

# TRIBUNE

# RED TAPE

## Makes Nullity of Concession

At the last Budget, Government decided to remove the import duty on unexposed 35 mm cine films imported for the local production of sound films for public exhibition: and the resulting position was a 5 per cent general duty and no duty on preferential goods. This decision was the result of long agitation by local film producers and all those interested in the growth of a Sinhalese film industry.

"Tribune" understands that through bureaucratic administrative regulations the Principal Collector of Customs has made this concession practically null and void. It would appear that if local producers are to avail themselves of this concession, the Customs Chief has laid down that they should import these films direct and that the concession would not apply to raw film imported by the local trade representatives of international manufacturers.

This is a totally unrealistic approach to the whole problem. Film producers do not have the import facilities, storage accommodation and the like to obtain and keep in stock unexposed films. Moreover, with the limited capital many Sinhalese film producers have to contend with in

order to complete their pictures, it would be too much of a strain to expect them to be importers of raw film as well. Film producers furthermore need not take on this additional burden as there are large film importers who are willing and able to import and stock adequate supplies of unexposed cine films.

### Foreign

This reason which the Principal Collector of Customs has conjured up to justify his regulations is that if importers were allowed a free hand, foreign film companies which shoot their pictures here (they are far and few between) would benefit. Whilst other measures may be devised to check such abuse — if they arise at all — the present attitude of the Principal Collector re-

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duces local film producers to the level of foreign producers who operate in Ceylon (unless, of course they are willing and able to turn, importers of raw films themselves).

Apart from the question of the monetary and other benefits foreign film producers would bring to the island by being permitted to shoot their films locally, (which is a factor to which serious consideration must be paid) the action of the Principal Collector makes null and void in actual practice the decision of Government to allow producers of Sinhalese films concessions in the matter of import duty on raw films.

This is an illustration of how bureaucratic red tape can run amok and make a mockery of the best decisions of Government. In India, where the film industry has been permitted similar concessions, no such stupid regulations have been framed to make a nullity of the concession. This question of import duty on raw films is a matter to which Government must pay immediate attention.

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## TRIBUNE

CEYLON NEWS REVIEW  
COLOMBO, Oct. 20, 1956  
Vol. 3 No. 23

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# FILM

## Algiers

Hedy La Marr and Charles Boyer  
at the Sapphier

I saw this film nearly twenty years ago. It was then known as *Pepe le Moko*. The only thing that appears to have been outmoded is the acting of Charles Boyer. Refinements of production and photography made this film an exceptional one at the time. They still do today. Who can forget the scene of the informer about to be shot, accidentally starting a juke box and drowning his screams for mercy with the throb of cheap music? Who can forget the roar of the ship's syrens mingling with the lover's goodbyes? Who can forget the acting of Gene Lockhart as the informer? Or Joseph Calleia as the Inspector of Police? And who can forget the rare loveliness of Hedy La Marr as Gabrielle?

The story — if it matters — concerns Pepe who combines light crookery with a lot of raking and a little philosophy. He is wanted by the Police of most of the European capitals. We see him seeking refuge in the Casbah — a sort of Algerian Pettah only a hundred times dirtier — in the dens and backstreets of which he feels re-

sonably safe from the Police and the wicked world outside. But really Pepe doesn't belong to the Casbah, although he may have certain ideas of the Casbah belonging to him. He says its like a graveyard. He is sick of the old familiar faces and the old familiar places.

He gets an acute attack of claustrophobia and nostalgia, especially after a beautiful tourist visits the Casbah, like a breath of sunshine and gives him a whiff of the Paris he knows like the back of his hand. He falls in love with her of course. And she promises to call again. She does. But one fine day she doesn't, through no fault of her own, as she is also very much in love with Pepe. Pepe leaves the Casbah in search of her and his doom. He buys a ticket for Paris on the same ship.

He sees her on the ship and is about to go to her when the Police confront him. He is arrested and brought ashore. But as the ship draws away, he catches a glimpse of Gabrielle on deck and involuntarily runs toward her, shouting her name. But she hears not and the ship's syrens wail a protest. The Police fire and Pepe is mortally wounded. But it is a happy release for him in many ways. And not only from the Casbah.

That is the cynical end. The small parts were wonderfully well played. And the types of the Casbah, the informers, the touts, the



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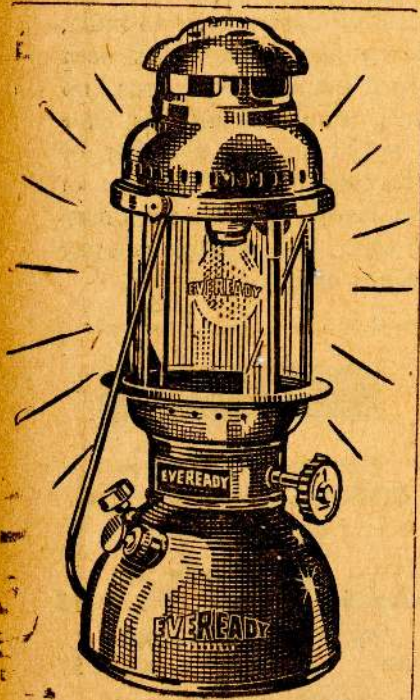
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hangers on, the human dregs, and the little touches here and there of life in the Casbah, were remarkably well done. The producer evidently knew his Casbah well.

Charles Boyer's metier is the suave gigolo with the smooth tongue and the passionate kiss. But I am afraid he has missed the bus in this role of a rakish robinhood of the Casbah. He hams like the devil and quite frankly his attempts to portray horror or anger would make the callowest amateur of Jubal's theatre workshop die of embarrassment.

N.



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# RELIGIOUS HARMONY

Indonesia may be regarded as the blind alley of one of the world's great trade routes. Religions of the world invariably followed these trade routes. Following the impact and interchange of ideas, culture and civilisation sprung in their wake. In fact, in Indonesia, it may be said that the four main religions came to a standstill. They are in order of their arrival as follows: Hindu-Buddhist, Muslim, Christian and the group of Chinese faiths. In the process, there are in South-East Asia two main concentrations of religious faiths. In the Philippines, ninety per cent of the population is Christian. In Indonesia, over ninety per cent of its 80 million peoples are Muslims. In either case, in both areas there is complete harmony of religious relationship.

In Indonesia, the basic friendly atmosphere that underlies the differences in religious beliefs is due entirely to the attitude of their Holy Book, the Koran, where it is said (Chap. 2 Verse 256), "There is no compulsion in matters religious". This climate of tolerance and peace is observed in the predominantly Christian area of Tapanuli in N-W Central Sumatra and in the islands of Ambon and the Lesser Sunda islands, where you will find small isolated mosques dwarfed by imposing and massively built churches and chapels. The same atmosphere of peaceful scene is witnessed in Atjeh of North Sumatra where the predominant population is of the staunch and warlike Muslims. On the other hand, in Bali and East Java where the inhabitants are Hindu and Buddhist adherents, mosques and prayer houses, churches and chapels are interspersed among innumerable Hindu and Buddhist temples.

Though it is quite possible that one meets any of these adherents in all parts of Indonesia, generally the mass of the inhabitants of a particular area follows one or other of the religions of the country. Thus the population of Sumatra may be said to be Muslim with the exception of the Tapanuli highlands referred to earlier. Similarly, the population of Java is Muslim except for the

This article by Dr. M. P. Drahman draws attention to harmony and amity that prevails among all religious groups and communities in Indonesia. It also furnishes a great deal of information about the different religions that flourish in that country.

Magelang area in Central Java where Christians are concentrated. In Borneo and Celebes, called now Kalimantan and Sulawesi, the Muslims are in the majority except for North and South-East Celebes where the Christians again predominate. Hindus are centred in Bali, while Buddhists are largely found among the domiciled Chinese.

### Peaceful

It would seem, according to 1952 statistics, compiled by the Ministry of Religious Affairs, there are 6503 churches and chapels with a registered Christian followers of 3,141,567 throughout Indonesia. There are two million Hindu and Buddhist adherents. The other less well defined religions number also two

millions. The rest of the population over ninety per cent is Muslim. According to the Muslim department of Religious Affairs, there are 189,812 registered mosques and religious institutions.

The spread of all the religious faiths in Indonesia were through peaceful means. The first in the field were the Buddhist and Hindu religions. Before their arrival the religion was of an animistic character. Early in the Christian Era, the Hindu spice-traders gained firm ground on the fertile coastal plains of Sumatra and Java. For fourteen centuries the Hindu religion played a dominant part in the life and culture of the Indonesians. It lived side by side with Buddhism, effected a synthesis and reconciled with the indigenous animistic character of the original religion as far as possible.

Islam appeared about the beginning of the 14th century. Like the Hindu spice-traders its spread was entirely due to the activities of the Gujerat merchants of South-West India. Its teaching and culture which had absorbed some veneer

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# INDONESIA

*continued from page 355*

of Hinduism during Islam's long domicile in India in juxta-position with the Hindus, took quick roots and there was rapid spread from Sumatra to Borneo. Eventually the Muslim Empire of Malacca swept aside the Hindu Empire of Madjapahit and drove the remaining adherents of the Hindu religion far into East Java and on to the island of Bali. It may be mentioned here that this Hindu Empire rose out of the ashes of the Buddhist Sumatran Empire of Sri Vijaya which it had destroyed earlier.

The gospel of Jesus Christ was seriously taken up by the European missionaries in the 19th century. The areas in Indonesia selected were those in which the Hindu-Buddhist and Muslim religions did not have many followers. The first contact, however, with Christianity appears to have occurred in 1545 in the Eastern Indonesian islands. The foundation for Catholic influence was laid by Saint Francis Xavier after his lengthy missionary tour of China and Japan. With the establishment of the Dutch hold in the

western Indonesian islands, Dutch Protestant missionaries with subsidies and protection from the Government built missionary centers in Tapanuli of Sumatra and Magelang of Java.

## Tolerance

The general Indonesian attitude of preserving harmony in all things has been conducive to their maintaining an attitude of tolerance to different and opposing religious beliefs. Thus, even in a Muslim family where a member has adopted the Christian faith, the social unit is not disturbed, nor is there a break in the family ties.

In the development of varying religious beliefs which succeeded each other the super-imposition of the Hindu-Buddhist religion on an animistic belief was a decided advance. Thus the new religion were happily super-imposed, suited to and fused with elements of the old. It was indeed one of the characteristic features of the Indonesian peoples to preserve the old while adopting at the same time, new elements of thoughts, belief and culture. Many rites in the marriage and burial ceremonies in

the customs and etiquette of the daily lives of the Indonesian Muslims still carry the veneration of Hindu traditions, harmoniously corrected, moulded and adapted into the cultural pattern which has proved capable of maintaining itself in the modern age. Much of it, however, has been purged by the Arab trader-missionaries of Hadramaut who arrived in Indonesia later. In the same way Christian marriages in Tapanuli and Megalang areas, are usually concluded with rites and ceremonial customs handed down from days long gone by. These were later gradually weeded out by later Christian missionaries.

By and large, though there are a diversity of religious faiths in Indonesia, the common spiritual revolt against domination during three and half centuries of Dutch rule brought about consciousness of national identity and unity, and liberated the great mass of Indonesians from extreme religious fanaticism.

It is not surprising, therefore, that Indonesia is one of those few coun

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# CONQUEST

Today (August 19) happens to be the exact anniversary of the seizure of the Suez Canal by the British fleet. That act of piracy was committed on August 19, 1882, during the British conquest of Egypt. On that date Queen Victoria's ironclads shelled Fort Said. The gateway city was taken. Egyptian blood was shed. And the British flag flew over the waterway that was built — in the main — with Egyptian money, at the cost of 120,000 workers' lives. Now, 74 years later Queen Elizabeth's government threatens to commit the same crime again. French and British warships are readied for action near by. Parachutists wait at Malta. The U.S. Navy conducts "exercises" in the Eastern Mediterranean. And Secretary of the State Dulles says canal "shareholders" must be protected.

And yet one can be hopeful of Peace. War can hardly come without America's O.K. And the men behind Dulles know the gamble is desperate indeed. For the world would condemn imperialist aggressors.

Dulles, meanwhile, insults the men who nationalized the great canal. The Egyptians have no real grievances, he insists. The nationalization of Suez was just an "angry act of retaliation against fancied grievances" the Number One member of the Cadillac Cabinet cried out in a recent radio speech.

Those grievances aren't "fancied", however. They have been written in blood since the enslavement of Egypt by the imperialists began. And I call Dulles' attention to the real story behind the Suez Canal Treaty of 1888.

Dulles mentions this Nine-Power Treaty of 1888 six times in his recent radio broadcast on Egypt. The treaty says the private Suez Canal Co. shall run the waterway and collect the profits. And this treaty is sacred, says Dulles. It was signed by Egypt 68 years ago. And the powers will use their "moral force" to make Egypt honour it, the Secretary declares.

Morality is all against Dulles, however. For the Egyptian hand

that signed the treaty was a captive hand. It was the hand of a puppet Khedive, whose land was occupied by the British Army. And I'm asking Dulles to read the *London Times* stories of the barbarous invasion that overran the ancient Nile River land.

Dulles will find more details of this savage attack, that preceded the "sacred" treaty, in "The Secret History of the English Occupation of Egypt," by Wilfred Sowaen Blunt. This is an authoritative report by a well-known diplomat and poet, who rebelled against the Empire's hypocrisy and cruelty.

## Occupation

The occupation of Egypt began with a "sheer act of piracy," said Blunt. A dozen British warships anchored in the roadstead outside of the port of Alexandria and shelled the Egyptian forts for nine hours. The British fired the first shots.

The Egyptians fought with "obstinacy and pluck," the *Times* correspondent reported on July 12, 1882. But they hadn't a chance. Their forts were manned with ancient guns the British had sold them many years before. And the

Last week we published an article on how the U.S. "acquired" the Panama Canal. This week the spotlight is turned on the Suez again. In the recent past we have published articles which have laid bare the financial operations of the Suez Canal Company. This article outlines the story of the British "conquest" of the Suez Canal region and the circumstances in which the Convention of 1888 was signed.

Egyptian works were all reduced to rubble.

The ancient city of Alexandria burned down after the bombardment. And the only signs of life found by the *Times* man on July 17 were starving cats.

"Even the dogs seemed to have disappeared," said the *Times* writer. "But from every corner of the streets from every remaining window, there seems to be a starving cat, whose mewing gave the only evidence of life."

Suez fell next. Land battles followed. Some prisoners were executed and others exiled to far off Ceylon. And Egypt went under the lion's paw that was to guide the hand that signed the treaty that Dulles calls sacred today.

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## THE PEOPLE'S CAR



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# SUEZ

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Blunt saw that puppet hand the year the treaty was signed. "The Khedive Tewfik commands no respect in the country," the keen English observer noted in his diary in Egypt on Dec. 5, 1888. "(He) is dependent for his maintenance on British support, which might at any moment be withdrawn. Weak and discredited he is, without personal authority."

It's an axiom in law that no promise is binding that is made under physical duress. And it's obvious, therefore, that the independent Egyptian Republic of 1956 is not bound by the signature of the captive Khedive of 1888.

British occupation of Egypt lasted 70 years in one form or another. It did not end until the nationalist revolution of 1952 when King Farouk was ousted. Indeed it did not vanish entirely until the British troops left Suez in May of this year. But the occupation was supposed to be only "temporary" at the beginning. Britain had not selfish motives, declared Prime Minister Gladstone, when he started they shooting in '82. He was just protecting the foreign bondholders, the sanctimonious Empire leader said. And the story of how Egypt went in hock to the bankers in London and Paris goes back to the digging of the canal in 1856.

## Cost

Most of the financial cost of this 103-mile ditch between Africa and Asia was borne by Egyptians themselves. That is a fact that Prime Minister Eden, Premier Mollet and Dulles would like to forget.

The Egyptian funds were furnished by Mohammed Said, the Khedive, after he granted the canal concession to Ferdinand De Lesseps, the French promoter, in 1856, a century ago. Egypt enjoyed much autonomy at that time. The Turkish overlords had little to say any more. And the Western powers had not yet moved in. But Said did not know that he was signing his country's independence away.

The Egyptians were badly cheated by the slick promoter. They not only bought 45 percent of the canal shares, which they could not afford to do. They also furnished millions of Pounds Sterling of good Egyptian land. And their total canal

cost eventually ran to more than 16 million Pound Sterling, or about 80 million dollars. This was admitted by Lord Cromer, the British high commissioner in Egypt, who examined the canal books after he took power in the 1880s.

De Lesseps got much of these millions by blackmailing Said. He would force the Khedive's abdication by British and Turkish pressure if the money weren't paid, the promoter kept saying.

But lives are more precious than money. De Lesseps' book-keepers kept no count of the tens of thousands of forced labourers, who gasped out their lives in the tropical ditch.

The canal — which fattened the French and British shareholders so many years — was built by forced labour. The contact between De Lesseps and the Khedive provided that—

"The labourers employed in the company's work shall be supplied by the Egyptian Government at the demand of the company's engineers, and as requested."

These forced labourers were not criminals, the historian Crabites point out.

"... They were Egyptian fellaheen (peasants), taken from their fields and placed at the disposal of the Canal Company, which was to bury them if they died, and send

them home if they survived the ordeal."

De Lesseps worked these force 1 labourers until they were "useless," the historian continued. And then they were "cast aside like an empty match box."

## Perished

But myriads perished first, says Ahmed Hussein, head of the Young Egyptian Party, in his book. "The Story of Egypt and Anglo-Egyptian Relations."

"Tens of thousands of them died," Hussein reported. They died from "malaria, infested air and the unbearable heat. Their bleached bones lie there now."

Many also died of thirst, say Lt. Col. Arnold T. Wilson in his book — "The Suez Canal." The water for the desert labourer came on camel backs. "And when the supply failed, as it occasionally did, they perished," the British officer said.

The total number of Suez victims was estimated by President Nasser at 120,000 when he issued his nationalization decree.

This estimate does not seem fantastic when one remembers how the work was done. The Khedive's forced—or "corvee"—the labour was cheaper than machinery. And Lt.

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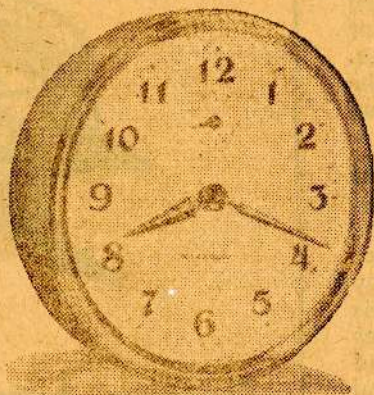
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# WEEK by WEEK in CEYLON

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Minister of Finance, Stanley de Soyza, has said a great many things in London which are likely to stir up the MEP hornet's nest when he returns. Addressing a group of Ceylon students in London, the Finance Minister is reported to have declared that the greatest danger this country faced was from extremists from within the MEP and the Government itself.

From the press reports of this speech which are available, it is not clear as to what kind of "extremists" de Soyza had in mind. He undoubtedly seems to have thought of language and religious extremists like Rajaratne, Mettananda and Jayasuriya and their adherents within the MEP. He also seems to have had a few onslaughts at other extremists who seek to effect radical social and economic changes.

It is not clear what Minister Stanley de Soyza wants, but it was painful to many in the MEP and outside to read reports of some of his speeches in Washington at the International Monetary Fund Conference. He spoke a language and idiom that one associated with the dying and decadent philosophy of Wall Street and its agents in Asia like Chiang Kai Shek. It was also the ideological content of the philosophy of Sir John Kotelawela — a philosophy which admittedly hastened his downfall.

## Ashamed

Minister Stanley de Soyza, it is reported, pleaded with Western nations for financial help, and "threatened" that if they did not come the rescue (presumably of men like himself), there would be *subversion* of the existing social and economic order in Asiatic countries. Even John Foster Dulles is now ashamed to use the word "subversion" in this context, and to find a Minister of the progressive Bandaranaike Cabinet indulging in such sentiments is not a healthy sign.

It is one thing to dislike the politics of the Left and want to meet the challenge four square by alternative economic and social mea-

sures which will enable a country to advance materially, but it is quite another thing to plead for interference (financial or otherwise) from the Western nations (with their long and persistent history of colonialism) to help countries like Ceylon to fight "subversion".

If Minister Stanley de Soyza is unable to provide an answer for the problems facing this country without calling for "help" from Wall Street, political circles feel that he should give place to men who can do so. These circles feel that it is too late in the day to talk of *subversion*, which is the language of SEATO.

## Moscow and Peking

Whilst Minister de Soyza amuses the world (and Ceylon) with his talk of *subversion*, the Premier has chosen two excellent men as Ambassadors in Peking and Moscow.

Wilmot Perera, former M.P. for Horana, is the choice for Peking. There is universal approbation in Ceylon about this appointment

(which is yet to be formally made). Wilmot Perera is an idealist who founded Sri Palee on the lines of Santineketan in his native village of Horana. When Wilmot Perera went into politics he was always on the side of the progressive forces, although he was never associated with the Left Parties. He was an Independent M.P. for many years, and after making an effort to set up the Republican Party, he joined the SLFP when Bandaranaike broke away from the UNP

Wilmot Perera did not contest the last elections. He disagreed with the SLFP on the language policy. He believed in a bi-lingual policy of having Sinhalese and Tamil as official languages and made no secret of his views.

In the belief that the climate in which the last elections were fought was not conducive to a two-languages policy, Wilmot Perera did not seek re election. Political as well as commercial circles seem unanimous that no better person than Wilmot Perera could have

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*Tribune* was the first paper in this country which drew attention to the ban which the Minister and Food Agriculture had placed on advertisements in the Lake House journals. In spite of the persistent criticisms we have levelled against Lake House for the policies it has advocated, we felt that the Minister's ban was a threat against a free press and democratic liberties. The only reason for the Minister's ban was that Lake House had criticised some of his actions. Whether the criticisms were justified or not is another question (a question of opinion), but the important point was that nobody should be penalised for adverse criticism. Even *mala fide* criticism should not merit such penalty, but only an exposure of the wrong motives that prompted such criticism would have been proper way of meeting the situation. And furthermore, who is really to judge what is *mala fide*? If the particular Minister felt that the Lake House papers were reporting him unfairly he had only to issue a statement on the question pointing out just where the Lake House was wrong. If the Minister felt that criticisms levelled against his policies were unjustified, he could either have ignored them or issued a statement setting out his side of the story. If Lake House had refused to publish his statements, particularly statements criticising Lake House, then the Minister had a genuine grievance which he should have taken up with the Cabinet and the public at large.

But to deny advertisements and official information to Lake House is the undemocratic way of meeting the difficulties which arose as a result of the Minister's grievance that Lake House was dealing unfairly with him. And, what was even more surprising, was that the Minister seems to have taken action unilaterally without any kind of consultations with the Cabinet!

Lake House, for its part, took the matter a little more calmly than was expected of them. Apart from publishing the ban it made no comment for two weeks. Finally, after a period of official silence, the Political

Correspondent last Saturday set out the Lake House case. Justifiably, he took high ground, and emphasised that only about one percent of the revenue Lake House earned from advertisements came from Government sources. Having said this to impress upon the public and the Government that Lake House could do without Government advertisements, the Political Correspondent delivered himself of a homily which should have come two weeks earlier on the rights of the Fourth Estate and the ethics of the Minister's action. There has been speculation as to why Lake House had been so silent, particularly when it was in such a strong position. It may be that some behind-the-scenes "negotiations" were afoot and until these broke down Lake House may have held its hand, and even when it did it was not editorially but through the column of the Political Correspondent.

This ban is a question which all persons interested in democracy in this island must take up, and what has worried us is that the *Times* group have been silent about this matter for a very long time. The first reference to this ban was made in the *Through the Looking Glass* column in the *Morning Times*. It was followed up with a comment in the *Times of Ceylon*. They were half-hearted protests. It is an open secret that the *Times* group, particularly the *Lankadipa*, extends enthusiastic support to the Minister of Food and Agriculture and his policies. But this is no reason not to protest against action which amounts to a gross violation of democracy. Must support to a Minister be so blind as to want to permit the menace of fascism to creep into the body politic of this country? The *Times of Ceylon* group have lost a wonderful opportunity of establishing that they are interested in standing up for democratic rights by their silence in regard to the ban placed by the Minister of Food. It is, however, a hopeful sign that at

least columnists in the *Times* group have thought fit to rise to the occasion.

When we first mooted this question, we suggested that some form of joint action by all those interested in a free press should be immediately organised. One of the most unfortunate aspects of democracy in this island is the absence of a Press Association which could deal with problems that vitally affect all newspapers. The two giants in the local newspaper world, the *Times* and the *Lake House* have tended to grow in isolated aloofness, and the periodical papers too have gone their own way. The time has come, however, for the Fourth Estate in Ceylon to get together to have an organisation which can effectively deal with problems affecting the democratic right to publish newspapers and canvass public opinion. In the present instance, if such an Association existed this matter of the Food Minister's ban could have been taken up by the Association immediately. Such action would have saved Lake House the embarrassment of talking about itself and blowing its own trumpet (to see a hackneyed cliché) and also brought the matter before the public with the full authority of the free press in this country.

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Two social functions which I attended recently have persuaded me that, in spite of the feeling of uncertainty which men like Dharmayake insist on creating in the public mind, the main stream of life in this island is going forward at a rapid pace.

The first was a dinner party that Dr. J. T. Amarasingham, Vice-President of the Ceylon China Friendship Association, had in honour of the visiting Chinese delegation from New Delhi on Wednesday October 10. At this gathering I met three Cabinet Ministers, the leader of the Opposition, businessmen, professional men, writers, cinema producers, students, and foreign diplomats stationed in Ceylon. In the days of Sir John Kotelawela, Cabinet Ministers would have shunned anything and anybody out of China. Businessmen and professional men would have been afraid to attend such a party lest they get into the black books of the Public Security Department (which might have meant the loss of contracts and licences and the denial of promotions).

Nor would Cabinet Ministers of UNP vintage have been willing to sit at the same table with fighters in the cause of liberty like Theja Gunewardene. Dr. Amarasingham's party was a happy one which showed that Ceylon is moving forward to an era where friendly relations with all countries in the world, irrespective of the ideologies, will be a reality and a fact.

### Cinematic

The second function which has left an impression on my mind was the convivial evening last Monday at the Galle Face Hotel when Guneratnam of Cinemas Ltd threw a cocktail party to enable his friends and business associates to meet T. R. Sundaram, the South Indian film director.

Sundaram is now the President of the Film Chamber of South India and is one of the leading film directors. He is now in Ceylon to help in the production of the next

Cinemas Sinhalese film. It was again a rather happily mixed crowd which would not have been possible in the days of the UNP when businessmen would have been afraid to invite persons who were thought *persona non grata* at Kandawela and Temple Trees.

There were no politicians at the Cinemas party, but there was a full turn out by the cinematic world, producers, distributors, exhibitors, actors, and actresses. The Cinemas' star, Kanthi Gunatunga, fresh from her victory in the "Lankadipa" *Pancha Kalyani*, was an attraction. I also met a very representative gathering of the press in Ceylon, daily as well as periodical.

### Unilevers

At the Cinemas party, I met a big noise from Lever Bros in Ceylon. Readers will recall how *Tribune* has in recent weeks written several pieces about the dangers of the Lever Bros monopoly in Ceylon and urged that some measure of restriction and protection was necessary to enable local soap manufacturers to survive.

I was pleasantly surprised when I found the Lever Bros executive anxious and willing to meet someone associated with *Tribune* and put across his point of view. I can recall many occasions in the not too distant past when certain personages on whom the *Tribune* had turned the spotlight regarded anyone who was connected with this paper or even read the paper with holy horror. In fact, the most amusing incident was when representatives of a foreign country took pains at a diplomatic function to show they could not breathe the same air as anyone even remotely connected with *Tribune*. The only reason for this childish and uncultured behaviour was that this paper had criticised some of the actions of the present ruling party in that country in some matters of foreign policy.

As I said, the Lever Bros representative did not have any of these inhibitions (which I also regret to say that persons from many leading foreign firms and combines seem to have had in regard to people who hold contrary views).  
Ideology

What this Lever Bros executive told me constituted a refreshingly new (as far as I concerned) approach to certain problems. It also gave me an insight into the "ideology" (if I may use the word) of a big international combine which has to operate in a controlled economy like that of India. That position in Ceylon is still uncertain, but it is not unlikely that Ceylon too would adopt some form of controlled economy in the near future. Lever Bros seemed to have worked out a *modus vivendi* in a controlled economy where private enterprise is permitted. It has also a reasoned case for being permitted to exist and provide a *service to the consumer* — service because it is in a position to supply certain vital consumer commodities of good quality at a cheap and fair price.

I have told the Editor of this paper what this gentleman told me and an fresh examination and analysis of the approach Lever Bros have towards the economic development in this country should prove worthwhile. The crux of the problem would centre around two questions: can Ceylonese manufacturers exist and flourish with Lever Bros operating *freely* in this country? and, will the interests of the consumers be adversely affected if Government curbs the productive activities of Lever Bros and enables certain Ceylonese manufacturers to obtain a monopoly of their own?

It would appear that Lever Bros claim that the percentage of profit they take out of the country only represents a just return for the advanced techniques (which provide cheap consumer goods) they have brought to this country. It should be interesting to examine the Balance Sheets of Lever Bros (Ceylon) Ltd. Whether these are available for public inspection (or even private) I do not know.

# CHINESE ART

The exhibition of Chinese Art which was opened by the Prime Minister at the Art Gallery on Wednesday October 10 heralds a new epoch of cultural relations between Ceylon and China.

In the ancient past there was close contact and friendly relations between the two countries. Fa Hsien and other Chinese travellers came to Ceylon and took away from this country the heritage of Buddhism and Buddhist culture. Today over a thousand years later, after a gap of many centuries of interrupted connections, China has sent this country an exhibition of Buddhist art that has developed in that great country through the centuries.

A visit to the Exhibition will show the unique and singular expression of the artistic genius which the Chinese people and her artists have displayed. In murals, in cave paintings, in stone and wood carvings, art which flowered from the teachings and philosophy of Gautamma Budha has resulted in artistic creations of the highest magnitude.

Apart from the merits of the exhibits themselves, this exhibition is unique in several ways. A representative of the Chinese Embassy in New Delhi graced the occasion, and this is the first visit by an official Chinese delegation to this country. Even after this country had recognised the Peoples Government of China, and even after the Rubber-Rice Agreement with that country in 1952, the then government of Ceylon did not open diplomatic relations with China. In fact visitors from China were taboo and visits to China were prohibited. A delegation from China to the Ecafe Conference in 1954 was treated with the greatest suspicion and unfriendliness by the government of Sir John Kotelawela.

The defeat of the UNP and the coming to power of the MEP has brought about a dramatic and complete transformation of the situation. Diplomatic relations will soon be a fact. Ceylon has already named its first Ambassador to China. In the greater cultural contacts that can now develop between

the two countries there is hope that peace in Asia will be strengthened.

A visit to the exhibition will convince, even the die-hard nationalist, that there is a great deal in common between Ceylon and China in that matter of Buddhist Art.

S

## Week by Week

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been found for the post of Ambassador in Peking.

Whilst the same degree of unanimity cannot be said to exist in respect of the choice of Dr. Malalasekera, it is admitted that the appointment is a good one considering the men available for such assignments. In the not too distant past, Malalasekera's name was associated with revivalist movement in Buddhism and in those hectic days he was guilty of grandiloquent boasts which Mettananda and his crowd have now taken up on a much cruder and more ill-natured level than the attitude taken by Malalasekera.

But when the recent religious and language flare-up took place, Malalasekera took the side of reason and helped to bring sanity to persons who might have otherwise gone berserk. Reports indicate that Malalasekera was reluctant to accept this post. He is next in the line of succession to the post of Vice-Chancellor at the University, and he evidently does not want to be side-tracked. It is perhaps for this reason that it has been mentioned that he is taking the post for a short time. He probably wants to return when the post of Vice-Chancellor is next vacant.

### Landless

According to a press report, Minister of Lands and Land Development, C. P. de Silva, is planning to "distribute" 19,000 acres of Crown Land, situated in the Galle, Matara, Kalutara and Ratnapura districts, to landless persons in those areas. If this report is correct, it is a step which is in the right direction.

If this policy had been followed, the "communal" problems which have now arisen in Gal Oya, Kantalai and the Vavuniya areas would have been avoided. The UNP had, for reasons of its own, thought it fit to "plant" persons from the South (even when land was available in the South) in the North without giving the first opportunity of settling the Northern landless in the lands in their area. There is no doubt that this policy has reflected itself in the communal tension which has now arisen in these areas.

Informed circles are hoping that the decision to settle the landless in their own areas in the first instance will mark the beginning of a new policy in the matter of land distribution and colonisation schemes.

### Malaria

One of the greatest boasts of the UNP regime was that its health policy had completely eradicated the scourge of malaria. Statistics now reveal that malaria is very much in evidence and that it has always been present, though not to the same extent as in the pre-DDT days.

The number of cases of malaria reported and treated in the 1952-54 period is a shocking revelation that malaria is still with us, and that the UNP in its desire to impress upon the voters the great benefits showered on the nation by its benign rule had tended to create the impression that malaria had been wiped out completely.

The Minister of Health, it is reported, has called for a full report on the present incidence of malaria. This report should be made public and the complacency which had grown up in the days of the UNP should be removed.

### Religious Broadcasts

Government it would appear, has decided not to renew the contracts certain foreign religious bodies have with the commercial service of Radio Ceylon when these contracts expire in February 1957. There has been a great deal of controversy about these religious broadcasts, and it is known that organisations of other religious communities had also asked

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# ADMISSIONS

We continue this week with a third instalment of the speech made during the Budget Debate by P. Kandiah, M.P. for Pt. Pedro, on the question of the University. He analyses with penetrating insight the reasons why the Ceylon University is not able to discharge its functions adequately.

I shall now describe a few more aspects in details in regard to the University. University education, in my view, should have concerned itself not merely with the teaching and examination of students. It should have concerned itself also with deciding, helping, influencing the education outside its walls. Yesterday the Hon. Minister was talking a good deal on the problems that he and the administration are faced with. The University had a fine chance, a fine opportunity, and a great duty, to have done some thinking on this subject and co-ordinating, as a result of this thinking, the work done in the schools of this Island and the University itself. It never did such a thing. I would refer to a statement in an English educational journal which says that the teaching body of the University and outside the University must be looked at as a 'real and single clerisy engaged in the task of educating the nation'. The University is primarily concerned with the education of our people, and we mean by education not only what goes on within the walls of the University, but also what goes on in the elementary schools, the secondary schools, the training schools and technical schools in this country. At present our University is not concerned with education outside its walls. It has remained, and is, cut off from the nation's education.

I now read from the Report published—I will refer to it in detail later—by a special committee of

the Ceylon University, teachers in 1946 on University Functions and structure. That Report states further: .

"This is a mistake because there is no other body that is more competent to advise on and influence the education of the nation other than the University."

It was not concerned with the larger problems of education outside its walls; and even inside them, its work was exclusively confined to teaching and examination of degree students.

Let us take the question of admissions to the University. They never wanted to increase the admissions. In 1942 when the University was established, there was a student population of 904, including those in the Medical College. In 1955, the total students population numbered 2,431, an increase of a little less than 1,500 students in a period of 14 years. I will come to the details a little later. That was the proportion of increase Jennings was prepared to allow, namely, 110 students every year.

University teachers, as a body, were rather worried about this slow progress. So, they appointed in 1946 a special Committee, of which I was Secretary, to study and report on this question. That Committee made the following recommendation, among other recommendations:

"We think we should plan to increase the number of students entering the University. We should plan to receive into the four faculties, but in proportions different from those of today . . ."—there were only four then.—

" . . . a minimum of 1,250 students during the next five years."

Those that will be admitted to the new faculties, like Engineering, Agriculture—which came later—would be in addition to this number. That is why this body suggested an increase of 250 students per year for the first five years after 1947. That period would have been over in 1952.

Jennings and the senior members of the University staff disagreed  
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# ADMISSIONS

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with this recommendation and, in fact, shelved it. Somehow the report found its way to the *Times of Ceylon* and was published. Jennings wrote to me a few days after the publication and asked me whether I had sent it to the press. I said I had not; and added that since it was not a confidential document, anyone can send it to the press. But I said I was glad that it was published because the public should know that he was keeping the number of admissions to the University unnecessarily and artificially restricted. And still they are going on the basis of about 100 additional students every year.

### Science Teachers

I will now come to another question. Yesterday the Hon. Minister of Education spoke of the need for and dearth of science teachers in our schools. In 1946 the University Teachers' Committee really discussed that question seriously and made the following two suggestions which again Jennings shelved:

"By close association with the schools, the schools will have to be urged with the assistance of the Department of Education, if necessary, to encourage their students to study science subjects in as many cases as possible. Perhaps it will be necessary for a small permanent committee of the Faculty of science to inquire into the whole question of the teaching of science subjects in schools and formulate a correct course of studies. The committee will naturally work in close conjunction with the Government Industries Departments and with industrial companies, with a view to finding employment later. The service of the Ceylon Association of Science also could be used to give a general impetus to science studies".

They ended that statement thus:

"If the Government is planning a programme of development, surely the needs in regard to the personnel necessary for the programme is a vital matter on which the University is alone competent to advise."

That is what this unofficial body of teachers told Jennings and the council in 1946. If Jennings had accepted that proposal, we would not be in the plight that we are in today.

I must welcome in this connection, parenthetically, the suggestion made by the Hon. Minister of Education yesterday that he is going to immediately help the staffing of schools with science teachers by employing those students who have failed to enter the University in the Entrance Examinations to science subjects. I am very glad about it, and I welcome that suggestion. All I would ask the Hon. Minister to do is to make it possible for these very same new teachers—those who have failed the entrance examination in science—to be sent to the University after a few years of teaching, without being compelled to sit for the University entrance examination, to enable them to complete their science degrees. That will not only be a fine method of getting over a temporary difficulty but but will also be an admirable means of helping these men who are going to be employed to avoid a blind alley in which they will otherwise find themselves in.

*Jennings sought various ways and means of keeping the number of students in the University restricted. At one time he would say that the standard of the entrants was poor, as if a particular standard was set in the horizon to measure a man against. I suggested in the University Court that if the standard was low, they should begin with that standard and, in course, of time, bring the standard up.*

### Imaginary

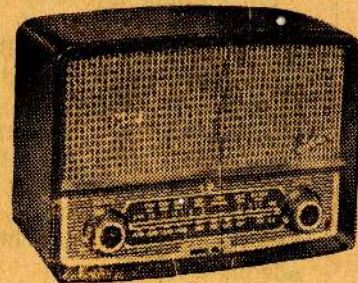
It would appear that Jennings had brought with him some imaginary standard when he came to this country, and he expected students of this country to measure up to that standard before they could gain admission to the University. That was the first excuse. His second excuse was this: if you do make many people graduates, there will be the difficulty in finding them employment. As early as 1949, mind you, this gentleman was able to see that we were going to face an unemployment problem. Very patriotically, he says in the University Council Report for the year 1949:

"During the year the Government has had under discussion the size of the University to be erected in Peradeniya. The question is not only one of the cost . . ."

I will come to the question of the cost in a minute.

*To be continued next week*

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# EGYPT'S LIBERATION

By Abdul Gamel Nasser

In this book, published last year in Washington, the President of the Republic of Egypt discusses the nature and motive forces of his country's national-liberation movement. It is not a conventional history and lays no claim to systematic exposition. Yet though somewhat fragmentary, President Nasser's notes provide much material for an understanding of Egypt's movement for freedom and independence.

That movement always enjoyed wide sympathy in the Soviet Union. And friendship for Egypt has grown still stronger now that she has achieved sovereignty and has aligned herself among the nations working for world peace and co-operation.

It is only four years since the Revolution which brought to power the young, vigorous forces of Egyptian society, but much has been accomplished in that brief space of time. The monarchy has been abolished; the last foreign soldier has left Egyptian soil; agrarian reform has been instituted and the political and economic power of the feudal aristocracy thus undermined. Steps have been taken to enlarge crop areas, develop a national industry, give the country a sounder financial structure, and purge that government machinery of reactionary elements.

In foreign policy, too, the young Republic has important achievements to its credit. The Bandung conference last year brought out saliently Egypt's important part in uniting the peaceable nations of Asia and Africa in opposition to colonialism. The Egyptian government has been energetic and resolute in counteracting attempts to inveigle the Arab countries into the Bagdad military alliance.

President Nasser's book helps one to understand the development of Egypt in these past years, and more especially the philosophy of her leaders, the motives actuating their policies. In the ideas which he unfolds in its pages; President Nasser is of course speaking for himself. But his position in present-day Egypt, and the part he had in the events of 1952, lend them a far wider significance. Not for nothing

With acknowledgements to the Soviet journal *News* we publish the review of Nasser's book which reveals the motive forces behind the revolution which took place in Egypt in 1952

does he speak of himself and his friends as "typical examples of the youth of our generation."

President Nasser appreciates the part played by the objective laws of historical development. "I have been aware since the beginning," he writes, "that our unity is dependent upon our full realisation of the nature of circumstance in which we found ourselves, the historical circumstances of our country." And referring later to the events of July 23, 1952, he emphasises that they did not take place because he or his friends wished it, but were "brought about by the.....history of our people." In general, he remarks elsewhere, "fate does not jest and events are not existence out a matter of chance — there is no existence out of nothing."

What, then, was the chief cause of the revolutionary events of 1952? If one reflects on the remarks the author makes on this subject, it is seen that the chief cause was the national awakening of the Egyptian people. "The Revolution of July 23," President Nasser states,

"marks the realisation of the hope held by the people of Egypt since they began in modern times, to think of self government and complete sovereignty."

But this awakening did not come at once. The President cites many historical examples, from the days when the country was ruled by the Mamelukes, later by the Turks, and lastly by the British, to show the depths of oppression to which its people had been reduced, and the formidable difficulties that blocked their way to liberation. Foreign domination retarded and multitalented Egypt's historical development, and it also held back the spiritual growth of her people. President Nasser writes: "We were still living mentally in the captivity of the thirteenth century, in spite of a few manifestations of the nineteenth, and afterwards of the twentieth century. Our minds tried to catch up with the caravan of human progress, although we were five centuries or more behind."

That is why, the President notes, for many years the Egyptians only called down curses on their oppressors. For the most part things went no farther. And even when there were attempts to rid the country of foreign rule — the Arabi revolt, and the revolutionary ferment of 1919, for instance — they were unsuccessful.

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# SUEZ

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Col. Wilson tells how the workers dug one 25-miles stretch with their naked hands.

Not shovels — just naked hands.

The workers stood in salty swamp water. No dredges had yet arrived. So—

“The vigorous race of fishermen on its borders.....scooped up the clay in their hats, rolled it into balls on their chests, and then carried it on their backs, with their arms crossed behind them.

“In this way they raised some 400,000 cubic meters until the first dredges..... carried forward the work.....

“The sulphuric exhalations of the mud were almost unbearable.....

One can only guess how many of these hand-grubbing slaves died.

But there's no guess at the hundreds of millions of dollars the Suez shareholders have netted. That is a matter of record. And the biggest single owner is the British Government which took over the Egyptian share long ago.

tion among them, aid their respective works with unprejudiced guidance and grant them subsidies in money and materials. Mosques, churches and temples damaged or ruined during the early revolution, or later armed insurrections have been renovated and rebuilt with aid from the Ministry. The Ministry of Religious Affairs have no power to interfere with beliefs and internal organizations of the different religious groups so long as they do not cause public disturbances or dislocate the present peaceful relations between the various religions.

## Indonesia

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tries that has a Cabinet Minister in charge of the Ministry of Religious Affairs. It has departments to care for the various religious groups, preserve harmony and good rela-

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# Egypt's Liberation

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But a different situation took shape in 1952, one that was more favourable for the revolutionary movement. The decisive force in 1952 was the army, but, as President Nasser emphasises, it was not acting just by itself — it was the expresser of the people's interests. The young officers who banded together in the Free Officers organisation during the Palestine war felt that the biggest battlefield would be in Egypt. "We were fighting in Palestine, but our dreams were genred in Egypt.... Our hearts hovered over our distant country, which we had left to the care of the wolves."

The book does not give the factual story of the 1952 Revolution and the events that followed. Its author only remarks that the victory of the revolution did not remove all of the formidable difficulties obstructing Egypt's development. And this is quite natural, for, to quote President Nasser: "It is impossible for hopes to come true simply by pressing an electric but-

ton. It is impossible for the accumulated consequences of long centuries and successive generations to disappear in the blink of an eye."

Many difficulties are still there. Some of them are described in the book — the survivals of feudalism, the resistance offered by big land-owners, by dissatisfied old-time politicians, and by the top bureaucracy, whose material interests have been affected. No less serious are the difficulties resulting from the continued pressure of the imperialist powers. Only recently the United States and Britain announced that they would not finance the Aswan dam project, intimating that they hoped thereby to make Cairo "choose between East West." Covert supporters of the imperialist powers are at work with the country. But whatever the difficulties, there can be no doubt that the people of Egypt will not depart from their chosen path.

And this book is eloquent proof of their splendid moral qualities, and of how deeply they prize their new-won freedom, which they are upholding with such determination and dignity.

# WEEK by WEEK

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for time on Radio Ceylon to propagate their faith.

So far, the only groups that had been able to buy time of Radio Ceylon were certain American-sponsored sects like the *Assemblies of God*, *Back to the Bible movement*, the *Billy Graham Broadcasts*, and the *Oral Roberts show*. Some of the broadcasts, particularly the Billy Graham broadcast, had a political tinge to it.

With the fall of the UNP, the demand grew that either these broadcasts should be stopped (in spite of the decrease in income) or that other religious faiths should also be permitted to buy time and broadcast. This would inevitably have led to a "radio war" between the different religious groups, and the Government, it is felt, was correct in deciding to stop all religious broadcasts from Radio Ceylon.

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