

# TRIBUNE

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## \* ILLANGARATNE'S THREAT?

The *Times of Ceylon* of Tuesday May 26, had a front page lead under the headline **WHITE—FLAG HOUSES AS CO-OPS? MINISTER READY TO TAKE THEM OVER**, and reported that Mr. T. B. Illangaratne, the Minister of Internal and Foreign Trade, had stated that he was ready to take over any house or shop that had hoisted white flags on Republic Day to use them as co-op stores. We have to presume that this report is correct because it has not been contradicted or denied. It must be remembered that Ministers of this Government are quick to point out errors in reporting very promptly over the Radio, and that Minister Illangaratne has been second to none in giving the broadest publicity to such denials or contradictions not only in regard to state-

ments attributed to him but also in regard to or actions alleged to have been taken by the department in his Ministry.

UP TO THE TIME OF WRITING, no denial or contradiction has been forthcoming, and we have therefore to take it that the *Times of Ceylon* had carried a faithful report of what was said at the meeting where had uttered this threat. For the record, it would be pertinent to set out the full text of the *Times* report.

"It was the want of accommodation that had prevented him from going ahead with his plan to open a co-operative store for every 500 ration book holders. He was now ready to take over any house or shop that had hoisted white flags on Republic Day and convert it into a co-operative store so that people could buy their provisions without having to wait long in queues.

"Mr. T. B. Illangaratne, Minister of Foreign and Internal Trade, said so at the opening of a Building Materials Corporation shop at Dehiwela.

"He said that fascism was rearing its ugly head. The people should therefore be vigilant. Otherwise they would lose their socialist gains. The people could see what progress had been made in the development of agriculture. The farmers were solidly behind the Government. They had made great sacrifices and had now got back the land they had lost to the capitalists during the colonial era.

"Mr. Pieter Keureman, Minister of Housing and Construction, said that in future all product of the Building Materials Corporation would be sold

through co-operative shops so that people could obtain building materials locally and thus save the cost of transport. Recently there was an acute cement shortage, but it had ended and the Cement Corporation was even able to export 15,000 tons of cement.

"The people of the area should be grateful to Mrs. Vivienne Goonewardene MP for Dehiwela-Mount Lavinia, for getting the Housing Ministry to open a building material store at a co-operative at Dehiwela. Mrs. Goonewardene also spoke."

IF THE REPORT IS ACCURATE AND IF THIS THREAT WAS REALLY MADE—we are making provision for a belated denial—then it is as serious a threat to democracy and the democratic system as Mr. J. R. Jayawardena's threat to launch a satyagraha and a civil disobedience movement.

The hoisting of a white flag or even a blue flag, or a red flag, as a mark of protest or disapproval, is a perfectly legitimate democratic way of showing one's disapproval to anything one does not like. Hoisting a white or a black flag is not extra-parliamentary or undemocratic action in a democratic system, the right to dissent, the right to protest, the right to oppose within the democratic framework, is fundamental to the system. If Mr. Jayawardena's threat to stage a civil disobedience movement to compel the Government either to quit or hold an immediate or premature election is "fascism," then Mr. Illangaratne's threat

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# ?

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## ✻ FDB & Corporations

WITH THE MASSIVE IMPORTS of rice, flour and other foodstuffs which this country has now assured itself, a new and dangerous euphoria has begun to seize the higher echelons of the Establishment and the Administration that everything was alright with this country. This new complacency tends to view the efforts to produce food locally with a superior and patronising attitude that even if the agricultural experts failed the country the financial wizards would succeed in buying the food on credit or on a never-never basis.

This complacency has been made worse by the fact that the UNP and the Opposition had blundered and the Government is still well away on top of the world. This complacency and euphoria among UF adherents has reached heights that will make anyone dizzy, but our stalwarts are undeterred and feel that everything will be this way evermore.

They feel that the gospel they preach was something so special that only success will attend their efforts: that they have a formula which they feel will resolve any difficulty. Ego has reached such proportions that there are zealots hero who feel that Sri Lanka would show a new way to the world to establish socialism through parliamentary democracy and the ballot box.

This euphoria came as an excellent antidote, no doubt, to the fears and apprehensions which had been held about the food situation during the early months of the year when it was known that the Maha would not be the success it was expected to be.

But it would be wise for our pundits to be a little careful about what might happen in the immediate future. There is so much that is rotten in our society that one does not know when it will all blow up. In this connection it will be

to take over the houses and buildings which had hoisted white flags on Republic Day as a mark of protest and mourning is also fascism all over.

And what is worse, is that whilst Mr. J. R. Jayawardene can be prevented by the State's security forces from staging a satyagraha as an "illegal act", Mr. Illangaratne and the Government of which he is a senior Minister have "legal" powers to take over any building, on every whim and fancy, without attributing any reason. The right of appeal as normally understood no longer exists. And this Ministerial power has been indiscriminately used in recent times—and the less said about some of these acquisitions and takeover the better.

*It is also well to remember that it is only when anti-democratic actions are legalised under the authority of state power that it becomes fascism. If Mr. Jayawardene attempts to stage civil disobedience, it is open to any party to insist that he "paving the way to fascism", but if Mr. Illangaratne carries out his threat to take over buildings which had hoisted the white as a punitive measure, then it is naked and real fascism.*

WE FEEL CERTAIN that either Mr. Illangaratne did not utter the words as reported by the *Times* or that he misunderstood the significance of the words he spoke. If this is so, it is not too late for Mr. Illangaratne to issue a statement clarifying the position and setting out what he had really said.

We cannot believe that a senior Minister of this Government would be guilty of a transgression such as this, namely to threaten to take over buildings over which a symbol of protest had been hoisted either by the owners, or a tenants, or even mischief makers.

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Mr. Illangaratne, Mr. Keuneman and others who spoke at the meeting should remember that in their days in the wilderness and later in the established Opposition, they had sported many a symbol of protest, and if their personal belongings were "taken over" because of such protests, then they may have something to complain about today, but for them to resort to such acquisitions as proposed by Minister Illangaratne will open the flood gates of anarchy that can only lead to totalitarianism. Moreover, if tomorrow, or after 1977, one or more of partners of the present United Front government find themselves in the Opposition, action could be legitimately taken against them for sporting red shirts or ties, or even for hoisting a flag which the Government of the day does not approve.

**The Prime Minister and the Government must take serious note of the uneasiness creeping into wide sections of the people who are sympathetic to the programme of the UF government, because they are disturbed by many acts of commission and omission of the Government which seems to be similar to the kind of action Mr. Illangaratne proposes to take under his threat.**

Complaints have reached the *Tribune* that there have been instances of land acquisitions, take over of lorries and the like, done solely to "punish" persons who did not approve of the actions of the Government and had attended some Opposition meetings. Land Reform is one thing, but to take over small parcels of land and under "other laws" because the owners had faces which were not liked by parochial electoral Czars is a crime against democracy.

*There is already a great deal the the saner elements in the Government must immediately rectify—for unless these flagrant acts of victimisation are not reversed with appropriate action, it is the United Front and the Government which has to answer for it before the bar of history and before an alert and vigilant people in the elections of 1977. Some things are soon forgotten, but others are not, people have long memories in regard to acts of unnecessary and indiscriminate victimisation.*

TRIBUNE, June 8, 1974

useful to examine with care the remarks made by Minister Felix Dias Bandaranaike about the present state of our Corporations and public sector enterprises. *Tribune* has not yet been able to get a copy of the full text of this speech he had made before a Seminar on Sunday May 26 at the BMICH.

**We therefore publish the report of the speech as it had appeared in the Daily News of May 27th.**

The law imposes severe penalties on Company Directors and company chairman who mislead shareholders. The Minister of Public Administration, Local Government, Home Affairs and Justice, Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike said that he believed a similar law should be made applicable to State Corporations. He was speaking at the inauguration of the Asian Colloquium on public corporations at the Bandaranaike Memorial International Conference Hall yesterday morning.

In a forthright appraisal of the public corporations of Sri Lanka as they existed today, Mr. Bandaranaike pinpointed instances of duplication and maladministration. Some of his views the Minister said would be constructed as heresy but, he was merely expressing them in order to stimulate the discussion on public sector institutions so that participants could exchange their views and benefits from each others experiences.

Mr. Bandaranaike suggested that the colloquium should consider the setting up of a Permanent Select Committee of the national legislature which would keep a vigilant eye on the performance of public corporations. Such a body would be in a position to prevent mistakes instead of the present practice—detecting them after they were committed and apportioning blame.

Mr. Bandaranaike said public corporations fell into five distinct categories, viz public utility undertakings, industrial undertakings, trading undertakings, financial, credit and insurance undertakings and those in charge of development activities.

The Justice Minister noted that there was no uniform principle behind the public sector institutions. While the CTR which handled road transport was a public

corporation, the Railway remained a government department. A similar lack of a concrete principle could be found in other fields too.

While the development of the coconut industry was in the charge of a network of statutory bodies, the much more important rubber rehabilitation was handled by a single government department. The State he said should clearly define the areas that should be handled by public corporations and government departments.

Mr. Bandaranaike said that government departments and corporations should avoid duplication. The Commodity Purchase Department handled the purchase and export of rubber under the Sino-Ceylon rubber-rice pact while Consolidated Exports handled other produce for export.

There was again a Weaving Materials Corporation that handled the supply and distribution of yarn manufactured by the National Textile Corporation. The additional cost of the second corporation had to be ultimately passed on to the consumer. The logical order of things would have been for the National Textile Corporation to handle the distribution of the yarn produced by them.

Advocates of the concept of public corporation held that the collective responsibility of a board of directors had its advantages over the arbitrary decisions of a single government official. They also cited the financial flexibility of a government corporation as another advantage. While government corporations in India and the United Kingdom had attracted men high calibre Sri Lanka had lacked such talent.

In India they had been able to attract men like J.R.D. Tata to head Air India while in the United Kingdom Dr. Beeching had taken charge of the British Railways. In Sri Lanka we had not often succeeded in drawing the best talent to head our corporations.

Mr. Bandaranaike said that a board of three directors should be sufficient to handle a corporation efficiently. The maximum should be five directors. The Demodar Valley Corporation—one of the largest public sector undertakings in India was efficiently run by a board consisting of three directors.

The Minister of Industries, T. B. Subasinghe, held the view that a number of small corporations should be amalgamated under sectoral boards. There was much merit in this proposal, Mr. Bandaranaike said, the Principle of a holding company could be adopted in this instance. While the holding company set down policy the implementation and management devolved on the subsidiary companies. A similar arrangement could be drawn up for public corporations.



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Mr. Bandaranaike also said that there should be an upper age limit stipulated for chairmen of corporations. Corporation jobs should be viewed not as alternative super annuarium benefits. All corporation heads should also work full time. He did not agree with the notion that busy lawyer could handle the running of public corporations on a part time basis. They should also avoid appearing for each others corporations.

Mr. Bandaranaike said that a government department which sought to increase its cadre had to justify its claims to the Treasury. But there was no such restraint on public corporations. The Tea Research Institute had under the previous government recruited a person who was not qualified to be a PWD inspector as an engineer. His maximum salary was even higher than that of the Director of Public Works.

There were also instances of Corporations hiring typists who could not type and clerks who were barely literate. Mr. Bandara-

naike said that though the examples he cited occurred under the previous administration in fairness he had to concede that such things had happened in some places even under this government.

There were also glaring anomalies between statutory corporations and government departments. A clerk in the Exchange Control Department of the Central Bank performed the same work as a clerk in the Import Control Department. But the Central Bank employee enjoyed a higher salary plus several other benefits such as pension and provident fund, free medical assistance etc. A staff officer of the Central Bank was similarly well placed when compared with an engineer who served in the provinces.

Mr. Bandaranaike pointed out that the employees of the Department of Electrical Undertakings got an increase of 33 per cent in their salaries when the department was converted to a Statutory Board. They got the 33 per cent increase for performing the same

services, while the public had to bear the additional cost.

The multiplicity of trade unions in government corporations was another problem. The trade unions presented extravagant demands to beat one another and, if one corporation gave in to some demands it would start a chain reaction in all other corporations with the result that corporations which could least afford to concede such benefits were also forced to cave in.

Mr. Bandaranaike also noted that public corporations should present their program budgets every year to the National Assembly. Profit and loss was not the only criterion to determine the efficiency of a public corporation.

If a manufacturing corporation marketed its product at a price higher than what the imported product would cost its profitability was no indication of its efficiency.

Mr. Bandaranaike said that in 1956 the late Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike had brought about a revolution through the ballot. Sri Lanka had since changed Government five times through the peaceful exercise of the franchise and democracy has taken root in the country. Mr. Bandaranaike's revolution had dislodged the English-speaking western oriented and educated elite who controlled the destinies of the country up to that point.

Since 1956 language and dress did not constitute a barrier to social and political advancement. Before the economic and social changes could keep pace with these political changes Mr. Bandaranaike was assassinated.

Now there was an emerging elite within the corporations. In the universities and elsewhere the youth were in a state of ferment. They believe that they could perform the task better than the emerging elite in the corporations. Some preferred to call it youth unrest. But this constituted the political context in which the role of public corporations had to be examined. Mr. Bandaranaike concluded that this was a pressing problem of major dimensions.

No comment need be added to what Minister Felix Dias Bandaranaike has said except wide publicity should be given to his incisive remarks about Corporations.

Muthurajawela

### WHAT ARE ITS POTENTIALITIES

As a person who was actively involved in the development of Muthurajawela, I feel growing of paddy is out of the question simply because of its low yield in this soil, as it will not yield an adequate return and in land usage priorities must be given to areas where it is mostly needed.

The report of the special Committee on development of Muthurajawela which was chaired by Mr. C. Kumarasuriar, Minister of Post and Telecommunications, in which I had the privilege of serving as a member, as outlined the priority areas in which development should take place. It includes Industrial Development, Tourism, Housing (flats for city dwellers), Middle Class Housing Schemes, Village Expansion involving housing and growing of vegetable, king-coconut and animal husbandry with potential wholesale Sundry Fair cum pleasure resort in Uswatakeyawa and Inland fisheries.

The Committee strongly recommended the setting up of a planning and co-ordinating authority to implement this scheme. Unlike other Corporations which are executing agencies, this authority will be a co-ordinating agency with its minimum financial commitments. The Committee expected this authority once set up would not only plan out the development programme but also harness the private company capital investment as well as individual entrepreneurship and funds available with various Government departments in developing this area.

If this report is implemented I feel this land mass two miles from Colombo, will turn out to be an area hive of activity in a very short space of time.

M. S. B. Ralapanawe

997/26, Kotte Road,  
Colombo.

5.5.74

## CHRONICLE

# May 25 - 30

*A Diary of Events in Sri Lanka and the World compiled from English-language dailies published in Colombo.*

**SATURDAY, MAY 25:** The Minister of Foreign and Internal Trade, Mr. T. B. Ilangaratne, yesterday at a press conference appealed for consumer assistance to wipe out corruption and maladministration in co-operatives: the Minister pointed out that criticism was inevitable because he had chosen to put at the head of the co-operative movement only those persons who were supporters of the United Front Government: he said that complaints of long queues should vanish once the movement is expanded and more branches are established. The Colombo Municipality has requested the Minister Foreign and Internal Trade to appoint a permanent Disciplinary Board to inquire into complaints against co-operatives and to punish severely those who are found guilty. The *Daily News* has reprinted abstracts of an article from *Pravda* in which it is stated that the adoption of a new constitution and the proclamation of the Independent Republic of Sri Lanka in 1972 opened up new favourable prospects for the country's advance along the road of social progress. According to the *Daily News*, the World Bank Mission which reported recently to the Aid Consortium countries has commended the Government for its export promotion policies especially in regard to non-traditional products. The Minister of Agriculture and Lands, Mr. Hector Kobbekaduwa, will participate in a ceremony tomorrow at Nawalapitiya where ten estates will be taken over by the Land Reform Commission. A new bill will be tabled in the National State Assembly shortly giving the Price Controller the power to distribute and price control all goods. The Criminal Justice Commission (Exchange Frauds) reserved its verdict for a later date in its second inquiry against four accused. According to the *Daily Mirror*, doctors in Government service will not be allowed to retire and set up private practice until they complete the compulsory period: the Ministry of Health has decided on this in view of the growing demand for doctors and also to prevent the exodus of doctors from the country: the Ministry has sent a lengthy list of the names of doctors to the Department of Immigration and Emigration asking not to issue exit permits to those listed therein. A rare incident where a "tame" domestic monkey entered wards of the Lady Ridgeway hospital for children and attacked several children occurred yesterday: a six-week old baby died as a result of the injuries. India defended itself against Pakistani charges that its nuclear test explosion last Saturday had opened the road for Israel and South Africa to join the "Nuclear Club". The Pakistani Government has set up a Press Commission with wide-ranging terms of reference.

**SUNDAY, MAY 26:** The Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, opens the new 8 million rupee block rubber factory at Mawanella today: according to the *Observer Magazine* Sri Lanka's effort to promote the

rubber industry will get a significant boost with the opening of this new factory. The Interpol has informed the CID of an international trade racket where goods bought from firms in various countries are allegedly resold at nearly ten times the original price after re-packing: the information was relayed to Colombo following the arrest of three company directors in Australia in connection with a "buy and sell" racket running into over 9 million Australian dollars. The Samastha Lanka Tri Nikaya Maha Sangha Sabha, one of the leading bikkhu organisations, at its 53rd annual general meeting unanimously decided to appeal to the leader of the UNP, Mr. J.R. Jayewardene to desist from carrying on his civil disobedience campaign. The National Textile Corporation has announced that locally manufactured cotton textiles will not go up in prices: cotton prices which skyrocketed in the world market have plummeted by nearly 50 per cent. According to the *Sunday Times*, the price of sovereign gold has soared to an all-time high of between Rs. 450 and Rs. 475: bullion-dealers in Colombo attributed the trend in the gold market to buying pressure all over the world. A racket where cloth had been purchased from the Lanka Salu Sala on forged marriage registration certificates has been detected by the Police. Israel's Foreign Minister, Abba Eban, said that there was good hope of an agreement being reached with Syria on a disengagement of forces. Iran and Egypt signed agreements and protocols for trade, economic and technical co-operation under which Iran will invest and grant loans and credits to Cairo worth more than 420 million sterling.

**MONDAY, MAY 27:** The Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, addressing a mass rally at Mawanella yesterday said that this government has been able to do more work within its short period of four years than the UNP could do in all its ten years. A statement adopted by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Sri Lanka (soft-liners) warns that tragedies witnessed in countries like Indonesia and Chile must not be allowed to be re-enacted in Sri Lanka. According to the *Daily News*, the Colombo Municipal Council will make representations to Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike, Minister of Local Government, to hold by-elections in three Municipal wards. According to the *Daily Mirror*, every student seeking admission to the University from next year must do a compulsory sixth month period of National Service before actual admission to the Varsity: this was decided last week by the Special Committee appointed by the Board of Governors of the University of Ceylon, to go into the question of compulsory National Service for all University students. The Minister of Justice, Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike, yesterday addressing the Asian Colloquium on Public Corporations said that the Government is not happy with the history of public corporations in this country: he said there was inefficiency, waste and corruption in certain corporations and therefore, there was the urgent need for a Parliamentary Select Committee to consistently review the activities of the United corporations. The Working Committee of the Tamil Front passed a resolution congratulating the Indian Government on the successful nuclear test carried out recently. The White House has made it clear it would fight the appeal by Special Watergate Prosecutor Leon Jaworski to the Supreme Court for access to 64

tapes of White House conversations: White House spokesman Ronald Ziegler said President Nixon felt he had to defend his office against "excessive encroachment". China is concentrating its nuclear knowledge on the development of sophisticated weapons while insisting that these will never be used except in defence.

**TUESDAY, MAY 28:** According to the *Daily News*, the ECAFE is vigorously following up Prime Minister, Mrs. Bandaranaike's, proposal for a World Fertiliser Fund made at the opening of the 30th ECAFF sessions held in Colombo: a meeting of experts will commence today at ECAFE headquarters in Bangkok to consider a report prepared recently on a World Fertiliser Fund: Sri Lanka is represented by the Secretary to the Ministry of Planning, Dr. H. A. de S. Gunasekera. The Central Bank has decided to provide guarantees on behalf of the Government to commercial banks for loans granted by these banks for tea replanting and tea factory development. According to the *Daily Mirror*, Police Intelligence reports from all parts of the island reveals that the popularity of the Government had improved tremendously during the past one month, while that of the UNP, the principal Opposition party had dropped. English will be made a compulsory subject for the National Certificate of General Education, and for the National Certificate of Higher Education, which replaces the General Certificate of Education (Ordinary Level) and General Certificate of Education (Advance Level) from 1975. The Criminal Justice Commission (Exchange Frouds) yesterday reserved its order for June 5 in the matter of the rule served on the Editor of the *Ceylon Daily News*, the Associated Newspapers of Ceylon Ltd., and two members of the editorial staff to show cause why they should not be dealt with for contempt of the Commission. According to the *Daily News*, the Colombo Municipal Council is considering the question of acquiring nearly 50 per cent of the shares in new tourist hotels that come in the city of Colombo. According to the *Daily News*, the Paddy Marketing Board is very hopeful of achieving its target of 15 million bushels as purchases under the Guaranteed Price Scheme for the Maha harvest since its collection from January to the third week of May has already reached nearly 10/12 million bushels. British Foreign Secretary, Mr. Callaghan, in a speech, in Washington has said that International Monetary institutions' policies need revision in view of the changing world economic situation. The 20-day old Indian rail strike will be called off unilaterally from today. Dr. Henry Kissinger will return to the United States today, but it was still not certain whether he would clinch the disengagement agreement between Syria and Israel for which he had been working.

**WEDNESDAY, MAY 29:** The Ministerial sub-committee on the "brain drain" met representatives of professionally qualified men and it was tentatively agreed not to impose any further restrictions on the flight of talent: representatives for doctors, engineers' and accountants' organisations placed before the Cabinet sub-committee chaired by Mr. Maithripala Senanayake, Minister of Irrigation, Power and Highways, evidence which indicated that the nation could survive the exodus, which they claimed a temporary phenomenon. The debate on a UNP motion condemning the Government for permitting a police baton charge at the Colombo

Town Hall premises on Republic Day came to an abrupt end in the Colombo Municipal Council last night when two UNP Municipal Councillors physically charged at each other: a free-for-all ensued and amidst the chaos and confusion: the Mayor, Mr. A. H. M. Fowzie, adjourned proceedings. According to the *Daily News*, commercial banks have introduced a credit squeeze with immediate effect following instructions from the Central Bank: credit will not be extended over the limit as at May 24, '74. According to the *Daily Mirror*, a new piece of legislation now being drafted by the Price Control Department on the instructions of the Minister of Foreign and Internal Trade, Mr. T. B. Ilangaratne, will compel traders who sell spoil goods or goods that are inferior in quality to pay back the value of such goods on return by the purchasers. The visit of the Zambian President, Dr. Kenneth Kaunda, to Sri Lanka which was due to take place in the first week of June has now been postponed. The water cut in Colombo and the suburbs will be lifted from June 1 in view of the improvement in the water supply situation in the Labugama and Kalatuwawa reservoirs. Israeli Cabinet met for five hours yesterday but postponed a final decision on a separation of forces agreement with Syria. Workers on India's state-run railway began returning to work yesterday after calling off their 20 days old strike. Egyptian newspaper *Al-Akhabar* accused Libya's leader, Colonel Muammar Gaddafi, planning assassination campaigns in Egypt and had allocated huge sums of money to carry them out.

**THURSDAY, MAY 30:** According to the *Daily News*, Sri Lanka is expected to receive aid to the value of about 150 million US dollars following the aid group meeting concluded in Paris recently: this will include a pledge of 35 million US dollars by the World Bank: bilateral aid from the donor nations is expected to be around 114 million US dollars. According to the *Daily News*, Sri Lanka is now likely to join the ECAFE sponsored Asian Rice Fund: the Fund was set up a few years ago to help developing countries which needed rice imports: Sri Lanka did not join the Fund earlier because it was expected that Sri Lanka could export rice by 1975, but now in view of the international shortage of rice it is expected the country could benefit by being member of the Fund. In view of a report called by Mr. T. B. Ilangaratne, Minister of Foreign and Internal Trade, on present import policies, Government expects to increase the imports by government agencies while imports by private sector will be reduced substantially. According to the *Daily Mirror*, students qualified to enter the University, but denied admission can now follow their courses as external students. President Nixon yesterday announced agreement between Israel and Syria to disengage their forces along the Golan Front: Simultaneously in Jerusalem, the US announced that the two countries had reached accord seven months after the end of the October war. Chinese Prime Minister, Chou-En-lai, in proposing a toast to the visiting Prime Minister of Malasia, Tunku Abdul Razak, extended his countries support to the move to make South Asia a zone of peace and neutrality. West German Development Aid Minister Erhard Eppler yesterday warned India that it risked losing German Aid if it attempted to become a nuclear power in military terms. The Indian Government has ordered the release of thousands of railway workers detained under emergency regulations for taking part in the three week strike.

OPENING TO THE EAST

# THE "LIGHT" RAILWAY:

## MAHO, GALOYA JUNCTION, TRINCOMALEE & BATTICALOA

by Jepharis

A SHORT NOTE on this interesting railway may not be out of place, if only in order to bring the late G. F. Perera's pioneering work up-to-date, for he omits a description of it in his monumental epic on railroad construction in Ceylon "THE CEYLON RAILWAY—The Story of its Inception & Progress": the line being still in the building at the time he published his tome in 1925.

However he makes passing reference to it at pp. 14,15,44 and 201 of his book, mainly touching on the expenditure, or rather, the estimated cost, of its construction.

*'Maho...the dawn is breaking..'*

The line eastwards from Maho began to be laid in the early nineteen twenties, during the regime of Sir William Henry Manning (1918-25), that most able of administrator and Governor of Ceylon. It reached Galoya junction in 1926, Trincomalee in 1927, and Batticaloa in 1928; pushing forward resolutely in the face of many financial and political obstacles in its path, although the natural terrain was unresistant, and the gradient easy enough'.

The twenties were a decade of universal economic crises, in the wake of World War I, which were to reach their climax in the Great Depression of '29, whose repercussions were fully felt in Ceylon during 1932-4 and it was certainly no easy task to salvage sufficient funds to finance such things as railroads: the overall cost of work on this line being in the neighbourhood of Rs. 20 million. This explains its staggered and long drawn out period of construction at a time when money and manpower could hardly be spared for such projects.

It is called a 'light railway', although it adopts the standard broad gauge of 5'6" in use throughout the island except on the

Kelani Valley and now defunct Uda Pussellawa tracks (which used the narrow gauge 2'6") because it was built to cater mainly to 'light' rolling stock, such as the long, low-strung, uncovered goods waggons used to transport timber from the Wannu forest—whose southern fringe the line circumvents in its journey from Maho to Vakanneri—as well as 'light' passenger freight, consisting in not more than half-a-dozen carriages per train.

THE LINE helped to develop one of the world's finest natural harbours at Trincomalee as Ceylon's third busiest port of call, after Colombo and Galle, for ocean-going steamers and also served to popularise as tourist attractions such places of historic interest as YAPAHUWA (an ancient capital of Raja Rata), AUWKANA (where there is the largest standing statue of Lord Buddha in South-East Asia), KALAWEWA and MINNERIYA (famous for its legendary tanks relics of the Great Parakrama Bahu era of irrigational achievement) and POLONNARUWA (teeming with the ruin of Lanka's bygone civilisations). BATTICALOA, the capital of the Eastern Province, with its network of lagoons and waterways famous for its 'singing fish' and its 'flying angels', also rose to prominence with the opening of this track, one fork of which it forms the terminus.

Of course, the road from Badulla, running through Veddah country, also brought Batticaloa within easier access of the metropolis. The Eastern Paper Mills Corporation's Factory at VAKANERI is one of the largest industries of its kind to which this line caters, and recently Vakanneri railway station was renovated and renamed 'Kadadasi Nagaraya' in honour of this enterpriser. Not long ago a new railway station was opened at JAYAN-

THIPURA to transport dairy produce from the Tamankaduwa Government cattle Farm near here to the Milk Board at Colombo. Polonnaruwa was earlier known as Topawewa (after one of its tanks), and carrier still, before the railway line was built, as Tamankaduwa. Hence the commemoration of its ancient name.

A MODERN RAILWAY STATION has also been constructed at HINGURAKKODA, and important agricultural and industrial hub for this region, served as it is by an airport on the Colombo—Trincomalee flying route. KEKIRAWA & HARARANA are points where the track crosses the main Kandy-Dambulla - Anuradhapura and Colombo - Kurunegala - Trincomalee Trunk Roads respectively, while the latter town, with its cosy, little resthouse, is one of Ceylon's most popular head-quarters for the observing and hunting of wild-life..

*'I don't know where she comes from,  
I don't know where she's bound;  
I only know, at Habarena,  
The line comes into view.*

Indeed, the entire stretch of track passes through the most excellent country for such leisured pursuits as camping, hiking, exploring, painting, and shooting—with either camera or gun; being as densely forested, sparsely inhabited, and teeming with wild life, as any other part of the island, Punanai, for instance, was the habitat of the famous 'man-eating leopard of Punanai which having once had the taste of blood, used to roam the country—slide here, terrorising its scanty villages, about the time the track was being laid back in the early 'twenties, until it was shot down by an intrepid adventurer in 1924. GALLALA, MANAMPITIYA, KOLAKANAWELI, WELIKANDA & PUNANAI, are ply-wood depots from where teak, satinwood, halmille, and other varieties of dry zone timber are transported to Colombo by goods wagon; and the eastern seaboard, with its spacious golden beaches, the coast of the rising sun, is reached at VALAICHENAI and KAL KUDAH, the latter being world-renowned, and attracting tourists to this island, mainly on account of its magnificent stretch of strand,

## THE POLONNARUVA COLOSSUS - 6

## THE AGASTYA CULT

By James T. Rutnam

GALOYA junction, from which one fork flows north-eastwards to Trinco and another south-eastwards to Batticaloa, is situated in the very heart of the Vanni, the largest extent of primeval, forest still extant in the Dry Zone, if not the whole of Ceylon; and of which the Sinharaja Forest east of Kalawana in the Sabaragamuwa Province, of smaller size, is the Wet Zone's counterpart.

Here at Galoya, there is not a human habitation within sight for miles around, and the only sign of civilisation is the important railway junction, with its usual bustle of activity more subdued than usual owing to the scarcity of trains.

**They are changing trains at Galoya Junction,  
One-two-three-four.  
Throw a line for Trinkets!  
and a line for Baticks,<sup>a</sup>  
One-two-three-four.  
Gal-ORRYER!**

Tune: A. A. Milne: 'They are changing guards at Buckingham Palace.'

1. Trincomalee
2. Batticaloa

Galoya Railway Station and a part of the track were washed away by the devastating Dry Zonal floods which affected North & East Ceylon in December 1957; and had to be re-built. North of Galoya, is situated the VEDDIKACHCHI INTERMEDIATE ZONE, for which ALUT OYA siding is the stopping-place, and further along the line to Trinco, we reach KANTALAI, famous for its beautiful tank and its bird life, and CHINA BAY, the headquarters of the Armed Services, where Trincomalee's airport is also situated. Trincomalee itself, at journey's end, is one of the finest scenic wonders of this 'other Eden, demi-paradise', and would take an article of its own to fully describe.

#### Priests Take To Fishing

Some Catholic priests headed by the Archbishop of Trivandrum have taken a deliberate decision to involve the Church in fishing so that the income from this source can be used to help the poor.

*This is the concluding instalment of the paper by Mr. James T. Rutnam at the Fourth International Conference Seminar of Tamil Studies held in Jaffna from January 3 to 9, 1974. This paper is entitled THE POLONNARUVA COLOSSUS—A CRITIQUE ON AN ANCIENT STATUE. The statue has been the subject of a great deal of controversy in recent years and Mr. Rutnam's paper throws a great deal of light on it.*

Whether in fact the statue is that of Parakrama Bahu or not—Right or Wrong—many now believe what they wish to believe. Even a highly academic publication such as the *Ceylon Historical Journal* in its Special Number on the Polonnaruwa period finds it perhaps patriotic to declare while scholars differ, that "to the people of Ceylon however the statue will always represent none other than their greatest ruler King Parakrama Bahu!"

The Ceylon Government too has chosen to have a picture of this "Parakrama Bahu" on its currency notes and in its Tourist Propaganda and even on the label of a state—produced condensed milk can. As a piece of art, as an inspiring national symbol, the statue of this "Tamil" king has its uses. But it cannot, and must not, deter the quest for Truth.

Before Siri Goonesinghe and, Sestieri joined issue with Paranavitana over his revised view of the statue, Nilakantha Sastri, the South Indian historian has left it on record in the Polonnaruwa number of the *Ceylon Historical Journal* that he had doubts about the identity of the figure and that he held a contrary view to Paranavitana in that the object in the hands of the figure "does not seem to be a yoke whatever else it may be".

Siri Gunasinghe had completely shattered the argument that popular tradition cannot be wrong. As pointed out by him, and as observed earlier, the Dakkhinathupa, among many others similarly misnamed, was wrongly called Elala Sohana (Elala's tomb). Incidentally this is another of those cases where Paranavitana appears to have misdirected himself when he called it the spot where Dutugemunu was cremated. Dr. de Silva the present Commissioner of Archaeology, as we had stated earlier, had shown that "the evidence brought forward by Paranavitana does not support" Paranavitana's own theory that the Dakkhina Thupa was built on the spot where Dutugemunu was cremated.

Paranavitana's idea that the statue represents a king carrying

an inverted yoke (why inverted?) showing the burden of state, is certainly a "brilliant" one, as cryptically remarked by Sestieri, but far too fanciful, far too far-fetched and unreal, and too weak in the face of the formidable arguments *contra*, to be taken seriously. In the present case too it is, besides other grounds, Paranavitana's own uncontradicted evidence that stands in the way of our accepting Paranavitana's latest theory. As matter of fact Paranavitana does himself grave wrong by completely ignoring his earlier argument.

Gunasinghe in his argument has drawn pointed attention to the two sculptured figures from *Siva Devale* No. 1 at Polonnaruwa and to a large number of painted figures at *Tivanka Pilimage* and some mural paintings at the rock-cut shrines at *Gal Vehera* and had observed the affinity between the figures there represented and the statue. Particularly had this been noted on a comparison between the sculpture at *Siva Devale* No. 1 and the statue. Against this, the affinity drawn by Paranavitana between the beardless statue at *Panduvas Nuwara* and this statue would appear to be so unconvincing that it is not surprising, neither Gunasinghe nor Sestieri have thought it fit to give any consideration to it.



THE LINE OF ARGUMENT chosen by Paranavitana to serve his purpose in the present case is typical of a new methodology. It seeks to build an impressive superstructure of erudition and scholarship over a weak and flimsy foundation. In such cases one is intellectually intimidated by the show of clever copious, vigorous, fluent and incontrovertible advocacy of some trifling (and often irrelevant) circumstance, and such a person is led to applaud with enthusiasm the point gained in the minor skirmish, little realising that the main argument must one day totter because of its weak foundation.

Dr. Sirima Kiribamune had dwelt at length on Paranavitana's contribution to history in an highly critical article in the *Ceylon Journal of Humanities*. Since the time of H. C. P. Bell no one had reached the commanding position in the field of Ceylon Archaeology as Paranavitana. His journey to the top had been long and arduous. And finally having reached the summit he dwarfed his contemporaries. He was the master *Sans peur et Sans reproche*, His word was accepted without question.

Paranavitana had an encyclopedic knowledge of Oriental literature and was a facile writer of English prose, enough to make the best English writers envious. It was his *ipse dixit* that concluded every argument, and for a time everyone bowed to him with awe and even with fear and trepidation. We say this deliberately for whoever attempted to cross his path (they were very few) would have to be ready to receive his whiplash.

Dr. Kartigesu Indrapala was one of the first scholars seriously to criticise. In a journal of the Sri Lanka Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, the basic foundation of his theories, but history had been spared a look into the heated and almost savage invectives with which the angry savant treated this critic, for the Society had prudently refused to publish it.

Since then several had joined issue with him, but all are agreed that Paranavitana was a giant in his generation. His integrity has never been questioned. If he takes a view (not necessarily the correct one) he would explore the entire gamut of human knowledge to

substantiate that particular position. In the process he has been known to ignore or indifferently dismiss anything to the contrary. He was an ingenious propagandist of his own wishful hunches. He expected everyone to look at the prospect with almost identical eyes.

This of course could not last for long.

THE TIME has now arrived to test and scrutinise many of Paranavitana's findings; in some cases such as the rock-relief at Isurumuni of a man and a horse it seems to have been most convincingly established by Professor J. E. Van Lohuizen de Leeuw that the figure is that of Aiyana who, "down to the present day, is one of the most popular gods in the Dravidian area."

We are compelled to draw attention to Paranavitana's methodology for he seems to have done great damage to some aspects of our history by incorporating his theories into standard works such as the concise University History of Ceylon; and also because of his pre-eminent stature among the *literati* of this country, his pronouncements which he had generally uttered with a sense of pontifical infallibility is accepted by scholars outside without any further reflection on the matter.

Take, for instance, the description of the Polonnaruva statue in the three editions of the book entitled *Art and Architecture of India* by that renowned art critic Benjamin Rowland.

In the First Edition in 1953 it was stated, "This representation of a bearded holy man looking up from the reading of his palm-leaf book is one of the finest pieces of sculpture in Ceylon". He says that the statue was sometimes identified as a portrait of Parakrama Bahu himself.

In the Second Edition of the book in 1956 Benjamin Rowland follows the direction of Paranavitana and describes the statue as. "This representation of a bearded sovereign holding a yoke as the emblem of the King's burden...."

In the Third Edition published in 1967 the author describes the statue as a "colossal figure of a

Buddhist king "Whatever the statue may be, there is nothing Buddhist or kingly in the representation. Of that we are certain. It is a figure of a holy man, a South Indian Brahmanical Rishi. Paranavitana himself had emphasised the Brahmanical character of the image by refuting the suggestion that the statue may be of Kapila, on the ground that the Kapila referred to in the *Culuvamsa* was a Buddhist ascetic.

From the above account of the controversy over this statue we would have observed the widely different views held by some of the most eminent scholars in this field. One must now concede that this statue is definitely not that of a king. It does not represent either Parakrama Bahu or Vijaya Bahu. It is definitely a statue of rishi.

Coomaraswamy had once identified it as a "Tamil Saint". From its close resemblance to the one at *Candi Banon* in Java we are inclined to identify it as that of Agastya. O. C. Gangoly, a famous Indian art critic, had however demurred on iconographic grounds, basing his argument on an assumption that the statue belonged to the twelfth century. The *Candi Banon* image of the ninth century does not conform to the canon in every detail. It is possible, as some view, that the "Agastya images were at first represented by normal figures of rishis without the markedly short stature and the pot belly."

IN WHICH CASE we should agree with Vogel, the most distinguished and most knowledgeable of the critics, that our statue is that of Agastya and that its style pointed to a much earlier date than the period of Polonnaruva. Here perhaps Paranavitana's earlier discovery behind the head of the figure of distinct traces of old writing of the 8th or 9th century is significantly helpful.

In May 1959 a person calling himself Antiquarian wrote a letter to the *Ceylon Daily News* stating that a few years earlier a former Assistant Archaeological Assistant had told him that he had discovered an important fact regarding the (so-called) Parakrama Bahu statue at Polonnaruva. He rubbed chalk

over what was believed to be "the sacred thread of a Rishi which ran across the statue. To his surprise he found that it was a string which terminated behind the statue on a quiver full of arrows." Mr. M. H. Sirisoma of the Archaeological Department who was not aware of this communication to the Press, independently drew my attention to a part of the sculpture which clearly indicated the feathers of arrows falling into what seems a quiver on the left shoulder of the figure. This feature of the statue emphasises an aspect of Agastya which is sometimes forgotten.

Hermen George Jacobi a renowned Sanskrit scholar had specially noted this attributed of Agastya in his article in Hasting's *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*. Writing on Agastya he has stated "A curious trait of our Saint is that he was a famous hunter and archer." This would be a further confirmation of the position now taken by the majority of scholars that the statue is that of Agastya. The Agastya cult in Sri Lanka has been referred to by two Sanskrit poets of the ninth century. There is also a book entitled "Thadchala Kaylaya Mameian" which gives us an account of Trincomalee and the Dravidian and Hindu influences spreading from that place along the banks of the Mahaweliganga. Agastya is regarded as the earliest teacher of Science and literature to the Tamils. No wonder the Rishi has a book in his hands and a quiver full of arrows over his shoulder.

(Concluded)

### Joint Ownership of Wells

An Innovation to increase the income of small and medium farmers has been made by land development banks (LDB) and other financial institutions by evolving the concept of joint ownership of wells. A RBI study has found that construction of irrigation wells owned jointly by small farmers having adjacent land holdings has good prospects of increasing farm income by facilitating intensive land use, multiple cropping and cultivation of more remunerative crops.

## Inania of this, that and the other

### "Not So Inania", Said George

— the Portuguese —

by INNA

George read through the draft of this paper and said: It's not so Inania, and so I'd like to tell you something approved by George *in toto*. I happened to meet an old friend in Galle some weeks ago and discovered a first rate book in his library: *Account of the Island of Ceylon* by Captain Robert Percival. Great historians don't like him; what he says is not palatable to all Christians, but only to those who'd say: "give him a chance. Let's listen though we don't agree fully."

COMMENTING on the terrible acts of irreligion of the Portuguese (of Cabora Bassa fame) in Ceylon, he says: :

"The Portuguese destroyed a banamaduwa (ancient and solid)" (p. 219)

"Most of the ancient monuments however have suffered severely from the ravages of the Portuguese, whose policy it was to destroy all monuments of art of former splendor among the unhappy, natives. But the religious buildings of the Ceylonese were not only defaced and ruined by these barbarous invaders; even the materials which composed them, the hewn stones and masonry pillars were transported to the sea-coasts to erect fortifications." (p. 221)

In this book he pays high encomium to the Buddhists who were so tolerant, or may be, he refers to the people in general:

"The injustice of the Portuguese in forcing religious tenets upon them, must have shocked them the more, as they have not the smallest idea of intolerant zeal. The Christian priests and the missionaries though, often successful in propagating their doctrines, have never yet been able totally to eradicate superstitions which have been imbibed from the cradle" (p. 228)

In the Roman Forum, the guide happily shows the church of Santa Maria antica, adding that the Roman church was not satisfied until it had "completely defeated paganism and persecution, a sign of this defeat being the making of a church right in the Forum."

Perhaps the same idea pervaded the minds of those who built a church on Adam's Peak! Percival adds:

"The Roman Catholic priests with their usual industry, have taken advantage of the current superstitions to forward the propagation of their own tenets; and a chapel which they have erected on the mountain (Adam's Peak) is yearly frequented by vast numbers of black Christians of the Portuguese and Malabar race." (p. 224-226).

NO LESS a person than Paravivana of revered memory corroborates: as he speaks of Dondra. Of course there are places on the Dondra map, like "Paliyawatta" (Church garden) and Kurisiyagawatta (Cross Garden). The Portuguese destroyed or built over the Upluvan shrine at Dondra, their Cathedral to our Lady, and "to the Portuguese, all of these shrines, being not of their faith, were the Devil's handiwork, and as their mission on their first appearance at Devundera was a destructive one, they had no interest in finding out whether all the shrines they destroyed were of the same cult" (p. 16, *The Shrine of Upluvan at Devundera, Paravivana*).

The Portuguese are like Charles the Tenth, men "who learnt nothing and forgot nothing"!

They are still at the game of treating the rest of the world as second-class citizens with third-class passports to heaven; as disseminators of the faith and propagators of goodwill and western civilisation with the largest amount of bad-will.

It never occurs to them to see what a great grace the Lady of Fatima (add a line to end the Rosary!) would give them to see themselves as others see them!!!

SHAMBA

## MUSING IN A RUSTIC SCENE

By Anatory Bukoba

May 9.

Years, it is since I have slept late, but this is what I have been doing this last week. Our house-wife gives me tea, and then I go to sleep again. With me in the house, she has a chance to get out, and she goes out after her daughter who goes to shop.

I do not see to the food, I give her the money and she gets what she wants, giving me and her children and herself just two meals a day, this is now breakfast and dinner. If it is a late launch, then they miss dinner. They get Rs. 3/- a day for food and expenses, and an extra Rs. 2/- when I am here.

I am called upon for little extras now and again, and I give them soap. One item on the food bill is lamp oil, or I would not be able to write these notes. We have two lamps, one a condensed milk tin, and the other a small bottle.

The house-wife keeps her lamp burning all night. She sleeps on the floor of the room with her children and barricades herself in with cadjans. She has a mat and gunny-sacks on the floor, and it all looks like a big rug, very cosy. My bed is cadjan on sticks or poles, and it was only last night that I started using a pillow again. A part of the kitchen, now, is open. It lets it more light and some wind. It also means we can look out in that direction as of old. One firm pole in the middle of the house holds the lot up; I put it in myself. All the other poles, holding the roof up, are away. Our own path to the river is nearly overgrown, and with *Nithi Kumba*. This makes it is painful for bare feet.

The children are great fun. The two-year old's doll is a polythene bag; I do not quite know how it works. She is often cooking; rice, that is sand, and I hear she also makes *roti* and *ka-awn*, or however you spell it, also sand. Our

seven-year old is of a more serious, or perhaps I should say, practical, or even realist frame of mind, for she really shops for us; for what can be more practical than cooking even if it is only playing games. The seven-year old is standing beside me as I write; she does not want to go to bed just yet. We discovered today that her mother is related to people who know me as a child, or I should rather say one person; but I know several of that family. It is a nice feeling to know that there is some connection and one going back to one's boyhood. This came to light when we were talking about her village. A picture of our Lady of Perpetual Succour, the one at Borella, adorns our house. That, too, gives me a comforting feeling.

May 10.

Land ties one down. Cattle in another place ties one down, too. I used to find that sport did this, serious competitive sport; you have to be there for your training. I do not get around half as much as I would like, and at the same time, possession or occupation or ownership makes me dislike travelling. A job, working for someone else, ties one down; having to keep hours does so; management does so, but in another way. I suppose being a politician can be a bind, and being a member of the government. I wonder if a dictator gets any rest at all. I suppose it all boils down to that no man is his own master.

These last three days I expressed views on population, citizenship and land. I am for all three, no ceiling, no curb; no exceptions. These are cardinal in a context. Here is a point. I consider it a great mistake to let in an influx of foreign money as investment, loans or aid. Let us pay off our foreign debt; and our national debt, too, so that we have no more bond-holders. I learnt something about bond-holders from Marx and Engels, *Das Kapital*, Volume II, although I am no communist, let alone a socialist, a national one. That was what Nazism was, National Socialism, as opposed to International Socialism, which is communism.

May 14.

Came back, did I, to find that someone had come here to join me. On his first day here, a man

who had come here to stay here, work here and was full of promise, had got hold of him and taken him away to his house, and so now I have lost the new arrival. His reason is this, that the waters have washed away what soil this place ever had, and that he would like to go home first and then come back and start his own *hena* or *chena*. He lost all he had or brought with him on his way here, at a railway station, his wireless clothes and money. I told him that I cannot give him his fare back, as I do not know how I am going to hold out myself this month financially, which is true, as I have only Rs. 50/- for the next two weeks. The man, who took him away, had left this place on my very first absence, after a few days and he took away with him a few things to which he claimed ownership but which I only lent him.

Coming here last night I saw a car which had fallen a clear six feet or more on to its hood, a sheer drop. There were eight people inside and not one died. Seven had been sent to hospital one was still there walking about, a boy, his shirt in blood. This time away, I met a number of people I knew, one, by chance, whom I had not seen for years.

Last time I wrote these notes, I spoke about restricting the flow of money from one country to another, as aid, investment and loans, and certainly with regards to our own country. I would just like to say here that there should be no restriction as regards the movement of people. I am all for it; off of away with the diplomatic restrictions and red tape; restriction as regards to transport as well, making only the more expensive forms of transport feasible or legal; work permits—people should be free to move and works where they like without these in whatever country they like.

May 15.

It was a day dealing with people. My two friends, the new arrival and the one who took him off to another house, convinced me that they had done the only thing possible. The upshot of this was that the new arrival got the fare. He came back after an hour or so and put to me a business proposition. So I entrusted with some money, Rs. 25/-. He reckons to

be able to give me Rs. 3/- a day in what amounts to interest, but which I would much rather call income. Rs. 3/- a day is what I give the family. This friend has not turned up yet, but long before this I began to worry about my money.

There was a man who stopped me on the bridge and who asked me about the work. His only possessions were the shirt, sarong the sandals he had on. I brought him here and explained the situations to him, lack of food and so on. He left saying he would come back, but him I have not seen either.

A Burgher woman killed a big cobra today and burnt the remains herself. I did not see the actual killing, but about the rest she was workmanlike.

There has been rain for a few days. I just now fell asleep at the end of the last sentence. Our housewife has a swollen face, a bad tooth, and she has been in pain most of the day. There I fell asleep again.

Propos about what I said about controlling the movement of money but not of people; here is another point, strong regional governments. Just now, provincial governments centring on the old provinces will do.

There are large rats running about. One nearly ran into the new house. I wanted to kill it but a friend would not let me.

So sleepy was I, let me just recapitulate again a few points I have been trying to make. They are about populations, citizenship, land, money, people, government, the collective, the individual, the principle. I am for no restorations on the first three, and I would like to up-hold this by law. In this instalment of *Shamba*, I have been against the flow of increased foreign money, even as investments and aid, and even loans; but for no restrictions on the foreign person, such as visa taxes, work permits, restrictive visas, and so on. Let them come here and work or stay, but not bring too much money. The last in that group, I touched upon inadequately, as I was half asleep. I am far strong, effective, local government. Such as on the provincial level, that of our old provinces. The last

three points appeared before in *Shamba*, they are; we must learn to work in groups, give each man scope to use his talents, and, above all freedom, freedom to say yes or nay, without denying other people that, too.

## NEW DELHI

### Indira Gandhi Government

#### And The Forces of Disruption

May 30,

It is like a new era in the capital. Somehow everything seems to be different after May 18. The exploding of nuclear device has given a new sense of self-respect to every Indian whatever his political affiliation and whatever his party loyalty.

The Government too has gained in stature. The fact that the Railway Unions, which had seemed so intransigent and determined even after the three weeks of strike, had clutched at the feeble lifeline held out by the Congress Working Committee that it would soon take steps to have a "rational wage policy" for government employees to call off the strike, is an indication that Mrs. Gandhi's atomic stature has begun to have a serious impact on the domestic scene.

The internal problems are grave and complicated, but at the moment much of the focus of public attention has been turned on international repercussions caused by the Indian nuclear explosion.

INAUGURATING AFRICA DAY CELEBRATION on May 24, Mrs. Gandhi had hit out at critics of India's nuclear experiment and asked whether it was their contention that it was all right for the rich to use nuclear energy for destruction, but not right for a poor country to find out whether it could be used for construction. It was difficult for India to understand the outcry that had been raised against something "we have been doing for 25 years". Mrs. Gandhi said amidst thunderous applause.

Dismissing as without basis the argument that India's peaceful experiment had introduced a new element of tension Mrs. Gandhi assured the country's neighbours and others that they have nothing to fear from India. India, Mrs. Gandhi said, was being taunted that a poor nation could not afford the luxury of a peaceful nuclear experiment. "This same argument was advanced when we established our steel mills and machine building plants. They are necessary for development, for it is only through acquisition of higher technology that you can overcome poverty and economic backwardness", she added.

Mrs. Gandhi said that India's nuclear know-how was not developed suddenly or in secret. "We have had an Atomic Energy Department for 25 years. The funds allotted to it and the work done by it to gain nuclear know-how for peaceful uses in agriculture, medicine and above all, power generation are of public knowledge", she added.

Mrs. Gandhi pointed out that India had shared a great deal of its development in industrial know-how and research and training facilities with its neighbours in Asia and Africa. This covered many fields including engineering, metallurgy, nuclear energy, medicine and agriculture.

"We shall always be willing to use our own knowledge and development to help our neighbours

#### BONES AND BUSINESS

There are increasing numbers of Japanese tourists visiting Papua (the Australian administered part of New Guinea), where heavy fighting went on between the Americans and the Japanese in World War II. They are looking for the remains of their kith and kin with the aim of taking them home for reinterment. Enterprising local businessmen saw money in this and set up a brisk trade in bones. One trader has told the *Age* magazine that he sells up to 200 kilogrammes of human bones a week and makes about 8,000 Australian dollars on them.

and friends wherever they are", Mrs. Gandhi said.

The Prime Minister said, "The recent fear over the world running out of some resources has spurred a world-wide technological effort for a better balance of the utilisation of resources. Last week's experiment is a part of this search".

Development of nuclear energy in India, Mrs. Gandhi said, was due to the encouragement and support given by the Government and the work of brilliant scientists like Dr. Bhabha, Dr. Sarabhai and now Dr. Sethna and Dr. Ramanna and their colleagues.

She recalled that 20 years ago her father had declared that the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes was more important for a country like India than for advanced countries which had plentiful resources of power.

It will be noted that Mrs. Gandhi did not take an apologetic stand when she defended India's advance into the nuclear age. In recent months, she has been taking an aggressive attitude in regard to the activities of Opposition forces inside the country.

The tone and purport of her recent speeches is best exemplified in the speech she had made at the annual general meeting of Federation of the Chambers of Commerce and Industry, on April 25, and the following excerpts will demonstrate the main logic in her theme about the "forces of disruption". Nearly all her Cabinet and her top party colleagues have followed her cue. This is just what she had said: What is most disturbing is that precisely at this moment a campaign of political disruption has been launched. Those sections of the population which are the hardest hit by the rise in prices and shortages are bearing the hardship with exemplary forbearance, but an attempt is being made, especially in urban areas, to exploit people's difficulties. The current agitations are not confined to idealistic young people. The young want to cleanse politics but it is one of life's ironies that the good intentions of some are exploited by others for their own nefarious purposes. Disruptive activities make it difficult to bring inflation under control. They hit production and distribution on the one hand and add to Government's financial liabilities and, there

fore, deficit financing on the other. Perhaps the disruptionists want the country to burn the candle at both ends.....

"Today there is a concerted move to undermine this sanction and the institutions which have been built through such sacrifice and faith. Some short sighted cynical or even corrupt groups in our national life are pouring money and effort to demolish the very foundations of our orderly society and constitutional behaviour..... Wittingly or unwittingly, even those who swear by non-violence are indulging in activities which encourage disruptive forces. It is particularly regrettable that some sections of the working class have been drawn into their web. The politics of disruption will do the country no good, and it must be resisted and rejected...

"A handful have often tried to force their views on the people. They are ultimately rejected, but even in the short term, unfortunately they do inflict considerable damage—the clock is put back and the miseries of the people are aggravated....."

THE PRIME MINISTER and all government spokesmen have emphasised that the present wave of unrest in the country, in states like Gujerat and Bihar, and in the Railways and other workplaces was the evil outcome of the disruptive

forces which were at large in the country. It was stressed that such actions not only threatened India's democratic institutions but also her national interests.

It was also alleged that the multi-pronged attack by the Right-wing Opposition directed at creating chaos and anarchy throughout the country coincided with the increase in the anti-India hostility of the USA and China.

Attention has been drawn to the fast-growing Chinese military presence in Tibet. Much publicity has been given in India to a recent report in the *Daily Telegraph* 25.4.74, that China was building "a nuclear testing base in Central Tibet to replace or supplement its existing nuclear base in Sinkiang province in north-west China. The Chinese have been working secretly for several months at the nuclear base which is situated in Nagchu region, 320 kms. north of Lhasa, the Tibetan capital. The base is in the centre of a vast unpopulated plateau with an average height of 16,000 feet.

"The Chinese authorities have described Chamdo, one of the main towns of Nagchu region a prohibited area for the Tibetans. Even Chinese civilians and soldiers have to obtain permission to enter Chamdo. A shopping centre has been opened at Kormo, near

### EARN AS YOU LEARN

The G. B. Pant University of Agriculture and Technology at Pantnagar offers its students ample opportunities to earn while pursuing their studies. During free hours students work as electricians, masons, laboratory assistants. They are paid at the rate of Re. 1 per hour for unskilled work and Rs. 1.25 per hour for skilled work. In the final year of the course students of agriculture are required to do practical crop production. A team of eight students is allotted five acres of land on which they have to carry out all operations by themselves. The inputs and farm machinery are made available to them on loan. They also have to pay rent for the holding. At the end of the crop season they market their produce and divide the profits among themselves after paying back the loans to the University. During 1972 the students earned a total of Rs. 3.56 lakhs from various self-employment schemes of the University.

The University operates a placement service motivated to create a strong link between its graduates and their prospective employers. An up-to-date college-wise graduate directory giving the biodata of all graduates is sent to prospective employers in the country and abroad to enable them to pick their requirements. It is revised every year. The University maintains a Technical Aid Pool which offers services of its graduates to employers for one year on a trial basis. On the expiry of this period the candidates are either absorbed on a long-term or on permanent basis by the employers or reverted to the University.

Chamdo to meet the builders, needs.

"According to local observers the work, that is being carried out strongly suggests construction of a nuclear base, for which the region is admirably suited.

"According to western sources, the Chinese are busy building this alternative nuclear base in Tibet because they may be feeling that their base in Sinkiang is too vulnerable to Russian attack and strong Russian influence. The Tibetan base is about as inaccessible a spot as possible."

The emergence of India as a nuclear power will bring new strategic problems to the Chinese in Tibet whose nuclear base there had been regarded in India as a serious threat to Indian integrity.

Whilst New Delhi was not able to openly point an accusing finger at the Chinese nuclear base because much of news about it was still speculative, it had a ready made case against the USA which, it was alleged, was building a nuclear base in the islands of Diego Garcia.

The song and burden of the PM's speeches, which has been faithfully echoed by her top aides and colle-

agues was that the Americans and the Chinese had increased their efforts inside India to undermine the Indira Gandhi government by utilising the Rightwing forces, on the one hand, and the tribes and minority racial groups on the northern and north-eastern borders of the country on the other. It is also emphasised that these two Powers are opposed to India becoming a strong and independent power in Asia, and as this ran counter to the strategic objectives of both the US and China in this region.

It is further alleged that both Washington and Peking (and Islamabad) believe that India's current economic troubles will help them to make India go on "reverse gear", and thus take advantage of these difficulties to remove the Indira Gandhi government, and bring to power a Government which would be willing to play ball with the US on the one hand and China on the other. From this it is concluded that the disruptive forces inside the country are encouraged and assisted by these two countries which are hostile to the Indira Gandhi government.

**Such is the theme and logic on which the Prime Minister**

**is hoping to rouse the masses of India against her political opponents who are no doubt creating a great deal of trouble for her.**

**IN THE MEANTIME** there are serious moves by far-sighted persons in Washington and New Delhi to bring about a change in Indo-US relations aimed primarily at persuading the Nixon administration to accept the Indira Gandhi government as one which could maintain friendly relations with the US at the highest level.

It is admitted that the redoubtable Henry Kissinger will visit New Delhi in the very near future. It is said that but for his lengthy stay in the Middle East he would have come long India a long time ago.

The administration in New Delhi, which is anxious to establish a detente with the USA, and also get economic aid is aware that India has to guard itself the creation of a climate of international opinion by some interested powers to foster the impression that it is squandering its meagre resources on an irrelevant status symbol like nuclear capability while the country is faced with economic difficulties of staggering proportions. The Government is likely to make more information available about the limited outlays involved in India's nuclear research and development to rebut this mischievous campaign, since it could provide further excuse for some unfriendly Congressman in the United States to decry the whole purpose of economic aid.

India is also taking steps to put its nuclear policy in its proper perspective by using every possible opportunity in future to press for a more vigorous international drive against the continued nuclear arms race which was making a total nonsense of the whole concept of non-proliferation. And a renewed emphasis on nuclear disarmament is going to be one of the hard staples of Indian diplomacy in future.

### SEA TREATMENT FOR DISEASES

In 1605 Professor Parashkev Stoyanov tried for the first time in Bulgaria to organise winter sea treatment of children with tuberculosis of the bones and joints. The famous Bulgarian physician was right to consider the period from October to April as the most favourable for treatment of different patients at the seaside, because the weather there is warmer, sunnier and milder than in the country's interior.

Since 1959 Bulgarian physicians have applied winter sea treatment for hypertonia, atherosclerosis, neuritis, bronchial asthma, anaemia, diseases of the skin, endocrine diseases, etc. They have reported the excellent results achieved in these activities at many international congresses and conferences. It is well known, for example, that after a 20-30 day stay by the sea in winter the blood pressure of 75 per cent of the hypertonic patients is normalised (in the first stage of the disease—an effect difficult to achieve by administering medicines. Considerable improvement is shown by 80 per cent of the patients with neurasthenia psychasthenia and different phobias. The pain in 70 per cent of the patients suffering from arthritis deformans disappears too. Almost every patient suffering from obesity in 30 days take about 10.15 per cent of his weight off.

—News from Bulgaria

SOMETHING TO  
THINK ABOUT IN SRI LANKA

# SOCIALISM AND THE INDIAN TRADITION

by Hiren Mukerjee

In spite of India's avowal of socialism as her goal, there is still in many quarters an idea, which dies hard, that socialism is an alien plant which will not truly grow in this country's soil.

It should be remembered that if India is, by some quirk of history, entirely averse and allergic to social ideas and formations emerging at road, then by the same logic democracy, nationalism and liberalism, the parliamentary system and so many other things just cannot and will not strike root in this country.

Such, however, is not the case. India has never been and is not today an anchorite peninsula. She is in the stream of world events. The winds of change blow here as everywhere else, though of course the velocity, the depth, the impact of the phenomenon necessarily vary from country to country and from period to period.

Lenin himself, profoundly convinced of the final world triumph of socialism, stressed that while

*all nations will arrive at socialism—this is inevitable but all will do so in not exactly the same way—each will contribute something of its own to socialist transformation in the different aspects of social life.*

THE "FATHERS" of scientific socialism, Marx and Engels, had an authentic internationalist orientation and were never "Europe-centric". Writing on India in 1853, Marx observed:

*We may safely expect to see, in a more or less remote period, the regeneration of that great and interesting country, whose gentle natives are, to use the expression of Prince Saltykov, even in the most inferior classes, plus-fins et plus adroits que les Italiens, whose submission even is counterbalanced by a certain calm nobility, who, notwithstanding their natural languor, have astonished the British officers by their bravery, whose country has*

*been the source of our languages, our religions, and who represent the type of the ancient German in the Jat and the type of the ancient Greek in the Brahmin.*

Marx knew that revolution in Europe, "this little corner", would be inevitably crushed if there were happy hunting grounds of the empire in Asia and Africa. It is significant that towards the end of his life Marx contemplated learning Sanskrit and Arabic, and that in a letter of 12 September 1882, Engels wrote:

*India will perhaps, indeed very probably, make a revolution.... (which) would certainly be the best thing for us.*

In August 1971, the London headquarters of the first international actually received from Calcutta a communication requesting affiliation; careful research, one hopes, will some day identify the effort.

ONE IS STILL sometimes told of the Indians' propensity towards "contemplativeness", of the religio-idealistic and mystical trends in Indian culture, of an allged aversion towards mundane things, and of what someone once termed "the relentless self-transcendence of Hinduism". Reference is made not only to Max Muller's 19th century rhetoric about "a life not for this life only but a transfigured and eternal life," but to Prof.

Radhakrishnan's stress on intuition and on spiritual life, "not a problem to be solved but a reality to be experienced, a new birth into enlightenment." A great and perceptive thinker like Albert Schweitzer has thus written about "world—and—life—denial" being a dominant feature of Hindu thought, more than, for instance, in the case of that of Christianity. If that, however, was the whole truth or even a large part of it, the ideology of socialism would be a gratuitous imposition and foredoomed to rejection by the Indian people.

In the same vein one hears of Indian philosophy being fundamentally hostile towards materialism, and of the historic rationalisation in India of caste and a hierarchic structure of society as a factor which is sure to resist and foil changes in the direction of socialism.

If that, again, was the whole truth, socialism in India could be little more than a sorry reed. If, that is to say, the entire trend and tenor of Indian life and thought has been to prop up a generally unvarying structure of an acquiescent, if sometimes resilient society which has lasted a long enough time to weather the newfangled blasts of today, the prospects of socialism must be bleak.

THE SUBJECT is too vast and intricate to be treated adequately in a short compass, but certain cobwebs in the thinking of many of us can be cleared by a little careful thought. It should not take long, if one is honest with oneself, to

### Vegetarian Meat

Denmark's reputation as an agricultural nation, selling bacon and other animal based foods to the world, is well established. It is perhaps not so widely realised that Denmark also exports 'meat made of soyabean fibres'. Soya bean fibres are being transformed into 'pork', 'veal', 'chicken', meat and 'weiner sausages'. The latest product to be developed is deep fried 'chicken' slices in cans, which the housewife merely has to turn in a hot frypan.

find out that the so-called "other-worldliness" of the Indian is almost entirely a myth, that "contemplativeness" (in certain contexts of living) is by no means an Indian (or an eastern) speciality, that materialist schools have played a large role in Indian philosophy though, of course, they have been sought to be subordinated and smothered, as almost everywhere else in the course of the history of class society, by metaphysical-idealist trends which have been subtle and sophisticated auxiliaries to the social order.

If passivity and a penchant for mute acquiescence has been often India's bane, it had objective historical reasons and was never something innate, as it were, to our nature. This country of course, has had a unique history much, of which can be our pride, but that uniqueness never meant dissociation from the joys and sorrows of common humanity and from the values, ideals and aspirations emanating therefrom.

**Materialist and atheistic trends in Indian philosophy can be traced from its earliest beginnings. They are far from being confined only to the Charvaka-Lokayata doctrines which are usually pooh-poohed by bourgeois ideologists.**

They are found in some degree or other in the Nyaya, Vaishesika, Samkhya, vaibhasika, Santrantika and

other systems, often represented as religious doctrines.

**THE PHILOSOPHY** of Buddhism and Jainism also has much to do with materialist thinking and, in spite of the common idea that they made for a pessimistic view of the surrounding reality, it is a shining fact that, as in the quest of Buddha, an answer was sought to the problem of suffering and found at last in *The Eightfold Path of Right Conduct*.

Indeed, the widespread concept of the spiritual culture of India as essentially pessimistic and a negation of the material world and secular life is essentially erroneous and often deliberately planted. It is completely out of harmony with Indian art, painting, sculpture and poetry, with Indian attainments long ago in technology, in metalurgy and ship-building.

It negates the phenomenon, for example, of Pataliputra, Mauryan capital of the fourth century B.C. which had four times the population of Rome in her most flourishing period and was run by a municipality which, according to Megasthenes, the Greek traveller, collected even vital statistics. The viewpoint conflicts with Kautilya's *Arthashastra* as well as with Vatsyayana's *Kamasutra* with the living energetic, uninhibited heroes of the Indian epics. If the negation of world and life constituted the

Indian speciality. Indian history could just never have been what it was.

**LOVE OF LIFE** shines in the Vedas with the stress on the glory of dawn and of sunrise, the smile on women's faces, the love of man and wife and the sanctity of motherhood. "May we see for a hundred years, live for a hundred autumns, yea, even more than a hundred autumns"—this is a recurring refrain.

In *Atharvaveda* occurs a lofty prayer for universal harmony: "May we all be of one mind! May we join our mind with that of others! May we work conjointly..so that all may happily live together!" One finds in *Yajurveda* the famous hymn to peace: "May the heaven, the sky, the earth ..water, herbs, vegetation, God and the entire universe be full of peace!"

The stress in the *Upanishads* on the ultimate truth did not minimize worldly things. Thus, corn was worshipped as God, as it was "the nouriser of being". In *Aitareya Brahmana*, there is a wonderful sequence: "...behold the beauty of the sun, who never slept since the beginning of creation—therefore, move forward, be astir!"

**METAPHYSICAL TRUTH**, of course was sought but with a view to fortifying ethical social behaviour. T. S



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Eliot took out of *Brihadaranyake Upanishad* "the three D's"—*Dam yata, Datta, Dayadhvam* (self-control, charity, compassion), qualities by no means unrelated to real, even lusty living. Preeminent among *Upanishadic* personalities were the *Rajarshi* (king-cum-saint) Janaka, father of Sita, and the great *Yajnavalkya*, the sage with two wives, among them *Maitreyee* who questioned him on the issue of immorality for she could be content with nothing less. The French indologist, (Louis Renou), relates how *Yajnavalkya*, once asked if meat could be eaten, answered: "Why, yes, but it must be tender!"

Indian thinking in ancient times was not overloaded with pessimism and passivity. In the *Mahabharata*, poverty is denounced as "death by degrees", "a greater sorrow than the death of one's husband or son". This is reflected in the later southern classic, the *Kural*: "Nothing pains more than poverty, save poverty alone". One cannot, in the present sketch, expand on the theme, but it seems correct to deduce that Gandhi in the 20th century was in line with his hoary forbears in India when he stressed the condition of living of his people as the paramount issue. Every morning inmates of his *Sabarmati Ashram* would circle its precincts and chant from *Markandeya Purana*: "I do not wish for a kingdom or for heaven or to be born again, I wish only an end to the suffering of all beings."

There should not be an impression that the evolution in India, almost as a sociological marvel, of an organic society, hierarchic and yet preeminently stable, an exemplar, as it were, of the conservative genius, queers the pitch for socialist development. One recalls in this connection the celebrated *Purushasukta* hymn in the *Rigveda*, delineating the derivation of the castes from the limbs of *Brahma*.

However, if the great *Plato*, with his authoritarian ideas, can have a place in the history of communism, if *Rousseau* with his concept of the general will and the notion of the citizen having to be "forced to be free" can have helped the trends towards socialism, if *Hegel's* dialectics could play a seminal role since *Marx*, though he

claimed to turn it upside down owed a lot to it, there should be no reason to damn the old *Hindu sociologists, Manu et al.*, as permanent road blocks in this country.

ANCIENT INDIAN THINKING could not, for obvious historical reasons, evolve scientific socialism which awaited its appropriate time and place, the mid-19th century in industrial Europe, but it was throwing up preconditions for the event. There is in the *Rigveda* an averment that the man who cooks only for himself is a sinner. Later lawgivers like *Vasistha* laid down that usury was sin, which reminds one of the *Christian Father Tertullian*, quoted often by European socialist scholars. In the *Bhagvadpurana* it is enjoined that one had no right to anything more than what was needed for sustenance, and a great passage in the *Ishavasyopanishad* one reads: "You may enjoy only through renunciation; do not covet, for whose, indeed, is the wealth?"

This is not, of course, socialism, but it prepares the soil for it.

Moving up the vista of history, one hears the beautiful lament of *Amir Khusrau*, that stupendous genius who served the *Khiljis* (14th century) as a court poet: "Ever pearl in the royal crown is but the crystallised drop of blood fallen from the tearful eyes of the poor peasant."

Perhaps one can place alongside this the famous formulation of the great 15th century humanist in England, *Sir Thomas More*, author of *Utopia*, and quoted in all histories of socialism, that "sheep were devouring man", for the greedy rich were evicting peasants from arable land which they turned into pasture for sheep farming.

*Aurobindo Ghosh*, later to withdraw from life and work on the "superman" concept of self-realisation, was, as everyone knows, fervid patriot, and in November 1893 he wrote in an essay: "Whether we like it or not, it is in our hinderable and ignorant proletariat that one can find seeds of our hope, the only prop of our future."

In 1908, *Hardayal*, founder of the *Ghadr* movement, wrote an article where he called *Karl Marx* "a modern rishi". In his own unique way, *Swami Vivekananda* spoke of "the gospel of social raising up, the gospel of equality" for rousing "the sleeping Leviathan", the *Indian masses*, once also saying: "Bread! Bread! I do not believe in a God who cannot give me bread here, giving me bliss in heaven!"

IT WAS from this tremendous man that India heard in 1899: "A time will come...the rising of the *shudra* class...socialism, anarchism, nihilism and other like sects are the vanguard of the social revolution that is to follow". The fire of his spirit is seen in the adjuration: "You the, upper class of India,

#### PURE WATER THROUGH REVERSE OSMOSIS

Communities in poor water areas might obtain high quality drinking water at a relatively low cost by installing a reverse osmosis (RO) system to treat brackish ground water. That solution will be much less expensive than desalting seawater or importing fresh water from distant sources, says the Du Pont Company of U.S. manufacturer of "Permasep" premeators used in the RO system. "Permasep" premeators function as a molecular filter, using hollow plastic fibres, about the size of a human hair, as an osmotic membrane.

Water is circulated around the tiny fibres under 400 pounds per square inch (28.1 kg/cm<sup>2</sup>) pressure and, by reverse osmosis, pure water permeates the wall of each fibre and flows down the hollow centre bore to be collected at one end. Dissolved contaminants in the feedwater are too large to permeate through the tube walls and, therefore, remain outside the fibres to be continuously flushed out of the premeators into a waste or reject line. The premeators can remove as much as 95 per cent of the dissolved solids, and up to 99 per cent of organics, bacteria, and other contaminants from brackish water.

do you think you are alive? you are but mummies ten thousand years old. The only hope of India is from the masses."

Rabindranath Tagore, another master-mind steeped in India's past, greeted in July 1918 the Russian revolution and wrote in view of the perils facing it: "If she fails, then her failure will fade, like the morning star, only to usher in the sunrise of the new age". In a 1929 article he wrote: "The weakness of the poor has so long kept civilisation weak and incomplete; they must set this right by the conquest of power."

No wonder that visiting the Soviet Union in 1930, he hailed the "miracle"—for "new Russia is engaged in pricking a death-bolt out of the skeleton of man's civilisation, the bolt called greed," and he wished well to the Soviets in writings which the British tried once to ban.

Mahatma Gandhi would often call himself a socialist or even a communist, "in the best sense of the word". In March 1922, while facing trial for sedition, he made a tremendous statement accusing British imperialism of the cruelest exploitation, wherein its partner was the Indian "town-dweller" (bourgeoisie). "The miserable little comforts of the town-dweller in India", he said, "represents the brokerage they get for the work they do for the foreign exploiter, and the profits and the brokerage are sucked from the masses."

In his weekly *Young India*, he wrote (15 November 1928): "The means of production of the elementary necessities of life (shall)

remain in the control of the masses. These should be freely available to all as God's air and water are or ought to be..." On 1 April 1928 he wrote to Jawaharlal Nehru that he would have "a movement without the rich and the vocal educated class"—only "the time is not yet". For him, that time never came and, of course, in 1940 he held back the people's resurgence for he feared "revolution and red ruin."

EVEN SO there are clear socialist overtones to his *Sarvodaya* concept and it is remarkable that he did not hesitate during the August 1942 upheaval, when "do or die" was his call to the people, to envisage "15 days of turmoil" when landlords would "cooperate by fleeing." Once Gandhi declared he was a communist minus the violence, propagating not *Samyavad* (the theory or ideology of communism) but *Samyadharma* (the practice or duty of equality).

It would be naïve to call Gandhi a socialist, but there is no doubt about the direction of his thought.

Subhas Chandra Bose had in his *Indian Struggle* (1934) propounded a synthesis of fascism and communism in his concept of *Samyavad*, and it is known how shortly thereafter he demarcated himself away from fascism and during world war II, in spite of his association with fascist powers, he never truckled down to them and at great risk refused to take part in anti-Soviet, anti-socialist propaganda.

Much of this new information has come from the federal republic of Germany, the German democratic republic, the USSR and else-

where recently. It was as the congress president in 1938 that Bose appointed the national planning committee with Jawaharlal as chairman, and at an important meeting said he envisaged India's economic advance requiring, not slow, measured steps, but a "forced march".

Jawaharlal Nehru's views on the subject are too well-known for elaboration. It was a very Indian thought which he expressed in his *Autobiography*, when he wrote that "everything that comes in the way (of the classless society) will have to be removed gently if possible, forcibly if necessary—(with no hatred or cruelty) but with the dispassionate desire to remove obstruction." He had little patience with the Fabian idea of "the inevitability of gradualness"—he quoted instead: "You can not leap over the abyss in two jumps" and also, from the gentle English socialist, R. H. Tawney: "Onions can be eaten leaf by leaf, but a live tiger cannot be skinned paw by paw, for the tiger will do the skinning first".

**"All this is not intended, of course, to say that these great Indian leaders were thorough-going socialists. They were not. But as representatives of their ancient country in an age of doubt and change and conflict, the orientation of their thought regarding the reconstruction of India can be gleaned this way. What basically is the aim of socialism cannot, therefore, be considered remote from this country's mental frame.**

On the marxist analysis, revolution grows out of the womb of society and at the moment of birth "force is the midwife" of history. Just as with the advance of medicine painless birth has become today a feasible proposition, so with the march of events, with socialism in power today over one-third of humanity, the old classical-type revolution is no longer necessarily unavoidable. In the search, therefore, of the non-capitalist path of development, India might well be an eager participant.

On the issue of "ends and means" which Gandhian ethics stresses strongly, perhaps it is salutary to remember what the late Professor

### IRRIGATION THROUGH BAMBOO BORINGS

Bamboo Borings are widely used for irrigational purpose in Katihar Subdivision of Purnea district (Bihar). These are generally sunk to a depth of 60 ft. In many cases the bamboo borings are supplemented with iron pipes at the top which entails a little more cost but very much enhances their longevity. These borings have a life of 10 years and can irrigate about 10 acres of land. The total cost of one bamboo comes to about Rs. 300 only.

So far more than 2,271 bamboo borings have been completed throughout Katihar sub-division with Government help. Some 1,066 bamboo borings have been sunk by private parties.

Irrigation facilities were almost non-existent in Katihar sub-division before December 1972 when bamboo borings appeared.

D. D. Kusambi pointed out perceptively. In Indian tradition no name is more honoured than that of Shri Krishna. But as the *Mahabharata* testifies, it was on Krishna's advice that Bhishma was killed unfairly by putting the eunuch, Shikhandi, ahead of the fighting forces, and Bhishma would not soil his hands by taking arms against him; Drona was killed by Yudhi's thira telling him a deliberate lie, Karna was killed, against all canons of chivalry, when he was dismounted and disarmed; Duryodhana was bludgeoned to death after a foul mace blow that shattered his thigh—every time Krishna bluntly stating that victory could never have been won otherwise!

This is not a plea for wrong, unethical conduct, but a justification, in the logic of life, of the notion that socialists hold that ends cannot be always dissociated from means, that, indeed, as K.S. Shelvankar's little book's title avers, *Ends are Means*.

Perhaps in India today, subjective and objective conditions are ripe and yet not ripe, for socialism—that will be for history to determine. But let no one imagine that it is alien to our soil and can never take root in it.

## ONION

### Vegetable and Spice in One

Few can miss the unique flavour of onion assailing one's olfactory nerves from the kitchen and fewer can resist the temptation to partake the dish containing it. Though onion is generally considered a flavouring medium for the main vegetable which is made into curry or kootu, it has been given the status of a vegetable itself because of its nutritive and tasty qualities.

The special pungency of raw onion is due to the presence of a volatile oil allyl-propylsulphide which is more concentrated in certain varieties and mild in others. The intensity of this "hotness" is also conditioned by the soil and the method of cultivation or storage of this bulbous vegetable. Nutritionally onion has all the

essential ingredients in a balanced manner though for all appearances, the peels of onion may seem to be not nutritive. Some think it has only water and some mineral salts.

On the other hand onion (the big type) contains in 100 grams 1.2 gm. protein 0.1 gm. fat, 0.4 gm. mineral, 11.1 gm. carbohydrates, 46.9 mg. calcium, 50 mg. phosphorous, 0.7 mg. iron, 0.08 mg. thiamin, 0.01 mg. riboflavin, 0.4 mg. niacin and 11 mg. vitamin C. The big onion does not provide vitamin A, but the smaller onion which is slightly richer in protein, minerals, phosphorous and niacin contains 15 micrograms of carotenes.

The onion stalks are useful as green vegetable with a mild flavour of onion, and richer than the bulb itself, containing 0.8 gm. minerals, 7.5 mg. of iron, 595 micrograms of carotene and 17 mg. of vitamin C in addition to the other nutrients in the same proportion. Apart from the nutritive value and attractive flavour the onion is useful to correct many common ailments.

It is a handy medicine as well as vegetable. According to Nadkarni, it is a domestic remedy for colic and scurvy. It can be used as poultice to indolent boils, bruises and wounds, roasted or otherwise. The juice of onion can be used as relieving agent in faintness, headache and infantile convulsions. Applied as hot juice to the soles of feet it can be, it is said, useful in allaying distress in convulsive disorders. Applied locally it alleviates irritation of insect bites and skin diseases. It is an antidote in tobacco poisoning and a good application for rheumatic pains or inflammatory swellings, mixed with mustard oil. Roasted onion mixed with cumin and cow's ghee is often used to give relief in piles.

For the housewife, onion comes in handy to be used with any vegetable to enrich its taste and mask its unwholesome taste or flavour. It can be used as a salad and chutney or pickle with or without other combinations. It has a versatile use and is one of the oldest vegetables of this country though its origin is traced to the Mediterranean regions.

—Hindu

## FROM THE PRESS

### In Sri Lanka Today

— a random collection of cuttings and excerpts from the local press reflecting the state of the nation —

#### FALSE I.T. RETURNS TO BACK BANK LOANS

False income tax assessment notices are being submitted by some applicants for bank loans. Police sources said a case was detected yesterday by Bank of Ceylon officials when scrutinising the loan application of a woman who was present at the Bank. The attempt was detected when bank officials found discrepancies between the information given in the application and the income tax assessment notice accompanying it. Detectives from the Colombo Frauds Bureau were called in and investigations were in progress at the time of going to press.

Daily Mirror, 18/5/74

#### CAUGHT PAINTING ANTI-GOVERNMENT SLOGANS

Jaffna,

Five youths were caught red handed by the police while they were painting anti-Government slogans on walls on Wednesday night. The police found in their possession tar paint and brushes. These slogans—all of them inciting the people to revolt against the Government and wage war—were written on walls along the main roads from Kankasanturai to Jaffna and in the Jaffna City. The youths were arrested by the Police while they were writing on a wall at Maviddapuram in the Kankasanturai electorate. One of the youths arrested is said to be a brother of a prominent Federal Party youth leader who is now in police custody.

Daily Mirror, 15/5/74

# IS IT TRUE?

## Sherlock Holmes

### YALA PROGRAMME

IS IT NOT A FACT that the details of the Yala 1974 paddy programme are embodied in each of the District Programmes? That it was stressed that "present weather conditions indicate that larger extents of land will be cultivated especially in the Dry Zone than originally planned"? That this would call for a careful distribution of resources? That it was also recognised that problems relating to short supply of tractor tyres, fertilisers and vehicles would arise? That the primary focus on the Yala paddy programme will be "good management" of fields? That will involve good tillage, hand weeding, transplanting wherever possible and good use of available water? That shortfalls in supply of tractors and fertilisers can only be mitigated with better management?

That the national targets for paddy in Yala had been fixed as follows? That the gross extent sown was fixed at 692,850 acres? That the consumption of fertiliser was fixed at 62,018 tons? That the total supply of Rs. 36.203 million? That the total production credit was fixed at national production was anticipated to be 31 million bushels? That as a postscript it was felt that "present favourable trends in weather indicated the possibility of exceeding the Production Target in appreciable measure"?

IS IT ALSO NOT A FACT that the programme for other crop for Yala envisaged "an extension of grain crops such as sorghum, green gram and cow-pea to the upper slopers or well drained paddy lands in the dry zone which are left uncultivated for insufficient irrigation for paddy cultivation? That these crops can be grown successfully with the Yala rains with supplemental irrigation? That the prevalent prices for these crops would be a positive stimulus to the extension of such cultivation?

That further "the importance of this programme is derived not only from the urgent necessity to augment food supplies, but also from the immediate need to reduce under employment and to increase farm incomes? That all owner cultivators, and cultivators and agricultural labourers who were occupied on this land during the Maha season are left without employment during Yala? That the Report anticipated that problems relating to tillage power and supplemental irrigation? That in the Report it was required that "political authorities of Dry Zone Districts with Major and Medium scale irrigation schemes should take immediate action to formulate their respective programmes in consultation with officials of the TCEO in regard to supplemental irrigation for upland crops on paddy land and with other relevant officials on other problems?" That it was pointed out that the Department of Agriculture was in a position to supply reasonable quantities of seed material? That the potential for cultivation of other crops such as cowpea and green grains on unutilised paddy land in some of the districts in the dry zone was examined and Political Authorities and Government Agents to concentrate on this aspect of the programme and organise supplies and services.

IS IT ALSO NOT TRUE that apart from the extended cultivation of other grain crops on well drained land in the dry zone under rainfed conditions where there is no irrigation for paddy? That one of the crops that would be encouraged would be yams?

That the emergency Yam Drive last year was intended to augment the supply of carbo-hydrates in the face of the threatened short supply

of imported rice and flour as a direct result of the very steep price increases in the international market? That this programme was therefore almost confined to Manioc and Sweet Potato because ready supplies of planting material were forthcoming only from these two root crops? That this was certainly not intended as a permanent solution to the food problem? That it is still necessary to continue to depend on short-term root crop on developed land such as home-steads because there is no indication of a reversal of World prices to normal trends, nor do our Balance of Payments show a favourable position?

That it must be emphasised that the current Yam drive is a programme for the production of all possible varieties of root crops which are appropriate to each agro-climatic zones? That it is intended not only to increase the supply of carbo-hydrates but also to provide a wider range of nutrients and root crops to satisfy different palates with a view to shifting the sole dependence on rice and wheat flour for the carbo-hydrate component of the diet? That some of the varieties which are envisaged in this programme apart from Manioc an sweet potatoes are *Innala*, *Kiri-ala*, *Kukulala*, *Hingurala*, *Wel kiri-ala*, *gus kiri-ala* and *Raja-ala* (especially in the Dry Zone)?

That the main elements of the programme will be the identification of sources of planting material, purchase, assembling and processing and sale to the public at the commencement of the season? That this should done in close collaboration among the Political Authorities and the Village Organisation, Productivity Committees and Cultivation Committees, wherever they are functioning, Agricultural, Extension Staff and other District Officers at all levels?

