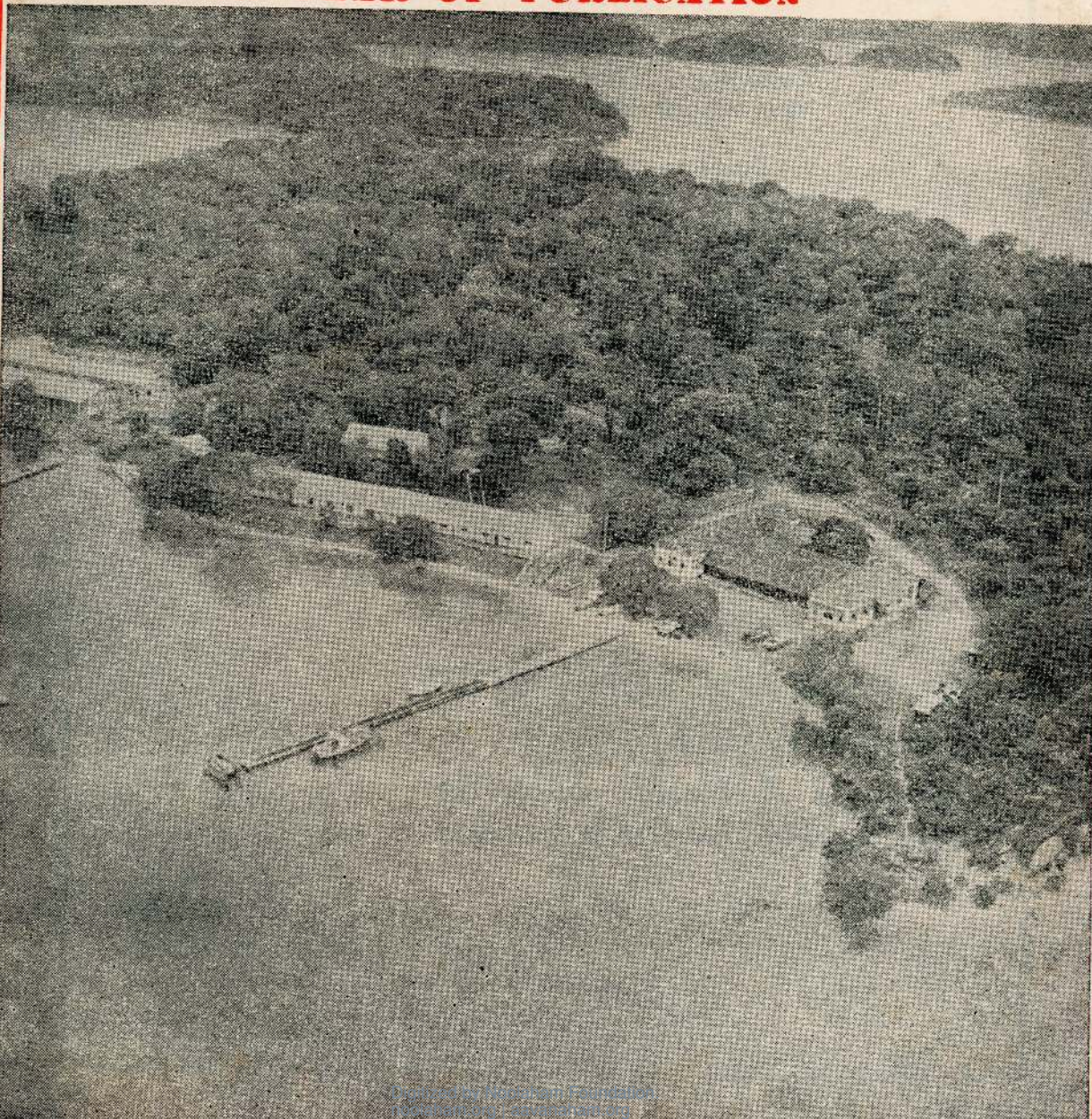


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# TRIBUNE



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## Letter From The Editor

WATER, WATER, EVERYWHERE BUT NOT A DROP TO DRINK. This is a cliché heard often in Sri Lanka today, but it is only to assert that the conservation and utilisation of water has been mismanaged. Whilst the common people bewail the lack of rain and water during some months, they cry for relief when the floods come in other months. Politicians and technocrats, however, talk glibly and learnedly about groundwater, without doing anything to make the groundwater available. This is the tragedy of Sri Lanka. And there is moreover little or no attempt to educate people about some of the basic facts about water. How many people realise that water reserves on earth are not increasing automatically according to the world's current requirements? Nor do people see the significance of the simple fact that 95 per cent of the total reserves of water is salted and hard to use as such. And that of the balance 5 per cent, 4 percent is the ice cap of the earth while only 1 percent is left for consumption. Most of this tiny 1 percent is hidden underground often at difficult depths. But what is easily available is enough for the present requirements of man—if conserved and utilised properly. Man, however, will require more water by the year 2,000 when the population of the earth is expected to reach the 6 billion mark. But let us, for the moment, think only about the present. The question is whether the available water is being used intelligently not only on the planet but also in Sri Lanka today? According to available statistics 1.2 billion people in Third World countries are today very poorly supplied with water. About 1.4 billion are living without adequate sanitary facilities. With all their natural water resources, some developing states are unable to use them optimally. Why? Because they are short of money and expertise. In order to meet the demands of the "Water Decade"—ensuring safe water and adequate facilities for all the world's population—only 30 billion dollars are needed. This is a mere bagatelle compared to what the world spends on military hardware, which in 1979 amounted to 425 billion dollars. Experts say that halting this dangerous race only for 26 days would save enough money to give water to every inhabitant of the earth. And if the crazy and senseless arms race is halted for a month, the world's entire water problem could be solved. If arms spending is halted for two more weeks the problem of food could be solved. And with a few more days of restraint in armament expenditure the world can solve the problems of education and culture, and if the expenditure on armaments is stopped for a year, all the global problems of poverty, unemployment, disease—and everything else—could be solved. Sri Lanka does not spend overmuch on armaments but have we any need for some of our military hardware like decorative jets which are used only on National Day parades? But there are a great many other areas of waste and unnecessary expenditure that could be easily eliminated. If this is done, Sri Lanka will have all the money for water conservation and utilisation.

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## Not So Placid

ON THE COVER this week we have a picture of the placid waters in the China Bay area in Trincomalee harbour. In the foreground, if we are not mistaken, is the famous Sea Anglers' Club. Everything appears placid and calm in Sri Lanka when viewed from the air or from afar—most of our Ministers are now entrenched in distant ivory towers—but at grass-roots level there is a dangerous ferment which neither the UNP nor its ruling hierarchy seem to sense. Burying one's head ostrichlike in the sands of modern propagandist sophistry, as many in the world now do, is of little help in the storms bursting all around us. Take the game of hide and seek the international wire agencies have played about the outcome of the Olympic Winter Games at Lake Placid, U.S.A. The results were not fully reported—and a deliberate attempt was made to create the impression that the U.S.A. and some Western countries had run away with all the gold medals. Even the *Newsweek* could do no better than gloat only over the US victories. But what was the reality? An independent news report stated: "the U.S.S.R. and the German Democratic Republic won first and second places in the Winter Olympics, which concluded last week. The USA was pushed into a poor third place. The Winter Olympics, held at Lake Placid in the U.S.A., were the first lap in the 1980 Olympics. The summer games will be held in Moscow in Mid-1980. The USSR won 10 gold, 6 silver and 6 bronze medals respectively. The G.D.R. won 9 golds, 7 silvers and 7 bronzes. In contrast, the U.S.A. won 6 golds, 4 silvers and 2 bronzes. The International Olympic Committee, which met at Lake Placid before the Winter Games began unanimously rejected a demand from President Carter and Secretary Vance that the Summer Games should be shifted from Moscow or cancelled. The behaviour of the U.S. government, which contrasts markedly from that of America's sportsmen, aroused so much opposition and contempt that many people commented that President Carter does not want the U.S.A. to compete in Moscow as he is not sure that they will get even second place. To make up for his

loss of face as a result of the IOC's unanimous rejection of his insolent ultimatum, President Carter threw a special party for the American ice-hockey team, which won this event, beating the U.S.S.R. He addressed the American hockey players as though they had just won World War III, instead of a friendly sports competition. But his face turned red once again when the American sportsmen he had invited to dine presented him with a petition asking him not to proceed with his announced boycott of the Summer Games in Moscow."

In the same way that Carter and his cold warriors seem to think that they can score a runaway win in the Afghan stakes through managed news and propaganda gimmicks. Many in Sri Lanka seem to believe that misleading headlines and slanted news in the *Lake House* and *Times* newspapers (and over the SLBC) will fool all the people all the time. Even the staid and usually placid weekly, *The Catholic Messenger*, 2/3/80, in its editorial stated:"

"In spite of an ineffective Opposition and an evasive Press, people here during the past week assimilated and reacted in due measure to the staggered yet ruthless strategy of escalating prices and travelling costs. Coinciding somehow with the Finance Minister's frantic search for funds, the implementation of the World Bank recipe will have its own backlash in rhythmic spasms. As admitted by the Minister of Trade, the Government is no doubt aware of the hardships caused by the price hike. He called it a painfully and regretfully taken decision. But, caught up as they are with the dilemma of survival, the mass of our people's need to be understood even when they unceremoniously dismiss all talk of the distant dawn of development as mere moonshine or political rhetoric. In this respect, every government has promised the moon to the masses and every government has had to reap the "whirlwind" it sowed. No political party could point out an accusing finger at another. This collective guilt should forge solidarity among them to face reality and repair the damage of three and a half decades of political gambling. The closest call to reality was the appeal made exactly one month ago by President Jayewardene to place ourselves on a war-footing. War is a time of crisis when a nation has to close ranks, shed differences and forge ahead to.

gether. It calls for unity and solidarity. In such a crisis a government should seek the support of all sectors with humility and all sectors should respond with magnanimity. In the national interest, all parties should agree to put back the political excesses of the past and choose priorities and act with austerity. As mentioned by the Minister of Trade, the masses would not expect the Government to abandon development projects like the Mahaweli Scheme, the Kotmale Project or, perhaps, even the fruitful aspects of the FTZ. The masses do not expect the Government to pull out money from those projects to subsidise and cushion the consumer. But the austerity of 'war time' would demand the shelving of graduate schemes like the proposed parliament complex, building a new capital city and beautifying the old, for better times. Axing all wasteful expenditure in the Government and Corporation sectors curbing the squandermania of self-rewarding political stooges are meaningful ways which will help the Government heed the call to live austerity. Living austerity is more important than preaching it—if the Government is to retain the confidence of the masses."

This editorial reflects the views of a conservative community not prone to revolution. Rightly it demands that our economy be placed on a war footing as suggested by the President. But the President's appeal has fallen on deaf ears. Tamashas go on as if we are in an age of plenty and prosperity in a land flowing with biblical milk and honey. Limitless gallons of petrol and diesel are wasted on meaningless displays of old-school-tie jingoism in the Big School matches. Government and Public sector organisations use three times the number of vehicles they need. Gem mudalalis and the *novaeu riche* export tycoons and smugglers burn petrol and diesel—in one week what should be used in a month or even more.

But what is even more disastrous is that we are producing less and less and importing more and more. Instead of crying over spilt milk and lost opportunities, the Government should get on a war-footing in all matters and as a first priority initiate a really down-to-earth programme of food production. As we have suggested in some recent issues, it is

necessary to evolve an even-handed balance between liberalised import policies and the requirements of local production. For over 30 months import policies were mainly directed to satisfy consumer demands which had earlier been undoubtedly repressed. The absence of any tariff or other barriers to curb imports especially of subsidiary foodstuffs and items like broiler chicken meat has placed local producers at a disadvantage. It is this that must be set right if local production is to have an impact on the economy. If, as at present, the Government lets matters drift, all the brave talk of the million round the corner (by 1933 according to one Minister) will vanish into thin air sooner than later.



### EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

:: Operation Topple :: N'Eliya  
 :: Bonanzas :: CIB, CGR

IT IS NOT THE MILLION-DOLLAR QUESTION OF THE HOUR the mystery of how a mighty little atom was ensnared in a trap in a way that a little indication became a major scandal with political overtones? That whoever laid the trap also had enough "pull" to induce the police to raid a suburban residence on the ground that an anti-government terrorist revolutionary plot was being hatched there at the identical time the selected victim was in a compromising situation for which there can be no defence in political circles—if caught redhanded or, as the saying goes, with the pants down? That in normal circumstances, polite circles pay little or no attention to such diversionary peccadillos, but a top police (ISD-Internal Security) raid focusses attention that is difficult to overlook or ignore?

That what the outcome of all this is going to be is anybody's guess, but certain questions have begun to trouble the ordinary man? That if the surmise that the whole operation was a neatly laid out trap is correct, the first question is whether the Police (ISD) really believed that underground terrorist activities were being organised in that particular house which had a well-known reputation for acti-

titles other than the revolutionary? That it is just possible that the Police (ISD) was led up the garden path to raid the place? Or could it be that some top brass in the Police were party to this Operation to lay the mighty low under cover of unearthing a terrorist plot? That thinking people will be happy if they are assured that the Police were misled by an informant who had an axe to grind? That the police would not normally raid a private residence unless several complaints had been lodged by reputable persons that something unsavoury was going on there? That a "complaint" (or information) of terrorist activities alone gives the police the right to act without the usual formalities and procedures?

That the *second question* is whether the rat race for top posts has reached a stage of traps, frame-ups and ISD raids? That the *third question* is whether Opposition suggestions that all this is a reflection of inner-party struggles within the ruling hierarchy has any basis of truth? That the *fourth question* is whether throat-cutting in high circles has reached such levels that no decent or honourable person will want to serve the country in positions which lesser men intrigue to grab? That the *fifth question* is whether the double-dealing snake-in-the-grass type of person who had engineered this **OPERATION TOPPLE** and who had evidently the "pull" to persuade the Police that terrorism was afoot (when there were only fun and games) should be entrusted with any responsible post?

That if such **OPERATION TOPPLE** exercises are condoned or permitted (whatever the punishment meted out to the victim) then this country will soon have only fools or knaves (or worse) willing to serve the country? That the *sixth question* (and the last for the present) matter is that if the public is to have confidence in the Police, it must be shown that the Police do not become tools in the hands of designing persons? That credibility in the Police should be maintained and sustained at all costs?

2. DIDN'T IT COME AS A SURPRISE even to *Tribune* that a reader in Nuwara Eliya should call us on the long-distance on the morning of Saturday March 8 to commend last week's **CONFIDENTIALLY** column which dealt with some of the acts of commission

and omission of the Marketing Department? That this issue of *Tribune* had been despatched on the previous day, Friday March 7, and the reader in Nuwara Eliya must have got his copy only a short time before he called us (at 9 a.m.)? That he endorsed every word we had written about the Marketing Department (MD) and had something to add about the activities of the MD in N'Eliya? That as a piece of hot news, this reader told us that right at that moment the Meepilimana Government Farm (we hope we got the name right) in N'Eliya had nearly 50,000 lbs. of cabbage ready for immediate cutting and sale? That being a government-sponsored farm it had offered the cabbage to the MD, but the latter had said that it was not able to purchase it? That no one seemed to know why the MD was not able to accept this cabbage, and undoubtedly the farm could not keep it because it would go bad? That at the time of phoning, the Farm Manager is said to have sought permission from his superiors to sell the cabbage to private traders?

That *Tribune* does not know what Meepilimana Farm did with the cabbage (it was probably sold to the traders) but our readers will be interested to know what our informant told us about some of the activities of the MD in N'Eliya which is the premier up-country vegetable producing centre in the island? That, among other things, our informant is a gentleman farmer who grows vegetables in and around Nuwara Eliya? That he said that, over the years, he has sold vegetables to the MD; but that at all times such sales were possible only when palms were greased—from the lowliest labourer who loads the vans and weighs the sackloads right up to the higher echelons of the MD in that town? That very often he was able to sell his vegetables to the MD only through private traders at slightly reduced prices?

That the *modus operandi* of MD to explain its inability to purchase is simple? That though the MD has been operating for years in N'Eliya, it does not possess enough gunny sacks to service the purchase of vegetables? That it is the custom for wholesale buyers of vegetables (whether the MD or private traders) to hand over to the producers empty gunny-sacks to pack the vegetables? That whilst traders have as many sacks as are wanted, the

MD does not have them and this excuse is always trotted out when the purchasing officer of the MD wants to push the vegetables on to the private traders who make unconscionable profits? That even if the MD functions sparsely and poorly in the rest of the country, it should have long ago been geared up to purchase the whole, or at least the overwhelming bulk, of the vegetables produced in Nuwara Eliya?

That our informant went on to say that one reason for the decrease in the island's total production of vegetables stemmed from the shortsighted policies of the present Administration? That on the phone he mentioned one glaring instance of such short-sightedness? That the Race Course in Nuwara Eliya had become unproductive land after horse racing had been stopped? That the "bad old SLFP government" had leased out the race course in one to three acre lots to persons who were willing to grow vegetables? That this, he said, was proper and laudable utilisation of cultivable land? That water being available on site, the entire 100 to 110 acres (or a little more) were intensively cultivated? That three crops were raised every year—(a) potatoes, (b) cabbages, and (c) beets, leeks or carrots with beans and others thrown in? That, on an average, each acre produced about 25 to 30 tons of vegetables each year? That each acre also needed 4 to 4 1/2 labourers for intensive cultivation and about 400 to 450 persons were employed when the Race course was so cultivated?

That in 1977, for some strange reason, the new government cancelled all the leases and cultivation of vegetables was stopped? That different spokesmen for the Government had said that this Race Course was to be utilised to grow flowers for export (and incidentally make Nuwara Eliya beautiful) but in the last 32 months not a single flower has been grown there? (That in the last few months the Forest Department had set up a nursery for jurgle trees in a tiny fragment of the entire land? That the reader who telephoned us has at all times been a UNP stalwart and he would be willing to tell Party chieftains or Government VIPs what he told us and more?)

3. IS IT NOT FUNNY that the pro-government media should try to make people forget the hardships of the present by promising the moon during Sinhala and Tamil New

Year i.e., April 12, 13. That the headline in one paper read: MASOOR DHAL, ONIONS, POTATOES, TINNED AND DRIED FISH CHICKEN—CWE PROMISES EXCELLENT FARE FOR NEW YEAR? That the headline in another paper read FOR SINHALA AND HINDU NEW YEAR, ESSENTIAL FOOD ITEMS IN PLENTY, That one report stated: "Three pounds of Masoor Dhal to each household from next week, plenty of Bombay onions and potatoes, tinned and dried fish and dressed chicken (italics ours). This is the fare the CWE hopes to provide for the people during the Sinhala and Hindu New Year season. There will be no Chinese chicken as China has not been able to arrange refrigerated freight in time. The CWE has begun issuing 4,000 tons of Masoor dhal to all the co-operatives to be issued to consumers. Each household will be issued with three pounds of masoor dhal consumers will be able to draw this quantity any time from next week till April 12, said a CWE spokesman yesterday. The first consignment of Bombay Onions is expected here on March 14. This consignment will comprise 1000 tons from Holland and 500 tons from Bombay. The earlier 500 tons of Bombay Onions and 500 tons tons of potatoes will arrive each week from India. A large stock of potatoes, has been already made available for distribution through retail outlets. The CWE has in hand adequate stocks of cummin seeds, mathe seeds, chillies and tinned fish. A large stock of dry fish is expected within the next few days the spokesman said....."

That though "dressed chicken" was mentioned, the report also said: "This year Chinese chicken will not be available as the Chinese exporters have not been able to get refrigerator facilities. In view of this the CWE has contracted with local big suppliers for chicken which will be made available in big quantities only after the New Year. Local chicken will be sold around Rs. 10 per pound?"

That *Tribune* had predicted in its issue of March 8 (Vol. 24 No. 35) that Chinese chicken would not be immediately available. That it is not likely to be available for a long time or never at all? That *Tribune* had also said that there was an increasing shortfall of local broiler chicken (again because of short-sighted government policies)? That is why the newspaper report spoke about "dressed chicken"—no

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TRIBUNE, March 15, 1980

doubt tough old culled birds that do not lay eggs? That it is time government VIPs realised that the ordinary people are tired of being promised plenty for New Year or X'mas? That what worries them is not what they can get but that their money today buys less and less? That whilst prices are shooting up higher and higher, incomes were either stationary or the increases are so infinitesimally small that they are not able to buy adequate quantities of basic essential food stuffs for themselves and their families? That with fish averaging round Rs. 10-12 a lb, beef Rs. 7 a lb, mutton at Rs. 14 a lb, and the cheapest vegetables at Rs. 2 a lb, the ordinary householder is hard put to keep malnutrition away from himself and his beloved?

That this is the real crux of the problem facing the ordinary man or woman in Sri Lanka today? That learned thesis that by 1983 incomes would have moved upwards bring no comfort? That the problem is how to exist until 1983? That there is also no guarantee that income increases will catch up with the inflation? That everyone believes that at the rate prices are being pushed up by cutting subsidies and by the impact of global inflation, the overwhelming bulk of the people will be pauperised and suffer hardships of real poverty and endure the pangs of hunger? That the threatened increase of Rs. 50 or more in April will only add to the inflation in the context of reduced local production? That the sunshine stories the government insists on inflicting on the people have begun to irritate and annoy them? That nobody believes these stories—though theoretically the chances of improvement by 1983 may be possible?

4. IS IT NOT TRUE that in spite of the increase of bus and train fares, there has been no improvement in the quality and frequency of the service? That if this increase (early 40%) had ushered in a better service, popular grumbling would be less? That people are tired of hearing the excuse that improvements cannot be effected overnight—when three years have gone by with matters worse than ever before? That *Tribune* is waiting reports about the state of bus transport after the increase of fares, but reports received about the Railway are most distressing? That in spite of the new locomotives, trains continue

to be chronically late? That little or no attention is paid to passenger comfort? That buffet cars are ill-stocked and are hard to enter or approach? That Restaurant rooms in the main stations are as bad as ever—or worse, now that they can sell liquor scant attention is paid to those who do not want liquor?

That though the new Rumanian coaches on the long distance trains have a little more leg room than old (LSSP) Rumanian coaches, they still have seats with straight, stiff and rigid backs that bring pain to the spine of even the healthiest? That this straight back coaches are meant only for short suburban runs but to punish long distance train travellers in this way shows the total lack of consideration for passenger comfort? That the worst sufferers are those who pay for first class sleeping berths or air-conditioned comfort? That bug-ridden sleepers, badly maintained and dirty, dany passengers even the minimum comfort and cleanliness they expect?

That the air-conditioned carriage service on the Yal Devi is an even bigger scandal? That a charge of Rs. 40 per seat is levied in addition to the first-class fare? That in the last six months, more often than not, the new second class Rumanian coaches have been substituted for the air-conditioned coaches? That this is at least a lesser evil than the discomfort passengers suffer when the air-conditioning fails shortly after the journey begins? That this has happened very often in recent weeks? That neither full nor part refund is made when the air-conditioning fails or a second class carriage is used? That if the CGR is not able to maintain the five air-conditioned carriages in good repair, they should run an ordinary first class carriage and charge a suitable free for reservation (is now done in the reserved second and third class compartments)? That one reason why these upper class passengers do not protest is because the majority who travel first and second class are "warrant holders" who get it all free? That cash-paying first and second class passengers are few and the third class has an overabundance of ticketless travellers? That very soon cash paying passengers will switch to private luxury and semi-luxury buses which have begun to ply on some of the main routes. That once this long and medium distance coach and bus services developed



and expand, the CGR will cater only for free warrant holders from the public sector? That one can only hope that this competition from the luxury and semi-luxury bus service will prod the CGR to do better? That people are tired of hearing all the excuses—no locomotives, no carriages, no rolling stock, no sleepers (it took three years to award the tender for sleepers until certain persons became the cheapest tenderers! etc. etc.)? That the simple question is what the existing equipment is not put to better use, why they are not better properly maintained, why civility and courtesy cannot be enforced, and why such a simple matter like the catering service cannot be better run? That there is no doubt that if the CTB and CGR are run as at present, the UNP will face an uphill task at the general election, for next to food, travelling is the most sensitive sector so far as voters are concerned?

The hills shelter Batticaloa from the southwest monsoon and the hot dry Kachchan wind blows from the southwest. This wind ascends gradually over the southwestern slopes of the hills, cooling and condensing its moisture and then a descent that heats it up. This phenomenon is called Fohn effect, after a Swiss meteorologist, who studied it first in his mountainous country. Unlike the southwest, the northeast monsoon encounters steep hills, on its way across the southern half of the island and climbs it only at possible places. Otherwise it blows around the mountains. Anyway, when this northeast wind reaches the southwest coast, its moisture content is much reduced. People of Colombo and Negombo feel much the same in their weather of January as those of Batticaloa feel in July and August, when the southwest monsoon is at the full blast.

*In many a year and in many places, January has been the rainiest month.* Depressions and upper cyclonic circulations have given very heavy falls in January. Of the 197 rain-gauge stations, 18 of them (9%) have had their maximum ever daily falls in January and there are many more among the abandoned rain gauge stations. This is more than an equal share, in a year of twelve months including depressional November and May, when the southwest monsoon hursts. March is the only month without any such record breaking falls.

JANUARY 1913 was Noah's month, where out of 239 stations existing then, no less than 200 beat their own previous record for January. The highest recorded that month was at St. Martin's, Rangalla, 3600 ft.—109.53", next was Ledgerwatie Estate, Badulla, 4000 ft.—108.01" and the third Kobenella Estate, Urugala 4500 ft. 81.85". These records have not been beaten at any place, or month. Climatologists born long after this date seem to think that there was no rainy month like May 1940, when the monsoon burst over Balangoda on the 17th with a fall of 29.76". The highest monthly total that May was at Watawalla, 63.57" and at Balangoda it was only 54.50". In Noah's January, Kurundu Oya, Maturata 5150 ft.—78.56", Duormacella Estate, Gammaduwa 2880 ft.—69.82", Gammaduwa Estate, Ratota 2400 ft.—69.23" and Taldena 1100 ft.—65.12".

JANUARY 1980

## Is It The Drought Of The Century?

by V. Buvanandaram

IT IS A TRADITIONAL BELIEF among Tamils that in a prosperous land, it rains heavy three times a month, one for just ruler, the other for ritualistic priests and the third for chaste women. None else but nature can supervise their activities and shower approval rains. Sodom and Gomorrah went up in flames.

*January is by no means a droughty month not to expect three showers even in Colombo 7.* It is a northeast monsoon month but in January, the winds are more easterly than southeasterly. The area sheltered by the hills from these winds gets the least rain. Over the years, Negombo's January average of 2.33" is the lowest for the entire island. From Negombo the averages increase in both directions, north and south—Chilaw 2.54", Puttalam 2.88" and Marichchukkaddi 3.21"; to the south, Colombo 2.93"; Colombo 7 3.68"; Dehiwela 5.16" and Moratuwa 5.30".

all beat Wattala's 5.40 May total. I doubt, even these have ever been exceeded. 23 stations recorded over 50 inches, that in itself is a record.

**RECORDS**, were broken in this January of 1980 but in the reverse. In 110 years of observation at Anuradhapura, the lowest total ever recorded for January was 0.08cm in 1916 and this January there was only a single fall of 0.01cm. At Vavuniya too, where in 80 years of observation, the lowest recorded was 0.03cm in 1974. This January it was 0.02cm. Among the Meteorological stations, Kurunegala, Katunayake and Puttalam recorded nil rainfall and among raingauge stations, the number of zeros for January is also a record. Even the southeast that is traditionally watered by the northeast monsoon in January received very poor rains Batticaloa, which meets this monsoon straight off the sea got 2.38cm. which is only 8% of its average of 27.94". Panama tank got 10.29cm 32% of its average: Yala 3.71 24% of its average and Palatupana 6.76cm and it has no average yet. The highest rainfall for this month was 34.27cm at Kurundu Oya. This is only 66% of its average, which is 9% below Bate's drought level.

It was practically nil rainfall at almost every station sheltered by the hills and to the north of the hills. Galle with 12.58cm was the only place that received more than its average of 11.18cm. Monravia Estate so close to Galle received nil rainfall and so were other inland stations like Avissawalla, Pelmadulla and Haputale. North of the hills, it was nil everywhere broken only by light rain artificially sceded out by aircraft fumes or by local pollution of the atmosphere. Local city pollution gave Anuradhapura 0.10cm while close-by agricultural experimental station got nothing.

IN SRI LANKA, there is a lunatic love to describe anything happening now as a special kind of phenomenon. A strong breeze is called a cyclone. The current rainlessness is called the drought of the century. This is further from the truth than birds hatching eggs in an eclipse. There are many years, still not

past the retirement age, more suited for this title—1973/1974 for instance. Counting the number of zeros is not the way to judge a drought. Drought is defined in terms of percentage rainfall at any place. To judge this drought in general terms, it is best to compare where it seasonally rains most:

Place	1974 Jan.	1980 Jan
1. Batticaloa	0.38cm	2.38cm
2. Badulla	0.33cm	3.92cm
3. Hambantota	—	1.69cm
4. Iddumakelle	1.70cm	28.19cm
5. Keenakelle	5.99cm	18.31cm
6. Kobenella	—	14.58cm
7. Kurununduoya	0.15cm	34.27cm

In the 110 years of recorded history, Nuwara Eliya for the first and the only time recorded nil rainfall for January in 1974. At no other time has it recorded nil monthly rainfall except in March 1903. Colombo Observatory in 78 years and Kurunegala since 1888 recorded nil rainfall only in 1974. In over a hundred years of observation Galle 0.05cm and Ritnapura 0.13cm are the lowest for January and they were recorded in 1974. The claims of other years like 1973, when Batticaloa 0.23cm and Trincomalee 0.08cm recorded their January lowest or Badulla's only nil January fall in 1875 or Diyatalawa's lowest of 0.76 in 1945, all pale into insignificance for the title of "drougtest January year."

The inclusion of dry February cannot make any difference in a drought. In 1974, there were some places distributed over the island like Hingurakgoda, Suriyawewa, Talaimannar, Topawewa, Mantota, Kekandura and Kumana, which had not a drop of rain for 3 months from the beginning of the year. Trincomalee farm's 4 months drought from the beginning of 1973 stands alone. 1974 drought is not only the worst drought of this country since rainfall measurements began 112 years ago. This year 1980 will find some place among the many droughts that have occurred since 1869. but it is certainly not the drought of the century.

(To be Continued)

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## KANDY

### Lady Deputy Mayor

Kandy, Feb. 29,

The best place to catch His Lordship the Mayor of Kandy, is during the Council sittings—at the tea break. His Worship in dazzling robes was playing host to the city fathers and the press. "You have been a bit too hard on the *Dawasa* pressman," I told him. His Worship was unduly pained that the February 20 *Dawasa* had in its news item hinted that the clean up of Kandy city was for the benefit and glory of the Prime Minister. The Mayor read out the *Dawasa* (it is now part of the Council's proceedings). The writer covered the meeting from the Press Box for the *Tribune*.

It would be childish and indeed churlish to take up the position that *Dawasa* wasn't doing its duty. The *Dawasa* was. Other members agreed that the matter had many loose ends. The King and Queen of Nepal were to visit Kandy. The President would come and the Prime Minister was coming. Protocol demanded that the Mayor—Kandy's first citizen, and his city fathers—would have their place of precedence in all official ceremonies. But those in charge of protocol tripped over an elementary, which "had it been when E. L. was Mayor, would not have happened, if it did, things would have been put right" M.M.C. Mahaulapola (had) told the writer during the tea break.

"Why didn't you all protest?"

"We did."

"What happened?"

"Nobody cared. And I have protested in today's motion, that was unanimously passed."

"What then did you do?"

"We boycotted it en masse."

Here then was a civic reception to the king of another country and the hosts were not there. Were not invited. Or did somebody keep them out? The Deputy Mayor, the lady, was in a mood to talk.

Q. "Your traffic wardens are an asset."

A. "Yes", and she paused....." we select from the poorest of the poor. They have

not had education as such. They couldn't have had....."

Q. What is the strength?

A. We have 80. They support 80 families at a comfortable level. They are happy.

Q. What is the highest daily collection?

A. Well.....

Q. What share is the Traffic Warden's?

A. Three quarter.

And then the incredible truth came out that those girls, "the rustic flowers of rustic youth", as she poetically went on, earn three figures every month and one hit the four figure mark.

Q. How many more, would you take?

A. Not many more. By dividing them into two shifts, we have doubled the number of such bread winners.

Q. Why not an increase in the parking rates?

A. We'll (there was the unusually long pause).

Q. Like in Co'ombo?

A. Kandy is not Co'ombo.

Q. What (social) service, do traffic wardens perform?

A. Three as I see it. They are employed: dependents are looked after; nearly 10 million rupees of motor vehicles are watched. No thefts or losses now, isn't this security?

The burning issue of the city's water problem came up. She scotched the rumour that Kandy was serving raw water from the Kandy Lake whose 36,000 gallons a day was augmenting needs. She said that the purification of the water was being done at two points. At the intake point and then before the water was released from the Reservoir for consumption. Whether her technical informants were sure of their figures is a question. 6,000 gallons per hour and 36,000 gallons per day were being pumped out of Kandy's polluted lake. Another 36,000 from Getembe. Whether 72,000 gallons of phased water could go through an instant purification process is hard to answer. But the lady was stubbornly gentle and femininely adamant.

A. I drink it now off our taps, my children too.

Medical sources and technocrats aren't as certain as the lady. The other burning issue was the Library service. She was adamant again, but listened, without comment, when I rattled off a catalogue of shortcomings.

Dayawathie Ranarajah, Kandy's first Lady Deputy Mayor, with her chairman, knew about the congestion in the Library. She knew about *Time*, *Newsweek*, *Indian Mirror*. But what she did not know was that the latest *Tribune* and *Lanka Guardian*, two reputed Sri Lanka weeklies, NEVER come on time. The latest *Tribune* was the issue of the 16th February (as on the morning of February 29) and the Office clerk who was consulted—poor man—produced a register, and yet another. The Security Guard could tell only what might go out. He couldn't tell me what came in. Nobody was certain how they came in at all. The sad thing was that the new Security Guard had no security hold. He could tell what leaves the library; but he couldn't say what came in—especially in handbags. That is how the *Tribune* and *Lanka Guardian* come into the library. It took the writer one hour to find out from the library when the latest issue of *Tribune* purchased at the local agents came into the Library. One officer, showed me one register. Then he showed another. But nowhere was it stated who bought the magazine, when it was brought and so on. Nobody knows, whether all issues came in at all or whether any political winds kept them out or sent them round before they come to the Library. But, the SLP *Nation* was always on time. *The (UNP) Journal* and the *Hansard*, since J.R. came to power, are NOT available in the reference.

In the lending section, before Laxmi Ariyadasa took over, books have had free rides and some have not returned. It might be useful, if a list of missing books are drawn up with dates and then something can be done to remedy matters. One has to understand the pickle—that is the library. The most alarming thing about the Kandy Municipal Library is that there is total impermanency. The Librarian is an acting man. His assistant, Mrs. Gunaratne, is herself an acting assistant and whenever the acting Librarian is absent, this acting assistant, acts for the Acting Librarian.

Deputy Mayor Dayawathie Ranarajah made an honest attempt to defend her colleagues and the Council's employees. Will her protective strategy work? Can blue become green or green blue? Only time can tell. Will the acting ever become permanent?

John B. Kumarakulasinghe

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## QUALITY OF LIFE—2

### Our Ethos And Culture?

by,

Dr. M. L. M. Salgado Ph.d (Cantab), B. Sc (Lond)

EVEN THE MASSES, the workers, peasants and students can hardly afford a decent meal today. In 1922, day scholars who travelled from Panadura and Moratuwa to the University in Colombo (Bambalapitiya) were able to get a substantial rice and curry meal for 50 cents while today even a plain rice and curry in a Middle Class Restaurant costs more than Rs. 5/- for what is an ill cooked meal. The Quality of Life, which is associated with the GOOD LIFE of this category of citizens who form the vast majority of Sri Lanka's citizens today, is no more today. Food is the fundamental need, good food—healthy/nutritious and palatable food with a SRI LANKA flavour, a meal which is a change from home food, from the eternally recurring BREAD, BREAD and BREAD for 3 meals (and at Rs. 2/05 per lb) with a spoonful of POL SAMBOL, which if served in adequate quantity can certainly supply a well balanced diet both in calories and proteins. It may be mentioned that it is only at the YWCA Restaurant in Colpetty, that one can obtain for a very reasonable price a meal of rice and curry (at Rs. 5/-), tastily cooked, well presented, clean and spotless by polite and charming females (young girls).

Where are we leading to? QUO VADIS. Does not culture form a part of the GOOD LIFE, and is part of the QUALITY OF LIFE? It forms an indisputable role—Culture based on our traditions of Decency and its ETERNAL VERITIES. Respect and Reverence for the ELDERLY, and appreciation of our traditional religious virtues and hallowed traditions. How

many younger men and women (so-called NONAS) offer a seat to a venerable grey haired old man or even an elderly old lady, compelled to do her marketing by BUS. Certainly, the AGE OF CHIVALRY is no more. Where are our Knight Errants who succour our young ladies in Distress except to play the fool of young ladies. I wonder if this is all involved with the reactions to WOMAN'S LIB?

In aspiring to the GOOD LIFE versus the QUALITY OF LIFE, the comments of Dr. Raja Coomaraswamy who visited Sri Lanka a few months ago, when he made some remarks in the Interview, published in the Tribune (No. 14, Vol. 24 dated 13.10.1979) are quoted below: "The famous son of the famous father stated as follows: 'Dr. Raja Coomaraswamy debunked Television which perhaps gives Sri Lanka a STATUS SYMBOL in the world of undeveloped 'Progressives' aspiring to the realisation of the Quality of Life we have forgotten our ethos and except being the world's notorious imitators, rarely can sort the good from the evil that springs from the sophisticated West and the Yankee discarded scraps of alleged culture VIA Commercialised TV.'

Take the case of our famous feminine MODS. Where are our saree-clad lasses of the towns and even the modest young girls of the villages. Hardly a decade ago in the NCP, it was a delightful sight to see teenager girls going to school in the NCP (as in Kekirawa Central School) dressed in charming half sarees. But today do we see the artistry and graciousness of our traditional good life and the corresponding QUALITY OF LIFE?

Even in Music, we had absorbed "BAILA" and KAFFIRINGHA from the Portuguese and the Kaffirs into our Folk Culture so that these have become a part of our life. Such cultural symbolisms do occur like the CALYPSO in the WEST INDIES which has given its place to popular music and folk dancing, like the POLKA of the Poles. Fortunately there has been a revival of Kandyan dancing and indigenous dance forms and Music thanks to the Khemadasa, Amaradas, Vajira and Chitrasena to mention only a few.

Certainly we should encourage foreign cultural trends showing their best of music

and dance forms and sponsored by foreign embassies. For example the BOLSHOI of Internationally supreme Ballet Dancing was a unique case in point. But how many could afford to take their talented children to the BMICH for these shows, show by a Communist nation which only the capitalists of Sri Lanka alone could enjoy. Shows of this nature should be heavily subsidised, either at the expense of the respective embassies, or in collaboration with Sri Lanka's Department of Culture. Otherwise, these cultural importations become a classbiassed endeavour that becomes a closed book to the majority of middle class and/or poorer sections of the Community

Any government during periods of stress, have to throw PANEM ET CIRCENSIS (Bread and Circuses) to keep the masses quiet as was the practice in ancient Rome. But how many could even afford to take a family to the recent APOLLO circus, where the tickets were highpriced or even to have the PANEM at Rs. 2/05 per pound.

When the SITAR p'aver Bannejee gave a show recently in Sri Lanka, the tickets were priced at Rs. 500/- with the lowest at Rs. 50/- per ticket. A few aspiring students of the Sitar, could barely afford even these minimum rates which somehow become the narrow monopoly of just a few who can least appreciate such music, making the entire exercise an exhibition of art based on class limited by wealth. Even culture must be subsidised as done at the Tower Hall, where it has been democratised in an exemplary manner. The rates charged are reasonably not excessive. There have been mainnee shows at 2.30 p.m. when Samudra Devi was staged recently, and in the case of these early mainnee shows for school children the rates were all Rs. 5/-.

Says our distinguished visitor, Dr. Raja Coomaraswamy, son of an illustrious Sri Lankan, Dr. Ananda Coomaraswamy, one of Sri Lanka's brilliant products exported to culturally educate the Americans: "You see, your contact with western intellectual life is Zero. your contact is almost entirely at the level of scientific and technical teaching. But we have good thinkers in the West. I will give but one example. I visited one of your large bookshops and there I found no book by significant thinkers in the West. They did have several of my

father's books and I asked the man if they were selling and he said, 'Oh, yes, they sell to the foreigner, but the Sinhalese are not interested in buying them. Now in the West, my father is considered to be one of the greatest thinkers of the last century and his ideas are taken with great seriousness and yet it was said that most of the Sinhalese students who come to the west don't even know his name.' (*Tribune*, loc cit). While appreciating the fact that books are very costly today and beyond the reach of most middle class book lovers, I wonder if the lending libraries or even the American Centre and/or the British Council Library have copies of Ananda Coomaraswamy's books. It is therefore pleasant news from Dr. Raja Coomaraswamy the worthy son of a distinguished father that "Am I my Brother's keeper" by the father is going to be published under the title "The Bugbear of Literacy" and that our Minister of Cultural Affairs is considering purchasing this book for distribution in Sri Lanka.

THERE IS I FEEL, a cultural upsurge towards a higher Quality of Life culturally. This must be canalised, directed and motivated by genuine Cultural leaders and not by false imitators and shaped in consonance with the cultural ETHOS of our country. If only a second Anagarika Dharmapala appears as an AVATAR reborn in Sri Lanka, we may discard most of our shibboleths regarding the Quality of Life and make all classes feel what our ideas of our Quality of Life should be. Our Quality should not be based on a CHAMPAGNE standard when our income is a TODDY INCOME.

Our President, His Excellency, Mr. J. R. Jayewardene is a man of Culture, well read as anyone who listens to him will realise and let us hope that he will give the leadership to a renaissance of genuine culture which is also an essential part of Democracy and will be a second.

Take one example of conditions today. Our education in Buddhist Schools today in the context of our cultural Ethos. Even in premier Buddhist educational institutions of the primary and secondary grades, I was alarmed to learn that prior to their Big matches and after there are celebrations where there have been cases where Sri Lanka "GAL" and "POL" flowed. How low have our cultural levels

fallen? I wonder if these manifestations are an imitation of the big match post prandials which used to take the form of celebrations of liquor flowing among teenagers of some Christian schools, called the Eton and Harrow of Ceylon. This may be a case of doing as the next door Jones' do. The School Sessions start with Pansil at Assembly and end after post match revels in boozing. They all forget the last precept of Pancha Seela. And what about teachers who too take to the bottle (of course not at school) but in the privacy of their homes, but in Parties with Buddhist friends who teach the Quality of Life to their next generation.

On the radio there are regular sermons; in fact the day starts with DHAMMA CHINTA and rarely have heard learned Priests make sufficient stress on this new trends of Buddhist Youth defying all our Buddhist traditions and sullying Buddhist culture. In fact it may be that our Buddhist Priests in the secluded confines of their temples are not aware of these new dangers to our Quality of Life. There are among Buddhist Youths various organisations sponsored by religious leaders both lay and priests, doing very commendable work such as the youngsters looking after the spiritual needs of Buddha Patients at the General Hospital, Colombo. But the old Dhaham Pasalas of the old days, which during our teenage days were supported by laymen and priests working as instructors to the young are now of a different type—perhaps more MOD in consonance with modern trends. An unfortunate trend in these schools has been the class distinctions, in that now there appears to be only few children from the well to do families, but patronised more by the children of the poor.

So let us hope that in these matters at the ground level (grass-root level) our enterprising Prime Minister, Mr. Premadasa who may have been a pupil in the Daham pasals of the old days will take the lead to rejuvenate to help the realisation of the new QUALITY OF LIFE.

Concluded



## Basic Agreements—1

by S. P. Amarasingam

It would be useful to place on record a summary of the basic agreements reached as contained in the Final Declaration before embarking on a critical analysis of the Declaration and more especially examine the differences that had surfaced on certain crucial issues and the nature of the consensus arrived at or the reservations entered.

**THE STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES** began by stating that for a growing number of countries the policy of non-alignment constituted a genuine expression of the interests and aspirations of an increasing number of countries and peoples throughout the world. The heads of state or government expressed their great satisfaction at meeting for the first time in Latin America. They said that when the Movement was founded there was only one Latin American country, Cuba, among its founding members. Latin America, was a region of a ceaseless struggle by its peoples for the achievement of their full independence, and this had enabled them to play an increasingly dynamic role alongside their brothers and sisters in Africa and Asia. Meeting in Havana 18 years after its founding, the Movement was aware of its responsibility and its role and represented an overwhelming majority of humanity struggling to do away with inequality between the developed countries and the developing countries; get rid of poverty, hunger, disease and illiteracy; and establish a new world order based on justice, equity and peace, instead of the present order in which wealth continues to be centred in the hands of a few powers.

**THE PREAMBLE** also said that liberation will not be complete until effective control of natural resources and wealth has been guaranteed and independent economic development achieved and until the peoples are guaranteed the decent living conditions that they deserve. The Movement of Non-aligned countries represented the hopes and wishes of millions of human beings who had been deprived of freedom and the right to decide

their own destiny. It stated that this Movement, which was born in the midst of the breakup of the colonial system and the liberation struggle of the peoples of Africa, Asia, Latin America and other parts of the world, and at the height of the cold war, had been an essential factor in the process of decolonisation—which has led to the achievement of freedom and independence for many countries and peoples and the creation of dozens of new sovereign states—and in the preservation of world peace.

**THE CONFERENCE** reaffirmed that the essence of the policy of the non-aligned is the struggle against imperialism, colonialism, neo-colonialism, racism, apartheid and Zionism; opposition to all forms of foreign occupation and domination, and hegemony; the struggle for peaceful co-existence among states and non-interference and non-intervention in the affairs of other countries; for the establishment of a new international economic order on the basis of equality, respect for the inviolability of frontiers, opposition to the use of force and for the peaceful resolution of controversies. The Heads of state or government felt that events of recent decades had shown the validity of the principles of non-alignment and, therefore, maintained their commitment to implement these principles in practice. They also reaffirmed that the criteria for acceptance as members must be based on a country's having adopted an independent policy, based on co-existence between states with different social and political systems, and on its not belonging to any multilateral military alliance agreed to in the context of the conflicts between the great powers.

**THE CONFERENCE** stated that the policy of non-alignment constituted an important and indispensable factor in the struggle for the freedom and independence of all the peoples and countries of the world, and expressed its thanks to the peace-loving forces for their support, declaring its wish to continue collaborating with these forces. The Declaration said that at the time the 6th Summit was taking place in Havana, the world was living in a situation fraught with dangers, but also full of encouraging possibilities. It added that solidarity with the peoples and with the causes of Palestine, Cyprus, Panama and of other peoples of Latin America, Central America

and the Caribbean was being strengthened. The Conference hailed the achievements of Iran and Nicaragua in their emancipation, the decision to establish a new international economic order, and the growing demand for general and complete disarmament.

(To be Continued)

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## A SOVIET VIEW

# YOGIS

by A'xei Katkov

THE YOGIC SYSTEM OF SELF-IMPROVEMENT is about 5,000 years old. In a way, it is going through a second birth in our days, for it is being put to intensive scientific scrutiny not only in India, its home, but in the USA, as well as in Great Britain and other European countries. International conferences on medical aspects of this research have been held annually since 1977 in Czechoslovakia. Some progress in this field has also been made in the Soviet Union.

If we take yogic postures, the so-called *asanas*, we find that they differ from conventional physical exercises, above all, in that they are accompanied by a definite rhythm of breathing and a concentration of attention on definite parts of the body. A. Boyarshinov, a stage actor in Moscow, found a happy blend of yogic *asanas* and a specific system of self-improvement, the blend known as actor's gymnastics for senses and emotions. This blend is reported to be conducive to good health and helps cure some diseases.

It is common knowledge that experienced yogis can sleep on a bed of sharp nails. I, Kuznetsov, a teacher in Chelyabinsk, has proved, with his own experience, that any person can do the same even without any special training. He made several so-called acupuncture belts with metal needles (about a centimetre long) mounted on the inside of the belt and spaced about one centimetre apart. It turned out that if one lies down with his naked back on such belts and girdles them around himself, the sensation of pain passes away very quickly, while a sufficiently long

stay in these belts produces a sort of a narcotic effect. In other words, the same happens as in acupuncture which is now being thoroughly studied here at the Institute of Reflex Therapy recently established in Moscow.

YOGA INCLUDES a variety of breathing exercises. In some, intensive breathing is combined with an active contraction of abdominal muscles. Similar exercises have been suggested by A. Streinikova, a teacher in Moscow. But unlike yoga, she recommends the combination of the muscular effort with inhaling, rather than with exhaling. According to her method, the inhalation should be light, shallow and accompanied with self-embracing movements of the arms. In doing this, the person is in a way obstructing the expansion of the upper part of the chest in inhaling. Exhaling is easy. A practically healthy person is recommended 1,200 such inhalations daily.

A. Streinikova's breathing-control technique has found wide application in voice setting for stage actors. The making of sound in this technique involves not only the vocal chords and the muscles of the larynx, but also the muscles of the diaphragm, the abdomen, hips and legs. The muscles involved take over part of the strain and thus preclude an excess load on vocal chords. The technique has proved to be very effective and many well-known actors apply to A. Streinikova for instruction.

Yogis hold that during their "sleep" they accumulate "prana" a special cosmic energy. It might be more reasonable to believe that "prana" accumulation is a peculiar oxygen regimen of an organism, the ability of making the most of the energy of free electrons of every atom of oxygen. Directing a stream of "prana" to a definite organ most likely means making greater use of the increased oxygen supply to the organ in question. The oxygen regimen of tissues has not been studied in yogis but it has been investigated in athletes.

Many people are amazed at the super-strength of yogis' muscles, which can withstand the weight of a lorry. Some light has been shed on this phenomenon by two researchers in Alma Ata—A. Roman, D.Sc., (Medicine), and R. Inyushin, D.Sc., (Biology).



They experimented with volunteers who, resorting to self-suggestion, demonstrated the phenomenon of super-strength. People who were physically untrained could keep their body suspended, resting the heels of their feet and the back of the head on the backs of two chairs. During this experiment high-frequency photography or electroluminescence recorded strictly specific changes in the corona aura at the tips of the fingers which was due to an increase of free electrons in the organism. By self-suggestion the same volunteers could ease off pain and even accelerated blood coagulation in haemorrhages.

**THE ABILITY OF YOGIS** to induce in themselves a state resembling hibernation, like that of bears in winter, is a matter of special interest. Physiologists call this state hypobiosis. One of the secrets of yogic hypobiosis is the dairy and vegetable diet which does not require a particularly large consumption of energy for assimilation. Directly prior to hypobiosis, yogis prefer to refrain from taking any food—it is much easier to slow down one's breathing if you have been fasting for many days. Fasting also helps in learning the yogic methods of self-suggestion. Indeed, one of the medical establishments in Moscow is making wide use of psycho-biological training—a blend of fasting and hypnosis or self-hypnosis. The yogis radically slow down their breathing aid, reaching the state of deep self-hypnosis, enter the stage of "sleep". Not infrequently, they allow themselves to be buried for several hours or even for several days in such a state.

Soviet specialists believe that the key to the understanding of yogic hypobiosis is to the combined action on an organism of three powerful physiological factors—a measure of fasting, utmost muscular relaxation and slowed-down breathing. All these reduce the consumption of oxygen, forcing the organism to switch over almost completely to oxygenless reserve mechanisms of obtaining the minimum of energy needed to sustain life.

Another interesting phenomenon is that during their "sleep" yogis may "see" and "hear" whatever they want to, as if having dreams to order. They can "see" and "hear" specific individuals, including

themselves, in self-suggested colour and sound hallucinations. This is not fiction. The evidence is in the experiments of V. Raikov, a Moscow doctor-hypnotist. In these experiments, the volunteers after several months of self-suggestion training (an hour a day) were capable of "seeing" themselves sunbathing on the Black Sea shore. While submerging to the colourful world of hallucinations they did not feel any pain and their pulse was 10-30 beats a minute less. Upon "awakening", people seemed more intelligent, their capacity for mental work growing 50 per cent.

All these and many other phenomena demonstrated by yogis, hold great, and promising, interest for medicine. Therefore, they have to be thoroughly studied and the yogi techniques have to be further developed on the basis of a modern scientific and technological achievements. —Moscow News

## A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

### Realignment In The '80s.

The recent developments that occurred in the International arena, especially those of Iran and Afghanistan indicate that the post-second world war bi-polar alignments and cold war non-alignments will soon give way to new re-alignments. The post second world war and cold war alignments were largely based on military and ideological notions. The Truman doctrine of 1946, as did Carter doctrine of 1980, virtually prompted by the activities of USSR more or less in the same region has lost its credibility. During the period of detente, bi-polarity yielded to multi-polarity and the super power condominium has lost its face and force. In a way Carter's State of the Union Message was a revival of Truman doctrine.

Up to the 1970s there was a feeling among many nations that despite their mutual antagonisms the super powers, because of their sheer military and nuclear power and economic invulnerability, sought to exert their influence and conduct their International re-

tions, and in some cases in their domestic affairs too unmindful of the interests or the wishes of other countries. This was clearly seen in the partial test ban treaty, non-proliferation treaty, law of the sea conference etc. However this phase passed with amazing post war economic recovery of West Germany Japan and China. They in fact began to pose challenges to the super powers, especially to USA. The preceding decade saw the maturing of this phenomena and therefore, this decade is bound to witness the beginning of a realignment of the configuration of powers.

In the first place, this could be attributed to the gradual weakening of influence exerted by USA over her one time allies. Her western allies in the NATO are no longer willing to be at the beck and call of USA. Western European countries, except perhaps Anglo-Saxon England, have become more or less independent. The establishment of the EEC and the European Parliament has strengthened their bargaining position. They have their own economic interests and as a consequence their own foreign policy to look after. It is doubtful whether the EEC countries, which have everything to gain by maintaining a healthy relationship with USSR, will jeopardise that by agreeing to subscribe to the global policy of the United States. Their performance during the hostage issue and Afghanistan issue are nothing but lukewarm (except for England). They joined with USA and some of the Third World countries in barking at USSR but they refused to go to the extent of biting. Besides they have their own oil interest to safeguard. "Culturally" too a friendly USSR is much more amenable to Western Europe than USA.

In the Far East too the United States has been pressed to recognize certain changes. The US policy in the Indo-China and Far East had been directed towards the "containment of the spread of communism" of Russia and China. With the outbreak of conflicts between Russia and China and withdrawal of USA from Indo-China, which led to the cementing of relations between China and US, a new situation has arisen. The so-called Russian "invasion" of Afghanistan had given an added fillip to this friendship which the traditional American policy advisers never liked. Americans were advised as late as 1974 by Professor

Kennan not to count on Chinese to solve American problems with Russia. "The reason for this lies in the differences of national character and psychology that divide us from the Chinese, in the ideological commitment of the Chinese leaders....." If Russia wishes to have a secure eastern border then it is not American business to heighten those pressures to win favours for American global policy. "It should be a matter of principle for American diplomacy not only never to promote poor relations between other countries but also never to attempt to strike profit from such as already exist" (DETENTE—Hearings before the Committee on Foreign Relations United States Senate—August-October 1974). But USA much against such an attitude has taken an opposite turn and this friendship will be much closer. It is not suggested that the US should not forge friendship with China but it should not be an instrument to normalise relations with Russia.

Further new development is the one that has forged a common understanding among hitherto antagonistic powers USA, China and Japan. Having helped to bring about and understanding between China and Japan (i.e. having secured Russia's eastern front to her allies) it is likely that US may withdraw from this area. In that event Japan has to police the area and there are already symptoms and murmurs, that Japanese will very soon amend their Constitution enabling them to build up an army. (By Article 9 of the Constitution of 1947, Japanese renounced war as a means of settling international disputes and hence the absence of a modern army in Japan. The self-defence force has not been given the title of Army as yet). This will bring back Japanese to their position of strength as it was at the beginning of their century and during the second world war until she was defeated. Japanese economic empire is also fast expanding and it is quite likely she will move into the Asian region, avoiding EEC and US.

As a consequence and of necessity, all these developments are bound to exert severe strain and influence on India. The US, Pakistan and China axis and the steady entry of Japan into the Asian markets, will compel India to have much more comprehensive and firm foreign policy than what she had hitherto

followed. India and Russia may come still more closer as the cordon *sanitaire* built against them is strengthened. India is undoubtedly the foremost "power" in the Indian Ocean. In heightened tension and with a threat to her security, it is also doubtful whether India herself would agree to keep Indian Ocean a zone of peace.

Though it is an important feature of the preceding decade, the resurgence of Muslim nationalism is bound to influence the course of international politics in the present decade. Whether the Western propaganda will be able to divert the energies of the growing sense of religio-nationalism among the Moslems in the Middle East and Gulf States against "Communism" only the future can tell. But overdoze of anything may have its backlash and like Indo-China the diversionary tactics of Western, especially US propaganda may force them to the strengthen OPEC on the pattern of EEC. The avowed desire to establish military bases in Egypt and Israel has already created consternation among oil states as to the future security of their states in the event of an oil crisis.

Russia too on the other hand will do well not to antagonise Muslims by overstaying in Afghanistan and which may in turn create more security problems for India. Any destabilisation or Balkanisation in the western frontier may immediately weaken the enemies of India, but that is bound to have its own repercussions on the Indian domestic front.

The performance of the non-aligned movement in the recent past too poses some questions. Is it in disarray? or partially paralysed? Their performance at the UN on the Afghanistan issue was far from satisfactory. The voting pattern in the UN has its own significance for the future of the movement. Pakistan which had been until recently in the CENTO, earlier in the SEATO, became a non-aligned nation after having renounced all military alliances has virtually gone back to the military fold? Could Cuba, hold on to the chair of the movement? Right or wrong her voice has not been heard after Havana.

The heightened tension may get defused once Carter wins the election. However, there is the likelihood of the following alliance formations taking place in the near future. US, England, Australia and New Zealand,

cutting all their geographical barriers, get together as a family of Anglo-Saxon cousins. The strengthening by military ties between China, Japan, Pakistan and USA to encircle Russia and pressurise India has become more than apparent. In other words a quadripartite configuration consisting of China, the US, Japan and Europe, directed against the Soviet Union as envisaged by Chinese may become a reality. Whether Yugoslavia will remain away from the Socialist Camp is yet to be seen. But that so called "Communist Camp" may not break up, but they will become much more independent from the Soviet sphere of influence. And finally an organisation of South Asian countries is also a possibility as the Indian Ocean become a zone hive of super power activity.

K. Arumainayagam

HAF ZULLAH AMIN

## Willing To Co-operate With West

by Michael Goldsmith

Kabul, Feb. 7,

Secret signals to the West from the late President Hafizullah Amin that he was prepared, under certain conditions, to expel the thousands of Soviet advisers in Afghanistan may have triggered the Soviet military intervention and brought about his own downfall and death. Details are gradually emerging among Western and non aligned diplomats of the events leading up to the Dec. 27 coup that brought pro-Soviet President Babra Karmal to power with the help of the Red Army. The sequence of events, as pieced together by these sources, begins shortly after leftist thugs kidnapped and murdered U.S. Ambassador Adolph Dubbs in Kabul last February. Washington accused the Soviet-dominated regime of Nur Mohammed Taraki who was then president, and his Russian advisers of not doing enough to prevent the killing.

Mr. Amin, then Mr. Taraki's premier, first discreetly signalled his anti-Soviet feelings

with a personal message to the United States expressing regret at Mr. Dobb's death. On Sept., 14, Mr. Amin replaced Mr. Taraki in a palace coup and Mr. Taraki was killed. The diplomats described Mr. Amin as a ruthless Marxist but also an opportunist willing to change sides if the price was high enough. There was no indication of what price Mr. Amin was asking. His renewed overtures, some made through the Afghan delegation at the United Nations, were ignored, possibly because of his too blatant contempt for human rights in Afghanistan.

The Russians quickly learned of Mr. Amin's moves, the sources said. By October, American intelligence reports noted large Soviet troop concentrations north of the Amu Darya River that marks the Soviet-Afghan border. Senior diplomats who knew Mr. Amin personally said that by mid-November he was acting like a man at bay. In a desperate attempt to turn events, he distributed arms to a civilian militia loyal only to him, ordered a black-out of Kabul and warned Afghans against obeying the orders of uniformed foreigners. Since Mr. Amin's death, Communist propaganda has continually accused him of conspiring with the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency. Soviet President Leonid Brezhnev said that Mr. Amin planned to turn Afghanistan into "an imperialist military bridgehead on our southern border."

On Dec. 24, an armored airborne division landed at Kabul airport. There was no opposition from the Soviet-trained Afghan Army. Mr. Amin made no public statement. On Dec. 26, still the recognized president of Afghanistan, he received visiting Soviet Communications Minister Nikolai Talizin. A photograph of the two men in Mr. Amin's office was published in the government daily *Kabul Times* on Dec. 27. At 7 p.m. that day, the Soviet radio station in Tashkent, north of the Amu Darya, broadcast a statement by Mr. Karmal assuming full powers and announcing that Mr. Amin would be tried for atrocities. About the same time, violent gunfire erupted around Mr. Amin's residence at Kas Taj, three miles from the city center. The diplomats said there was little doubt the fighting was between Soviet troops and Mr. Amin's guards.

The residence was partly wrecked, and by midnight on Dec. 27, Mr. Amin was almost certainly dead. Mr. Karmal's statement was finally broadcast by Radio Kabul at 1 a.m.

—International Herald Tribune, 8/2/80

## EYE-WITNESS ACCOUNT

### Kabul Insurgency

by A. Raghavan  
New Delhi,

All Carter's men and all Zia's horses have not been able to displace the Babrak Karmal government of Afghanistan, though the insurgents made a bold bid by pulling off a complete *bundh* by shop-keepers which was followed, on the next day, by incitements through Juma prayers. *I would like to give here, in the main, a sort of personal diary, for I was in the thick of it all.*

Insurgency reached this Capital city on the morning of February 21, having been there in Jalalabad, Herat and Kandahar earlier. It was Thursday, a half-day for government offices, the next day (Friday) being the weekly holiday. The day was rainy and the roads slushy, but I walked round the centre of the city and found all the shops closed. The Government certainly had advance information about the shutdown. **It was formally stated that shopkeepers had been told by an underground organisation that if they opened their shops, they would have to pay with their lives.** If that was really the case, then their response was quite understandable and one thought that it would be all over by the next day. But that was not to be.

That evening, I went by taxi to the residence of Dr. S. Teja, India's Ambassador in Afghanistan, for a party he had organised for Indian journalists. When we were about to disperse, we heard cries of *Allah-o-Akbar*, all round followed by gunfire. The crackle of rifles was quite persistent so much so that I decided to stay at his place overnight, rather than risk my life returning to Kabul, Hotel, which

was in the centre of the storm. After the guests left, the Tejas and I went out to the first-floor balcony. There was not a dull moment. Mrs. Teja kept saying she hated war, all kinds of *gadb*. (There would have been no *Gita* but for a war—a just war, of course!)

The next day, the day of Juma, the situation took a grave turn from early morning itself. I got the impression that the government was rather taken aback by it. The Army had taken over the city. The government proclaimed martial law and tanks were out on the streets, at no time in twos, but single. Two MIGs filled the sky with deafening noise. Helicopters whirred overhead perhaps scanning the possible hideouts of insurgents. These infernal machines were meant to scare the people and keep them indoors. But they did not entirely succeed in this venture, for quite more some groups of people came out hurling dire threats against the government and, more so, against the Russians. The biggest group was at the city centre and it marched towards a mosque. Estimates of its number varied from 3,000 to 5,000.

After breakfast, we set out in two vehicles from the Ambassador's residence to the Embassy for the Ambassador was eager to send a situation report to Delhi, which was obviously somewhat in the dark over these developments. The evidence of it came soon enough. We had to return to the house unable to reach the Embassy. Standing in the courtyard we espied an IAC flight coming from India landing at the nearby Airport amidst the roar of the MIGs and helicopters. The Kabul Airport was certainly not closed, but if the IAC had known the real situation, the plane could not have taken off from Delhi. I was again cooped up in the Ambassador's residence, which was quite revolting to the spirit of a journalist. Some taxis were plying, but they were quite overloaded. So I decided to foot it out to my hotel. There was no let up in the firing at all and I found it rather intriguing that there were a large number of pedestrians on the roads, apart from several vehicles.

So I plunged into a walking exercise. I had a suspicion that the firing was mainly in the air to intimidate the mischief-makers, rather than at them. And I received confirm-

ation of this as I started walking. Expecting a bullet to whizz past me or into me, I had taken to the tree lined pavement, hoping that the trees would afford some protection. But the gun-toting Afghan soldiers would not allow me to proceed further as, on the way to my hotel, was located the headquarters of Babrak Karmal. That meant a detour of three kilometers to the hotel instead of one. I trudged along the muddy name-sake road along the Kabul river and reached the city centre, 500 yards beyond which my hotel was located. Here a young soldier rudely waved me away.

Up above the snow-laden hill on one side of the river were houses of the city's common folks. From down below, these houses looked like matchboxes piled upon one another. And from these quarters came the chant of "Allah-o-Akbar." It was quite frightening. But it was a mere chant. If Allah-o-Akbar were a panacea, then a State of a mere four million Israelis would not have survived amidst 150 million Arab Muslims, while 45 million Vietnamese could kick the mightiest imperialism out of their homeland.

But such Vedantic thoughts were of no immediate help to me to help me reach my abode. Fortunately, I came across an Afghan who spoke English well. I introduced myself to him as an Indian journalist. Within minutes, I found myself before the Commanding Officer of the Afghan Army in charge of that troubled spot. "From Hind?" The Commander asked me. "India" was tuly my pass key. Within seconds I was inside Kabul Hotel. I had trudged for an hour and a half amidst firing all around. Only at one place on the banks of the Kabul river did I see a spattering of blood. *The only conclusion is that most of the firing was in the air.* One need not affirm or deny the fatal casualties circulated by the Western media, especially that Zionist news agency of the Associated Press of America.

The point is that there was no mass uprising in Kabul, as sought to be projected by the neo-colonialist media in the same fashion it projected the war in Vietnam. And since India, supposed to be the tenth most industrialised country in the world, which boasts of the third largest pool of technical intelligentsia, cannot afford to

keep its own correspondents in Kabul, we Indians swallow every nonsense that is being pedalled by transnational news agencies which conveniently employ other nationals like Indians, some of whom have been acting like touts and agents provocateur.

BY THE TIME I RETURNED TO DELHI on Monday afternoon, Kabul was fast returning to normal. The pavement were back in business, shops were gradually opening, the MIGs had been withdrawn, and there was no street-roving of tanks except those positioned at major road intersections. To my pleasant surprise, I drove in a taxi right in front of Karmal's headquarters, which was a forbidden stretch to me on that fateful Friday of February 22.

It is pertinent to note that the fearsome developments in Kabul bristled with certain curious coincidences. For one thing, February 21 and 22 marked the end of the deadline Jimmy Carter had imperiously set for the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan. Second, the Kabul bundh by traders was on the Soviet Army Day. The incitement (on Friday) was left to the mosques and mullahs. There was a certain selectivity in the targets of the insurgents' attacks. A shop completely smashed up was a book centre near the Ministry of Information and Culture, which sells Soviet books and periodicals.

The lead for the Kabul insurgency, seemed to have come from Mahzat-Islami Afghanistan. This organisation is part of the "Ikhwanis" the fanatical Muslim brotherhood, headed by Gulbuddin Hikmatyar, a former engineering student of Kabul University, who has been chosen by the overseas instigators as one of their main agents in Pakistan. More about their planning and execution will be known when the Afghan authorities complete their interrogations of the infiltrators—16 Pakistani and one American (Robert Lane)—taken into custody from some of the Kabul hotels with communication equipment and other paraphernalia.

Moving about in Kabul from Thursday to Sunday (February 21 to 24) I got the same feeling when I experienced in Bangladesh immediately after its liberation after a quarter of a century of India-baiting, indulged in by

Jinnah's illstarred successors, not to speak of the pre-partition hatred, which simply could not be melted by the hot lead that poufere out of the Indian guns that liberated Dacca. Within months the surviving pro-Pak-elements managed to engulf Bangladesh with hatred for everything Indian, which culminated in the dastardly murder of Mujib and his fellow freedom-fighters a mere four years after its liberation.

Although Afghan-Soviet ties had never been like the Indo-Pak relations, the natural uneasiness of the fiercely independent tribes

### THE LAND ACQUISITION ACT ORDER UNDER SECTION 39 A (I)

By virtue of the powers vested in me by sub section (I) of section 39A (inserted by Act No. 8 of 1979) of the Land Acquisition Act (Chapter 460), I, Lionel Gamini Dissanayake Minister of Lands and Land Development, do by this order divest with effect from 25th January, 1980, the land specified in the Schedule hereto, which has vested absolutely in the State by Order made under section 38 of the aforesaid Act and published in Gazette No. 28 of 6th October, 1972 the possession of which has been taken for or on behalf of the State under paragraph (i) of section 40 of that Act.

Lionel Gamini Dissanayake

Minister of Land & Land Development.

My No. 03/J.71 L.392(VE)

G.A.'s No. 25/2/343.

Colombo, 7th January, 1980.

#### Schedule

The land called Ebewatta alias Kossinnage watta about 5A.IR.23P. in extent situated in Yatanwala Village, Dehigampal Korale Megodapotha pattu, Dehigampal Korale and Lower Bullathgama D.R.O.'s Division in Kegalle District.

North : Galgahapella kumbura claimed by Genayake Rallage Lewis Singho and others.

East : Ebekumbura claimed by B. Marthelis and others and Galgahapala claimed by Genayake Rallage Lewis Singho and others.

South : Radage Ibbanwalahena claimed by M. H. Marikkar

West : Kossinnagewatta claimed by K. Hendrick Singho and others.

that tenuously make up the Afghan nation over the Soviet military presence is being ruthlessly exploited by the United States and the Western media with the Chinese mandarins playing second fiddle. And when such uneasiness over Soviet troops is turned to the hoary war cry of "Allah-o-Akbar", it can create problems for any government, especially the Karmal government, which has been taking a soft line in contrast to that of his predecessors, especially Hafizullah Amin.

In Bangladesh, in early 1972, India called it a day and later mourned the strangulation of a whole revolution. This course is not open to the Soviet Union, which has a global stake. It cannot and will not allow the new regime in Kabul to meet the same fate as the Mujib government in Bangladesh and the Allende government in Chile met with. Moscow sees the fierce assault on the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, and especially the new phase of the Saur (April) revolution, only as a small link in the Carter-Brzezinski conspiracy to assault this region, in which India is located, with nuclear powered naval flotilla as a part of a global strategy against the Socialist world. The new Kabul government cannot be toppled by mere internal insurgency. Its fall can be brought about, if at all, only by external intervention, for which Pakistan alone can provide the springboard.

After all, in 1965, Srinagar almost fell to the Pakistan raiders. This menace of infiltration ceased only when Pakistan was dismembered in 1971 a small country like Afghanistan cannot certainly afford to wait till further splintering of what is left of Pakistan. That explains the insistence of Afghanistan, as also of the Soviet Union, on a "credible" guarantee against external intervention. This calls for a political solution. One of the formulas, informally being canvassed by India, held in high esteem by the Karmal regime, is to hold a conference of nations, directly or indirectly involved, in the Afghan affairs, to see if an agreed "Border Force" as had been the case in Indo-China, can be formed to police the Pak-Afghan border. President Babrak Karmal expressed his readiness to welcome

any "noble initiative", when this reporter asked him about such a political solution in the course of an exclusive interview with him, which will be published in the next issue of BLITZ.

—Blitz, 1/3/80

## WHAT ARE WE DOING?

### To Create An Awareness Of Our Difficulties

by R. Kahawita

The *Sunday Observer* of 3/2/80 in a supplement to the Independence Celebrations, the banner front-page headline said: "Float or Sink In a Sea of Oil" coming from His Excellency the President. The page also contained a warning to the upper echelons of the Public Service on waste etc. by the Hon. Minister Ronnie de Mel. Lower down on the page was an announcement that Hon. Ronnie de Mel was going out immediately with the begging bowl to collect Rs. 350 million to finance Maduru Oya, Victoria Dam and Kotmale. Further down the column the same *Observer* edition announced of a special extravaganza at Matara on a scale never done nor heard of during the several varieties of Independence celebrations we have gone through since 1947. This was preceded earlier in the week in the *Daily News* with the Poverty of the "State of the Union": a balance of payment deficit of Rs. 6,000 millions.

This is not just "caju-etta or Kos-etta" as the villager would put it if he could understand the economic plight we are in today because he is ignorant of the economic jargon we used to describe our poverty that the 7 million on the starvation line are silent and we are in power. To top all these we have reduced working hours from 45 hrs. a week to a five day 37 hrs. week to the public sector as if our production has outstripped the demand. Not that the public sector is overworked, nor did they ask for a change. The reduction in working hours may be to cut short hours of indiscipline in a Government Establishment—instead of idling and being unruly in the office. "Let the employees go

home and mess about in their homes or on the pavements." Or instead of being abusive to the executives when they try to maintain discipline and order in a work place: "Let them go home and abuse their kith and kin." This may be the thinking behind the five day week and 37 hrs. work.

**WHEN ONE LOOKS**, from above so to say, all these do not make sense. Something is wrong somewhere. And nobody seems to know what is wrong and where. For sure the man who knows is the man who has to depend on a "chit"—to get his food, clothing, shelter, employment, treatment for his ailments and to get his child to a school so that the child can enjoy the benefits of the free books and biscuits, another giving but to be snatched away with the other hand as the complaint goes. He would ask "why the hell should I work?" "Work will not take me anywhere?" Better to depend on 'the chit' than to work like a slave for some one." "Let the State work for me and maintain my family at least that is what these gesture are construed to be."

So we have a sizeable drop in the production of Tea, Rubber, Coconuts and other commodities either for export or for home consumption. Accordingly our revenue is shrinking yearly, imports are increasing daily, export earnings are becoming minimal to bridge the gap between exports and imports. Thus the deficits are growing in a geometrical progression while our production levels are shrinking. So our Finance Minister is forced to hop off to beg for aid, grants and loans, on which we are able to float instead of sinking in a sea of oil." It is like the Wanathamalla beggar: wheeled out in the morning to the pavement to beg; in the evening comes "the owner" takes the collection and pushes the beggar to his den for the night, while "the owner" enjoys the good things in life. He does not work for it. So the story goes on. What a life for the man who has to work for a living.

**WE ARE LIVING** in a "Brick and Mortar" prosperity. We see it every where, going up and up and it will go on for years. This is what we can refer when we read, "Growth in the construction and service sectors significantly contributed to the overall growth rate"—Yesterday we came across a place, two and half a million rupee building meant to house equip-

ment etc. for a textile industry typromised by a donor country. With the hope of filling the begging bowl, we are spending 2½ million rupees on brick and mortar. But lot of other things are necessary before the wheels move; power, large volumes of water, treatment of effluent before discharging into the river—that is if we are serious of anti-pollution, and environment control—roads and housing—a whole parcel of infrastructural facilities before we press the button to start the machinery—that too if the donor country does not change her mind. However, we have dumped 2½ million in the project. There are three other projects of the same class may be another three years before something is produced, till the inflation gets unmanagable, and you and I pay Rs. 2/50 for a pound of Wattakka—if we can spare the Rs. 2/50. This is what we mean by floating on loans etc., and brick and mortar prosperity. At the same time, the same type of industry, already established by our previous Governments and run by Government Boards have come under the hammer. Not one but sixteen are up for sale. It is there now for the asking—does not matter who is bargaining—the main objective is to get rid of the headache.

What is the reason for this? The Government we succeeded in defeating in July 1977—31 months ago—had a lot of thinking as to how they could punish those "who were not with them." They put into action what they thought out and implemented then during the seven years they were in power. They destroyed agricultural development, subsistence farming, money or plantation crops on which depended our bread and butter. To replace agricultural development that Government started, what our representatives in The House had aptly described as "Seeni Bola" industries. They are prospering as ever under our aegis, while we are also lending a hand to destroy our agricultural life as planned and executed by them.

House owning was made a social crime by them and the house owners were deprived of their houses by law, many of them were reduced to poverty. But up to now no compensation had been paid to them by either governments. Nevertheless in the largeness of our hearts we went around a couple of weeks ago distributing the legalized booty to the tenants as if we conceived, planned, and implemented the robbing process.



We were ready to receive "the garlands, the pandans, lanka lime etc." But what about the erst-while owners of these houses? The answer may be—"That is not our concern, ask the previous Government; they did all the thinking. We are here to take credit for what they did only." One could carry on this kind of narrative as to what the people are undergoing today in spite of the just society we have avowed to establish.

EVERY PASSING DAY, we read of massive loans to push through our Dharmista Society without plans, programmes and money—a begger cannot plan his life. He can do so day to day only, according to the day's collection in his begging bowl. This seems to be our position. Since we commenced this article the Finance Minister is off on his collection tour. But by the time he left, he says his task is now to collect 400 M dollars=6,000 M rupees. This is what he needed today to push on with Kotmale, Victoria and Maduru Oya alone. "We have to find another 400 million dollars and it is vital that we do that "FAST", says the Minister in his Air-port interview. All this money is needed to hatch the eggs we have put in the Mahaweli basket. We earnestly hope the eggs will not turn out to be infertile. We have already expressed our concern over this when we were commenting on NEDECO report—Incidentally the best we could do now is to pigeon-hole that report as we have done with multitudes of such reports in the past; after spending millions of hard to get foreign exchange, they are virtually discarded. They say "haste makes waste."

We learn that Kotmale Dam site is still being shifted around. We are also told that it is because the work was started without investigations. What would be the success of our search for 400 m. dollars? It may be several times more by the time Finance Minister touches down in the home territory. What with the threat of global involvement over Iran, Russia, African countries, Afghanistan, and ever escalating oil prices? The arming of NATO countries, China, Pakistan etc., inflation will be something beyond perception? There are the indications—Rubber prices sky-rocketing as a strategic commodity and Gold prices shooting up as security investments (in a war-threatened world).

With all these types of International

activity and expenditure but unproductive to be put on the consumer-counter, prices of consumer goods are bound to run hay-wire. A house-wife does not require a hand-grenade in the shopping basket. What she wants is bread and butter within the reach she can pay. Because we spend more on making hand-grenades than producing bread she has to pay more for bread and if she cannot, she has to do without it. This is what is happening to our people also after the last price hike of bread, rice etc.

We are in a similar situation not because we are making hand-grenades but with our brick and mortar prosperity, where our gross national growth is most significant. Our house wife does not want bricks in her shopping basket, she wants rice, Keera, vegetables, onions and chillies etc. to feed her family. She cannot do this with the Rs. 50/- life support or the Rs. 15/- food stamp or Rs. 13/- a day wage.

Since we took office we have been putting up model houses, model villages, high rise complexes—all in brick and mortar. How much of this expenditure has produced an extra grain of rice or an extra Wattakka? Answer is—Cheapest available rice in the open market is Rs. 4.50 per measure and Rs. 2.50 for a pound of Wattakka. It will be eons before the money we spend on brick and mortar today can contribute a cent to our economy, local inflation is due to this kind of unproductive expenditure.

(To be continued)

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THE PARTY PRESS : WITH OUT COMMENT

:: SLFP :: CPSL

**NATION**, February 29,

**Devaluation (40%) or Dissolution (August)?**

Unless the UNP Government devalues the rupee to overcome the economic crisis, it will have to succumb to a premature dissolution of Parliament to meet the political crisis. President J. R. Jayewardene is already a lame duck with a Kennedy-type Premadasa breathing on the back of his neck. The Inter-

national Monetary Fund and World Bank sources are pressing the Finance Minister to further devalue the rupee by another 40 per cent, to overcome the financial crisis generated by the UNP spending-spree. The vain-glorious neo-Pyramid building at Kotte (Jayewardenepura) has turned out to be another necropolis-dead city, dead even before its birth. If the statistics of the private contractors books are true, at the rate the earth-filling is being done at Kotte, even an ant-hill above sea level will not exist by now in the whole of Western Province.

The Maharaja-Navaloka cheque book has come into existence on the grave of the ration-book of the poor. Treasure, Pleasure, Leisure has become the Holy Trinity of the Maharaja Paradise. Local revenue, Treasury Bills and Foreign Loans have gone to fatten a few hundred families, who have almost created a corrupt Kuomintang regime here. The UNP spending-spree cannot be sustained any longer, hence the remedy dictated by the IMF is another devaluation around 40%. The 1977 devaluation has failed. What can further devaluation achieve? What can Sri Lanka export?

But the UNP's Carter-Kennedy fight will escalate, till President J.R. is forced into retirement by the domineering will of a lobby of over 100 UNP MPs. Like Sir John Kotelawala inheriting Dudley's mandate in 1953, the Premadasa group attempts to inherit J.R.'s mandate within this Parliament, before 1983. To abort this runaway victory, the JR clique is contemplating mid term General Elections, sooner, the better they insist. Only the Premadasa-group are opposed to the dissolution proposal. But if no devaluation comes, a 1981 budget is unthinkable, argues the M.D. H. Jayewardene group. Hence an early dissolution is the only merciful exit left for the UNP. This very important announcement may come on the May Day, 1980.

—Front Page Lead

FORWARD, March 1, 1980,  
Cut To Size

The process of cutting the PM down to size has been intensified since the re-shuffle. As is usual in bourgeois politics in Sri Lanka,

the first shots are fired at the satellites before aim is taken directly at the sun. Mr. Premadasa's catchers and placemen are being set up for target practice. It is in this context that political insiders see the current ho-ha in top government circles about the incident where one of the PM's top lieutenants whom he pushed into VVIP position in the world of external relations, was discovered by the Police a few days back in a compromising position in a "rest and recreation" residence not far from Ratmalana.

Normally, the UNP passes off such incidents with a behind-the-hand snigger or a dirty joke. But this time, the shrieks of outraged modesty and the pious talk about breached codes of conduct are wonderful to hear. The betting is that this VVIP's being set up for the Big Chop. In fact, his supporter's claim that the whole thing was fixed by an ambitious colleague (incidentally, one of the President's men) with an eye on his job. But the executioner's arm is being temporarily stayed to see whether the PM will succumb to the heavy pressure from his other loyalists to intervene to save his compromised lieutenant, who has often rendered Mr. Premadasa service in the past when he was confronted with legal problems.

Another question that is being asked in political circles is whether sentences on Premadasa loyalists are being written with a golden pen. Insiders predict further high level moves against several others close to the PM. Mr. Premadasa's wings' are also being clipped. He has had Rs. 150 million cut from his housing vote and been told that further cuts would follow. How the PM will react is the big question. As the role he played in the Dudley-J.R. disputes of the early 1970s showed, he is no voice in political intrigue and in-fighting. He is already hinting that there are "other ways" of getting money for his pet projects and publicly denouncing "conolian mentalities" who want to do whatever the World Bank tells them. He even tried to fly a kite about another pay rise, although both the President and the Finance Minister have categorically ruled this out.

Sparks may well fly when Parliament considers its Select Committee's report on Upali Wijewardene. The pro-President faction is anxious to keep him on the head of the

F.T.Z. despite recommendations to the contrary.

—Gamini in "Last Page"

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### An Envoy Extraordinary

What is the current gossip about a Sri Lanka diplomat who was found in a house in the suburbs of Colombo, when it was raided by the Police on a tip that the house concerned was harbouring terrorists. We are not concerned here with what the diplomat was doing in the house at the moment it was raided. From what we hear, he was certainly not engaged in terrorist activities. The diplomat concerned was presumably back in Sri Lanka for briefing and consultations with his government—and he was probably completing the briefing by adding a little bit of local colour. The episode has much larger ramifications than what any casual peeping-tom could observe.

Is the diplomat concerned a close associate of the Prime Minister—who was in fact responsible for his choice for the post? Who was the powerful omniscient person who tipped off the police with the exact address of the house and the crucial time of the diplomatic visit? Is there any connection between this zealous dharmishta detention and the PM's chairmanship of a Select Committee dealing with the head of the Free Trade Zone? Will this be used to patch up the simmering blow-up in the government group or will it further exacerbate the already tense situation high up in the government? Are telephones being tapped?

—Gadfly "So They Say"

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### FILM FOCUS

#### Awards

THE OFFICE CATHOLIQUE INTERNATIONALE DU CINEMA (O.C.I.C.) Sri Lanka Branch held its annual salutatio ceremony to the local Cine Creators, at the Ladies College Hall on 3.3.80, the Chief Guest to grace the occasion being the Prime Minister, Mr.

R. Premadasa. While the late Cine Artistes of 1979 were remembered by the observation of two minutes silence, those in the land of the living and who had made noteworthy contributions in 1979 (**Sarungale, Palangetiyo, Handaya, Geheniyak, Amal Biso, Hinganna Kolla, Chuda Manikka, Podi Malli, Nuwan Renu**) were introduced to the audience, to strains of music composed by Fr. Marcelline Jayakody. The National Director, Rev. Fr. Ernest Porutota, welcomed those present and introduced the Chief Guest as one who kept his cool under any stress and preferred to grapple with problems than run away from them. The keynote address was presented by Edwin Ariyadasa, who, in doing so, expressed contentment, that shorn of commercialism, the Sinhala cinema had come off its shell, into a medium where the Directors' Arts had bloomed and flowered with purpose in the seventies—**Thun Man Handiya** being judged the best Cinematic venture in this decade.

The Prime Minister replied with candour that although he did not claim to be an expert in the field of mass media, his heart was in it, and therefore was prepared to expatiate on some home truths in this sphere. He said the value of "freedom for the arts" could be magnified, and its praises sung and expressed very meaningfully by the cine media. He dwelt on how bridges for communal harmony could be built in the same way, and made particular reference to the film **Sarungale** where a sincere effort in this direction was attempted. The P.M. expressed satisfaction at the achievement of the State Film Corporation, which having emerged as a controlling factor was now acting as a catalyst to weed out the impurities that could pollute the local cinematic endeavours. He concluded that the cinema had very little to fear from T.V. and as had happened in other countries, both media would settle down in the long run, to enrich one another. While the tone of the awards dwelt heavily on the need for a United Sri Lanka—the major awards being picked up by **Sarungale's** Gamini (Nadarajah) Fonseka and Farina (Thangamary) Lye, with a young and promising actor/writer Dharmasiri (Surath) Bandaranayake, being cited for his outstanding performance in **Palangetiyo**. The general appreciation of children's films was evinced

by the effortless recognition that Titus Totawatte's **Handaya** received. (This column would however like to sincerely pick a bone or two, which could strengthen the aims of the O.C.I.C. in Sri Lanka, for the future, and with apologies to its energetic National Director would sincerely attempt to do so constructively in the next issue).

**TAK TIK TUK**—Sinhala. With the ugly stench of "Tenders and Projects" in the air, this film revolves around the lifting of one such, with a plot similar to that of the English film, **The Sting**—in its trail, but on a lower key. Vijay Kumaranatunge, Joe Abeywickrama and Sonja Disa gingerly lift this film away from mediocrity, to a light evenings entertainment for the family.

**SPECIAL DELIVERY**—English. A neatly pulled Bark Robbery gives a startling start to this 20th Century Fox release which introduces two stimulating and magnetic stars, as it settles down around a wayside Mail Box, where part of the loot had been hurriedly put away with only three pairs of eyes watching the incident. A chain reaction develops as the clearance time ticks in, and the excitement is heightened by several intervening incidents captured pulsatingly by the camera. Bo Stevenson (6 ft. 6 ins) is a hunk of a male while Cybill Shepherd is a delightful dish that you will visually relish. An outstanding entertainer that will keep your mind off "Oil" and the corresponding rise in the cost of living these days.

James N. Benedict.

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**LETTERS**

**Water, Water, Everywhere  
But Not A Drop To Drink.**

Sir,

Today the Government is croaking like frogs in a well for water. Three years ago, I suggested pumping water from Kelani Ganga confluence with Sitawaka Ganga to Kalatuwawa a distance of about six miles to a height of about 350 feet, with a high pressure pump

to tide over the drought periods. I was backed by the Editor, *Daily News* to the hilt but the politicians and technocrats thought otherwise and still have no solution to overcome "water cuts". Their excuse is "pumps for Ambatale will be brought down and conditions will be alright."

As regards a permanent scheme for Colombo City and suburbs these pumps are a farce. The foreigners who advise our technocrats are bent on making profits on pumps etc. Why not have a really permanent scheme like the Yogama Reservoir proposed by the Irrigation Department for flood protection, Hydro power, Irrigation also be used for domestic use for the next half a century catering for the increased population?

Prime Minister Premadasa when he took over the Ministry of Local Government said that he will see to it that the water supply and drainage Department attends to the water shortage immediately. Nothing has been done so far.

In fact I sent to Mr. Premadasa a copy of my report on the above pumping scheme to Kalatuwawa and the permanent Yogama Reservoir Scheme along with my book **SRI LANKA TOMORROW—THE FUTURE PHYSICAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE ISLAND (1946-2001)**. I suppose he has no time for "citizen Perera."

Shelton L. Perera

15A, Chapel Lane,  
Nugegoda. 4.3.80

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**OFFICIAL EXCHANGE RATES**

Official Exchange Rates of Commercial Banks to their customers for Telegraphic Transfers fixed on Tuesday this week were as follows:—

CURRENCY	PER 100 UNITS	
	Buying Rate	Selling Rate
U.S. Dollar	Rs. 1600.50	Rs. 1603.50
Sterling Pound	Rs. 3551.50	Rs. 3557.50
Deutsche Mark	Rs. 888.00	Rs. 889.60
French Franc	Rs. 379.20	Rs. 379.90
Japanese Yen	Rs. 6.4545	Rs. 6.4695
Indian Rupees	Rs. 196.15	Rs. 196.55

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Feb. 28 — Mar. 3

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

CDN—Ceylon Daily News; CDM—Ceylon Daily Mirror; CO—Ceylon Observer; ST—Sunday Times; SO—Sunday Observer; DM—Dinamina; LD—Lankadipa; VK—Virakesari; ATH—Aththa; SM—Silumina; SLDP—Sri Lankadipa; JD—Janadina; SU—Sun; DV—Davasa; DP—Dinapathi; CM—Chinthamani; WK—Weekend; RR—Riviresa; DK—Dinakara; EN—Eelanadu; IDPR—Information Dept. Press Release.

**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 28:** Sri Lanka and Nepal yesterday called for the immediate withdrawal of all foreign forces from Kampuchea and Afghanistan; the call came in a joint communique issued at the conclusion of the three day State visit of King Birendra and Queen Aishwarya of Nepal. A group of clergy and laymen representing the Roman Catholic and Protestant churches in the island, who met at the Tewatte Retreat House on February 16 and 17, pledged themselves to the common task of "healing and helping, uniting and unifying, all Sri Lankans previously rent apart by communalism"—CDN. A fond but sad farewell was given to King Birendra and Queen Aishwarya when they left for Singapore on the second lap of their South East Asian tour from the Colombo Airport, Katunayake, yesterday morning. The Cabinet yesterday approved a tender worth Rs. 2,115 million for the construction of the dam and tunnel of the Victoria Project of the Mahaweli Scheme—CDM. Six Thai nationals were arrested at the Katunayake International Airport yesterday after CID detectives foiled an attempt by them to smuggle out of the country one million rupees worth of precious stones—SU. The Government has received complaints that police teams that were sent to arrest illegal gemmers have threatened them and taken valuable gems from them; some of these police officers have already become millionaires—DM. A number of large-scale programmes are to be implemented in the

Rajarata for the extensive cultivation of onions—DV. The Government has decided to increase the salaries of senior public officers by Rs. 500—ATH. A decision in the Parliamentary Sub-Committee report recommending the removal of Mr. Upali Wijewardene, Director-General of the GCEC may not be taken for some time; a powerful group in the government has asked for a fresh report saying that the parliamentary committee consisted of Ministers who were strongly against the appointment of Mr. Wijewardene as the MP for Kamburupitiya—DK. The Government is expected to announce shortly the increase in sugar price up to Rs. 7/50 per lb.—JD.

**FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 29:** Four major tourist hotel complexes with around 1,800 rooms are to be constructed within the next three years in the City of Colombo which would dramatically alter the City skyline and landscape, a state Ministry official said yesterday; negotiations for the construction of the hotels will be finalised soon; the foreign collaborators are international hotel chain entrepreneurs—Hilton, Sheraton, Taj and Dusit Thani. President J. R. Jayewardene told a massive gathering at Bandaragama that government policy today was to sell imported commodities without incurring any losses in the transactions; anyone was free to import any commodity needed by the people and to sell it to the people today—CDN. The new National Insurance Corporation will introduce a health insurance scheme for the first time in Sri Lanka; the scheme will come into operation from March this year—CDM. The Justice Ministry has empowered the High Court judges and magistrates to impose a community service order on any convicted person in lieu of a jail sentence or in default of payment of a fine. Sri Lanka will have a mission in Kuwait shortly. Finance and Planning Minister, Ronnie de Mel, who arrived in Washington last Tuesday will hold talks with the US Secretary of State, Cyrus Vance, the Ministry of Finance and Planning announced yesterday. The Government yesterday announced an increase in telephone and trunk call charges; local calls (from non-subscriber telephone dialling exchange) which are now 35 cents have been increased to 50 cents; trunk call fees, both the standard rate and the cheap rate

TRIBUNE, March 15, 1980

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during night have been raised. Drums and the chantings of a thousand monks reverberated through the vast dome of the Kelutira Chaitiya as President J. R. Jayewardene laid the pinnacle atop the inner Chaitiya yesterday morning—*SU*. Several forest fires have been reported from the drought-parched hill country including one from Horton Plains, Police Headquarters said this morning. A factory for packeting milk foods is to be set up at Welisara at a cost of Rs. 8 million—*EN*. The railway department has awarded a tender for the supply of 40 petrol tanks valued at Rs. 120 million under very suspicious circumstances; a group of government MPs are reported to be trying to bring the irregularities in awarding this tender to the notice of the President and the PM. A special stage is to be constructed at a cost of Rs. 7 lakhs for the opening ceremony of the Victoria project. The government not content at increasing the prices of essential food items has now decided to increase postal, telegraph and telephone charges—*JD*. The Commissioner of the Bribery Commission has complained that senior officials protect the officers when the bribery commissioner investigates bribery allegations against officers by the public; the Commissioner further points out that the discipline of the employees of Public institutions has come to a low level and they do not have a knowledge of the responsibilities; this has led to a massive increase in corruption in public institutions—*DM*. The Justice Ministry will shortly introduce a system by which criminals sentenced to prison terms of less than 3 months will be put to work in the government offices and work sites till their sentence expires. The IGP has decided to set up 8 separate CID units in the 8 divisions under the DIGs—*LD*. The Secretary of the Treasury has informed Secretaries of Ministries and heads of departments that budget estimates have changed because department officials have forwarded their estimates irresponsibly—*DV*.

**SATURDAY, MARCH 1:** The 10-member Presidential Commission headed by Law Commission Chairman, Victor Tennekoone in its reports submitted to President J. R. Jayewardene yesterday has recommended the setting up of Development Councils with subordinate law-making powers in all districts of

Sri Lanka. Mr. Nalin Ratnayake, Secretary, Ministry of Cultural Affairs said yesterday that Government had decided to deposit the ashes of King Dutugemunu in the Dakkhina Stupa near the Ruwanvelli Seya, Anuradhapura. The All-Ceylon Dhamma School Extension Service Council is working out a scheme for establishing Dhamma schools in all villages as a broad foundation for the envisaged righteous society. The Defence Ministry is considering a proposal to deploy armed police and Navy personnel on board all ships in outer harbour to tighten security measures against smuggling of goods—*CDN*. Mr. Vincent Tennekone former Chief Justice and Chairman of the ten-member Presidential Commission appointed in August last year to recommend a scheme of decentralised administration handed over the Commission's report yesterday to the President, Mr. J. R. Jayewardene. Train and bus fares go up from today; according to the new rates the lowest bus fare will be 30 cents; the lowest train fare will be 50 cents. The Inland postage rate is due to go up from next week, from 25 cents to 35 cents for the first ounce or fraction thereof. Air Lanka will also fly to Karachi and Trivandrum from April 1—*CDM*. Sri Lanka Freedom Party leader and former Premier Sirimavo Bandaranaike has been ordered to appear on March 25 before the Special Presidential Commission; this Commission is probing allegations of misuse of power, fraud, corruption, nepotism, political victimisation, irregularities in promotions or contravention of the law in administration of public bodies by the Prime Minister, Ministers or any public officer during the period of May 28, 1970 to July 23, 1977. The Cabinet has decided to accede to the demand by the Opposition for the appointment of a Parliamentary Select Committee to report on the circumstances relating to the resignation of the Ceylon Petroleum Corporation's Managing Director, Dr. L. Wijetilleke; Dr. Wijetilleke resigned as Managing Director of the Ceylon Petroleum Corporation on February 8; in his letter of resignation sent to Industries and Scientific Affairs Minister, Cyril Mathew and in a letter to President J. R. Jayewardene Dr. Wijetilleke has raised a series of matters relating to the Rs. 1,600 million Hydro cracker project—*SU*. The Presidential Commission appointed to

recommend a scheme of decentralised administration has suggested that the Parliament and Cabinet which hold an administrative position can be decentralised and given over to the proposed District Development Councils and their executive committees—**VK**. Minister of Home Affairs, K. W. Devarayagam stated that changes will come about in the working patterns of Grama Sevakas; these changes will be to enable them to offer complete service to the people and to improve the districts—**DP**. The Deputy Minister of Trade and Shipping is reported absconding from office because of a friction between him and the Minister of Trade and Shipping—**ATH**. A top Sri Lankan diplomat was caught by the police at a tourist hotel with a lady when the police raided the hotel on a tip off that there were illegal firearms inside the hotel premises; the CID has forwarded its report on the matter to the President—**JD**. The fuel prices are to be increased again; the new prices will be Rs. 45 for a gallon of petrol, Rs. 15.50 a gallon of diesel and a gallon of kerosene oil will go up to Rs. 15/68; the price of aviation fuel will go up by 25%—**DK**. The World Bank plan to develop the bus services will come in effect from today after the increase in bus fares; the three year plan which will be completed by 1983 will be financed by the World Bank which has promised Rs. 800 million for the 3 years—**DM**.

**SUNDAY, MARCH 2:** Grass fires across the patnas have razed parts of the tinder-dry Horton Plains and in tea estates countrywide workers now are lucky to get four days' work; the January tea crop is down by over a million kilos and February will be worse. A top-level Sri Lankan team led by Foreign Minister A. C. S. Hameed will lead the Asian group at a crucial UN meeting on international co-operation; the meeting will be held in New York from March 10. Sinharaja, Sri Lanka's magnificent tropical rain forest which now carries the scars of a huge logging project, is suffering what many experts believe to be an unprecedented drought that has dried up most of its streams and killed many giant trees—**SU**. A United States Government gift of four Bell helicopters to Sri Lanka in the aftermath of the abortive insurgency of 1971 led to some Sri Lankans receiving pay-offs from an American multi-national group; this shock-

ing scandal involving a former high-ranking Sri Lanka Air Force officer, a government official and a top-rung executive of a leading city mercantile firm, has surfaced before a high-powered committee of the United States Senate. Several leading members of the clergy from the different faiths have expressed what they call embarrassment caused to them over the government's decision to permit them to travel free in public buses and trains—**WK**. Rs. 10 lakhs worth of Infant milk powder lying uncleared in the Port for the past nine months have got spoiled—**CM**. 90% of the vehicles imported by the private sector are second hand vehicles; 274,080 vehicles have been registered up to December 1979—**SM**. The Government has decided to remove the names of the Job bank applicants who refuse jobs offered to them—**SLDP**.

**MONDAY, MARCH 3:** Sri Lankan youth are being increasingly affected by heart diseases; Cardiology Unit's statistics disclose that the number of patients below 28 years reporting for treatment to the Unit had risen from 1047 in 1976 to over 2,000 in 1979; the Cardiology Unit's Heart Specialist Dr. D. P. Atukorale yesterday attributed heavy smoking among youth as the principal cause of heart disease; the local tobacco leaf contained more nicotine than those grown in other countries, he said. The Ministry of Lands and Land Development will withdraw all cases filed against encroachers on State land and grant them permanent title before the end of 1983; Lands, Land Development and Mahaveli Development Minister, Gamini Dissanayake said yesterday—**CDN**. A sub-committee of each Consultative Committee has been set up for each Ministry to investigate waste of manpower, material, equipment and funds; this has been decided on the recommendation of Mr. R. Premadasa, Minister of Local Government, Housing, Construction and Highways—**CDM**. The Greater Colombo Economic Commission (GCEC) will shortly be empowered to promote foreign investment in selected zones outside its present area of authority without, however, assuming local government responsibility in these new zones; the GCEC Law will be amended for this purpose, enabling the Commission to promote investment by foreign-entrepreneurs in "Industrial Estates" or "licen-



sed Zones" established in various parts of the country. The lack of adequately stringent Customs controls at Sri Lanka's main entry point, the Colombo Airport, Katunayake, has been brought sharply into focus following the recent gem-smuggling attempt by six Thai nationals—SU. There is an acute shortage of English typists and stenographers in the island according to surveys conducted by the Ministry of Plan Implementation—DP. A committee headed by Trade Minister Lalith Athulathmudali is now examining the report submitted by the Presidential Commission for decentralised administration—VK. The question of the removal of Mr. Upali Wijewardene as the Director General of the GCEC has now become a direct conflict between the President and the P.M.—DK. The Minister of Agriculture E. L. Senanayake has decided to launch a programme to cultivate chillies and other food crops in 1 lakh of gardens in village homes to double the crops—DV.

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### In 1864, BEFORE

1. The first direct telegraphic message was transmitted from America to Sri Lanka (1866).
2. Marx's Das Kapital was published (1867)
3. The Frankfurter Hoff and Oriental Bangkok (1876)  
Imperial Tokyo (1890)  
Tajmahal, Bombay (1903)  
St. Francis San Francisco (1904)  
Raffles Singapore (1910)  
Manila Hotel (1912)  
Royal Hawaiian (1927)  
Peninsula Hong Kong (1928)
4. The Opening of the Suez Canal (1869)
5. Stanley found Livingstone in Africa (1871)
6. The First Australian Cricket Team visited UK (1882)
7. Conrad Hilton was born (1887)

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# Confidentially

## Tobacco & Trishaws

IS IT NOT TRUE that whilst middle income people (who used taxis in the good old days) are happy that 600 odd trishaws are being put on the road, questions are being asked as to why it should be under the aegis of the Sri Lanka Tobacco Industries Corporation (SLTIC)? That it will be admitted that it is within the purview of a trade union (Jathika Sevaka Sangamaya—JSS) to participate in a self-employment scheme to help its members (or even to recruit members), but it is difficult to understand why a Corporation connected with the Tobacco industry (really beetles) should get involved in the transport business? That the only explanations forthcoming are that the SLTIC has money to finance this scheme (or is able to get bank credit for it) and that it is a Corporation in the fiefdom of the Minister of Industries, Cyril Mathew, who has for sometime now been entangled in the intricacies of the trishaw business? That this Mathewian interest had developed when the UNP Trade Union, the JSS, had waged a trade union struggle against the allegedly exploitative greed of the owners of the first trishaw venture, viz., Messrs M. S. Hebtulabhoy & Co.? That this struggle, as *Tribune* had then pointed out, had been carried on in the most unorthodox manner, when the drivers of the trishaws, in the course of their industrial dispute with MSH & Co. had not only taken over the vehicles (and parked them in the UNP headquarters at Sri Kotha) but had also demanded that MSH & Co. should disclose the true owners of the vehicles (it was privately alleged that MSH & Co.'s trishaw venture was only a cover for the business of a political VIP)? That at that time *Tribune* had correctly stated that this trishaw industrial dispute was really a reflection of one of the many mini inner-party confrontations within the UNP on a ministerial level? That it became clear to the public that the winner in the tussle was the Minister of Industries who was also the President of the JSS? That the solution arrived at was that MSH & Co's trishaws would be taken

over by the JSS (or the SLTIC on its behalf) and sold to the drivers on a three-year hire purchase system—thus fulfilling a UNP dream of a self-employed society?

THAT THE SCHEME was first spelled out in the *Ceylon Daily Mirror* 13/2/80, under the heading TOBACCO CORP. TO RUN AUTO-RICKSHAW SERVICE: "The Sri Lanka Tobacco Industries Corporation has embarked on a new venture—to run an auto rickshaw service with a thousand strong fleet ..... Initially, about 593 auto rickshaws will be commissioned. The auto rickshaws driver would become the owner of the vehicle within three years. These drivers are expected to pay a sum of Rs. 40 a day for 25 days a month out of their earnings which will be set off against the cost of the vehicles.....". That on March 7, the *Ceylon Daily News* announced that "President J. R. Jayewardene will inaugurate a trishaw taxi service sponsored by the Jathika Sevaka Sangamaya and the Sri Lanka Tobacco Industries Corporation under a self-employment scheme at Sri Kotha UNP Headquarters, Kollupitiya at 8 a.m. today?" That the *CDN* carried a full page supplement about this venture? That it is not known why the supplement was not published in the *Times* or the *Gunaseena* group of newspapers? That whatever the behind-the-scene operations, the public will be thankful that at least one thousand trishaws will soon be on the road? That it is, however, difficult to see what the kind of service these self-employed trishaw operators will provide or how soon these owner-drivers would be bought up by mudalalis who will have more working capital to operate the scheme? That whilst a big question mark hangs over the kind of service this scheme will ultimately offer, the taxpayer is concerned about the financial involvement of the SLTIC? That in the last government, the SLTIC (Beedi) had been used by Industries Deputy Minister Sooriyaratchi (later Minister) to run cattle farms and other business ventures? That all these Sooriyaratchi SLTIC (Beedi) ventures had turned out to be disastrous flops and scandals and this government had appointed a Commission (one of the hundreds) to probe the SLTIC? That it is to be hoped that history does not repeat itself?

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- TO GIVE personal recognition and support to every statement and effort by prominent men and leaders of thought everywhere which has the quality of goodwill, so that whenever and wherever the power of goodwill is used it will have the support of an enlightened public.
- TO USE their time, their thought and their money to increase goodwill action everywhere in the world.

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# Voluntary Family Services For All.

*In Sri Lanka our population has doubled since independence from 7 million in 1948 to 14 million in 1978 and is increasing at 1.8% per year.*

Compared to the death rate which is 6.6 per thousand today the birth rate is 28 per thousand (one of the highest in the world).

Our population density which was 95 persons per square mile in 1871 is 572 persons per square mile today.

Our age structure is top heavy with a dependent population of 49.6% under 18 yrs, and 6.4% over 60 yrs, which has to be maintained by a work force of only 44% of which 9.2% is unemployed.

Our natural resources are getting depleted rapidly. Arable land has diminished from 4.5 acres per person in 1901 to 1.1 acre per person in 1979.

But the most serious effect of rapid population growth is the severe increase in unemployment. To generate new jobs we need adequate capital formation. But capital formation cannot improve when the basic needs of an increasing population have to be met first.

*Therefore to solve this problems the government:*

- 1) is taking all meaningful steps to curb unplanned growth of population.
- 2) will provide enhanced family planning services and incentives both by way of money and leave to individuals both male and female who practice family planning.
- 3) will emphasize service oriented programmes to enable motivated couples and individuals to receive family planning services and to undergo sterilization voluntarily.
- 4) will pay a minimum of Rs. 100/- to all employees of public sector institutions and state organizations who voluntarily undergo sterilization (both male and female).
- 5) will give 3 days full pay leave for male sterilization and 7 days full pay leave for female sterilization to employees of public sector institutions and state organizations. This leave is in addition to the normal leave.
- 6) will ensure that the Private Sector Organizations too would provide such incentives to their employees who undergo sterilizations.

(Extracts from the opening address of His Excellency J. R. Jayewardene to the International Conference of Parliamentarians on Population and Development in August 1979)

RELEASED BY THE MINISTRY OF PLAN IMPLEMENTATION