

TRIBUNE

SECOND KILN

U. N. Expert's Views

A fortnight ago we published an article by our Special Correspondent who, after a careful analysis of the economics of the present cement factory at KKS and the future demand for cement in the Island, came to the conclusion that the Government's decision to abandon the original plan to double the output of the present cement factory by installing another kiln was based more on political considerations than economic realities.

Our Correspondent pointed out that the cement factory is now earning substantial profits and this could be more than doubled with a second kiln in production. He also urged that the Government, instead of repeating *ad nauseum* the argument that transport is a major obstacle to any further expansion at KKS, should immediately encourage and develop coastal shipping, which would cut down the cost of transport by more than half the present rates.

He also drew attention to the fact that the demand for cement in

Ceylon is bound to rise very rapidly in the future and by 1960 it would reach the figure of nearly 600,000 tons per annum; and to meet this demand six additional factories each of the capacity of the present one at KKS will be needed.

Tribune now understands that the same conclusions have been reached by one of the top United Nations Experts in Ceylon who has just submitted his report to the Government. This expert has been in the Island for over four years and has been associated, in one way or another, with the various industrial projects undertaken by the Government. In addition, during the past two years he had exercised overall supervision over the Government Cement Factory at KKS and can, therefore, claim to speak with authority.

EXHAUSTIVE

We gather that his report on the Cement Factory is an exhaustive one and that his arguments for installing a second kiln at KKS are based on incontrovertible facts. We also gather that he has warned the Government that all its development plans for the future will be severely handicapped for want of cement unless the Government takes immediate steps not only to instal a

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second kiln at KKS but also to initiate surveys both in the Puttalam and Ambalangoda areas with a view to establishing two more factories.

Certain interested and influential parties are still calculating on the assumption that if the production at KKS is frozen at its present level the Government will not withdraw the present import duty on cement. Behind this protective barrier these gentlemen hoped to amass a big fortune in double quick time. It is understood that they had the active support of certain Government officials who were in a position to influence Government policy. This would explain why the original plan to instal a second kiln at KKS has been obstructed so long.

Even from the point of view of political expediency, the M. E. P. Government will be committing a grave blunder if it does not revise its decision regarding the second kiln. Its present decision will not only strengthen the hands of the extremists in the North but also, what is more important, impede economic development in the Island.

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TRIBUNE

CEYLON NEWS REVIEW
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FILM

CLIFTON WEBB

English, at the NEW OLYMPIA

The first moments of this film were for me memorable. I don't remember a more effective beginning for a long time. There is a beautiful shot of a quiet sea beating and receding on a lonely beach which stretches right across the cinemascopic screen. A dark object is seen in the water; it moves hither and thither by the ebb and flow. It is a dead body. There are no sound effects. The silence gives the scene a peculiar eerie effect. And upon this background, like a rude interruption, appears the who's who of the film.

And so we get away into a story — quite authentic, we are told — of how a dead body was used by the British to hoodwink the Germans in the last war. Now I enjoy a good war yarn and the British tell one very well. Although one may be sure in these stories of Intelligence, all the intelligence is one side and all the nincompoopery on the other, generally across the Channel. The film follows the familiar pattern. There is the original idea. There is the genius or the brains behind it. There is the entire bureaucracy of the War Office or the Admiralty or whatever it may be, turning up a very superior nose and shaking a very dubious head at a most fantastic and nonsensical plan. The whole thing is of course utterly chimerical and cranks will be cranks. The bright idea is soon on the point of being flattened out of existence by brass hats continually sitting upon it.

But you can't keep a good man down. Nor a good idea either. Right, like murder, will out. At least, the brick walls begin to crumble a bit. But only to prove once and for all how absurdly unworkable the idea is. Well, after much trial error and disappointment, it works. And the War Office and the Admiralty are certain that they knew it all the

THE MAN WHO NEVER WAS

with the nonchalance of a Battle of Britain pilot. But the Jerries are not so clever after all. The spy O K's time. Why, it was as plain as a pikestaff. The idea here is a dead body. Now although death is a very old fashion, a dead body is evidently something quite original. Although I've never tried to get one myself, I nevertheless appreciate the difficulties of those who try to. There is a terrifying sanctity about a cadaver which is difficult to explain. People simply will not give up their dead. The problem becomes doubly difficult when the body has to have certain attributes and specifications as recommended by Sir Bernard Spilsbury.

However, as the story cannot proceed without one, one is got. They christen it. Preserve it in ice. Cloth it in the uniform of an officer of the Royal Marines. Plant it with a whole lot of misleading documents and ditch it into the sea off the coast of Portugal. In due course the dead man begins to tell his tales. But strange to say the Germans have indeed a glimmer of intelligence. They don't swallow the bait whole. They even send a spy over who walks into war-torn Dover



Major Martin — for such was the name of the man who never was — and so ensures the final destruction of the Third Reich. The film dawdles a bit. But on the whole contrives to be quite British and competent.

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American Suez

One can understand John Foster Dulles' anguish about Suez. He knows the idea of nationalization can travel fast. And Egypt's example is being talked about by the peoples of the Middle East, where Yankee oil drains rich Arab sands.....

But Dulles is worried about the Western Hemisphere too. Ideas can leap over oceans as well as desert sands. And Egypt's example fits the needs of distressed American lands. So Ike's unhappy Secretary of State may see a powerful movement rising in Chile and Peru for the nationalization of the American Copper Trust mines before long. And he may hear voices in Venezuela demanding the ownership of the fabulous South American oil fields.....He remembers that Mexico title to her oil fields long ago.

Stolen

The Panama Canal zone is stolen property. It was stolen from the Republic of Columbia by U.S. Marines. And the theft was admitted by President "Big Sticks" Teddy Roosevelt in his arrogant boast: "I took the Canal Zone, and let Congress debate; while the debate goes on, the Canal goes on to."

No one is better informed about this crime than John Foster Dulles himself. For the records of the theft can be found in Dulles' law offices at 48 Wall Street. Those are the offices of Sullivan & Cromwell, the biggest law firm of imperial finance. And the theft was directed by Dulles' chief patron, who hired him and pushed him along. That was William Nelson Cromwell, who headed the law firm until Dulles took his place.

The story goes back to 1880, when a French firm began digging the ditch under a treaty with Columbia. The company was headed by Ferdinand De Lesseps, the aged promoter, who had directed the project at Suez. And the human cost was frightful indeed.

De Lesseps cared little for lives. One hundred and twenty thousand Egyptians perished at Suez. And

22,000 new graves were dug on the Panama Isthmus in 10 years. Many victims were West Indian Negroes. For that terrible tropical pestilence — Yellow Fever—took its deadliest toll from these poorest paid workers.

Then De Lesseps went bust. Another company—The New Panama Canal Company—was formed with the help of American finance. And Cromwell came into the picture as company lawyer and political guide.

Cromwell was hired for his influence in Washington. He knew how to make Senators and Presidents dance to his tune. And his job was to unload the New Panama Canal Co., with its rusting and worthless machinery, on the American Government for all the traffic would bear.

Bribes

The job wasn't easy, American engineers favored the easier route along Nicaragua's lakes and rivers. So Cromwell decided to soften the way to Panama with bribes.

Suez is very much in the news, but many forget that the U.S.A. too has a Suez of its own. This article tells the story of how Wall St. "acquired" the Panama Canal for the U.S.A. It focusses attention on a problem that is likely to become an international problem sooner or later.

The size of the bribe fund can only be guessed. Henry Watterson, the noted editor of the *Louisville Courier-Journal* of the day, (estimated that "twenty millions (in bribes) went to the grey wolves of the U.S. Senate." This may be an exaggerated figure, but some smaller items have been officially admitted.

Thus Cromwell gave dollars 60,000 to the Republican campaign fund in 1900, when McKinley and Roosevelt were running against Bryan, the anti-imperialist candidate. And he gave it for a price. The price was a plank in the Republican platform, calling for a canal through Panama, instead of Nicaragua.

The money was paid to Senator Mark Hanna, the Cleveland capitalist, who managed the campaign.

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American Suez

(continued from page 339)

Another dollars 100,000 was spent on the lake Panama "Revolution" of November, 1903. The Columbia Senate had refused to ratify a treaty sanctioning the Isthmus Canal. The terms were too cheap; Columbia's sovereignty would be tossed away, and Columbian "public opinion was strongly against it," the American Minister to Bogota admitted in a dispatch to the State Department.

So Cromwell began plotting his Panama "Revolution." The plot was worked out in dozens of confidential talks in the White House and Senate Office Building. And the firm of Sullivan & Cromwell concentrated on this dirty job for months.

"Two of our partners were constantly traveling between New York and Washington," said Cromwell later. "They were often occupied for days, sometimes weeks, in conferences with the Secretary of State, Party leaders in Washington, and with the President himself.

Puppet

Cromwell's puppet was a discredited Columbia politician, named Manuel Amador, who lived at Panama City. He was promised the presidency of the new puppet Republic. And he was told to wait for orders from Washington.

The final orders were not transmitted by Cromwell himself. The wily lawyer stayed behind the scenes. And he let a French adventurer, named Philippe Bunau-Varilla, who have been connected with the Panama company, send the flash.

The flash came after Amador had distributed the dollars 100,000 bribe money to a string of petty politicians and local Army officers.

And the flag of the puppet Panama Republic was raised over Panama City.

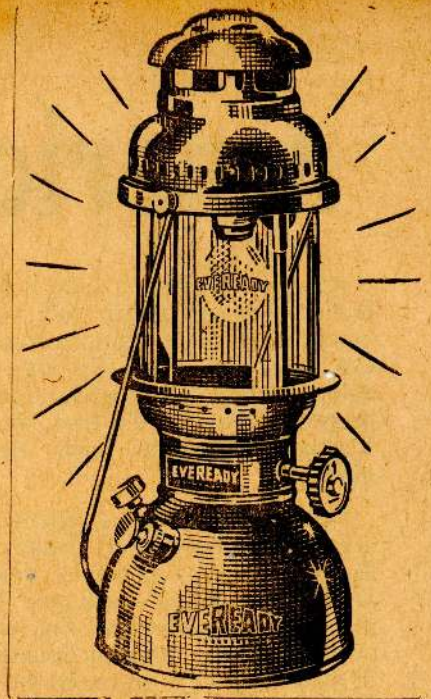
That flag was made by a New York woman in a little Hudson River town and shipped to Panama City. Bunau-Varilla boasted how he got the woman to do it, in an interview with Editor Barron of the *Wall Street Journal* many years later. And the French adventurer bragged that he had supplied the "revolutionists" with their Constitution as well. It was copied verbatim from the Constitution of Cuba.

This imported flag was hoisted on Nov. 3, 1903, as the Cruiser Nashville was steaming into the harbour of Colon. Commander Hubbard had orders to protect the puppets against the 500 Columbian troops, who had landed in the port.

He did that by posting a force of bluejackets and Marines in front of the railroad station. The Columbian troops were now unable to proceed to Panama City to put down the insurrection without a battle with the American Navy.

The battle would have been hopeless. Seven more Naval ships were on the way—the Battleship Wyoming among them. And the helpless Columbian general was soon arrested by the Panama puppets. Teddy's "Big Stick" had won.

Washington wasted no time in legalizing the theft. The Amador Junta was recognized as the "de



facto" government on November 6, three days after the coup. "De jure" recognition followed on November 13

Treaty

Next came the signing of the Panama Canal treaty. It was signed by John Hay, Roosevelt's Secretary of State, and the new minister from Panama—the Frenchman, Bunau-Varilla. And—shameful to tell—the ink for this stolen goods treaty came from an ink well left by Abraham Lincoln.

The treaty was drafted by Bunau Varilla. It gave the United

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LAST NAIL

Pertinax concludes his series on the *Eksath Bhikkhu Peramuna* with article in which he refers to Mettananda's final reply. Pertinax believes that at least for a time the menace of "yellow-robed racialists" has disappeared from the political arena in this country.

The mud slinging, which started with the Mettananda's letter of September 4, came to an end with Mettananda's final reply published on September 15. In the ten days, in which the chief sponsors of the erstwhile EBP indulged in furious attacks against each other, the last nail, was driven into the coffin of the EBP. Only a miracle can revive the EBP now and restore it to the prestige and glory it enjoyed during the April elections and for a short time thereafter.

Mettananda's reply was a masterpiece in the art of polemics. The priests had no reply for it. This is how Mettananda opened his attack:

"My critics, Hevanpola Ratanasara Thero, Talpawila Seelawansa Thero and Mahapitigama Buddhakakkhita Thero, bring to my mind the old fairy tale of Hans Andersen where a foolish king duped by clever imposters paraded the streets naked thinking that he was wearing the most gorgeous apparel. Everyone anxious to please the king praised the imaginary clothes until a child brought all the pretence to an end by shouting "Why he is quite naked." Substitute dussila monks for the king, their yellow robes for the imaginary clothes and me for the child and there is a modern version of the story. There is, however, a difference, the king in the fairy tale was discreet enough to turn and run and saved further problems. No one asked the child to recant.

"The thesis I sought to establish in my letter of 4th September was that the immoral government having been expelled by the bhikkhus, it was time for them to cleanse their own ranks of immoral monks. A yellow robe no more makes a Buddhist monk than the proverbial black cowl his Christian counterpart. I have not been told I am wrong, but I have been ordered to recant.

Recent why?

"Let me see what I can recant of the statement I made in my letter. Shall I stoutly deny that the Buddha placed a high value on the discipline of his order? If my critics help me with a declaration that the

Vinaya is apocryphal, I would have some chance of recanting my statement. Shall I say that the Arahants at the First Council did not declare that the Vinaya was the life of the Buddha's religion and as long as there was Vinaya, the religion would last? If my critics would re-write the early history of Buddhism omitting this incident. I would have some chance of recanting.

"Coming down to more recent events, it is certainly not possible for me to recant my statement that certain bhikkhus sent a letter to the Prime Minister using the signature-franks of certain other bhikkhus, who were at the time over a thousand miles away. Nor is it possible for me to recant what I said about the application for a Buddhist monk to go on a scholarship to a number of places including the Papal Seminary at Rome which cited as a qualification that he was the joint secretary of the E.B.P. And lastly can I honestly say that the Buddhists do not disapprove the conduct of the dussila monks? As these are facts, I do not see what I can possibly recant."

Then, point by point, Mettananda took the charges made against him and with consummate skill in the technique of casuistry he demolished his critics. In regard to the main charge of a secret hankering after office, Mettananda had this to say:

"I find that my critics have hurled a torrent of abuse at me. This is in keeping with the practice of the bad advocate who believes when you have no case, abuse. I am told I have undergone a metamorphosis of late. I am a buffoon, a tiger, a clown, a hypocrite, a laughing-stock, an eccentric opportunist, an ultra-extremist-nationalist. I am mad for revenge, boiling with anger, bursting with hatred, scorching with envy, now attacking the Catholic Church, now the Prime Minister and now the Sangha. I am a dangerous man, disrupting society, disrupting the government, disrupting the Sangha. This last is a sad in

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THE PEOPLE'S CAR



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Bhikkhu Peramuna

(continued from page 341)

sult to the Sangha, if my critics think that my statement that the Sangha should be cleansed of dusila monks is going to cause disruption!

Office

"The reason alleged for this metamorphosis is that I failed to get into the Cabinet through the backdoor. I am grateful that Hempitagedera Gnanaseeha Thero has nailed this canard to the counter and he knows me better than any other of the Peramuna. Gnanaseeha Thero, who went to see the Prime Minister at Horagolla on April 9 wrote to the Press on September 9 as follows:—

"Mr. Mettananda did not summon the bhikkhus to his residence for the purpose of getting himself recommended for the office of Minister of Education nor did he make any endeavour towards that end."

"I am accused of hypocrisy, the allegation being that although I publicly declare that I have no personal ambition to achieve, yet I am secretly seeking office. The facts are these. In early May, I was offered the post of Minister Plenipotentiary in Burma, carrying an annual salary of Rs. 33,350 with other allowances and diplomatic privileges. The idea of serving in a Buddhist country which has done so much for Buddha sasana appealed to me. But I pointed out to the Prime Minister that as the two main issues — the language issue and the Buddhist issue in which I was interested — were not yet settled. I felt it my duty to be in Ceylon to fight those issues."

After stating why he had supported the Jayasuriya fast and replying to charges made against him, Mettananda concludes on a high note:

"And so I may return to my thesis which I feel has been discreetly left alone by my critics. The mass of abuse that has been hurled may have obliterated it somewhat out of my reader's mind and that is why I have re-stated it. The Dasa Anatha or Ten Point Programme to which the three worthies mentioned above subscribed has as the second point.

"To fight against evil, whatever and in whatever guise it presents itself.

"I am sure many Buddhist layman share with me the view that we would like to fight evil most when it appears disguised within the folds of a yellow robe. Let us fight the evil in the palatial mansion in which we may meet it, in the limousine car and on broad acres which are very remote from the path Buddha trod. Let us rather die fighting than yield to this evil, for as the Buddha said:

"In the struggle (with Mara), I prefer to die rather than to live as his slave.

"May this Buddha Jayanthi year, a year of prophesy, fulfil itself as regards all matters both within and without the Sangha."

Though Mettananda had the best of the fray with the three knight warriors (in yellow robes) of the MEP, the public was all along conscious that it was Mettananda himself who had created the Eksath Bhikkhu Peramuna. Realising the possibilities of priestly influence in the present stage of development in Ceylon, Mettananda started the Sangha Sabhas for the priests. His method was the old one of indirect influence on politics and politicians without any direct interference.

However, when a rival organisation, the All-Ceylon Congress of Bhikkhus, was started with an openly avowed political programme, Mettananda achieved a united "election front" in the shape and form of the EBP. The election front

worked wonders and contributed a great deal to the downfall of the U.N.P.

Clash

But, it was inevitable, that when the elections were over, the two constituent parts of the EBP should clash. Their aims may have been the same, but their methods were radically and totally different. Whilst the Mettananda group sought to achieve the hegemony of Sinhalese Buddhists through the cry of a united Sinhalese (Ceylonese) nation by insidious methods of propaganda (embodied in the Buddhist Commission report) and secret pressuring of politicians in power to resort to unobtrusive administrative action to "liquidate" all who stood in the way of a Buddhist Sinhala Ceylon, the Buddharakkhita section endeavoured to achieve the same objective through the smokescreen of a seemingly progressive socialist programme embodied in their *Ten Demands* (Commandments) backed by demogogy and rabble-rousing of the worst kind. Buddharakkhita and crowd also believed in flaunting whatever power and influence they had in an ostentatious manner.

It has been mentioned that Mettananda and his friends, in fact, disliked the radical political programme which the Buddharakkhita group sought to promote. Even if

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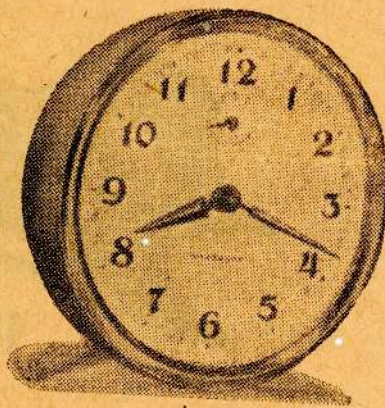
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Perhaps the most significant event in the last fortnight was the Jayasuriya visit to Jaffna. The *Morning Times* columnist Alice (*Through the Looking Glass*) commented on the courage of this quiet little lieutenant of Bandaranaike walking into the lion's den in Jaffna.

Home Minister Jayasuriya was the first from the Bandaranaike Cabinet to pay an official visit to Jaffna after the *Sinhala Only* Bill was passed. It was also significant that the Minister, who is perhaps the closest colleague of the Premier, went to Jaffna. The visit was looked upon as a preliminary to bringing about better relations between the Tamils and the present Government.

Black Flags

Mr. G. G. Ponnambalam and his followers greeted the Ministerial Party with black flags. This decision by the Member for Jaffna is said to have originated after it was known that the Federal Party had decided to "co-operate in administrative matters", while boycotting the Minister socially and otherwise. One would have thought that the Federal Party action would have been more consistent with its policy if it had welcomed the Minister socially but boycotted him in administrative matters (until Federalism was granted). But the ways of the Federal Party are sometimes unpredictable, and G. G. Ponnambalam, in order to score a point off the Federalists, staged a stirring black flag demonstration. This was probably intended to show the Jaffna public that he alone was willing to fight "Sinhalese domination" at all levels.

While this demonstration of Ponnambalam is not likely to have weakened the present Federalist hold over the Tamils, it undoubtedly focussed attention on some contradictory features of Federal Policy.

Triumph

Apart from this black flag procession, the visit may be said to have been a personal triumph for Jayasuriya. Jaffna did not welcome

him with open arms and enthusiasm. (This could not have been expected after the *Sinhala Only* Bill). But from all accounts he was received with courtesy and respect.

Jayasuriya issued a statement on his return to Colombo which may be regarded as a step in the right direction to bring about better relations between the Tamils and the Sinhalese. It is also an indication of the impact present day Jaffna has had on Jayasuriya. After commenting on the fact that the Tamils and Sinhalese lived harmoniously in Jaffna, he stressed that the people of Jaffna at public meetings, in their deputations to see him and in private conversation urged that the future of Tamil should be legally defined so that the matter may be put beyond all doubt. "The anxiety and heart-burning on the future of the language was obvious," he said.

Mr. Jayasuriya's statement went on to add that this was a matter that would receive the urgent and sympathetic attention of the Prime Minister and the Government. If this means that the Government is proposing to consider amendments to the *Sinhala Only* Bill to give a status to the Tamil language and define its proper role, a great deal would have been achieved in the

matter of creating a united Ceylon where all communities could live in amity.

Members of Parliament

During the Jayasuriya visit to Jaffna, the Communist Member for Point Pedro Kandiah was the one M.P. who took upon himself the task of welcoming the Home Minister to the Northern region. Kandiah, while emphasising that the Tamil people were deeply hurt over the *Sinhala Only* Bill, stated they were anxious to live in harmony with other communities in a united Ceylon. He urged amendments to the *Sinhala Only* Bill, but whilst this was pending he stressed that Government should continue to provide for the urgent needs of the Jaffna peninsula. Unemployment was acute, Kandiah pointed out to Jayasuriya, and asked the Minister to persuade Government to take immediate action to provide for a development plan for the North as an integral part of the National Plan.

Mr. Ponnambalam "boycotted" the visit, while the Federalists were of two minds — boycott socially, co-operate administratively. Two Federalist Members of Parliament, Navaratnam from Chavakachcheri and V. A. Kandiah from Kayts,

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The Government Medical Officers Association (GMOA) claims to be on the warpath. It has stated that unless its demands for increased salary scales and the total abolition of private practice is forthwith conceded, the members of the GMOA would go on strike as from December 1. It is not clear what form the strike would take: whether the gallant doctors would decline to offer their services, or whether they would refuse to attend on patients (except in cases of grave emergency, unmindful of the fact that lack of early attention leads to grave deterioration), or whether the strike would be merely symbolic like a universal growing of beards by members of the GMOA to register a a hirsute protest.

Whatever one thinks about the strike, there is no doubt that doctors in government service have a genuine grievance. Under the pretext that such doctors have a right to private practice (those recruited after 1934 have a conditional and qualified right only), two Salaries Commissions have ignored the claims of government doctors for enhanced salary scales. These doctors therefore, rightly feel that private practice and salary scales have been coupled, by the two Salaries Commissions to the disadvantage and detriment of the bulk of the medical practitioners in government service.

Mythical

It is no doubt true that private practice only assists a few doctors to supplement their income, and an even smaller number earn fantastically high incomes through unconscionable methods of extracting fees from patients. It is the ill odour that emanates from the activities of this small coterie of specialists and consultants (some of them now in the outstations too) that has made the curative medical service of the government stink. The GMOA perhaps has good reason to state that all evils in the present system stem from private practice allowed to government medical officers,

For, apart from the question of the direct abuses, the psychological and climatic effects of the unbalance caused by depressed salary scales for the vast and overwhelming majority of the government doctors, in the context of the few who earn large sums through the abuse of private practice, is devastatingly tragic. The sense of grievance among the majority is even greater because legitimate salary increases were denied to them (when other sections of the government service and the community were granted increases) because of this mythical (to most of them) right of private practice. There is no doubt too that Government has tended to overlook the demands of government doctors. In the circumstances, the spirit of cynicism and callousness that many government doctors display is understandable. This is particularly accentuated because they have to work under difficult conditions of universal shortage of trained personnel (nurses, attendants and doctors), equipment and drugs.

The complaints made against government medical officers about their indifference is more often than not true, but it is only right that their present sense of frustration must be examined in the conditions in which they are compelled to work. In the outstations the conditions are even more trying and distressing than in Colombo and the big provincial towns. There are hospitals in important outstation centres where one doctor has to look after over 100 hospitalised cases and vast streams that come to the OPD; attend murder inquiries and hold post mortems, and also be ready to appear in court to give evidence in criminal cases. On top of this a vast amount of purely administrative and routine duties falls on the doctor. There are cases where doctors have been surcharged and penalised for the loss of hospital linen which is *de facto* looked after by minor staff but which *de jure* the doctor is

responsible for. The outstation doctor has also to contend with inadequately trained nurses and completely untrained attendants.

Sympathy

Whilst we admit that the conditions and circumstances in which the vast majority of government doctors work is heart-rending, and and whilst we support their claims for higher salaries unreservedly, we must frankly state that the threat of strike is most unbecoming of a profession that is expected to serve suffering mankind. The problem of government doctors is not a struggle between capital and labour, between finance monopoly and wage-slavery. The problem of our government doctors is simply one of a maladjustment between an important section of the community and the State (and the rest of society, too). To talk of a strike and ultimatums is to reduce a noble profession to the most sordid mercenary level. If the GMOA hopes to effect reform, it cannot base its entire argument to salary scales.

It is a gross oversimplification moreover, of the problem to say, as the GMOA does, that the private practice effectively enjoyed by a small number is the root cause of the entire evil. The public would show even greater sympathy to the GMOA than it is prepared to extend to it if this Association were willing to launch a campaign to make its members shed themselves of mercenary motives, and rise above petty vindictiveness against the whole of society for defects of a system which they should endeavour to remedy.

The stalwarts of the GMOA will do well to realise that a less bellicose attitude in regard to salaries and a more humanitarian approach to their profession will win them greater sympathy than their current talk of strikes and ultimatums.

A few days ago I received an official looking envelope — long rather and well-filled. The frank outside indicated that it was from the General Manager of Railways. I slit open the envelope and pulled out a long card — something like a calendar.

It was not a calendar however, but something just as useful. It was a simplified pocket time-table which set out the working times of 25 up trains from Colombo and 25 down trains to the city. By moving a card up and down to bring the train a person is interested in into the central cage where the stations in the CGR are enumerated, this "ready-reckoner" (if this term can be used) provides the necessary details about the movement of that train.

I must say that this is one of the finest things that has come from the CGR in the regime of Rampala to keep train travellers informed about the movement of the more important trains. The usual time-table of the CGR is a large cumbersome affair and one has to wade through a mass of figures (and pages) before one can get at the information one wants. The Railway Inquiry Office in Fort is so heavily over-worked that everytime one wants any information, the line is engaged. This little card I have just received eliminates the need to worry the Inquiry Office. All the important questions about the main trains are answered by this "ready-reckoner," which I must say has been most ingeniously devised.

I am sure that copies of this reckoner is available for sale to the public. If they are not, they should be up for sale immediately.

Sir John

Sir John, according to press reports, has called for a meeting of the Parliamentary Opposition. The purpose would appear to be to consider three matters. The *Morning Times* sets out the three matters in the following terms:

"The first is a report that the prosecution in a criminal case in the Kurunegala Magistrate's Court was withdrawn on political in-

structions, resulting in interference by the Executive with the Judiciary.

"The second is an alleged irregularity involving a Cabinet Minister and a C.A.P. and S. Society.

"The third is a directive said to have been issued by the Minister of Agriculture and Food asking his departments not to advertise in the Lake House newspapers. Sir John says the newspaper in which advertisements appear are selected by a committee functioning under the Ministry of Finance and no individual Minister has the right to interfere."

The third matter concerning the question of advertisements to Lake House papers was the front page comment of the *Tribune* last week.

The second charge about a Minister and CAP and S society funds, according to informed circles, is said to centre around a practice, started in UNP days, when influential people "cashed" cheques at CAP and S societies. These cheques were dishonoured and a civil liability was created—and such debts have quite often been written off. A bad debt, say Rs. 10,000 or Rs. 20,000 is only a drop in the ocean of CAP and S losses which amount to millions, and so no one has so far bothered about such dud cheques on which monies had been paid out. And in the old days nobody ever dared to bring a charge against a UNP Minister.

Today, the situation is different. It would seem that in this particular case, the cash was collected against blank cheques. It is no doubt a serious matter. It is also whispered that there are writs against this same MEP Minister which have been put into cold storage. The creditors are big merchants and they

must have good reason for holding their hands. All these things and more happened in the days of the UNP, and it is refreshing to see Sir John leading the campaign to cleanse the political life of this country of the sad legacy of the past.

This is particularly so in regard to the alleged interference of the Judiciary by the Executive. The *Morning Times* commentator, Alice, in the column *Through the Looking Glass* remarked a few days ago that Sir John and the UNP should be the last to make this charge in view of the numerous allegations of such attempts to interfere during Sir John's regime as Premier.

But the fact that such abuses existed in the past is no excuse for their recurrence today. A Peoples Government should fight corruption and the first step would be to fight it in its own ranks.

Changing Over

The UNP has lost one of its members in the House of Representatives to the SLFP. L. B. S. Jinasena, the second M.P. for Kadugannawa, resigned from the UNP and went across the floor to join the SLFP and the Government Parliamentary Party. The UNP strength in the House has thus been reduced from six to five, and the SLFP strength has been increased *vis a vis* the VLSSP faction in the MEP.

The Jinasena somersault followed that of Mudaliyar Kariapper who broke away from the Federal Party to join the SLFP. Whilst the Jinasena change-over has gone unnoticed, Kariapper and Dr. Naganathan (General Secretary of the Federal Party) have been indulging in verbal as well as epistolary exchanges: ex-

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WEEK by WEEK

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took the Minister to their electorates, held meetings and placed before him some "urgent" needs which required attention. Member of Vadukoddai confided his "co-operation" solely to leading a deputation of toddy-tappers asking for a relaxation of the present rules regulating the transport of toddy.

There are no reports as to whether the other Federalist M.P.'s of the North did anything in particular, but the solicitude which the Members for Chavakachcheri and Kayts showed in "co-operating" in administrative matters has been a matter for comment in the North as well as the South.

Paddy Lands Act

Minister of Food and Agriculture, Philip Gunawardene, stole the thunder in the South last week by releasing to the Press a memorandum on the principles of land tenure in regard to agricultural holdings. Apart from the Common Law of the land, the Paddy Lands Act of 1953 has so far regulated the rela-

tionship between landlord and tenant (cultivator) in agricultural lands.

Philip Gunawardene in a comprehensive memorandum sets out principles, which on first reading, impress one as being a great step forward in the matter of establishing principles which will contribute towards a system of land tenure which consistent with progressive developments in other lands which have achieved tremendous advances in the matter of food production.

There is no doubt that one of the greatest stumbling blocks in the way of greater food production has been the rather antiquated system of land tenure in this country. The Paddy Lands Act of 1952 only suggested very superficial remedies which did not go to the root of the problem. The new Bill suggested by Philip Gunawardene should be closely examined as to whether it would meet the problems facing agriculture in this country in a concrete and practical way.

One question that has been asked in political circles is whether this Memorandum on a vital and important problem has been submitted to the Cabinet and received gov-

ernmental approval. The view seems to be held in certain quarters that Philip Gunawardene has released this document even before it has gone to the Cabinet. One cannot believe that on such an important matter as this, the Minister would have taken unilateral action, but with the piratical tendencies displayed by certain Ministers of the MEP Cabinet, knowledgeable circles are inclined to think that Philip Gunawardene has released the document independently as a manifesto to win over the peasantry.

Bases

On October 5, 1956, *Morning Times* reported that the "basis on which the British Government seeks facilities at Trincomalee and Katunayake has surprised the Ceylon Government..... The *Morning Times* learns that Britain wants an agreement under which she would legally be entitled to the exclusive use, for all time, of facilities of communications, movement, and the storage of fuel and ammunition."

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AUTONOMY

In regard to the question of autonomy, I should like to emphasize, that the Government has renounced up to date all powers to influence, or direct, or decide questions of policy and administration in the University. Under the Ordinance, as it is, officially the Pro-Chancellor, who is the Minister of Education, has no power at all to tell the University what to do and what not to do. To place in the hands of these 10 individuals, whom I named, such unlimited power to decide the place and destiny of our one and only University is, I regard, very very dangerous.

To entrust these people with Rs. 7 million, as we are now entrusting them, of public money every year without telling them what, in broad terms of policy, they should do with that money is an act of irresponsibility which this country cannot suffer. It is to create an unchanging vested interest, intent upon perpetuating itself and its spoils.

To invest this body of 10 University Professors with the responsibility of deciding the policy and carrying on the administration is to make the one barren and the other incompetent and corrupt. *It is not as if these 10 people are robust and well tested scholars with vision or imagination — no, they are ageing fossils. They have lived in softer times and wish to continue to live in a soft atmosphere. They are unwilling and incapable of learning the nature of society in which they live, or of taking a view of the University's development consistent with the needs of our society; it is foreign to them.*

For them, to think at all, with vision and imagination, is an effort which, we can well understand, neither their age nor their past performance fits them for. If we had other Universities in this country, then we can afford to ignore the malpractices and discontents of this one institution but this is our only University on whose performance and development depend so much the performance and development and the future of this coun-

try; depends, I say, more than on any other single factor. So much in regard to the policy and administration of the University.

Responsibility

I wish to raise a further question. To whom is this University responsible? To the Hon. Minister? No. To the Government? No. To the Parliament? Not even that. Can we question its action in Parliament and has the Hon. Minister a right to give an answer? No. It is sre-

This is a second instalment on the University from the speech made by P. Kandiah, Communist Member for Point Pedro, during the Committee Stage of the Budget Debate. Another instalment on a very vital aspect of the University will appear next week.

possible exclusively to itself and that is, to the 10 aged Professors who are now controlling the destiny of this institution. Here I think we

have an instance, unknown in this country or in any other democratic country, where a public-financed, and public-owned institution or corporation performing a vital public service is not held responsible for its actions and thoughts to any one but to itself. I must emphasize this fact because there is an error in the view generally held that autonomy means or should mean autonomy both in regard to administration and in regard to policy. That is not so.

When we start a corporation to run the omnibuses of this country, we give that corporation power to administer the running of the bus service but we do not give it the power to decide the policy on which the road transport service will be run.

Let us take the parallel case of a country where there is not one but where there are several universities — most of them autonomous and most of them really private corporations. I refer to the 20 universities in England. Quite a

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UNIVERSITY

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number of them are private. Cambridge and Oxford have sources of income exclusively their own which is as much as the grant given to them by the British Government. Even so, all Government grants to the universities of Great Britain are channelled through a committee called the University Grants Committee which consist of people who are Members of Parliament and who are educationists. This University Grants Committee is responsible to the Parliament through the Minister of Education. This University Grants Committee defines the policy, the entire educational policy, of the universities in Great Britain and co-ordinates that policy. Here you have an instance where the Parliament and the Government of the country are able to decide educational policy and influence it, in ways far more democratic but far less patent than are known here, in the various universities in that country.

A distinction must be made between autonomy in regard to matters of policy and autonomy in regard to matters of administration. In the Ceylon University, by the University Ordinance, autonomy is vested in regard to both matters in that single body, the Council, though actually concentrating power in the hand of ten persons, in practice.

The result of all this has been that the University has not served the purpose for which it was established. There has been a great gulf between the University on the one hand and society on the other. There are in my opinion three ways in which contact can be established between a university of this type and society itself. Firstly, you might have as Vice-Chancellor and Head of the University a man who is alive to the needs of the society, a man with imagination and vision, with a liberal outlook; if you had such a man he would inspire the life of the University towards channels which would bring it near to the society it serves.

Secondly, the University as a community, especially the senior members of the University, the teachers, might be so much an intimate part of the community outside that they will automatically be able

to respond to the pressures that emanate from society. Thirdly, the University might be a public body whose policy and administration is in the hands of a body of men or a department which is directly responsible to the people, through their elected representatives. These are three ways of establishing contact between the University and the people.

Jennings

In regard to the Ceylon University, none of these three factors has existed. It is a singular misfortune, Mr. Chairman, that we had Jennings as the first Vice-Chancellor, and Attygalle as the man who succeeded him.

Jennings was a well-advertised, I almost said, self-advertised mediocrity who was proficient in his chosen, small field of scholarship narrow-minded and utterly without vision, who came here to serve that narrow coterie of men who hire his services to serve their petty interests. Utterly without vision, he destroyed the University; he sent it along the wrong track.

His main purpose was to restrict the number of students the University admitted. He was thinking that it would need thirty to forty years for the University to reach the optimum population of 5,000. He was succeeded by Dr. Attygalle, a man extremely able in his own field—I do not want to question his ability in that field; I have had to use his services for members of my family myself—but, I am afraid thoroughly unfit to correct the distorted traditions which Jennings for ten years had striven to establish. It is a singular misfortune. It would have been far more fortunate if we had as the first Vice-Chancellor a man who could have put the University on the right track. Then Dr. Attygalle would have been able to follow that pattern. Or, if the second Vice-Chancellor was a man of vision, he could have put right the traditions introduced by Jennings in time, so that the University could have prospered after Jennings left this Island. But we have had the worst from both worlds.

As far as the University's contact with society is concerned—I have been a member of that community myself—we never did have that contact. We lived very happy, sec-

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UNIVERSITY

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cluded lives, very peaceful, with no contact with the outside world; we did not like to have those contacts. The only thing that interested us was where our houses were located, our salary scales, the dates on which we were going abroad and so on.

The third method is, where the University's policy and administration is in the hands of a body of men directly responsible to the people of this country through their elected representatives. As I said before, there is nothing of that kind here.

It is of the greatest significance, in this context, that 14 years after the inception of this University neither

the government nor the University has issued a statement, even for their own benefit, of what they plan or hope the University should do. There is a section in the calendar of the University called "Aims and Functions of the University", but there is not a word there about it. What has happened is, we have gone along piling one thing upon another; if we want a second medical school; we have one; if we want a third dental school, we have that too, as time and pressure dictate. It is all a patchwork of ad hoc proposals, made at different times. Under this type of autonomy, my submission is that no progress at all is possible. The University must be judged to have failed.

Supposing the Hon. Minister does want to influence the policy of University or change it, he has no way of doing that.

To be continued next week

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Bhikkhu Peramuna

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this programme were only on paper, and even if it were only a cover for religio-racial jingoism, it is asserted by those who intimately know the Mettananda group (and particularly the senior Civil Servant said to be its presiding genius) that they were afraid that the spread of radical economic and social ideas would be "dangerous" in the long run.

Whatever be the truth or otherwise of this surmise, the fact that the two groups had different techniques for power-grabbing and were rivals for the same instruments of power, they clashed headlong. And out of the dust and storm of this clash, there now has emerged a Ceylon which for the moment at least is spared of yellow-robed racialists. It is to be hoped that when Buddhist priests came forward once again into the political arena (it is inevitable that they will as they reflect the aspirations a substantial section of the people) they will be wedded to a progressive policy which will tend to bring about harmonious relations between all groups, communities and sections of the people inhabiting this island.

American Suez

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States perpetual rights to a 10-miles strip across the Isthmus, where the Frenchman had been digging.

And the New Panama Canal Co., which Cromwell represented was paid dollars 40,000,000 in hard American cash.

There were angry American protests against this "pirate" deal, as Prof. Henry Loomis Nelson of Williams College called it. For anti-imperialist sentiment was strong in

those days. But President Roosevelt had Wall Street behind him. And an era of brutal racial discrimination on the Isthmus began.

This discrimination began on the Canal job where Chief Engineer John F. Stevens used to refer to the workers as "lazy n——rs." And it continued at the pay window, where dark-skinned labourers were paid in silver, having half the value of the gold wages given Americans.

Labour unions were virtually outlawed, meanwhile. And a group of American corporations, led by the United Fruit Co., took over the economic life of Panama outside of the Canal Zone.

The isthmus is now run by a tight, little oligarchy of Army officers and corporation executives and native collaborators. This has not prevented many protests against imperialist oppression, however. And these protests reached a climax in 1947 when the Panama Assembly unanimously refused to ratify an agreement to continue American military bases.

The "No Bases" decision was carried out. But the theft of the Canal Zone has not been forgotten or forgiven in Latin America. And the time may come when a democratic Organization of American States may demand that America's "Suez" be returned to its rightful owners.

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Just Briefly

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changes, which only show that Kariapper was never a convinced "Federalist" but that he associated with the Party during the elections for understandable reasons (according to Kariapper he was inveigled into a trap by the Federal Chief). The Kariapper-Naganathan exchanges also reveal, if one may read between the lines, that the Federal Party in its anxiety to pick winning candidates did not examine too closely the political beliefs of the men chosen for the Audit.

Three weeks ago, *Tribune*, commenting on the unsatisfactory manner in which the accounts of government controlled institutions were audited made several suggestions to remedy the present state of affairs. This paper also suggested that the Auditor General should take upon himself the task of nominating the auditors from a panel of Ceylonese accountants and also that all these accounts should come before Parliament for scrutiny.

Tribune had also suggested that the Audit Department of the

Government should be streamlined by recruiting qualified men not yet in government service to bring the Department up to scratch.

According to press reports, the Auditor General seems to have decided upon adopting all these measures suggested by this paper. Whether he did so after reading *Tribune* it is difficult to say, nor would this paper presume to think that the learned Auditor General could not have arrived at the same conclusions on his own. In any case, it is a strange coincidence that *Tribune* and the Auditor General should think along similar lines both in regard to the auditing of government controlled and subsidized institutions as well as the re-organisation of the Audit Department itself.

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WEEK by WEEK

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A Ceylon Government delegation, led by Sir Claude Corea, has left for the U.K. to negotiate with the British Government on the question. In the meantime, a communique of the External Affairs Ministry denied the truth of the *Morning Times*

report. It was a cautious statement which denied in a formal manner the *Times* report. Informed circles seem to think that there is a great deal of truth in the report and that it is the reason why the negotiations are being delayed so long. The reason for wanting secrecy is also understandable.

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