to his non-marxist centrist politics.

Confidentially

THARUNEE

IS IT NOT A FACT that Mr. T. B. Ilangaratne's stock had shot up in serious and right-minded circles when he refused to have anything to do with the *Lake House's* (disguised) sex tamasha to spot a *Lassana Tharunee*? That TBI has wisely imposed a ban on the Insurance Corporation side-tracking its activities into beauty contests and other such sexy deviations? That the publicity afforded to TBI's very welcome decision to have nothing to do with these sex shows—really part of the permissive sex stemming from *Janavegaya* revolutionary theory—was minimal compared to the space and columnage devoted to the curves and contours of many *tharunees* spotlighted for the delectation of jaded nerves and fanciful imaginations? That the fuss and furore which the management of *Lake House* has bestowed on the magazine *Tharunee* is a complete negation of the objectives for which *Lake House* was taken over? That one of the main charges against the Wijewardenas was that they had debased standards—in politics, culture and education—by the methods and techniques of journalism they had practised? That it was particularly in the field of politics that the Wijewardenas had gone completely beserk where they had tried to "manage" the news (by slanting and blacking out) in order to promote their kind of politicians? That in the field of culture, it was said, that they favoured brown sahibry? That what made matters worse was that some of the topmost owners and directors of *Lake House* had brazenly broken the laws of the land in regard to exchange control and currency transactions with foreign funds accumulated on secret commissions? That it is for these reasons that many honest-minded people had supported the UF's decision to take over the privately-owned *Lake House* and convert it into a broad-based public company (with the Public Trustee having interim ownership)? That nearly three years have gone since the takeover but the *Lake House* is still in the interim stage? That

instead of the Wijewardenas we have an impersonal Public Trustee (controlling the bulk of the shares) who has let an even more impersonal Board of Directors (blissfully ignorant of anything pertaining to journalism, journalistic management and journalistic ethics) run riot? That in this process a particularly pernicious form of Left adventurism has now taken a firm grip of the effective administration of the majority of the publications of *Lake House*? That this kind of adventurism, identified in the minds of the public as *Janavegaya-ism*, has brought down *Lake House* in all aspects of its activities to depths unimaginable in Wijewardena's times? That one major manifestation of degeneracy which has overtaken *Lake House* is the total concentration on *Tharunee*?

IS IT NOT A FACT that national political crises, global inflation, OPEC price increases and the hundred of other events in Sri Lanka and in the world around that makes news and compels vast changes in our lives and living do not seem to bother the top brass of *Lake House*? That all that seems to matter to them is *Tharunee*? That with the money spent on sales promotions, beauty contests, sex and cheese cake and all the rest of the expense-account paraphernalia surrounding the *Tharunee* campaign, the only satisfaction that some of the top bosses of *Lake House* find is that the circulation figures of *Tharunee* have topped 90,000? That what they forget is that the more popular cartoon paper *Sathya* sells over a lakh of copies with any sales promotion? That *Sathya* is popular because of the quality of its cartoons and cartoon-stories? That it would be interesting to know the amount of money which has been spent on *Tharunee* sales promotion ever since *Tharunee* addicts took over in *Lake House*? That there have been stories in papers like the *Aththa* about the high quality foreign liquor which had been consumed on *Tharunee* expense-account bills in hotels in far flung places like Kandy, Galle and other places? That *Tribune* has not been concerned with such expenditure—nobody can complain except the Directors who authorise (even retrospectively) such unsustainable expenditure? That *Tribune* is not concerned that a five-figure prize money was pulled

out of *Lake House* funds whereas promoters of such beauty contests induce advertisers and business houses which profit from such tamashas to offer the prizes? That the Directors will be tempted to say that they have succeeded in pushing up the sales of *Tharunee*? That the question is whether the *Lake House* exists only to push up the sales of the sex and cheese-cake paper like *Tharunee*? That "*Tharunee*" is a nice word for a unmarried young damsel—past being a teenager (or a spring chicken) but before being hardened into adolescent young womanhood? That the only explanation one can find for the all-out concentration of effort on *Tharunee* is that those who are responsible for it are among those who believe that permissive sex and free love will bring the youth into the "revolutionary" movement? That it was this kind of perverse logic which had made these same types support and promote the sex-dominated ragging at the university campuses? That it was because of this that most of the publications of *Lake House* had directly and indirectly supported the degenerate sex orgies which were called "ragging" on the campuses? That it is now known that some of the top bosses of *Lake House* were horrified that the Government had backed Commissioner Kularatne in condemning the horrible acts of ragging in the campuses? That those who can read the writing on the wall will realise that *Tharunee* will only pave the way for permissive sex and perverse ragging not only in the campuses but also in other places where the young congregate? That right-minded people who have a say in the Government and in *Lake House* should look into the goings-on around *Tharunee* and take the necessary action to end the growing scandal over *Tharunee*? That stories have surfaced about young *tharunees* who, attracted by the paper's logic, have been led up the garden path of temptation into sex degeneracy? That those who believe in permissive sex will call this emancipation of the female who has long suffered male domination based on prudery and exploitation? That something must be urgently done to emancipate *Lake House* from the stranglehold *Tharunee* has on on it?





DOLLAR COFFEE

is the best

It is the

CHOICE

of the

PLAYERS

and my

FAVOURITE



...They accuse me of leaning to the Right. I shall not lean either to the Left or the Right. I shall tread the Middle Path — I shall continue to proceed along that path whatever the brickbats I receive.....

Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike

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