

TRIBUNE



25TH YEAR OF PUBLICATION



TRIBUNE

PRICE INCREASE

The price of each copy of Tribune will be Rs. 3/- from the issue of July 26, 1980, i.e. Vol. 25 No. 1.

Tribune has resisted a price increase as long as possible, but it cannot do so any longer. The increase of 50 cents a copy is the barest minimum considering the enhanced all round costs of production.

The subscription rates for Tribune in Sri Lanka—with the increased postal charges—will be Rs. 160/- for 12 months, Rs. 85/- for 6 months and Rs. 45/- for 3 months.

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Letter From The Editor

WE HAD POINTED OUT in this column last week that the Left Movement in Sri Lanka has a record of splits and disunity perhaps unequalled in any other country in the world. At the moment, the CPSL wants to resurrect a United Left Front. But the LSSP is not willing—unless the SLFP is part of it. Nor is the JVP, still suffering from the euphoria of 1971, willing. The CPSL continues to inflict sermons on the LSSP and JVP that they should shed their right and left wing sectarianism respectively (vide, *Forward* 15.6.80). The CPSL also appealed to all "other Left Parties" to follow the trade union example set up by the JIUAC on June 5 and forge a political United Left Front. The *Forward* does not list the "other Left Parties". There are so many of these Left Parties and groupings each pulling in different directions, that it would be a superhuman task to combine them into any kind of ULF. Taking them at random, there is the PDP (People's Democratic Party) with Nanda Ellawela, Tennyson Edirisooriya and others—now weakened by A. M. Jinadasa breaking away to form the NPP (Nava Prajathantravadi Pakshaya) and Kumar Rupasinghe and other "progressives" forming Sri Lanka National Committee for Democratic Action. The PDP, like the MEP, likes to tie up with the SLFP for getting nominations under the SLFP flag. The five party Maoist bloc, Nava Janatha Peramuna (NJP) comprising of the true believers of "Mao's Thought", took part in the JIUAC token protest led by the CPSL on June 5, but has shown reluctance to join any CPSL sponsored ULF. The NJP in its official organ *Desha Vimukthi* wants to set up a single "anti-imperialist, anti-UNP National United Front" on the broadest basis (but its programme includes the anti-hegemony anti-bloc and anti-super power slogans also). There are also other Maoist groups: the CP (ML) of T. Benedict which is the only one that supports the Deng-Hun regime; the G. I. D. Dharmasekera, Gaman Yapa and other splinters—but all have their sights directed at winning a parliamentary seat. Mahinda Wijesekera's group, another splinter from the JVP, has indicated that it will support the SLFP provided, (it is said), if Wijesekera gets SLFP nomination. In the five party bloc—whilst some are willing to have limited agreement with the SLFP, others are opposed to the SLFP as much as they are to the UNP. Of the non-Maoist groups, we have Bala Tampoe's RMP and Vasudeva Nanayakkara's NLSSP. One thing is clear that among this multitude of Left parties and groupings there seems little chance of a straight-forward non-sectarian United Left Front. There is, however, one common factor among practically all left and progressive parties—and also the SLFP—that they suffer from the delusion of spontaneity that "the people, the masses will automatically turn to an alternative if the ruling party does not deliver the goods. There is no doubt that voters have done this in the past when there was a cohesive alternative, viz., the electoral fronts led by SWRD and Sirimavo Bandaranaike. At the moment the Left is in such a badly battered state that it is not able to offer any alternative leadership. Nor is the Left able to form a broad anti-UNP front. Whether the left parties and the progressive movement can regroup to form a strong political force by 1983 is problematic.

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On Posterity

ON THE COVER we have a Sri Lankan ruin to remind all those who have developed a cock-eyed sense of history that posterity is not what many of us wishfully hope it will be. The picture depicts what posterity often does to the greatest and noblest achievements of man.

Today, in Sri Lanka and in many other countries, there have been and there still are men and women in power guilty of deeds of doubtful morality and political sagacity which they committed only to perpetuate their names in what they believe is posterity. This kind of action can be done only at the expense of less fortunate beings.

These powerful people are little concerned with the immediate present—except for their personal well-being. For others, they speak only of the future and the millennium that awaits them in three, five, ten or a hundred years hence. They glory in the past and endeavour to re-create and re-live in what they claim were highlights of a golden age that has long ceased to be. All the rhetoric, song, dance and processions may make some people forget the travails of the present—but this will last only for a brief moment of time.

The ordinary people of Sri Lanka cannot be fooled or mesmerised for long. At the moment the inflation and the daily rising cost of living have come down hard on the overwhelming majority of the people—although there are more in employment today than yesterday, more money (devalued and inflated) floating around, also a fractional increase in nominal money earnings (not real) and welcome remittances from abroad for some. With all this the burden is heavy especially on those who can bear such strains the least—heavier, than they need be because of the availability of consumer goods which all like to have (even if it means debt). Ask any middle-class householder or a working class family whether they can make ends meet, also the professionals and the technocrats. They all have a tale of woe. Even University dons are joining in the protest. Their grievances

are not imaginary. They are real. And what they want is just.

Unless the needs of these people who constitute the mainstream of our nation are met immediately—and prices and cost of living are made to bear some relationship to income and earnings—there will be no posterity for those in positions of strength today. In fact, there is no future for them. The five-star elite who are the only beneficiaries of the actions of those who have their eyes on posterity will soon disappear with the winds of popular fury.

There are some in power who think that if they silence critics and stifle criticism, their posterity would be assured. Such shortsightedness boomerangs. When criticisms surface, such men endeavour to “investigate” and intimidate those who, in the public interest, expose the dark deeds of misrule, mismanagement and corruption—instead of investigating the matter complained of. Flatterers, kitchen guards and other vermin who surround the ivory towers of power have generally made it out that all criticism is sedition, subversion and worse. If a critic says that Corporation X sells rotten or adulterated goods, it is the complaint that must be investigated especially if earlier official investigations and reports show that such adulteration was rampant—and not cry blue murder that a campaign of vilification has been launched by interested parties.

Tribune is not the only paper that has warned the people in power that ostrich-like behaviour to realities only brings disrepute. Migara in the *Weekend* (29/6/80) had this to say: “Once earlier it was mentioned in these columns that the intelligence services still have that archaic thinking that if a newspaperman writes a sensitive story, instead of following it up themselves, they go after the journalists. Similarly some officials, even some Government Ministers feel that criticism of them, where Ministries and their Departments would mean a total anti-Government approach either by the writer or the newspaper. This was the morbid hallucination that was in a large way responsible for the downfall of the previous government and even Governments before them. Tending to feel insecure, being captives of their own ‘yesmen’ they tend to ward off

criticism the easy way and thereby alienate themselves from reality."

One can cite many more instances where men in power have sought to bury criticism by pretending that critics were motivated by bias or malice. Only recently, the Customs Chief issued an "order" that a particular newspaper reporter from the Daily Mirror should be barred from entering a public place. And this illegal and totally unwarranted "order" was made because the reporter had published a story about some inexplicable and mysterious happenings regarding a customs seizure.

Tribune had picked up this story and raised a number of queries, and there may soon be a ban on Tribune investigators going anywhere within ten miles of any Customs outpost. Why has the Customs Chief not thought of placing such a ban on convicted smugglers and other well-known evaders of Customs regulations? But has he the power to do this? Has he even the power to ban his officers from relating facts or speaking the truth—if it is in the public interest? Can he ban a newspaper man from discharging his functions?

These are matters which those who want a niche in posterity must ponder on.

There are today men in the top-most rungs of power who welcome criticism and respond to it in the correct way. Who do the others not follow this example?

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

The Writing On The Wall

Colombo, June 28.

THE GOVERNMENT has once again enveloped itself in an euphoria of self-adulatory tamashas. The Gam Udawa show at Amparai and the Dutugemunu Poson celebrations at Anuradhapura (and all along the way from Tissamaharama) have kept a very large number of officials on their toes—away from their offices. With the power cut on one hand and these tamashas on the other, little or no work of a productive nature is being done. A dangerous illusion is growing in the minds of some people that foreign investment, foreign contractors and even

foreign equipment will do the work for them—whilst they indulge in tamashas, carnivals, exhibitions, speeches, festivals and rallies.

The country's record for production for 1979 is dismal and in the first six months for 1980 it is even worse. The usual excuses have been trotted out—the legacies from SLFP misrule, the weather (drought, floods, cyclones) and now the power crisis. The plantation crops—tea, rubber and coconut—have fared badly. Subsidiary food crops have fared worse. Official statistics—released by the Ministry of Plan Implementation—reveal how badly production has fared.

And about vegetable production only little was known so far, but Chitra Weerasinghe writing in the Sunday Observer of June 25 had some interesting details: ".....According to a Central Bank Report, ten percent of the average Sri Lankan's expenditure on food is spent on vegetables. Thus any increase in its price is likely to affect the cost of living. What are the reasons for this upward trend and recurrent price hikes? A survey of the vegetable economy in Sri Lanka said Mr. P. G. Gunawardene of the ARTI (Agrarian Research and Training Institute) has revealed that a decline in the acreage during the past few years was among several factors responsible for the inadequate production of vegetables.....". The writer draws from the ARTI Survey to point out that whilst demand for vegetables has increased production has declined: "Demands meanwhile had increased due to population growth. For instance the population from 1971-76 had increased by 1,031,000 which meant that the vegetables required for this number would be in the region of 72,070 tons. In the alternative the quantity available had declined by 4,000 tons. Then again, as compared with such items as potatoes, beef, fish, dry-fish and eggs—vegetables are cheaper. And average consumption had increased. At present 300,000 acres of land are annually devoted to vegetable cultivation amounting to an yearly production of 600,000 tons of vegetables, added Mr. Gunawardene. Other factors that prevent farmer from producing more vegetables are the cost of fertilizers, agro-chemicals, labour and equipment. No comprehensive credit facilities are available to vegetable farmers. Neither is there a crop insurance scheme. (It must be

remembered though that most vegetables are grown in rainfed areas). However, those engaged in the cultivation of paddy or animal husbandry are entitled to such a relief. Contributing to their disappointment is also the fact that no extension officer ever visits them—making it possible for them to avail themselves of agricultural advice.”

Then dealing with the cost of production, she says: “As regards the cost of production in 1976, it seems cabbage per acre was Rs. 2000 which worked out to only eleven cents a pound. In 1978 it had increased to Rs. 5,000 per acre determining the price of a pound of cabbage at 28 cents—leaving the producer with only sixteen cents. The producer often being the loser is therefore discouraged.” Then she deals with the question of marketing and the way producers as well as the consumers are fleeced by the private traders who dominate the vegetable market. We shall go into the question of marketing vegetables in a note in a later issue (but this is a matter on which *Tribune* has written a great deal in the past).

THE PRESENT STATE OF SRI LANKA must cause concern among all thinking people. Production and productivity have slipped and are slipping—and this adds to the galloping inflation. It is not falling production alone that has sent the inflationary spiral zooming. Wages have been increased in selected areas in such a haphazard fashion that an outburst from the general mass of wage-earners will soon become inevitable. A mighty demand for a massive increase in wages is slowly building up.

It is significant that the first rumble of discontent has come from the University teachers—some had resigned and others had threatened to resign *en masse*. They wanted better salaries. This is understandable. Last week, the papers reported that “Varsity staff (were) in Luck’s Way” because the University Grants Commission had decided (with the approval of the Minister—the President in this case as he looks after the Ministry of Higher Education) to increase salaries retrospectively from January 1, 1980. According to the *Daily Mirror*: “Under the new scheme the salary of a Vice-Chancellor has been increased from Rs. 2,500 to Rs. 3,500. The salary scale of a Professor which is now Rs. 1,750 to Rs. 2,165 has been increased to Rs. 2,200-Rs. 2,500.

The scale of assistant lecturers which is at present Rs. 800—Rs. 1,010 has been increased to Rs. 920-Rs. 1,160.”

Now compare this “proposed” salary scale to what the People’s Bank (and, no doubt, other State Banks) pays its employees: Below are given representative salary scales for some categories. Included also the qualifications required and minimum age. Monthly salary includes the basic salary and bonus at two months the gross salary. The monthly equivalent of this annual bonus has been added to the salary. In a special column the minimum benefits (housing loan and medical benefits) have also been added to the salary.

Peons

Qualifications -8th Standard

Minimum age—18 years	
Inclusive monthly salary	Rs. 748.00
Equivalent Bonus	Rs. 92.00
Total per month	Rs. 840.00
Minimum extra benefits	Rs. 650.00
	Rs. 1490.00

Most Junior Clerk

Qualifications—G.C.E. (O.L.) with five credits

Minimum age—18 years	
Inclusive monthly salary	Rs. 968.00
Equivalent bonus	Rs. 288.00
Total per month	Rs. 1248.00
Minimum extra benefits	Rs. 650.00
Equivalent total	Rs. 1898.00

Junior Staff Post (Bank Managers)

Qualifications—Graduate with a class or those promoted from within its ranks.

Minimum age—21 years	
Inclusive Monthly salary	Rs. 2800.00
Equivalent Bonus	Rs. 400.00
Total per month	Rs. 3200.00
(Bank Managers also get inspection allowances which average to about Rs. 380 per month) So add	Rs. 350.00
Minimum extra benefits	Rs. 650.00
Equivalent total	Rs. 4200.00

General Manager

Qualifications—No formal qualifications required now under new changes, i.e. not required to be a graduate or have banking qualifications.

Inclusive Monthly Salary	Rs. 4775.00
Equivalent Bonus	Rs. 900.00
Total per month	Rs. 5875.00
Minimum extra benefits	Rs. 650.00
Equivalent total	Rs. 6525.00

The details of the Bank employees "perks" are: *Medical Expenses* up to a ceiling of Rs.5000 per year which is equivalent to Rs. 420, per month. *Housing Loans* up to Rs. 200,000 the first Rs. 125,000 at 4% and the next Rs.75,000 at 8½%. *Car Loans* Rs. 25,000 at 8½%. *Furniture Loans* Rs. 10,000 at 8½%. Assuming that only a housing loan of Rs. 125,000 is taken difference of interest between market rate 12% (before the current interest rise) and the subsidised rate of 4% for loan of Rs. 125,000 is equivalent to Rs. 230/-. Therefore the minimum benefit not included in the salaries of Rs. 420 for medical and a housing loan subsidy is equivalent to Rs. 230 is Rs. 650 extra benefits. *Other benefits not discussed include provident fund cum pension.*

IT WILL BE SEEN that a peon at the Bank draws as much or more than the average run of University teachers. Income Tax assessors—who bring in more revenue than bankers for the State—get only as much or less than a clerk in a bank.

One does not need to be a pundit to know the Government has been very short-sighted in increasing wages in certain sections out of all proportions to wage levels in the country. The government continues to make pompous pronouncements about constructing and maintaining a national wage structure consistent with production levels and other basic imperatives. But the wages now paid by the People's Bank (and no doubt by other State Banks too) not only knocks the bottom out of any national wage structure but also blows the top off wage ceilings which any government must maintain if it wants to keep any kind of balance and equilibrium in the economy—and also contain inflation.

Comparisons are odious but one cannot avoid comparisons. Compare the wages paid by the People's Bank with the salaries paid to journalists in the government owned papers i.e., *Lake House* and *Times*. A bank peon

gets four times what an average journalist is paid. SLBC salaries are also woefully low compared to People's Bank salaries. And who does more important work—a peon or a sub-editor or assistant editor?

The protest on June 5 was no doubt a bit of a damp squib, but that was because the anti-UNP forces are so divided. But disunity at the top will not keep the volcanic fury that is slowly building up among wage-earners in towns and villages. There will be a point when the rising tide of inflation will reach such a pitch that will act like the proverbial last bundle of straw that broke the camel's back.

ADD TO ALL THIS, it will not be long before people at all levels learn that an ordinary MP gets a legal emoluments amounting to over Rs. 5,000 a month plus other benefits. This amount is certainly not anywhere near the Rs. 64,000 a month which the lowest paid foreign expert gets (Sri Lanka gets "aid" to pay these fantastic and fabulous sums mainly to men from donor countries who don't deserve them).

It will be foolish on the part of the Government to remain complacent in this situation. It is worse to pretend that everything is hunky dory (to use a Yankee idiom)—or that it will be hunky dory with expensive tamashas, galas and celebrations. Whether the electoral explosion will come in 1983 or 1989 is hard to say, but disturbing events of a grave nature with far-reaching consequences can take place at any time from 1982 to 1990.

Somebody in the government must wake up. What this country needs is not village re-awakening but Cabinet re-awakening.

The villager knows how to exercise his vote (whatever the system of elections). And he will do in the way he thinks fit, He will take all the tamashas in his stride—he will, as in the past, flock to all exhibitions—and then vote a government out if the ruling party mixes its priorities and does not know how to keep inflation in check and separate the wheat from the chaff.

Government propaganda moreover has become heavy handed and boring. Somebody must tell the Prime Minister, for

instance, that a 15 minute TV feature on Gam Udawa would have had much more impact than the one hour of repetitive boredom. Too much of anything, even a good thing, is always counter-productive. Flatterers may give wrong impressions of what people feel but an honest-to-goodness survey will reveal that people were "fed up" with the one-hour of the Gam Udawa on the TV last week. This is not merely the reactions of English-educated viewers, but more importantly the views of Sinhala visitors from a rural area who saw the TV film in Colombo. The English educated viewers just shrugged their shoulders and bore the infliction with fortitude, but the rustics did not hide their feelings—and it will be good for the government to know what they think and feel. What these simple folk—with their rustic shrewdness—tell the contact men who surround ministerial ivory towers is only intended to obtain favours—if and when possible, a kind of insurance. But voters have always done this in Sri Lanka, i.e. say nice things about the government in power and then throw them out at the next elections.

Lengthy and tedious TV documentaries, recording everything that has been done, may be good for the archives of posterity, but when regularly inflicted on the people turn out to be electoral boomerangs. The government must wake up to realities and get the priorities right. Otherwise the country will have to suffer hardships that can be avoided.

The writing on the wall is clear.

Wage demands will soon come from all sectors. Wage earners will want the salaries to match those paid by the People's Bank and certain other select State Institutions. If an 8th standard peon can get Rs. 1,500/- a month why should a specialist doctor, or a scientist, not get Rs. 15,000 a month? Or why should not top administrators or Corporation Chairman with degrees and doctorates get at least Rs. 10,000 a month? But with falling production levels, how is the government going to meet these demands for higher wages?

Minister Lalith Athulathudali in a recent speech at Moneragala had said that the "government's endeavour was to ensure to every citizen a monthly income of Rs. 1,000 before the end of this century. The Government had now launched on a massive development to eradicate poverty and it had resulted in an economic

revolution giving people a better value for their labour and produce....." (Ceylon Daily News, 23/6/80).

This is no doubt a noble, wonderful, fabulous and a necessary objective but with the current inflationary trends can people wait until the end of the century for the Rs. 1000 minimum monthly income? And can this objective be ever reached—if the production levels continue to fall? Insufficient production will mean a more inflation and therefore a higher minimum will be required.

Before the end of this decade, not the century, a minimum income of Rs. 5,000 a month may be required to keep one's stomach just above the subsistence level mark. And what are people to do until the UNP millennium emerges at the end of this century when UNP's development scheme begins to bear fruit?

The writing on the wall is getting bigger and bigger every day.



POEM

Metamorphosis

With sunrise the pearled lilac petals
unfurl into flower,
Soft lashes fringing the glistening white pupil
Cradled in the subaqueous shade
Of leaves that both bear and sustain them—
Delicate and so wistfully young
Wide open to the lascivious sun, which
By noon has bleached the blossom pale grey
And has totally destroyed it by
the falling of the day.

Now in their morning beauty I sadly anticipate
The night's decay; a child's smooth skin
Turning sallow, wrinkling—clear lips
Puckering—hair
Losing its lustre, whitening
While breath hovers frozen and
Vained lids
Close

Anne Ranasinghe

Govt.



Notices

Notice Under Section 7 Of The Land Acquisition Act (Chapter 460) As Amended By The Land Acquisition (Amendment) Act, No. 28 Of 1964.

Reference No. 11/7/1/135

The Government intends to acquire the land described in the Schedule below, for a public purpose, for particulars, please see the Gazette of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka No. 96 (Part III) of 04-07-1980.

Schedule

District : Anuradhapura
 D.R.O.'s Division : Hurulu Palatha Central
 G.S.'s Division : Tulana No. 36
 Name of land : Katupathkele
 Plan No. : F.V.P. 1437 Sup. No. 1)
 Lot No. : 131
 Name of Village : Diwulwewa

Chandrasoma Weerasinghe

Acquiring Officer and
Assistant Government Agent, (Land)
Anuradhapura District.

The Kachcheri,
Anuradhapura.
11/06/1980

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. 1604.50	Rs. 1607.50
Sterling Pound	Rs. 3786.00	Rs. 3792.00
Deutsche Mark	Rs. 911.10	Rs. 912.70
French Franc	Rs. 392.55	Rs. 393.25
Japanese Yen	Rs. 7.3175	Rs. 7.3325
Indian Rupees	Rs. 206.30	Rs. 206.70

Notice Under Section 7 Of The Land Acquisition Act (Chapter 460) As Amended By The Land Acquisition (Amendment) Act No. 28 Of 1964.

Reference No. 9/2/2/1087

It is intended to acquire the land described in the schedule below. For further particulars, please see the Gazette of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka No. 96 (Part III) of 04.07.1980.

Schedule

Name of Village: Gawarawela
 Name of land: Uduthurekumbura
 Lot & Plan No.: Final Village Plan No. 279
 Supplement No. 11 Lot No. 395
 Gawarawela Grama Sevaka Division, in the Divisional Revenue Officer's Division of Bandarawela, Badulla District, Uva Province.

N. C. Harvie

Additional Government Agent,
Badulla District,

The Kachcheri,
Badulla. 09th June 1980

Notice Under Section 7 Of The Land Acquisition Act (Chapter 460) As Amended By The Land Acquisition (Amendment) Act No. 28 Of 1964.

Reference No. 9/2/2/1214

It is intended to acquire the land described in the schedule below. For further particulars please see the Gazette of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka No. 96 (Part III) of 04.07.1980.

Schedule

Name of Village: Meegahakiula Town
 Name of land: Gederaawa alias Kumbure-gederawatte
 Lot & Plan No.: Village Plan No. 613 Extract No. 3 Lots 306 and 307
 Name of Village : Meegahakiula Town
 Name of land : Gedera arawawatta
 Village Plan No : 613 Extract 3-Lots 311 & 312 in Meegahakiula Grama Sevaka Division, in the Divisional Revenue Officer's Division of Meegahakiula Badulla District, Uva Province.

N. C. Harvie

Additional Government Agent,
Badulla District.

The Kachcheri,
Badulla. 9th June 1980

TRIBUNE, July 5, 1980

Where Do We Go From Here

by R. K. Mishra

THE BLOODIEST ELECTION in the history of our country, the world's most populous democracy, are over. Candidates were murdered in cold blood, shot, stabbed and poisoned. The manner in which "workers" of rival political parties attacked, bombed, fought and killed each other would lead inevitably to the conclusion that professional killers and criminals were recruited by the contenders for political power in the deadliest battle of ballot witnessed in the last three weeks. In the first two general elections, when the hangover of the freedom movement had not waned, the candidates appealed to the voters on grounds of their own sacrifice for the nation, their capacity to serve the people or the political platform and role of their parties in the nation's affairs. Of course, this included the charisma of national leaders of eminence.

The third general elections witnessed the sudden increase in the importance of money-power; many industrialists and big business houses entered the fray directly or aligned themselves with certain political parties overtly. The pre-vote poll expenditure increased steeply. The caste factor, which always functioned in a subtterranean manner, became more pronounced and became, with money-power, the decisive factor in 1967. The mid-term election to the Lok Sabha in 1971 and 1977 notwithstanding this dominant slogan of Garibi Hatao and restoration of democracy, were in the nature of referendum and popular swing in favour or against the Congress could be translated into votes by a skilful combination of caste factor and money-power.

ALL THIS seems to have now been pushed to a secondary place by the growing, and perhaps, decisive importance of muscle-power in determining the outcome of the elections. It is true that in some parts of Bihar and UP the landowning classes always intimidated the weaker sections and, in many areas, successfully prevented them from exercising their

franchise. But this was always regarded as an aberration and was disapproved, at least verbally by all political parties. Now this is different. Lathies, bombs, hand-grenades, pistols etc., have become, specially in the populous States as important—it is not more, as flags, festoons, posters, leaflets and public meetings. And, what should cause considerable concern is the indifference of major political parties towards this emerging cult of muscle-manship in public affairs. Now that the elections are over, it is, perhaps, necessary to pause for a moment and ask: Where do we go from here.

The question has acquired added urgency because the hopes that the nation would come back to the politics of consensus have been dashed to the ground. The Congress Party itself had become, during the freedom movement, a vehicle of building an national consensus. And though its claim to this role shrunk considerably after the Communists and Socialist parties went out of it, Nehru guided the nation's affairs, by and large, with the consensus method and endeavoured to carry the Opposition with him to a considerable extent. There is no possibility of a return to those days. The attitude of various parties to the challenge to harmony, integrity and security of the country in Assam provides enough evidence of their inability to rise above narrow partisan considerations even to safeguard vital national interests.

THOUGH SOME OF THE OPPOSITION PARTIES have preferred the path of dialogues and discussion to that of confrontation in tackling the north-eastern situation, even this limited co-operation may disappear if the Congress (I) acts recklessly in other spheres. The widespread poll violence will, no doubt, impose considerable strain on interparty relationship at the grass root level and unless conscious efforts are made to arrest further deterioration in the situation we may find the Government and the Opposition in a state of perpetual and irreconcilable conflict.

This danger has become somewhat more acute because of the rise of a spirit of intolerance within the ruling party and deepening of the widespread apprehensions about its intentions among the Opposition groups. A few exceptional occasions apart, the Congress Party ruled the country all these years on the

strength of a minority vote. In 1974, it was able to secure a razor-thin majority in Uttar Pradesh Assembly though it secured only 34 per cent votes. It may again repeat the performance in the current Assembly elections. What it should not ignore, however, is the reality that the recent purges in the party have seriously eroded its capacity to influence and carry with it the politically uncommitted sections. The problems facing the country have multiplied and the failure of the Government to arrest the rise in the prices of such essential Commodities as sugar even after the Cong-I was put into power by a massive mandate is a warning that the management of the economy will not be an easy task.

THE CLIMATE OF FEAR and uncertainty about the responses of the ruling party to Independent actions has sapped the initiative of the administrative machinery and the political executive does not now enjoy the benefit of disinterested, but inconvenient, advice. The middle classes are anxious and the working class is keeping its fingers crossed. The air is thick with apprehension that the government faced with a crisis of unmanageable proportions, may let loose a reign of terror to suppress all dissent after it has consolidated its power in the States. Though Mrs. Gandhi has denied that she has any such intentions, the Left Governments fear that the Cong-I might begin implementing its plans to topple them soon. The choice of the Chief Ministers in the States where Cong-I gets a majority, the Prime Minister's preferences at the time of expansion of Union Council of Ministers and the attitude of the treasury benches during the ensuing Lok Sabha session will either deepen or reduce these fears.

But the Opposition, specially the Left, democratic and secular parties and groups, cannot merely follow a policy of reacting to the moves of the ruling party. It is evident that the Cong-I, with its shrunken mass base and considerably depleted intellectual resources cannot, on its own, provide a solution to the manifold and complex problems facing the country. The capacity of the progressive forces to convince the people of their ability to provide solutions to these problems and stand resolutely against any attack on the people's rights, therefore, has become a crucial factor

In shaping the future of our polity and, possible restraining the ruling party from pursuing a course of reckless confrontation, which will further pulverise our polity. —Patriot.

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MARGINALIA

Malaysia

by Snooyer

IN SRI LANKA inflation is believed to be running at anything from 25% to 30%. This was shortly after the time of the last Budget. Now it must have crept up a few more points. There are whispers that World Bank experts in Washington now figure it is around 40%.

Inflation has badly affected all South Asian countries, Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. But Malaysia, which is not very far away from these countries has kept inflation very much under control. The bulletin *Malaysian Digest* (Vol. 11 No. 5) had this: "MALAYSIA had one of the lowest inflation rates in the world last year when the level went down to 3.6 per cent from 4.6 per cent recorded in 1978. Explaining this, the Minister of Finance, Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah, said the reduction was made possible through governmental measures to fight inflation, including formulating an effective tax policy and increasing production of goods. He urged the people to help the government combat inflation by adopting prudent buying practices. Reckless spending is one of the three main causes of rice increases he said. Over-production of goods is another factor because it can lead to hoarding with the aim of releasing the goods for sale at higher prices when demand has outstripped supply. The third cause is the influence of world-wide inflation because the country has to import goods from other countries at high prices."

In the *Malaysian Digest* No. 6 there is a report about the Finance Minister's statement on inflation, a few weeks ago: "The government will not allow inflation to affect Malaysia's economic performance, the purchasing power of the ringgit (Malaysian dollar) and the people's living standard, especially those in the lower income group. Finance Minister Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah drove home this point in a

written reply to an opposition question in the House of Representatives. The minister said the government had taken appropriate measures to ease inflationary pressures and would continue to do so for the people's sake. He stressed that success in containing inflation also depended on co-operation from all sections of the community, especially consumer movements, women's organisations and trade unions.

"Tengku Razaleigh said the inflation rate in Malaysia was moderate at only five percent per annum and, therefore, did not affect the ringgit's purchasing power too much. 'In the industrialised countries' he said, 'the inflation rate rose by about 10 per cent during the years 1970 to 1979. In the United Kingdom it was around 13 per cent at that time but had gone up to about 19 per cent. In the same period Latin American countries like Chile and Argentina had inflation rates of 268 and 107 per cent respectively.' Malaysia's moderate rate when compared with the Philippines' rate of 14 percent and Indonesia's 22 percent a year reflected the Government's success through fiscal, monetary and administrative measures to contain inflation, he said. The Minister added that small scale miners, oil palm growers and rubber smallholders were at present enjoying higher purchasing power because of the good commodity prices in world markets. He also said that the Government had provided \$ 1,260 million in aid to contain inflationary pressures."

MALAYSIA is a country with a reputation for getting things done. The following report about incentives to public servants should be of interest in Sri Lanka: "The government is considering giving double salary increments to its employees who have given excellent service as this will serve as an incentive for them to work harder. The Director-General of the Public Services Department, Tan Sri Hashim Aman says the possibility of introducing the double increment is being studied by the Excellence Service Committee of which he is Chairman. He makes it clear that the double increment will be given only to those government employees who have received a number of Excellence Service Certificates. Apart from the double increment, the dedicated employee will also be considered for promotion. He says the Government has

taken a serious view of the quality of service provided by each employee, and to this end ways will be devised to ensure that each employee carries out his job well and efficiently. One such step is the setting up of a Committee comprising representatives from the Public Services Department....."

It will also be of interest to Sri Lanka government planners that Malaysia is actively interested in finding cheaper building material: "Tons of sand lying waste in abandoned tin mines and river banks may be the answer to cheaper housing. A method of building walls using sand will soon be used to cut the cost of conventional brick and mortar by half. The National Co-operative Housing Society Ltd., (KPN) will conduct negotiations with an Australian company specialising in the method for its housing scheme in the state of Pahang. KPN Chairman, Datuk Raja Nasron Ishak said the Australian company has built a three room unit costing M \$ 4,500 as a model. The new method can be used for any type of housing and also for retaining wall structures, instead of using brick and mortar, sand is placed in an oblong flexible container stacked into a wall frame structure like bricks. The sand must be free of laterite clay and mud and need not be treated before being used. The containers are then dipped into a chemical solution and once the wall is erected, steel rods are driven through vertically for reinforcement before it sets. The method can be easily learnt by construction workers without any problem. This method has been successfully used on house in Australia and some African states. Plans for the Pahang housing project on a 67-acre site has already been forwarded and will be soon taken by Kobelview Sdn. Bhd., a joint venture between KPN and a private developer. KPN is also studying the use of cheaper roofing tiles made by a New Zealand firm. The tiles do not use conventional raw materials....."

There is much Sri Lanka has to learn.



Time To Take Stock

by R. Kahawita

WE CONCLUDED THE LAST ARTICLE by saying that local inflation problems are due to an unreal and immature understanding of our responsibilities. Strangely enough the *Ceylon Daily News* of 26.5.80 carried reports of a suggestion by a high-powered committee that there should be a "workshop" for training the future Ministers—today there are 91 of them graded to varying responsibilities. Ninety one in a government of 141 parliamentary members is a prepondering ratio. They form the inner circle with a majority. The outer circle is around 50 members. They form what is called the back-benchers, but they can be vociferous and often be a thorn in the side of the inner circle. This is where the need for a workshop arises. Later on this issue, we will comment.

Without the acceptance by other political parties of our plans and programmes our own fear is that, if the UNP fails to register the requisite number of votes to continue in the seats of power, what will happen to the Mahaweli Accelerated Programme, Free Trade Zone, Greater Colombo Economic Development and the new Metropolis? Will they be abandoned? We raise this question not without cause. We have seen it happening at Gal Oya, Uda Walawa, and even at Mahaweli from 1970 to 1977, Samanawewa and Canyon Hydro-power project. We see also the callous neglect of many completed and working Irrigation works over the years which should have been maintained to help in increasing production levels of food. *The succeeding Government may abandon all these and start on new schemes (short-term to catch the imagination of the masses, as we did with a liberated programme of imports).*

ACCORDING TO THE CENTRAL BANK, the Trade Sector contribution to the GNP is 28% in 1979, 20% in 1978. The reason, "largely on account of expanding trade in imported goods and domestic goods." "Domestic goods" is a sop to clear their conscience. The real jump is in the imported goods—displayed in the Advertisements; listen to the

Radio, and see the TV then one can realize the truth—Onions and Chillies do not have the advertising coverage. What is advertised are imported luxury goods, food and beverages etc. Import value of such items is said to be 0.9% only (according to the Trade Minister).

Why is it so low? Not because of controls, direct or indirect, but the takers are few—0.009% of the population can afford these luxury articles while there are millions to buy the onions and chillies. Yet the trade sector did contribute 28% to the National Product. This is the indicator to our economic imbalance. How much reliance can we place on such statements to how we are doing well?

We have created an economic imbalance by concentrating all our energies on four long term projects which are not going to benefit the masses of this generation. It may be two generations hence. By that time we would have doubled our population yet with "the same five loaves and fishes to feed the multitude." We cannot expect a Saviour to help us out of the problem. We are not against such projects though they are the primary causes of inflation in this country. But the tools of production available to us should be maintained, repaired and used to enable production levels to be increased to meet the growing demands resulting from more money coming into the hands of the consumer from Overseas. Free Trade Zone, Construction Trades, and long-term development activities. These are local causes of inflation. The means of controlling such inflation are within our capacity—Hard work and increased production.

This is what is being done in other countries to contain cost of living within reasonable limits. But as reported by the Central Bank there is a steady drop in our production levels all round, particularly in the Agricultural Sector pertaining to paddy and subsidiary food crops. This is where the pinch is felt most by the masses.

AS AN ILLUSTRATION as to how we could arrest this decay, is it not possible to divert a fraction of the expenditure on the massive construction works and other non-productive efforts to Agricul-

ture and maintenance of Irrigation works?

If we set up an Organisation to deploy 1000 Agricultural extension workers at the cultivator level we should be able to hit the targets in acreage cultivated and higher production levels every season. This same organisation can move into subsidiary food crops too in between the two main seasons. One asks what about cost? We are getting into debt hundred times over in non-productive ventures etc. The men are there, money is there—what is wasted in the development rush will cover the cost of the Organisation.

Why did we abandon the Green Revolution which we so enthusiastically supported during 1965/70 and made a success of it? The same high command came into power in 1977. We should have revived it. If we did we would be having the masses with us today and the inflation of consumer goods price within 10% to 15% which will satisfy them when we say that 15% increase is due to global causes. They will not understand a 110 C.O.L. index since the UNP came into power.

When we look at the other areas of agricultural activities such as the Agro-Industrial crops, the Performance Report on GNP 1980 says that "They remain a neglected Sector." The two main crops which we could have pushed ahead from 1977 are sugar cane and cotton. SUGAR—we have invested millions of rupees on two projects which have bogged down over the years due to mismanagement and lack of interest by the policy makers. To put the two schemes on a working footing very little additional investments are required—what is needed is administrative stability in the Corporation that is handling the two projects and an average sense of service to the country from everybody—top to bottom. We lack both, so that the report, says, "it is a neglected sector."

We ask, what is the purpose of this kind of annual reporting if we are not going to take heed of our omissions and commissions and take meaningful steps to correct? Are we waiting till the voter makes the decision? Nearly 3 years have gone by, we should be producing a minimum of 50,000 tons of sugar by now in an ever price escalating market. Assess the saving on Foreign exchange and productive employment opportunities we could have provided? Both we have thrown to the winds.

It is not sugar now for the masses but alcohol for power.

How easily the bureaucracy can mislead the policy makers and take them on a wild goose chase. Production of power Alcohol has become the topic of the day. But to produce the raw material needed for Power Alcohol, nothing is being done. Let us be honest and get down to the growing of cane in the areas already set apart for cane. We started in 1952 that is 28 years ago. What is the balance sheet today?

The millions we spent on land preparations and the investments on the two factories have become dead capital. These are causes for the ever rising cost of living internally—not global inflation. We cannot convince the people that shortage of their basic needs are due to global inflation so nothing can be done. We have been flogging this horse too long. When the people see what is happening around them, they will not believe what we say. OTHER AGRO - INDUSTRIAL CROP IS COTTON. The target for 1977-79 was 22,000 acres. Only 4,000 acres got under way says the report. Yet under Mahaweli we hope to hit a target of 100,000 acres. How unrealistic we are? Almost puerile in our thinking. There are 35,000 acres earmarked for cotton and for settlement with all the necessary infrastructure already built to cultivate cotton as the Yala Crop. With all the capital invested in the project our performance is 11% of the target since 1977. To keep the already established textile industry we import 88% of our requirements annually. What madness is this?

And we speak of self-sufficiency in rice next year. This is the sort of information doled out by the bureaucracy that infuriates people. One could go on like this to show how the Agriculture of our country has got into a rut, without an effort being made by the powers that be to pull us out of it. But we speak of grandiose schemes depending on millions of loans, grants and aid. We speak of a brilliant future, while what is under our very nose are just being wilfully neglected, ruined, and wasted to reduce the people to poverty.

This is what is causing all the trouble in Mahaweli programmes. If we have failed to develop 35,000 acres during the past 28 years

will the people believe when we say we can do 100,000 acres in one year. It is time we wake up, face the realities, and shake ourselves to action to conserve what we have and begin to produce to feed the people.

We have every thing we need to reduce the cost of living; land, water, expertise, capital investment etc., to make this land prosperous. Why are we neglecting and running down these assets? Is it because others have taken credit already for these works and efforts and we now are looking around to implant our own image elsewhere?

If it is so, it will not please the people. They have trusted UNP and given it a chance. As far as their thinking goes, we have failed so far. All we are doing today is to find excuses—today we say, "It is the previous government", next day, "oil producing countries", another day, "international inflation" or any other reed to cling to, to explain our shortcomings—not for long can we do this.

The time has come to take stock of our stewardship.

IN DEFENCE

Of Ranjan Wijeyaratne

Sir,

NEW BLOOD

Permit me to join in the debate regarding the above subject. The present government service needs better quality personnel to man the key positions as Secretaries, Additional Secretaries, Government Agents, Heads of Departments and as A.G.As. The type of well-read competent men who joined the CCS are no longer in the island. Some are in UN, foreign countries and in the private sector.

Only the incompetent men remained because no one wanted them. Some joined the CAS because they were young and there were no one who wanted them because they were either graduates in Pali, Sanskrit, Sinhalese or Tamil or Philosophy. Today some of them exist either as Secretaries or Additional Secre-

taries in Ministries or Project Ministries. They have learnt the art of stooging, and turning and twisting like weather cocks. Some are Sinhala champions now finding protection under industrial sector after running national planning. Some having done all the damage are with new found love in "greener pastures". These are the men who exist in public services.

The quality of CAS men are today far below subject clerks of the past. This is why the public service needs new blood. It is time for the government to reserve the posts of Secretaries, Additional Secretaries, Heads of Departments, Government Agents, AGAs to party men and outside the service or reserve them for technical men. Why not have an Irrigation Engineer to be GA Polonnaruwa or Anuradhapura? Why cannot an Economist lead the Co-operative Department, a Marketing man lead the Department of Marketing? A Media man in charge of the Department of Information? Why not have a top class planter as an Additional Secretary of Plantations? An Agricultural Economist as Additional Secretary Agriculture? An Irrigation Engineer as Secretary Mahaweli? Competent Land Development or an Irrigation Engineer as Secretary of Lands? Why cannot the Transport Ministry, Youth Affairs, be given to competent young men with the necessary background?

Your contributor *Outsider* (wide *Tribune* Vol. 24 No.) says that Messrs Weeraratne, Wijeyeratne and Weerasooriya are competent men. *Tribune* criticises Mr. Wijeyaratne, but what has Dr. Weerasooriya achieved? Writing articles and publishing reports? The Ministry of Plan Implementations serves no purpose. The Presidential Secretariat can do the job of publishing Performance Reports and disbursing Decentralized Budgets. Integrated Development Projects can be given to the respective functional ministries with a Central Steering Committee at the Presidential Secretariat and an operational committee under the District Ministry.

Another aspect of this problem is why have two or three Agricultural Ministries? Why not have one Agricultural Ministry with one Deputy Ministers for Peasant Sector, three Deputy Ministers for Plantations (Tea, Rubber and Coconut), one Deputy Minister for Industrial crops (minor crops including Sericulture; palmyrah and cashew) and one deputy Minister fo-

Minor Irrigation? The Secretary of this ministry should undoubtedly be Mr. Ranjan Wijeyaratne. He is an excellent worker and a charming man who understands the problems of people. I saw him in action in Jaffna recently. He spoke to the peasant in Tamil and moved with them freely. Farmers in Jaffna were very proud of him, his capacity and his high intelligence. His Excellency must be proud of Mr. Wijeyaratne. I have gone to his ministry several times for official assistance and only met him once. His officers are very competent. They are helpful and are ready to understand the problems. That is why I felt I should write to *Tribune*, and request it not to just criticise Mr. Wijeyaratne.

I am requesting the government to select some of the competent men in the Ministry of Agriculture into high positions. The post G.A. Baticaloa, Secretary of Lands, Additional Secretary of Industries are from Deputy Directors of the Ministry of Agriculture. Mr. Wijeyaratne is hard on his men and gives them correct leadership and training.

Tribune must congratulate Mr. Wijeyaratne for his good work. I am sure *Tribune* will do so and not so long in the future.

S. Mahalingam

Wellawatte,
13th June 1980.

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Sir,

MEET HIM

I have been a long-standing reader and a contributor to *Tribune* since my school days. I firmly believe that journals like *Tribune* which has been self-financed and which I have known for over 18 years of its 25 years of existence stands for justice and fair-play. But what I am worried and disturbed is the biased unbalanced analysis that is creeping into the journal like a cancer in-growth which is going to tarnish its impressive image built over the years by one single man on his own efforts.

I am a firm believer in opening the public service to outsiders—outside the former CCS and the present CAS. If one evaluates the CAS personnel only a handful are of quality material. Today, the best men or women in the country do not enter CAS because of

nepotism, cut-throatism, caste favouritism, ethnic feeling and political favouritism. In getting promotion from one class to another, CAS class struggle is much worse than those Marx foresaw or Trotsky envisaged. Character assassination, branding on politics, family bandism, caste favouritism is common in this great class struggle to the top. Today some CAS men are not worth the post they hold. They are not well read nor are knowledgeable. They cannot contribute intellectually. Today CAS is an avenue to sell oneself for a fat dowry from a new rich elite family. The quality of some CAS (men) has much to be desired. Whoever who remains in public service are either there because of their political fidelity to the party in power, or because of their family obligations. Only a few ex-CCS men are in the public service. People like Mr. G. V. P. Samarasinghe, James Lanerolle, Sarath Amunugama, Vincent Panditha, Bradmen Weerakoon, W. T. Jayasinghe, Eric de Silva, C. Chanmugam, B. C. Perera, D. B. I. P. S. Siriwardene, W. L. P. de Mel are only men the service can be proud of compared to political eels and shirkers who hold some posts as a Secretary and as an Additional Secretary. Only few technical men could reach these posts and this is shown when one looks round ministerial posts. Outside the public service, selection of non-CAS men came in only when H/E Mr. J. R. Jayewardene selected the present Minister of State, Mr. Anandatissa de Alwis, as his the Secretary of the Ministry of State. He was followed by few appointments during the last government. Today the UNP government has brought in a blend between outsiders and insiders. Outsiders like Mr. Ranjan Wijeyaratne, Dr. Wickrema Weerasooriya and Mr. Anura Weeraratne are today recognized as the best Secretaries.

Tribune has been attacking Mr. Ranjan Wijeyaratne for some time. I wonder whether the *Tribune* Editor ever met Mr. Wijeyaratne. If Mr. Amarasingam meets him he will definitely change his opinion. People like Dr. Colvin R. de Silva, Mr. Doric de Silva who held the once successful Ministry of Plantations would vouch for his capacity, intelligence and sincerity of purpose. As the Chairman of the Planters Association and the Director of Whittall Boustead Ltd. Mr. Ranjan Wijeyaratne worked for the upliftment and betterment of the planting community. Those officials who have

worked in the Ministry of Plantation Industries during Colvin's era would vouch for this, Mr. Wijeyaratne is not a Satan you try to paint. He is a man with a human heart, who stands for justice, fairplay, and the right thing. He is not proud. He is an understanding man. A much practical man than most secretaries—a man who wants results and not cheap publicity for the sake of currying favour with high ups—in the government and preserve their positions.

Undoubtedly, those public servants who hate him because of his forthrightness spread all kinds of rumours to tarnish him. They attack the A.D.A. which does a good job. He has no time to write to the popular press nor waste his time at cocktails nor go for foreign trips. He works till late in the night clearing his papers, making quick decisions. He works during the week-ends, in the field, meeting officials, farmers and common people. If the editor could write to him for his field visits and reports which even H.E. the President only appreciated only recently, the image about him will change.

Mr. Wijeyaratne has sacrificed a lot. He has no favourites. He has not helped his kith or kin. He can stand on his feet. He is capable and not a shirker or a publicity man like some public servants. I suggest *Tribune* Editor meets him soon and change his impression.

I am recommending to the Government to get more and more Ranjans for high echelons of the service from outside, the CAS. It is time for the government to scrap CAS and establish one single public service and allow technical men to get into decision making positions. Give Economists, Engineers, Agronomists, an opportunity to be Additional Secretaries, Secretaries, Government Agents, AGAs, heads of departments, Departments/Ministries like Irrigation, Agriculture, Agrarian Service, Land Development, Education Housing, Local Government etc., should be manned by technical men/women.

Mr. Ranjan Wijeyaratne's silent achievements are not known to the public. Though he does not write popular articles publicising himself for launching a master plan for agriculture, he has done a lot.

He has systematically streamlined the working of the Department of Agriculture, and decentralised its working, research, ex-

tenston, training, pest and disease control. The Department has been decentralised. Paddy production has increased during his tenure. In 1977/78 according to the Agricultural Implementation Programme the targets were 1.64 million acres of paddy and the achievements were 1.62 million acres. Estimates for 1978/79 was 1.69 million acres and the Central Bank reports the achievement at 1.84 million acres. Fertilizer issues increased from 113,809 MT tons to about 115,000 MT tons. Yield per hectare enhanced from 2613 Kgs. to 2750 kgs. Production of paddy increased from 1,891,000 MT tons to 1,917,000 MT tons. Mr. Wijeyaratne, has also streamlined seed production and seed imports through a National Seeds Committee. Inputs like fertilizer, Agro chemicals, tractors, implements have been streamlined. Concessions on imports of inputs has assisted in its greater usage. He has put the Government Farms into order and made most of them viable. He has expanded the home garden service. The Paddy Marketing Board is being cleaned of its corrupt elements. He has already got the National Food Committee headed by the Secretary to the Cabinet to work and monitor the food situation. He has got the Market Research Unit (MRU) of the ARTI to work. He has got the Floor Price Scheme to cover 10 commodities this yala from 8 commodities in the last Maha. Subsidiary food crops are being exported in large quantities now. Black, gram, green gram, onions, groundnuts, Sesame, are finding outlets in foreign markets, thanks to the assistance of Mr. Wijeyaratne.

The Department of minor exports is now doing a good job with the National Agricultural Diversification and Settlement Authority settling people in the mid country with minor crops grown in their settlements. Mr. Thondaman will vouch for the good work done by NADSA due to Mr. Wijeyaratne's leadership. He has put the Sri Lanka Sugar Corporation on a viable position and gives it correct leadership. Sri Lanka Fertilizer Corporation under his supervision has been cleaned and put on its feet. He has assisted large number of landowners, who were victimised under the LRC laws. He has corrected the Agricultural Insurance Board of its inefficiency. The very corrupt Janawasa Commission was scrapped. The Agrarian Services

Department is being put on a new path under his leadership. He has through his ADA got inefficient coconut sector to move, even though a separate coconut project ministry was established.

The Coconut Minister lived on publicity than on work. Mr. Wijeyaratne's ADA pushes the Coconut Boards to work. The much neglected Minor Irrigation is finding new relief due to the assistance of the ADA. The sleepy Agrarian Services Department has risen from its slumber and has been activated by Mr. Ranjan Wijeyaratne. If only coconut, and plantations were also given to Mr. Wijeyaratne he would have put plantations into good order from the "mess" created by the former Secretary who took all for a ride, leaving the Ministry devoid of its good men (who have migrated to other Ministries and private sector).

Let me repeat that Mr. Ranjan Wijeyaratne should be commended and not criticized. He is not an ostrich who hides from danger. He is like a strong tower amidst gales. He must be congratulated and encouraged rather than criticised. His Ministry is excellently manned by competent men. In 1983 when government takes stock of progress both Mr. J. R. Jayewardene and Mr. R. Premadasa would undoubtedly "Thank God" for having Mr. Ranjan Wijeyaratne in the Agriculture sector. Why not wait and see?

M. S. Sarath Amarasinghe

752, North Kalutara,
Kalutara.
15.6.1980

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● We will wait and see! Mr. Wijeyaratne is free to meet the Editor any time he chooses. The Editor meets only those who desire to see him. Before **Tribune** makes its own comments on the "Defence of Mr. Ranjan Wijeyaratne," we will await comments from our readers—which we are sure we will get. It is a good thing to have the work of a Secretary evaluated in the fire of public discussion—within the law. We invite our readers to send in their views about Mr. Ranjan Wijeyaratne's work-record as Secretary in charge of Agriculture, but we would ask them to make their comments as brief as possible. —Editor

NGUYU—3

Work, Milk And Men

by Bwana Rafiki

Contract work is something I have had a prejudice against dating back from my own days as a farm hand, for I was a painstakingly slow worker however hard I worked. In an iron ore mine where I worked for two years, the happiest years of my working life, at Haverigg in Cumbria in Britain, I used to do all my work on the run to counteract my tendency to slowness, and most of my work was done with bogies, empty or fully laden with ore. The miners were a grand lot. With reference to work on a coconut estate, there seems to me to be something seriously wrong with people going home two and a half hours before the end of the working day, even after taking their two hours off for lunch, having completed their task, their contract. Those same people would not do their task in a day unless there was the threat of losing their pay. Yet my prejudice is that all are not made alike, and that contract work rather alienates a man from his work. There is not much husbandry about the business. Theologically I may be quite wrong. Perhaps people should be alienated from their work, consider themselves just hired out for the day.

What provoked these thoughts is really almost too complicated to bear description. At the wages that are paid today, the circles that are cut round coconut trees to take the manure should work out at forty cents a circle, I was told, and so for a man to earn his keep as they say, he should do about thirty three trees, the inside of the circle or ring one and a half feet from the coconut tree and two feet wide, and six inches deep. Our two men did precisely half the number that should be done in half a day, that is eight each instead of sixteen. On the other estate, which was one with ours before Land Reform, they would be sent home even today without their pay, which would soon make them change their ideas and do an honest day's work. But our men argued that eight and not sixteen was as much as they could do. Now I could take advantage of the fact that they have topped the age of fifty five and retire them. It would save me having to pay their provident fund

of which my contribution for three of them over retiring age comes to nearly Rs. 1000 a year, or a thousand nuts.

Carrying a churn of milk on the back of a bicycle is something I do not think I could do. Yet we have to send two churns away on a bicycle, and just now in the mornings each churn contains a pint less than forty. I do not know how a bicycle can stand up to this. I do not know how a man can balance the lot. In a few weeks, if we are lucky, we shall have to send three churns on two bicycles with two men at least in the mornings, and the more regular at work of the two men again in the afternoon with two churns, six miles there and six miles back each time. Two or three times in the year at least, our main gate goes under water, and then the milk cannot be sent away at all. Most of it has to be thrown away. If we could make cheese of it, it would be a great help. Even when the gate and the main road are under water, we make great efforts to get the milk away by carrying the bicycle and the milk over a barbed wire fence and through a neighbouring estate. That can be done when there is a churn to handle, but not when there are two, or as we soon home with three. Then there are floods at the other end.

Most dairy farms weigh each cow's milk once a month to keep a record of the yield of each animal during that lactation. On our place, we do not do any weighing but we measure each cow's milk by making use of a pint measure which can hold two pints, and the yield both morning and evening is recorded in a book. Several of our cows have touched nineteen and a half pints a day, but we have not touched the twenty mark on any recorded day during the last three or four years. It takes a little time for a cow to reach its maximum yield. Pamphlets say that a cow will go on yielding milk for a very long time so long as it has not been served. I think this depends on the cow, although it might also depend on other external circumstances which effect the cow's make up, emotionally or physically. But on two cows in a herd, still less all the cows in a herd, react in the same way. Once a cow has been served, it is good to conclude or terminate the lactation before the new one begins. There may be the odd cow where this is not possible. Some

cows will go dry of their own accord in good time, and it is the better way perhaps.

There are Englishmen who have described the dairy cows in England to me as machines. One can believe it after reading tableaux on their feed. The proliferation of milk seems to have followed the proliferation of money. I have an axe to grind there. With distances to cover which constitute mileage and time, it is bad enough I think having to find one's food without having to find the money to buy it. For the worker it is a fairly simple question of collecting one's pay. For the owner it is a tremendous task of transporting money. Any token that has an exchange value constitutes money. There is the tremendous task of going and fetching it. For the convenience of the recipient it has to be done once a week. In the remote parts of England a farm hand is paid only twice a year. There is much to be said for this. I think there is even more to be said for paying a man all his dues at the end of every day. The owner or employer who pays once a month even with weekly advances is really living on credit and is really in debt to his workforce most of the time to my way of thinking. All these various ways of proliferating money by postponing payment must surely expand consumerism.

The true character of man is said to come out when the man is drunk. One of these men, a former employee, invaded my property just with the purpose of having a row with me about the terms on which he left my employment. He said he went away on the understanding that I would have him back. Whether that was so or not, it was with reluctance that I decided I could not have him back especially in view of something that happened later. On this last unwelcome visit of his, he just would not go away and he was spoiling for a fight. It was an odd situation for, for all the men I had around me, I might well have been alone. There is also the fact that some people have lion's courage in a crowd. They are better behaved when they are alone. However, he did observe certain proprieties, the kind of which was to refrain from using obscene language, but his parting shot was a studied *umba*. He had become rather a lamb when his in-laws turned up. A lot of young fellows. They got him away after a little delay.

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Airport And Rains

by V. Buvanasundaram

MONSOON was established during the last week in May. It entered through the district of Kalutara on the 26th but the heavy rains started on the 28th. 10cm a day is heavy rain and over 15cm is very heavy rain. Forecaster estate got the highest, 21.01cm. St. Vincent estate came next with 19.05cm, followed by Gikiniyakande with 17.96cm. Monsoon arrived in Galle on the same day, 28th and Monoravia estate greeted it with a heavy fall of 13.24cm. The following three days too had heavy falls. 29th-16.51, 30th-8.89, 31st-10.16cm. In all, it rained 48.80cm during the four days, which was more than any other place, during this spell. There were heavy rains in other places too; Clyde estate, Kalutara, 14.10 on the 28th and 9.14 on the 29th. Eheliyagoda estate had 14.78cm on the 29th.

All these heavy rains were due southwest of the catchment areas of the C.E.B. The same southwesterly air-stream that gave these heavy rains, closer to our coastline would have blown over the catchment areas. The large condensation nuclei on which water-vapour readily condenses to form large cloud-drops would have all fallen with the heavy rains and the smaller ones that remained would have given only light rain, except on the 31st, when the monsoon reached up-country. Maskeliya, 27th-0.11, 28th-0.20, 29th-0.35, 30th-2.21, 31st-5.72cm. Light rain is below $1\frac{1}{2}$ cm light to moderate rain. $1\frac{1}{2}$ to $2\frac{1}{2}$ cm, moderate rain $2\frac{1}{2}$ -5cm and fairly heavy rain 5 to 10cm. Blackwater estate at Ginigathena was out of the air-stream that gave the heavy rains and it got better rains than Maskeliya from the 28th-0.34, 29th-0.51, 30th-3.96, 31st-16.26cm.

June began with a spell of monsoon rains that lasted the whole of the first week. The highest fall during this spell was at Lunuwila, 9.55cm on the 2nd beating even Ratnapura's 9.09 on the 1st. Katunayake airport received 7.46 also on the 2nd, which was next in the order. Lunuwila's weekly total of 22.99cm exceeded every other place. Next came Chilaw with 22.39cm and Katunayake too had over

20cm. The rains here in this coconut triangle was much more than at "Monsoon" Kalutara 8.30 and "Rainy" Ratnapura-13.11cm. Last year, at this time, this area was in severe drought. Monsoon had dodged the MONEX experimenters and the rains did not arrive till September.

WHEN PLANES TAKE OFF against south-westerly winds at Katunayake Airport, the condensation nuclei in their exhaust fumes are carried in the opposite direction into land. These extra nuclei could precipitate the clouds before their time, precipitate more rain out of them and even precipitate clouds that are reluctant to give up their water. In this case, these condensation nuclei have been carried north, as far as Puttalam, Maha Uswewa and even beyond and to the south at least up to Colombo. The monsoon winds then were rather strong at lower levels.

Puttalam is at the boundary of the rains from the southwest monsoon. Places north of it are sheltered by the western ghats of India. Nachchikali, Kalpitiya, Karativu, Marichchukkaddi, Veppakulam received nil rainfall for the entire month of May. The cyclonic circulations in May nor the Monsoon burst could give them any rains. Our hills too sheltered Minneriya, Angamedilla, Polonnaruwa, Bakumuna, Crystal hill estate—Matale, Kobenella estate (Kandy), Deredde estate (Badulla) Mone-ragala, Irrakam, etc. and they too had no rains for May.

At Puttalam, it rained 7.54cm, during this first week in June, while its average for the entire month is only 2.31cm. Perhaps by the end of the month, it may even beat its previous best of 19.48cm in June 1912. Maha Uswewa, west of Puttalam and closer to the airport with 8.62cm got even more than Kalutara 8.30cm. Maha Uswewa's June average is only 3.83cm.

Place	Rainfall	Average	% excess/ deficit
1. Puttalam	7.45cm	0.58cm	+1185
2. Maha Uswewa	8.62cm	0.96cm	+800
3. Chilaw	22.39cm	1.91cm	+1073
4. Kurunegala	7.63cm	4.08cm	+87
5. Kegalle	5.91cm	7.20cm	-18
6. Colombo	12.69cm	5.29cm	+140
7. Kalutara	8.30cm	6.21cm	+34
8. Ratnapura	13.11cm	11.56cm	+12

THIS IS an average monsoon spell. The rains were not due to any cyclonic circulation in the monsoon stream but from clouds that had developed traversing all the way across the oceans from the southern hemisphere and developed further at the bend into the northern hemisphere. This bend is called the convergence line. The excesses of 34% at Kalutara and 12% at Ratnapura would make up for their rainless days in June. Kalutara on an average has 6 rainless days and Ratnapura has only 4. The increase at other places, even the 80% at Kurunegala are far in excess of a normal monsoon spell. Unintentional seeding of clouds by aircraft is the only answer.

Whatever may have been the conclusion arrived at the Symposium on Artificial Rain, held in Delhi on 9/10th Feb. 1953, the rain at Kegalle showing this deficit of 18% must have been robbed from clouds on their way to Kegalle from the west coast.

It is raining now, 21st June. Experts, local and foreign have gone up-country to fill up our reservoirs with artificial rain. It must be raining there too, but they should not stop their project. Only 5% of the water content of a cloud precipitates naturally, the rest passes off with the cloud. Seeding can increase this percentage. My long cry for the last 21 yers, has at last been heard over the high walls of officialdom. And it must not fail.

It happened in April to give Katunayake and neighbourhood, record breaking rainfall. It happened in May to drag in the Monsoon. June, it has happened again. 27 days after the drag of the monsoon. Moon got into the same position in the heavens, as in May. It joined the planets Jupiter, Mars and Saturn to tug at our atmosphere. On the 17th evening. Moon cut the plane of the ecliptic at the Node and got into position. On the 18 th it was under Jupiter, beneath Leonis Regulus, the brightest star in the constellation of Leo. 19th under Mars and that very evening under Saturn. Satellite pictures, showed two patches in the Arbaian sea and it started raining on the 20th. Sun was square to Moon on 20th and 21st. It is a traditional belief that if it rains heavy, when Moon is square to Sun, the rains will soon pass off.

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RANDOM JOTTINGS

by Rambler

● South Asian Summit ● Bangladesh

WE HAVE FAR BEEN so concerned with the cold war war-mongering adventurism of Brzezinski and Carter that we had tended to forget crucial developments in other countries—especially those nearer home.

Bangladesh, which has been trying hard to push for a South Asia Economic Community and which Sri Lanka seems to have fallen for, has failed to get Pakistan into this net. An editorial in the Karachi daily, *Dawn* of May 29 on *Regional Co-operation in South Asia* had stated: "The proposal put forward the other day by Bangladesh for a six-nation summit to discuss ways and means of promoting relations among the South Asian countries is the first move of its kind. Although President Ziaur Rahman has not spelt out the details of his proposal, Foreign Minister Shamsul Haq has spoken about creating a forum like ASEAN which, according to him, should help the countries of South Asia in solving their common problems and in facing challenges from outside. The concept of regional economic and political co-operation has now come to be widely accepted the world over as an important means of promoting international peace and security, besides furthering agreed regional purposes. The first instance which readily comes to mind is that of the EEC which has led to a degree of political unity and considerably more economic progress in Western Europe. In that context, the Bangladesh proposal could prove to be a significant move. Moreover, regardless of whether or not the authors see it this way, the proposal has the potentiality of promoting new equations between South Asian States based on equality and reciprocity rather than the predominance of any one Power.

"The absence of serious bilateral conflicts and the existence of a sense of common political purpose are two essential starting points for an undertaking aimed at regional co-operation. The six countries of West Europe when they formed the EEC had long since put bila-

teral conflicts behind them and had to come to see that economic integration was essential if they were to regain their pre-war position of pre-eminence in the world. In the case of ASEAN, too, the component States were not divided by acute political conflicts and positively shared their perceptions of the region's security interests. *In this sense South Asia evidently lacks the advantages that the EEC and ASEAN regions possessed when they made a start towards a regional scheme of co-operation. If the Bangladesh idea is for anything other than an informal forum for consultation and if moves are to be made to institutionalise and formalise the arrangement, it is certain to run into snags. In view of the differences in the foreign policy orientations of some of the countries of South Asia and the unresolved disputes which have impeded closer co-operation between them, it is very premature to think of a regional organisation. (italics ours).* Obviously, the first move will have to be essentially at the bilateral level and should be directed towards resolving bilateral differences and improving political ties between the six nations of South Asia. The Kashmir issue between India and Pakistan, and the Farakka and river boundary dispute between Dacca and New Delhi, to speak of the most important ones, hardly augur well for greater political cohesion in the region, and the distrust and suspicion they engender would definitely hamper closer economic relations.

"As for a regional economic arrangement, Pakistan's experience of the RCD has amply demonstrated that in the absence of complementarity in the economies of the participating countries and fairly identical levels of economic and social development, a multilateral arrangement simply fails to get off the ground. *It would, on the contrary, be more realistic in the first instance to explore possibilities of bilateral economic co-operation and political understanding among Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal and Bhutan. In regard to any matters which are thought to be of concern to all the countries of the region, consultation on an ad hoc basis can always be arranged.....*"

If this is the thinking in the ruling circles in Pakistan, then such a South Asian Economic (or Political) Community is still a far away dream.

IN THE MEANTIME, Bangladesh's economic

difficulties are mounting. In a despatch to Dawn Overseas (7.6.80) from Dacca, Hassan Saeed reported "AID DONOR'S THUMBS DOWN ON SECOND PLAN: "A last-minute 'thumbs down' by aid donors seems to have put in jeopardy the launching of Bangladesh's second Five-year Plan by July 1, this year. The Government, two days after this rebuff, unveiled a 17-billion US dollar development plan aimed at improving the lot of some 80 million people with at least 75 per cent of them living well below the poverty line. The 21 aid donors after two day's meeting in Paris (May 12 and 13) decided to slash down the Bangladesh aid request by more than 50 per cent, leaving behind a lot of uncertainties as the Plan was based largely on foreign aid and loans. The donors agreed to provide 1.3 billion dollars as against Bangladesh's request for 2.8 billion dollars for the first year of the Five-year Plan. In terms of actual assistance it is 15 per cent less than what the donors gave last year. Chartered Accountant-turned Finance Minister, Mr. Saifur Rahman, who led a top-ranking team to convince the donors about extra aid, said, on his return home, that failure to get the desired quantum of aid from the donors will not affect the launching of the Plan. The grim-faced Minister hoped that the OPEC and some of the socialist countries may fill the gap. The OPEC and socialist countries have been giving annually 300 million dollars, mostly as project aid. The Soviet Union has stopped aid to Bangladesh since the political change in Bangladesh in August 1975 when President Mujib and his family were assassinated. Countries close to the Soviet Union also have less enthusiastic trade and aid relations with Bangladesh. China of late has started taking an interest in the growth of Bangladesh—but so far has committed little financial help.

"At the back of his mind, perhaps, the Finance Minister was conscious of the financial implications of the donors' thumbs down. He told a correspondent that 'we will have to tighten our belts' in order to ensure the implementation of the Second Plan. With a shortage of food and rising prices of oil on the one hand and low prices of its exports, like jute and tea, Bangladesh is dependent to the extent of 75 per cent on foreign aid and loans for whatever little development work that has been done so far. Bangladesh's Second

Plan which is now almost certain to be revised drastically, if not now then in the foreseeable future, is far bigger than the first Five-Year Plan launched in 1973. The outlay for the First Plan was Taka 4,445 crore (one US dollar-15.75 taka). The Second Plan envisages a total development outlay of taka 25,595 crore of which taka 20,125 crore was proposed in the public sector and taka 5470 crore in the private sector. The Second Plan draft was made public only 28 days after World Bank chief Robert McNamara had visited Bangladesh to study the new nation's aid requirements. On the conclusion of the trip, which took him even to the site of a canal being dug on a self-help basis in Cox's Bazar, he indicated that donor countries and agencies, including his Bank, should be willing to make bigger contribution to Bangladesh's developmental efforts.....

"Despite refusal to increase the quantum of aid to Bangladesh, there were indications available from the United States, Britain, France and West Germany of some extra help. The United States, France, Australia and Japan through their embassies in Dacca have shown a keen interest in the accelerated pace of development in the country since President Ziaur Rahman assumed power in November 1975. The World Bank, whose chief has promised to give more aid, has provided 1.8 billion dollars to Bangladesh since 1973. When, after allowing for what Mr. McNamara promised the quantum of World Bank aid will hardly be sufficient to fill the gap caused by the aid consortium refusal. Aid from Muslim countries with surplus petrodollars has not increased but assistance from the Islamic Development Bank and the Asian Development Bank has nearly doubled over the years.....

"A top-ranking Government official told this correspondent that less aid this year from the donor countries was mainly because the Government had failed to circulate the draft of the Second Plan to the donor countries well in advance. He, however, said with chances of more sympathetic attitude and also depending on the performance in the first year of the Second Plan, it was reasonable to expect that more aid will be coming to Bangladesh in the future. Till then we may have to sit with our fingers crossed."

Bangladesh which had received the most favoured treatment for the last three years—after the overthrow of Mujibur Rahman—has suffered a rebuff from the Consortium donor countries. But Pakistan which had received a rough deal from the donor countries for the last three years was restored to favour by the Paris Consortium meeting this year.

—Next Week: **Pakistan**

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FILM FOCUS

National Film Festival

ALTHOUGH THE RAIN CLOUDS hung heavily and hovered outside, with power cut minded bureaucrats tracking them perhaps, the stars of the Silver screen glittered glamorously within the B.M.I.C.H. premises on the evening of 10.6.80, when the second President's National Film Festival focussed on Sri Lankan films released in 1979, got off on time with the arrival of His Excellency the President and Mrs. J. R. Jayewardene, to be received by the Chairman of the Sri Lanka Film Corporation. The cultural troupe of the Sri Lanka Army, then escorted the President to an anthurium decorated stage, while its band heralded his arrival. The playing of the National Anthem was followed by the lighting of the traditional oil lamp by the dignitaries on stage, to the accompaniment of Magul Bera and the strains of Jaya Mangala Gathas chanted by the students of Ananda Balika Vidyalaya. A very appropriate song of welcome, befitting the occasion, sung by W. D. Amaradeva set the stage for the speeches to follow.

A calm and composed Chairman, of the S. F. C. Mr. Anton Wickremasinghe expressed contentedly and with conviction that the future of the Cinema Industry in Sri Lanka was no longer static or euphoric, and the interest evinced by the Government gave him all the encouragement, making his task relatively easier. He then announced the twin births, due shortly of a National Film Corporation which would replace the present SFC and a colour film era which would not only keep abreast with the times, but would find foreign markets with valuable exchange. He concluded with the news that the SFC had recorded a profit

of Rs.7.3 millions in 1979 on which it was not going to sit cosily, but use the money for the betterment of standards of national films with corresponding facilities to satisfy the picture-going public.

The address of the President unwrapped an even bigger bounteous bonanza, when he announced that a new cinema complex, combining Film and T.V. studios respectively would be constructed at Bauddhaloka Mawatha. He added that these popular and dual facets of modern Mass Media would not only combine and blend with purpose in the national interest, but would fecundate each other. He continued that as an incentive for the production of better quality films, enhanced awards would be given in the future, subject of course, to the curtailment of other subsidies in keeping with Government Policy, if and when it was found unavoidable. He concluded on a role of optimism with the words "you can however be certain that my Government will do everything possible to help and foster the National Film Industry of Sri Lanka."

AT AWARDS TIME, the films **Palangetiyo** and **Sarungale** ran true to the praise that was evinced at the OCIC and Sarasaviya Film Festivals, but the surprise pocket came in the form of the film **Wasantho Davasak** which collected no less than nine awards for its technical perfection. The whole festival carried a genuine national air about it, the proceedings being trilingual at every stage, although it did sound unfortunate that not a single local Tamil Film in 1979 reached award deserving stature. A posthumous generosity was however shown in the award of the late S. M. Nayagam, a Tamil, who pioneered the production of the first Sinhalese film, **Broken Promise** in 1947.

And then it poured and poured as if the weather Gods had not only relented, but also showered their approval on the proposals that left the Cinema Industry happier at the end of a memorable day—thanks to the enthusiastic Chairman, and staff of the SFC who had laboured hard in the preceding days for its final fruition.

Since the film **Sarungale**, which won for Gamini Fonseka, the best actors awards has been reviewed recently in the *Tribune*. I shall record below my assessment of the Triple Bronze Lion winner **Palangetiyo** and **Wasan-**

the Davasak for the benefit of *Tribune* readers, with the hope that these films will be released once again, now that they bear the Presidential confirmation of their quality.

PALANGETIYO (Grasshoppers). (Awards for Best Film, Best Director and Best Screen Play to Vasantha Obeysekera).

This rather thought provoking Sinhalese film with an adult theme, runs true to life, depicting the aberrations and thoughtlessness of modern youth and their penchant for sordid literature which lead them on a trail of sin, sex and sorrow, to wreck their humble homes. A rather torrid infatuation between the hard working Sarath (Dharmasiri Bandaranayake) and temptress Kusum (Dhammi Fonseka) leads to a runaway dalliance that skids adulterously before long, as poverty seeps in, on the unholy association. There are a few lessons for parents, who do not know when or where to draw the line and keep a check on the movements of their children. The wages of love devoid of spiritual strength and parental approval are spotlighted forcefully, but I thought the camera's pre and post marital clinches—made with an eye on the box office—polluted somewhat the excellent message that was knit in the story, where slum life was surfaced with all the slush. A word of praise is due to veteran actor Henry Jayasena who roles a tormented father very convincingly. This film is recommended for mature audiences only, particularly those who can breathe in the wheat and blow out the chaff.

WASANTHE DAVASAK (A Day in Spring)—Collected Nine Awards as follows: Best Actress—Malini Fonseka; Best Music Director—Premasiri Khemadasa; Best Supporting Actor—Joe Abeywickrema; Best Supporting Actress—Somalatha Subasinghe; Best Lyrics Writer—Ajantha Ranasinghe; Best Playback Singer—T. M. Jayaratne; Best Cinematographer—Sumitha Amerasinghe; Best Art Director—Hemapala Dharmasiri; Best Sound Recordist—George Manotunge.

In the hands of director Arjuna this Sinhalese film has brought out very forcibly in excellent photography, a problem that has eaten into the vitals of simple rural life in Sri Lanka. The film characterises capably, the many youth who dared the portals and entered the citadels of University Education to collect degrees at a price—a price their parents had

met by sale of their lands etc., to be haunted eventually by the grim spectres of unemployment, and to exist as neither fish, fowl nor farmer when they returned to their humble homes. Ravindra Randeniya portrays cuah an "Enigma" well in his excellent presentation, when he discovers that he cannot even collect his village love (Malini Fonseka) from her mother (Somalatha Subasinghe), with the case he collected his degree. A scheming and jealous Grama Sevaka (Joe Abeywickrema) and a brow beaten widowed aunt stand in his way, as the film grinds out some excellent performances, with the camera hard at work to give a stamp of rural authenticity to the whole story. While Malini and Joe take on their roles, effortlessly, it was Somalatha who gave a towering performance. The music was mellow with a few sober and subdued numbers, that win you over with their sentimentality. This film which is not burdened with any formula trappings is a treat for all lovers of tasty cinema. See it with the family.

James N. Benedict

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FOREIGN AID—3

Who Benefits?

by Prometheus

THE DEPENDENT POSITION of the developing countries in the currency and financial sphere is largely promoted by the policy of some economic organisations such as the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Established with the prime aim of regulating currency and financial relations between the advanced capitalist countries, they have grown to become instruments of control used by imperialism against the interest of developing countries.

The IBRD uses its credits primarily to create the favourable "investment climate" and strengthen the position of private capital, particularly foreign investors, in the developing states. The geography of IBRD credits speaks for itself. In the 1976/1977 Fiscal year, three countries (Brazil, Indonesia and South Korea) accounted for nearly a quarter of the

credits issued by the Bank.

The IBRD (World Bank) controlled by the western powers, utilise their two-third majority of votes, to continually interfere in the internal affairs of developing countries. The Bank's advisers are always on the move in order to evaluate development trends in these countries and attempt to influence them by way of credits. They make assessments of industrial development, agriculture, transport, energy sector, manpower and mineral resources, the "quality" of governmental activities, education, foreign trade and balance of payments, the internal financial set-up and taxation. Also, the pretext that the Bank's credits are not to be utilised for military purposes, even national defence potentialities are spied upon. "A constant dialogue on basic economic policy, development trends and the provision of development aid is taking place in countries in which the World Bank group is particularly active. This happens as a result of both official and UNOFFICIAL contacts". (The World Bank, Questions and Answers, Washington 1976).

THERE ARE 12 World Bank "missions" in Africa alone which, under cover of their advisory programme, are brazenly interfering in the internal affairs of developing countries. It must also be stressed that the conditions of IBRD credits have worsened over the years. Thus, IBRD interest on its credits today average 8-9 per cent, compared with 4-5 per cent ten years ago. The average period for which IBRD credits are given was reduced by three years. The developing countries' relations with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) are very complicated and, in some cases inextricably entangled. Some developing countries are unable to return their debts to the IMF and are compelled to take new credits under the collateral of future foreign exchange receipts. This allows the IMF to conduct a policy of DIKTAT in respect of these countries.

The IMF is also controlled by the developed countries of the West, and acts as an out-and-out financial "disciplinarian" of developing countries. Presiding over 8 billion dollars, it occupies a strategic position among capitalist international financial institutions. The FRANKFURTER RUNDSCHAU has noted: "It is only when the 'market economy missionaries' from Washington give

the green light to governments looking for money that most of the other private and governmental financial fountainheads start flowing throughout the world. Recent examples show what happens to governments which, out of consideration for their own populations, want to avoid the IMF strait jacket: they are sent home empty handed elsewhere, too". The IMF's influence is based not so much on the volume of its financial resources, but on the fact that it considers itself and is universally regarded as a guide in this sphere-where private banks are inclined to grant credits only after the IMF has secured acceptance of its terms.

THE ECONOMIC BIG - STICK the IMF uses under the guise of "advise" results in demands which include a liberalisation of currency regulations, and the governments concerned are told in detail what incomes, wage and expenditure policies to adopt. Instead of asking Pinochet's Chile to reject its fascist system of government, they were urged to "free the state from having to provide social services for the needy and to lift social restrictions imposed on proprietors and entrepreneurs. The result was a further increase in unemployment, a diminished growth in productivity and a higher rate of inflation.

The condemnation of IMF policies is worldwide. Peru's Foreign Minister has quite rightly emphasised that "international financial organisations are fomenting social disturbances through their loan conditions. This is a new and more subtle form of violation of human rights of developing countries". The Peruvian President notes: "The deflationary recipes of the IMF inevitably result in a cycle of social agitations and repression, which obliges governments to violate in an ever-increasing degree the rights of man." Mexican President Jose Lopez Portillo, underlines the problem of cutting back on social welfare measures as per IMF recipes: "There is something which upholds all human rights, without which they can't be understood the right to what we have called the dignified levels of consumption of the human being, the need he has for guaranteed levels of food, health, education, leisure, and the right to enjoy."

Peru, which must use 30 to 40 per cent of its raw material export earnings to pay off its debts to capitalist industrial nations,

was told by the IMF to proceed with a drastic increases in tariffs which hit the poor particularly badly, in respect of such items such as medical care or public transport, Peru was asked to abolish social services such as milk allowances in school for poor children, subsidized bread and a maximum price programme. When the PHILLIPINES, a country with a foreign debt of 8 billion dollars asked the IMF for a loan in late 1979, the condition stipulated that the country make more generous conditions for foreign capital penetration, in spite of the fact that over 200 of the country's important enterprises are whole or partly foreign owned: "inviolability" of investments had to be guaranteed along with a wage-freeze and increased taxation of the population. TANZANIA, in return for a 300-million dollar credit in 1979 was ordered by the IMF to devalue its currency, reduce government expenditure and loosen price controls. TURKEY, in return for a 1.45 billion dollar handout in mid-1979, had to devalue the Turkish pound by 43 per cent vis-a-vis US dollar and raise the price of petrol by 30 per cent. When ZAIRE was offered "aid" in 1977 by the IMF, the conditions were that MNCs be given unlimited opportunities to plunder the country. Zaire's financial and monetary policies are now in the direct control of an IMF official. The result? The cost of living rose to 30 per cent in 1978, wage increase had to be limited to 15 per cent, according to IMF DIKTAT. In the first week of June 1978, the International Monetary Fund assumed day-to-day control of the Jamaican economy. The Jamaican Finance Ministry had to submit a daily report on "the basis of four performance criteria" to an IMF monitoring unit in the Bank of Jamaica and send a full weekly report to IMF headquarters in Washington D.C. The result? Newsweek (June 9, 1980) reports that Jamaica is suffering its worst political crisis since independence from Britain... :....To quote ".....Jamaica is on the verge of a national cataclysm. Living standards have fallen 40 per cent in three years: unemployment has soared past 30 per cent. Within weeks, Jamaica may have to default on its more than one billion foreign debt. The economic crisis has been building since leftist Manley took office in 1972. BUT THE IMF RECENTLY BROUGHT IT TO A HEAD. After keeping Jamaica afloat with loans since

1978, the IMF ordered Manley to take severe austerity measures, and he refused..... The economic chaos has contributed to political violence.....”

Such credit policies by international financial institutions like the IMF sets off a rightward political trend in developing countries. IMF conditions are more easily fulfilled by reactionary regimes than those which prefer a democratic path of development. As has been aptly observed;” translating the demands into national economic policy requires iron fists whose clenching often results in the collapse of democratic government. The alternatives which present themselves are

amendments’ to the programmes or the setting up of military dictatorships”.

The payments made to reactionary regimes in Latin America, by Capitalist credit institutions, for the period 1975-1978, underline this point. The World Bank made available the following credit: Guatemala—207.5 million dollars, Honduras-223.5 million dollars; El Salvador-44.7 million dollars, Paraguay-194.7, Chile-298.8 and the IMF extended to Honduras 20.0 million dollars, and to Chile, 143.8 million dollars. Chile has, thanks to the support of four advanced capitalist countries, received almost 1.5 billion dollars since Pinochet seized power in a bloody coup and established a fascist regime. The total sums made available to the other dictatorial regimes mentioned are as follows: Guatemala-295.4 million dollars, Honduras 638.1 million dollars, El Salvador 260.0 million dollars, Paraguay 381.0 million dollars.

As the Secretary General of UNCTAD, Dr. Gamani Corea quite rightly pointed out in regard to IMF policies “.....the problems of a developing country cannot be solved by borrowing from the Fund, carrying out an internal contraction process which create a whole lot of social problems.....”.

Concluded.



INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

by Ariel

Sanjay, Indira & Afghanistan

The unexpected seems to be the order of the day in world affairs today. Whoever expected that Sanjay Gandhi would disappear from the Indian political scene just when he had crossed the threshold of a career to take him to the dizzyest heights of power. Already at thirty-three he was regarded as the real power behind the throne. R. K. Karanjia in the Bombay Weekly *Blitz* (7/6/80) said “Sanjay Gandhi has arrived. My friend Khushwant Singh was less than a prophet when he forecast that Sanjay should be the next Prime Minister (*Society*, May 1980). Sanjay already is the *de facto* Prime Minister of India, with Indira Gandhi as the *de jure* occupant of that high

Sir,

FOREIGN AID

I have read with great interest in the article by Prometheus on “Foreign Aid—Who benefits?” in the latest issue of your esteemed paper. I would be most grateful if the following letter could be published in an early issue of *Tribune*.

In his article on “Foreign Aid—Who benefits?” Prometheus states that “the rate of interest on West German state loans to India is 6.75%”. This statement needs rectification. In reality German government loans to India, which is considered one of the countries most seriously affected by the increase in oil prices, is given on IDA terms i.e., with an interest rate of 0.75%, a grace period of 10 years and a period of repayment of 50 years. Prometheus’s researcher has, therefore, not done a very thorough job.

Furthermore, Prometheus states that the rate of interest on credits granted to the developing countries by the Soviet Union and some other socialist countries is 2.5%. To make the picture complete Prometheus should, in my opinion, add that for instance the development aid granted by only one leading “capitalist” country, i.e., the Federal Republic of Germany, exceeds the development aid given by the whole “socialist” camp put together.

Dr. H. Wockel

Ambassador,

Federal Republic of Germany.

Colombo.

June 26, 1980

office, presiding over its liquidation in favour of her own son. The transfer of power from the traditional to the Youth Congress—that is, from Indira to Sanjay—should be completed by 1982, when the Prime Minister finally bridges the generation gap between the two. In the meantime, Sanjay is expected to take charge of the new and more youthful and dynamic ruling party as President, or General Secretary and dominate governmental policies and actions. This will enable Mrs. Gandhi to devote more time to external affairs.

“Last week really constituted a watershed in India's post-independence history. On the 27th of May fell the sixteenth anniversary of the death of Jawaharlal Nehru; and on 28th and 31st followed the crucial States election whose results were announced on June 2. The ruling party has repeated its massive January victory with an equally impressive landslide in the States elections. And it was Sanjay Gandhi who personally conceived, planned, monitored and executed the present as also the last poll, in the teeth of opposition from the Congress elders, the results amount to a personal triumph for him and his Youth Congress. They have now secured a powerful new political base for themselves which is bound to dominate the national scenario for the coming five years. Indeed as the *Financial Times* (London, 27/5/80) correctly forecast, ‘a new Congress Party has been born and Indian politics has entered another era’.....”

Another prestigious Indian weekly, *Mainstream* (31/5/80) has said this before the Assembly election results were known: “.....in this week of memorials to Jawaharlal Nehru's passing away sixteen years ago, it looks as if we are about to enter a new epoch. It may not be just an accident that the son whom Indira Gandhi is grooming as her successor was not seen offering flowers at Shantivana, five years ago, Sanjay was candid in confessing in his first press interview that Jawaharlal made little impact on him. The advent of Sanjay Gandhi symbolises the end of an era in Indian politics. Jawaharlal Nehru has to be out of date as Sanjay Gandhi struts about on the platform helped on by a doting mother. Maternal love does not necessarily ensure the good of the nation which Indira happens to govern today. Is the Nehru legacy to be buried under Indira's new-look politics?....”

Sanjay was a controversial figure. His methods were unorthodox, Laws did not exist for him. He broke rules. He was a law unto himself, and he insisted that others follow him blindly. He was the saviour. His word was law. Those who disagreed with him or opposed his methods were heretics to be burnt at the stake. His supporters hailed him as a New Messiah to uplift India by a new kind of extreme private capitalist endeavour. His critics said that if he had persisted in politics, it would be civil war in India with the ballot box thrown into the dustheap.

“He died by his own hand, by his lunatic dare-devilry and his disregard for rules. He died in a plane for which he had no licence to fly. He looped the loop in acrobatic feats in air space where he should not have indulged in such stunts. A bereaved mother has not permitted an official inquiry into the plane crash which killed him. This was the last act of a wayward son she will condone. Sanjay's supporters bemoan his death as the passing of a national hero. But most thinking Indians will probably heave a sigh of relief that India has been spared the perils of Sanjayism.”

Whilst Indira Gandhi's domestic policies under the impact of Sanjay's influence have come in for sharp criticism in India, her foreign policies (which had been spared Sanjay's immature ego-centrism) have won her the admiration of rational and sane-minded people all over the world. Her attitudes and actions in regard to the Afghan crisis is an outstanding example of continuing the Nehru tradition of safeguarding India's national interests whilst doing everything to sustain regional and world peace in a period when detente was under grave threat.

She does not approve of Soviet Union's intervention in Afghanistan, but she refused to join the US-led chorus to condemn the USSR and issue threats of eternal damnation unless the Russians withdrew their troops. She did not join the Carter-Brzezinski hue and cry that the Soviets should be “taught a lesson” and thereby be compelled to withdraw the troops. She continued to maintain the recognition of the Babrak Karmal government and carried on a dialogue with Kabul. She pursued a policy of negotiations to persuade the Soviets to withdraw their troops.

She recognized certain basic which she realised could not be ignored; that the present growth of tension was caused by irresponsible actions of the imperialist powers—viz., the US military threats and the provocative adventures against Iran from the time the Shah was forced to flee the country, the military intervention from Pakistan territory into Afghan territory to destabilize and subvert the 1978 Saur revolution, the dangerous American presence in the Indian Ocean and the creation of military bases in African and Arab countries. She also refused to countenance the attempt to utilise the non-aligned movement by certain countries to attain their regional, parochial or selfish interests under the cover of non-alignment.

The Indian commentator, Inder Malhotra, in the course of a recent article, had emphasised India's stand on the Afghan crisis was to "seek a reduction of tension and peaceful solution in the problem in the region," and that it called for abjuring military methods and finding a political solution out of the difficulty, "while this is still within the range of possibility". Indian policy-makers, Malhotra said, were deeply conscious that "This is the first Soviet action in three decades of highly fruitful Indo-Soviet friendship and co-operation which impinges on India's geostrategic interests. And yet there has been some reluctance on the Government's part to say so publicly for two understandable reasons. First this country does not want to encourage those who view the Afghan crisis purely in terms of super-power rivalry and wish to exploit it to bring the cold war into the region. Secondly India cannot allow its differences with the Soviet Union over the Afghan situation to impair bilateral Indo-Soviet relations, especially the Soviet underwriting this country's defence preparedness....."

Malhotra referred to the Indian Foreign Minister's statement in the Lok Sabha after his recent visit to Moscow in which he had expressed strong disappointment that the Soviet Union had made no move to withdraw its troops. Malhotra set out the reasons why India had taken this rather strong stand against Moscow: ".....Another reason for New Delhi's decision to place its concern on record is its anxiety to convey its feelings to the people of Afghanistan. They, like the Soviet

people, have a long tradition of friendship with this country which it cherishes. It is no secret that in recent months the brave and simple Afghan people have been under the impression that the Soviet Union enjoys uncritical Indian support for its intervention in Afghanistan. The impression is, of course, wrong and has been deliberately fostered by elements not particularly friendly to this country. But it exists and has to be corrected. Allied to this is the problem of credibility with the third world countries, especially those liable to be influenced by interested propaganda from such forums as the Islamic Conference. All this does not mean however, that India is now prepared to join any chorus of denunciation of the Soviet Union that might be orchestrated by the US, China or anyone, else. It remains firmly opposed to any such move. Indeed, it has chosen to be outspoken at this stage in the knowledge and belief that even ardent cold warriors are now beginning to realise the folly of their ways....."

Malhotra went on to point out that: "In his statement, Mr. Narasimha Rao said, for instance, that according to press reports, citing a senior US official, there had been a 'small but significant' change in the American position on Afghanistan. This is an understatement. The Foreign Minister has much more than press reports to go by. American diplomats in New Delhi make no secret of the fact that their country no longer insists on the withdrawal of Soviet troops as a precondition for talks with the regime in Kabul. This may well have a beneficial impact on the attitude of the three-man committee appointed by the recent conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers. Its exertions so far have left both Moscow and Kabul cold. But a greater flexibility in its approach produce different results. New Delhi is not oblivious of the weapons, money and aid in various other forms which continue to reach the Afghan rebels from across Afghanistan's borders with Pakistan, Iran and perhaps even China. But when all is said and done, the fact remains that this aid makes only a marginal contribution to the inflamed situation in Afghanistan. Those who are masterminding the pumping in of the aid into rebel-hideouts in the hills of Afghanistan may well be tempted to increase it if the Soviet military presence expands and threatens to

become permanent.....”

Finally, Malhotra drew attention to the difficulties of finding a political solution and hinted on India's thinking on the subject: “But it is easier to stress the desirability of a political solution than to suggest what exactly it can be or how it can be reached and implemented. For instance, even if it is accepted that Afghanistan must remain as it has been for six long decades broadly within the Soviet orbit in the sense of being friendly towards Moscow how to put together a pro-Soviet regime in Kabul whether headed by Mr. Babrak Karmal or someone else that would survive the departure of the Soviet troops? And yet with all these difficulties and complexities there is no escape from the search for a political solution, no matter how slow and painful it is. For a start, bilateral talks between Afghanistan and its two neighbours, Pakistan and Iran can lower the tension somewhat. These can make headway if they are supplemented soon enough by a demonstrable attempt to broaden the base of the Babrak Karmal regime on the one hand and, on the other, by a declaration by Moscow to consider an early withdrawal of its troops.”

Most neutral observers are agreed that the Soviet decision to withdraw part of its troops from Afghanistan was the result of Indian diplomacy. The withdrawal may be “token” but Carter's initial reactions to demand a total withdrawal immediately stiffened Russian attitude. According to a *Reuter* message from Moscow datelined June 27: “The Soviet Union has made clear that there would be no further withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan until foreign interference in the country's internal affairs stopped, diplomatic sources said today. In a message to Italy in its capacity as current Chairman of the European Common Market Ministerial Council, Moscow also said that more Soviet troops could be sent to Afghanistan if required.....”

Though the Soviet withdrawal came before the Western Powers Summit in Venice and the NATO Council's meeting at Antera, Carter had insisted that both the Venice Summit and NATO should in strong language demand the total and unconditional withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan. Though Britain backed the US, the French took a more

lukewarm and conciliatory line. A *Reuter* report from Paris stated: “French President Valery Giscard D'Estaing said yesterday that the announcement of Soviet troops withdrawals made it clear that Moscow was seeking a political solution to the Afghan crisis. The President told a Press Conference that the pull-out announced by the Soviet Union last weekend was a move in the right direction. ‘However limited in number, although the numbers are significant, this withdrawal is a gesture in the right direction and responds to the demands made on the Soviet Union. With the troop levels remaining in Afghanistan it is clear that it is only by political means that a solution can be found,’ the French leader added.”

It is interesting to note however that Carter's tough “teach them a lesson” and “compel withdrawal” strategy has not won complete support from his allies. A *Reuter* report from Washington (28/6/80) stated: “President Carter appeared to improve his standing with major allies, but failed to narrow differences over world crises during an eight-day European tour which ended last night. European diplomats attended the seven-nation Western Summit in Venice said he won respect for his spirited defence of his policies and for his willingness to listen to criticism. The Summit supported him with a strong condemnation of Soviet intervention in Afghanistan but offered no measures that might put pressure on the Kremlin to withdraw all its troops. Disagreement persisted in other areas where Mr. Carter's allies felt he was following incorrect and sometimes risky policies. The West Europeans remained reluctant to impose strong sanctions against Iran in the hostage crisis and continued to challenge US policy in the Middle East.....”

With regard to Carter's continued differences with the French and the Western Germans, the *Reuter* report stated: “Mr. Carter smoothed out—at least temporarily—his frequently difficult relations with French President Valery Giscard D'Estaing and West German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt. President Giscard D'Estaing, who angered the White House by withholding advance notice of plans to confer with Soviet President Leonid Brezhnev last month, agreed that consultations in the Western alliance had been inadequate and should

June 10-14

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

be improved. President Carter and Mr. Schmidt agreed to a truce in a public brawl over US concern that the West German leader might be backing away from a NATO position to deploy modern missiles in Western Europe to counter Soviet missile strength. Mr. Carter sent Mr. Schmidt a letter which astonished and angered the Chancellor. The two leaders held a private meeting in Venice and President Carter told reporters that it started out on a stormy note....."

Schmidt will be in Moscow this week and he will discuss the question of a freeze on the NATO plan to have medium-range nuclear missiles in Europe—though Carter was adamant that he should not.

Carter's "teach Moscow a lesson" strategy has failed. His grain embargo has hurt the American farmers more than it has the Soviet Union and has hastened a recession in the US. His "boycott the Olympics" has not prevented the Olympics from being held at the same level of participation as the Montreal Olympics (although two or three major sporting nations are keeping out). The Babrak Karmal government has not fallen in spite of unlimited support to the rebels and mercenaries sent into Afghan territory. And the Babrak Karmal government, from many reports, appears to be gaining ground and may soon stabilise its position.

A guerilla war against the Kabul regime can be carried on for years if the US, China, Iran and Pakistan continue to arm and help the rebels and mercenaries, but this will mean that the Soviet Union will not withdraw its troops. Without the help of these four countries, the rebel movement will fizzle out within a short time. Intervention begets intervention. Intervention to oust a socialist regime in Afghanistan brought the Soviet troops to that country. The stopping of intervention to help Afghan insurgency is the only way to ensure Russian troop withdrawal.

Indira Gandhi recognized the realities of the situation and Indian diplomacy has endeavoured to effect a political solution to secure Soviet withdrawal by persuading the interventionists not to help the insurgency.

Even American diplomats have now stopped talking about "compelling" Russia to withdraw her troops and now use the term "induce withdrawal." This is a vindication of Indira Gandhi's policies.

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 Lanka-dipa; JD—Janadina; SU—Sun; DV—Davasa; DP—Dinapathi; CM—Chinthamani; WK—Weekend; RR—Riviresa; DK—Dinakara; EN—Eelanadu; IDPR—Information Dept. Press Release.

TUESDAY, JUNE 10: YMBA president Siri Perera, who has returned after attending a conference in Teheran last week on alleged US intervention in Iran said yesterday that the American hostages might not be released for some time; Mr. Perera was one of three Sri Lankans who attended the conference at the invitation of the Iranian Foreign Minister Sadeq Qotbzadeh; the other two were Dr. M. C. M. Kaleel, president of the All-Ceylon Muslim League and Dr. Badi-ud-din Mahmud, former Education Minister. The Department of Census and Statistics had begun a survey of the labour force and manpower in Sri Lanka to assess skills, training, unemployment, under-employment and other details, Director W. A. A. S. Peiris said yesterday. Work on the proposed 1000 bed Sri Jayawardhanapura hospital which Japan will build as an outright gift is expected to commence by the end of this year—CDN. The Government will soon confer honours on citizens who render exceptional service to the nation; such honours will take the form of decorations and awards conceived in the tradition of the country's culture. Private sector enterprises offered about 19,678 job opportunities to young men and women during the second half of last year; the employment offered were at high, middle, skilled and unskilled levels; the Netherlands has offered development assistance to Sri Lanka to the tune of Rs. 368 million—GDM. Education Minister Ranil Wickremasinghe, has been directed by Cabinet to in-

quire into the recruitment procedure of teachers last year. Colombo subscribers will be provided with direct dialling facilities with cities in India under a new-micro-wave radio link system to be commissioned in October. The Ceylon Electricity Board is to consider introducing the five-hour power cuts from next week, a spokesman warned yesterday. Government has decided to resume recruitment for vacancies in Government Department; this decision by Cabinet last week ends a several months long temporary suspension of recruitment to department vacancies due to a lack of funds. Government has decided that the search of private premises without a warrant permitted under existing special laws should be continued with new safeguards to prevent abuse of this power—SU. 20 Lankans including rich gem merchants are said to be involved in the recent abortive attempt to topple the Maldivian government—LD. The Government has decided to fill the existing vacancies in the public sector as the financial situation has improved; the government earlier decided not to recruit any new persons to the public sector as the financial situation was tight—DV. Thousands of workers participated in the funeral of Mr. D. Somapala who died on the 5th of June—JD.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 11: The leader of the visiting parliamentary delegation from the Netherlands H. J. B. Aarts has said that his country could not and would not tolerate a situation in which aid to developing countries becomes a barometer for the economic climate in the industrial countries. The only positive response Sri Lanka has received so far in its effort to obtain generators from abroad on an emergency basis for tiding over the current power crisis is from India. The conversion to the metric system of weights and measures in all activities and transactions affecting the general public in Sri Lanka will be completed by October this year, many years ahead of schedules; Chairman of the National Metric Conversion Authority H. L. K. Goonetilleke said yesterday that by October the metric system would have replaced the Imperial system that had existed in Sri Lanka from the early 19th century when Britain annexed the country. One died of food poisoning and nine others from three different families were being treated yesterday at the Colombo

South Hospital, hospital sources said: they had consumed rototi and stringhoppers made of flour purchased from the co-operative stores at Divulpitiya in the Kohuwala Police area. Trade and Shipping Minister Lalith Athulathmudali, returned from a 17-day official tour of four European countries yesterday, convinced that Sri Lanka is moving forward in the tough world of foreign investment and trade. The Hotel Lanka Oberoi has started construction to increase its room capacity to 580; this work is scheduled to be completed next year—CDN. An official committee chaired by Mr. James Lanerolle, has recommended the immediate withdrawal of the Sunday ban on use of private vehicles. In Sri Lanka, life expectancy, infant mortality and literacy—three basic welfare level indicators—are shown to have "far out-performed countries with higher per capital income levels; this view is expressed in an ILO report on Welfare Systems, their distribution and income distribution, just published. The Prime Minister Mr. R. Premadasa has recommended to the Government that Sri Lanka should aid Zimbabwe the newly emergent African state to overcome acute shortage of trained personnel—CDM. Tough penalties, including fines up to one million rupees will be levied by the Sri Lanka Government on ships, vessels or any off shore installations found flouting any provisions of a proposed new Marine Pollution Law; the proposed law which contains a series of stringent provisions, providing for the prevention, reduction and control of marine pollution is now being examined by the Legal Draftsman; it will shortly be presented in Parliament by Trade and Shipping Minister Lalith Athulathmudali. Dental technicians of the Health Department have been on a go-slow for the past one and a half years. President J. R. Jayewardene is expected to discuss matters relating to the proposed regional grouping in South Asia and the future of non-aligned when he visits New Delhi in September to attend the regional meeting of Commonwealth Heads of State to be held there. Western European entrepreneurs are expected to invest here in tea packeting, boat building, coconut fibre-based finished products, rubber-based consumer items and fishing equipment as a result of Trade and Shipping Minister Lalith Athulathmudali's investment

promotion mission to the European Community—SU. The rainfall deficit over the Castle-reagh catchment during the period January-May this year has been a massive 283 millimeters below the standard average while the deficit over Mousakelle was an even higher 434 millimeters during the same period, figures compiled by the Department of Meteorology reveal—CO.

THURSDAY, JUNE 12: The government approved yesterday a proposal by President J. R. Jayewardene to implement a project called the Basic Needs Project for Vavuniya. The Ministry of Textile Industries will shortly distribute among local manufacturers the export quotas for garments allocated by the United States to Sri Lanka, Ministry Secretary, Vincent Pandita, said yesterday. The government yesterday decided to lift with immediate effect the ban imposed on the use of private vehicles on Sundays—CDN. A sub-committee headed by the Prime Minister Mr. R. Premadasa was appointed by the Cabinet yesterday to inquire into the Telecommunications and Postal services and make recommendations for improvement—CDM. The Newspaper Ordinance is to be amended to ensure that the proprietor, printer or publisher of a newspaper obtain guarantee bonds to meet decrees of court for damages against the newspaper—SU. The Central Committee of the TULF has decided to expel from the party membership Mr. Kovai Mahesan and Eelaventhan, but they have been granted two weeks in which to beg for pardon; if they do so they will remain as party members—VK. The government has done away with all the restrictions in the import of cattle and chicken feed—DP. Students who sat the GCE (A/L) and scored high marks in science and commerce will be given teaching appointments shortly; there are about 1000 vacancies—DM. The Cabinet has ordered a full-scale investigation into the activities of the Food Department—DK.

FRIDAY, JUNE 13: The Colombo Municipality has decided to be tough with its rate-payers who have persistently defaulted in the payment of rates: accumulated arrears in rates reached the staggering figure of Rs.32 million at the end of 1979 and still the accumulation goes on. Finance and Planning Minister Ronnie de Mel said yesterday that information had been received that the Netherlands had de-

cidied to almost double its official aid to Sri Lanka—CDN. The postponement of the Art education and law examinations of the University of Colombo was very likely because the deans and the heads of departments of the three Faculties had given up their administrative functions in protest against their salaries being not revised—CDM. The Chamber of Commerce and Industry has warned that if the present regular power cuts continue much longer, it would have "disastrous effects" on the country's export industry. There had been a further drop in the water level at the Mousakelle reservoir, latest reports from the catchment area indicated yesterday. A miniganga compressing and packing factory was discovered by the Police at Kirillapone yesterday—SU. With an extension of the present three-hour power cut very much on the cards, the government has approved a proposal of the Ministry of Power and Energy to urgently explore the "over the counter" availability of gas turbines combined with the necessary transformers and switchgear—CO.

SATURDAY, JUNE 14: Japan yesterday gave Sri Lanka two grants totalling Rs. 164.68 million (2300 million yen) for the television broadcasting network and for a factory to produce note books for school children under an agreement signed yesterday in the Finance Ministry—CDN. Heavy commercial vehicles have caused serious damage to the public roads and sent the maintenance bill skyrocketing to several million rupees—CDM. Strict quality control will be applied on all consumer goods under a Standardisation Marks Scheme to be introduced by the Bureau of Ceylon Standards from July. The premises of the Maharagama Teacher Training College has been declared out of bounds from yesterday for the trainees who are on strike demanding an immediate inquiry into the incident which took place last week (on June 5) where a group of lady teachers were allegedly assaulted by a group of unidentified persons. The much awaited regular local gem auctions to be conducted by the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce will begin in Colombo from August with interest already shown by foreign brokers and buyers—SU. The Ministry of Agriculture has decided to give land in Vavuniya to those farmers who are growing onions and also to grant them loans—DM.

Confidentially

Foreign Experts

IS IT NOT A FACT that one publication issued by the Ministry of Plan Implementation (in March/April 1980) has not received the publicity it deserves? That this investigative study is entitled FOREIGN EXPERTS/CONSULTANTS/ADVISERS IN PUBLIC SECTORS INSTITUTIONS AND FOREIGN AND LOCAL STAFF ATTACHED TO EMBASSIES AND HIGH COMMISSIONS IN SRI LANKA? That apart from a brief reference to a part of its contents in the *Observer* shortly after it was released, there has been no further reference to this all important document? That whether an iron curtain has descended on this important document is hard to say? That it is not the blackout that has enshrouded this document which is important but the contents themselves? That in an introductory note to the publication on 3rd April 1980, Dr. Wickrema Weerasooriya had stated: "This publication consists of a survey made by this Ministry on Foreign Experts and Consultants serving in Sri Lanka. We have also included for general information a list of the main Embassies established in Sri Lanka and the number of personnel both local and foreign serving at these Embassies within our country. The information given in this Report is information available as at June 1979. There may be changes since then. We are also hoping to make this an on-going study and from time to time publish a short survey or report on this subject. This Ministry makes no comment on the information compiled and available in this Report. It is for each Ministry and institution concerned to study this Report and make the best use of it. I welcome any suggestions as to how this study could be improved. We have also reproduced a recent cartoon by the well-known Cartoonist 'Wijesoma' of the *Ceylon Observer*. We record our due acknowledgement both to the *Ceylon Observer* and to Mr. Wijesoma. I also wish to mention that much of the work in this connection with this survey was done by Mr. V. N. Selvaratnam, Director of this Ministry"?

That Section One relates to "FOREIGN EXPERTS/CONSULTANTS/ADVISERS ATTACHED TO PUBLIC SECTOR INSTITUTIONS IN SRI LANKA? They fall into four categories: "According to the information furnished by Ministries in response to this Ministry's circular of 23.7.79, there are 215 Foreign Experts/Consultants/Advisers in Sri Lanka made up as shown below: (i) U.N. Group 65; (ii) C. Plan 14; (iii) Foreign Experts provided and paid for by other Foreign Governments/Agencies 88; and (iv) Foreign Experts recruited direct and paid for from Sri Lanka funds 48."? The report goes on to state that: "The information furnished by Ministries does not however tally with the information received from the U.N. and C.Plan offices in Colombo regarding their experts serving in Sri Lanka as at 1st July 1979. According to these two Agencies, there were 180 UN and 44 C. Plan Experts working in Sri Lanka at the beginning of July 1979. Their distribution according to U.N. Agency in the case of U.N. Experts and Donor country in respect of C.Plan Experts is given below: U.N. Experts: (1) UNDP 4; (2) UNFPA 1; (3) UNGHS 4; (4) UNDTCO 3; (5) UNICEF 9; (6) UNV 82; (7) UNIDO 2; (8) UNESCO 10; (9) WFP 2; (10) ILO 17; (11) FAO 22; (12) WHO 10; (13) ICAO 1; (14) ITC 2; (15) IAEA 1; (15) World Bank 5; (17) IMF 3. C.Plan Experts: (1) Australia 6; (2) U.K. 13; (3) Canada 11; (4) India 2; (5) Japan 12. Total UN group 180; Total C.Plan 33 and Grand Total 224."? That the report goes on to say that the Ministries had included only those recruited by them.

That the real "guts" of the question is contained in para 3, which reads: "For the purpose of working out the Indicative Planning Figure for estimating the cost of Experts services, the UN uses the figure of US \$ 4,000 p.m. This figure includes all costs including air-passage, salaries and all other allowances payable. Naturally, the exact cost per expert-month will vary from expert to expert depending on his discipline, classification, whether accompanied by family, duration of stay in Sri Lanka etc. C.Plan experts also receive about the same salaries and allowances as those belonging to the UN Group....."

(To Be Continued)

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