

TRIBUNE

Storm Brewing

at Ratmalana

Whilst the port of Colombo is in a bad mess the situation in the Airport does not seem to be any better. It is true that there is at present no strike or slow down among the workers at the airport but the conditions prevailing there today cause the greatest dissatisfaction not only among the airline companies which are using Ratmalana but also among all served by the facilities at the airport. The situation is deteriorating so fast that there will be a blow-up at the airport far sooner than the worst pessimist in the MEP may anticipate.

The Minister of Transport in his most genial manner has called for

reports from officials who in the UNP days were responsible for creating and perpetuating the mess that prevails at the airport. The same Minister seems to depend far too much on the same kind of bureaucrats in the Road Transport section to usher in the brave new world of nationalised bus transport. This dependence on the bureaucracy which was created by the old world regime of colonialism and which had gathered moss in the corrupt regime of the UNP will be the cause of the failure of the MEP unless it is prepared to create new cadres of efficient officials who are prepared to work round the clock to make this country advance along the road of economic progress.

Complaints

Tribune has received a great many complaints about the happenings in the airport and in the Civil Aviation Department. It has received reports on the state of Ratmalana. It has been furnished with goings-on which needs careful investigation. Whilst Tribune, with its limited resources, can only undertake investigation of a restricted nature, and we propose to do this before making further comments, we have enough material to utter a word of warning to the MEP Government that unless it wakes up and decides to do something about the situation in Ratmalana, it is likely that it will be faced with a serious headache at the airport. With the transportation difficulties in the port of Colombo, it will not do for the Government to add to its troubles by sleeping over the crisis that is brewing in Ratmalana.

If the Government hopes to get confidential reports from the old



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Security corps, now in MEP disguise as CID officials, about the storm which is brewing at Ratmalana they will be doomed to disappointment. In spite of top appointments in the CID, and all the flattery that may be bestowed on "Ministers", there is a deep under-current of resentment in the secret police personal against the new Government. The reports of this secret police do not arise from the investigations of top officers but from the rank and file. The wrong information that had been given to the Prime Minister about the incidents of June 5th (evident from the Finance Minister's report) is clear indication that if the MEP wants to depend on the reports of its new "Security Service" it will soon find itself stuck up the wrong kind of tree.

The Tribune warned the Government nearly three weeks before June 5 that plans were afoot to create disturbances under the pretext of the Language Bill; and that such a conspiracy was being hatched by extremist elements both within and without the MEP. If Government had heeded this warning and taken the necessary precautions a great deal of hardship and suffering could have been prevented. If the Government wants to know what is going on in the country it cannot depend solely on the CID and the hangers-on of the MEP. It is only when the CID realise that Ministers are able to check up reports on their own that the CID will improve its methods of work.

The MEP bigwigs are wasting time on language squabbles, on saving murderers from the gallows, on permitting telephone girls to marry, and even on preventing boxing. Lake House papers give these matters the biggest headlines. That is the surest way of seeing that the MEP do not tackle the real problems and thereby bring about the downfall of this Government.

TRIBUNE

CEYLON NEWS REVIEW
COLOMBO, July 7, 1956

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Finance Minister



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PLANNING

The Government has announced that it was proposing to set up a National Planning Board. This is an important matter which cannot be overlooked much longer. But the danger which must be avoided is the mistake that the previous Government made in regard to planning.

It was thought that a Committee of Civil Servants and Public Officers from different Government Departments with a sprinkling of political figures would be sufficient to constitute planning. In the first place, the vast majority of the civil servants, particularly the older breed among them, have their heads twisted the wrong way round and,

At the request of the Government of Ceylon and pursuant to the revised standard Basic Agreement of 16th December 1954, a Mission was appointed by the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Directors-General of the International Labour Office and of the Food and Agriculture Organisation with the following terms of reference:

- i. to study economic and social aspects of the promotion of small-scale manufacturing industries in the light of availability of raw materials, power, equipment, finance, qualified management, and manpower and in the light of domestic and export marketing prospects;
- ii. to prepare a comprehensive outline plan for the expansion of existing and the establishment of new small-scale industries, including recommendations of Government policies, organizational arrangements etc;
- iii. to formulate for the guidance and consideration of the Government specific suggestions for further technical assistance which would contribute to the development of small industries in Ceylon.

unless their energies are given their proper direction, it is more than likely that they would lead the new Planning Board up the usual bureaucratic garden path.

Men from the University, and men in all walks of life, who are likely to contribute to the question of planning must be on the Board. Further, expert guidance from countries which have made a success of planning and a success of State enterprise must be obtained. At present, our Civil Service is overburdened with conceited officials who have no faith in State enterprise and who, owing to the red tape which they insist on weaving around themselves, are totally incapable of organising State Industries in a manner which will ensure success.

In this matter of industrialisation, a report made recently by a United Nations Team of Advisers on small scale industries is perhaps one of the most illuminating documents on the subject. Though the Report, which for some reason has not received the publicity it deserves, deals primarily with small scale industries, the sections in the Report which refer to the broader questions

of industrialisation provides a first rate analysis of the situation in Ceylon and sets out the immediate tasks before any Government interested in industrialisation. Below we publish an extract from the Report on the question of planning which speaks for itself.

"As industrialisation has an effect upon and is affected by virtually every sector of the economy, government must undertake responsibility for the planning and co-ordination of such development in order to ensure that all sectors of the economy make their proper contribution to the process, and that the development does not itself adversely affect the balance of the economy. This responsibility is particularly necessary at the inception of an industrialization programme, as it is a period, when competing claims for relatively large sums of capital exist and balanced growth is so very important. A "laissez-faire" approach will achieve few results, and such results as are obtained may be at unnecessary cost to the economy. The importance of planning is gaining more and more recognition in all under-developed countries, and Ceylon itself has made very healthy progress in this direction. Much, however, has yet to be undertaken and accomplished in this field, and it is hoped that full support will be given to the Government Agencies responsible for this

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Implementation

What are the implications of the *Sinhala Only* Bill in its present form? In the first place, there is a categorical declaration that the *Sinhala language* shall be the only official language of the Island of Ceylon, with the proviso that "where the Minister considers it impracticable to commence the use of only the Sinhalese language, for any official purpose immediately on the coming into force of this Act, the language or languages hitherto used for the purpose, may be continued to be so used, until the necessary change is effected as early as possible before the expiry of the thirty days of December 1960."

This can be said to be the main provision of the Bill. By this the Minister in charge, the Prime Minister at the moment, can decide the purpose for which the *Sinhala language* shall be used as the official language immediately and which other languages shall be used until December 1960. The first and primary implication is that before 1960 the *Sinhala language* shall be used in all spheres of work. Whatever assurances the Prime Minister and Government spokesmen have given about extending the time after 1960, there is no doubt that any such extension will be a definite violation of this enactment. Unless the Bill is amended, it would be incorrect to alter the four-year provision by regulation.

Impossible

That it would be humanly impossible to effect the switch-over in four years is universally admitted even in the most enthusiastic pro-*Sinhala* circles. *It has therefore been suggested that the purpose of this Bill was to impress the electors that the MEP even though it is unable to bring about the change in 24 hours, undertakes to make Sinhalese effective in the lifetime of this Parliament. This is definitely a political objective for narrow party reasons and not a national programme which can seriously be implemented without disorganising the entire machinery of administration. Whether the Sinhala language is developed*

sufficiently and whether it has all the words and vocabulary to fulfil its role as the only official language is another matter.

Having succumbed to the temptation of utilising the language policy of this country for narrow party purposes, the Bill authorises the Minister to frame regulations for its implementation. Just what are the powers conferred on the Minister?

"If such a change cannot be effected by administrative order, regulations may be made under this Act to effect such change." The Minister is therefore first entitled to do a number of acts by administrative order. This amounts to placing the entire switch-over to *Sinhala* to be at the whim of a Minister. To place such an important matter like the change-over to a new official language at the caprice, the prejudice or even obsessions of a Minister, whoever he be, is certainly no method of democratic legislation.

The second and only other clause in the Bill stipulates that the

This is the third and concluding part of a series by a Special Correspondent on the *Sinhala Only* Bill. Many readers have written endorsing the views of the Correspondent. We have also received a critical protest from the Senadipathy of the Tri *Sinhala* which will be published in our next issue.

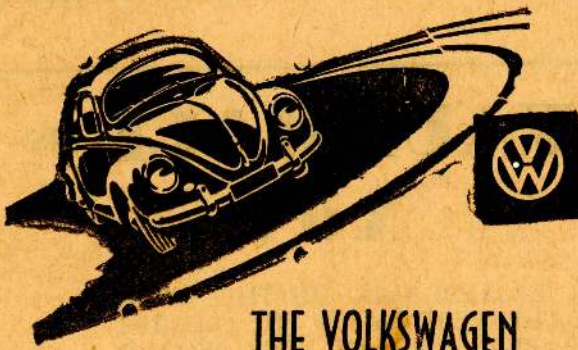
"Minister may make regulations in respect of all matters for which regulations are authorised to be made, generally for the purpose of giving effect to the principle and provisions of this Act." To give the regulation greater prestige, the Act further provides in clause two that "no regulation made under this sub-section shall have effect until it is approved by the Senate and the House of Representatives and notice of such approval is published in the Gazette."

Extremists

What this means is that every time a new set of regulations are framed and brought before Parliament there would be a battle royal in which the language extremists would find fertile ground for their disruptive and anti-national activities. It must be also noted that the regulations can only relate to the main provision of the Bill, that is,

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IMPLEMENTATION

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of making the Sinhala language the only official language in all departments of national activity within the four year limit. Any regulation that detracts or contravenes would probably be *ultra vires*.

The Prime Minister and other Government spokesmen made great many promises and gave a heroic assurance about safeguarding the rights of Tamil-speaking people and how these would be enshrined in the regulations. Would not such regulations be *ultra vires* if they in any way violated the spirit or the letter of the provision that Sinhala should be the official language of Ceylon before December 1960?

In the Bill, as it stands, there does not seem to be any way of safeguarding the rights of the Tamil or the English languages even for the restricted purposes conceded by the MEP spokesmen through regulations. An express amendment is essential in the main Bill to recognise Tamil to be at least an national language (if such violent objection is raised to making it another official language for application to a section of the population), and also to stipulate the role English would continue to play during the period of the switch-over.

The experts, legislators and jurists who drafted the language policy for India and Pakistan have recognised the need for a comprehensive enactment. They saw the dangers of a mere declaratory Bill like our *Sinhala Only Bill*. The danger is all the greater here because the implementation is not set out but has been left to the discretion of a Minister. As long as Mr. Bandaranaike is Prime Minister it may be possible for him to give effect to some of the assurances given, but if any other person were put in charge of this work, the result would be chaotic anarchy. Already the language extremists are said to be planning a campaign to ask for a new Ministry of Sinhala to be placed in charge of a person who would meet with their approval. Will there be another hunger strike?

For these reasons, it cannot be too strongly urged that the Bill should be amended without the least possible delay. If this is not done, the language and racial extremists in the two main communities would stand to benefit. If the Bill were implemented

in the manner that would please the Sinhalese extremists, there can be no doubt that national unity would be impaired and that the extremists among the Tamils would be able to distract the Tamil masses with the vilest separatist demagoguery. On the other hand, if the Bill were not implemented in a manner that would win the approval of the Sinhala chauvinists and the Minister in charge attempts to safeguard a few rights for the Tamil speaking peoples by means of regulations, the Sinhalese racial extremists can rightly charge the MEP Government with not implementing the spirit and the letter of the Bill and these would have a wonderful opportunity to campaign among the Sinhalese masses that the MEP was only deceiving the people by means of the *Sinhalese Only Bill*.

If the assurances given by the Government spokesmen are put into effect, the Sinhala Only Bill will prove a huge fraud on the Sinhalese public. The honest way out of the dilemma therefore is for the Government to amend the Bill in such a way as to be able to carry out the assurances given in Parliament. If the Government does not do this and continues to do tight-rope walking on the fragile wire of assurances it will sooner than expected run into the kind of stormy weather that shipwrecks Governments.

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Prosperity without Colonies - I

People in Western Europe have been so long accustomed to the belief that a European country can live only at the expense of other peoples, Asian or African, and that a highly developed country must, so to speak, receive constant blood transfusions from underdeveloped countries, that in certain bourgeois quarters the passing of the colonial era is regarded as a terrible and fateful catastrophe. What, they wonder, will become of Western Europe if it has no colonial possession? What will happen to its economy when it is left to its own resources?

That colonies were one of the chief sources of the growth and enrichment of West-European capitalism cannot be denied. Before World I, six Great Powers, whose own area aggregated 16.5 million square kilometres, owned colonies with a total area of 65 million square kilometres. For each inhabitant of Great Britain there were 6,450 square metres in the home country and 720,430 square metres in the colonies. The combined area of all the colonies and the principal semi-colonial countries amounted in 1914 to 89.4 million square kilometres, the equivalent of three fifths of the land surface of the globe. Their population totalled 930 million, while the population of the other countries of the world was only 727 million. In other words, the colonial system embraced the greater part of the old capitalist world.

In the space of the single decade since World War II, the backbone of this gigantic system has been broken by the Asian and African peoples. Of the eight West-European colonial empires, two — the German and the Italian — no longer exist, while only the ruins remain of two others — the Dutch and the Spanish. The four biggest colonial empires — the British, French, Belgian and Portuguese — are now principally entrenched in Africa. France no longer has any possessions in Asia. Britain has undertaken to confer independence next year on the biggest of her remaining Asian colonies — Malaya. The following table shows what has

With acknowledgements to the Soviet weekly *New Times* we reprint in three instalments an article entitled "CAN WESTERN EUROPE EXIST WITHOUT COLONIES?" which appeared in the issue dated June 7, 1956. This week the historical aspect of disappearing and tottering colonial empires is dealt with. Next week's instalment deals with the three contemporary schools of thought among Western politicians in regard to the future of colonies. The final part indicates how Western European countries can be assured of greater prosperity by trading with free, independent, economically progressive countries in Asia and Africa than by endeavouring to hold down in colonial subjection under-developed countries thirsting for freedom.

About a million and a quarter people — nearly one half of the total population of the globe — have won freedom from colonial or semi-colonial dependence. In aggregate, the area of the liberated countries is six times as great as that of Western Europe, and their population, four times as great. The West-European colonial empires were built up in the course of centuries; they are collapsing in the space of a few years. It is with such dynamic speed that historical progress is expiating the tragedies of the past.

The above list does not include three Asian countries — South Korea, the Philippines and South Viet-Nam — which have formally acquired sovereignty since the war, but which actually remain in the position of colonies — no longer West-European, but American. The Asian countries which enjoy independent status also include some which, because of their association with American military blocs, are threatened with loss of independence. Pakistan is an example.

happened in the ten years since World War II (from 1946 to date):

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Colonial and Semi-Colonial Countries which have won Independence

	Population Millions.	Area Thousands of sq. Kilometres.
In Asia.		
China	600	9,900
India	380	2,950
Indonesia	80	1,904
Pakistan	76	946
Burma	18	677
North Viet-Nam	13	165
North Korea	10*	127
Ceylon	8	66
Cambodia	4.1	181
Syria	3.5	185
Laos	3	237
Israel	1.7	21
Jordan	1.4	96
Lebanon	1.4	9
14 countries.	1,200.1	17,464
In Africa.		
Egypt	22	994
Morocco	10	448
Sudan	8.8	2,530
Tunisia	3.2	125
Libya	1.1	1,760
5 countries	45.1	5,857
Total: 19 countries	1,245.2	23,321

Tottering

But this does not alter the general picture. The map of the world has changed irrevocably. The colonial empires are tottering and crumbling. Once occupying three fifth of the territory of the globe their area is steadily shrinking. And the colonialists have nowhere to hide from the storm. Africa has not stood apart from Asia, as they hoped, but is firmly following in its footsteps. By this spring, all save one of the Arab countries in the North of the Dark Continent had secured political independence, and it is now obvious that the appearance of independent Negro states is only a matter of time.

"Kipling's White Man," the Paris *le Monde* observed in connection with the developments in the North Africa, "still bears his burden, but evidently, he no longer knows what he is bearing or where he is going..."

"Where are we going?" is a question that is worrying the colo-

nialist element in all West-European countries. The British, the Dutch, the Portuguese, the Belgians and Spaniards feel that the "burden" of colonial rule is becoming too heavy to bear and threatens to plunge them into the abyss. And it is significant that the heirs of Imperial Germany — which was a big colonial power — are clearly trying to make capital out of the fact that they are no longer implicated in colonialism. *Industriekurier*, organ of the Ruhr monopolies, recently wrote:

"After the defeat, we began as it were, from zero point; we have no colonial heritage to liquidate, have no cause to fear the charge of imperialist ambitions, but are entering anew a world that is in process of renovation. We must not miss this chance."

Kiesinger, chairman of the Bundestag Foreign Affairs Committee, recently declared that the Federal Republic "must exploit its repute as a non-colonial power."

History is thus reversing all the concepts of imperialist bookkeeping; a zero balance in the colonial possession account is now considered a



valuable asset of bourgeois foreign policy! How is this historical process regarded by the capitalist leaders of the countries which still possess colonies?

To be continued next week

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Three matters have held the attention of political circles during the last ten days. First, our Premier's activities in London where, among other matters, the British bases in Ceylon were discussed. Second, the continuing trouble in Colombo harbour has not only caused dislocation in the work of unloading ships but also focussed attention on the clash between the Harbour Union led by Philip Gunawardene, Minister of Food and Agriculture, and the Union led by Pieter Keuneman and the Communists. And third, the confidential statement of Stanley de Soyza, Minister of Finance, on the part played by the Police on June 5, which was "scooped" by the *Times of Ceylon*, has caused a flutter on a national scale which is likely to have more interesting repercussions when the Premier returns.

Bases

The first problem concerning that of the bases seems to have been more quickly and satisfactorily (amicably) solved than was anticipated. At the time these notes are being written, indications are that the British Government have accepted the principle that they should quit the bases. Discussions are being held with a view to drafting some kind of agreement to arrange for a gradual handing over of the bases to Ceylon without causing dislocation, unemployment among the workers employed at the bases and the like. An official statement is likely to be issued by Sir Anthony Eden and Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike on the concrete steps that would be taken to regularise the process of quitting the bases.

There were many who thought that there would be serious resistance on the part of Britain to quit these bases. But those who have studied the trend of British diplomacy in the South East Asian region believed that Britain would quit these bases as long as her trading and economic rights were assured. Britain quit India, Burma, Pakistan and Ceylon in 1947 and

since that time her export trade to these countries has increased tremendously. What Britain, long famed as a "nation of shopkeepers", is doing now is to transform an empire over which she held political suzerainty by force (and which gave her certain monopolistic privileges in trade and highly paid employment for its nationals) into a "commonwealth" where she could use the advantage she has acquired as a leading industrial country to export capital, goods and also consumer goods to "under-developed countries".

Whilst this seems to be the general attitude of British diplomacy to its Asian connections (she is even willing to give up her suzerainty over Malaya by stages), in Africa she still continues to play the traditional role of being a ruthless colonial ruler. But that is another matter. In so far as Ceylon is concerned, it was clear, according to political observers, that all that Britain would have sought was an agreement to spread the quitting over a few years, with some haggling over the assets to. Bandaranaike and Nehru, who must have played a prominent role in these discussions quietly, believe in the "gradualization" of the process of such political transformations.

Telegram

In the meantime, the Federal Party sent a telegram last week to the British Premier in London reiterating one of the recent resolutions passed at Trincomalee that Britain should not quit Trincomalee without the consent of the Tamil-speaking peoples.

Although Federal supporters endeavour to quibble that they are not opposed to the liquidation of the bases, the only meaning that can be given by any reasonable person is that the Federal Party opposed the British quitting the bases, without a political settlement with the Federalists. This is an attitude which can be characterised in so many ways, but an analogy which has been drawn in political

circles in Colombo is fitting and apt. The demand of Federalists would be on a par with a demand, say of the Depressed Classes in Jaffna for a specially marked territory as a homeland for them in the Northern Province to resist the discrimination practised against them by the caste Tamils, as a precondition before any demand of the Federal Party is even considered by the Government of Ceylon.

Whatever be the merits of the arguments of the Federalists in support of their telegram to the British Premier, there is no doubt that it has isolated them still further from progressive Centre and Left opinion in the south of Ceylon which have fought hard and will fight hard for equality and justice for the minorities. Ceylon Indian opinion has also hardened against the Federalists because if there is one thing that patriotic opinion in India and the whole of Asia have demanded, it is the liquidation of foreign bases. In spite of all their quarrels with their Sinhalese brethren, if the Federalists had stated categorically that they stood for the liquidation of foreign bases without provisos which are only quibbles, they would have won for the Tamils, who follow them a great measure of goodwill, sympathy and support not only from all sections of the Sinhalese community but also from progressive thought in all Asia.

Furthermore, the telegram according to critical observers revealed that the Federalists still looked for foreign support, in this case to the British reactionary circles which still want to maintain the bases, to help them in their own domestic quarrels. What the Federalists seemed to have forgotten is that Britain has stopped playing up minorities in Asiatic countries to enable her to maintain political suzerainty. From 1946 it has been pretty obvious (even the Soulbury Constitution showed this) that Britain was placating majorities (political, racial or even religious) in the different countries in order to come

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The port of Colombo is the hub of the present economy of Ceylon. Owing to the long tenure of a lop-sided plantation economy in Ceylon, which still dominates the economic life of this country, over ninety five percent of our revenue comes from our exports and imports. Indeed, without fear of being charged with over-simplification, it can be said that our present economy is nothing but an *Import-export* economy. And the centre of this system is in the city of Colombo, and the port is the venue of the entire import and export trade. That is why any trouble in the city of Colombo, and more particularly in the harbour, has immediate island-wide repercussions. A day's rioting in the Pettah can throw out of gear the entire food and sundry goods distribution system of the whole island, for it is from Pettah that dealers draw their supplies through railway and by means of lorries. But trouble in the harbour is even more disastrous. It can disrupt the entire import and export economy on which our contemporary society rests.

For some years now the Colombo harbour has not been what it should be. Its previous efficiency in British colonial times was based on immigrant labour which was sweated and made to render what amounted to slave labour. The demands for better conditions by this labour, which began after the Government of India banned further emigration of unskilled labour to Ceylon in 1939, was met by attempts to displace these workers, long trained in harbour work, with local labour under the plea of *Ceylonisation* in the hope that the new labour would be satisfied with any kind of employment at all. Unemployed persons given work under the plea of *Ceylonisation* do not make the best workers especially when they attach a political tag to their services. During the war years, owing to the exigencies of war and the shortage of manpower, the labour in the harbour was not disturbed and they won many union rights and wage concessions,

but in the years after when unemployment mounted, citizenship laws were introduced to enable Government to forcibly displace the immigrant labourers (many of whom had long settled down in the country). This process has gone on quietly and today the labour force is mainly composed of Sinhalese workers with a sprinkling of other workers who are either of immigrants or the descendants of such immigrants.

This new labour has not even now settled down to work in the primitive state in which the port of Colombo had been maintained by the colonialists on the basis of the sweated labour of immigrants. Moreover, the new labour has asked for conditions which every human being has a right to demand from its employer as well as its Government. The UNP met this situation by disrupting the unity of the workers, who had until then been organised in one union, by dividing them firstly on a racial basis and secondly by raising the bogey of "communist" infiltration. In the first phase just after the war, aided by labour leaders no longer on the scene (and whom the UNP later discarded) the cry of *Kochis* and *Bolshies* was raised with some degree of success. In the second phase, Government stepped in with its own Labour Welfare Officers and a semi-totalitarian system of recruiting labour and allocating work, mixed with endeavour to placate them with mid day meals (unfit for consumption). All this led to the creation and formation of several trade unions in the harbour, one of which supported the UNP. And, for the rest, the UNP had encouraged internecine warfare between the other unions hoping thereby they would liquidate each other.

None of these calculations have come right. The UNP sponsored union group has disappeared. There

is now the union of the Food Minister and the union led by the Communists. At present, the Food Minister seems to want to liquidate the Communist Union through exactly the same means which the UNP had adopted. The racial cry (with a faint echo of the religious) has been raised, and the strong arm of the Government has also been indiscriminately used in an endeavour to help the Food Minister (who on the strength of his Left politics had a major portion of the harbour workers at the time of the elections) to wipe out his rivals. Government interference of this kind will not help the Food Minister's union. On the other hand, he might well suffer the fate of Goonesinha who unwisely accepted governmental assistance in his fight against rival unionists.

But what is important is that the Government cannot hope to solve the mess in the port of Colombo by taking sides in labour disputes. A Labour Relations Officer, appointed by the UNP and now vigorously MEP, it is reliably learnt, has informed employers in the harbour that the solution to the problem lies in the employment of only Sinhalese labour. Does he think that Sinhalese labour will not become union conscious? Even if they are brought from that ranks of the lumpen unemployed it will be only a matter of time before they join other workers. The history of the port should convince anybody that racialism is no answer to unionisation. And that a single Government-sponsored union, fed on the language formula, also cannot meet the existing crisis. If the MEP desires to solve the harbour tangle it must rid itself of partisanship in union affairs. It must meet the legitimate demands of labour as well as hasten to modernise the port to cope with requirements of efficient shipping.

THREAT

For the first time since the new Political Correspondent of the *Daily News* started his Saturday sermons, I find myself in complete agreement with him. Last week his column mainly dealt with an outburst by the Finance Minister against *Times* and the Press generally. Readers will recall how Stanley de Soyza convened a Press Conference the morning after the *Times* disclosure about his report to the Cabinet on the events of June 5 and he proceeded to give a "piece of his mind" on the functions of the Fourth Estate.

Said the Finance Minister, after a discourse on how the Press is entitled to get its news and its scoops, "you have your methods of finding your news, but if you are going to publish news of this explosive nature, which would embarrass the Ministers of Government, you will not get any news from me." He was no doubt entitled to say that, but he did not leave it at that. "I dare say," he declared, "as newspaper men you will try to get news in advance. You have your own methods of finding such news. I am not against that. That is journalism. But if you are going to publish news of this nature which might embarrass me without consulting me I will have to take action.....If you are not co-operating with me you cannot expect me to co-operate with you."

Not satisfied even with this hint on "co-operation", Stanley de Soyza thought fit to utter a threat. Said he: "I would warn you that I have been holding my hand but there are things which the Government can do in these matters. If it is going to be a fight between the Press and ourselves we will win the fight. It was fight between you and ourselves right up to the election and we are here in spite of it."

When a *Times* reporter protested mildly that it was the Lake House that had attacked the MEP, Stanley de Soyza retorted: "Lake House was blatant but the *Times* were insidious in their attacks." And then he delivered his knockout blow or what he thought was a knock

out. "Make no mistake about it. If we were able to fight against you before the elections we can do so more now we are in power."

What an amazing outburst by a leading member of a party that has no newspaper to back it. Dizzy with power Stanley de Soyza seems to have forgotten that but for the *Times* group of newspapers, particularly the *Lankadipa*, the MEP could not have won the elections. Not to realise this betrays a sad refusal to know the realities of the political situation in the country. Without press support no party in power can hope to survive long.

No doubt the UNP with all the press support any party can ever hope to get in Ceylon lost the last elections. What it proved was that even with press support a party can fall from grace if it follows anti-democratic policies and connives at corruption. The MEP came to power because of the misdeeds of the UNP, and also because the *Times* group decided, for reasons of its own, to reflect the seething discontent against the UNP in its columns and encourage the voters to think that some change of Government would be beneficial. Even the activities of the Bikshu Peramuna would have been inadequate if the *Times* group had co-operated with the Lake House, as in 1952, to back the UNP.

Forgetting, this the Finance Minister seems to have lost his head simply because the *Times* had a scoop which brought him into the picture ("embarrassed" him according to his view.) This Minister must remember that the *Times*, like other smaller periodicals, had hailed the MEP victory and given it the fullest support, but the foolish and anti-democratic practices of the MEP (no different from the misdeeds of the UNP - phone tapping, censoring letters, etc) together with the totally discriminatory *Sinhala only* bill has lost for the MEP its best friends. Threats cannot win friends. And braggadocio will only make matters worse.

To threaten that he would deal with papers which do not toe

the line is fascism at its worst. No doubt the Finance Minister is the ultimate authority in regard to Government advertisements in the newspapers. There have been occasions in the past when Government advertisements have been withheld from certain daily papers but ultimately the Government has climbed down after a suitable "face-saving" formula.

For a member of the MEP Government, which has so many pretences to democracy, to say all that the Finance Minister did on that occasion is the height of foolishness. It was foolishness of this kind that sent the UNP out of power. And the MEP seems to be following in its footsteps. No wonder J. R. Jayawardene thought that Stanley de Soyza was a fit and proper person to be incorporated in the UNP. If the Finance Minister goes the way he is threatening to go, and if the MEP permits him to utter all the threats he chooses to make, there would be no need for him to join the UNP. He would soon have transformed the MEP into another version of the UNP, and J. R. Jayawardene might very well join the new MEP.

In discussing the Finance Minister's amazing threat I had forgotten what I had set out to say in the first instance. The Political Correspondent of the *Daily News* registered the only protest so far made against the threats of Finance Minister. That is why I want to congratulate this Lake House columnist for I find myself on his side for the first time since he took over the column from that doughty veteran, who for years had been the Saturday Morning political guru of the Lake House group. The Political Correspondent told the Finance Minister where he got off and what the proper attitude of a Government should be to the Press.

I was surprised that the *Times* and Lake House did not protest more vigorously against the Finance Minister's outburst. Did they want to ignore it or did they not want to lose government advertisements even temporarily?

Week by Week

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to terms with them to establish a commonwealth of trade. The political tactics of the Federalists in sending that telegram to Eden is really an anachronism as a political tactic. It does not fit in with current British diplomacy in Asia, and for that reason it has turned out to be a damp squib.

Colombo Harbour

The existence of two unions in the harbour, one led by the Minister of Food and Agriculture Philip Gunawardene and the other by Communists, has led to a tussle which though it has so far not shown any signs of a major blow-up, has nevertheless led to a strike of about 750 stevedores (at the time of going to press) and a general slow down which has dislocated the unloading of ships. A large number of ships moreover are lying outside harbour waiting to discharge their cargo.

Philip Gunawardene has accused the Communists of wanting to disrupt the stability of the new Government by taking the language issue to the harbour and has alleged that the Communist union is mainly composed of Indians and Tamils. It is the communal twist that Philip Gunawardene has most surprisingly given to the union tussle which Pieter Kenueman has picked on for special comment. The Communist leader also stressed that Philip Gunawardene was utilising his position in the Cabinet to "squeeze" out the other Union and that Philip's Union had refused to attend a conference summoned by the Ministry of Transport to settle the dispute. In fact, subsequently the Cabinet had supported the position taken by Philip Gunawardene.

One of the main issues in dispute is the "battle of the gates". Owing to some "incidents" between the supporters of the two unions, the Port Commissioner ordered the gate through which the supporters of the Communist Union entered the harbour to be closed with the result that all those who used this (Kochchikade) gate had to walk a greater distance to enter the harbour through the gate in the Fort. It is alleged that Philip's supporters are in large numbers at this en-

trance and all those who do not belong to his union were subject to various forms of pressuring when they used this gate.

As the tussle grows the work in the port becomes more difficult. Food ships are being held up. Some of them are being diverted to Trincomalee, Galle and Kankasanturai. It is believed that the Minister of Labour, Illangaratne, who returned to the island this week after his visit to Geneva and London, will make a fresh effort to settle the dispute, but it is likely that it will be only after the return of the Prime Minister that the matter will receive the kind of attention which can lead to a solution.

Stanley de Soya

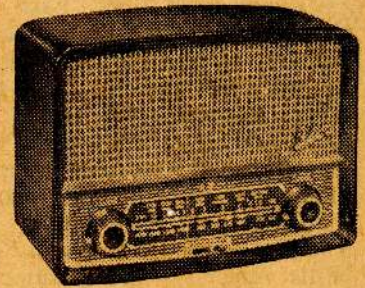
Early last week, on Tuesday 26, the *Times of Ceylon* published a report, said to be that of a "Cabinet Minister" which charged the Police with grave neglect in the matter of providing protection to citizens on June 5, when the House of Representatives debated the language bill. The document was significant in that it presented a picture which was contrary to the story which the Prime Minister has given in the House. The only inference which could be drawn was that the Premier had been given a wrong version and incorrect information by some one in authority with regard to the happenings on June 5. That is another matter which has to be sorted out when the Premier returns, but this "scoop" by the *Times* led to certain interesting repercussions.

The report was undoubtedly a scoop. It could have only leaked out through a Cabinet Minister, and Nimal Karunatileke, M.P. for Matale, rushed into print with a letter publicised in next morning's *Daily News* revealing that the report was that of the Minister of Finance, and among certain "constitutional" questions he raised, he wedged in a sinister hint that Stanley de Soya was endeavouring to help his brother Sidney de Soya, Deputy Inspector General of Police, in the matter of promotions.

This appears to have rattled the Finance Minister. At a Press Conference he lashed out at the newspapers and held our meaningless threats like a peevish schoolboy about what "they" could do to

continued on page 127

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ISLAMIC SOCIALIST FRONT

I take this opportunity to welcome all those who are here assembled to raise their voice in protest on the language issue.

In 1943 Mr. J. R. Jayawardene introduced his "Sinhalese Only" motion and when an amendment to grant Tamil equal status along with Sinhalese was moved he accepted the amendment in these words: "But if it is the desire of the Tamils that the Tamil language also should be given an equal status with Sinhalese, I do not think that we should bar it from that position"

Since that time till the "crowning" of Sir John as Emperor of Delft in Jaffna, Swabasha was understood and accepted to mean equal status for both Sinhalese and Tamil languages.

Muslim politics in Ceylon have been the politics of two parties: the Muslim League and the Moor's Association. Behind each of these two associations are arrayed the warring families of Colombo. The result is that each framed its policy to discredit and destroy the other and also to make sure that their association was earlier in the field for political plum-grabbing than the other. They were not worried about the soundness of the policy they followed. This policy was clearly indicated when the Muslim League and the Moors joined the U.N.P. and also when they sup-

This is a short report of the policy statement delivered by M. T. M. Sivardeen, President of the Islamic Socialist Front on June 3, 1956 on Pakistan Maidan, Colombo, to a crowd of over 5000 Muslims. Owing to exigencies of space we are unable to publish a fuller report of this statement which marks the beginning of a mass Socialist movement among Muslims in Ceylon.

ported its language policy. Muslim League was wedded to a policy of parity but they had to abandon it because they feared the Moors would adopt Sinhalese Only earlier. And hence to be in the good books of the U. N. P., which party they thought will be in power for ever, the leaders adopted Sinhalese Only hoping there by to be amply rewarded for their stooging.

Meanwhile the Muslim Community whom their leaders have taken on jolly ride in the U.N.P. bus, have come to dead halt in the midst of a thick jungle of political wilderness.

Demands

1. *Parity of Status*: "This mass Meeting of Muslims is of the opinion that the Constitution should be amended to provide for the Sinhalese and Tamil languages to be the State

Languages of Ceylon, with Parity of Status throughout the Island."

2. *Sinhalese Only Bill*. "This mass meeting of Muslims resolves to register its protest against the SINHALA ONLY BILL which denies the rights of all minorities in the island, and calls upon all Muslim bodies to express their disapproval of this bill in Parliament and outside".

Natural Justice and Democracy demand that every citizen should be granted this fundamental right. If the government fails to do so the very structure on which the foundation of our society is built will be shattered, leaving only the ruins of disunity, discontent and chaos

I want to make it very clear and emphatically state that our stand on the language problem does not in any way imply that we stand for the solution of this problem in the same manner as the Federal Party or Tamil Nad propagandists want to solve the problem. We do not stand for Federation or Tamil Nad.

Neither we want do declare war on the Sinhalese because the progressive sections in them have always been our best friends at all times.

Further I state that it is in the interest of the Muslim Community to fight for a united socialist Lanka.

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FANTASTIC

The prices of several food-stuffs have been steadily rising for the last few weeks. Since such items like dhal, potatoes, onions and vegetables, constitute a significant part of the normal provisions consumed, a steady rise in their prices does affect a vast majority of the people who can ill afford to pay the present fantastic rates.

While the country was seen dissipating its energies in debating as to what language should be the medium of administration, the more serious problem of food seems to have been ignored. In fact the recent language disturbances had to a great extent dislocated the normal food distribution, thereby enabling the food racketeer to have his own way.

Though such a situation seems to have been brought under control there has been no signs of any appreciable fall in prices. On the other hand, they continue to be at a high level thereby affecting a vast majority of the people belonging to the middle and lower income groups.

The congestion in the harbour is said to be the main cause of the present unhappy situation. Ships loaded with food cargo are unable to enter harbour. Since most of the food-stuffs that are to be unloaded are perishables, they are liable to go rotten, if not distributed in time for consumption. Besides ships will not undertake to convey such cargo (as they are beginning to do so in some instances) on account of the expenses involved.

The problem is made further complicated by the quarrels among the harbour workers led by rival trade unions. This has resulted definite slow down by the workmen. As a way out of the problem, the government seems to have undertaken the handling of lighterage. To what extent they could speed up the work of unloading the goods is yet to be seen!

Onions

The Government would be acting wisely if it could avoid the mistakes its predecessors had made. It was hardly an year ago that we received the news that onions produced by the cultivators of the North had been destroyed owing to lack of storage facilities. There is presently a shortage of onions, making it an expensive item to the normal consumer. Now that the crop in Jaffna is to be soon harvested, has the Government taken any concrete steps to prevent what has happened previously? Unless adequate storage facilities are provided the vast stock will go bad in a short time.

Congestion at the Port does not exhaust the causes for the present rise in price. Vegetables which are definitely not imported, has also become an expensive item. Seasonal vegetables apart, good many varieties among them seem to be affected seriously, due to the lack of marketing facilities. It is worth noting that the Madabavita Vegetable Growers' Association of Kegalle which, while claiming to be in a position to supply the whole Island with vegetables, seems to be suffering from the lack of adequate facilities to dispose off its stock. It is not surprising to find the *Marketing Dept. News Bulletin* stating that middlemen make a profit of 2 cents per lb. of Bandakka when the producer gets only 10 cents for it. Neither the producer nor the consumer is relieved of his difficulties which on the other hand seem to swell the profits made by a third party.

It is time that such problems are attended to immediately. The people cannot afford to continue to pay such high prices for their essential food-stuffs.



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BISHOP PEIRIS

As a good Roman Catholic I had held myself in check all these days while the language controversy raged and the Roman Catholic Hierarchy kept dumb on the subject. But I was absolutely distressed when I read in the newspapers an account of His Lordship of Chilaw pleading on behalf of the Tamil Language and Justice to the Tamils sometime after the Sinhalese Bill had been in the House of Representatives.

Locking a stable-door after the steed is stolen is one of the subtler methods of conniving at the theft. This is just what His Lordship has done. For with the documentary evidence I have in my possession it is possible for me to state emphatically that the Roman Catholic authorities in the Sinhalese Districts have in their own little way contributed to the fostering of communal feelings that threaten to deluge this Island today. Long before the M.E.P. was conceived of in the year 1951, the Catholic Authorities in Colombo and Chilaw Dioceses, particularly, had already predisposed their section of the people to the extremes that racists have pushed matters through in Parliament today. That is a charge that His Lordship of Chilaw cannot counter.

Why His Lordship of Chilaw delivered himself of these pious platitudes at such a late stage one cannot guess; may be to win the sympathy and support of the Tamils and others against the time when the M.E.P. goes on to the implementation of the next important recommendation made in the Buddhist Commission's report.

I am sure no one is going to be fooled by these pious platitudes of His Lordship of Chilaw nor of any other Catholic dignitary who will make belated efforts at locking the stable door after the steed is stolen. And I also suppose Tamils are Tamils first and Catholic, Protestant or Hindu afterwards—like His Lordship who is evidently a Sinhalese first and a Catholic only thereafter.

P. M. Paul Pillai

Colombo,
19-6-56.

Red Cross

A number of Buddhist associations have asked the Minister of Health to cut out the Red Cross symbol from the National Hospital Sweep tickets on which it appears, "and to substitute a more suitable one in its place".

In spite of the fact that everyone on this earth knows that the Red Cross is a world symbol standing for devotion to humanitarian work and is quite unconcerned with religious beliefs, the Minister of Health displayed the distinctive feature which characterises the present Cabinet, she bowed low before the Buddhist associations and decided to do *her bit* by BANNING the Red Cross in the same spirit of irresponsibility and stupidity as that in which her colleagues in the Cabinet *did theirs*.

She has however agreed to the use of "any other symbol" on Sweep tickets (provided, of course, the Buddhist associations do not object to that also),

It is therefore now incumbent on us, true Sinhalese and true Buddhists, to suggest to the Hospital Lotteries Board other symbols which are pertinent and which point out the truth.

In the absence of any suggestions so far may I be permitted to propose that the symbol which is described in the next paragraph be printed on the new tickets that are to be issued when the present ones are all sold.

This symbol would bear the impress not only of Buddhism but of Nationalism as well —

1. The nurse in alien dress on the present tickets should be replaced by a Sinhalese Lady in Saree — to do honour to our Nationalism.
2. The Red Cross should be replaced by a Buddhist Priest, with a distant view of an ancient temple like the Raja Maha Vihara of Kelaniya in the background — to add lustre to Buddhism.

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Good income, domestic worries, new friends, journeys, problems relating to occupation solved.

Aquarius (12th Feb to 13th Mar)
Increase in popularity, profits from land or agriculture, patronage of superiors, good health, worries due to jealousy of others.

Pisces (14th March to 12th April)
Fear of enemies, loss of honour or in reputation, hard work, sympathy of superiors luck in financial affairs.

Aries (13th April to 13th May)
Success in new enterprises, other peoples' troubles and worries, pressure by debtors—a change

for better towards end of week.

Taurus (14th May to 13th June)
Anxiety, unnecessary expenditure, tension in domestic affairs eases, success in occupation, possibility of journeys or trouble from employers.

Gemini (14th June to 15th July)
Visits from friends, much expenditure, success in undertakings, victory over enemies.

Cancer (16th July to 15th August)
Worries about children, unnecessary expenditure, success in occupation, loss of friends.

Leo (16th August to 15th Sep)
Assistance from friends, profit

from land or agriculture, journeys, visits from friends, patronages of superiors, conflicts with spouse or spouse's relations.

Virgo (16th Sep to 16th Oct)
Profits, success in occupation, loss through vehicles, fear of enemies, sickness of spouse.

Libra (17th October to 15th Nov)
Trouble from superiors, exercise considerable tact, fear of enemies, journeys, disputes, situation improves towards end of week.

Scorpio (16th Nov to 14th Dec)
Realisation of hopes, effortless success, journeys, profit through vehicles, sickness.

Sagittarius (12th Dec to 13th Jan)
Success over enemies, help from females, promotion, financial worries, misunderstandings, subject to deception.

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Week by Week

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papers that did not "co-operate" with the Government. This apart, Stanley de Soyza demanded a categorical statement from the *Times* that he did not hand over the statement to the paper (this was to meet Nimal Karunatileke's innuendo that it was he who had secretly released the report to create a flutter when the Prime Minister was away.) The *Times* thereupon declared that the report was obtained not from Stanley de Soyza but from some other source which it was under no obligation to disclose.

The Finance Minister was also perturbed that another Cabinet memorandum prepared by him on the question of "de-freezing the cost of living index" had leaked to the *Times*. Politically informed persons in Colombo are of the view that some person or persons, interested in embarrassing Stanley de Soyza *vis a vis* the Prime Minister and the

Cabinet, have been responsible for the "leaks". It is known that a number of persons in responsible positions in Cabinet and outside regard Stanley de Soyza as a "thorn" and the current opinion seems to be that these leaks are only the beginning of a campaign to "liquidate" politically the present Finance Minister. For this purpose, no better opportunity than the two reports on the Police and the "defreezing of cost of living allowances" could have been picked on. They are from every point of view explosive material.

Government agencies, in order to avoid overlapping of functions and at the same time to ensure that there are no "unoccupied" fields in which Government activity is required.

"Furthermore, greater progress should be made in the realm of co-ordination between Government departments and agencies, to ensure that the activities of related agencies are working towards the same goal, and that all agencies are making their proper contributions to each of the development programmes. This is particularly necessary in the field of industrial development, as the agency responsible for this programme must rely upon the full co-operation of the multitude of other Government agencies which are interested only incidentally in the process of industrialization, but whose understanding and co-operation is vital to the carrying out of the industrial programme."

Planning

continued from page 114

phase of Government activity. In this work, more and more reliable statistical data is required, and a knowledge of the interplay of economic forces has to be developed. In the planning phase, much work has yet to be done in delineating the responsibility of the various

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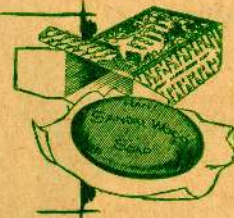
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