

Vol. 22 No. 48 — May 27, 1978 — Rs. 1-50

TRIBUNE



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Letter From The Editor

ON THE COVER we have the picture of the head of a peasant from Akkrapattu. Though a Muslim of the Eastern Province vintage, he is every inch a Ceylonese, a Sri Lankan. His mother tongue is Tamil and he is no doubt fluent in Sinhala. He is probably schooled enough in Tamil to affix his signature to a document and write a scrappy letter to his son employed in a Government Corporation in the Western Province. Does this peasant need English as an additional qualification? He certainly does not need English to survive or even flourish as a peasant, but his son who is not on the land will make the grade if he is proficient in the official language Sinhala, his mother tongue Tamil and a world language like English. In a speech on May 13 at Kal-eliya in the Mirigama electorate, President J. R. Jayawardene had stated that every school pupil would have the opportunity to study English which was an international language along with his or her mother tongue and the other national languages of the country. All this and more the President set out when he spoke at the Convocation of the Muslim Ladies Arabic College. In his speech, Mr. Jayawardene had stated (*Ceylon Daily News*, 15/5/78) that "he was happy to note that the school was the only one of its kind in the world where Muslim girls were trained for six to eight years to become Moulavias and Al-Alims to teach Islam. Apart from a grounding in religion the girls were taught four languages—Sinhala, Tamil, English and Arabic. 'The speech made by a girl in Sinhala was better than any of our speeches' he said amidst laughter. He thanked, on behalf of the Government, donors from all over the world who had contributed to the progress of the school." On this occasion, he also indulged in a little of history to show the unity in diversity that characterised Ceylon, now Sri Lanka: "The President said there were several muslim humlets around Kaleliya. From the time of the Sinhala Kings the Sinhala and Muslim people had lived together. The Muslims had come to Sri Lanka about a thousand years ago and the Kings had looked after them and given them land. They in return helped the Sinhalese to protect their country from invaders. Today there were about 10 lakhs of Muslims in the country.....As a government we are pledged to afford protection to you and ensure equal rights in this country, your motherland." He also went on to trace the history of the language problem and suggested the three-language formula as the way out: "Mr. Jayawardene said it was as far back as the State Council days in 1943 that he had moved a motion proposing Sinhala as the official language. Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike in 1956 made that the law of the land. No one could reverse that process now. Today however proficiency in an international language had become increasingly necessary in a world rapidly becoming one world. 'If we accept that language to be English, we don't believe only the children of the Ministers and the rich should be sent abroad to study English.'" The last Government which had neglected the teaching of English had seen to it that the children of the politically powerful were sent to England and France to be educated. Today under the new Education Minister a scheme had been launched to make the study of English available to all students along with proficiency in his mother tongue and other national languages said the President." Old readers will recall that *Tribune* from its very inception in 1954 favoured a three language policy not only to sustain national unity but also to keep abreast of world developments. For this, *Tribune* was denounced as "reactionary" and "anti-national" not only by Chauvinists but also many Leftists for not upholding Sinhala Only or at least the Mother Tongue Only slogan. The new demand for English came from Sinhalese rural youth who felt left out of the mainstream of world knowledge. This led to the three-language policy of the JVP which was promptly adopted by the UNP. Left Parties now swear by a two-language policy whilst the SLFP is still sticking to Sinhala Only.

TRIBUNE

Ceylon News Review

Founded in 1954

**A Journal of Ceylon and
World Affairs**

**Editor S. P. Amarasingam
Every Saturday**

May 27, 1978

Vol. 22 No. 48

TRIBUNE

43, DAWSON STREET,
COLOMBO - 2.

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EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK**Some Thoughts
On Tigers**

Colombo May 23,

It was a peaceful Wesak. The President and the Prime Minister both urged the people to follow the precepts of the Buddha. As in the past, the emphasis was on religious matters. Wesak is now a day of national significance, because Buddhism, whatever the platitudinous sentiments expressed about the rights of other religions, is the *de facto* official religion of Sri Lanka.

Ceylon was built up as an independent state after 1948 on the twin props of the Buddhist religion and the Sinhala language. With these two basic easily organised and readily chauvinised concepts of resurgent nationalism, the Sinhalese majority have established themselves as the dominant political force—and this was achieved with the assistance of a multi-party left movement which until recently defended Buddhism as the virtual *de facto* state religion and also until recently upheld Sinhala as the only official language.

This change in the Left has come after the victorious UNP enunciated a new programme of sugar-coating the position of Buddhism with statutory and constitutional safeguards for other religions. To the credit of the UNP it must be said, that it has in practice sought to implement what it preached and has now enabled other religious denominations to participate in official and national functions—something which had been denied to them earlier. This new departure, made possible by the new UNP government under J. R. Jayawardene, is one of the most welcome features of present regime.

In language, with the supreme position acquired by the Sinhalese as the dominant political force from Pt. Palmyrah to Point Dondra, the UNP has introduced a three-language formula (in which Tamil and English acquire a national status besides Sinhala which continues to be sole official language). The three-language formula, in which English once again gets a legal status, is essential for the Sinhalese not only to lay the foundations for national unity on a new basis and a new dimensional level but also to enable the mass of the Sinhalese intelligentsia to establish links with the rest of this world through an international language.

The Sinhalese are now strong enough, politically, economically and culturally, to show magnanimity and benevolence to the minorities which they had found difficult to do in the first twenty five years after Independence. They are also now in a position to enshrine the new political potentialities in constitutional guarantees in regard to language, religion and also some degree of decentralised regional autonomy (not amounting either to a separate state or even federalism).

These are basic realities which the current leadership of the Tamil minority have refused to recognise for a long time. And, when they can no longer get away from such realities, they find it difficult to adapt themselves to the new situation, and this is mainly because of the little and big Frankensteins they have created for themselves by the rather short-sighted and insular policies they have followed and which were designed to ensure their demagogic return at parliamentary elections (and not to solve any political or economic problems).

Recent events, culminating in the furore over the so-called Tamil Tiger Terrorist Movement, have

demonstrated the inept and bankrupt political policies followed by the FP (and now the TULF). *Tribune* has, over the years, pointed out that demagogic slogans of the FP and TULF could lead only to the denigration of the Ceylon Tamils as a national minority—and the point of no return was reached towards the end of the last regime. The J. R. Jayawardene government, no sooner it came to power, in July 1977, had tried to bring about a better understanding between the Sinhalese and Tamils, but forces in both communities which have benefited in one way or other from the earlier policies of political attrition and confrontation—with demands of subversion and assimilation on the one hand and devolution and separation on the other—created a situation (by what they did and said just before and after the elections) that inevitably led to the communal holocaust of August-September 1977.

It was the patient politics of J. R. Jayawardene and R. Premadasa showing a new maturity on the part of the Sinhalese ruling class, and the restrained attitudes of the TULF indicating that Tamil leadership was also getting away from childish political infantilism of the past, that saved the situation.

But whilst the extremist elements among the Sinhalese—the so-called Dutugemunu fanatics—were brought under control and stopped (temporarily, at least) their provocative activities soon after September 1977, the Tamil youth who had been tempted to resort to terrorism in the SLFP-UF phase from 1970-71 became impatient and through persistent acts of individualistic terrorism created for themselves, and for the Tamil community serious political problems. The Sinhalese youth who had indulged in terrorism in 1971 and some of whom continued to use

terrorist tactics to rob banks, shops, houses and highway travellers, had no opportunities to develop foreign contacts and obtain foreign support.

But not so with the Tamil extremist youth. The origins of Tamil terrorism had their roots—not in South India as it was popularly believed for a long time—but in Europe and America. The genesis of the demand for Tamil separation can be traced to the Tamil expatriate groups abroad consisting of persons who had been forced to leave the island owing to the discrimination and injustice they had suffered. In a sense, what was worked out in concrete detail in seminars and conferences on Eelam by Tamil expatriate groups in the UK, US and Canada was a reflection of the frustrated yearnings of the Tamils in Sri Lanka. There are a large number of Ceylon Tamils in Malaysia, Australia, African countries, the Middle East, the Gulf States, UK, US, Canada and elsewhere who were and are prepared to pay donations to active organisers for the "Tamil" cause. The Tamil terrorist movement no doubt, had a haven of sympathy and place for asylum in Tamil Nadu, especially when the DMK was in power, but apart from the sympathy and asylum they got little else from that quarter. The money and the weapons came from elsewhere.

The SLFP-UF government (1970-77); which was basically responsible for driving the Tamils and Tamil youth into this desperate situation, was totally unmindful of the consequences of their discriminatory policies. The JVP when it was able to come out into the open, after the UNP came to power, was the first Left party to ask for

"self-determination" for the Tamil minority in terms of Leninist principles and to demand that Tamil be granted an official status. The CP and LSSP followed suit—with a "national status" for Tamil and regional autonomy (of yet an undefined kind) for the Tamils in the areas in which they predominated.

The Select Committee of the NSA for the Reform of the Constitution has been seeking, from reports that are available, a solution that will grant the Tamils everything they wanted short of federation or a separate state. The TULF unwisely declined to participate in the deliberations of this Committee, but Mr. Thondaman (not long ago a bulwark of the TULF), co-operated as a member of the Select Committee and in a recent debate declared the Committee was willing to recommend all that the CWC had asked for to safeguard the future of the Indian Tamil community. Prime Minister Premadasa has once again invited the TULF to join in the work of the Committee.

Many are surprised that the TULF should persist in keeping out of the Select Committee when it is willing to play ball with the Government as the official Opposition. The real reason for the TULF keeping out of the Select Committee is that it is unable to live down its pre-election Eelam braggadocio when it had promised sections of the extremist Tamil youth to "do or die" for Tamil Eelam. They had given even written undertakings that they will fight for Eelam—and nothing short of it.

Little did the TULF imagine that a new era of Sinhalese-Tamil relations would open in 1977-78 with the centrist UNP adopting liberal humanitarian attitudes to the national minority question and the Left — LSSP, CP and the

JVP — moving to "self-determination" and "regional autonomy" in one form or another. The UNP as well as the Left parties are now willing to grant the Tamil language an official status. The TULF group in the NSA could not but be influenced by the new winds of change that have begun to sweep through political arena. Officially, the TULF has not disowned the Eelam demand, but its leaders have made enough noises and speeches to indicate that they would lay Eelam if the discriminatory laws and practices against the Tamils are eliminated and something better were substituted. Whilst still upholding Eelam as the ultimate, the leadership was willing to accept compromises if Tamils were no longer treated as second class citizens.

It is significant that two groups did not change or show any indications of change. One is the SLFP and its natural allies who verge on Sinhala Chauvinism—whether under right or left wing garb. The SLFP has been silent on the national minority question presumably on the footing that the policies it had followed from 1970-77 are still the best for the country. The other group which vociferously stuck to its pre-July 1977 cry was the extremist pro-Eelam Tamil group which had acted as a ginger group within the TULF for about two years or more. Sections of this group with connections with ex-patriate Tamil groups in UK, US, Canada and elsewhere turned to further terrorism. Those who are even remotely acquainted with the genesis of the terrorist movement among Tamil youth know that the Tamil youths did not learn "terrorism" from their Sinhalese insurgent fellow detainees in the gaols—as has been suggested by some TULF speakers in the recent NSA debate on the Tiger emergency legislation. The terro-

rist movement among the Tamils dates from the Duraiyappah murder and runs through other terrorist acts to kill political opponents and rob banks. For a time, it won the sadistic sympathies of the frustrated Tamil people, but the situation is different today.

The only thing that the Tamil terrorists learnt from the Sinhalese insurgents was to direct their fire at the police. This led to the killing of the CID officers in Jaffna sometime ago and more recently at the Ganesharatham farm at Murunkan where a posse of four officers were butchered with inhuman cruelty. The Murunkan killings were the outcome of the confrontation between the police and the terrorists over the attempt to kill the Pottavil MP who had crossed over from the TULF to the UNP. The Murunkan massacre was followed by the murder of Inspector Pathmanathan in Jaffna.

No government can take such a challenge lying down. For some months now, in the hazy political world that fringes on what exists in Sri Lanka today as a political underworld, stories were current of a Liberation Tiger Tamil Eelam Movement for sometime and alert journalist Mervyn de Silva had written a piece about the Tigers to the *Far Eastern Economic Review*.

Tribune is aware that many TULF leaders, carried away by enthusiasm whilst on that side of Elephant Pass, have claimed to be Tamil Tigers at least in metaphorical language punning on the word Tiger. As late as the May Day rally in Jaffna, some leading figures of the TULF have openly and publicly raised slogans in favour of the Tigers. This is known to many Jaffna Tamils who were personally present at this and other rallies. There is great deal of truth in the charge made by Government spokesmen that many TULF leaders follow a Jekyll and Hyde exist-

ence—saying one thing on that side of Elephant Pass and other things on this side.

The Government has come down with a heavy hand on political activities which rely on violence to win success. Tribune will examine in detail in a future issue the debates on the two Bills passed in the NSA last week—(a) the Criminal Procedure (Special Provisions) Law and (b) the Law to proscrib the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam and other similar organisations—both limited to a period of one year.

But for the present, comments of a general nature will be enough, especially about the latter. There is no doubt that the government has over-reacted to the threat from the Tiger Movement, and it is probably because of the realisation of this fact that the government at the final stages of the debate announced that the operation of the Bills would in the first instance, be confined to one year.

The Criminal Procedure (Special Provisions) Bill must be examined on a different basis from that of the Tiger Bill because it relates to ordinary crime which has undoubtedly increased by leaps and bounds in recent years. The charge that too much power was being invested in the Police needs to be looked at in the light of the fact that the Administration of Justice Law of the last government had, whilst granting the Police supreme powers in some matters had relaxed vigilance in the administration of Justice in a way that had pushed up crime. The Administration of Justice Law has been repealed but the damage it has done is great and there is a good case for arguing that some special powers and regulations were necessary to bring the crime situation back to a level of normality. It will be interesting to see if the new provisions will help in combating crime; or whe-

ther it will only lead to increased police persecution of innocents, as has been suggested, without crime being effectively controlled. One year is not too long and this is an experiment worth watching.

But in regard to the law Proscribing the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam and other similar movements, there is something in the charge that the government has over-reacted and has shown symptoms of unnecessary panic and over-kill.

In its over-anxiety, the Government has issued island-wide posters with photographs, first of four, then of thirty eight, "most wanted" Tamil youth. There may be officials and policemen who may think that the publication of the 42 names with their photographs will constitute a kind of political *Rogue's Gallery* of Tamil youth who should be ostracised, but history may repeat itself, as it has happened in many countries, that these posters will become a Heroes' Gallery not only for the Tamil youth but also for Sinhalese youth who are looking for a way to end the frustration and economic misery they suffer. Will the 42 become the leaders of the future?

Whilst the government may be over-reacting and showing panic in combating the Tiger Movement—which had met with the success so far owing to the inefficiency and lack of proper Intelligence by the Police—the TULF displayed total political stupidity in the way it has tried to defend the Tigers whilst half-heartedly denouncing the killings and terrorism. If the TULF believes in Terrorism or in defending it in the manner its spokesmen did in the NSA (in the most circuitous and circumventory manner), it has no business to be in the NSA. If a Party believed in parliamentary democracy and wants to derive benefits from it, as the TULF does, it has

to denounce and oppose terrorism in whatever form or for whatever cause it may be utilised. The TULF mixed up their history as well as truth in an attempt to throw dust into peoples eyes about the true role of the Eelam Tigers. Some of them spoke of Vietnam—but to compare the current actions of Jaffna terrorists to the fighters for national liberation in Vietnam is a travesty of history as well as truth. There is no doubt that the TULF spokesmen, whilst wanting to remain in the NSA by denouncing killings, seemed more anxious to keep the extremist and terrorist youth happy and satisfied that they were waging a parliamentary battle for them.

One overwhelming impression is inescapable after reading the speeches in the NSA on the Tiger Bill—that the TULF came out very badly through the ordeal. If the TULF had maintained a discreet silence—after formally disowning the killing of politicians and policemen—they would have come out in a better light. They do not seem to realise that more the TULF members spoke the more they dragged themselves into the mire of political chicanery. Some of the TULF speeches, under cover of buffoonery, punning on the word tigers and joking about tiger hunts, spoke a million about the political hollowness and instability of the TULF. Either they were afraid of the Tigers or they thought that the dreadful acts of the Tigers could be laughed away.

Some TULF speakers wanted their listeners to believe that Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam was a concoction of the Police and that the whole business of the terrorist movement was a police frame up. If our police are smart enough now to invent the appellation Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam and distribute a bogus letter in order to precipitate ac-

tion against the Tamil youth, the people of the country must be happy that the Police have developed a new kind of maturity, they have never before displayed.

Some TULF spokesmen and one of its journals have suggested that it was the publication of the Tiger letter in the *Virakesari* (allegedly a collusive act between the management of *Virakesari* and the Police) was the excuse for the strong arm action. But whatever the TULF may say, the ordinary man in Jaffna and Colombo believes that Governmental action had been too long delayed in regard to the killings and the robberies; and that the recent spate of murders of police officers was the main and only cause of the stern government action. This is far nearer the truth than any fairy tales spawned by the TULF.

Can the TULF persuade even the Tamil people to believe that there is no terrorist Tamil group with a lot of support from ex-patriate Tamils abroad to trigger a terrorist war to fight for Eelam? Everybody in the Tamil areas—and elsewhere—knows that there is such a group, that it has killed policemen and politicians, that it has robbed banks, and that it was now intimidating TULF MPs to get back to the straight and narrow path of Eelam. People in the Tamil areas know that the word "Tiger", as symbolic of the active terroristic fighter for Eelam, is not a police invention and that it was current in the political pharaseology of the Tamil areas for a long time. If the law proscribing the Tiger Movement has undesirable features—we shall discuss these undesirable features in subsequent issues—the TULF or any other party cannot hope to fight it by pretending that a Tiger movement does not exist or that it is a fabricated frame-up of the Police.

The Tamils and the TULF will soon realise—if they have not already realised it—that the activities of the Tiger Eelam Terrorists and the stupid TULF defence on their behalf have set the clock back for a long time (if not for ever) in regard to the question real and effective regional autonomy for the Tamils in areas which they have regarded as "Tamil". This is the price the Tamil community has to pay for terrorism indulged in by its misguided youth.

The Tamil terrorism and the new emergency laws open a new chapter in the history of the government and this country. They are bound to have far-reaching and far-ranging impact on the youth among the Tamils as well as among the Sinhalese—and these developments must be examined with care in the coming period.

Letter

A (Fishy) Bouquet!

The *Tribune* has always given considerable space in its columns to highlight national issues or policy measures so that the public would know the true facts and thus be aware of the actual situation. The recent activities of the Fisheries Corporation regarding an agreement between Sri Lanka and foreign companies to sell our fishing rights for 40% of the catch is a case in point.

The *Tribune* is indeed rendering a service to its readers and the nation at large by bringing this type of news to the notice of the public which has no other means of coming to know the details of such deals.

Piyasena Wanigabadu

Centre for
Society & Religion,
Colombo 10.
21.4.78

BETWEEN THE LINES

BY SERENDIB

- Party Politics ● SLFP
- Tremors ● One Law For
- Poor, Another For Rich
- Ministerial Jaunts
- Rural Housing ● Less
- Bread ● Queries

***PARTY POLICIES:** The long awaited report of the Reorganisation Committee of the SLFP was discussed by the Executive Committee of the SLFP's on May 13. The full text of the report has not been released. And there is no indication that any political resolution was adopted. *Tribune* had waited for a political programme of the SLFP to discuss the political resolutions already adopted by the LSSP and CP at their recent Congresses. This paper has only referred to the CP's resolution on national minorities. We had thought that it would be appropriate to examine the main political resolutions of the three partners of the 1970's successful United Front in one exercise. If the SLFP does not formulate a new political programme, then it will become necessary to analytically examine the political resolutions of the LSSP and CP separately. These two parties have formed a United Left Front (ULF). Both these parties are not represented in the present NSA.

The TULF which is the largest party in the Opposition today has postponed its annual sessions until after the Third Amendment. The TULF had hoped that the Third Amendment would be adopted by end of May and had thought of an Annual policy-making session in early June. From all reports,

it does not seem that the Third Amendment will get through the NSA before the end of June or even July, and it is problematic what the TULF is likely to do. Its position has become a little complicated after some of the stepped-up activities of the Eelam Tiger Liberation Movement and the campaign the Government has been compelled to launch to contain the Tigers, or wipe them out if that were possible. The TULF has made a platitudinous declaration that it believes in Gandhian non-violence, but it has evaded, making any direct statement about the Tigers. This is understandable, but the public, including the Tamil public, expect the TULF to adopt a positive policy—one way or the other.

*SLFP RE-ORGANISATION.

At the time of writing, we have not yet received copies of the latest issue of *The Nation* and we have therefore to fall back on reports in the *Sunday Observer*, *Daily News* and the *Daily Mirror* with regard to the report of the Special Committee on the Re-organisation of the SLFP.

The *Sunday Observer* of May 14 report under the headline WITH SLFP REORGANISATION: MANY VETERANS MAY BE DROPPED, "With the complete overhaul of the SLFP many veterans of the party might be dropped. It might even include Mrs. Bandaranaike herself says *The Independent* in an interview with Mrs. Bandaranaike published in the paper. The text of the interview is as follows:— 'Even Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike, President of the SLFP, may have to quit under her party's new reorganisation scheme as also many, veterans in the SLFP hierarchy. So said Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike in an interview with the *Independent* regarding the past and the future of the SLFP. Mrs. Bandaranaike revealed that she herself

was uncertain of her future under the refurbished system recommended by a reorganisation committee recently. 'I will bow to the party decision. What is good for the SLFP is good for me. It is the party that matters'.

"A committee consisting of several youthful SLFPers, include Mr. Anura Bandaranaike, K. H. Shinya, former party secretary, S. K. K. Suriyarachchi and a few behind-the-scenes men. Mrs. Bandaranaike contended that a complete overhaul was envisaged with an eye on the next elections. 'The SLFP will be geared to the new form of electoral representation, which means that future candidates must have district popularity as against constituency popularity', she said. 'Naturally, I foresee many veterans being dropped. This may include me. But we will also have to accept it', she observed. Did she think that the fortunes of the SLFP could be revived? 'Why not,' answered the former Prime Minister defiantly, 'at the rate the UNP is going on it may be quicker than we expected.' Did she realise that her government made mistakes during her 7-year regime? 'Of course,' answered Mrs. Bandaranaike, 'it is human to make mistakes but the UNP is making more mistakes in 7 months than we did in 7 years.' Any complaints about the UNP attitude towards the SLFP flock? 'I must say, the President, Mr. J. R. Jayawardene is a considerable man' she said. 'Although, it is difficult for anyone, save God to know what he is thinking. I have heard that the idea of holding a commission is to deprive some of us of our civic rights. But I know justice will prevail'....."

The *Daily News*, (15/5/78) report under the headline DIFFERENCES WITHIN SLFP ESCALATE, "The Sri Lanka Freedom Party's working committee meeting on Saturday which discussed recommenda-

tions of the reorganisation committee saw a further escalation of differences within the Party. The *Daily News* reliably understands that the working committee members who heatedly debated the report for over five hours rejected some sections of it and suggested amendments for the consideration of the executive committee. A press release by the General Secretary of the party Mr. S. K. K. Suriyarachchi however states: 'The Executive Committee of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party which met on the 13th of May, 1978 at the Sri Lanka Freedom Party Headquarters, presided over by Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike, leader of the Party, unanimously decided to adopt the report submitted by the re-organisation committee of the Party. The Executive Committee discussed at length the recommendations submitted by the reorganisation committee on the basis of the present and prospective political orientation of this country. The main features of the report of the reorganisation committee were as follows: (1) further democratisation of the party structure starting from grass-root level, (2) the criteria on which members from the grass-root level can rise to the highest level in the context of the honesty, dedication, ability and popularity, (3) the leadership of all organisations affiliated to the party will be elected by the popular vote of the members of each organisation, (4) constant dialogue to be maintained between the leadership and the rank and file of the party in all matters in order to enable public opinion to be reflected in all party activities, (5) to enable greater participation by the peasants and workers in the activities of the party. It was also decided that the party would celebrate Republic Day which falls on the 22nd of May in a fitting manner.'

The *Daily News* report, though on the front page was on a low key, but the *Daily Mirror*, (15/5/78) had prominent banner headlines which read GENERAL SECRETARY'S PRESS RELEASE RAISES HORNETS NEST IN SLFP: "The Press release issued by the General Secretary of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party, Mr. S. K. K. Suriyarachchi claimed that the party's Executive Committee had 'unanimously' decided to adopt the report submitted by the Reorganisation Committee of the Party has raised a hornet's nest in SLFP circles. This contention of the General Secretary is being hotly contested by a number of SLFPers who attended Saturday's meeting which was presided over by Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike. Dissenting SLFP sources expressing surprise at the General Secretary's statement told the *Daily Mirror* that in the first instance the meeting was that of the party's Working Committee. It lasted from 9.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. at the party headquarters. The vast majority of members were present. Far from the meeting acting as a peaceful rubber stamp for the Reorganisation Committee's proposals, certain sections of the report had been at times debated heatedly. Such was the mood prevailing and the determination with which certain objections were raised that some sections of the report were amended and other sections deleted. The meeting then decided that the report as amended which was accepted in principle, should be submitted next to the office-bearers of the Party for their approval. The full text of the Press Communique issued by the General Secretary, Mr. S. K. K. Sooriarachchi is as follows: 'The Executive Committee of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party which met on the 13th of May, 1978 at the Sri Lanka Freedom Party Headquarters, presided over by Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike

leader of the party, unanimously decided to adopt the report submitted by the Reorganisation Committee of the Party. The Executive Committee discussed at length the recommendations submitted by the Reorganisation Committee on the basis of the present and prospective political orientation of this country. The main features of the report of the Reorganisation Committee were as follows: (1) Further democratisation of the party structure starting from grass-root level, (2) the criteria on which members from the grass root level can rise to the highest level in the party will be honesty, dedication, ability and popularity, (3) the leadership of all organisations affiliated to the party will be elected by the popular vote of the members of each organisation, (4) constant dialogue to be maintained between the leadership and the rank and file of the party in all matters in order to enable public opinion to be reflected in all party activities, (5) (a) to enable greater participation and co-operation of the youth of the country in order to establish a Socialist society, (b) Similarly, ensuring wider participation by the peasants and workers in the activities of the party. It was also decided that the party would celebrate Republic Day which falls on the 22nd of May in a fitting manner.'

The Political Correspondent of the *Daily Mirror* had an interesting piece in the same issue with the heading: TILL SLFP CONSTITUTION IS AMENDED—MOVE TO VEST ALL POWER IN MRS. B TURNED DOWN. The report read: "The Working Committee of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party at its meeting on Saturday turned down a motion which proposed to vest in Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike, the Party President the sole responsibility of running the Party temporarily, according to

SLFP sources. These sources said that the motion proposed that until such time as the Party's Constitution was amended in the light of the Party Reorganisation Committee's report, the full responsibility of running the party be vested solely in Mrs. Bandaranaike as President of the Party. A motion to this effect was proposed by Mr. W. Dharmadasa, former MP for Pelmadulla and seconded by M. Sumathipala Jayawardena, Assistant Secretary, SLFP. This motion was rejected by the Working Committee on the grounds that the present Constitution of the Party would continue to be effective until such as a new amended Constitution was approved by the All Island Executive Committee of the SLFP."

It is not very clear what really happened at the SLFP Executive Committee. Nor is anyone certain about the contents of the Reorganisation Committee's report. It has not been published.

*WHIPPING AS DETERRENT:

It is rather strange that the Ministry of Justice, according to the *Sunday Times* (14/5/78), and also according to reports in other papers, has suggested whipping and lashes as deterrent against serious crime for a certain class of offences. The *Sunday Times* published a "factual" account of the way whipping and lashing are carried out: "The maximum lashes for a person under 16 years of age under the Penal Code is six while a maximum of 24 strokes of the whip can be inflicted on one above 16. Whipping of an accused can be ordered at such time and place as a court directs. According to the Penal Code whipping a person of 16 years and above, must be carried out in the presence of a medical officer with a cat of nine tails or other implement of such description as the Minister of Justice may direct.

"In the case of those under 16, lashes can be inflicted with a cane or rattan on the bare buttocks and must not exceed six strokes and must be carried out in the prison by trained prison officials. If parents of the offender ordered to be lashed, desire to be present they will be permitted to do so. No medical officer need be present during the infliction of this punishment. The offender lashed or whipped is tied to a tripod with protective cotton or fibre pads protecting the neck, spleen and kidneys. The prison official practises on a dummy for three days before the actual lashing. The strokes are directed at the shoulder blades. Whipping will not be inflicted unless the medical officer certifies that the person is in a fit state of health or until ten days from the pronouncement of the order, to give the offender time to appeal and time for reference of the order by the prisons to the Ministry for confirmation. Under the Corporal Punishment Ordinance whipping should not exceed 12 strokes for those above 16 years of age. Lashing or whipping of females is forbidden." Offences for which whipping can be ordered are rape, grievous hurt, extortion, robbery, housebreaking and trespass, among others. The full punishment may not be carried out in the case of whipping, if the medical officer orders stoppage on the ground that the person is not in a fit state to bear the strokes."

It sounds very sadistic. In fact, it is.

Whilst the Ministry of Justice has thought of whipping and lashing for serious "crimes" (rape, grievous hurt, housebreaking etc.) the Ministry of Agriculture seems anxious to extend this form of punishment to "theft of agricultural produce and livestock." The top brass in the world of agriculture, including the Minister who

had just returned after a trip to five or six countries, had foregathered on May 12, (vide *Daily News*: 13/5/78) and decided that it was necessary "to take stern punitive action to prevent theft of agricultural produce and livestock..in addition to the normal punishments those convicted of these offences will be whipped as prescribed under the Penal Code.." Very learned reasons were trotted out for such punishment, but the whole thing seemed a little ludicrous.

A person who steals a jak fruit or a coconut because he is hungry or pinches a goat for meat is to be whipped, but the big superintendent and the big company manager who did the stealing and robbing in cash in lakhs and millions will not be whipped even if found guilty. The determination of these people to load the law against the poor and the hungry, and at the same time permit the rich to get richer has now assumed serious proportions.

Agricultural produce and livestock will not be stolen by the ordinary man or the rustic villager if he was not "unemployed" or his earnings were enough to make both ends meet with the prices of foodstuffs being what they are. To punish the hungry and the poor for stealing food with lashes-whipping and to let the rich, who cheat the country and its people of millions of rupees through the blackmarket they operate or the import of short-width textiles, go scot free to make more millions, is a crime against humanity.

It is to be hoped that saner counsel will prevail in regard to the choice of crimes for which whip-

ping and lashes can be inflicted. It is one thing to prescribe whipping and lashing for rape, house-breaking, armed robbery and the like—but a totally different thing to whip a man for stealing a coconut or a pumpkin. The government must see that enthusiasm does not get the better of the discretion in the new Agricultural Development Authority (ADA).

The ADA wants to whip those who steal a cow, but what about the damage that hundreds and thousands of free range cattle in the Dry Zone do to the produce of ordinary farmers. The owners of these cattle want protection from theft, but these owners do not take the slightest trouble to look after the cattle in a way that they do not break into the farms of poor peasants. It is the farmer who needs protection in these areas, and the ADA will cover itself with glory if it is able to do something about it. A farmer has the right to shoot wild boar that breaks into his farm, but there is little he can do about the herds of semi-wild free range cattle (bearing the brand marks of some nominal far-away owners) that perpetually break through his fences to eat his crop. Why does the ADA not suggest that the owners of these wild not-looked-after cattle be given whipping and lashes if their cattle enter fenced lands which grow agricultural produce?

***MINISTER'S TRIPS:** Minister E. L. Senanayake in a press release set out the great things he had achieved on his last trip: "The Minister of Agriculture and lands, Mr. E. L. Senanayake, returned to the country from trips to India, Rome, United Kingdom and Egypt with chunks of aid and a fund of goodwill to boost our paddy, sugarcane, cotton and clover cultivation. The Minister stated that he represented Sri Lanka in Rome at the inaugural meeting

of the International Fund for Agricultural Development and was elected to the board of Executive. He was successful in obtaining Rs. 18 million in aid repayable in 50 years with a grace period of ten years, at 1 per cent interest. The money will be used for the Kirindi Oya project when 12,000 acres will be brought under paddy and 8,000 acres under cotton. In India the Minister made a study of mini-sugar industrial plants where each plant could crush five tons of cane a day. The Minister has decided to set up a network of these plants in Sri Lanka following its success there. For a start he will introduce the mini plants in Moneragala, Wellawaya, Buttala, Bibile and Balangoda. Since sugarcane producers have experienced considerable difficulties in transporting their crops to the centres, the new projects will remedy the situation. Self-sufficiency in sugar could on this basis be achieved in a few years. In the UK the Minister studied the manufacture of beet sugar which he has decided to experiment with in Ramboda and Nuwara Eliya. The UK Government has promised all assistance in this direction. In Egypt, the Minister studied the growing of flax, a crop producing long cotton and the cultivation of clover which could be grown in five months. The clover seed mixed with cotton seed makes good cattle feed. Two officers of the Agriculture Department are at present undergoing training in cotton growing in Cairo and that government had acceded to a request of the Minister to extend their training to cover clover and flax.

It is a good thing that Minister E. L. Senanayake has done so much for the country whilst he was abroad. But some persons are spreading cruel stories that the President had "ordered" him to return because he was spending more time in foreign countries than in his own.

In this connection the *Sunday Observer*, 14/5/78 had a piece entitled **MINISTERS TOLD CUT TRIPS ABROAD:** "The President, Mr. J. R. Jayawardene has once again drawn attention to the need for Ministers to curtail foreign trips. If any Minister believes it is absolutely essential that he should go abroad on official business, he has been required to give timely notice of his plans, his itinerary and other relevant information. Once the Minister returns he will have to report to Government giving details of the work done and the benefits that have accrued to the country as a result of the foreign trip. Mr. Jayawardene has emphasised that except for very special reasons a Minister should not be out of the country for a period exceeding seven days. The President has already ordered a pruning of foreign trips by high Government and Corporation officials. He thereafter asked Cabinet members too to curtail their foreign trips."

The *Weekend*, 14.5.78 rubbed this story in with sardonic headlines. **SEVEN DAY LIMIT ON FOREIGN TRIPS: AXE FALLS ON MINISTERIAL JAUNTS:** "The axe has fallen on global peregrinations by State Ministers. President Mr. Jayawardene who has given the matter of frequent overseas trips by his Ministers and Deputies careful thought, has now decided, to clamp down on overseas trips unless they are absolutely necessary. He has also decided that the maximum duration that a Minister or Deputy could be absent from the island should be one week and that too with the prior sanction of the President. This action of the President follows numerous questions raised, in the National State Assembly by Opposition MPs on trips abroad by Ministers. At a recent conference the President informed them that in future all Ministers

and Deputies seeking to go abroad for whatever purpose should brief the President beforehand of the purpose of the trip and all other details connected with the trip, including the foreign exchange cost of the trip, accommodation and duration. The Minister or the Deputy should also show reasons why a government official could not deputise for them abroad before the President could approve the trip. The President has also discouraged trips abroad that would involve a Minister or Deputy staying out of the country for more than a week. He has stressed that a week should be the maximum period that a Minister or Deputy should be out of the country. This would ensure that he is readily available to the President, Prime Minister, other Cabinet colleagues and the voters when the need arises. The President has also laid down that Ministers and Deputies should prepare an itinerary of the trips they propose going before final approval could be given by the President."

And that is that.

But, in spite of this, how many Ministers are now abroad? And for how long?

***A GOOD THING:** According to press reports the Government has decided to launch a comprehensive plan to upgrade the living conditions in rural areas. According to the *Sun*, 13/5/78, "For this purpose, the Prime Minister Mr. R. Premadasa in his capacity as Minister of Housing and Construction has allocated Rs. 250 million to provide a tiled roof, a cemented floor and a water-seal lavatory to more than 100,000 houses within the next five years, the Commissioner of Housing Mr. M. G. D. Jayawardena told a news conference at the Ministry yesterday morning. The plan, he said, had been formulated after a survey which revealed that an estimated

60 per cent of the housing stock of this country consisted of mud floors, cadjan roofs and lacked sanitary facilities. Each of these families would be entitled to a grant of Rs. 3000/- with repayment being spread over a period of 15 years, he announced. Mr. Jayawardena said applications for these grants would be called from house owners by the respective People's Bank branches or Co-operative Rural Bank branches from June 1. In this respect the recommendations of Members of Parliament too would be taken into consideration. Mr. Jayawardena emphasised that these applications would be carefully scrutinised and the house inspected to ascertain whether it needs improvements. All applications which were found satisfactory would be referred to the Department of National Housing with recommendations, he said. The banks which would be notified of the approval of the applications would then pass on the information to the house owner and a letter to suppliers assuring the payment of the value of building materials supplied by them to the applicants. A portion of the grant—not exceeding Rs. 2000—would be released to the householders only after the bank has satisfied itself that the material had actually been purchased, he said. Of the balance Rs. 1000 half would be payable as labour charges if all the necessary material had been purchased and the other half would be paid on completion following an on the spot inspection that the work had been carried out satisfactorily. The inspection, he said, would be made by the bank manager and officials of the Housing Department."

This is a welcome and excellent programme if it can be pushed through the bureaucratic red tape that exists.

***MORE RICE THAN BREAD:** Another good thing that has come

from another Minister—this time from Mr. Lalith Athulathmudali—is the appeal to people to eat more rice and less bread. He appealed to the public for co-operation for the quick disposal of large stocks of rice now stored in the various parts of the island. "This could be done only by eating more rice and less bread," the Minister said.

This appeal from Minister Athulathmudali should be blazoned forth from every house-top in the country. Every Minister must repeat this at every meeting. A major public relations campaign must be started to persuade people to eat less bread. But, the government must also bring down the price of rice and the other items that go with rice.

Tribune has always advocated that the people of this country must eat what they can grow. Wheat is something that can never be grown in this country—at least not until agronomists find a wheat strain that can flourish here.

***COMMENTS AND QUERIES:** A reader whom we will call ZEETA has sent us two pithy comments which we think merit attention. The first is about *Felix and the CJC*. He said "...every single human being whether friend, acquaintance, or official, man, woman or child, who associated with Felix Dias, however remotely, now knows what to expect if ever Mr. Dias is called upon for any explanation..." The second is on *Sirima and the ULF*: "...Sirima asked on May Day which force does the Left consider a greater danger to progressives—the UNP or SLFP. Did she ask herself that question (UNP or LSSP & CP) when she broke the Left alliance..." Third a query has come from an old time reader in Kandy who under the heading *Perahera Accounts* wants to know whether "seats were sold by a certain Army VIP for the Kandy Perahera for several

years in succession between 1970 and 1977. How much was collected? Were accounts submitted? Were they even called for? Has any single person made a personal profit running into a couple of lakhs or more?..” The reader seems to think what many residents of Kandy are deeply concerned with this matter.



THE WORLD AROUND

New Afghanistan

—anatomy of a revolution—

by The Recorder

Interest in the recent change of government in Afghanistan has begun to fade. But students of politics in this region are still keenly interested in what has happened in Kabul.

Is it a pointer to the anatomy of a new kind of revolution? So far revolutions have been brought about by a left-oriented "dictatorship" of the proletariat or right-wing fascist oligarchy, and coups have been initiated and motivated by small conspiratorial groups either from the armed forces or intimately connected with all three services. Furthermore, in the realities of the contemporary world, many coups have been inspired by powerful foreign governments operating through their cloak and dagger outfits.

Where does the Kabul Coup which has led to the Afghan Revolution fit in? Is it really an indigenous show?

Below are published more reports and comments to help our readers to keep themselves informed about the recent upheaval in Afghanistan.

10,000 Estimated Killed

Kabul, May 2,

An estimated 10,000 persons were killed in last week's coup that replaced President Mohammed Daoud's Government by a pro-communist regime, authori-

tative sources reported today. A large number of the dead were members of Mr. Daoud's elite personal troops, the Republican Guards, who defended the presidential palace against heavy armoured and air attacks with small arms and a few anti-tank weapons, the sources said—AP.

Will US Continue Ties?

Washington, May 2,

The US has not decided whether to continue diplomatic relations with Afghanistan following the bloody pro-communist coup there last week, the State Department said yesterday. A spokesman of the department, Mr. Hodding Carter, said the new regime had requested the US to recognise it, but this question did not arise. "The important question is whether diplomatic relations will continue". He explained that the US no longer used recognition of foreign government as an instrument of policy and, instead, focused on the level of diplomatic relations which could be conducted from the exchange of minor functionaries to that of ambassadors. Mr. Carter said the US deplored the bloodshed in the coup in which President Daoud was killed and was aware that the new President was the Secretary-General of the Afghan Communist Party. "We are in touch with other Governments on this subject." Mr. Carter said he was not aware that the coup would have any effect on current US aid programmes for Afghanistan. Earlier this year, the Carter Administration proposed to provide Afghanistan \$ 24.7 millions in the coming year, including \$ 600,000 for military training." —Reuter.

Daoud's Property Confiscated.

New Delhi, May 3,

The new Afghan Government has decided to confiscate and nationalise all properties accumulated

by former President, Mohammed Daoud and his family, Radio Pakistan reported today quoting Radio Afghanistan. The decision taken at the first meeting of the new Cabinet in Kabul yesterday was unanimous. It was agreed at the meeting to confiscate and nationalise the properties of "five remnants of the Naair Shah dynasty" including Mr. Daoud and his brother, Mr. Mohammed Naim. In the new 20-strong Afghan Cabinet the Ministers are all civilians except for Col. Abdul Qadir, Defence Minister and Lt. Col. Mohammed Rafi, Public Works Minister. The President and Prime Minister, Mr. Noor Mohammed Tarakki, is chief of the new united Communist Party of Afghanistan, called Democratic Khalq which is pro-Soviet. Mr. Babrak Karmal, Deputy Prime Minister and Vice-President is former President of the Parcham (Red Flag) Communist Party, and Secretary of the Democratic Khalq. Mr. Hafizullah Amin another Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, is a member of the party's Central Committee. In Rome, ex-King Mohammed Zahir Shah of Afghanistan yesterday accused his country's new rulers of violating human rights, the Islamic religion and national tradition. In his first formal statement since last week military coup, the former King said in a statement read at Reuters by an aide that his country was living through "difficult hours". "I must express my affliction and reprobation at the conduct of the new Rulers. Their actions, which have already claimed numerous victims are against all the principles of Islam and human respect. I am even more anguished at the thought that the future of the country could belong to men who would reject the rules of religion, the national traditions and the spirit of fraternity", he said. The Daily

Telegraph said yesterday that the passing of Afghanistan into the Soviet sphere of influence was very bad news for Pakistan and Iran. "Almost overnight, or so it seems, what the British Raj in India strove so long and successfully to prevent has come to pass", the paper said in an editorial. "The development is very bad news for Afghanistan's two neighbours to the South and West—Pakistan and Iran.

—PTI.

Sri Lankan In Kabul

Colombo, May 5.

Sri Lanka's Solicitor General, Mr. V. C. Gunatillake and his family, were among the Sri Lankans who were in Kabul when rebel military officers seized power in Afghanistan on April 28. Mr. Gunatillake was on a three-month UN assignment to draft Afghanistan's aviation laws. He had left for Kabul three months ago with his wife and two children. Mr. Gunatillake recalled his experiences on that fateful day, when he contacted him in Colombo yesterday. On the afternoon of April 27 they saw tanks moving along the streets. He and his family were in the city at that time. About 5 p.m. a number of planes began to fly firing rockets from all directions. A curfew was imposed. The rocket firing continued till the following morning. Mr. Gunatillake and his family were at the time residing at a German club and stayed indoors. They were frightened as they had no news of what was happening outside. The night passed in this manner and the following morning by about 10 a.m. everything was quiet. But all communications came to a standstill. Telephones and the radio went out of commission and all the borders and the airport were closed. But all foreigners were given assurances that they would be protected at all costs and no harm would befall them. These

assurances were given by means of notices on the street. On May 2 the airports were opened. There were no problems of travelling and Mr. Gunatillake and his family took their plane homeward bound.

—Sun

US Recognises New Regime.

New Delhi, May 5,

After careful consideration, the United States, Britain and other leading Western powers, have decided in consultation with Iran and Pakistan, to simultaneously recognise the new regime in Afghanistan. The necessary announcements are expected to be made tomorrow from the various capitals after the new Government in Kabul has been officially informed of this collective decision.

—PTI.

Reports Exaggerated

London, May 5,

One of the most interesting aspects of the coup in Kabul is the way it has been reported in the Western media. The media would have us believe that some 10,000 people have lost their lives in the last few days. Some over-enthusiastic Western correspondents even suggest that more purges are in the offing. The details of mass killings and reports of military build-up in the capital city of Kabul would suggest that the new leaders of Afghanistan fear and anticipate another counter-coup in the next few days. Most of the Kabul-based Western newsmen have tried to outdo one another in reporting the ruthlessness and the prospects of what they think is a pro-Moscow communist regime. But this could not last long, and last night Afghanistan's new rulers imposed full-scale censorship on the foreign press in Kabul. Now the foreign correspondents find it difficult to enter Afghanistan. The head of the

Afghan News Agency is too busy to see them. Telephone calls to the outside world get cut off suddenly in the middle of conversations. Messages sent by telex from Kabul are subjected to censorship by officials who strike off words such as "pro-Moscow" and replace them with "democratic." Independent observers here agree that the Western media has made too much of the new regime in Kabul being "pro-Moscow" and all that. Many third world diplomats and journalists also agree that the figure of 10,000 dead is very much on the high side. Of course, it is impossible to know the exact figure and chances are that even the new Government in Kabul does not have an idea. Western correspondents would also like to suggest that the new regime is set on a collision course with Afghanistan's orthodox Muslim leaders of the Sunni sect. There is of course a great deal of tension in the country but to suggest that another coup is in the offing or that the present leaders are at loggerheads with the Mullahs and traditional Muslim leaders is to read too much into a highly confusing situation. What is really happening in Afghanistan and what is at stake, will not be known for some time. Those who know Afghanistan will have welcomed the latest development in Kabul. It may be a communist regime but, on the face of it, the new regime is unorthodox and reform-minded. Afghanistan could do with a bout of genuine reforms to break the shackles of orthodoxy and religious tradition. It will not be an easy task to move a feudal society of some 20 millions in the twentieth century. China on Thursday coldly reported the coup in Afghanistan but the New China News Agency, after four days' silence, added no editorial comment. It named the country's new leaders in a brief report omitting details

of the bloody take-over, a report from Peking said.

—Baturk Gathami, *Hindu*

Extensive Purge.

Kabul, May 6,

Afghanistan's new Government has launched an extensive Purge of top civil servants and members of the dynasty which ruled the country for more than a century, well-informed sources said today. About 60 Foreign Ministry officials have been dismissed and most Ambassadors have been asked to resign their posts. Diplomats in Kabul confirmed that senior officials with whom they usually dealt at the Foreign Ministry—which had been controlled by Mr. Mohammed Naim, brother of the late President Mohammed Daoud—were missing from their desks. President Daoud was overthrown on April 27 in a bloody military coup which was reported to have taken the lives of up to 4,000 people including many members of his family and Government. The new President, 61 year-old Nur Mohammed Tarakki, told a news conference on Saturday that only 72 or 73 people died in the coup. But diplomats and highly reliable Afghan sources said this figure would cover just the immediate members of the Daoud family and of the Government who were killed.

—*Reuter*

U.K., Iran Extend Recognition

London, May 6

Britain today became the first major Western power to announce diplomatic recognition of the new Afghanistan Government. A Foreign Office spokesman here said that Mr. Roy Crock, the British Ambassador in Kabul, today delivered a note to the Foreign Ministry there stating that diplomatic relations would be maintained. This constituted recognition of the new government, which came into power following a coup on April 27.

The new Government had asked Britain in a note on April 30 to recognise it. Iran also today implicitly recognised the new regime in Afghanistan by announcing that it would maintain existing diplomatic relations with Kabul. An official Government communique in Teheran said the decision to maintain existing ties was in response to "the request of the Afghan Government.

—*Reuter and AFP.*

Friendship Depends On Support.

Kabul, May 7,

Afghanistan's new socialist leader said that relations with the United States, the Soviet Union and all other countries would be based on the amount of aid they gave his revolutionary Government. President Nur Mohammed Tarakki said Afghanistan would not become a Soviet satellite and wanted good relations with both Washington and Moscow. "Our friendship depends on the amount of support given to us." Mr. Tarakki told his first news conference since a military take over on April 27 swept him to office. "Give us aid. Help us with our projects." He said he expected economic assistance without strings from the Soviet and US Governments to help overcome the problems of his backward, mountainous land. "We are not a satellite of anyone, we are an independent country" he declared. President Tarakki stressed that Afghanistan was non-aligned and said that no other country would be justified in interfering in its internal affairs. He denied that his ruling People's Democratic Party was communist or marxist-oriented. He called it a party of the workers, peasants and other oppressed groups. "Our revolution was on the Afghan model" he said, "It is I think, unparalleled in this region." Mr. Tarakki insisted it was his party, and not

rebel Army and Air Force officers, that had planned and directed the overthrow of President Mohammed Daoud who was killed in the fighting nine days ago. "I was at the centre of operations the first night after I was brought out from jail and we were issuing all the instructions," he said. "The military were completely obeying. They are our sons and comrades." President Tarakki said only 72 or 73 people were killed in the 24 hours it needed to change the government and fewer than 30 had been arrested. He denied what he called reactionary. Western press reports that 10,000 people had been killed. The Palace Guard of President Daoud had been disbanded, not killed. The army had been ready "to help us, the people of Afghanistan, to be emancipated from the cruelty and oppression of the aristocratic regime," he said. An Air Force Major, who has now taken charge of the police stood at his right throughout the news conference, which lasted about 90 minutes, with sub-machine gun at the ready and a revolver on his hip. The US informed the new Government in Kabul on Saturday that it would maintain diplomatic relations with Afghanistan, a State Department Spokesman said in Washington. This information was conveyed to Afghanistan's new rulers through the American Embassy in Kabul. It amounted to diplomatic recognition of the new Government.

—*Reuter.*

Russia Refutes Charges

Moscow, May 7,

The Soviet Union today refuted the allegations of its involvement in the recent Afghan coup as "deliberate lies intended, on the one hand, to discredit the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan and its leadership, and, on the other hand to cast aspersions on the policy of the Soviet Union." Tass said in a

commentary that it had long been noticed that everything that happened in the world, contrary to the will and plans of imperialists, their followers and voluntary allies, was ascribed in one way or another, by definite circles in the West to "the hand of Moscow." —*Tass*.

New Envoy

New Delhi,

Mr. M. Anwar Nowroz, who has taken over charge of the Afghan Embassy, called on Dr. I. P. Singh, Joint Secretary dealing with Afghanistan, on Saturday according to Afghan Embassy sources. These sources described it as "introduction" meeting. Mr. Hamidullah Enayat Seraj, who was the former Ambassador, has been relieved of his post by the new regime.

—*PTI*.

Tarakki Press Conference

Kabul, May 7.

The April revolution in Afghanistan was carried out under the leadership of the Popular Democratic Party. I declare for everyone to hear that the revolutionary events of April 27th were not the doing of a narrow group of army officers. Our party set up in January 1965, has conducted extensive educational work in the army and has educated and mobilised all the progressive-minded military to fight to free the people from the oppression and tyranny of the aristocratic elite that ruled the country. Nur Mohammed Tarakki, Chairman of the Revolutionary Council and Prime Minister of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, told a press conference here. Explaining the causes of the revolutionary explosion in the country, Nur Mohammed Tarakki said that the former regime of Daud failed to fulfil the promises it had made to the people. Contrary to its promises, he kept the progressive forces out of the National Government. In the recent period, pre-

paring a crackdown on the Popular Democratic Party the ruling circles unloosed cruel repressions and persecutions against the PDP activists and many of the party's leaders have been jailed. The party faced threat of destruction. In these conditions the leadership of the party appealed to its comrades-in-arms in the Afghan Army to launch armed struggle. On April 27th the revolutionary in Afghanistan scored a victory. Replying to newsmen, the Chairman of the Revolutionary Council of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan thus defended the political line of the new Afghan government and the Popular Democratic Party: the government of the DRA, he said, is a democratic form of government reflecting the genuine interests of the oppressed strata of the Afghan people—workers, peasants and small national bourgeoisie. Our programme is progressive. We are working for the good of all the people. We intend to implement a genuine land reform and carry out other measures to promote the country's economic and social development and improve the well-being of the Afghan people. In its foreign policy, Nur Mohammed Tarakki went on, Afghanistan will adhere to the principle of non-alignment. We refuse to take part in military pacts and do not want other countries and peoples to take part in them. Our goal is peace and freedom in the whole world. The relations of Afghanistan with any state will be based on the degree to which it supports our Revolutionary Government and the help in political and economic fields, help unqualified by any conditions, stressed Nur Mohammed Tarakki—*Tass*.

Ghaffar Khan Meets Tarakki

New Delhi, May 9.

Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, had a meeting in Kabul on Sunday with

the President and Prime Minister of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, Mr. Nur Mohammed Tarakki, according to an Afghanistan Radio broadcast monitored by All India Radio. The two leaders had a friendly talk during which Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan congratulated Mr. Tarakki on the success of the "national democratic revolution" the radio said. The morning meeting was followed by a lunch with the Afghan President at the Revolutionary Council headquarters, attended among others by the Vice President, Mr. Badrak Karmal, the radio said. Earlier, according to the radio, Badshah Khan, accompanied by the Director-General of Border Affairs of Nangirhar province, arrived in Kabul from Jalalabad. He was received by the Afghan Ministers for Border Affairs and Radio and Television as well as a number of admirers. Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan arrived in Afghanistan from Pakistan in early April and was admitted to the military academy hospital in Jalalabad for treatment.

—*PTI*.

Tarakki On Pakhtoons

Kabul, May 10.

The President and Prime Minister of Afghanistan, Mr. Nur Mohammad Tarakki, last night spoke of the "national problem of Pakhtoons and Baluchs" and said his country wanted to solve the problem based on their right of self-determination through peaceful negotiations with Pakistan. Mr. Tarakki, who broadcast to the nation over Radio Afghanistan, said his Government would "expand friendly relations with India" and would also "implement friendly relations with Pakistan, China and Iran." His Government's relations with the neighbouring countries, regional and world nations "depend on the attitude of the said countries towards our democratic and national revolution." The new Afghan

regime he said would follow the policy of "active positive non-alignment" and peaceful co-existence.

In a special reference to the Soviet Union, he said his Government wanted "to strengthen and expand friendly relations with the great neighbour in the north, the Soviet Union." In his speech, which covered the entire gamut of international relations, Mr. Tarakki told his people his government's efforts would be to strengthen the foundations of peace in the region for international peace and to struggle for disarmament and stop proliferation of nuclear weapons. Mr. Tarakki, who recently denied that his government was communist or pro-Moscow, said it would respect human rights and the United Nations Charter. His broadcast, monitored by All India Radio, gave a 22-point programme for implementation, including land reforms and rehabilitation of barren lands. It also envisages "effective control", over the natural wealth and resources of the country. Mr. Tarakki said his government is wedded to cleaning the country's administration of anti-revolution, anti-democratic, anti-national and anti-people elements, and to set up true democratic departments and organisations to serve the people—PTI.

CENTO To Discuss Impact Of Coup On Pak.

Teheran, May 10,

Moves to support Pakistan have been initiated here within the framework of the pro-Western Central Treaty Organisation (CENTO) two weeks after the coup in Afghanistan. Pakistan is generally regarded as the weak link in CENTO, a mutual defence alliance also grouping Iran, Turkey, Britain and the United States. The Shah on Monday had a lengthy meeting with the United States Deputy Defence Secretary, General

Clifford Alexander, to discuss the possible consequences for Pakistan of the Afghan coup. Gen. Alexander later met Iranian military chiefs. Pakistani concern about the new situation was echoed here yesterday at a meeting with the Shah by the Pakistani Foreign Affairs Adviser, Mr. Agha Shahi. The CENTO military section is expected to meet soon in Ankara to discuss strategy in the light of the change of regime in Kabul. The move follows estimations by Afghanistan's neighbours as to the degree to which the new Afghan regime can be considered a Soviet "satellite." It also comes on the heels of CENTO's recent conference in London on April 19 and 20 at which members called for a reactivation of CENTO's military role. —AFP

FROM READERS ABROAD

PRESIDENT MUST ACT Police Service

Sir,

The appointment of more D.I.G.G. S.P.P and A.S.P.P. will not solve the problems that the Police Service is confronted with.

The structure of the entire service must be changed to suit changing conditions in the country. There should be better understanding between the gazetted officers and their subordinates. There is one method of remedying this and that is to adopt the method of recruitment to the service that is prevalent in UK, Australia and certain other countries. There should be direct recruitment to the upper grade. All recruitment should be to the rank of constable. The constables will then have an opportunity of rising in the service. The Head of the Service and other officers under him will be men who have

gone through the ranks. They will be in a better position to understand the problem of the men under them and the public.

There should be no political interference with enlistments, promotions and transfer or in any other matters concerning the administration of the service.

The men recruited to the rank of constable should bear excellent character, intelligent and possess high educational qualifications. If necessary a person like Mr. A C. Dep (Retired DIG) may be sent to one of these countries to study this method of recruitment.

The misuse of Police cars could be minimised if all those cars bear the "Police" sign on the hood and the Police Crest is painted on both front doors of the cars. This is what is being done here. Police officers who use Police cars must not be permitted to park their cars in their residences, but at the Provincial or District Headquarters. Drivers driving these cars must be always in uniform and never in civils. Police officers other than those entitled to be in civils, travelling in Police cars should themselves be in uniform.

Vehicles attached to the CID should be exempted from these regulations. I.P.P, S.I. and other rankers engaged in normal Police duties should use jeeps or vans.

There is another aspect of Police work that needs immediate reformation and that is Police-Public relations. This Branch should be re-organised to suit present conditions prevailing in the country.

I will quote here an extract of a letter received by me from a retired police officer in Sri Lanka regarding a recent case. "He is said to have done cruel and brutal things to captives to get confessions." This is a common habit of certain police officers to earn promotions or rewards. This is

one of the reasons that mar Police-Public relations.

Good and genuine work by an officer or officers must be recognised by his superiors or else it causes a certain amount of frustration.

I will quote here an example in a certain case that occurred when I was in service. I believe it was in 1955 or 1956 that a I.P. a S.I., a P.S. and 2 P.C.C. and I arrested a notorious criminal, Yakadaya at Matala. He fired at point blank a revolver at me but the two shots misfired. He then attempted to shoot us with a shot gun. We arrested him after a struggle. All that we received were commendation and handshakes from Sir Oliver Goonetilleke who was then the Governor General. The I.G., D.I.G. and the SP had no guts to recommend us for gallantry medals. This is a clear example of the devil not being given his dues.

I would suggest that a Commission be appointed to go fully into the working of the Police Service and make recommendations to re-organise the whole structure so that the Sri Lanka Police Service would be one of the best services in the world.

If a commission is appointed, I would suggest that the members of the Commission should be from the category of retired Chief Justice Mr. Sansoni, Messrs D. B. I. P. Siriwardene and A. C. Dep. The Police Service must be one of the best paid services in the country and so the Commission should go into this aspect too.

I have the highest regard for the President Mr. J. R. Jayawardene and I have no doubt that he will put this house into order very soon. I put in 39 years service in the Police Service and I know what is best.

Jack Van Sanden
Retired DIG, Police

4, Westdale Court, Watsonia,
Victoria 3087, Australia.
11 5-1978.

Mahaweli And The CID

Sir,

This is not related to the kind of investigation connected with the feasibility study of the project. It is a strange kind of investigation, normally connected with criminals and pariahs of society. The *Tribune* under date line 5th April summarises a news item in the *Sun* thus: "Detectives of the CID will this week take over investigations of alleged attempts by certain anti-national elements to sabotage the accelerated Mahaweli Development project." This is a most alarming trend, if it is found to be done, in our national life. I have heard before that those who felt that the five year schedule for completion of the project—and now the accelerated programme—were being classed as *saboteurs*. So to avoid embarrassment, those who had a say in programming the work, just said, "yes, it could be done." I hope it is not this kind of *saboteurs* who are under investigation.

On account of its vast coverage to prop up the economic and social life of the people of Sri Lanka—after seven years of misrule—there may be a group of anti-nationals who for sheer vindictiveness, want to sabotage the project, even before it took off on its accelerated programme. This breed of vultures are present in every country and every political organisation; may be more numerous in a democracy than in any other political set up. But that does not mean that they should be allowed to or be given the freedom to destroy a national undertaking that is going to benefit an entire nation, a nation that has suffered for seven years, and is expecting wonders to be done by the present administration in 300 days. It may be that the steps taken by the present administration to

alleviate the suffering of the people are taking shape, so there is an attack on all sides and at all levels to disrupt the programmes and progress to economic recovery. If there are any such individuals, democracy or no democracy Dharmista or ad-Dharmista, they must be wiped out. Once a government has been elected by the people for their well being and if that government's policies and principles are for the total good of the people, all political parties must toe the line and if they do not agree then they have the Political Forum to criticize and correct the actions of the government. If the opposing political parties believe and trust in democracy that is the arena for action and not subversion underground and cowardly actions to create chaos in the country, whoever the culprits are, for the government must initiate investigations, and deal with them severely if found guilty.

It is most unfortunate that the biggest nationals undertaking in our history should be the target of *saboteurs*. They should be denied the rights to be members of our society. Mahaweli Development Project should be placed above political wrangling, above all power aspirations, above communal war-fare, and every thing that may hamper the progress of the project. Everybody should be conscious and proud of the undertaking and must be aware of the benefits the nation can reap if successfully and expeditiously completed. A target of five, six years or an accelerated programme may not be realisable, but the main thing is to give it a start, lend all the support and involvement to maintain the acceleration till the task is completed.

How is this to be done? It is not the baby of any one Political Party. It is not the burden of any one Administration. It is not the

responsibility of any one Board, Department, or a Corporation. It is the burden of a nation irrespective of colour, creed and community. Everybody must be in it, for its success means that the well being and prosperity of the whole country is secured.

Therefore, the President should appoint a Committee—say a “Presidential Committee” composed of officials and non-officials to follow up the progress of the work and settlement programmes and report to him quarterly the progress, and make suggestions to maintain the acceleration, review and revise work plans. The proposed committee may number ten to fifteen and the members drawn from the worthwhile political groups, from the private sector, from Trade Union Federations and a few officials from the Ministries which are involved in various aspects of development—all members to be of a knowledgeable quality who can, without any considerations of personal prestige or gain can contribute to the ultimate success of the project.

This will keep the President and his government well informed, of “what is happening at all levels” without depending entirely on the officials—who have a skin to save—and therefore may not present the true picture—What we need is a correct assessment of the progress and that assessment made every three months’ by a group whose interests should be national progress and not bread and butter, political sectarianism power ambition or personal betterment.

They will see that the saboteurs are hounded subtly and honour the trust placed on them by the president. There will not be the need for the Detectives of the CID to take over investigations; the members of the suggested com-

mittee will be the detectives. I commend this suggestion to the President for serious considerations.

R. Kahawita

Bombay.
7.5.78

LETTERS

SLFP's Future —A Reply

Sir,

Your issue of May 6th, 1978, carried a letter by a mysterious individual who prefers to remain ‘SSP,’ titled SLFP FUTURE.

The writer has made a fairly wide range of observations on what has happened and what might happen in the future. Unfortunately most of his observations have been based on incorrect information. What is amusing is that ‘SSP’ makes his points with a great deal of ‘authority’.

He observes that Mrs. Indira Gandhi's victory is a ‘flash in the pan’. I do not know how he concludes sweeping victories in Andhra, Karnataka, excellent performances in Maharashtra and the recent by-elections where the Janata majority in one was slashed from lakhs to a few thousands and in the other a defeat of over a lakh, just a year ago was turned into a 35,000 victory in UP as a ‘flash in the pan’. It is some ‘Flash’, that has spread across India and not confined to one special area.

Having dealt with Mrs. Gandhi and India, SSP turns his attention to Mother Lanka. He claims that Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike was rejected by the people ‘rather than the SLFP’. He states that the 32 lakhs polled by the UNP, the 6 lakhs of the TULF and the 6 lakhs of the left (while neither,

the TULF or the left polled anywhere near 6 lakhs) was a rejection of Mrs. Bandaranaike. He does not even pause to think that those votes may have been cast for the political philosophies advocated by those respective parties. What he also fails to realise is that Mrs. Bandaranaike won Attanagalle by over 10,000 votes while her Deputy scraped home with only a mere 300 votes (thanks to the ULF that did not contest him), while all her Ministers excepting for her Deputy lost along with her 90 odd MP's. If her rejection was so total how did she poll 30,000 votes, won by a majority of over 10,000 and her party polled nearly 190000 votes, Mr. SSP?

‘Even within her party she fears a post mortem’ claims the all-knowing writer, without even bothering to find out that a EX-CO meeting was held 2 months after the 1977 Elections where a severe post mortem was held, where Mrs. Bandaranaike was not blamed by a single member. On the contrary they passed a unanimous resolution endorsing their faith in the leadership of the party, and Mrs. Bandaranaike in particular. SSP, then assumes that Mrs. has stated that her Minister's were ‘inefficient, reckless or corrupt’. Nowhere has she said this, and if she had the newspapers and the SLBC would have gone to town.

Then SSP turns astrologer by predicting or assuming that if the SLFP obtains 65 to 70 seats in 1983, 30 to 40 will ‘stand for private enterprise’. This is indeed a peculiar statement to make when Nominations for the 1983 elections have not been even thought of.

He concludes by saying that Mrs. Bandaranaike dreams of taking on Prime Minister Premadasa at the next Presidential elections ahead. What about President Jayawardene? How come that SSP has forgotten that JRJ is perfectly fit and fighting

He has not stated anywhere that he plans to stand down by 1983 and even if he does it may not be Premadasa who will lead the UNP. Surely there are a host of others waiting on the side line.

I only hope that the letters SSP do not stand for Special Secret Police, for they too have the habit of making observations based on incorrect information and wishful thinking.

I hope Mr. Editor, you will publish my letter in full for your journal is perhaps the only English publication to give publicity to all political views.

Ranjan Atapattu.

26, Jaya Road,
Colombo 4.

* * *

On Relics

Sir,

The *Sunday Observer* of 23/4 carried on its front page a picture of a broadly-smiling President carrying the Sacred Relics casket on his head. The infection had spread to another VIP, who has his right hand resting on the casket, as if to prevent it falling down. Was this an occasion for merriment or sanctity, one is constrained to ask?

As a devout Buddhist who has had the good fortune to worship the Sacred Relics of the Buddha and His two chief disciples, the Arhats Sariputta and Maha Mogallana, enshrined in Dagobas and caskets at the various pilgrim centres in India, not once but twice in the early thirties, I am naturally pleased at the Indian government's gracious gesture in sending at the request of this government these Relics for exposition here. But, what blessings would accrue to the people, except of course the merit they would acquire by worshipping them, in consequence of their presence in this 'Adharmadvipa'

(as it has now come to be known) one finds it difficult to comprehend. If India (which is in as bad a state as Sri Lanka politically speaking) does not appear to have derived any benefit from the presence of the Relics of three of its most illustrious and noblest sons, is it likely that this country which is generally speaking, nominally Buddhist, will fare any better? Do the people of Sri Lanka of the present day who are steeped in vice and crime—even monks are not immune—deserving of blessings from these Relics? In the first place? What percentage of the Bhikkus who, for one thing, are quite unnecessarily divided into several sects which are diametrically opposed to one another and, what is even worse, are the principal propagators of caste (against which their Master fought all His life) are true followers of the Enlightened One? What Maithriya could there be in the hearts of Bhikkus of the Siamese Sect who look askance at brother Bhikkus of the other Sects (whom they consider beneath them perhaps) when they meet each other on the road, because of their 'low' caste? And, they are all supposed to be 'Sons' of the Buddha! Is anyone, particularly politicians, so naive as to believe that the 'seth pirith' these "venerables" (who readily assemble at the BIA and elsewhere at the behest of politicians (whose 'tools' they have unashamedly become for material gain). Chant, has the desired effect. Secondly, how many of the VIP's present at the BIA last Saturday afternoon to "receive" these Relics can conscientiously claim to be practising Buddhists whose example is worthy of emulation by one and all. How many of the hypocrites present would have abstained from liquor just for this day in honour of the occasion? These are the folk—both clergy and laity—who foolishly believe and proclaim that the presence of the

Relics will ensure prosperity to our land, despite the lives they live!

It is my considered opinion (which I am sure is shared by many Buddhists) that the getting down of these Relics at this juncture is just a propaganda stunt calculated to make the people forget for the moment the severe hardships they are undergoing, which undeniably are infinitely worse than during the last few years of the former regime. Readers of *Tribune* are indeed lucky to have before them a true picture of the actual state of affairs today. It is too much to expect the so-called National dailies to provide their readers with the true position as it exists today! They dare not incur the wrath of the powers that be by doing so. Comment on the SLBC is of course superfluous. It continues to be a laughing stock as HMV of whatever government is in power. Few people listen-in to its news broadcasts, which are often repeated 'adnauseam'.

It would have been appropriate if these Relics were got down after the establishment of a Dharmishta Society which however, many people are pessimistic about. The talk of a Dharmishta Society is just blarney, it is said—not without good reason.

C. E. J. Alles

113, Anagarika Dharmapala
Mawatha, Dehiwala.
26.4.78

* * *

Mother Tongue

Sir,

I refer to the letter written by R.W.W. (*Tribune* of 1.4.78). It appears to be written by one nursing a personal grievance, which does not conduce to objective discussion of national problems. I too was a sterling scale salaried

officer. When I saw discrimination I (still in my forties and only two steps from the head of the department) decided to get out under the Soulbury Constitution. I have never allowed that phase in my life to colour my views on national policies.

R.W.W. damns Dr. Bryan de Kretser with faint praise for sending his son to a village Sinhalese school and adds that it is not surprising as his mother is a Sinhalese. Under existing rules children of mixed marriages can choose their medium of instruction and Dr. Bryan de Kretser is the only parent I know who has purposefully chosen a Sinhalese village school for his son. Unlike most of us in Sri Lanka, he practises what he preached and I salute him for it. If his son has guts and takes after his father he will be none the worse for missing the fashionable urban school, which is producing a large number of boys who are cricket-mad, rock swinging, cigarette puffing and (if reports are to be believed) among the more affluent indulging in alcohol and even drugs.

With regard to the personal grievance R.W.W. seems to nurse against the Burgher community, surely the Burgher top brass did not have the monopoly of arrogance. Top brass of all communities have to serve their masters and I have experienced some Tamil and Sinhalese arrogance.

The point Dr. Bryan de Kretser is trying to put across, both by precept and example, is that the leadership of the future will not be top brass Sinhalese, Tamil, Muslim or Burgher. They will have to be from the village where the action will be. It will not matter the shake of duck's tail whether they know English or not, provided they are dedicated.

Dr. R. W. Crossette Thambiah
Colombo 5.
10.4.78

A Dharmista Society

Sir,

What a noble object! But shouting "Dharmista" does not necessarily convert it overnight from "Adarmista" to "Dharmista". The ingredients to the conversion is primarily dedication, sacrifice, and above all selflessness of our leaders. Unless these essentials are genuinely and meaningfully adopted, it will be another instance of the "Distant Dawn" of recent vintage. No amount of shouting propaganda, or pious hopes, could magically convert it unless our leaders are prepared to set an example to those who look up to them.

We therefore are fully justified in calling upon those who profess to lead us in this path, to first, set an example. It would be folly to expect the masses to tighten their belts while our leaders live in the lap of luxury. We can only hope that they set the example in sacrifice and dedication by discarding their high living thereby proving that they too are equally prepared to lead the simple life they prescribe for others, who are less fortunate, and, who are presently fighting a losing battle for existence with prices of essentials so high that making ends meet is proving to be impossible, (and likely to be more so in the future), and which has been made more difficult by the withdrawal of the rice and sugar ration.

It is shocking, that, whilst operation rice and sugar ration, has been executed irrespective of the additional sufferings imposed by this exercise on the lower income brackets, our representatives have blithely added another Rs. 100/- persitting for themselves in addition to the Rs. 1,000/- allowances they are paid as M.P.'s, plus the other privileges they enjoy e.g. free travel in public transport, free postal and telecommunication facilities, subsidised food and accommodation (subsidised by

a further 25% recently) which is contrary to what they prescribe for us, and, availability of cars at subsidised rates, insurance coverage at public expense on travel (introduced recently), diplomatic immunity which insulates them and their luggage from the probing eyes of the Customs whenever they travel abroad on official or private business.

What about the pensions they enjoy after a mere five year term whereas a public servant is called upon to serve almost 30 years, before he is entitled to a pension? Well! do we ever hear them say 'nay' to any of these privileges?

All we ask is an even break to live in the present where the Cost-of-Living is almost unsurmountable with unrealistic prices of essentials as they are—Rice Rs. 2/90 (at the cooperatives) Chillies Rs. 12/-, Onions 4/-, Maldivefish unavailable at the cooperatives, clothes Rs. 7/50 the cheapest, Beef Rs. 4/50, Fish prohibitive, Monitor Exercise books not available at the Government selling points.

We therefore hope that our leaders emulate the example of our neighbour India whose leaders have refused to accept everything that has been allocated to them by the laws in their land. Some of them have sacrificed part of their pay; others have refused to live in the palatial mansions allocated to them. Let us therefore follow their example in genuine dedication and sacrifice. Then only can we hope to realise the fulfilment of this new Dharmista Society.

Ye Gods! how much longer will the masses be fooled with enticing plans which never seem to see the light of day

There has been recently several articles regarding the Bungling Bureaucrats whose sins of omissions and commissions have been the subject of exposures and are alleged to have cost wanton wastage of food items. In this "Dharmista Era" a meaningful step to be taken

would appear to be to hunt out these perpetrators of such national crimes, suspended from their duties irrespective how big they are, and if found guilty meet out summary public punishment as is imposed at present in Pakistan as a deterrent to others who too may be indifferent to the trust placed in them by a nation already struggling in an economic morass.

S. P. R. FERNANDO,
278, Kattuwa,
Negombo,
28.04.78.

* * *

“Dharmista Society”

Sir,

Where are those who spoke of equal rights? Where are those who spoke of a free and just society? May I be bold enough to say, that they are not in this land of beggars! Day to day, life has compelled us to cast away the clod of “simplicity—towards the path to righteousness”. It is not all who win elections, but those few among our fellow-beggars who won the elections last year, should practice their ‘sayings’ about “FREE & JUST SOCIETY”. After all, what is a just society amidst in an unrestricted capitalist state?

The communication between a man at the bottom to the man at the top has become impossible. How, then can there be a free and just society? We see, among the many happenings, the use of Government vehicles. Officers and their wives are seen everyday either at market places or at wedding houses and sometimes their children taken to and from schools or other purposes, while so many others are waiting to get into a crowded bus to fulfil their day’s work. Thus, is it not obvious that selfishness inevitable in capitalism has been coated with the sugar icing of a “free and just society?” People should begin to feel for others. It would be relevant

to quote what Gandhi wrote in *Young India* :—

“Among the many curious inquiries I receive, here are some from a correspondent in Guntur District. People say Gandhiji does not do what he says. He preaches poverty, but possesses property. He advocates simple and inexpensive life yet he is expensive. So answer the questions below: ‘Do you take anything from the A.I.C.C. or Gujarat Congress Committee for your living and touring expenses? If so what is the amount? If not, how are you meeting the expenses for your long tours and your food and clothing if you are, as people take you to be, a propertyless man?’ There is much more in the letter of the same kind, but I have taken out the most salient points.

“I do make the claim that I attempt to act as I preach. But I must confess that I am not as inexpensive in my wants as I would like to be. I draw nothing from the A.I.C.C. or the Gujarat Committee. But friends find my travelling expenses including food and clothing. Often during my tours railway tickets are purchased by those who invite me and my host everywhere covers me with kind attention which often embarrasses me. People present me during my tours with much more Khaddar than I need. The balance goes to clothe those who need it or it is put in the general Khaddar stock of the Ashram which is conducted in the public interest. I own no property and yet I feel that I am perhaps the richest man in the world. For I have never been in want either for myself or for my public concerns. God has always and invariably responded in time. I can recall several occasions when almost the last penny had been spent for my public activities. Moneys then come in from the most unexpected quarters. These responses have made me humble and filled with a faith in God and this goodness that will stand the strain

of utter distress if it ever becomes my lot in life. It is open to the world, therefore, to laugh at dispossessing myself of all property. For me the dispossession has been a positive gain. I would like people to compete with me in my contentment. It is the richest treasure I own. Hence it is perhaps right to say that though I preach poverty, I am a rich man.”

I hope that this example of Gandhiji would convert the imperfect beings (in a hidden capitalist society) who often change “Democratic Socialism” to “Socialist Democracy” and vice versa.

AHIMSA

Colombo,
10.04.78.

* * *

On Higher Wages

Sir,

According to press reports, the Minister of Finance, Mr. Ronnie de Mel, proposes to increase the wages of workers in view of the high cost of living.

One must consider the implications of giving wage increases at this stage to only paid workers to combat the high cost of living. The majority of the people of the Country live in rural areas and many lakhs of them are unemployed and underemployed and will get no wage increase although the high cost of living adversely affects them too. Increasing the money supply in the hands of workers before sufficient essential goods are produced or imported, will only lead to galloping inflation which industrialized Countries of the West and the U.S.A. have been fighting against in recent years by limiting wage increases.

Inflation is the result of too much money chasing too few goods and if wages are increased at this inappropriate stage before production is increased, consumer prices will

swell still higher and the rural population, farmers, low income labourers, the elderly, the self-employed and the unemployed will suffer most, apart from the seven million people of this Country who, according to the Prime Minister Mr. R. Premadasa, are living on the verge of abject poverty.

The labourer is worthy of his hire but it is not in the interest of the Country to increase the wages of a fraction of the population at this stage before production is increased and the Country can afford it.

Tea Estate workers who deserve better wages did not receive the benefit of a sliding scale of wages when tea prices boomed because the Government imposed an extortionate Export Duty of Rs. 15/50 per kilo of tea which still continues, in addition to the Sales Tax on tea. Now a large percentage of the teas produced are selling at below cost of production. How can tea estates workers' wages be increased now when many estates are running at a loss unless the Government is prepared to alter its fiscal policy? And the President, Mr. J. R. Jayawardena, stated recently that he would not hesitate to close down any Corporation which runs at a loss.

Most of the tea estates are now Government-owned and are managed by either the State Plantation Corporation or the Janawasama. I dread to think what would happen if the labour intensive tea estates are closed down. Crop Diversification? I shall comment on it at a later date—Mr. Bradman Weerakoon's recent assurance to Mr. M. S. Sellasamy of the Ceylon Workers Congress that tea estates would not be arbitrarily diversified not withstanding.

In my opinion it will be unwise to increase wages at this stage and, instead, in the interest of the whole population of the Country, the Government should do all it can to

reduce consumer prices like it has done this week in the case of the prices of essential drugs. And this above all, mushroom Firms and other traders should be prevented from spending valuable foreign exchange on the import of playing cards, marbles, toys, worn out motor vehicles from the East and other unessential goods.

ROBERT HARLEY.

Monte Cristo Estate,
Nawalapitiya,
09.05.78.

* * *

Today's SLBC Obituaries

Sir,

In the past obituary announcements in the English medium by the SLBC, followed immediately the morning news broadcast. Regrettably in recent times there happens to be a sudden variation in the present procedure. Namely in between the termination of the morning news bulletin and the obituary announcements another new item has crept in, which surely can conveniently be placed as usual in the past after the obituary announcements.

After all if we are to keep with the aspirations of a just and righteous era today, it is time the SLBC gave due place to honour the dead and accordingly fell in line with the one time procedure which allowed little room for complaints. For one thing the new item that has crept now between the morning news bulletin and the obituaries, namely the highlights of the programme for the day, is not that interesting for an impatient and busy listener as that of listening to the death announcements of one's near and dear friends or relatives, first thing in the morning.

Assuredly this cannot be my individual opinion alone, unquestionably there are many other morning

SLBC English medium listeners who subscribe to this worthy view. It is therefore earnestly hoped that the SLBC authorities will give due attention to this matter and do the needful without as usual carrying on regardless of the listeners' views.

N. SRIKANTHA.

Alwis Town,
Hendala,
8th May, 1978.

* * *

Ronnie And Lal

Sir,

I read with amusement the letter of Vasantha Rupasinghe in your issue of April 29 regarding the "removal" of Dr. Lal Jayawardena and the installation of Dr. W. M. Tillekeratne as head of the Treasury. Knowing Mr. Ronnie de Mel, Minister of Finance, as I have since he was a civil servant in the early fifties and later as a politician, I could not for one moment imagine that he would remove a man from such high office for personal reasons only, but neither would he, because of external pressure, be deterred from making what he thought was the best possible appointment of his Secretary which it is because of what people like Vasantha Rupasinghe might say. I should like to add that the Minister was "kind" enough to retain Dr. Lal Jayawardena (not to be confused as a relation of the President by any stretch of the imagination) for well over 8 months. A probe is certainly welcome into the circumstances of the appointment of Dr. Lal Jayawardena as Secretary to the Treasury in succession to Mr. C. A. Cooray, I must however, disclose one fact—even though I am resident in Matara, I am a voter from Devinuwara.

AJIT WIJEWICKREMA.

Matara,
04.05.78.

CARAVAN FAMILY—10

On To Jaffna

by Ina Trimmer

The road was straight and flat so Jason had a good time going as fast as he could. Near a village called Horuwapatana they left the wide highway to Anuradhapura and turned right along a minor road.

There wasn't much traffic, so very soon they were at Madawachchi where two wide roads branched off, one going west to Mannar, and the other north to Jaffna which they chose.

Mummie spotted a fine place to lunch in, by a small tank full of pink and white lotus. Then they carried on again, past Vavuniya, onwards till they came to the Elephant Pass causeway, over the lagoon which almost cuts off Jaffnapatnam from the rest of Ceylon.

"We must stop here for tea", said Daddy. "This Elephant Pass rest house is another Dutch fort. It is in perfect condition and has been in use as a rest house for about a hundred years."

Mummie and the children were charmed.

"A most delectable spot" said Mummie with a sigh. "I want to stay here."

"Let's bathe in the lagoon", cried the children.

Before daddy could even think, they scuttled into Jason and were out again in bathing costumes, splashing in the warm, calm salt water that washed at the foot of the fort.

They entered Jaffna as the sun was setting in a blaze of orange and golden light. The sooty trunks of the Palmyrah palms were deeply black in contrast with the fiery sky. Flat, as flat as a slat, Jaffna, lay before them, a city of another world, from some Arabian night's tale.

"We'll park on Beach Road," said Daddy.

Beach Road wasn't an ideal parking ground though Daddy chose, a nice enough spot close to the lagoon, under a gnarled old Suriya tree with a well close by. There were too many people about, and inquisitive lookers-on were a nuisance.

However Daddy said they would stick it out till they finished with the sights of the town itself. They did a fair amount of walking in spite of the heat and the brilliant sun which nearly got Mummie down, owing to the glare.

One of the first places they visited was the Fort another old Dutch fortification.

"This Fort too," said Daddy, "was first built by the Portuguese who as usual were here before the Dutch. It was a wonderful fort and it still is, as it stands now, after Dutch improved on the work of the Portuguese.

Of all the odd forts in Ceylon, this one in Jaffna is in the finest condition of all, and the best built."

"It's smaller than Galle fort", said Mummie.

That's so. There are no ordinary dwelling houses only for the governor's house, now known as King's House and a beautiful "little church."

The children were astonished at the size of King's House.

"Daddy", said Ranjit, "the front verandah is like a road, so long."

"It certainly is. It's 210 feet long, and there are 32 pillars. Look at the window ledges. A bed can be placed on them. Now let's go into the church."

They walked into the old house of prayer and worship, trying to avoid the grave-stones on the floor, where Dutch ladies and gentlemen were buried. Daddy pointed out the Dutch furniture in the church all on an enormous scale.

"What big fat people there were in those days", said Ranjit. "Look at the Governor's seat."

"My word, the size of these pulpits" said Varuni.

Ranjit was interested in the cannon balls lying all over the fort, and the ancient, enormous cannon.

"May I take a cannon ball Daddy?"

But all he was allowed to do was to lift one in his hands. "Gosh! It's heavy", he said.

They walked the dusty streets where women baked and sold hoppers at all hours, even later in the evening. All they could see was a bangled arm stretched over the "chatty" with the coals underneath. A fence of thatched palmyrah or coconut leaves hid the baker.

"The palmyrah palm is to the north and east what the coconut palm is to us in the south and west," said Daddy when the children stopped to buy kottekelangoo.

"The Tamils say there are 801 uses for the plamyrah palm. As you see, their houses are thatched and fences are made with the leaves. They eat the fruit which is dried and called 'pinatoo'.

"Kottekelangoo which you are now chewing are the dried roots. They make toddy from the flower spathes just as we do with the coconut and they make juggery in the same way."

One afternoon they went to the jetty by the Customs House.

"Daddy" asked Ranjit "where is the sea?"

"There, far out on the skyline. Ships anchor as close as they could to the lagoon, and boats bring the cargo and take it out. Now what do you say to sailing on the lagoon?"

The children were delighted. In a few minutes they were away, the jolly boat dancing over the little waves, the sail belying out in the wind. They could see all kinds of aquatic plants spread out in the white sand, beneath the clear still water.

Daddy directed the boatmen to take them to several little islands some with only one or two fisher huts, but Mandativu was like a coconut estate and had several houses.

"Daddy", Varuni said, "of all the places we have visited, I like Jaffna best. It's so different."



Easier Divorce—The Safer Course

Humane, enlightened is the law
Designed with speed to bring
Relief for those, who few foresaw,
To end their suffering.

In monogamous wedlock bound
By rigid law and creed,
Now courage and commonsense
have found
An answer to their need.

Condemned to lives of misery,
Devoid of peace and love,
Such couples may their bonds
break free—
No fate or gods above.

The children of a broken home
Have frequent fears to face,
With waifs and strays the
streets they roam
In drugs, despair, disgrace.

No longer may offending spouse
Enjoy the tyranny
Of living in a cheerless house,
In hate or villainy.

No more any feast the prying eye,
Or scandal-monger be
Within the Court when judges try
The woes of family.

The law will serve an urgent need
By bringing hope and life,
For victims may repair with speed
The homes destroyed by strife.

Mervyn Casie Chetty,

April 30, 1978

May 10-May 17

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

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

TUESDAY, MAY 10: Sri Lanka will press for disarmament to be given high priority at the Co-ordinating Bureau meeting of the non aligned nations which opens in Havana on May 15: this meeting was earlier scheduled to be held in Kabul but the venue was shifted to Havana following the coup in Afghanistan late last month which toppled the Daoud regime. Since the country is short of 600 doctors in government hospitals to maintain services the Health Ministry is studying the possibility of obtaining doctors from UN agencies. An Aid Protocol for further aid from Sweden to Sri Lanka was signed on Monday in Stockholm by our Finance Minister on behalf of Sri Lanka and Mr. Ola Ulstein, deputy PM and Minister of International Co-operation for Sweden; this brings the total level of aid from Sweden to Sri Lanka to 267 million. Synthetic Textile manufacturers have agreed to release 30% of their productions to the co-ops; only 20% will be sold through the manufacturer's showrooms while the balance would be released through private dealers. An army officer attached to the

contingent in Mannar has received a phone call threatening to kidnap his child if he did not stop assisting the authorities in their investigations into the murder of four detectives at Murunkan—CDN. The Minister of Labour is examining a proposal for the payment of monthly pensions to private and corporation sector employees in the near future. The 'Open University' when set up will provide courses in three languages through television from mid 1979, as well as by radio and correspondence said the Secretary to the Ministry of Higher Education. Contrary to expectations that the price of gold in Sri Lanka will come down after the May 3rd auction in Bombay, the price of a sovereign has gone up by Rs. 25; the prevailing price now is Rs. 875 a sovereign—CDM. Singapore has given an assurance that it will supply the Sri Lanka government with equipment for use in the Colombo Port once the FTZ is established. Three more persons have been arrested by the Jaffna police in connection with the killing of Inspector Pathmanathan. Terrorists of the Liberation Tiger Movement added another murder to their growing list when they shot and killed a youth warded at the Jaffna hospital in the early hours of Saturday morning; police sources believe that this was a fatal case of mistaken identity for the youth who was shot has been mistaken for another who occupied the bed a little while earlier.—SU. The government is planning to recruit 1000 youths from each electorate for the Mahaweli Project; a total of 6,81,527 persons are needed—DW. The Fisheries Corporation has distributed 8187 pounds of fish yesterday through their sales outlets in Colombo—LD. Mr. M. S. Krishnan and Mr. Ganesharatnam who are suspected of being two leading members of the Liberation Tiger Movement have been arrested in London and Oman respectively—DK. Over Five hundred Police officers

are to be despatched to Jaffna shortly to combat the wave of violence that has overtaken the Jaffna Peninsula—EN. The Police have reason to believe that the Liberation Tiger Group which has been operating in the North, has connections with some extremist groups in South Sri Lanka—VK. The Minister of Foreign Affairs leaves Sri Lanka today to attend the Meeting of the Coordinating Bureau of Non aligned countries to be held in Cuba—IDPR No. 80/78. President Anwar Sadat said yesterday Egypt was ready to attend an Arab reconciliation Summit and that he expected nothing to stand in its way. Supporters of Mrs Indira Gandhi won two by-elections and appeared to be heading for a third in the Northern Indian state of Uttar Pradesh underlining growing popular support for the former PM—CDN. The body of former Italian PM Aldo Moro was found wrapped in blankets in the back seat of a car near the HQ's of the Christian Democratic Party. Afghanistan's new left wing government has launched an extensive purge of top civil servants and members of the dynasty which ruled the country for more than a century—CDM. Britain's Labour Government today faced loud demands for its resignation in the wake of last night's dissent by eight on its taxation programme, part of the Finance Bill which forms the backbone of the government's strategy—SU.

THURSDAY, MAY 11: The Ministry of Labour has recommended to the government the revision of the existing superannuation pension scheme in the state service in the lines of the system prevailing in the private sector in order to provide dismissed employees of state services with their retiring benefits. The President yesterday appointed a one man commission to probe administrative malpractices or abuse at the university of Sri Lanka dur-

ing the previous regime. A colossal buddha statue—36 1/2 feet long was discovered inside a cave at Kandegama while work was progressing on the accelerated Mahaweli scheme. The President has ordered the IGP and the service commanders to launch a massive combined offensive to stamp out the liberation tiger movement which is terrorising the Jaffna, Vavuniya and Mannar districts and causing a threat to the maintenance of law and order there. The Food Department yesterday commenced purchasing paddy for the first time on tender system direct from the farmers in the seven paddy growing districts. A person said to be one of the shareholders of the Ganesharatnam Farm, where the CID officers were gunned down, has been taken in for questioning in London; another person was taken in for questioning in Oman—CDN. Sri Lanka hopes to strengthen its rupee in due course as the country benefits further from economic and political stability the Sri Lanka Finance Minister said in Stockholm. The Chairman of the Oils and Fats Corporation said that the subsidies of the corporation had been used by rich people to become richer; he was referring in particular to Mr. Gamini Wickremayake and Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike who had drawn large amounts of poultry feed from the corporation during the last regime. The price of cattle food has been reduced by Rs. 100 a ton with effect from today. The President has taken over the subjects and functions of Aviation including Air Ceylon. A reward of one lakh of rupees has been offered by the police to anyone giving information leading to the arrest of the people who killed Inspector Pathmanathan—CDM. The government has decided to proscribe the Liberation Tiger Movement—SU. The government has appointed a Ministerial Committee to recommend

measures to strengthen the Presidential Commission of Inquiry by adding new teeth to it—CO. The government is taking steps to hand over the running of the railway buffets to the private sector—ATH. The President has given permission to spend millions of rupees to modernise the Colombo Harbour—LD. Co-operative societies are unable to buy paddy from farmers because of transport problems and mill owners are unable to supply paddy to the PMB due to the shortage of gunny bags; therefore farmers are forced to sell their paddy to traders at low prices; the minister of agriculture had earlier denied newspaper reports that there were transport problems. The entire government machinery in Bangladesh was paralysed yesterday when 600,000 low income workers went on strike throughout the country demanding higher wages. The US said yesterday that it would launch a robot space craft this month to explore Venus which scientists say is the planet most closely resembling earth—SU. Word leaders expressed dismay and horror yesterday at the death of former Italian PM Aldo Moro, amidst calls for closer co-operation between governments to combat terrorism. After a stinging defeat in Parliament British PM, James Callaghan yesterday hit back at right-wing conservative opponents charging them with fiscal irresponsibility—CDN. Former Indian PM Indira Gandhi's Congress Party yesterday won its first parliamentary by-election since her crushing defeat in the general elections just over an year ago—CDM.

FRIDAY, MAY 12: A massive training operation mobilising both the state and private sector machinery will soon get under way to revitalise rural development work in 22,000 villages in Sri Lanka. The government has approved the re-employment of retired teachers

for the teaching of English, Mathematics, Science and other specialised subjects. The Minister of Agriculture has decided to establish a network of mini sugar factories in the sugar cane growing areas. A team of CID detectives left by air for Madras yesterday in connection with the investigation into the murder of the four CID officers at Murunkan. Colombo had a rainfall of 87.0 mm yesterday—CDN. A Criminal Procedure Code Bill to restrict the granting of bail for a variety of serious offenses will be represented in the NSA next week. Six Thai nationals were yesterday ordered to pay Rs. 1.5 million as penalties for attempting to smuggle into the country 10 1/2 pounds of gold valued at Rs. 500,000. General Sepala Attygalle has been appointed Chief Co-ordinating Authority of the Defence Ministry—CDM. The President has ordered that immediate controls be imposed on contracts given by public sector institutions to the private sector. Jaffna police yesterday arrested another 14 suspects in connection with the murder of Inspector Pathmanathan. The Ceylon Oils and Fats Corporation is to be modernised at a cost of Rs. 11 million—SU. Relatives of the youth arrested at the Katunayake airport in connection with the Murunkan killings has complained to Police HQ's that his brother had been tortured, and attacked in many ways by the police—DP. Twelve youths from Vavuniya have been arrested in connection with the Murunkan murders—EN. The Coconut Marketing Board has imported 1000 tons of low grade copra from East Africa for milling here—CO. The government of Zaire has appointed Mr. Nauz Makunga as the first Ambassador with residence in New Delhi—IDPR 79/78. The Ministry of Industries had drawn up plans to build 504 industrial factories all over the country. The Committee on Cost of Living has recommended

to the government to import biscuits to meet the present biscuit shortage in the country. The Ministry of Food and Co-operatives has decided to distribute foreign luxury goods through co-ops. The Labour Ministry has received 90,000 applications for jobs in the Middle East—DW. Six special advisors who will advise the President on economic and other matters will be appointed shortly—JD. A number of Soviet soldiers crossed into China on May 9 and shot and wounded a number of Chinese it was stated in Peking. Britain's labour government last night suffered its second humiliating defeat in Parliament this week when opposition parties combined to raise the threshold for higher income tax rates. The rift in Rhodesia's multi racial leadership widened yesterday when Black nationalist bishop Muzorewa withdrew from a public meeting which was to have featured all four leaders—CDM. Italian Interior Minister Francesco Cossiga resigned last night in the wake of the murder of kidnapped ex-PM Aldo Moro. A Japanese Defence Chief said yesterday that the Soviet navy's recent build up in the Pacific had effectively turned the sea of Japan into the 'sea of Russia.'—SU.

SATURDAY, MAY 13: Three former MP's and a number of former directors and employees of 23 Co-operative societies against whom prima facie cases have been established, are to be charged with misappropriation, leakages of goods and cash shortages in the co-ops with which they were connected; two of the MP's were from the SLFP and one from the LSSP. The government will take stern punitive action to prevent the theft of agricultural produce and livestock; in addition to the normal punishments those convicted of these offenses will be whipped as prescribed under the penal code. Thousands of prisoners languishing

in the country's prisons are soon to be harnessed in the many development projects. The PM will launch next month a massive 252 million rupee national programme to improve 84,000 rural houses. The government has ordered the immediate suspension of exports of industrial goods manufactured by state corporations and boards; this is sequel to a detection to ship 150 tons of cement to the Maldives—CDN. An Orientation Week would be conducted for new entrants to the University of Sri Lanka this year where parents too would be invited to participate. An estimated 3900 telephones in the city of Colombo have been reported 'dead' following the heavy rains experienced during the past few days—CDM. Legislation is to be introduced by the government to enable private sector firms to increase their employment capacity by 10%. Detectives inquiring into the murder of the four CID officers are now trying to unravel the international ramifications of the Liberation Tiger Movement which is believed to be responsible for the killings—SU. The person who was arrested in London in connection with the Murunkan killings has been released after questioning—EN. The Education Department has instructed all government schools to refrain from admitting students over 13 years to the Advanced level class—JD. The CTB has earned nearly Rs. 2.2 million on May Day this year—DM. The Minister of Posts and Telecommunications has attributed the inefficiency of the engineers and other officers in charge of telephones for the frequent breakdown of telephones—LD. In sharp rebuff to President Carter the Senate Foreign relations Committee yesterday voted 8-14 to ration the US arms embargo against Turkey. India's Opposition parties failed to censure Morarji Desai's Janatha

Government yesterday when they lost a no-confidence motion in the lower house of parliament. In the face of disheartening opinion polls for his ruling Liberal Party the Canadian PM Trudeau said yesterday in Parliament that he would not hold an election this summer as had been widely expected—SU. President Sadat of Egypt has suggested that Israel return Gaza strip to Egypt and West Bank to Jordan as an interim step in the middle east peace negotiations. A Lebanese newspaper reported today that the US is considering a plan to set up military bases in the Middle East to protect western interests and encourage Arab-Israeli peace moves—CDN.

SUNDAY, MAY 14: After weeks of intensive investigation into the murders of the four CID men at Murunkan and the attempted murder of the second MP for Pottuvil, the police yesterday identified the men they wanted to question. With the complete overhaul of the SLFP veterans of the Party might be dropped. Two thousand families in Colombo have been rendered homeless following the heavy rains in the last three days. The so-called Tamil Liberation Tiger Organisation operating from abroad is financing the Liberation Tigers here police revealed yesterday: the TLO has connections in Britain, the Gulf States, Malaysia and Singapore, terrorists were using the funds to buy up lands for use as 'operational bases' in different parts of the island, encroachment on state land with the active support of certain politicians was already under way. Mrs. Tilak Gooneratne wife of Sri Lanka's Ambassador to the EEC in Brussels has died in an accident in Britain. The Japanese government has decided to grant US 38 million dollars in the field of commodity assistance and grant projects for 1978—50. All Chairmen

of State Corporations must work eight hours a day like any other officer; this is contained in a directive by the President to all ministers. Bakery owners in some parts of Colombo and the suburbs have created an artificial shortage of bread—ST. The Judiciary of this country is expected to experience a complete overhaul in the court structure. A country-wide manhunt is on to hound out the 'Liberation Tigers'. The President has decided to clamp down on the overseas trips of ministers unless they are absolutely necessary; he has also decided that the maximum duration that a minister or a deputy could be absent from the island should be one week and that too with the prior sanction of the President—VK. The Committee appointed to advise on government holidays recommended to the government to reduce about 10 days of the present number of holidays given to government and corporation workers. The Labour Department has taken steps to restart the Land Army from next month—RR. Palestinian Commando Chief Arafat yesterday indirectly rejected Egyptian President Sadat's reported proposal that Israel return the Gaza strip to Egypt and the West Bank to Jordan as an interim step in middle east peace negotiations—ST. President Carter said today congressional rejection of his middle east war planes would be a terrible blow to peace efforts that Egyptian President Anwar Sadat opened at great political risk. A senior exiled Comoro official said that President Ali Sailhi has been overthrown in a military coup headed by the Interior Minister in the island republic of Comoros. A Commission of Inquiry has indicted the former Chief Minister of the South Indian State of Tamil Nadu Muthuvel Karunanidhi for squandering public funds and accepting bribes—50. As the hour for the state

memorial service honouring murdered ex PM Aldo Moro approached Red Brigade guerillas launched a new wave of attacks in Northern Italy by cutting electricity lines at a power station at Sarowa hours after setting fire to the plant of an American Computer company and bombing a car show room in nearby Milan—WK.

MONDAY, MAY 15: The President addressing a meeting at Kaleliya in the Mirigama electorate on Saturday said the government would ensure that every school pupil, will have the opportunity to study English which was an international language along with his or her mother tongue and the other national languages of the country; the government was pledged to afford protection to all citizens and ensure that they enjoyed equal rights irrespective of race, religion or any other consideration. President Jayawardene paid a surprise visit to the Katunayake Airport yesterday and issued orders on the spot for immediate action to rectify shortcoming at this vital international link, he also directed that highest security should be observed at the airport. The British government has agreed to bear the burden of paying pensions of expatriate officers, their wives and orphans in respect of pre-independence service in this country; this will mean that Sri Lanka will be relieved of meeting an annual pension bill of Rs. 3.5 million Rs. which it pays to British civil servants or their dependents for service in the colonial regime in Ceylon. The Customs have bared a racket in which unemployed youth are being deployed by mudalalis to smuggle cloth and ready made garments specially from the Maldives, thereby abusing the concession given by the government for foreign travel. The SLFP's working committee meeting on Saturday which discussed recommendations of the re-organisa

tion committee saw a further escalation of differences within the party—CDN. A Massive house-to-house search for the killers of the five police officers is under way in the Jaffna peninsula. The government would not allow the fragmentation of large estates owned by the private sector for sale as individual plots said the Minister of Agriculture—CDM. The Armed Forces and the Police have called for the assistance and co-operation of the public in their drive to bring the anarchist Liberation Tiger Movement to book. The President yesterday called out all members of the armed forces for the maintenance of public order in every administrative district in the island. Six persons are believed dead following an earthslip which completely gutted some houses in the Kiriella area yesterday. Senior government security officers are carrying out investigations to ascertain whether certain officers down the line were responsible for the leak of classified information to the Liberation Tiger Movement which led to the murder of the CID officers. A team of TV experts from Japan are now in the island to survey the scene before establishing the broadcasting network.—SU 115 persons will testify before the Sansoni Commission which begins sittings in Kandy today—EN. The President has ordered the Ministry of Food and Co-operatives to build food warehouses all over the country immediately; under the first stage of this project 17 warehouses will be built in Colombo, Trincomalee and Jaffna—DW. The Ministry of Housing Construction and Local Government has decided to construct 25 libraries and play grounds to commemorate Children's Year—DM. Four journalists and press workers were flogged in a jail in Lahore yesterday after being sentenced by a military court for staging a hunger strike. PM

Menachim called on Egypt to renew Middle East peace negotiations saying that outside pressure will not force Israel to accept a peace agreement it opposes. Ethiopian ruler Colonel Mengistu Haile Mariam said Somalia was sending its regular troops in disguise back into Ethiopia's Orgaden region—CDM. Saudi Arabia's King Khalid has sent a personal letter to President Carter saying his country urgently needs up to date fighter planes to combat communist expansion. A military directorate has seized power in the Comoros Islands, overthrowing and arresting President Ali Soilih—SU. Refugees are quitting Rhodesia for Botswana at a rate of 1200 a month despite the establishment of a bi-racial interim government in Salisbury intended to bring equalised majority rule to the territory—CDN.

TUESDAY, MAY 16: Hatton and Maskeliya police yesterday arrested Vamadevan alias Thanabalingham, one of the four men wanted in connection with the killing of four CID officers at Murunkan and the attempted murder of the second MP for Pottuvil. Certain police officers who were alleged to have been serving as 'double agents' by a person described as a key informant and a member of the Liberation Tiger Movement have now been transferred out of the posts they were serving in. Heavy rains in the past few days have rendered thousands homeless and many roads impassable in several districts of the island. The government has formulated a new scheme of admitting children to schools in the future; according to this scheme 50% will be admitted to government schools on an area basis and the rest to private schools—CDN. Any person who surrenders himself to court and is produced on arrest on an allegation that he has committed certain prescribed offences shall be kept on

remand until the conclusion of the trial in terms of the Criminal Procedure Bill which is to come up before the NSA shortly. The Bill seeking to proscribe the Liberation Tigers will come up before the Constitutional Court today, Sri Lanka will get Rs. 96 million from Norway this year. A severe cyclonic gale hit Mannar on Sunday morning damaging houses and public institutions—CDM. The prices of soaps produced by BCC have gone up in price. The Finance Minister's reported remark that the government hoped to revalue the rupee in due course has caused consternation in commercial and business circles in the country—SU. The rights that the TULF could not win for the Tamils for the past so many years will be given by us within a year said the Minister of Justice—VK. Up-country potato farmers have decided not to pay back their loans as a protest for importing potatoes when they could have been produced here; farmers have been unable to sell their produce because of the imports—JD. Rice imports will be cut by half this year; last year 5,27,00 tons were imported; this year only 2,62,000 tons will be—DW. Any loss of revenue for the government when officials delay implementing projects approved by the Cabinet will be recovered from the official responsible for the delay—DM. President Anwar Sadat in a political offensive against Egyptian communists yesterday ordered a referendum seeking to bar them from senior jobs in the government. Australians mourned the death of their most famous statesman, former PM Sir Robert Menzies. The Indian government announced its acceptance of findings by a government commission of inquiry which has been strongly critical of the last 21 months of former PM Indira Gandhi's rule—SU. The National Liberation Front

of the Congo whose forces have invaded Zaire's Shaba Province claimed to have inflicted heavy losses on government troops opposing their advance. China has said that war will inevitably break out some day with the Soviet Union and called on its army to intensify its training. The new rulers of the Comoros Islands have decided to release all political prisoners and draw up a new constitution following their seizure of power on Friday—CDM. Black Nationalist leader Bishop Muzorewa and his United African National Council decided last night not to carry out their threat to quit the interim government formed ten weeks ago—CDN.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 17: The Bill proscribing the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam movement and similar extremist organisations lays down that money, moveable and immoveable property suspected of being used by the movement and by persons involved in the movement will be forfeit to the state; any person found guilty of supporting or assisting the proscribed movement will be liable for imprisonment for a period not exceeding seven years. An urgent message from the Liberation Tiger Movement to their members abroad warning them to lie low as a massive security dragnet was closing in on the activities of the movement was intercepted by the city police. The Jaffna police have taken in twelve persons for questioning following the arrest of Vamadevan, one of the four men wanted in connection with the CID killing. 50,000 persons have been rendered homeless after the heavy rains—CDN. 154 members of the International Telecommunications Union are celebrating World Telecommunications Day today. The government has decided to allow the private sector to import dried fish from countries other than

India and Pakistan with a view to making available to them at reasonable prices—CDM. A non-violent, non political movement of Tamils from Colombo, the North and other parts of the country is reported to be in the blue print stage. The man who was arrested in connection with the murder of the CID officers underwent a grilling at the hands of a special CID team yesterday—SU. Four new corporations besides the Janawasama and the State Plantation Corporation will be set up to run the state owned estates more efficiently. Construction work on many buildings for the FTZ will begin shortly—DM. The Ministry of Agriculture is drawing up plans to construct 200 small scale paddy mills—DW. The government has spent 6460 million rupees to import luxury items during the last five months—JD. Government paratroopers were dropped to bolster Zaire forces seeking to recapture the southern copper mining

town of Kolweiz from rebels. Definite results in local Italian elections showed a sharp swing away from the Communist party and a boost for the ruling Christian democrats. President Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia held crucial talks with British ministers in London yesterday to seek Western support in dealing with the Rhodesian problem and with his own economic difficulties at home—SU. The continued influx of Muslim refugees from Burma into Bangladesh will develop into another Palestinian problem if it is not checked, Saudi Arabia's Ambassador to Bangladesh said today. Multi-millionaire industrialist William Powel Lear Jet creator of the Car radio and more than 150 patented inventions has died of Leukemia aged 75—CDM. The non-aligned co-ordinating bureau session began in Havana yesterday. Dr. Yuri Orlov, who led a group monitoring Soviet Human Rights privileges refused to enter a plea

REVIEW

CHINA'S POPULATION CONTROL

Jayantha Somasundaram

Planned Birth Campaigns in China: 1949 - 1976, by Leonard L. Chu has been published by the East-West Communication Institute, The East-West Centre, Honolulu, Hawaii. The author is a research specialist and editor of *The Asian Messenger*, a journal on communication development, at Centre for Communication Studies, The Chinese University of Hong Kong. The 143-page account of China's efforts to curtail her rapid population growth, traces the periods of progress and those of retrogression from 1949 to the present. Organisation and communication activities in the campaigns are discussed in detail. The author also assesses the effects and transferability of China's propaganda in planned birth.

The book's main thesis is that planned birth in China is a national policy decision that is to be carried out by the Chinese people. In general, China's campaigns do not emphasize individual benefits, but rather streets collective incentives in ideological terms. In terms of communication strategies, the Chinese do not rely on transmitting messages through the mass media, but on passing the information to small local groups, which discuss the policy on planned birth and, most important of all, the allocation of "birth quotas" of each unit. Further more, there are sanctions against violations.

yesterday to charges of anti state activities at the first major dissident trial since Moscow signed the 1975 Helsinki declaration—CDN.

* * *

RANDOM THOUGHTS—I

Beyond The Horizon

—to be or not to be—

It was evening. Twilight was heralding the sunset. In life, sometimes, there is no twilight to prepare for the sunset. But Nature is more considerate. It is a sad spectacle to find sunset overtaking the twilight of man's life. But to Peter, life was only a dream—a phase in a cycle. He had grown with that perception; therefore he was ready.

That evening Peter was sitting on the rocks. He had only recently got back from abroad. One thing he had gained by being out was that he had learnt to be better satisfied with his own country—this country, Sri Lanka. But he had other problems to cope with—emotional problems that made him wonder why God created man, was it because HE wanted to ensure the continuity of the human race? This evening, Peter, had other thoughts as well gnawing upon his mind. He was looking beyond the horizon. He did not know what could be out there. Why was man's knowledge circumscribed thus? Why was it not given to him to know what lay beyond? Why did he have to go to the astrologer or palmist? Yes—Nature was always just one step ahead of man, even if he could split the atom.

Peter was depressed. The deep anguish which held him in its grip caused much pain. It could have

pushed him over the hump. It is a thin line that divides sanity from insanity. Peter was still sane. He knew he had to keep a firm grip upon himself—in his own interests and because he felt he owed a duty to his child, a girl in her teens who did not realise how much her father suffered to spare her the trauma of a broken home.

The effect of the sea on man varies. It depends upon the eye of the beholder and upon his mood. This evening, Peter was sad, immeasurably so. He had cause. He had none to speak to. None to whom he could go and freely unburden himself. His thoughts were of his mother. But she had gone. Peter had a premonition of impending doom. As the twilight faded into the sweet sunset, and the soft golden light spread across the evening sky, Peter rose to walk into the sea in quest of what he had lost and which he thought could be found beyond the horizon. He did not know what he was doing, because Nature so beautiful, was beckoning him to become one with her—Peter was ready, for life had cheated him. He had withdrawn into an inner sanctuary of thought and was quite oblivious of what he was doing. The world in which he lived did not matter. He wanted to reach into the future, beyond the horizon, when an unseen hand restrained him. Peter came back to life and reality. He turned to see the soft and gentle face of a man.

"What are you trying to do", the stranger asked Peter. For a moment Peter did not know what was happening. He felt that the intruder had interfered and once more he was cheated. But the gentle face had a quiet compelling dignity. He took the outstretched hand that lifted him back to the rocks. Peter sat down, silent and sullen. He did not know who this stranger was. He had never seen

him earlier. David too did not speak, but sat down looking far out into the sea. The soft murmur of the ocean was music to the ears. The receding waves left behind the laughter of white foam which reminded the other man of his home and of the laughter of his children. But to Peter this brought only poignant memories of an unfulfilled life. Of his mother, and of the tears he had shed. Since her eyes were closed, his had never ceased to cry. Ever since, he had felt out of place everywhere; at home nowhere.

"Why did you hold me back" Peter asked the stranger. "I thought you were sad and needed someone to talk to. I had been watching you over an hour. You seemed to be in another world, a dreamer in quest of the lost horizons of Shangri-la. But when you stepped into the ocean, I wanted to be quite certain that you were not mad" Peter was now annoyed. If he was mad, what did it matter to this stranger. He was angry because someone had entered his inner sanctum and violated its sanctity. Yet he could not walk away. "What is your name, anyway" he asked. "David—David, that's my name" was the stranger's reply. He continued "I too love the shore line. You and I are wanderers in a vast wilderness seeking for a light, which this setting alone can provide. As I gaze upon the countless stars in the sky, I always feel that those stars are also like me—and perhaps you too—wanderers. But even stars must fall when they trouble the firmament in which they abide and move. Are you in trouble? What ails you my friend". "Why should I tell you" Peter was still annoyed and ashamed of his rudeness. He wanted to go away, but David's personality held him. He looked so distinguished and refined. David ignored the parry and looking out into the sea spoke

aloud "For Thou art my lamp O Lord; and the Lord will lighten my darkness."

"What were you saying? My name is Peter". "I was only talking to myself, thanking the Lord for holding a lamp before me." said David. "Nothing begins and nothing ends, that is not paid for in pain. We are born in others pain and perish in our own". "True—very true David" said Peter. He continued "The weariness, the fever, the fret of life. We are born in pain, no doubt, but there is nothing trivial in the birth of man. It is so hard to come to terms with the harsh realities of life, with its unconcern for human needs." David asked "Do you read much Peter—if you don't, why don't you. You will find much that will answer your questions". Peter felt needed again and barked "Please leave me alone and go your way. I was on the edge of a discovery, finding my lost Shangrila, beyond the horizon, but you drew me away. I do read, but what does it matter to you?" David was too dignified to be disturbed by this outburst. He was far too content with life to be annoyed by the irritations of a disturbed personality. "Have you read the Lantern Bearers? While I watched you, I was reminded of that beautiful story, Peter. My friend, you were looking into the emptiness of space—I do not know what troubles you, but that is your business. Do not be angry with me for talking to you thus. I was fascinated by you. I even wished that I would have the patience to do what you were doing for so long."

Peter said "You could have done it if you were in my position—cheated all the time. It is easy for people to say that time will heal. My wounds are raw and they ache. I am waiting for the sunset, so it was easy to walk into the sea. My grief is too dire to wait for time's

healing hands. My soul is scorched with pain. You are perhaps right David, but it is hard, I do not see any lamp before me. Have I been rude, David. Please forgive me if I was and please do not go away. I want to talk to you" David was taken aback. He had already decided to leave—to go home, to his family, to his children and to the warmth of the fireside. David was always reminded of the watch dog's bark welcoming him home, of the eyes that shone brighter when he came in. "Alright, I shall stay and tell you of the Lantern Bearers. It will interest you. Next time you come here and look beyond the horizon, you will have different thoughts. Now listen."

"Yes David, I shall, even if it means spending my night out here on the rocks. One must journey through life alone; to rely on others is to invite heartbreak. If you are married and happy, David, you must thank God for it. Marriage and all such close relationships have quite infinite possibilities of pain and joy. Have you read Maugham? Somewhere he has said that there are men whom a merciful Providence has ordained to a single life. But, remember, I am speaking only for myself. Let's forget all this and tell me about your lantern bearers, David."

ANON

(To be Concluded)

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NEXT WEEK

- ① A CAPITALIST NEW WORLD ORDER
- ② MORE ABOUT TIGERS
- ③ C.T.B. RE-ORGANISATION
- ④ WORLD AFFAIRS

A PLEA

For Cadju Cultivation

Sir,

The Cadju crop which is popularly called the "Wasteland Crop" could be a prominent and promising Foreign Exchange spinner and a source of providing the largest employment prospects, which are the mostly needed things of this country at this present juncture. In India, the Cadju nut brings in over Rs. 1,000 million per year in Foreign Exchange and gives employment to about 2 lakhs of people in the doldrums, according to the recent statistics revealed in the *Illustrated Weekly of India*. As Cadju crop can be grown in all marginal lands with the minimum of rainfall and where other crops cannot be grown and in all types of soils, it should be considered a boon to a country like Sri Lanka, where the maximum benefits could be exploited. Since a major portion of the Dry and Arid zones of this country, covering a vast acreage of land is lying barren and idle due to very little rain fall and comes under the category of Marginal lands, Cadju crop could be a thriving and prosperous export crop with the prospects of creating a number of allied industries. It is said that all parts of this tree are useful in one way or another. The wild trees of the jungle could be replaced with these useful trees, as they will grow to a size of a banyan tree and give benefit for over 70 years and at the same time provide a desired forest cover to please conservationists. In India, the 'Tree Crops Development Project' of Kerala, financed by World Bank encourages large areas to be brought under Cadju cultivation.

There is an acute shortage of this Cadju nuts for export in all

countries which produce same and hence there cannot be any limitation for the expansion of this cultivation. In India, though 418,000 hectares come under this crop, only 26% of world export goes from India. India even imports large quantities of Cadju nuts from East African countries to feed the Cadju Nut network of Factories of Kerala and other places. A good number of women are employed in this industry. There is a big demand for Cadju nuts in USA, USSR and West Germany which cannot be met by the present exporting countries.

It is not understood as to why there is a slackness on the part of the Government in exploiting this situation for the benefit of Sri Lanka. Of course, there was a good start made under the Department of Minor Export Crops, with various subsidies promised and bank loans guaranteed. Lands were alienated for this purpose in the Dry Zone. A Cadju Corporation of Sri Lanka was established. But with all this, the Cultivation and Industry are in the womb even today.

The reasons are many fold. The lands alienated for this purpose are not made use of by many allottees due to non-interest in this type of cultivation. The loans are very difficult to get and inadequate. There is no proper incentive, guidance, supervision, persuasion, or coercion. The laissez-faire attitude is the main cause. Hence the lands remain still in jungle and the progress is very little. What is required is encouragement in all corners, by arranging Seminars and stepping up of loans, Research centres and the enthusiasm.

These plantation areas of Cadju cultivation could also be mixed farm centres. There could be short term and medium term inter crops established and carried out, till

the Cadju plants reaches bearing stage. Even after this stage, the Animal husbandry could be successfully carried on in these areas, since no animal will attack a Cadju plant. The interest of world organizations and welfare Societies should be aroused to finance these projects with Aids or long term loans, or subsidies. In India there are similar assistance obtained to promote this crop and Industry.

Since of late, the Aid Division of Cadju Cultivation which was part of the Department of Minor Export Crops has been brought under the Cadju Corporation of Sri Lanka. This is not desirable or give any inducement. The loan of Rs. 800/- per acre was formulated and drawn up, about ten years ago and there has been no revision inspite of sharp rise of various factors of production. It is necessary to raise this amount to Rs. 1,600/- per acre according to the prevailing prices. In granting Loans the alienated lands could be taken as surety with strict supervision and personal guarantees as sufficient for the purpose. Since most of the alienees of middle class persons are employed otherwise, formation of Public Companies or private companies under Companies Ordinance No. Cap 145 with the alienees as share-holders, should encourage. The Guarantee of this company for the repayment of loan could also form another guarantee for the loans released. Economic history speaks of successful development of such ventures only through such broad based Companies for various reasons.

The Cadju Growers or Planters Associations should be given encouragement and every backing, recognition, support, as vigilant bodies by the Government and the Departments or Corporations. The Aid should be channelled through

such Associations, with certificates. The Government Agents to be ex-Officio presidents of these Associations. These Associations should be called for conferences every now and then to discuss problems, strategies of developments, and issue of instructions and given wide discretionary power to recommend cancellation or allotments of non-developed lands, or errant alienees, not conforming to conformed requirements and in alienating those cancelled lands to those deserving cases or to adopt any other alternative methods of disposing them. These powers are now diversified and are vested in many authorities and are therefore dormant.

It is discouraging to find that this Cadju plantation and Industry has become nobody's baby. The suggestions and advices of Cadju Planters Associations are ignored and discouraged.

Will the present Hon'ble Minister of Plantation and Industry and the Finance Minister give their serious thought to this Cadju Plantation and Industry and the defects pointed above and encourage and develop, as well as promote this crop, in par with the other countries? Since Hon'ble Minister is an experienced planter and an Economist as well, it is hoped that no time will be wasted any more to develop this crop of Cadju and allied industries.

V. Shanmuganathan
Hon'y. Secretary,

Cadju Planter's Association

Ganapathy Farm,
Sendenkulam,
Madhu Road P.O.,

* * *

Confidentially

FRDB And Eggs

IS IT NOT STRANGE that with the May Day present Felix R. Dias Bandaranaike (FRDB) made to Prime Minister Premadasa about the CJC Act being the handiwork of former Attorney-General and later Chief Justice Victor Tennekoon, the FRDB clan has been catapulted into the limelight of notoriety? That immediately the NSA hue and cry about the missing CJC and other files (*Hansard*, 4/5/78 *Tribune*, 20/5/78), the present Chairman of the Oils & Fats Corporation Mr. Roy de Silva launched a terrible blast against the FRDB clan at a press conference on May, 10 and "gave statistics to show how the Corporation sold provender during 1970-1977 and how subsidies meant to benefit the poor people were given to the rich to become richer?" That the press conference was only really one small chapter in the FRDB saga in the world of eggs and poultry? That a *Sun* summary under the heading HOW FRDB GOT POULTRY FOOD stated: "...Prior to 1971 a permit was given to Palmgrove Farm owned by Mr. Gamin Wickremanayake for 35 tons of poultry food, it went up to 75 tons in 1975. Up to June 1977 it was at 60 tons a month. Naiwela Farm owned by Mr. Felix R. D. Bandaranaike—10 tons a month in 1971, 14 tons a month in 1972. Then 20 tons a month up to June 1977. Three Acre Farm under the management of Mr. Gamin Wickremanayake—25 tons a month in 1970, 141 tons in 1971, 141 tons in 1972 and then 67 tons upto June 1977. The Corporation had to bear a loss of Rs. 700 per ton of poultry food. The Chairman

told newsmen that after the new Government came into power this quantity had been reduced in the following manner from October 1977—five tons per month to Palmgrove Farm, 5 tons for Naiwela Farm and 35 tons to the Three Acre Farm. This was kept at 35 tons because they were franchise agents, he explained. Mr. de Silva also revealed that credit facilities were available to Mr. Gamin Wickremanayake for Rs. 25,000 in 1970-71. In 1971-72 it increased to Rs. 40,000, in 1973-74 it went up to Rs. 60,000. In all instances the credit limits had been exceeded. For Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike, the credit limit was Rs. 25,000 for 1972. In 1974-75 it went up to Rs. 35,000. Though the credit facility was Rs. 25,000 in every instance it had been exceeded. In May 1973 it went up to Rs. 61,000. In 1974 it was Rs. 77,000 and thereafter it was Rs. 73,000. There had been credit facilities extended to certain other categories of customers, but none had exceeded credit limits in this manner, he said."

That one of the FRDB outfits which received poultry food on concessionary terms was the Three Acre Farm? That there is in circulation a very sordid "story" as to how the FRDB syndicate had grabbed the Three Acre Farm? That we will repeat the popular story about how the Three Acre Farm came into the FRDB-GW combine? That until FRDB or GW throw light from their point of view, there is no alternative but to believe the story that the major partner of the Three Acre Farm was squeezed out by pressures which any Government can exercise on contractors who have to obtain payments from the Treasury for work done? That in this case, the amount delayed or withheld is said to run into millions and that even a rich contractor could not afford to hold out for long at a

time when a major credit squeeze was in force? That any investigator will be up against the problem of finding documents to establish a connection between delayed payments and the sale of shares in the Three Acre Farm? That an investigator can only rely on tell-tale dates and some thought-provoking coincidences? That one such fact is that the Three Acre Farm came under the control and management of Gamin Wickremanayake (FRDB's brother-in-law and his official Secretary) at a critical juncture because a big-time contractor sold out his controlling shares in the Farm? That the contractor had to sell out, it is alleged because his cash liquidity and credit were at a low ebb because payments due to him from Government had been unduly delayed after the completion of the work? That whilst the Treasury may have good reasons for delaying or withholding payments, the fact is that he sold out his Three Acre Farm shares to a nominee of the ruling dynasty in the Treasury which had begun to get an octopus grip on the egg and broiler market in Colombo and Ceylon? That what we have set out is the belief of many important and responsible people? That if anyone—especially FRDB or GW—have any other facts, interpretations or inferences to offer, this column will be happy to publish the same? That in addition to the Three Acre Farm mystery, it is believed that the FRDB-GW combine had artificially pushed up the price of eggs through a contract under which the Marketing Department (MD) had contracted to purchase a very large quantity of eggs (at the beginning it was believed to be 50,000 a day) from FRDB-GW group at 50 cents an egg? That at that time the open market prices was about 30-35 cents an egg?



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