

TRIBUNE

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Paddy Price & Rice Production

THERE WAS A JOYOUS ANNOUNCEMENT on July 10/11 that the GPS price for paddy had been increased from Rs. 30 a bushel to Rs. 33 in view of the fact that Government had decided to do away with the subsidy on the fertiliser used for paddy cultivation. To "sell" the removal of the subsidy on fertilisers to paddy farmers, governmental propaganda made a song and dance about SRI LANKA FARMERS (BEING) THE BEST PAID IN THE WORLD because the GPS price was now Rs. 33 and also because a grant of Rs. 500 per acre was being granted for new paddy lands. Garnished in this way it certainly seemed that a most attractive deal had been extended to paddy farmers.

This is how the *Ceylon Observer* brought the glad tidings to the public on July 11. "Farmers in Sri Lanka now enjoy premium prices for their paddy, following the decision of the government to increase the Guaranteed Price for paddy to Rs. 33 a bushel. It has also been decided to give an incentive to those who want to open up new paddy tracts. A grant of Rs. 500 an acre will be given to persons who asweddumize new paddy land. This is the fourth instance that the GPS for paddy has been increased by the United Front Government.

"It is also a part of the pledge given by the UF to farmers that they would get a fair return for their sweat. The current rate is

Rs. 19 more than what the farmer got under the previous UNP government. After the UF Government came into power the GPS was increased from Rs. 14 to Rs. 18 in February 1973. Subsequently when the Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, launched the "Production War" in October 1973 another increase of Rs. 7 a bushel was given to the farmer. This was again raised to Rs. 30 and now it stands at Rs. 33—the highest paid to a farmer in the major rice-producing countries.

"The government also decided to increase the price on the ration rice by 10 cts. a pound. However, non-income tax payers are entitled to a pound of rice free. But they will have to pay the new rate of Rs. 1.25 a pound for the extra ration. The government has decided to do away with the subsidy on fertilizer used for paddy cultivation. At present the government spends Rs. 100 million (as against Rs. 30 million budgeted for) to provide subsidized fertilizer to the farmers."

The *Daily News* presented the same story on a lower key with a faint attempt to provide a little background interpretative material. The same story dressed in this fashion does not sound any more impressive. Said the *Daily News* "Increases in the guaranteed price of paddy and an increased price on the ration were announced by the government yesterday following a decision to abolish the subsidy on fertiliser to the farmer.

"The following communique was released last night by the Department of Information: The Cabinet has decided to abolish the subsidy on fertiliser and instead to raise

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TRIBUNE

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Sri Lanka.

the guaranteed price of paddy from Rs. 30 to Rs. 33 per bushel. The price of rice on the ration (other than the free half measure) will accordingly be increased by ten cents a lb or a half measure. It has also been decided to pay a grant of Rs. 500 per acre for owners of undeveloped land who asweddumise such land. A scheme for ensuring minimum regular earnings for workers on estates over 100 acres in extent was also accepted.

"The Food Commissioner will announce the date on which the new price will become effective according to a government spokesman. The effect of the new proposals—the increase in the rationed price is likely to take effect only from Monday next, according to authoritative sources—so that the income tax payer will now have to pay Rs. 2.50 for the first measure (the present price is Rs. 2.30 a measure) and for the second half measure Rs. 1.25 (present price Rs. 1.15). Non-income tax payers will continue to get the first half measure free but they will have to pay ten cents more for the second half measure (that is Rs. 1.25).

"The new proposals will not bring in the government any new revenue according to government sources. It will enable the government to recoup the increased price for a bushel of paddy from the consumer. The farmer who will get his fertiliser at a higher price now is being compensated by a higher guaranteed price for his paddy (an increase of Rs. 3 on a bushel). The present fertiliser subsidy is 50 per cent of the fertiliser price.

"But when this subsidy was fixed the price of fertiliser was not affected

by the oil crisis. At present prices the fertiliser subsidy to farmers would have increased to over Rs. 100 million from the estimated Rs. 30 million, if action was not taken to make the price reflect its cost to the government."

With the daily press fervently echoing the government line, it is difficult for the ordinary people, who are not farmers, to realise the implications of what all this means. The picture painted is too rosy for words, but the high prices fetched by off-ration rice makes many people realise that all is not too well with paddy production.

The *Daily News* of July 12 ventured to write an editorial on the subject under the title MORE FOR THE FARMER and this provides an insight into governmental thinking and the mood of self-congratulatory complacency which has crept over the Government.

The editorial reads as follows: "Up goes the guaranteed price for paddy to more than double what it was when the United Front Government took office, and in the midst of all the economic stringencies besetting the country there can be no man so ill-informed as not to feel a deep sense of satisfaction. The guaranteed price today is also linked to the cost of the paddy farmer's fertiliser: the increase of three rupees to the farmer makes it possible to abolish the subsidy on fertilisers. It has been a curse, this incubus of subsidies on this, that and the other. Subsidies distort the economic picture and worst of all, they keep farmers (and all other beneficiaries from subsidies) in a sort of servitude, robbing them of independence and efficiency. Very healthy indeed is the government's steady progress towards eliminating subsidies and relying on the mechanism of prices for production. Give the farmer a good price for his produce so that he looks after his fields with self-reliance, relying on no crutches and standing on his own sturdy legs.

"Coupled with the good news of the increased guaranteed price for paddy is the equally good news, published by a happy coincidence simultaneously in Thursday's *Daily News*, of the convincing move towards self sufficiency in rice, and successes in growing subsidiary food crops, as well. The

Paddy Marketing Board records steady progress, coping with the delicate intricacies of paddy marketing operations and showing a healthy scepticism of paddy statistics, those reputed traps for the unwary. But even the PMB's tentative figures are promising."

It will be seen that the *Daily News* couples this news of an increased GPS price for paddy with a story the paper had published about the increased purchases ("tentative figures"—if you please) by the PMB. What is not known is what the term "increased purchases" mean. No statistics are yet available of what the actual Maha production really was or the actual amount which has come into the stores of the PMB. Stories have been floating around that the PMB purchases had totalled to over 14 million bushels for the Maha crop, but nobody has yet dared to state what the Maha production figures were.

Tribune has consistently pointed out that the paddy production statistics provided by government were uncertain and unreliable, and in this situation it was extremely difficult to derive any satisfaction about the state of paddy production in the country. But the *Daily News* editorial had no qualms about assuming that that everything was well in regard to paddy production and that paddy farmers were in a state of wonderful prosperity.

This is what the *Daily News* had further stated: "All of this adds up to great economic sense. For what future is there for the economy of Sri Lanka, until we grow our own food? We have all lived too long in the tragic situation of relying on traditional exports to give us money to import food. Never before has there been greater determination to end that folly, and to spell the future out in simple terms, economic salvation can come only with success in food growing. When food imports need not be made, the resultant foreign exchange savings can be invested in development and not, as the saying goes, be just eaten up. Prosperous farmers mean a contented national base, for we are mainly a nation of farmers and agriculturists. More foreign exchange for development means undertaking whatever in-

Corsican!

For many years West European connoisseurs held the wines made in Corsica in high esteem. Recently it was learned, however, that many of them are nothing but a mixture of sweet water and chemicals. Newspapers report that the two biggest distilleries on this French island have made 60 million francs on the sale of ersatz wines.

Paddy Price

dustry we can profitably engage in, which means jobs—the other bleak feature in a grey economic landscape.

“With all the satisfaction that will generally be felt about the increased guaranteed price for paddy, a thought has to be spared for those affected by the increase of twenty cents on each measure of rationed rice. But with no change, in the free half measure, hardship is reduced to the absolute minimum, that is, hardship upon those least able to support any increase in the price of staples. Nobody can be legitimately surprised that the increase was inevitable. A simple study of the facts, surely demonstrates the inevitability of this increase.”

ALL THIS MAKES EXCELLENT READING, but what are the realities? For the consumer the official minimum price has gone up by 20 cents a measure—although it was made out that the weekly ration had gone up by 10 cents, that is for one pound or half a measure. Such propaganda gimmicks will not make the price increase any easier to ordinary people.

The (UNP) *Journal*, (6/7/74), pointed out that “A staggering sum of Rs. 67,200,000 will be extorted yearly from the people of this country by the UF government. This is the burden this government has placed on the people when they raised the price of a measure of rice by 20 cents i.e. 10 cents on every half measure. The withdrawal of the subsidy on fertiliser will affect the small farmer so severely that to this category of farmers, paddy cultivation may no longer be profitable—lakhs of farmers will be affected. The increase in the government price from Rs. 30 to Rs. 33 will not compensate the cultivator for what he has lost by the withdrawal of fertiliser....”

Whilst it is no doubt satisfying to feel that a farmer was being paid Rs. 33 a bushel, does the government not take into consideration the current (and daily increasing) costs of all the inputs necessary for paddy production? Fertilisers, when available, cost more than double or treble the price paid at the time the UF came into power. The *Daily News* made a point that the UF has more than

doubled the GPS price since it came to power, but the fertiliser prices have doubled and trebled during that time. **By the time the Maha sowing season comes in, fertiliser prices can well be four times what they were in 1970, if not more.**

For a variety of reasons most of the larger paddy producing areas have for years now relied on tractor ploughing. Ploughing by buffaloes and bulls are used only by a very few of the small peasant farmers who have been able to acquire these animals and maintain them without having to sell them off to the butcher. The charges for tractor ploughing, owing to the new oil prices, tyre prices, prices of spare parts, and all other essential ingredients for tractors have already gone up three times what they were in 1970, and they are likely to go up further. Furthermore, a number of tractors will be laid off this season because of the lack of spares and tyres (and the prices are so high that many tractor owners are not able to afford them). Before the Maha sowing season starts the tractor rates will go up still further. Agricultural labour wages have also gone up because of the increased cost of living.

With all these increases it is foolish on the part of the Government to crow about the increased GPS price of paddy to the farmer. Whether it is a big farmer (maximum 25 acres) or a small farmer (one acre), the paddy farmer has a number of grievances of which little notice is taken. Apart from the increased costs of production—seed paddy too will cost much more this year—the farmer is unhappy that he cannot sell his paddy at the open market price. He is compelled to sell all surplus paddy he has, over and above what he has for consumption, to the PMB at the guaranteed price. The open market is denied to him through the device of the complete ban on transport, although the producers of other agricultural produce have the benefit of the open market to make up for increased costs of production and the higher cost of living.

Government propaganda, if it is to have any impact, should be more realistically conceived and more subtly put out. Slogans like

SRI LANKA FARMERS BEST PAID IN THE WORLD will no doubt sound elevating, but such prices must be compared to costs of production, costs of living and a whole lot of other things. And it must be remembered that comparisons are odious. Farmers in China are certainly paid less for paddy than they are in Sri Lanka, but in China there has been no inflation in the cost of living or the cost of production. They have been kept at the low levels they



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were over a decade or more ago through various devices—mainly adequate production—and farmers cannot grumble when the price they get for the paddy produce is kept at the old level too.

It will do the government a great deal of good if it examines the realities about paddy production and rice prices before getting on the top of mountains to proclaim that the farmers of Sri Lanka were the most prosperous in the world.

It is also well to remember that the food situation in Sri Lanka this year has been saved by massive imports at high prices. If the production of paddy for the last Maha season was anywhere near what it semi-officially is hinted it was the price of off-ration rice in the producing areas and elsewhere will be at least 25% less than what it is now. One test of the volume of production is the off-ration price. With the massive imports—and the inevitable pilferage by the servants of the government which also swells the stocks in the underground market—the off-ration price of rice will be much lower than it is today, in producing and non-producing areas, if the Maha production figures are anywhere near what Ministerial circles pretend they are.

Government propaganda now tends to increase the credibility gap between the government and the people. All the euphoria created by the failure of the UNP, all the euphoria created by the underground—JVP backed United Front rallies, notwithstanding this credibility gap will keep growing if the government persists in propaganda of this kind.

At the moment the UNP is not in a position to make use of this growing credibility gap, but it must not be forgotten that political forces which can make use of it can emerge overnight from the wilderness where oppositional forces thrive.

For Next Week

**CHOLERA—SCARE
OR REALITY?**

TRIBUNE, August 3, 1974

Tribunania

✻ TOURISTS AND TOURISM

COMPLACENCY IS THE HALL MARK of a lotus eater and it is unfortunate that in Sri Lanka we still find many lotus-eaters especially in high places. A lotus eater is defined in the dictionary as a person given to indolent enjoyment. This term is derived from the ancient Greek legend which represented the lotus plant as something inducing luxurious dreaminess and a distaste for active life. One does not need to know very much of the lives of our successful bureaucrats—who in any country run the affairs of state—to know how much they seem to be addicted to lotus-eating. Going around in huge luxury Six Sri limousines and station waggon seem to be the main pre-occupation of our lotus-eating bureaucrats. They are now spreading many myths and legends about various aspects of life and economic activity in this country, without warning people of the potential dangers and pitfalls which lurk in the shadows—with the result that when the current euphoria wears off the realities would shock people.

One of the many such myths presently floating around predicts the economic miracle that tourism will trigger in Sri Lanka. There is no doubt that more and more tourists are flocking to this country, and that calculations are made about the foreign exchange this country was earning from these tourists. But the people are not told the realities: that our tourist boom was built on the FEECs whereby Sri Lanka pays the greatest premium in the world for hard currency; that the foreign exchange component needed to satisfy the tourists is enormous and correct estimates of this have not been made because it is virtually impossible to assess this expenditure because part of it is "invisible" and the other part merges with other exports; and that the substantial investments made in building hotels and other tourist complexes

(at inflated costs) will ultimately hang heavily on this country when the tourist boom fades away as it has from so many other countries after a short spell of time.

It will probably be many years before the realities come home to roost, and the perpetrators of the hoax who are now riding high on the crest of superficial statistics with a rosy tint will be not with us to find solutions for the grave problems that must be solved—problems which stem from the so-called tourist boom of today. One of the characteristics of lotus-eating is allow the future to look after itself.

In the meantime, we are being daily fed with sunshine stories through a subservient press that tourism when properly developed will become the biggest foreign exchange earner for Sri Lanka—forgetting that prosperity based on FEECs premia and on imports to sustain the industry will sooner or later end in disaster.

At the beginning of every month the Tourist authorities supply the uncritical daily press with hand-outs about tourism and how well it was doing in this country. On July 8th, the *Daily News* had a sunshine story under the heading *Rs. 65 Million From Tourism in Six Months last Year*. This is what the report stated: Sri Lanka earned Rs. 65 million in foreign exchange between July and December last year from 77,888 tourists, a Shipping and Tourism Ministry spokesman said yesterday. During the same period 607 new hotel rooms were built which cost Rs. 53.2 million. Total room strength now stands at 2,502.

"During 1973 marketing programs geared mainly towards public relations and tourist promotion campaign were carried out in the Federal Republic of Germany, U.K., France, Scandinavia, Switzerland and the USA. About 13 special groups—numbering 189 members visited the country during 1973 on familiarisation and educational programs. The Ceylon Travel Newsleter, a new quarterly "Tourmaline" and the monthly bulletin 'Welcome to Ceylon' were published by the Tourist Board. The Travel Information Centre of the Board assisted a total of about 10,835 inquiries during the year.

"The Ministry spokesman said that by the end of 1973 the total fleet strength of vehicles in the industry stood at 124 cars and 18 coaches, providing direct employment to 7800 persons. The Hotel school graduated 23 students under the Three-year Diploma Course in Hotel and Catering Operations."

On July 11, the *Times of Ceylon* published a piece entitled *Tourist Boom Could Exceed Rs. 100m Mark*. The report read as follows: "About 45 000 tourists arrived in the island during the first six months of this year, according to an official of the Ministry of Shipping and Tourism.

The official told *The Times of Ceylon* that during the first three months Rs. 38,200,000 (without FEECs) was earned from 30,410 tourist arrivals, compared with Rs. 31,900,000 earned during the same period last year from 25,604 visitors.

"He said there was a 19.7 per cent increase in earnings and a 18.8 per cent increase in the number of tourist arrivals during January and June, compared with the same period last year. Sri Lanka earned Rs. 80,000,000 (excluding FEECs) from 77,888 tourist arrivals last year.

"The Ministry expected a total of 119,000 tourists this year and the target of Rs. 100,000,000 was expected to be exceeded in earnings from tourism, the official added. The tourist rush has begun and is expected to reach peak level towards the end of the month, for the Kandy Perahera."

THERE ARE SEVERAL PARTIES, besides the bureaucrats in charge of tourism, anxious to spread these sunshine stories. The tax-free investors, the earners of convertible currency, the hoteliers travel agents and the shopkeepers, the touts, pimps and the smugglers, who serve and exploit the tourists, are all interested in this game of tourists make-believe. They have no use for the long term interests of the island. And in this process we are building a new comradore class of private entrepreneurs, mouthing socialist slogans, making the fast buck and building nest eggs abroad—after the knowing the operative implications and the loopholes of the new Exchange Control Laws.

It is a pity that the Tourism and the Tourist Industry should be coupled with Shipping. In the field of shipping, there is not the slightest doubt that a great deal of solid work has been done and the achievements have brought the country real economic benefits. *Tribune* has not been able to examine the detailed operations and successes of the Ceylon Shipping Corporation in its manifold activities—it will do this in the near future—but from what is known there is no doubt that there is much this country can be proud about in the way our mercantile services is built up. In the world of shipping, Sri Lanka is on fruitful ground which will bring long-term (as well as short-term) benefits to this island. But tourism with all its glamour and publicity, is another kettle of fish. To go from Shipping to Tourism in Sri Lanka today is to go from a world of solid reality to a world of myths and mirages.

In the past, we have from time to time drawn attention to what we considered are legends which are being built up about tourism. We are conscious that, on this matter, we are still a voice in the wilderness, but we are certain that time and events will demonstrate as in many other matters, the correctness of our evaluation. In this issue, we have elsewhere published an article on the TOURIST INDUSTRY. Whilst pointing out the matters which could be considered achievements, the writer also lists the dangers and pitfalls which surround the tourist industry.

This Government has certainly done better than any other government in the past to get the tourist industry going by attracting more tourists—but will success in bringing tourists to Sri Lanka at any cost to our economy help the economy in the long run?

SNIPPET

He Spots Water

PHALTAN: DANI is a water diviner. With his hands behind his ears, he walks around the field, Where he stops there is water! People say that he is a great diviner, a

mystic. His 10,000 wells speak volumes for him.

A more striking aspect of this man from Phaltan, Satara District, is his way of life. He never touches a currency note. All he asks is that he be provided transport from his house to the land and back. Nothing else, not even a cup of tea. To get the services of this simple man, slightly greying attired in a well-worn short pant and short-sleeved shirt, one has to wait for two months.

Also acknowledging his ability is the geo-physicist of MRA, Pan-chgani. When farmers approach the geo-physicist for help, he quite frankly suggests that they approach Dani. He has reason for doing so. Thrice he attempted finding water in the MRA compound, and thrice he failed. Finally they called diviner from nearby Wai; and, in his first attempt, he hit water. The Wai diviner is No. 3 man—which means he fails at times. Dani is No. 1. He does not fail. Dani comes from a moderately wealthy family who holds a B.Sc. degree. But judging from his way of life, he seems to have renounced the world; but not so completely as to deny it humanitarian service.

—Blitz

* *

Surprise Bankruptcy

A big Japanese firm manufacturing air conditioning equipment has gone into receivership. In late May, Nihon Netsugaku Kogyo, and its chief Aeromaster Co. daughter enterprise, with a total capital exceeding 1,000 million yen, declared themselves insolvent. The U.S. periodical "Newsweek" has qualified this as "the biggest corporate collapse in Japan since World War II," one that has "sent shock waves through the Japanese financial community". Industrial experts say the bankruptcy is due to overstocking of unsaleable products. More than a thousand people have lost their jobs and it is expected that around a thousand smaller supplier-firms will be hard hit.

INTERNATIONAL-AFFAIRS

BY ARIEL

* ETHIOPIA

THOUGH JAPAN is now entering a new political crisis, stemming from the setbacks which Premier Tanaka received at the last elections for a third of the seats in the Parliament, it is a crisis mainly within the ruling Liberal Democratic Party. The uneasy truce which Tanaka had maintained with his political opponents has snapped wide open and the Fukuda group of Ministers have walked out of the Cabinet. But this crisis in Japan is an internal home and home match within the ruling LDP which cannot be ousted for the foreseeable future in Japan—because it is still the instrument and symbol of the mighty corporations which are among the richest in the world. The Opposition, socialist and communist parties, cannot as yet seriously challenge the LDP, whilst the rightwing extremist parties have only a nuisance value. Indications are that Japan's multi-national corporations will resolve the difficulty by quietly easing Tanaka out when the election for LDP's party presidentship comes round next year. The current so-called political crisis in Japan will not affect its economic or political structure and it only reflects the customary squabbles among the personalities in the forefront and the particular corporations backing them.

But the crisis in two other countries, Ethiopia and Portugal are of a different genre. In both cases, the changes which have already erupted suddenly signify sweeping and far-reaching changes. These two countries had resisted change for a long time.

ETHIOPIA is the world's most ancient kingdom in the contemporary world. For the last year or two it has been going through the convulsions of a transition from that of an *ancien regime* to a new order, and now the final stages of the death throes of the old set up have come upon the country, without anyone being clear whether the concurrent birth pangs

would produce anything fruitful or worthwhile.

It was last February that the final act of the drama had begun when the Army had set in motion a chain of events which had pulled the old order down. Until then, in spite of rumblings in more recent times, Emperor Haile Selassie, Lion of Judah, King of Kings, and so and so forth had wielded absolute power through the support of feudalistic land-owners and the loyalty of the armed forces. The people, as such, had no say whatever in the affairs of the state or the country. There were no political parties, the press was tightly controlled, and though there was a Parliament allegedly elected on universal suffrage, all power was vested with the Emperor.

The world right round Ethiopia was changing and the 80-odd year old Emperor, with all the power and prestige he enjoyed, could not insulate him and his people against the volcanic outbursts of change which was sweeping across the African continent. The soaring cost of living, the inequities of an anachronistic agrarian system and an appalling drought in the northern provinces which claimed over 50,000 lives together added up to a situation ripe for a popular rebellion against the Establishment, and the mutiny by young army officers over pay scales was all the spark that was needed to start a conflagration. The mutiny soon burgeoned into a general revolt of the armed forces and the Emperor was forced to concede all the army's demands, which included the dismissal of the Government and the arrest and trial of 25 Cabinet ministers on charges of corruption and negligence in dealing with the drought conditions. The Emperor himself was divested of all effective power.

Since then a power struggle has gone on as between the Army, Parliament and the Emperor himself who has been trying to regain at least some of his lost power. What seems to have provoked the army to strike again now is a suspicion that the new government of Mr. Makonnen is trying to whitewash the case against the arrested ex-ministers and other high officials. The army, which wants the arrested persons to be put on trial immediately, views the Government's

appointment last month of commission of enquiry to examine the record of all public servants and bring to book the guilty as a move to postpone the trials. Meanwhile, Parliament is trying to assert its authority and radical groups, who are stated to be receiving funds from Libyan and outside sources, are also busy fanning popular unrest. In this confused situation, what the latest crack-down by the army is going to lead to can only be conjecturable. However, with all sections of the people continuing to proclaim their loyalty to him, the Emperor still has scope to shape the new order that is emerging in the country.

DESPITE THE CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT IN FEBRUARY, the granting of wage increases to a considerable part of the wage-earners and higher pay to servicemen, and the promise given by Emperor Haile Selassie to introduce a number of progressive political reforms, the situation in Ethiopia remained tense. Building and municipal workers, bus-line employees, customs officials, and employees of financial institutions went on strike in April in Addis Ababa.

On April 11 the city's biggest ever demonstration was held in Addis Ababa to demand the dismissal of the mayor. The Emperor granted the demand. On April 13, thousands of workers and office employees demonstrated in the capital for wage increases, better working conditions, and the release of the trade union functionaries arrested in Dire Dawn, where railway workers went on strike.

Widespread discontent has been caused among the population and in the army by profiteers who by hoarding food have caused interruptions in supplies to the market and sent prices up. Soldiers of the Third Infantry division, who established control over the town of Jijiga with the support of the population, have arrested a number of black marketeers. Mass actions by workers and students demanding the punishment of corrupt government and police officials are reported from many cities.

But to understand the current development in Ethiopia, it is necessary to go back to February when the world was amazed with the outburst in Ethiopia when the

Army which was considered to be utterly loyal to the Emperor had revolted. Writing towards the end of February a correspondent who had visited Ethiopia had recorded that "after weeks of incredible confusion and Byzantine maneuvering the power struggle between the army, government and radical students and teachers in Ethiopia has reached a temporary balance. The radicals in the army have been forced temporarily to withdraw their more ambitious demands. And the new government of Endalkatchew Makonnen has won a temporary breathing time by giving in to union demands in the country's first general strike. His new cabinet is widely considered a selection of liberal but Establishment figures. No less than four members of the cabinet are classmates of his from the Harrar Secondary School. But there is still doubt that a government led by this Oxford-educated, land owning aristocrat from a noble Shoon family intends to institute sufficiently far-reaching reforms to meet radical demands...."

But it was not the said conservative forces in the Army which mattered. The Left was prominent both within and without the Army. Nor did the new Cabinet inspire confidence. Land Reform had become the main demand of the radical forces. "Above all else, the left is crying for land reform if the 50 per cent of Ethiopia's peasant farmers who are tenants are to free themselves from the crippling tithe system which exacts 50 to 75 per cent of their production in payments to the rich landlords. Land reform is also the only way in which Ethiopia can realise its agricultural potential and significantly boost its cash crop exports. There are serious doubts that Endalkatchew, an ambitious man whose experience has mostly been in foreign affairs, has the inclination or the resolution to get the land reform bills through. They have been gathering dust in parliament for years.

"Little confidence either is placed in the new Defence Minister, Mr. Abiy Abebe, who was a quiet voice as President of the politically powerless Senate and is a veteran already being War Minister at the tender age of 25 in 1943. The army which rebelled in Asmara, through the Second Division based

in Eritrea and took control in Addis Ababa has for the time being accepted Endalkatchew's government. But there is very strong evidence that as a well planned operation codenamed 'at no cost' developed, almost the entire army, except the most senior officers wanted far more radical changes. They were led by the cadets who graduated in 1969 and are now mostly captains and lieutenants. They wanted at one stage to sweep away the entire outgoing Cabinet and either take control themselves as a military junta or set up an entirely new reformist civilian government...."

But even the most knowledgeable observers found it difficult to evaluate the role of the Army. But it was interesting to see how the Army units had set about their work in this singularly peculiar process of politically transforming a country which had withstood change right into very nearly the fourth quarter of the twentieth century. "The theory that the army was ready only pursuing limited objectives to improve its own pay and conditions and purge the worst excesses of corruption in the old government does not really hold water. The Second Division in Eritrea was chosen by the army to start the rebellion against the 81 year - old Emperor Haile Selassie and present him with 23 demands. It held out for a second pay rise after the Emperor had told them that the exchequer simply could not afford to give them more.

"The Fourth Division in Addis Ababa acted throughout in complete co-ordination with their colleagues in the north. On February 28 they put up road blocks in the city and sealed off the airport, commercial bank and radio station. The Fourth was also responsible for at least three different pamphlets dropped from a military helicopter pledging support for the rebel groups in the north and saying that they would not take arms against them. The soldiers in Addis Adada allowed the free distribution of anti-Government literature and did not prevent the first major demonstration by university students outside the gates of the campus for many years. The army knew that the students and teachers were calling for the resignation of Endalkatchew the new premier."

Some very strange events had occurred in the course of the revolt.

"When the army seemed to be on the point of seizing complete power and imposing its will on the Emperor, junior officers took off their uniform and, dressed either as Other Ranks or as civilians toured Addis Ababa in cars explaining their stand to the troops and reinforcing their revolutionary momentum. The reason they 'demoted' themselves was to encourage the troops while concealing their own identity in case the coup went wrong and they were victimised in an ensuing army purge. Another sign that the army was on the point of demanding the resignation of the whole government except the Emperor himself, was that when the Cabinet Ministers and top officials of the old Government were called in for interrogation some really junior officers and Other Ranks were entrusted with full powers as interrogators. In other units there were strong indications that quite junior officers were in control."

When the Emperor had staged a retreat, a strategic retreat, no doubt, the momentum in the Army had declined. "But by Fri-

Railway Station for Ticketless Travellers

Sholapur, July 5,

Ever heard of a railway station established by ticketless travellers for ticketless travellers? There is one at Jaihind near Kanpur, according to Mr. Tulsidas Jadhav, Chairman of the Indian Railways' Standing Voluntary Help Committee. This 'unofficial station' has been brought into being by ticketless travellers for their own convenience by regularly pulling alarm chains in trains at Jaihind. There are many such 'stations' where trains are forced to stop sometimes on pain of violence, Mr. Jadhav told a press conference here yesterday. The Railways lose an estimated Rs. 20 crores each year because of ticketless travel. He urged the people to join the campaign against this anti-national activity.

day, March 1, the army appeared to be backing down and denied that it had been responsible for the more radical pamphlets appearing on the streets of Addis Ababa. The senior officers, who by then were in command, emphasised that all their demands had been met. They had achieved increased pay and had purged the most corrupt Ministers. The time had come to stop things getting out of hand and to show the radicals where the real power lay. Friday was the day of the student demonstrations which the police broke up with tear gas and gunfire.

"The explanation for the switch is that the army clashed bitterly with the Emperor over the new Prime Minister. The Emperor took a tough line and insisted that the new Government should be given a chance. He is also alleged to have threatened that if the army did not back down he would send in the police and his Imperial Guards to take National Defence Headquarters. Afterwards the rank and file locked up some of their officers because they disagreed with their loyal stand."

It was not clear how it had all happened. "Exactly what happened behind closed doors, is still not clear, but the Emperor who has more political experience than the whole officer corps put together, prevailed on them that this was the only way to avoid bloodshed. The army had achieved its limited objectives. It was the first time in Ethiopian history that an Emperor had ever had to sack his whole Cabinet, or give in to successive pay demands.

"Even in the first military coup of 1960 he had not been forced to negotiate with the rebels or suffer the humiliation of having his negotiating team arrested. But never, at any stage, had the army wanted a confrontation with the Emperor, so after flexing its muscles and showing its strength it decided to accept its 'limited objectives' and back down. The task of the new Government is herculean. Apart from satisfying the radical's political demands, the economy will be burdened by the 33 per cent pay increases granted to the 60,000 strong army, and inevitable increases for other security forces, school teachers and workers.

"It was the rapid rise in the cost of living (Addis Ababa retail price

index rose from 133 to 158 in 1973) climaxed by the sudden jump in petrol prices by 50 per cent which started the military rebellion. Now the wage concessions granted will stoke the inflationary fires which already existed before the crisis, allowing the problem to breed on itself."

But the "solution" found at the end of February and in early March did not satisfy the army or those sections of the people who had become politically awake and wanted a share in political power. From the middle of June events began to move rapidly and by the end of the month there was a new Army revolt which virtually placed the Emperor's government and his Establishment under control.

A Reuter report dated June 29 stated: "Ethiopian Armed forces clamped a curfew on Addis Ababa tonight and in effect declared themselves in direct control of the country. Dozens of well armed troops massed at the airport, telecommunications headquarters and the capitals two radio stations. A former Cabinet Minister was arrested, but civilian authorities denied reports that several in the present Cabinet were detained. Earlier the mutinous troops and police, who last night seized control of radio and other key points in Addis Ababa, announced that they had begun to arrest members of the Government on charges of corruption. They also threatened to take over the country if the officials were not put on trial.

"The Government, in an attempt to stop the slide towards full military rule, formed a four-man Ministerial Committee to meet Army representatives and discuss their grievances. But several hours after the official announcement, the troops had still not replied to the offer. The official Ethiopian news agency said "there is no coup in progress". The Army countered this by warning the population to heed only directives from the Armed forces and no other source. While the Government and Army put out conflicting reports, the city itself was calm. Some troops patrolled the streets and there were reports that all units in the area had been put on alert, but traffic flowed freely and shops were open. "There was no

immediate indication if the latest troubles had spread beyond the capital. The trouble appeared to have been spaked off by eight members of Parliament who demanded that the army release 25 former Cabinet members, army officers and officials.

"Radio broadcasts said the eight Parliamentarians went to the compound of the Fourth Army Division on Wednesday to appeal for their release. The armed forces retaliated last night by ordering broadcasters to read a message saying they would "like it to be known that we are ready to take the necessary action against the detained Cabinet Ministers." The Armed Forces in a broadcast, expressed their loyalty to Emperor Haile Selassie and the Ethiopian people.

"There have been repeated allegations that the previous administration was corrupt and a special committee has been set up to investigate their activities. Observers here said that for this reason the armed forces were particularly incensed that anyone should demand the release of the detained men and may have decided that the time had come for more firm action."

On June 30, Reuter repeated that the Ethiopian Army was in full control of the country. Most arrests had been made: "In a communique, which pledged loyalty to Emperor Haile Selassie and the Ethiopian people, the Armed Forces did not name those arrested or about to be detained. But military sources said those now in custody included the Defence Minister, Lieutenant-General Abiye Abebe Ras (Duke) Asrate Kassa, Chairman of the Crown Council and Ras, Mesfin Sileshi, a close adviser to the Emperor and one of the most powerful men in the country."

By July 3, the Emperor thought that he had once again talked the Army round to ending the confrontation. "Representatives of Ethiopia's Armed forces announced here today that a large measure of agreement had been achieved in talks with Emperor Haile Selassie and his Prime Minister, Mr. E. Makonnen aimed at ending the current crisis in the country.

In a communique which surprised observers of the Ethiopian

scene in view of reports yesterday suggesting that even the Emperor himself could be threatened by the latest wave of arrests, the armed forces said the chief concern of Ethiopia's leaders was now "peace, law and order."

The Emperor appeared to have given his support to the armed forces' action in arresting large numbers of people, even among his own closest collaborators, over the past five days, observers remarked."

It must be remembered that even this truce had become possible after a Security Cordon had been thrown round the Emperor's Palace on July 1, whilst arrests continued. Even after the compromise by which Army leaders were to be accommodated in the Cabinet, the Armed Forces Committee and the Committee of Young Officers were intent on arresting all those who had declared to be "enemies of the people" including a number of foreign (mainly Greek and Armenian) businessmen.

By July 4, the Emperor had conceded most of the demands made by the Army. "Emperor Haile Selassie granted an amnesty to political prisoners in Ethiopia yesterday to meet the demands of military reformers for a more democratic Government. A Palace announcement broadcast to the nation said the 81-year-old Emperor, facing the gravest crisis in his half-century of rule, also ordered a special parliamentary session to act on constitutional changes that would strip him of most of his power.

"The announcement said Emperor Selassie gave his consent to continued discussions between civilian authorities and military radicals demanding a reorganised Government in which soldiers would have a share of power. The Emperor's amnesty order was believed to benefit scores of Ethiopians detained as supporters of the guerilla independence movement in Eritrea Province and as participants in an unsuccessful coup in December, 1960. The Emperor's statement did not refer to the demand to turn over six key Ministries to military men — Defence, Interior, Justice, Information, Education and Land Reform.

"But Emperor Selassie, still a symbol of national unity, yielded to military reformers and appoint-

ed Maj. Gen. Aman Andom as Armed Forces Chief of Staff, succeeding Lt. Gen. Wolde Selassie Bereka. Maj. Gen. Aman, promoted to Lieutenant General is a popular, Leader who commanded Ethiopian forces during the 1964 border clash with Somalia and in the Korean war. An expected statement did not materialise from the Prime Minister, Mr. Makonnen, whose gradual approach to reforming Ethiopia's feudal system has been condemned by the military.

"Despite its agreement with the Emperor, the Ethiopian army retained its grip on key installations in the capital today and warned the population to remain calm. However, the troops guarding the city's two radio stations and other points slightly thinned out in the last 24 hours. The Emperor, looking relaxed also took time out to go to church and at one point stopped his motorcade in a busy street to accept a petition from a tiny girl. Meanwhile it is reported, that the military is still divided between the radicals and the moderates with the Air Force refusing completely to join the Armed Forces Supreme Council because its demands have not been far reaching enough."

And by July 8, the Emperor made an announcement that he would summon Parliament immediately to approve a new Constitution which would end direct rule from the Throne. "A spokesman for the Central Army Committee, which directed the military take-over of the country 11 days ago, said the army's aim was to form a viable Government incorporating both the military and the civilian Cabinet. Under pressure from the army, the Emperor cancelled Parliament's scheduled summer recess and called members back to a special session. The new constitution when enacted, will strip the monarch of many of his traditional powers and hand them over to the Cabinet and the people for the first time.

"When trouble first broke out in Ethiopia in February, the Emperor named a special committee to rewrite the constitution and present a new draft within six months. Government sources said the new constitution was almost complete and would be debated and acted upon by Parliament within weeks

Emperor Haile Selassie yesterday blamed corrupt government officials for the current crisis in the nation. Among the causes of unrest are the selfish motives and greed for power among government officials, the Emperor said in a statement released by the official Ethiopian news agency.

"It was the first direct comment from the 82 year-old Emperor on the situation since the Army grabbed power nine days ago. Diplomatic observers said the Emperor in his statement appeared to have thrown his support fully behind the Army in its current purge of leading Ethiopian officials, who have been accused of corruption or maladministration by the Army".

Understandably, the Army in Ethiopia is impatient that the Government was deliberately delaying the implementation of the social and economic reforms which the Emperor and the new Government had promised after the February upsurge. Whether Army participation in the Government under a new Constitution will usher in a new era in Ethiopia is difficult to say. It may be that the country has to go through much more turmoil before emerging into a liberal democracy, if that is possible in contemporary Africa, or anywhere else for that matter.

FOR
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CHRONICLE

July 21—July 25

A DIARY OF EVENTS IN SRI LANKA AND THE WORLD
COMPILED FROM ENGLISH-LANGUAGE DAILIES
PUBLISHED IN COLOMBO.

SUNDAY, JULY 21: According to the *Sunday Observer*, the vesting process of land is almost over: nearly 500,000 acres of land have been declared as excess land. According to the *Sunday Times*, two more United National Party Members of Parliament are likely to cross over to the Sri Lanka Freedom Party shortly. According to the *Sunday Observer*, all Commonwealth countries will be represented at the 20th Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Conference to be held at the Bandaranaike Memorial International Conference Hall from September 6 to 15: two hundred and fifty delegates from 94 Commonwealth Legislatures will be officially welcomed by Mr. Stanley Tillekeratne, Speaker of the National State Assembly and Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike, Minister of Public Administration, Local Government, Home Affairs and Justice on September 2: on the same day the Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, will accord a reception to the delegates at Temple Trees: the CPA conference will be ceremonially opened by Mr. William Gopallawa, the President on September 6. The tenth United Front rally is scheduled to be held today at Ratnapura presided by the Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike. Turkey hurled a powerful force of paratroops, seaborne units and planes against Cyprus yesterday and claimed early success in its invasion against the five-day old regime which deposed Makarios: reports from Athens said that Greece was on a war footing as tens of thousands of reservists responded to the general mobilisation order issued by the Government after the dawn intervention by Turkish troops on Cyprus: Archbishop Makarios, the deposed President of Cyprus now in New York denounced the Turkish invasion, saying it was not justifiable: Britain and United States yesterday attempted in diplomatic moves to stop the fighting and avert all out war between Greece and Turkey who are historic enemies.

MONDAY, JULY 22: The Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, addressing a United Front rally at Ratnapura yesterday said that the Government would go on till 1977: she lashed out at those public servants who, expecting the United Front Government to fall, had, far from doing a job of work acted as saboteurs. According to the *Daily News*, Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, Leader of the Opposition, addressing a conference of United National Party Youth Leagues and members of Women's organisations at the New Town Hall Panadura on Saturday said that his party was considering the question of the ban on public meetings and rallies under the emergency regulations and would challenge its legality in courts. According to the *Daily News*, over 500 members of the United National Party in the Baulla electorate joined the Sri Lanka Freedom Party. According to the *Daily Mirror*, statutory boards will be set up in various parts

of the country to manage the excess lands taken over under the land reforms: a decision to set up approximately ten such boards has been taken by the Minister of Agriculture and Lands, Mr. Hector Kobbekaduwa. According to the *Daily News*, the Government will shortly introduce a scheme to guarantee a fixed minimum number of days of work for estate workers: the scheme will be introduced on estates of over 100 acres in extent in the first instance. Under a trade agreement signed in Warsaw yesterday between Poland and Sri Lanka, the two countries are to clear their bilateral trade in convertible currencies: the agreement which envisages a growth and expansion of trade, came after a four-day visit by a Sri Lanka Trade Delegation which conferred with the Polish Deputy Premier and Foreign Trade Minister, Mr. Kazimierz Olzewski. According to the *Daily News*, the Government saves about Rs. 350 million in foreign exchange as a result of the steps taken to reduce the consumption of sugar in the country. Turkey's National Security Council met in Ankara yesterday to consider terms for a possible ceasefire in Cyprus: it is reported that Turkey had warned that Greece would go to war within 48 hours if the fighting did not end in Cyprus: Soviet Communist Party Leader, Leonid Brezhnev, called for an end to external military aggression in Cyprus and a return to an independent state of Cyprus: NATO is reported to be powerless to prevent a possible Turkey-Greece conflict. According to former U.S. Attorney-General, Elliot Richardson, President Nixon thought of sacking the first special Watergate prosecutor, Professor Archibald Cox, weeks before his dismissal led to the Presidential impeachment crisis. According to the *Washington Post*, the United States has temporarily suspended military aid to Greece following the coup in Cyprus and the Turkish invasion.

TUESDAY JULY 23: According to the *Daily Mirror*, a report published by the World Bank on Lanka's economy, the country has pursued multiple objectives in seeking to combine economic growth with the achievement of social ends: in particular the country has consciously sought a more equal distribution of income and wealth, with some success. The Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, will announce the recent Indo-Sri Lanka pact on the demarcation of the territorial waters between the two countries and on the ownership of Kachchativu at a special session of the National State Assembly this afternoon. The Ceylon Institute for National and Tamil Affairs has welcomed the Government decisions to set up a university campus in the North and at the same time has requested the Government not to acquire Jaffna College for this purpose. A Rs. 13 million Ceylon German Technical Training Institute for the Ceylon Transport Board will be opened by Transport Minister Mr. Leslie Gunawardene this afternoon at Moratuwa. The United States announced yesterday that Greece and Turkey had agreed to observe the cease-fire called for by the United Nations Security Council: *News week* magazine reported yesterday that US intelligence had intercepted a message only one hour after last Monday's Cyprus coup was launched that indicated the direct involvement of the Greek Government. Venezuela, one of the world's largest petroleum exporters and South America's major oil producer, has warned that

the world may run out of oil in another 17 years time. Senator Alfred Tanalez Marques, the Chilean Ambassador in Beirut, was shot in a Beirut street on Sunday night and seriously wounded: the security forces said that his condition is very serious.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 24: The Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, yesterday told the National State Assembly that the agreement defining the maritime boundary between India and Sri Lanka constituted a historic landmark in the relations between the two countries: she tabled an agreement on the demarcation of the boundary between the two countries signed by the Indian Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi and herself: she told the applauding Parliamentarians that the agreement would now make it possible to have even closer and more cordial relations between the two countries and an era of close and friendly collaboration could be looked forward to: the Prime Minister expressed pride and happiness at the fact that the two outstanding problems—citizenship status of nearly a million persons of Indian origin residing in Sri Lanka and the Kachchativu problem were settled during her tenures of office as Prime Minister. According to the *Daily News*, a special economic mission to Iran and Kuwait led by the Minister of Justice, Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike, is expected to leave Colombo on Friday: Mr. Bandaranaike who will be the Prime Minister's special representative will have top level talks on economic co-operation with these two oil-rich countries. Pakistan Government has officially announced that the Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, will visit Pakistan from September 4 to 7: Mr. Jaya Pathirana, Judge of the Supreme Court, yesterday ordered that four persons including an Englishman and a Buddhist monk who were under detention in connection with alleged violation of exchange control laws, be further detained till August 15 pending completion of Police investigations. According to the *Daily News*, 500 port workers in the UNP controlled Jathika Sevaka Sangamaya have sought membership in the SLFP oriented Sri Lanka Independent Harbour Worker's Union. According to the *Daily Mirror*, non-communist Opposition groups in both Houses of Parliament of India yesterday walked out in protest against the Indian Government's decision to hand over Kachchativu to Sri Lanka: the Indian External Affairs Minister, Mr. Swaran Singh told the Lok Sabha that the agreement which demarcates the maritime border was "fair, just and equitable to both countries": sharp exchanges between the non-Communist Opposition and the Congress benches and noisy scenes preached the laying of the Indo-Sri Lanka agreement before the House. The Cyprus ceasefire was shattered yesterday with fresh fighting reported between Turkish and Greek Cypriot forces across the "Green Line" separating the two communities in Nicosia: at the same time the Commander of the United Nations forces in Cyprus announced that his troops were taking over Nicosia's international airport because of a new and serious outbreak of fighting in the area: according to Nicosia Radio, Glafkos Clerides, President of the Cyprus National Assembly, was sworn in as Cyprus' new President.

THURSDAY, JULY 25: According to the *Daily News*, a top level delegation from the European Common Market is due here next month to explain some of its

policies which are of definite concern to Sri Lanka: the visit of this delegation led by Mr. Tran Van Tinh of France follows a request made to the Common Market by the ambassadors of some of the EEC countries represented in Sri Lanka: heads of missions of France, Britain, West Germany and Italy in Colombo made the request because of general concern in Sri Lanka following Britain's decision to enter the Common Market. According to the *Daily News*, the International Development Association (IDA), an affiliate of the World Bank, has made available to Sri Lanka a credit of 9 million dollars for the development of milk production: the agreement was signed last week: the credit is for a term of 50 years including a period of ten year's grace. According to the *Daily Mirror*, a World Bank report on Sri Lanka's "Recent Economic Developments and Current Prospects", states that additional revenues from domestic sources to finance development can be obtained through taxation, but in Sri Lanka, the tax burden already is considerable, about 23 per cent of the gross domestic product. The Press Council discussed, with representatives of Sri Lanka Medical Association, Independent Medical Practitioner's Association, the Ayurvedic Medical Council and the Faculty of Medicine matters relating to advertisements in newspapers extolling Western, Ayurvedic and Homeopathic drugs: the Council was of the view that an advertisement properly worded would cause no harm: the Ayurvedic Medical Council was of the view that there should be no advertisements at all where any drugs were concerned. The United States Supreme Court yesterday unanimously ordered President Nixon to surrender 64 Watergate tape recordings in a historic ruling that pushed the President closer towards impeachment: the eight justices who rendered the decision included three whom President Nixon himself had appointed. Greece's new Prime Minister Mr. Constantine Karamanlis, yesterday began his talks with political leaders on the formation of a Government of national unity to herald the country's return to parliamentary rule after more than 7 years of military backed rule.

2000-YEAR-OLD TOWN DUG OUT

Belgaum. July 7,

The Department of Ancient Indian History and the Kannada Research Institute of the Karnatak University, Dharwar, have discovered a 2,000-year-old township extending over an area of about 2.58 sq. kms. at Wadagaon-Madhavapur near here.

The excavation, jointly started by the two departments in 1972, has brought to light the remains of a number of brick structures, some of which are residential houses, each provided with an underground cellar, soakage pit and water well.

The structures are generally constructed of large sized bricks. The walls are mostly mud plastered, though some are lime plastered. A variety of pottery vessels painted in bright colours with attractive designs have also been found.

Among other interesting finds are: an image of Lakshmi finely formed in ivory and numerous punch marked coins and coins of the Sata-vahana times made of lead the former of silver-coated copper and base silver.

TOURISM AS AN EXPORT INDUSTRY

Realities, Myths And Legends

by A Special Correspondent

THERE IS NO DOUBT that tourism as an export industry, capable of the most rapid increase in foreign exchange earnings which are so badly needed by Sri Lanka today, has few rivals, apart from the three traditional exports of Tea, Rubber and Coconuts. Even if its import content understated at 25%, and is nearer 40%, and allowing for leakage of earnings into the exchange blackmarket, it still ranks high as a development resource.

It is thus worthwhile examining in detail the various estimates of foreign exchange earnings published recently. The Central Bank report for 1973 gives the Sri Lanka earnings as Rs. 58.9 million or US \$ 9 million (page 191)

The survey made by the Tourist Board of foreign exchange earnings reported by Shops, Hotels, Travel Agencies etc. who are all entitled to Convertible Rupees on the strength of their foreign exchange earnings, gives the total earnings at Rs. 80 million, or US \$ 12 million.

This is still a low figure when compared with the earnings of neighbour countries in 1973, viz. India \$ 66 million, Kenya \$ 74 million, and Singapore \$ 138 million, which would have paid twice the cost of our Nett Food subsidy of Rs. 500 million in 1973.

It shows clearly that tourists are flowing into this part of the world, overcoming the distance factor by charter flight fares and package tours, as fast as accommodation is built. As far back as 1962 it was estimated that Sri Lanka needed 5,200 new hotel rooms to meet the challenge of the Jumbo Jet era, but the last UNP Government failed to build even 1,000 rooms between 1966 and 1970 to meet this demand. That is one reason why our earnings are lower than our neighbours. Tax Holidays for Hotel construction were first mooted in 1962 and reform of our Exchange laws was also taken up in that year.

The delays in implementing these salutary measures and the scant regard paid to a major tourism industry being developed here as a means of diversifying our economy has left us lagging behind when we have one of the most beautiful countries in the world to develop tourism in, intelligently and without either Neo-colonialism or demoralisation of our values and culture as the Swiss, and the Yugoslavs have done.

The UNP period of tourism may be regarded as a great publicity puff and tall talk, such as the Hawaii-based Tourism Plan, which was over 80 per cent behind in implementation and

results in 1970. To the credit of this Government must be given the steady growth of Tourism, though the pace of building accommodation is still not quick enough, nor the marketing methods efficient enough to reap the main benefits.

The 5,200 room projection of 1962 was supported by both the Hawaii survey team and the World Bank, who further advised that considering the type of traffic Sri Lanka could obtain quickly even luxury accommodation should not be built at a cost exceeding Rs. 65,000 per room, whereas we have built some at over Rs. 2 lakhs per room making amortisation a lengthy process for recovery of capital investment.

SPACE DOES NOT PERMIT a detailed analysis but the effect of FEECs must be considered when computing tourism earnings. FEECs payments, or a free bonus to tourists, rose from 44% in 1968 to 65% in 1970. This represents a free premium rate which enables a tourist to cut his costs of a holiday in Sri Lanka. He can use it to purchase imported goods, as well as local foodstuffs causing a bargain-price drain on our food resources which the people of Sri Lanka do not enjoy.

Thus if we had one million tourists here on FEECs this year at

least one million people of Sri Lanka would be very short on food supplies. If on the other hand, a special tourism sector of the economy operates on an Entrepot basis, Sri Lanka would be the beneficiary, rather than permit a subsidised (to 65%) drain on our food supplies. One wonders whether it is Tourism promotion or FEECs premium that attracts more tourists here now.

No other country in Asia, or the world, uses such a liberal subsidy for the tourist as we do. On the contrary, both India and Kenya insist on payment of all tourist bills in Foreign Exchange at par value, as the recent Kenya budget showed and as India did last year. In India, any payments made by tourists in Indian rupees costs 33 percent more than if they were paid in Foreign exchange. Should we not adopt this principle now?

Rs. 100 million earned on FEECs premium to tourists means we payout Rs. 65 million free in order to earn it. This implies a depletion of our resources to that extent, or inflation. For example some hotels charge higher prices in rupees to scoop up the FEECs rupees such as Rs. 255 per room which is worth about Rs. 125-150 per day by international comparison. The additional rupees so collected swell their income so much that they do little to overcome seasonal troughs in traffic, when India and Singapore have heavy traffic in our off-season.

West German traffic, for instance drops some 84% at the end of the November - April season. Our American traffic is too low at around 5-6,000 when Singapore has over one lakh and India over 70,000. So is it with Australian traffic - Singapore had 46,000 in 1971 which almost equalled our total traffic. We are in danger of creating an inefficient hotel industry on FEECs by jacking up hotel prices which incidentally shut off Ceylonese from their own hotels.

THE WHOLE SCHEME now requires re-examination to ensure that the country benefits and that the industry becomes more efficient in operation. It was first mooted to beat the high prices of imported liquor which compared unfavourably with prices in the tourists own

countries and proved a deterrent to travel to Sri Lanka. Reform of the exchange machinery will benefit Sri Lanka rather than running a half-price tourism industry, so to speak. Once, more accommodation is built, Sri Lanka will be in a more competitive position. Doubtless, we have to beat inflation and the demand for Foreign exchange, but is this the best way to do it, at the expense of our country?

The phrase, Nett of FEECs, used in computing tourism earnings begs the question. The Import Content of Tourism is not complete nor is the effect of the subsidy on earnings, or off earnings, taken into account. To argue that 100 acres of coconut land earned Rs. 3.4 m from tourism is valid in another context but not in this: it is the kindergarten approach to assessment of the benefits of tourism which are far greater than that

Undoubtedly devaluation attracts more tourism if the hotels are there. But when do we strike a proper balance sheet and make tourism benefit the country apart from the superficial collections of foreign exchange? It could be argued that without the capital investment on hotels, we could add another 35% to FEECs and buy Foreign exchange since only Rs. 35 million more would be involved and not the Rs. 97 million invested on hotels up to 1972.

This matter requires further study and action to see that Sri Lanka gets the full benefit of tourism.



No Boxes of Matches

Boxes of matches are a hard to get commodity in most shops and boutiques both in the city and in the outskirts of Colombo.

The controlled price of a box of matches is seven cents but no brand is available at that price.

Shops and boutiques offer the unpopular brands at ten cents a box.

-Daily Mirror, 10/5/74

THE NEW EXAMINATION SCHEME-2

Many Dangers and Pitfalls

This is the second instalment of the memorandum submitted by the All-Ceylon Educational Federation

The ethereal term Pre-vocational Subjects potentially sweeps an expansive as-yet-to-be-compiled list of eligible subjects ranging from soldering to aeronautics, and from toddy tapping to plumbing. A pre-vocational subject could be anything from felling trees to hotel catering. As yet no guarantee has been made that this list would not be arbitrarily broadened to include the more exotic subjects.

AT ANY RATE, these subjects have been introduced into the curriculum with neither syllabuses nor text books to guide the teachers. How many teachers are qualified to teach these subjects? One must keep in mind that a person requires at least a minimal training in these specialized fields to be able to train others, and to date no courses for teachers have been planned.

Without this practical experience anything a teacher may parrot out is bound to have very little value educationally. What are the text books to be used, if any? What is the syllabus for each subject? If there are neither syllabuses nor text books (as is apparently the case) how will students be educated and subsequently examined in these subjects? How will the question Paper be set, or how will the prelimit be set in accordance to uniform standard in each subject?

Pre-vocational subjects are being practical subjects, how does the bureaucracy propose to test the practical work effectively (in the curious absence of an examination syllabus) in each individual subject and further, how will the teachers acquire the (at the very least) basic knowledge required to enable them to authoritatively discourse on the various subjects? These burning questions remain unanswered.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES: AN ESSENTIAL CHARACTERISTIC OF A TRUE SOCIALIST EDUCATIONAL POLICY. No pre-vocational subject should be introduced without an intensive feasibility study conducted by competent professional teachers, highly skilled craftsmen and technicians who, ideally would draft a syllabus for each

subject comprising equally of the theoretical and practical branches of know-how. Ideally, in a democratic socialist country all children must be afforded equal opportunity by the state, and the Government is commendably dedicated to eradicating inequality in our society.

Apparently, however, this crusading zeal has not filtered down to the ranks of the bureaucracy as is demonstrated by the vicious feature (of the new scheme) of doing out specified Pre-vocational subject—training to certain areas in a measure that reflects a frightening geographical bias in that children in Sri Lanka must grapple with a pre-vocational subject officially designated for his province regardless of his individual aptitude and his natural desire to select his own life's-vocation. The son of a printer should be allowed to study printing (if he so desires) no matter where he lives and this fundamental principle must apply to all students everywhere. Confining prearranged pre-vocational subject to specified districts could cripple and inhibit our society, and this unsavoury practise must be nipped in the bud immediately.

Pre-vocational subjects should be carefully selected with meticulous syllabic planning on the basis of the availability of experienced teachers, instructors, and facilities for such extra-educational study courses and training in these subjects must be made available on an equitable basis throughout the island.

THE SHUTTING OUT OF PRIVATE CANDIDATES THUS DISCRIMINATING AGAINST HIGH SCHOOL DROP OUTS AND LATE DEVELOPERS, MAKING IT IMPOSSIBLE FOR THEM TO CONTINUE THEIR INTERRUPTED EDUCA-

TION FROM WHERE THEY LEFT OFF. The Deputy Minister of Education, Mr. B. Y. Tudawe, estimates that nearly 40% of our student population drop out of school early in their academic careers. While the Department of Education has officially estimated that it is cognizant of this problem, the new scheme rather surprisingly makes no allowance for this very large number of drop outs beyond hinting that they would be allowed to sit for the Higher Examination.

It is ridiculous to expect these people, some of whom have been out of classroom for many years, to aspire to pass the N.C.H.E. Education in a couple of years. Indeed, this new scheme could only serve to compound their frustration. Today, under the G.C.E./O.L. system, scores of these students return to their studies at a later date. In Colombo alone, thousands of these drop-outs have hitherto attended Night Schools, classes in Pirivenas etc., making the grade, even though much later than their contemporaries.

A majority of these people realise the importance of educational qualifications only after finding employment, or when they realise the importance of educational qualifications only after finding employment, or when they realise the impossibility of securing employment without some educational qualifications. The new scheme makes no provision for them. Indeed it discriminates against them needlessly, cruelly jeopardizing their already bleak future.

POINTLESSLY LOWERING THE MUCH—VAUNTED STANDARD OF EDUCATION IN THE REPUBLIC OF SRI LANKA. For many years Sri Lanka's educational system has been widely admired internationally, remaining as the glittering show-piece of its kind in Asia. And Ceylonese academics and professionals have long been in demand abroad due to the reputation we have acquired as one of the best-educated nations in the world with a comparatively high standard of learning. The sweeping new 'reforms' now clearly promise to sully that reputation by dangerously lowering our standard of education, and we feel that if this new scheme is not scrapped forthwith the damage dealt to our image internationally would be irreparable,

and the loss of faith (in our standard) among foreign institutions resulting from this trend of waning standards could very well be permanent. Any vacillation could seriously impair our chances of repairing the damage already inflicted by the introduction of the initial stages of the new scheme in Grades 6, 7 and 8.

HYPOTHETICALLY, the standard of knowledge of a N.C.G.E. qualified student is considerably lower than that of a G.C.E./O.L. qualified one for obvious, compelling reasons: Under the N.C.G.E. scheme, the lumped together, fragmented portions of four science subjects form the entire syllabic content of Integrated Science and the student who reaches the Pass standard obtains his marks in a single subject ambiguously termed "Science" while under the G.C.E./O.L. scheme, a candidate who has fully covered a two-year syllabus is quite properly tested thoroughly in 2 Question Papers in each subject. On these grounds alone, the innate superiority of the G.C.E./O.L. Examination over the proposed N.C.G.E. Examination is unquestioned and we, feel it is justified to harbour serious reservations about the new scheme in its totality on the basis of this crucial point.

To date, the G.C.E./O.L. Examination is recognised academically as the equivalent of the High School Certificate, and a student possessing G.C.E./O.L. qualifications is readily admitted into the very best educational institutions in Britain, Canada, U.S.A., and the U.S.S.R., these qualifications being more or less interchangeable in a major portion of the world.

The students with the N.C.G.E. qualifications, given the predictably low standard of this examination, could only meet with rejection at any of these foreign educational institutions, and anyone who argues (burning with nationalistic fervour) that we have no need of foreign education, citing the fact that we have a language and culture of our own, is indulging himself and should be dismissed as a wishful thinker since it is an unalterable fact of life that the Republic of Sri Lanka cannot afford to isolate herself from the world community.

If this new scheme has been introduced on such nationalistic grounds, then it richly deserves

to be (correctly) regarded as the opening salvo in a chauvinistic Crusade against twentieth century reality. Economically or otherwise, we cannot scrap the G.C.E./O.L. Examination as such a move will have adverse effects on the country as a whole.

THE UNIVERSITY DEGREE STANDARD. Under the proposed new scheme, the N.C.G.E. Examination held at the end of Grade 9 and the H.N.C.E. Examination is held at the end of Grade 11. Therefore, the present G.C.E. syllabus will be covered only in Grades 10 and in 11, and the present Advanced Level syllabus will have to be covered in the first two years at the University.

During the third year, the present GSQ and the GAQ syllabus will be covered, thus holding out the grim prospect that the future B.Sc., B.Com., or B.A. standard will roughly correspond to the present GSQ/GAQ standards. This is a very sad state of affairs, as the new scheme entails allowing our system of education to deteriorate, opening to serious question the qualifications of Ceylonese who have hitherto enjoyed a very high recognition in academic circles throughout the world.

PIECEMEAL INTRODUCTION OF THE SCHEME WITHOUT REVEALING THE EXACT NATURE OF THE SWEEPING CHANGES IN THEIR ENTIRETY AND THEREBY EVADING THE RESPONSIBLE PROFESSIONAL AND LAY CRITICAL DEBATE SO NECESSARY AT THE INCEPTION OF ANY

Ladybirds

British scientists studying the effects of industrial pollution have found that in a badly polluted area ladybirds change their spots, as it were. Investigations in the suburbs of such industrial giants as Glasgow and Liverpool showed that 97 per cent of ladybirds there were black. After the introduction of extensive smoke control the proportion of red ladybirds rose sharply. Scientists say these insects can be used as scientific smoke-control instruments.

LARGE INSTITUTIONAL CREATIONS. The system of education is an elemental component in any society, the destiny of the two being inextricably bound together, making the travails of the system the travails of society and vice versa. This fact must not be ignored. The whole of society is related to the system of education at every conceivable plane, and therefore these students, parents, teachers, employers, employees etc. who comprise our society (and whose lives when, young, are undeniably moulded by the system of education), are directly or indirectly affected either for better or for worse by any radical change made in the structure of our educational system. The future of the Republic of Sri Lanka cannot be placed in the sweaty palms of a tight coterie of over-zealous bureaucrats to indulge their taste for ill-concieved reforms.

Logically, no sweeping changes in the system of education would be made without consulting and engaging in serious debate with the following:

- (a) Responsible top officials of the Ministry of Education.
- (b) Career officers of the Department of Education.
- (c) Representatives of Parents' Associations.
- (d) Professors and Lecturers of Departments of Education in Universities.
- (e) Representatives of Teacher's Unions.
- (f) Representatives of various Teachers' Associations.
- (g) Members of the Press representing their respective papers of the different language denominations, and
- (h) Prominent members of the general public with a good record of social /and / or intellectual work.

VIOLATION OF THE U.N.E.S.C.O. PRINCIPLES. Those bureaucrats who, with characteristically wild abandon, are hell-bent on implementing a series of sweeping changes in our educational structure regardless of the shattering impact these changes will inflict on our society without.

- (a) encouraging a sophisticated public dialogue among teachers

and the general public, and without

(b) treating them to their confidence and trust by providing them with the full details, enabling them to sift through the data and seek out viable alternatives in a civilised and democratic manner,

are flagrantly violating the internationally accepted professional and ethical principles of the U.N.E.S.C.O. and the World Confederation of Organizations of the Teaching Profession.

At the Inter-Governmental Conference on the Status of Teachers held in Paris, France, on 5th October 1966, the following resolutions were adopted:

- (a) That there must be close cooperation between the competent authorities, organisations and institutions of learning and research for the purpose of defining educational policy and its precise objectives.
- (b) The unstinted co operation of the community should be enlisted in achieving the articulation of educational goals and objectives.

An uninhibited dialogue (by this we mean a frank exchange of views unhampered by the traditional snails of red tape) between the community and the official representatives of the Department of Education will guarantee that all new educational experiments in the future will achieve the desired progressive results.

Details of such projected change should be divulged well in advances of its introduction, enabling the people who will be directly affected by it to acclimatize themselves and be prepared for such change. Ideally, plans intended to effect such radical change should be allowed to gestate for a period of at least two years this period of grace, so to speak, would make it possible for concerned citizens to critically inspect the plan publicly and enable educational institutions to make the necessary adjustments to accomodate the proposed new system, not to mention the fact that this would (in the case of the N.C.G.E. scheme) give teachers and lecturers time to prepare themselves for the changes, especially when these changes entail changes in syllabic content.

In addition to all that, erudite academic community of the Republic of Sri Lanka could (in this space of time) make a valuable contribution to the new scheme by professionally deliberating the positive as well as the negative facets of the proposed plans. These dedicated teachers could make invaluable suggestions regarding the planning of curricula, and are certainly more competent to outline changes in the field of education, and the bureaucrats seem to have forgotten, or completely disregarded that, important fact.

THE SHUTTING OUT OF SINGLE SUBJECT CANDIDATES.

Some reference about the shutting out of private candidates has already been made in preceding paragraphs, but we feel it most to make special mention here of Single Subject Candidates on whose future employment prospects the N.C.G.E. scheme will have a decidedly detrimental bearing.

Many thousands of students who have passed the G.C.E. / O.L. in Arts/Science subjects have to obtain Credit Passes in English, Book keeping, Shorthand and / or Typewriting in order to meet an employer's exact requirements, and many people already in employment often have to obtain passes in Book keeping, Shorthand, and/or Typewriting to qualify themselves for promotion or transfer to a better job. Similarly non-Sinhalese aspirants for jobs and Public Servants on the verge of promotions to an executive grade, sit for the Sinhala Language Paper at the G.C.E./ O.L. Examination.

When Government Departments, Public Corporations and Mercantile Firms advertise the existence of vacancies in their respective organizations and invite applications from the general public, they inevitably stress the desirability of candidates possessing passes or Credits in subjects like English Language, Book-keeping Shorthand and/or Typewriting at the G.C.E. Level. It has not been satisfactorily explained how these institutions will be able to recruit with the requisite qualifications if private candidates are shut out from the examination.

The majority of people who offer these single subjects are those who have left school three or four

Years previously, and the bureaucracy seems to have turned a Nelsonian eye on the fate of these people whose prospects for self-advancement will be grievously impaired with the shutting out of private candidates. Under the G.C.E. Scheme, thousands of adult candidates obtain passes in the following subjects (usually by sitting singly for them):

- (a) English Language (b) Book-keeping (c) Shorthand (d) Typewriting (e) Sinhalese (f) Arithmetic (g) French (h) German and (i) Russian (from 1974)

Very often, a pass in a single subject, particularly in English, makes the difference between success and failure in a person's frenzied attempt to secure remunerative employment. A pass or on occasion, a Credit Pass in English Language is essential and often mandatory, for many important avenues of employment. Even if such a pass is not officially required, proficiency in English enhances a candidate's desirability in the eyes of any prospective employer,

and greatly improves his chances of securing a job.

We need not point out to you that we live in an unfortunate era of massive unemployment, and that an individual badly needs every advantage he can find to succeed in finding employment, hence the vital importance of the G.C.E. system which allows an individual to acquire additional qualifications in individual subjects if he so desires.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE. A majority of Government Departments, Mercantile Firms, Banks, and Corporations favour applications possessing a Credit Pass in English Language at the G.C.E. / O.L. when selecting candidates to fill vacancies in their respective organisations and many of these institutions even go so far as to insist on such qualifications as a mandatory requirement for eligibility.

Quite rightly, the Department of Education insists on a Credit Pass in English, from those aspiring to be teachers of English. These bureaucrats who fondly imagine that Credit Passes in English can be obtained at the G.C.E./O.L. Examination with ease would do well to make discreet inquiries from the Commissioner of Examinations who is in a position to dispel their false impressions by baring the true facts.

It is an uphill task for a student (whose mother tongue is either Sinhala or Tamil) to obtain a Credit Pass or even an Ordinary Pass in English in his first attempt at the G.C.E./O.L. Examination and this is especially true in the case of students in rural areas where the teaching staff and the educational facilities often leave much to be desired. More often than not these students sit for, and finally pass in English Language and/or Literature long after they have sat for the G.C.E. / O.L. Examination proper. These students realize the value of English and manage to obtain pass marks by dint of dogged persistence encouraged by the knowledge that the G.C.E./O.L. system allows them to sit for the Examination time and again without restriction until they obtain satisfactory marks.

Thousands of these students find it impossible to gain Credit Passes

in English on their first attempt and obtain the desired marks at subsequent sittings after having studied English in Special Classes, thus qualifying themselves for attractive jobs. It is not an uncommon sight to see middle-aged workers pouring through textbooks as they study for the G.C.E./O.L. Examination as single subject candidates in the hope of acquiring a mastery of English.

The Commissioner of Examinations will be able to furnish interesting statistics on the thousands of students who offer only English Language as a single subject (or together with a supplementary subject, probably English Literature or Shorthand and/or Typewriting) since a Proficiency in English is invariably a critical point in their favour when they seek employment. Given the understandable desirability for English-speaking job-applicants among a majority of employers and the inflexible requirements of a Credit Pass in English Language for middle and higher grade jobs in Government Service, how do the bureaucrats expect students to obtain passes in English (especially those students handicapped because they live in rural areas and are thus exposed to a decidedly inferior grade of academic instructors) once the chauvinistic new scheme is implemented? How do the oracles in the Department of Education justify the existence of their corrosive brainchild (the N.C.G.E. Examination Scheme) when the fact is clear to the simplest intelligence that the already waning standard of English in our schools can only deteriorate further if such a questionable qualification is accepted.

It would be fascinating to know the academic grounds on which the English teachers of the future will be recruited and whether a Credit Pass in English Language at the N.C.G.E. (which is only a Grade 9 Examination) will be a sufficient qualification.

Classless Officialdom planned

New Delhi July 10.

The Union Cabinet is understood to have decided in principle to do away with the terms "Gazetted officers" and "non gazetted officers". A hangover of the colonial past, these terms were in use only in four countries—India, Pakistan, Burma and Sri Lanka. Except India, the other three countries have abolished their usage. Legal experts have been asked to examine how to eliminate these terms which have crept into scores of statutes. They will also decide which of the categories of officers should be permitted to authenticate documents which are now done by gazetted officers. The Cabinet is also believed to have accepted the Pay Commission recommendation to abolish grading of officers as class. I, II, III and IV. These class overtones will be removed and officers placed in four groups—A, B, C and D.

— U.N.I.

FOR NEWS
BEHIND THE NEWS

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regularly

Inania of this, that and
the other

ACTION NOW!

by INNA

It was a rainy morning in the lower hill-country. Early June. Four days of study were keeping the University young people absorbed in studying how best they could use their talents to be of service to their country. Motives and aspirations were trussed up and looked at; desires evaluated; strategy discussed. One spoke of the Peace Corps, the volunteers who gave their life for a cause. Others rejected the "urge" in the brain-drain (*buddhi-galanaya*) and wanted to stay on regardless.

One even suggested that in a "sincere and spontaneous gesture", two students or three, could soon after their MBBS exam ask for a remote place and work for the people. Still another suggested that our scientists and biologists would do better to stay on in Sri Lanka and probe the mysteries of our seafood, our soils, our production rather than go on a tickling-spree on the planet Mars to see just what kind of soil tickles our fancy, and why its soil is red and its drains so demanding of our brains, if you get the drift of what I'm saying.

RIGHT PLUNK in the middle of nowhere, one of them whisked out a Russian anarchist's statement and found it fitted like a glove to the question at issue:

"You are studying medicine. You wish to be useful to your fellow-men. You wish to get Your degree. You will become a doctor. Someone in pain will ask you to come to them. You go: you are led into a basement. You see a sick woman there. The room is full of darkness: no ventilation, no light. You prescribe for her—you tell her to get pure air, more food; but you know well she will not get more food. She has no money. She will get TB. Go to the people, free the people. After that, then you can study" (Kropotkin, quoted in *Indian Left Review*, Feb. 1973)

Kropotkin's letter can be food for thought for our Sri Lanka brains. If at one time there was ogre-eyed reflection on Knowledge-Conviction-Action and youngsters gave themselves several years to acquire Knowledge and then crept painfully into Conviction (adhistanā) and slowly (oh! so slowly!) wormed

oneself into Action, now the down-to-earth plan is to run the two complementarily and together:

*Action-Conviction-Knowledge
Knowledge-Conviction-Action*

"Learning by Doing" reminds us of that lousy, lethargic chap who broke all records when he found a bull chasing him. He did it and so he found he could do it. He ended up being a silver medalist, and all because of an enraged bull!

TIMES are hard. A little seeing and much wisdom will bring this point home to us. I am reminded of the answer given by a bishop to a young man who said: "I'm much disturbed at the changes in the church", for we are truly in crisis". The bishop wrote something during the discussion and handed it to him. It was a quotation from Bishop Mategrin of Grenoble: "The Church is in a crisis. Thank God! What will it be if the Church was in total tranquillity in a world that is entirely changing!"

No food, did you say? At least there food for thought and that makes the wheels turn into action.

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SHAMBA

Quest For A New Way Of Life

by Anatory Bukoba

July 10,

A surprise I had today, coming from the church I was, and a strange animal was on the circular drive. It was the colour that was arresting, two shades of pale green, almost bright, and an even paler colour that formed two short lines on the body as I saw later. It was doing a sort of dance across the road, a forward and backwards motion with raised leg, a real dance, and it was quite unperturbed by my approach and presence. I watched it fascinated until it eventually did cross the road, and I followed its movement through the grass. It soon got on to a tree.

Despite the fact that I was anxious to draw a crowd, as I was fearful for the animal's safety, a small crowd did form. A man, drawn by the sight of attention to something, had called out to me first, and not satisfied with my reply, he had come over to see for himself. Others soon followed. There were a few boys, and to these I gave anxious instructions that they were not to hurt the animal or throw stones at it.

The animal looked like a lizard, a blood-sucker, but it was not that colour. Its eyes were like balls, small like an elephants, and in the middle of this was a tiny hole through which the eye proper could be seen.

Everyone was fascinated with the animal, and kindly disposed towards it. They knew its name, and it continued to climb the tree, among the small branches and leaves, and it was either quite oblivious of our presence, or quite fearless. Its name was *boddhilima*, the accent, on the second syllable.

Only once before have I seen an animal so strange, and that was truly prehistoric in appearance. Almost transparent, it was being carried on a small branch, about four to six inches high it was,

like, a sail in shape, so thin it was, but, apart from its size, looking really like a prehistoric monster, and fearsome. I wish I had noted its name then. It was a year ago I saw it.

All this reminds me of a tree I saw yesterday, two trees, a *Nuga* I think it was, and a *Pallu*; a trunk that looked like one tree, but with two sets of leaves that obviously came from two trees. When a *pallu* is joined to a be tree, as is more usually the case, you can easily distinguish the trunks. *Pallu* is usually the tree that is left standing on Chenas. It is easily recognized by its peculiarly mottled bark. Its trunk has a wide birth. It is often bereft of most of its leaves and then it looks majestic standing against the sky in the cleared chena. I still would not know a *pallu* leaf but I know its bark.

This reminds, me, too, of a seven-headed coconut tree, which, until a few years ago, were all bearing nuts. Trees are a fascinating subject. Enter a jungle in the *wanni* and the tree all look alike, but a true villnge lad will give you a name for each tree, all different from each other.

Rain started to fall as I finished writing the last paragraph. It has stopped almost an quickly.

The expected friends failed to turn up. I met a number of buses. I have been recovering all day from my marathon walk yesterday I suppose I walked faster unburdened by my pack, and that the faster walk took more out of me than a slower walk burdened would have done. Then I had that swollen ankle before I started. I think it is going to need treatment. doctor friend suspected *fillaria* when he saw it.

Started I some work, uprooting that vicious thorn that grows round here. The shaft of one mammoty got loose, and that of another split right down from the handle. I had been working five minutes with either mammoty. I have already mentioned my reluctance to weed as the place shorn of its thorns will only give poachers easy access to the wood apple trees. So I was only too willing to return the mammoties, as they were, to their owners. The place does not look too bad; We have

got used to its jungly aspect now, but our housewife has had a few thorns in her feet. It was this that started me weeding.

Most of my working time is spent trying to arrange for people to move in here. There were two groups I saw today. Both expressed willingness to come but cannot come just now. They are looking for new places.

The children are being fed well at last. Their father sees to this and I supply some of the deficiencies when it comes to cash. This leaves me more free to spend my money on my own activities, and if I were to be a day or two late coming back from anywhere, it would not really matter, I suppose.

Our housewife had some guests in today, local people, her own sex, too, and young. There was only one *massa* bed for us to sit on, unless any chose to thry the floor. A man dropped in for water, a glass of it.

The children are indulging in some kind of singing at the moment. They are in the back room on a mat. The housewife keeps wandering in and out between our two rooms. She is in the doorway of the house just now, listening to an angry voice on the main road, or near it; a woman's voice it is. She is expecting her husband and looking out for him. I think she is going to make tea now.

No longer do I suffer from hunger. I remember some advice my father gave me in my youth, and that was not to economize on food. We were both younger then. I think the advice was sound, but I do not know if he would proffer me the same advice now, for people often get more careful about money as they get older.

Both children are cradling dolls just now, and the dolls are nothing but pieces of clothes in the size a doll, would be. They are putting them to sleep. The eldest is singin to hers. In the dark it is fairly easy to keep up the pretence that the clothes are dolls. I must say they look dolls the way they are being cradled in the children's arms.

Let me philosophize. In Ceylon the village has taken the place of the tribe. I am not using the word tribe to describe a *congomera*

tion of people, but a life, in the way that we speak of tribal life and village life. Tribal life, although I not lived it, always gives me the idea of something more potent, an idea I have gleaned from my reading. It is more of a way of life than that of a village; so I shall use it here in preference to the more conventional.

When tribal life came up against modern society, it disintegrated modern society was the trading post and all that one sees is a multiple store like Woolworth's or Selfridges. People were thrown on their own resources, and they no longer had the support of the tribe. People are now looking for security again. You see it, if I am not mistaken, in the so-called hippies, delinquent youth, broken marriages, socialism communism, progressiveness forces, and so on. People will only find that security in some kind of association with each other which involves the totality of their lives; and not just working hours. It is this we have to find, and what I am looking for to get this *Shamba* going. It involves leadership. There is one thing that I have heard constantly reiterated in this island of ours, and that is that we have no leaders.

AGRICULTURE

Move for More Manure

IT IS QUITE unnecessary to tell farmers about the value of farmyard manure, and the need to conserve all waste into rich crop nutrients. But with the undue emphasis laid on fertilizers for some years in the past, almost neglecting the importance of this locally available resource, it has now become necessary, thanks to the shortage of the inorganic fertilizers, to take special promotional measures for production of rural compost. It has been proposed in the Fifth Plan to implement an integrated programme in the States to utilise all conceivable manurial resources in rural areas and convert them into compost. Cattle dung, urine, farm wastes, water hyacinth and leaves all these can be collected, conserved and composted to give nearly

350 million tonnes of manure per year.

The main objective of the programme is to acquaint the farmers with the scientific methods of composting which can lead to the preservation of the maximum amount of crop nutrients and thus release the pressure of demand on chemical fertilizers. In Addition such a move for collection of rural waste would keep the villages clean and the living therein more healthy. For the farmer, it means not only a substantial cut in his fertilizer bill but also a good deal of relief from the thankless task of hunting after fertilizers from different sources.

COMPOSTING farm waste is quite well-known to the farmer, but what he should realise is that if some more care is taken, the final product will be worth all the trouble taken. Failure to utilise all the vegetable waste available which could increase the bulk of the manure, complete neglect of cattle urine, which is richer in nitrogen than cattle dung and lack of care to protect the decomposing organic matter from sun and rain bring down the quality of the final product. To avoid this, the rural compost programme has been taken up as a people's programme involving the panchayats and intensive promotional propaganda through radio and television and offering facilities for training of farmers. Fortified with such special knowledge, the trained farmers would be able to demonstrate the better methods of composting and thus supplement the extension work done by the department to a large extent.

Construction of improved cattle sheds, facilitating the collection of urine and washings of the debris, encouraging landless labourers to produce compost as an ancillary occupation, preparation of poultry manure as an adjunct to poultry rearing and construction of protected compost pits or heaps for storing manure, are some of the special measure that are to be implemented. Inadequacy of organic matter can be made up by growing quick-growing leaf-yielders like *Ipomea carnea* or *Glyricidia maculata* and through well organised farm forestry programmes.

MORE IMPORTANT is the organisation of demonstration-cum-training camps by farmers' associations. Every year 200 such camps of one day duration are to be organised for which a grant of Rs. 250 would be made available by the Centre to the associations. Green manuring of wet lands and growing such green matter for composting in the off seasons could also help to meet fertilizer shortages. The State Governments should ensure that farmers get green manure seeds suitable for local conditions. Irrigation water has also to be provided free of charge for such efforts. What a well-planned and executed green manure can do for the farmers is illustrated by the enthusiasm evinced by farmers in this field leading to a special programme mounted in Palghat District (Kerala) to grow daincha in 8,000 hectares to enrich the soil for paddy crops in this season. The department is taking steps to distribute 500 tonnes of green manure seeds for the next season also to cover 20,000 hectares with the manurial crop, according to the Joint Director of Agriculture, Palghat.

—Hindu

Mona Lisa and Inflation

Leonardo da Vinci's famous Mona Lisa, recently exhibited in Tokyo, evoked unusual interest there—and not only as a work of art. It was also used for other purposes. The participants in one of the demonstrations against rising prices carried a reproduction of Mona Lisa with a basket in her hand and an inscription saying: "I cannot live in Japan when there is such inflation."

Bottle, bits of glass in sugar

A multi-purpose society in the north bought a bag of sugar from the Kantalai sugar Corporation. When the bag was opened—in the presence of a high government official—an empty beer bottle was found in the sugar. Broken pieces of glass and particles of rust were also found in the sugar.

—Daily News 1/7/74.

IS IT TRUE?

Sherlock Holmes

❁ Our Overseas Boys

IS IT NOT SIGNIFICANT that the amount of interest evoked by the comments in this column about the situation in our Foreign Office has been great? That *Tribune* has received a large number of letters, telephone calls and comments from a wide variety of its readers? That most of them are happy that revealing light is being thrown on the inner structure and working of the FO? That most of them say that this spring cleaning initiated by Tissa Wijeyeratne has been long overdue? That it was a good thing that the cleaning out has come from a staunch SLFP loyalist who had been functioning as a politically-appointed Ambassador in France for nearly four years? That if the task had been undertaken by anybody more to the left-of-centre than TW it would have triggered unnecessary hostility in many places? That anybody more to the right-of-centre than TW would not have undertaken a job of this kind? That the whole fabric of the FO is far too right-of-centre, in fact most of it is extreme Right with pretensions to be Centre or even Left? That no one would have minded if the purely private views of the officers was Right or even extreme Right? That is a personal matter and every person has the right to hold any views he chooses to believe in? That the trouble really lay in the fact that these personal views, inhibitions, and even obsessions had been made the bedrock of the nation's foreign policy with the suitable sugar-coating and colouring to sell their views to the Government in power? That the old cold war policy of anti-communism and anti-left was sold to the Rightwing politicians, especially in the UNP, more or less straight with the usual garnishing of UNP idiom? That the same policy derived from diehard cold war ideology was sold to centre and pro-left SLFPers with the clever subterfuge, ingenious slant-

ing and a top dressing of big talk about buddhist dhamma and what not? That it is remarkable that in spite of the awesome concentration of deadweight in the FO, Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike, was able to project some of her independent non-aligned policies to the world? That this was probably due to the fact that she was assisted in this matter by a number of political leaders like Felix R. Dias Bandaranaike and Lakshman Jayakody who were able to push the bureaucrats in our Overseas Service a wee bit towards what they wanted to achieve? That if this tremendous pressure had not been forthcoming from the PM and her political aides, the career diplomats in our FO would have gone swimmingly on to present non-alignment in a way that John Foster Dulles in his grave would have welcomed it? That the resourcefully flexible types we have in our FO had been able to fashion centre-left Bandaranaike non-alignment in a way that pro-right Dudley Senanayake and J. R. Jayawardene become champions of non-alignment—with a twist that made everything so different? That it was all made out to be a purely mechanical question of how much one tilted to bloc of countries or another bloc of countries? That this simplistic device to make non-alignment a balancing act between two cold war blocs passed muster in a bi-polar world? That when the bi-polar world ended with *detente*, *ostpolitik* and what not, and the multi-polar world of the late sixties and the early seventies emerged, then our FO boys found themselves in trouble? That conflicts and contradictions begun to surface in the thinking of the different groups and factions within the FO?

IS IT NOT TRUE that the method of selection of our Overseas Service officers has made groupism

and factionalism inevitable? That with every change of government different groups reached out to new political masters with expressions of loyalty couched in the prevailing idiom and slogans of the day? That in the first phase of what might be termed the *Vaithianathan Period* selections were made from an elitist upper crust within (and on the periphery) of brown sahibry? That most of them came from the minority groups in race, religion, language and even caste? That the thinking of most of them were no different from that of Dulles or McCarthy? That the only concession they made to national aspirations or non-alignment was in new idiom and jargon with which they could bluff their way through? That their success depended solely on how well they had looked after local politicians when they were on visits to countries to which they had been posted? That the Vaithianathan era had covered the entire fifties, although Vaithianathan himself had faded out and governments had changed? Then we had the *N. Q. Dias era* which seems to have prevailed from the beginning of the sixties right up to today? In this era the selections were made from another elitist group which had emerged into political importance but which still had everything of brown sahibry? That whereas the earlier Overseas elite talked a christian jargon, the new elite mouthed pious Pali slogans about the Buddha? That even non christians in the earlier lot had grown up in the traditions of Biblical Jargon? That the non-Buddhists in the N.Q. Dias era were more Buddhist than the Buddha himself? That whereas the former lot despised everything other than English, the latter crowd were Sinhala loyalists with a vengeance? That apart from these differences between the Vaithianathan breed and N.Q. Dias breed, their attitudes to international affairs, to ideology and to politics, were the same? That idiom differed but not content? That neither group believed in educating themselves or keeping in touch with current developments? That they were satisfied if they were accepted in the cocktail circuit and by politicians with pull with the ruling Establishment? That this classification and description is no doubt over-generalised, but the few exceptions in our Overseas Service do not alter the rule?

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