

Vol. 22 No. 49 — June 3, 1978 — Rs. 1-50

TRIBUNE



At The Fixed

And Controlled Prices

SITTAMS

Dispensing Chemists

259/1 Galle Road,

Colombo - 4.

Tel: 84058

Letter From The Editor

THE LADY ON OUR COVER has a smile on her face. She did not have one for a long long time. Her basket—in which she carries fish to the market and to regular customers in their houses—was nearly always empty for the last six months or so. She told a *Tribune* investigator that she was rarely able to get even one fourth of the fish she had got previously. Often, for several days running, she got nothing. It was when our investigator told her that government had cancelled the licences of two foreign companies to fish in our waters, she began to smile. "Their ships caught all our fish and our fishermen had none", she said. "My husband, my children and all my relations are fishermen, and for months now they found very little or no fish in their usual fishing grounds.....the foreigners had caught them all, big, small, tiny—everything—and taken them away.....". And when the *Tribune* investigator had told her that these foreign trawlers had to fish in the deep seas, twenty five miles away from the coast, she burst into laughter and said, "the big men in our Fisheries Department know that in the deep seas, twenty five miles away, you get only one or two kinds of edible fish like shark, etc.....but all the popular varieties people eat are found within 10 to 12 miles of the shore.....these trawlers fished very close to the coast, but the officials refused to believe this if our people told them that. You see, all of us think that the foreign trawlers gave commissions and cuts to our officials to let them have their way....." Next, our investigator had asked her whether there would be more fish now that the foreign trawlers were sent away. She was sceptical....."the foreign devils, our men tell us, have caught everything that was alive in our seas.....and we will not have fish for a long time, may be years....." Finally, our investigator had wanted to know whether fish prices were high because there was no ice. "Our men say that ice has suddenly become scarce.....nobody seems to know why.....but I do not need ice.... I sell fresh from the beach to my customers, but I have not got enough fish.....sometimes no fish at all....." The reports *Tribune* has received from all fishing areas are the same. *Tribune*, readers will recall, started the campaign against the foreign trawlers operating in our seas. The licences of two Singaporean companies (with six trawlers) have now been cancelled. That is good. But are more operating still? And how many trawlers left on their own because there was no more fish to catch? The fact is the stables are being locked only after the horses have bolted. The trawlers are being sent away only after our seas have been commercially depleted of fish. The Minister of Fisheries, Mr. Festus Perera, in his speech at Weligama (vide *Ceylon Daily News*, 25.5.78) said "a VIP in the previous regime collected Rs. 450,000 as commission on eight Norwegian trawlers.....the Minister said that all documents pertaining to this deal would be placed before the Presidential Commission that would inquire into the misdeeds of the past regime....." **It's time that Mr. Festus Perera stopped raising red herrings about the misdeeds of past regime to cover up the present mess and got down to the job of providing fish for the people. And very soon when the allegations now circulating about cuts and commissions that had stemmed from the foreign trawler contracts snowball into "charges" and when presently tight-lipped insiders begin to talk, there will be another Presidential Commission to inquire into the foreign trawlers' scandal of the Dharmista government. Ministerial speeches full of boasts about the fish plenty millenium round the corner cannot save the situation. Minister Festus Perera must stop making speeches and talk only after he produces enough fish. Does he realise that things were better under the last Minister Jayasinghe? Why?**

TRIBUNE

Ceylon News Review

Founded in 1954

A Journal of Ceylon and
World Affairs

Editor S. P. Amarasingam
Every Saturday

June 3, 1978

Vol. 22 No. 49

TRIBUNE

43, DAWSON STREET,
COLOMBO - 2.

CONTENTS

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK	
—First 315 Days	p. 2
BETWEEN THE LINES	
—Performance, Fish	p. 5
FOR THE RECORD	
—C.T.B. Reorganisation	p. 8
NEW CAPITALIST ORDER	
—Trilateral Commission	p. 12
SRI LANKA BUREAUCRAT	
—Defended	p. 14
—CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT	
—On Two Special Laws	p. 17
RANDOM THOUGHTS—2	
—Concluded	p. 20
LETTERS	
—From Our Readers	p. 21
QUIDNUNCs	
—Prince Charles, Tenders	
Etc.	p. 25
INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS	
—Current Developments	p. 27
SRI LANKA CHRONICLE	
—May 18—21	p. 29
CONFIDENTIALLY	
—More Fishy Business	p. 32

EDITOR'S. NOTEBOOK

First 315 Days

ON SATURDAY, JUNE THIRD, the day this issue of *Tribune* is dated to appear, the Jayawardene Government will be three hundred and fifteen days old. In fifty days it will be three hundred and sixty five days old, that is one year.

It is said that coming events cast their shadows ahead and it may be interesting to examine some of the shadows that have appeared. *Tribune* will reserve its own analysis for the 365th day, but it may be useful to refer to some of the matters even the government media are no longer able to ignore.

The *Ceylon Observer* of Friday, May 26 had a stunning editorial entitled FISH, MEAT, EGGS, "Fairly good fish at five rupees a pound and more, Beef at five or six rupees a pound, Eggs at seventy cents each and more. And in addition to these absurd prices, the goods are scarce and the consumer has to pay pooja to the butcher, the baker and the egg man. Incidentally, the phrase goes 'butcher, baker and candlestick maker' and candles are now twenty cents each, a little less at the co-op—if they are in stock."

Excellent, but where can one buy fairly good fish at five rupees a pound? Fairly good fish (paraw etc) is now at least rupees nine and good table fish (seer) is around rupees fifteen. At five rupees one can only get the cheapest of the cheap like Salaya. Even the once despised (and cheap) shark costs very much more.

The editorial goes on: "No wonder the President has called a ministerial group to see what is wrong. While his move is a good one, it would have been better if the pressure to bring these prices

down had come from the departments and ministries responsible. The President has formed his committee of four ministries responsible, namely Agriculture and Lands, Food and Co-operatives, Trade and Fisheries. Other ministries are also concerned, like Industries for example which is in charge of the Oils and Fats Corporation."

It is a sad commentary on the state of Sri Lanka that the President has to step in to put things right in practically all ministries—not merely to overcome the heritage inherited from the old regime but mainly to undo the damage wrought by the inept and self-defeating actions of the present dharmista ministers.

The *Observer* does not mince its words: "President Jayawardene is not known to take kindly to fools and rogues so all of us can look forward to the sparks flying. But please, let us not be entertained with tales of the terrible things done by the previous government: the people had their say on these matters on July 22 last year and by now, there should have been results in the supply and price of fish, meat and eggs. Everybody knows how herds of prize cattle in the private sector were sold for slaughter because dairy and herd owners could not keep them going. Everybody knows that the Oils and Fats Corporation suffered from oiliness and fatty degeneration and that large flocks of poultry were eaten because it was uneconomical to keep them laying eggs. What a pity it is that we cannot eat tractors, motor vehicles, machinery and plastic goods because we could have imported them and even airfreighted them promptly. The fact that fish, meat and eggs have rocketed in price and are scarce even at exorbitant prices means just one thing, that those mysterious people referred to as 'the powers

that be' seem to have forgotten that cattle have to be reared, like poultry, and fish have to be caught. Only then comes distribution. Fortunately, distracting talk of shooting butchers has died down because it is realised that they are at the end of a chain of incompetence and worse, whether they make illicit profits or not. Nobody needed experts to tell us, as they did for years, that the national herd was being destroyed. When owners of one herd of cattle, or two or twenty or two hundred sold off their animals, nobody bothered enough to stop the destruction. The experts doubtless tut-tutted while owners gave up in despair. In the business of fish, meat and eggs, you name the deficiencies and you are probably correct because nothing seems to be right about what is being done to supply consumers with fish, meat and eggs at reasonable prices and in adequate quantities."

The Observer is quite correct we cannot eat tractors, motor vehicles, machinery and plastic goods. This is exactly what the common people are saying today—and more! The roads are full of new cars, but the food stalls are empty! The editorial also rightly points out that experts, foreign experts take us nowhere. Tribune has for years pointed out the futility of relying on foreign experts—they are only excuses to delay, postpone and idle.

The Observer is confident that the President will, without mincing words, throw out fools and rogues (sparks flying) and get things done to make fish, eggs and meat available. There is a welcome hint that Sri Lanka is lucky that aid like PL 480 are not available to provide short cuts to obtain more fish, meat and eggs:

"The President is likely to mince no words and therefore he is more than likely to reverse this destructive playing about with fish,

meat and eggs. We would suggest that the teams of experts each minister gathers around him, to say what went wrong and what has to be done to correct what went wrong, take their chance to speak out, and spell out in practical terms how fish, meat and eggs can be increased in supply and decreased in price. We are glad in a way that there is nothing like PL 480 aid and similar charitable donations readily available, for if they were, the short cuts would have been expertly trotted out. What we need is bulls, cows and chickens. Both public and private sectors should get them, look after them and service the consumer.

Yes, we need more bulls, cows and chickens. And we should also catch more fish which is sold here and not carried away by licensed foreign trawlers or exported by profit-greedy traders. Whilst this is what the **Observer** says, what is the reality?

The *Sunday Times*, 28/5/78, had a front page story: **IMPORTS TO BEAT THE BUTCHER**,

"The Government in a bid to beat the butchers has decided to permit the import of beef, mutton and poultry. Authoritative sources said yesterday that large quantities of meat would be allowed to be imported by the private trade. State-owned refrigeration facilities would be made available to importers to stock the imported meat. The sources said that for instance, the 2,400-ton refrigeration available with the Fisheries Department in Galle was being used well under capacity. Imported meat, the sources added, would be sold to the public at much below the prevailing prices in the open market and would also be cheaper

than good quality fish, the minimum price of which is about Rs. 7 a lb. The exercise is aimed at providing the people with much-needed protein in their food at fair prices. The Government will also allow the import of deep-freezers to hold stocks of imported meat."

Everybody knows that neither the butcher nor the egg man is really to blame. There is an ever-decreasing stock of meat cattle. There are fewer and fewer hens to lay eggs. And the mess about fish is now well known.

And what is the remedy "the government" hits upon? **IMPORT**. The SLBC now rarely broadcasts announcements that the Fisheries Corporation was flooding the market with fish, but the SLBC proudly proclaims that two million 15 oz. tins of canned fish was landed a few days ago that the tin would be sold at about Rs. 7 a tin; and that three million cans were on order. With a 13 million population of fish-hungry people how far can "the Government" stretch the 5 million tins? And we will soon import meat, eggs, poultry and what not and also deep-freezers. Who can afford the deep-freezers?

It is saddening to think that the Dharmista Government, nearly a year after it came to power, is falling back on importing fish (canned), meat, eggs and poultry to provide the consumer. Comment is superficial. The much-talked of plans to increase the supply of local fish, meat, eggs and poultry have all seemed to have vanished into thin air.

Is Sri Lanka rushing headlong into being becoming dependent on imports for her basic foodstuffs? What is the use of talking of self-sufficiency in rice and also exporting

Chinese rice when we have to depend on imported meat, fish and eggs? And where are the plans for increasing fish, meat and eggs?

This is something that the President and his Cabinet of Ministers must think about most seriously. Unless they stop this (import) short-cut to get over shortage of food, we will soon be in an Importers' Paradise where the rich will daily get richer and the poor poorer—and Revolution will not be merely round the corner but at every doorstep.

WITHOUT COMMENT

VIP meddling hampers police probes—IGP

Policemen who inquire into crimes are often embarrassed by influential persons who wish to have suspects (taken in for questioning) released. Recently an inspector of a suburban police station was compelled to show an MP an injured man and explain to him that a person whom the MP wanted released was the suspect in the case under inquiry. While a large number of people wanted the suspect released none was there to help the injured.

This incident was quoted by the Inspector-General of Police Mr. Stanley Senanayake at a conference at the Ministry of Agriculture yesterday to illustrate the point that the Police were hampered by the interference of politicians. "It is the wish of President J. R. Jayawardene that this type of interference should stop" declared the Minister of Agriculture and Lands, Mr. E. L. Senanayake, who promised to take it up with the President once again.

—Daily News, 15/5/78

The Moving Finger writes; and having writ,

*Moves on: nor all thy Piety nor Wit
Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line
Nor all thy Tears wash out a Word
of it.*

To be fair by the Government, one must refer to the good things it has done. In the lengthening shadows it is difficult for many people to see the brighter side of things. "The Sunday Times, 28/5/78, stretched everything to the credit of the government and editorialised on THE FIRST 300 DAYS: "The first 300 days of the UNP Government are over and the occasion affords an opportunity for evaluation, no matter how tentative the exercise may be. The Government has had to contend with threats to law and order on a scale which any previous government had not experienced in its first few months in office. By way of contrast, the insurrection of April 1971 for instance, occurred after the United Front had been almost eleven months in power and not without warnings, which apparently went unheeded. In dealing with the various threats and disturbances, the UNP Government's energies and attention were divided and diverted from some of the major economic problems. Nevertheless several structural changes have been introduced: obnoxious laws have been repealed, freedom has been granted to the April 1971 insurgents besides others, restrictive measures have been lifted and a strategy of growth has been devised. The most important change so far is that introduced by the Second Amendment to the Constitution, which in providing for an executive President promises not only a new style of government but also a quicker tempo in getting things done. While the country awaits the Third Amendment, which is expected to provide among other things, constitutional guarantees of the people's funda-

mental rights, we should like to applaud the Government for its choice of the dialogue process not only on the subject of constitutional change but also on other issues such as labour relations, educational reform and now, law reform. That process must continue and to a greater degree if the people's participation in government is to be meaningful. True to its election manifesto, job creation has received top priority from the Government, 87,000 persons being found employment in six months in the state sector alone. The pace will necessarily now be slower than hitherto until the Government's four-pronged development strategy of the Investment Promotion Zone, the Mahaveli Development Scheme, the Colombo Master Plan Project and the Kotte Development Scheme enters the action phase. Meanwhile the economy has picked up, as the Annual Report of the Monetary Board of the Central Bank reveals, and the various development programmes have won for the country assurances of increased foreign assistance. But the image of the Government that is projected in the day-to-day lives of the people is determined largely by the manner and extent to which the State responds to the people's aspirations and meets their needs. That the Government has set up a Cost of Living Committee and entrusted it with a continuing task and that the State is fostering the creation of consumer resistance societies are both indications that the price spiral of consumer goods has not been satisfactorily curbed. That there is a greater availability of goods is a fact. That prices are still high is the more relevant fact. The Rs. 50 allowance only cushions the blow. Public transport is another area of public travail. If it were only the shortage of rolling stock and of buses one could hope that with

the gradual supply of these, better services would be provided. But the malaise is deeper than that and calls for drastic remedies. The state sector dominates such a vast area of day-to-day life in this country that the manner of its performance is a measure of the Government's own efficiency. It is therefore not sufficient to monitor only economic performance. The state sector's public relations are also vital and need to be improved. While the nation is aware that many of the current ills have their origin in the past, it is confident that they are curable and the public weal requires that the remedies be applied expeditiously, and if necessary, drastically too."

Excellent again!

The Sunday Times consoles its readers by saying that "many of the current ills have their origin in the past..." etc. etc. This is what people are tired of hearing, and the Sunday Times rushes in to hope that these will be set right expeditiously.

But the real truth is that many of the present ills stem from the acts of commission and omission of the present government—its ministers and bureaucrats. What is the President proposing to do undo the damage done in the first 300 days? What will he do to reverse this mad rush to "solve" all problems through imports?

There are lessons of history which some politicians and bureaucrats refuse to learn—and at the rate it is going the dharmishta UNP seems to be going that way too. The UNPers who are even dimly aware of the tragedies now being enacted by the Administration are hoping that the President would be able to pull the chestnuts out of the fire? And, on the 315th day, there is no doubt that fire in which the UNP chestnuts are roasting are burning uncontrollably fast and furiously.

The talk of a Cabinet reshuffle has once again resurrected itself. Several dates have been mentioned after February 4, when Mr. Jayawardene assumed the office of President, as D-day for the reshuffle, but all of them turned to be wishful thinking. VIPs in UNP political circles finally asserted that a reshuffle was not possible until the Third Amendment was tabled and approved. The Third Amendment is now ready, but the Select Committee has put off final approval until June 7. Many had expected the Third Amendment to be adopted by the Committee on May 28, but the SLFP members wanted, with good reason, to describe the final product as the *Amended Constitution* while the UNP favoured the term *New Constitution*. There are probably a few matters still on which agreement has to be finalised, but from inspired leaks in the press it is clear that agreement has been reached on most of the major matters which the Committee had taken up.

Those who believed that the Third Amendment would be approved by the Select Committee before the end of May had started whispering that the expected Cabinet re-shuffle would at long last take place on June 6—the day before a customary Cabinet Meeting on Wednesday June 7. When the President appointed Mr. T. B. Werapitiya, who has so far been the Deputy Minister of Defence as Minister in charge of the Law Proscribing the Tiger Movement and other similar Organisations (a Minister but without Cabinet rank), the wiseacres, with an *I-told-you-so* air confided that the Cabinet reshuffle would finally come on June 6.

There are good reasons for saying a Cabinet reshuffle would be more meaningful after the Third Amendment, but is it enough to have the Select Committee's approval? Would a reshuffle not be better after the Third Amendment

becomes law and part of the Constitution? In any case, even if some Cabinet changes are made on June 6, they are likely to be tentative. Already, Aviation has gone out of Mrs. Kannagara's ministry which had come down from the last regime as Shipping, Tourism and Aviation. Will more departments be shunted around?

There are other behind-the-scene prediction-makers who say that the final Cabinet reshuffle would come only after the planets Saturn and Jupiter have stopped retrogressing. Different astrological almanacs have set out different dates between April 24 and June 13 (and one almanac pushes it to a date in July) for these zodiacal events to take place, and this has made it difficult for those who base their political predictions on the movement of planets to say anything with finality. The nett result is that the astrological guess is that some major Cabinet changes will take place in the next 50 days—before the first anniversary of the UNP government.

All said and done, what overwhelms any observer of the current Sri Lankan scene is that the country has become submerged in an import economy in a way that will gladden the hearts of the World Bank, IMF and all Western Bankers—but whether it is good for the country is another matter.

In this issue we have published an article by a writer who points out how the Trilateral Commission has produced a plan based on capitalism as an effective alternative to the radical-oriented international economic order by the third world and non-aligned countries.

In coming issues, *Tribune* will examine the claims of the Trilateral Commission—it has been denounced as a diabolic conspiracy to save the world for capitalism—and see how far they can help Sri Lanka.

BETWEEN THE LINES BY SERENDIB

- First Quarter's Performance
- Consolation From India

*WITHOUT COMMENT. We publish below two items from the *Ceylon Observer*, the first a report by Manik de Silva on May 24, 1978 under a frontpage banner: PLAN IMPLEMENTATION MINISTRY TURNS ON SPOTLIGHT: PERFORMANCE SHORT OF SET TARGETS. The report read: "The detailed examination of the performance of the national economy by the Ministry of Plan Implementation reveals that achievement has fallen well short of target in several spheres of activity during the first quarter of this year. In the plantation sector, the replanting of both tea and rubber has fallen 'well short of target' during the first quarter of this year. However, the authorities expect that with the increased replanting subsidy now payable, the replanting program for tea, particularly, will show a marked improvement in performance this year. In the forestry sector, there has been a shortfall on the production of hardwood logs (performance was 67 per cent of target for the first quarter) attributed mainly to the delay in starting extracting timber from the Mahaweli development areas due to lack of access roads, various agencies which underook road construction for the Timber Corporation had reported that they were hampered by rain. There had also been a shortfall of production of peeler logs (performance 50 pc of target) due to more controlled felling in the wet zone in accordance with the policy on conservation. In the sugar plantation

at Kantalai only 316 acres have been planted against a target of 1,181 acres for the 1st quarter. Shortage of machinery for land preparation and shortage of labour are reasons attributed for the poor performance. Harvesting, too, had been poor at Kantalai with only 50 p.c. of the target reached. At Hingurana, both planting and harvesting was better than at Kantalai with a 67 p.c. performance reached in planting and 82 p.c. in harvesting. But these are in relation to more modest quarterly targets. The Ministry of Plan Implementation expects that even with a 25 p.c. shortfall in harvesting (i.e. expecting a better performance than last year) this year's production losses at Hingurana due to non-harvesting will be in order of 5000 tons of sugar. In the fisheries sector the tentative estimate of the first quarter's production was 36,000 tons (compared to 33,400 tons during the same period the previous year). The target set was 42,700 tons. The shortfall is mainly attributed to shortage of spares and fishing gear. In the Mahaweli project too performance had fallen well below target in several spheres of activity. Examining the progress of work in the Kala Oya valley, the centre of current construction activity, the Ministry of Plan Implementation has recorded first quarter shortfalls in target in such areas as jungle clearing excavation and earth work. While in some areas performance was reasonably satisfactory, in others they fell well short of targets that had been set. In State industry and in public sector construction activity, too, there have been shortfalls in target in most areas as in the Mahaweli project, in some areas performance has been reasonably satisfactory while in others there have been substantial shortfalls. But there have been some industries that have exceeded their first quarter's targets."

The second item is an editorial in the *Ceylon Observer* of Thursday, May 25. We publish relevant extracts to show that even the Govt. media can no longer ignore realities. "Nobody can blame the United National Party government for its feeling of euphoria following its staggering victory at the polls, but that was nine months ago and even while the government was justified in feeling a great sense of satisfaction, there was from the very start the terrible social and economic challenges to be faced. Regrettably, it has to be stated that the picture, after nine months, is not as bright as it should have been. Yesterday, we reported how a detailed examination of performance, made by the Ministry of Plan Implementation, showed that achievement has fallen very short of target in several spheres of activity in the first quarter of this year. First of all, we commend this act of taking the public into the government's confidence, and not pretending that all's well. After all, the first requisite for success is an honest appraisal of faults and shortcomings as a prelude to correction. Successes take care of themselves. Failures have to be taken care of. The Ministry spelled out some of the details of underachievement. In the plantations, both tea and rubber replanting have fallen, "well short of target" which is a very serious matter indeed. A marked improvement is expected and while this is reassuring, it has to be said that improvement does not just happen, even if the best of incentives are offered. Those responsible have to keep at the job, seeing that it is done, and checking all the time for problems and then getting over these problems. Old games of buck passing are nothing short of anti-social activity. Excuses are never valid here... Sugar has fared badly at Kantalai, with less

than a quarter of the area programmed for planting being actually planted. Harvesting has also been just half of what should have been. Sugar does seem to need special and drastic attention. Hingurana fared better, but apparently the targets were more modest and Hingurana is likely to produce 5,000 tons of sugar below annual capacity—which is a lot of sugar lost. And so the discouraging revelations go on: the lack of spares and gear knocked down production in fisheries below target; the Mahaweli project has run into difficulties; so has work in the Kala Oya valley; state industry and public sector construction, likewise, have missed their targets in many areas. The Ministry of Plan Implementation has also listed the activities which have hit their targets and those responsible deserve much commendation....."

Tribune had written a brief analysis of the situation in the country at the end of 150 days and 250 days respectively of UNP dharmista rule. The 365th day of UNP rule is fast approaching and the report of the Ministry of Plan Implementation for the first quarter of 1978 does not inspire confidence even in the most enthusiastic UNPer. We have another 50 odd days to go and unless some miraculous changes take place, there may be not very much to celebrate on the occasion of the first anniversary of UNP rule.

***FISHY IN INDIA TOO.** Inept and gullible ministers in the Janata Government in India seemed to have made a mess of the fish business in India. They too have been lured by the great dreams of large export profits to bring in foreign collaborators owning modern trawlers to increase fish production with an eye to export.

We publish a report from the Bombay weekly Blitz of May 20, 1978, entitled RACKTEERS CREATE FISH FAMINE. Written by Shrikrishna Vanjeri, the article is based on current developments mainly in the Bombay-Goa area which is one of the biggest fishing centres in India. The facts disclosed in the article about foreign trawlers, fish exports, smuggling, middlemen etc—all appear very Sri Lankan.

"Greedy middlemen, exporters turning black money into white and big industrial houses permitted 'diversification' have created an acute fish famine. This has been accentuated by the Government of India's fisheries policy and massive programme of exports of fish and fish products.

"A pair of small pomfrets today cost Rs. 10/-. According to the State Bureau of Economics and Statistics only 10 per cent of the population is able to afford animal proteins such as fish, milk, eggs and meat. Ninety per cent of the population thus suffers from chronic malnutrition. Fish is a mineral-rich protective food full of iodine, phosphorous and calcium. We don't have exportable surplus. According to official statistics, the fish catch of marine fish in 1974-75 amounted to 3.64 lakh metric tonnes for which the producer got Rs. 7,075 lakhs. The catch in 1975-76 increased to 4.02 lakh m.t. and valued at Rs. 8,605 lakhs. But the exports of fish and fish products in 1974 had amounted to 11,080 m.t. valued at 11.30 crores. Strangely enough the corresponding exports in 1975 DECREASED to 7,005 m.t. but its value had INCREASED to Rs. 13.85 crores! The bulk of the marine fish catches are commandeered by the middlemen as they pay large advances to the primary producers. Producers who are not thus indebted sell their catch to the wholesalers at low price. Fish auctions are held but the poor Koli fishwives who

earn their living by their hereditary business and back-breaking labour get precious little for their toil. In an interview with BLITZ, Mrs. Sulochana Thanekar had described how these women are exploited by the rapacious "delals" of the Phule Market. This wily middleman wears a dirty pair of shorts, but has a turnover of lakhs of rupees. He does not keep accounts, neither true nor false, and is therefore not assessed for income tax!

"The exporters with their large fleet of trawlers buy up huge quantities of pomfrets at the auction. Among them, I have spotted two out of over 20 'known and notorious' bigtime Goa smugglers. They and other exporters buy fish at exorbitant prices, get their fish processed by chopping off the heads, freezing, grading and packing in polythene bags etc. ready for loading on the ocean freighters.

"Minister Barnala and Minister Dharia unwittingly believe that their "proteges" are fishing in deep sea. They are wrong since the deep sea contains only predators and inedible fish like sharks, rays and cat-fish. So the supposedly deep-sea fishing trawlers operate in area where fishermen with sailboats and mechanical crafts carry on their normal avocation.

"The programme of mechanisation and modernisation of installation of marine engine and the use of new-fangled nets has flopped according to official statistics. The number of engines supplied under subsidy-loan incentives was 53 in 1972-73 and was reduced next year to 40 and stood at 26 during the next two years then increased in 1976-77 to 41. The number of new boats allotted was 37 in 1972-73, reduced next year to 30 and was further reduced to 26 in the next two years and stood at 38 in 1976-77. The number of beneficiaries, similarly was reduced from 368 in 1972 to

336 the next year and further to 235 and 232 respectively in the succeeding years. It increased to 336 in 1976-77. During these five years 1972-73 onwards, the total number of mechanized boats was 2,562 and stood at 2,695 on 1976-77. The total number of boats in Maharashtra State was 11,158 (8,432 sail boats and only 2,726 mechanised boats).

If the mechanised boats are misused for SMUGGLING, it is difficult for the co-operatives or individuals to have a profitable fish business and those persuaded to modernize their craft claim to have been ruined. Only the manufacturers of Swadeshi engines and of nylon twine and the Fisheries Department bureaucracy have proposed. So, Government has now allowed some entrepreneurs in Goa to have foreign collaboration and bring out factory-ships costing Rs. 6 crores each. But where, in the light of the above facts are they going to operate? Why is the corporate sector competing with our poverty-stricken miserable Hindu and Christian Kolis and gabits and Muslim daldies? The factors which creates the fish famine must be tackled at their very roots.

"The Japanese are amongst the healthiest people in the world. They eat fish plentifully. Their fish catch is 18 percent of the total world catch. They breed fish inland in fish "schools" and fish "cultures". Fish breed prolifically. Even the poorest Jap does not starve; he lives and thrives on fish which is very cheap and plentiful. CAN'T INDIA EMULATE JAPAN?"

Before the situation in Sri Lanka gets worse (some say the very bottom has been touched, the government must (a) cancel the licences of all foreign trawlers operating in our seas, and (b) stop all exports of fish and fish products because we have no exportable surplus.

FOR THE RECORD

Minister Mohamed

— On the Re-organisation of the C.T.B., —

One of the most important changes effected by the new Government is the adoption of the Bill to re-organise the CTB.

The Government and the people of this country have lost untold millions in the attempt to run a nationalised bus transport service. We publish below the speech made by the Minister of Transport, Mr. M. H. Mohamed in the NSA on May 15. The Bill was adopted. Only SLFP spokesman objected to some provisions of the Bill, but TULF speakers, whilst welcoming the Bill, pointed out the hollowness of SLFP arguments.

The Minister's speech sets out the salient facts about the CTB: that from the time the transport services were nationalised they were run at heavy losses except for a few years when small profits were made; that up to 1976, the accumulated losses had amounted to Rs. 100 million and that this government had granted a special vote of Rs. 100 million to offset the loss; that the CTB had illegally utilised Rs. 84 million of EPF money; and that there was a loss of 0/22 cents on each kilometre run.

Minister Mohamed—Tribune has been critical of many of his actions—must be congratulated on the speech he made in the NSA on May 5. And we publish it below in full for the record. He has also put forward a workable plan for the reorganisation of the CTB. If the choice of men and women to run the new decentralised regional CTB units, and also at the centre, is on the basis of merit (and not nepotism, favouritism or sectarianism) the public can look forward to a new era in bus transport.

Already the introduction of the two-tier fare system creating a new

“semi-luxury” week-end bus service to Kataragama and Jaffna has been welcomed. In many countries bus transport services have a two or three-tier system of fares (as in the railways) with differential rates for ordinary, fast (luxury or semi-luxury) and super (air-conditioned etc.) services. In the higher priced services, there is no over-crowding: and buses operate on a very strict time-table. The higher-priced services can, under certain circumstances, be used to subsidise the ordinary or janata services.

There is also no doubt that there should be an upward increase even in the fares of the ordinary service. No country, especially a poor developing country like Sri Lanka, can afford to subsidise its bus transport to the extent of 0/22 cts. a km. Nobody can blame the IMF or anyone else for wanting this subsidy eliminated. Higher fares might mean less travel by certain persons on certain occasions, but a great deal of travel in the country is for holiday jaunts, pilgrims and other trips which can be cut down. Under certain conditions, government can subsidise the season tickets of office and factory workers, school children and such other categories who may find the increased fares something of a burden—until the wages improve or the cost of essentials come down.

The Opposition will no doubt raise a hue and cry that the government is succumbing to IMF demands to end subsidies, but even the Opposition Parties will remember that bus transport was nationalised in order to bring the profits made by the private owners into the state coffers. Nobody had wanted a subsidised transport service. Nobody had wanted a nationalised transport service to be run at a loss. This must end. But, any upward increase of fares can be justified only if waste, inefficiency and corruption are eliminated, and these are some of the evils which compel many to resist fare increase—

they argue that if waste, robbery and corruption are banished, the losses would disappear.

This is a fallacious argument and is demonstrably so. CTB fares must be increased to make Sri Lanka's nationalised bus transport viable and profitable, but the public will accept such increased fares only if inefficiency and corruption are eliminated.

—SERENDIB.

Mr. M. H. Mohamed—Minister of Transport, in moving the Bill stated: This bill is to restructure the Ceylon Transport Board by creating a Central Board and 9 Regional Boards. I should like to explain the need to decentralize the organisation of the Board. The Ceylon Transport Board was established in the year 1958. It is 20 years old. Hon. Members will agree that decentralisation is the only answer to an organisation which has become a giant in 20 years' time. The following details will show how the organisation has grown up to its present stature.

The number of routes operated by the CTB in the year 1958 was 1225. Today it has increased to 3,250. The mileage operated has risen from 102.6 million in 1958 to nearly 250 million today. The number of passenger journeys has risen from 456 million in 1958 to 1500 million today. The number of buses operated has increased from 3400 to 7200. The number of employees has risen from 15,200 to nearly 60,000. The figures are staggering, no doubt, but the CTB is one of the biggest road passenger organisations in this part of the world. Its problems are unique and therefore decentralisation is the only way of fulfilling its obligations to the travelling public and of bringing it to a state of efficiency administratively.

Before I explain the Bill in detail, I wish to bring to the notice of the House the position of the CTB when I took over the Ministry

of Transport. When I took over this Ministry in July 1977 the CTB was saddled with a very badly run-down fleet. At the end of 1976, 53 per cent of the fleet was over eight years old. The high percentage of aged vehicles was mainly due to the Board's replacement programme not being implemented since 1972. According to the mileage operated for a day, on an average—this is important and I hope Members will give thought to it—two buses are taken off the fleet every day. This would normally account for a replacement of 700 buses for a year. But during the period 1972 to 1976 the average replacement has been at the rate of 340 buses per year. The Board was therefore compelled to keep in its fleet buses which should have been scrapped, buses which had outlived their economic life, thereby incurring heavy maintenance costs. This is purely due to bad planning by the then administration. They had not taken into consideration the import service that the CTB is rendering to the people. If the management had taken care to study the problem and ordered buses yearly, then this problem would not have arisen. To clear the backlog created during a period of seven years, I wish to point out, it is definitely going to take a considerable length of time.

I have always welcomed newspaper criticism. I think newspapers have every right to criticize any administration but sometimes journalists go beyond journalism. However, I always give careful consideration and thought to whatever criticism is made against me take what is useful, and reject what I consider is unnecessary.

I wish to bring to the notice of the House the present situation regarding the number of buses that we have ordered and what we intend to do.

After I took over the administration in July 1977, I am happy

to say that within three months we were able to put into service 446 buses. After that we had released a further 195 buses. Six hundred and forty one new buses are being introduced to the present fleet. There are 314 buses in our workshops. The bodies are being built and these buses will be released within a short period of time. I am expecting another 331 new buses shortly, and I am happy, to say that before the end of this year there will be 1,286 new buses on the roads. I think that is an achievement.

When I took over there were a lot of obstacles and problems, but I took the initiative in discussing these matters with the Hon. Minister of Finance. I am very grateful to the Hon. Minister for his co-operation, for without his co-operation I would not have been able to improve the bus services. I am also happy to say that after I took over the administration I was able to release 534 reconditioned buses. These are buses that had been condemned by the previous regime. I was able to cannibalize some of the condemned buses and reintroduce 534 buses.

In the past buses were condemned without any report in regard to their condition, the board had a discretion to order that the buses be sold by auction. As a result of the absence of any report in regard to the condition of the buses that were condemned it is possible that good and serviceable buses may have been sold by auction. Now I have appointed a special committee to study the condition of each bus before it is condemned and put up for auction.

Our intention is to bring in at least 1,000 buses every year, but the increase in passenger traffic must also be borne in mind. We are rather surprised at the recent growth in passenger traffic. Nor-

mally the CTB estimates between 6 to 9 percent growth per year in passenger traffic. Since the advent of our Government, between July 1977 and February 1978 there has been a growth of 34 per cent in passenger traffic. This may be due to the following reasons: the increase in employment both in the public and private sectors and the reduction of the school-going age to 5 years as a result of which an adult usually accompanies a five-year old child. These reasons may account for the phenomenal increase in the growth of passenger traffic. I admit there is overcrowding and the commuters suffer inconvenience, the reason for which is the lack of buses. This will be remedied in due course, and I can assure you that there will be sufficient buses to cater for the needs of the commuters.

There is another very important point which I want to mention. The other day there was a Resolution that was unanimously passed in this House, brought by the hon. Member for Kayts (Mr. K. P. Ratnam), in regard to the revision of bus fares. I shall read that resolution:

"That since bus fares differ from place to place throughout the island as a result of such fares not being fixed at a uniform rate taking the distance of travel as its base, this Assembly, is of opinion that the CTB should take immediate steps to revise the bus fares on a rational basis so as to ensure its uniformity throughout the island and to implement the new revised fares within three months."

I am very glad the House had realized that there is an anomaly in the present rates. I shall explain that now for the information of the House. The present fares structure of the CTB is one which was inherited from the private operators at the time of the national-

zation of the bus services in 1958. This fares structure is full of anomalies: the fares vary from area to area—this is very interesting ranging from 4 cents to 12 cents a mile. These anomalies are reflected in today's system of charges by the board, with the result that there is a considerable degree of cross-subsidization of traffic. For instance, the Galle Road passengers are paying a higher fare per mile than the Negombo Road or High Level Road passengers. Nobody had taken the trouble to find this out. It is unreasonable and unjust for us to allow this kind of anomaly to continue.

There were two revisions made in 1971 and 1974. Actually, these were not revisions as such but surcharges on earlier fares, and, basically, the fares structure remains with all its inconsistencies. An equitable fares' structure must take into account the real cost of operation, the differences in the operating costs under different conditions of operation such as in low country and upcountry, and at the same time eliminate the element of cross-subsidization which is inherent in the present fares structure. And that is very important. For this purpose, I have appointed a committee to examine the present fares structure and make recommendations for a revision, starting with the removal of the present anomalies, so that every commuter will pay a standard rate. I do not think anybody can object to that.

The present Bill outlines the procedure for determining the fares to be levied by the Regional Transport Boards in respect of the bus services operated by them. As soon as the regional boards are established high priority will be given to the re-organization scheme. I do not think any Member will reasonably object to the standardization of fares which I

think is very necessary for the efficient working of the bus services.

Mr. Speaker, today everyone is speaking about losses in the CTB. I do not think that it is possible for any transport service transporting passengers to make a profit. I wish to quote from a report that I submitted to the Government on this particular aspect. Though a transport service cannot be run at a profit at least we must try to cut even. And that is what I intend to do.

The Ceylon Transport Board budget for 1978 reflected an operating loss of Rs. 210 million. This projected loss is the highest on record and is mainly due to the additional cost on price increases on materials arising out of the new parity rates and wage increases of Rs. 90 by the last Government and Rs. 50 approved by this Government. To defray a part of this additional cost, a sum of Rs. 130 million has been provided in the national budget.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in addition to this there was a further set-back in having to absorb a price hike on new and rebuilt tyres, tubes and batteries. The Tyre Corporation, commencing from March 1978, has increased the prices of new tyres and tubes by 25 per cent. The tyre rebuilders following the example of the Tyre Corporation have increased their prices by 12 per cent and the battery manufacturers too have quoted higher prices. Higher prices demanded for these products, have increased the budget expenditure to the tune of Rs. 24 million thereby increasing the projected unbridged deficit to Rs. 104 million for this year. The Board at its present level of operation, which is the maximum it could provide with the resources available cannot meet this deficit.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am putting all the cards on the table. We

must take the House and the people into our confidence. The operating costs to the CTB is Rs. 2.27 per kilometer while the revenue per kilometer is Rs. 205 resulting in a loss of 22 cents per running kilometer. Therefore you will see that at the moment it is necessary to revise the present fares at least to remove the anomalies, and this deficit can be reduced considerably. I am sure the House will agree with me.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am sure that after the committee's report is submitted the Regional Boards will go into these matters and revise the existing fares by removing the existing anomalies.

I was speaking of the anticipated losses. I will now speak of the losses already incurred.

It is interesting to learn that the CTB except for a few years after nationalisation, has incurred losses. It has incurred heavy losses which, according to its books, amounted to 100 million as at the end of 1976. This is not my baby. This was handed over to me. The CTB has suffered from severe liquidity problems from time to time and the Treasury has had to step in order to maintain uninterrupted services. I had to go to the Treasury even this morning.

The Board has been compelled in the past to keep back Provident Fund monies owing to its liquidity problems and accumulated dues to the fund at the end of 1976 amounted to Rs. 84 million. The provident fund monies of the workers have not been credited. This Rs. 84 million has been made use of by the CTB which is illegal. The board cannot meet this commitment in the context of its present financial situation and provision should be made in the Government Estimates to reimburse the accumulated losses so that the Board could meet them. I am happy to say that the other day the Cabinet

decided to vote Rs. 100 million to meet this deficit. With this, the new board will be able to start afresh. This Rs. 100 million is sufficient to set off the old debts and the regional boards will be able to start afresh without any liabilities.

It will be necessary for these boards, once they are constituted, to realize the purpose for which they were created. The primary function of these boards would be to see that they run at a profit. They may not be able to do it in the first year but in the next few years, with efficient administration and proper control, I am confident that they will be able to do so. They will be viable units. These boards could be easily administered because they will have to operate only a few buses and the business of these boards will be to run them efficiently and at a profit. That is the main objective in creating these boards and I am sure they will rise to the occasion and meet these challenges.

I have spoken to you about the fares and I have spoken to you about the losses. I now wish to outline the functions of the central and regional boards. The Bill is before you, but I wish, briefly, to explain its objectives.

It outlines the sub-division of the present organisation into nine Regional Transport Boards. These nine boards will be controlled by the Central Transport Board, which would interest itself in the broader aspects of engineering, production planning, co-ordination of schedules, co-ordination of service and operational activities, import and purchase of motor vehicle spares and accessories, civil engineering services, overall budgeting and planning and provision of engineering expertise.

The central board will comprise 13 members including a nominee of the Minister of Finance.

Mr. K. Thuraiatnam—Point Pedro: Why not make it 14? 13 is a bad number.

Mr. M. H. Mohamed—For me it a lucky number. I have found 13 to be my luckiest number. So you do not have to worry about it. The chairman of the regional board will be members of the central board, so that there will be better co-ordination and understanding between the regional boards and the central board. Our idea in effecting this reorganisation is to decentralize the transport services and introduce better understanding and better co-ordination in the administration of the country's transport system. The regional board will comprise a chairman and four members, one of whom will be a state officer nominated by the Minister of Finance. The Central Board, however, will co-ordinate the activities of the regional boards and exercise general control over the policies of the regional boards. The underlying principle here is to give the regional boards sufficient flexibility to do their utmost to provide an efficient service to meet the requirements of the public. These regional boards are charged with the responsibility for conducting business in a viable manner. Hon. Members are aware that the present Ceylon Transport Board not only runs buses but it is also in charge of recruitment, disciplinary control and so on. It has become unwieldy and unmanageable. This is because the central board controls every aspect of the service from Colombo. This is very difficult to do efficiently.

The functions of the central board are clearly defined in this Bill and will have nothing to do with the operation of buses. The operation of buses will be the main function of regional boards. The objective of the proposed reorgani-

sation is to usher in an efficient, economical and educated passenger transport service and to put the entire organisation on a sound footing. The activities of the central and regional boards will be controlled by the Minister provision for which is made under Clause 10 of this Bill. The Minister reserves the power to give general and special directions, which is the normal procedure in all laws.

Mr. Speaker, I do not think that it is necessary for me to go through the Bill clause by clause at this stage although I have made notes in regard to all the clauses. I think I will save the time of the Assembly by leaving the various clauses to be dealt with at the Committee stage. I think at this stage it is also necessary for me to bring to the notice of the Assembly the new services that have been started after I took over the Ministry of Transport. The new services started number 84 and extensions to existing services number 34. In other words, we are operating 118 additional services which include extensions to existing services. We have also opened ten new depots.

I also wish to refer to the increased production in the workshops. When I took over, it was very interesting to note that the production at the Werahera workshops was almost nil like in the Railway workshops. It was thoroughly disorganized and nobody was interested in the work. I do not know what had happened and I could not believe that such a situation existed in the workshop at Werahera and other CTB workshops where production had come down completely. I am, however, happy to state that as at 31st March 1978, we have reconditioned as much as 2,438 engines alone, and I am told that this is a record considering past performances. Gear boxes reconditioned amount to 2,452. Therefore, Sir, you will see that

generally in all sections of the CTB, there is a noticeable improvement after I took over the CTB which comes under my Ministry of Transport.

My aim is to see that once decentralisation takes place, men of calibre, men who understand transport and men with a knowledge of transport are appointed to regional boards. In the past we have always appointed members to boards purely on political considerations, but I think, in the interests of corporations this attitude must change. Certainly if there are capable men in our political party, preference must be given to them, but they must be men of calibre capable of being appointed to administer these boards. These are very important appointments and, therefore, I have already had some discussions on this matter with the Presidents. I wish to discuss this matter before appointments are made. I wish to discuss this matter with the President, and, of course, every Member has a right to suggest names. I will consider the names, and, in consultation with the President, men who are capable and men of calibre will be appointed to administer these boards. That is an assurance I can give the Assembly.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I do not think it is necessary for me to go on further as I have already taken nearly forty minutes. I have briefly outlined the objects of this Bill and I am confident that everybody will be supporting this Bill.

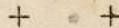
I have already tabled an official amendment. My original proposal was to set up seven regional boards. I have now thought of increasing it to nine. The reason for the increase is to make these boards viable and also to make it easier for these boards to administer their areas.

Some areas are very large; yet they are provided with the mini-

um number of buses. That is not what we should practice in the future. We want to change that pattern. We are not concerned about which part of Sri Lanka buses are sent to. We want to rise above petty party differences and think only of serving the country as a whole. We will provide the services that are provided in the south to the north as well. So will it be in the east. The needs of all areas will be looked after without any discrimination. The President believes in this, and as a Minister of his Cabinet I assure this House and through this House the country that my Ministry will not practise discrimination of any kind against any community.

I ask all members of the House to give their unanimous support to this Bill to have it passed. Once the Bill is passed I hope to establish the regional boards as early as possible—maybe within a week or ten days of the Bill receiving assent. I thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for giving me your indulgence. Whilst soliciting the support of all hon. Members, I move that the Bill be now read a Second time."

—Hansard, May 5, 1972-1978.



ABOUT THE
TRILATERAL COMMISSION

A New Capitalist World Economic System

by Jeremiah Novak

A former regional manager of A. H. Robins Company in Asia, is writing a book on the "new economic order" desired by developing countries.

Reprinted by permission from **The Christian Science Monitor** ©1977

The Christian Science Publishing Society. All Rights Reserved.

In July, 1944, venerable, brilliant British economist John Maynard Keynes and a younger American colleague, equally brilliant, strolled over the grounds of the resort hotel at Bretton Woods, New Hampshire, explaining to reporters the basics of an about-to-be-born international economic system. Ironically, neither Keynes nor colleague Harry Dexter White lived to see the fruits of their labour—a new and revolutionary economic system known as Bretton Woods.

For the system they had begun to piece together in 1942 was to result, over the 27 years of its existence, in a truly altered international economic picture: a world without empires, a world of free trade at nondiscriminatory terms, and an era of material prosperity far greater than any the world had ever known.

But Bretton Woods died in 1971, and until now nothing has taken its place.

Today a new crop of economists, working in an organisation known as the Trilateral Commission, is on the verge of creating a new international economic system, one designed by men as brilliant as Keynes and White. Their names are not as well known, but these modern thinkers are as important to our age as Keynes and White were to theirs.

Moreover, these economists, like their World War II counterparts, are working closely with high government officials, in this case President Jimmy Carter and Vice-President Walter Mondale. And what is now being discussed at the highest levels of government, in both the United States and abroad, is the creation of a new world economic system—a system that will affect jobs in America

and elsewhere, the prices consumers pay, and the freedom of individuals, corporations, and nations to enter into a truly planetary economic system. Indeed, many observers see the advent of the Carter administration and what is now being called the "Trilateral" cabinet as the harbinger of this new era.

But, just as in 1944, many asked what Bretton Woods was, today the questions being raised are: Who are these Trilateral men? What are they doing? Why do we need a renovated world economic system? What is Carter up to? Why did he call for an economic summit with leaders of world governments? The overall answer is that the world economic system has been ailing for years, that even the rich nations are suffering, and that to restore the economies of the West to full health the remains of the Bretton Woods system must be overhauled. To see what this entails, it is necessary to review the years since 1944 to understand what the Carter team is up to.

In the dark days of World War II, the US Government, in league with the British Government, in the persons of men whose names are almost forgotten, devised a plan to regulate postwar trade between nations. Men such as Eddie Bernstein, Will Clayton, John Maynard Keynes, and Harry Dexter White created a new system unlike any that had gone before.

They created at Bretton Woods the framework of the three major world economic institutions: the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), the institutions which, through their operations, would make possible the postwar trade boom. Essentially the institutions were created to replace the trading practices of the pre-war

period, when the empires of Britain, Portugal, France, Holland, and the United States controlled most world trade by posting imperial tariffs within their empires. These tariffs made it difficult for other nations to sell to countries within the imperial blocs. Seeing that the imperial system could not survive in the postwar era, the architects of Bretton Woods insisted that all empires give up their imperial preferences. The major break came in 1943 when, in exchange for Lend Lease, Britain, the largest empire, gave up its restrictive trade practices. This paved the way for a new structure.

In many ways, the Bretton Wood agreements were responsible for the end of imperialism because without imperial preferences, the benefits of empire no longer existed. And the end of empires made possible the rise of 80 new nations and an era of unprecedented international free trade. To regulate trade and eliminate discriminatory tariffs, the British and Americans called for the creation of an international trade organization which emerged in 1949 as GATT. The IMF was established to help nations adjust to free trade by providing balance-of-payments financial assistance. And the World Bank was set up to facilitate the movement of capital to war-torn Europe and developing countries.

In the following three decades the IMF, the World Bank, and GATT became the pillars of free non-discriminatory trade. During this period international exports grew from nearly zero at war's end to over \$ 400,000 million, and allowed places such as Hong Kong, South Korea, and Brazil to achieve economic growth rates of over 10 percent a year. To assure a stable free-trade system, the IMF established fixed exchange rates: all currencies were valued in terms of fixed parities with the US dollar, which itself was pegged to gold.

But the Bretton Woods system devised by Keynes and White collapsed in 1971, when the US unilaterally devalued the dollar and erected barriers to trade by putting a 10 percent surcharge on imports. These policies of the "Nixon shock" years destroyed the co-operative nature of the Bretton Woods system and effectively killed it. And although attempts were made to patch the system, these too collapsed when the Smithsonian Agreements of late 1971 failed to restore fixed exchange rates.

As a result, exchange rates fluctuated, and nations began to erect tariff barriers and to restrict imports—a situation that became still worse when the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) restricted exports and finally destroyed the underlying principle of free trade. Since 1971 the world economy has been wracked by trade wars, such as Japan's restriction of imports, and fluctuating exchange rates, such as Britain's falling pound.

In 1973, a group of businessmen, under the leadership of David Rockefeller, set out to restore the principles of free trade and stable exchange rates. The members of this group came from Europe, North America and Japan (the Trilateral area)—from countries which together represent 70 percent of world trade and are the world's most developed countries. They formed an organization called the **Trilateral Commission**.

Its membership roster reads like a *Who's Who* in business, labor, and government. There are I. W. Abel and Leonard Woodcock from the American labor unions; David Rockefeller of Chase Manhattan and his colleagues from Bank of America; executives of multinationals such as the Bendix Corpora-

tion, Hewlett-Packard, Time-Life, and similar organizations in Europe and Japan. And then there are Jimmy Carter and his closest aides—Walter Mondale, Cyrus Vance, Richard Blumenthal, Harold Brown, Richard Cooper, Fred Bergsten, and Zbigniew Brezezinski—all of whom are in the present administration, all of whom are members of the Trilateral Commission.

It is because Carter now is President that the ideas of the commission are important—because the members of the commission are working to implement their program.

In essence, the commission has devised a plan to totally renovate GATT, the IMF, and the World Bank. The plan would create a world economic system far different from that of Bretton Woods.

The commission has published 13 pamphlets detailing the proposed system: a new IMF, a new General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, a new General Agreement on Investment, and a new role for the World Bank. Moreover, the commission's scholars call for the creation of new institutions that would regulate resources in the sea, at the poles, and in space. And they call for a new Trilateral Committee that would co-ordinate the economic policies of Europe, Japan and the United States—to ensure that the industrial nations work together in the new system.

At the heart of the proposal is the restoration of free, non-discriminatory access to resources and markets. Thus, a renovated General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade would outlaw export controls, such as the OPEC embargo on oil shipments in 1973. To support free trade, the commission calls for a new IMF, which would function like the Federal Reserve System, but on a larger scale. The new IMF would be able to "create" money or restrict

the "creation" of money, just as the Federal Reserve now does in the United States. To do this, a new currency called "Bancor" would be established. Like the Special Drawing Rights of the IMF, this currency would replace gold and the dollar as the world monetary unit. All currencies would be fixed in terms of Bancor, so that at some future date even travellers checks and all export-import transactions would be calculated in terms of Bancor. The new IMF would also be a "banker of last resort", capable of helping national central banks and multinational banks in times of distress. Like the Federal Reserve and Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) in the United States, the new IMF could step in to help out banks in trouble in any part of the world. According to an economist at Harvard, "The new IMF is the centrepiece of the system. It would change the system completely and may lead to a whole new era in finance."

The World Bank would be changed as well. At present, the World Bank raises funds on the private capital markets in New York, Tokyo and Frankfurt. "Under the new system the World Bank could borrow Bancor from the IMF", said one Trilateral official. "This would change the whole system and make possible more foreign aid to developing countries."

A Vegetarian's Proposals

I feel so melon cauli dear
 Since you have been away
 The thyme has seemed so very long
 I pine for you each day
 No sugar beets your sweetness
 Don't turnip your nose at me
 But take this eighteen carrot ring
 And lettuce married be.

IN DEFENCE OF THE SRI LANKAN BUREAUCRAT—I

Introductory

—the problem—
 by A Special Correspondent

A *Tribune* Special Correspondent, in a series of four articles writes spiritedly IN DEFENCE OF THE SRI LANKAN BUREAUCRAT. This series, we hope, will provoke discussion on the following questions which the writer has raised: (a) Why is the bureaucracy in this country under fire? (b) What could be the net result of this unrelenting attack? (c) How can this be contained? (d) What is it that compels the bureaucrat to hold back something of himself—what are the problems? (e) How and in what manner does the bureaucrat feel that political power can help? and (f) What kind of environment (including incentives) will make the bureaucrat contribute more than he does at present?

Tribune will welcome comments, criticisms and suggestions in regard to the questions raised. There cannot be an Administration without a bureaucracy, and without an effective administration with an efficient bureaucracy there cannot be development, growth or prosperity in any country.—ED.

An article on *Reform of the Public Service* was serialised in the *Tribune* commencing 8th March 1978. By a strange co-incidence the *Time* magazine of 6th March, 1978, carried an article entitled "The Battle

Over Bureaucracy" in the USA. In that article the bureaucracy in the States has received a severe mauling. I derived some consolation—the Sri Lankan bureaucracy is in good company.

Eileen Shanahan, Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs, Department of Health, Education and Welfare, during a speech at the Women's National Democratic Club, is reported to have charged that: "While there are many highly competent, dedicated civil servants, the percentage of the civil servants who are not earning what the taxpayers are paying them is almost as high as any figure you ever heard by any right winger you ever hated. There is very substantial number of people on the civil service rolls who are literally bilking the taxpayer."

Earlier, on another occasion, Senator Daniel P. Moynihan of New York had, according to the Newsweek, of 7.11.77, chastised thus: "that anti-poverty programmes have enriched bureaucrats and social workers more than the poor. This money did not go to the poor people, but to the new class of professionals who managed the programmes."

The *Time* article referred to points out that there are 2.80 million federal employees and that although the bureaucracy "has grown by 15% in 20 years, and bigger is not meant better. From all accounts at every level, initiative is stifled, mediocrity is rewarded by raises, and there is an unknown number of living, breathing bureaucrats who get handsomely paid for doing virtually nothing". Even the Civil Service Commission which supervises the federal personnel came in for comment. The same report says "The Civil Service Commission itself has become a thriving bureaucracy with 8,600 employees. Over the past two decades, the agency has grown five times faster than the total

federal employment". These are certainly very harsh words.

This bureaucratic propensity which led Northcote Parkinson to postulate the famous Law which carries his name, is not peculiar to the USA. Speaking of the Planning Commission in India, Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru had once stated: "When the Planning Commission was started about 12 years ago, I definitely thought it should not function as part of the government. But now it is just like any other part of the government, in fact, deliberately it has duplicated every department of government and has the same hierarchy of Secretaries, Under Secretaries, Directors and what not. That is the normal habit of government"—(Yojana of 16.11.77) All this baffles the ordinary man. He does not understand these subtle nuances. He feels that the bureaucracy, with an immense capacity for survival and growth can be tamed, and that qualities of self-effacement, discipline, loyalty and above all an uncompromising dedication to the public interest which should be the hall marks of a public servant are not its forte.

Apparently this problem in the USA has been taken quite seriously or else why should President Carter's reorganisation chief Harrison Wellford consider it necessary to "put the work ethic back into the public service." Has there been a loss of credibility in the public service in that country? The Vice Chairman of the Civil Service Commission, Jule Sugarman feels that "Managers feel they are so enmeshed in red tape that they cannot manage any more". This is true in the Sri Lanka context as well. We are ourselves so enmeshed in red-tape, that the politician has become impatient, and quite rightly so. To get things moving here needs the patience of the biblical Job. The writer is aware of files remaining in out-

trays, because the office aide who is expected to carry them to the next room is not interested in doing so! He does so when he feels so disposed and officials are not apparently bothered either. In the meantime, the needs of the citizen remain unattended and this drives him crazy. "Seasoned bureaucrats obviously know how to outwait and outfox" and no one any the wiser.

The bureaucrat has attracted criticism not only in USA. Some years back, in Britain, the Chancellor of the Exchequer R. A. Butler had this to say: "They have silky minds. They have Rolls-Royce minds. In fact the civil service is a bit like the Rolls-Royce—you know it is the best machine in the world, but you are not quite sure what to do with it. I think its a bit too smooth: it needs a little rubbing up".

Chancellor Butler was not alone. Earlier, W. L. George, a civil servant himself, gives this description of his colleagues: "That man of oil, steel and silk, capable of every delay and grace, suggestive of every sympathy and capable of none; incapable of a lie, always capable of evasion; determined in public utility, yet not blind to private advancement; singularly addicted to justice, yet unable to suffer mercy; not a man but a theorem, a diagram a syllogism."

Is it any wonder that anyone who has had a confrontation with a bureaucrat is perplexed?

It is quite easy to condemn the bureaucracy. But can government be carried on without it? In *Presidential Power* Neustadt says "The bureaucracy is by far the most important single institution through which government gets things done. To the President or Prime Minister, winning its support is therefore crucial." But what kind of bureaucracy? It should imbibe a culture of efficiency, selflessness, incorruptibility, discipline and fearlessness. And more—government

should forge an administrative system that should not only possess these qualities and in which 'casteism' has no place (this is the grievance the Sri Lanka Administrative Officers Association has brought to the notice of government) and will not dominate the thinking of the senior civil servants.

How very important these virtues are in the state service is emphasised in a letter Sardar Vallabhai Patel sent to Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru on 27.04.78: "I need hardly emphasise that an efficient, and disciplined and contented service, assured of its prospects as a result of diligent and honest work, is a sine qua non of sound administration under a democratic regime. The service must be above party and we should ensure that political considerations either in its recruitment or in its discipline and control are reduced to a minimum, if not eliminated altogether. At the same time, I fully appreciate the importance of ensuring that the services are amenable to the control and discipline of Ministers"

Coming as it does from the Minister who integrated 600 odd princely states with the Indian Union after partition, it needs the closest attention of all. This is the ethos that should pervade every layer of public service hierarchy.

The administrator's job is to understand the policy of the elected government, advise it fearlessly and independently, and carry out the policy once it is decided by the elected government. The administrator must remember that the Minister is responsible for what happens in the ministry and should therefore take the greatest care to ensure that he is properly advised. None asks the civil servant to accept a party's political ideology in a free and democratic society. All that a government in power will want is that the civil servant knows the policy of government.

"If the politician* and the bureaucrat understand their roles and perform them honestly and fearlessly—neither of them wanting to stick to office at any price—there can be no scope for conflict of jurisdiction." wrote one politician recently. This is very apposite in Sri Lanka.

The higher civil service, and the higher echelons of the other services which symbolise government as its executive arm, needs the firm assurance of unwavering political support, because political power is supreme in a sovereign democratic state. How indispensable his support is necessary is evident in statements made by men who knew what they were talking about. Viscount Finlay had written: "If once suspicion is created that for any reason political or otherwise, an officer, who has done his duty is to be thrown over, the effect... cannot be exaggerated"

This is not all. Sir Edward Carson has commented: "If you lay down for British officers who are placed in difficult situations the doctrine that before they act... they must sit down and ask themselves what will Downing Street, and what will the House of Commons say to them... and if you make scape goats... you will never get officers to carry out their duties"

In an altogether different context, General Sir Havelock Hudson remarked: "No more distasteful or responsible duty falls to the lot of a soldier than that which he is sometimes required to discharge in aid of Civil Power. If his measures are too mild, he fails in his duty; if they are deemed to be excessive, he is liable to be attacked as a cold-blooded murderer"

These views expressed by a politician, a civil servant and a general reveal a close identity of opinion in regard to the type of environment needed for the bureaucracy to operate with justice, mode-

ration and fair play. He must remain firmly convinced that he is not going to be made a scape goat.

But we see a remarkable situation unfolding in this country. The public servant is attempting to make the politician a scape goat! They shout 'interference' at every turn to cover up shortcomings. I am afraid no one takes them seriously anymore when they indulge in this unseemly exercise. It would be prudent if he does not lay himself open to further attacks.

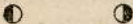
The Ceylon Daily News of 13.05.78 reported that the Sri Lanka Inspector General of Police had complained that "policemen who inquire into crimes are often embarrassed by influential persons who wish to have suspects released." This has attracted an immediate rejoinder from Prof. C. H. S. Jayawardene in the concluding paragraph of his article "Terrorising the Terrorists" in the Ceylon Daily News of 18.05.78. It is worthwhile quoting him: "This, Inspector General of Police Senanayake, bewails has been impaired by political interference little realising perhaps that political interference stems not only from the undesired activity of politicians but from the undesired activity of the policemen as well. The release of suspects, the non-prosecution of offenders, the harrassment of innocent men, the transfer of non-obliging policemen their premature retirement and even their dismissal from service, though done at the instigation of politicians were never done by politicians, they were always done by willing accomplices—obliging policemen especially in the upper echelons who had not the moral, physical, or ethical strength to utter that monosyllable NO"

Let us hope that the Inspector General will not be persuaded by fawning flunkies to join issue, for

he is on an extremely sticky wicket, after the police performance in August, 1977. Will he say that inadequacy was due to political interference? If General Attygalle had not been around with his forces and come to the aid of the Civil Power, this happy land would have writhed in agony and anguish to our eternal shame. It is time the bureaucrat stops talking of 'interference' and gets down to his job.

The evolution of the bureaucracy in this country was discussed in the article "Reform of the Public Service". Here it is intended to examine why the bureaucracy is under attack, almost a siege, all the time. I shall attempt to place before the readers the difficulties of the bureaucrat. If these are understood and appreciated, the public and the political master will show a greater understanding.

(To be Continued)



CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT OF
SRI LANKA

Two Statements

We publish statements issued by R. Sriwardene on behalf of the Civil Rights Movement of Sri Lanka on the two recent Laws adopted by the National State Assembly.

THE CRIMINAL PROCEDURE (SPECIAL PROVISIONS) LAW.

CRM is glad to note that the Government has amended this Bill to limit its application to one year, and to increase the no. of offences in which bail can be granted by the original court as opposed to the Supreme Court. CRM however remains critical of this Law for the following reasons.

(a) There is no justification to rush a Bill of this nature through in this manner, especially on the same day as another equally far reaching "urgent" Bill to provide for proscribing of organisations. If the reason is increase in crime, then the govt. must make out its case. The public must have time and opportunity to study the facts about the alleged "crime leap" and to consider whether these measures are (a) suitable and (b) excessive. The Bill was not available at the Government Publications Bureau.

(b) Bail will henceforth be granted only in "exceptional circumstances" in respect of a long list of offences. Denying bail is a very drastic step because it punishes the innocent as well as the guilty and facilitates the paying off of private grudges by making false complaints. When a breadwinner is so held for months on end a whole family may starve.

(c) The imposition of a compulsory minimum prison sentence for the scheduled offences, coupled with removal of the power to award suspended sentences or conditional discharge. The compulsory minimum is one third of the maximum possible. This removal of the power of the court to refrain from sending a person to jail where there are very extenuating circumstances is unacceptable. A person will almost invariably (because of the bail restrictions) have already been on remand for a considerable time before he comes up for sentence. But the court must nonetheless still impose the minimum prison term.

(d) In effect therefore the combination of the "no bail" provision and the compulsory prison term provision amount to a contravention of the internatio-

nally accepted principle of the Rule of Law that a law should not impose increased punishment retrospectively. The Bill is expressly made applicable to certain offences already committed.

(e) The offence of exciting or attempting to excite disaffection to the Government otherwise than by lawful means or to promote hostility between classes (an antiquated colonial provision—section 120 of the penal Code) has also been included in the offences governed by the Bill. This should NOT have been included unlike the other offences most of which either involve some degree of violence or are straight forward criminal offences, this offence involves neither violence nor ordinary criminality, and the provision can be used to stifle legitimate political protest. By the time a Court decides that a peaceable demonstration was "lawful" participants could have spent months in jail without bail.

THE LAW PROSCRIBING OF LIBERATION TIGERS OF TAMIL EELAM & OTHER SIMILAR ORGANISATIONS.

The Civil Rights Movement is glad to note that the Government has by an amendment limited the application of the new Proscribing of Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam and Other Similar Organisations Law to a period of one year. CRM is nevertheless constrained to point out the following regrettable features in this Law.

(1) This Law does not merely proscribe the "Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam." It provides that any other organisation which in the opinion of the President advocates violence and is either directly or indirectly concerned in or engaged in unlawful activity can be banned. Despite the fact that the order

must be subsequently approved by a 2/3 majority of the NSA, this provision is unacceptable because

(a) "unlawful activity" is defined as any action "prejudicial to the internal security of Sri Lanka". We are glad that trivial or non political contravention of the law (for instance trading without a necessary licence) would thus be excluded. But on the other hand the words "prejudicial to the internal security of Sri Lanka" are dangerously vague and wide.

(b) The phrase "advocates violence" is dangerously wide. For instance, it has been used elsewhere to apply to any Marxist group on the pretext that Marxists necessarily "advocate violence" although no member may ever have planned or participated in any act of violence.

(c) There is no provision for the organisation to be given a hearing before it is banned. To protest against its banning and ask for a hearing afterwards would itself be an offence as the expression of such protest would be "engaging in any activity of or connected with or related to" a proscribed organisation. Even in Bhutto's Pakistan (which CRM does not hold up as a model of democracy) the banning of the National Awami Party had, by law, to be referred to the Supreme Court within two weeks. (The Supreme Court even awarded the NAP Rs. 1500 per day for lawyers fees and a lump sum of Rs. 10,000 for the preparation of the defence)

(2) There is provision that the Law shall apply even to an organisation which, though it has not been proscribed, is "substantially similar" to a proscribed organisation. Suppose a number of organisations have been proscribed, it can be dangerous to support or contribute to any organisation, because how can one know whether it is "substantially similar" to some

other organisation which has been proscribed? *

(3) The Law provides for up to one year's detention without trial "in such place and subject to such conditions as may be determined by the Minister." CRM has during the six and a half years of its existence continually pointed out the dangers of laws and regulations which permit persons to be kept in custody without any rules. It is under such circumstances that under the emergency regulations and in the notorious "Paget Road" detention centre prisoners were arbitrarily deprived of their basic rights by secret orders issued by officials and torture and other cruel inhuman or degrading treatment took place. It is regrettable that the government which decried these laws and repealed them on the grounds that they encouraged "sadism" should have so soon introduced the same type of legislation. If persons have to be detained it should be in a prison under the Prisons Ordinance and Prison Rules. If any departure from these is necessary, the permitted extent of departure must be clearly spelt out in the Law itself, and stringent safeguards against abuse provided.

(4) The Law provides that the Minister may order the forfeiture of the property of a proscribed organisation (a provision which the Constitutional Court has held to be inconsistent with the Constitution). Again, there is no provision for appeal, and although the banning may lapse or be revoked there is no provision for forfeited property to be restored.

(5) The Law contains stringent provisions prohibiting the publication of any matter relating to a proscribed organisation without the prior permission in writing of the Competent Authority. This would mean, for instance, that even the publication of allegations that sus-

pects are being ill treated in detention camps, or a statement by an organisation such as CRM that a proscribed organisation is to the best of our knowledge a bona fide charitable body and that it is not fair to have banned it without inquiry, could be published only at the pleasure of the Competent Authority. The Law further provides that a newspaper or a printing press used for the publication of any such matter can be closed down.

(6) The law provides that bail shall not be granted to suspects. This would even apply to those suspected of the printing and publishing offences, whose moral culpability may be minimal.

(7) This Law brings into the ordinary law of the land measures normally used only in emergency situations, namely the power to ban organisations, detention without trial or charge at Ministerial discretion, and censorship. CRM naturally not in a position to say whether a organisation called "The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam" exists or whether it is responsible for the acts of violence claimed. However, even if legislation to ban the "Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam" is "urgent in the national interest", in our view legislation permitting the banning of other organisations (which despite the title of the Law, do not necessarily have to be organisations similar to the "Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam") is not. We regret that a measure of this nature, at least insofar as it applies to other organisations, has been rushed through the NSA without opportunity for public debate.

**TO SAVE THE NATION
AND ENSURE PROTEIN-RICH
FISH PRODUCTS FOR THE
PEOPLE**

GOVERNMENT HAS ACTED WISELY
in cancelling the licences of two foreign companies
and compelling them to withdraw their trawlers
from Sri Lankan waters

GOVERNMENT MUST ALSO CANCEL
all other pending licences, if any, and not
issue any more new licences.

BUT MORE THAN THIS

GOVERNMENT MUST STOP THE EXPORT
of fish and fish products. Sri Lanka has no
surplus of sea-food for export. The nation gets
no benefit by export — only a few exporters,
commission agents, middlemen, contact men
and mudalalis, benefit.

SPACE DONATED

RANDOM THOUGHTS—2

Beyond The Horizon

—to be or not to be—

"Yes, I shall. But Peter, do you know that Ingersoll regards marriage as the holiest institution among men and that without the fireside, there is no human advancement". "I never questioned that possibility. I only said that those who do not suffer pain in the process, should thank God for it" said Peter.

"After the Roman legions departed from Britain, there was turmoil and chaos in the land. During this period and before the Anglo-Saxons came, Rosemary Sutcliffe wrote many beautiful stories about that period. Lantern Bearers was one of them. The two main characters are Aguila and Euginus. Rosemary portrays these two characters, standing on the top of a hill, looking as you were doing a short while ago, beyond the horizon. Aguila tells Euginus 'I sometimes think that we stand at sunset and the darkness may close over us in the end. But I believe the morning will come again; the morning always comes again after the darkness, except perhaps for those who saw the sun go down. We are the lantern bearers, my friend. For us to keep something burning; to carry what light we can, forward into the darkness and the wind' What do you think of this Peter? Don't you feel this gives you something to think about—a different perspective? About being a lantern bearer" Peter was deep in thought while David was telling his story.

"Yet—possibly yes" said Peter. There was silence. "I do believe in the fireside, you spoke of, and in the home. But that is not given to all. When you go home, David, you possibly go into a warmth

that illumines you. Yes, my new found friend, I will try to be a lantern bearer, but I shall have to carry it myself, alone, and to lighten my own darkness". Far in the distance lights twinkled. It was from a ship sailing to its harbour, to home. Strangely both David and Peter were looking at the ship.

"Look Peter, you are clearly disturbed. You have lost something which you thought existed. You remind me of that eternal pilgrim in search of a shrine—of the Holy Grail. You had hopes and dreams, but they vanished like the morning mist before the rising sun. I can understand your grief my friend, but why do you not come to terms with the facts of life? Be a lantern bearer for others. You should rather light candles, than curse the darkness and let your warmth warm the world around you. If you could, in the process communicate the joy of eternal life and the tenderness of love in the sadness of unlit homes, you would be a lantern bearer. Peter," said David.

"When were you happiest, my friend"? Peter's face glowed—his face lit up as he remembered the yesterdays. "I was happiest when I was kneeling at my mother's side, her soft hand on my forehead and her sweet voice saying 'now go to sleep'. She never saw a fault in me. It is many years since she died and there is much to remember. Really she was on my mind when you spoke to me a while ago. I was going out into the ocean, looking beyond the horizon, thinking I would find her there. I was perhaps dreaming—or do you think I was crossing the frontier? I do not know". "Go on" urged David. "I too had a mother and I can understand you. Peter, the tragedy in life is that in your life you look for your mother or for your sister, and when in her you do not find even a fraction of either, you feel

let down. But go on, tell me about your mother, Peter, I want to listen" David was giving his new found friend a chance to unburden himself. After a while Peter continued "My mother's life was just one long service and her little hands were worn out with all that she did for me since the first day I was born. Wherever I went, David, her love went with me and I flourished in the sunshine of her love. She watered my life with tears of the tenderest sympathy and solicitude that never wearied." "She must have been a wonderful woman, Peter." "Yes, indeed she was. She is gone and when she went, a part of me went too. I was left like a reed torn up by its roots. It was a struggle, a great struggle. But I draw comfort from my belief that though she were dead, her spirit watches over me. Love such as hers can never die, my friend."

It was getting dark. Peter and David did not know how time had passed. Although he had not said so, Peter's main pre-occupation had been reading. Talking of his childhood, Peter was reminded of a few lines he had come across:

*My childhood's home I see again
And sadden with the view
And still, as memory crowds my brain,
There is pleasure in it too.*

"So you must be going often to your childhood home, Peter, do you?" This made it worse. He was grieved by what he found in his childhood home. "Yes, I do, but not often. The view certainly saddens me. In a home where love and unselfishness reigned supreme, I find only envy, jealousy and arrogance. In fact all the base qualities that one can find in man. You have to face it to know what it is like. But, David, I try to keep in mind what a child told a priest once 'Father, I have learnt to bear

only the pain of the present moment. I don't feel anymore yesterday's pain, nor yet tomorrow's. Else it is hard to reconcile myself to what I find in my childhood home."

Both were now silent. Only the sound of the waves lapping on the rocks disturbed the serene silence of the night. Somewhere in the distance a dog barked. This brought them back to life. "It is getting late, David, and you must be anxious to get to your home; and I to my house. What do you think about what the child told the priest. Do you think they can help to find answers to the harsh realities of every day life? For instance about my childhood home" "Well I do not want to say anything about that. But we can find answers in religion and prayer. It is an unquestioning belief in an infinite Being that will sustain us, my friend. But Peter, we do find disillusionment in the established religion—I mean in the 'establishment' of the places of worship and religion."

"Life without religion can be nothing better than animal life. It is good also to remember that religion has the same value as vaccination. It protects us from quacks. But you see, one gets troubled, despite religion, when we find a man dying of hunger, but next door there is another feasting on dainties. This is why I say that we can be sustained in this life only by a firm belief in a higher power, and by a conviction that in another world things may be different and there will be a more equitable distribution of goods. It is the almost universal instinct of mankind that somewhere, beyond what we call death, there is another life where the iniquities of this world will be set right" replied David.

"Perhaps you are correct. But what are we talking about, David?"

I came here to discover what lay beyond the horizon. You pull me back and now we are talking of the life hereafter and what not. You see, David, sorrow we have to bear alone—no one else can do that for us. We also fight our battles alone. But peace surely will come one day—there is no doubt of that—it lies beyond the horizon and that is what I set out to find. Death is not the end of life. If this view seems to lack support, you will have to stand by the grave of a cherished friend or loved one, as my mother was, to find the testimony that life is immortal" was Peter's response.

David rose. It was a signal to Peter that conversation was at an end. He looked at his Rolex—it was past midnight. David started walking away while he watched him fading into the darkness. He had become immune to pain. Within him was a centre of stillness, surrounded by a silence that none could disturb. He was thinking of his child. Whether he meant anything at all to her or not did not matter, for this is what he gradually had come to realise. He did not want another man to suffer pain. As he stood there alone listening to the rumbling clouds and the silent song of the sea, he wished fervently that the girl would learn to make "her heart her husband's throne; his soul his empire; her every wish his subject; and her will the meek and lowly servant of her strong and gentle lord and master". If she would do this, she could be Empress in her home, reigning instead of being ruled.

It was now too late for him to stay. He started walking. In the stillness of the ever deepening night and against the backdrop of a now turbulent sea, he was surprised to hear the familiar strains of Jim Reeves singing "Beyond the Sunset". He walked on and

on hoping that next time he would be able to reach the unknown, beyond the horizon or beyond the sunset.

ANON

* * *

LETTERS

Afghanistan And Mohamed-Kaleel & Co.

Sir,

There is a story told by the late Mirza Tursun-zade.

The old peasants in a Tajik village ganged up against the introduction of modern electric pumps to replace the primitive waterlifting wheels (charkhi-fahlak).

He lampooned this as the lament for the charkhi-fahlak!

The attitude to the peasants, given the Central Asian conditions weighed down by medievalism and clerical obscurantism of the early twenties, could be understood.

But, how is one to comprehend either the logic or rationale of M. H. Mohamed—M. C. M. Kaleel & Co's lament for the remnants of the discredited Nadir Khan dynasty whom the long-oppressed Afghan people, in a lightening uprising joined by the armed forces, toppled last month?

The cry is raised: "Islam is in danger!"

We have heard this before. "Islam was threatened" when Nasser, Kassem and Qatthafi dismantled age-old tyrannies and out-moded feudal oligarchies!

Tomorrow, that same historical process will inexorably sweep from Saudi Arabia to Iran and the miscellaneous emirates, sultanates and sheikhdoms dotting the Middle East like some evil locusts. And, when, before the wrath of the people long-oppressed Their Royal Majesties and Imperial Shahinshahs

totter, these local establishmentarian Muslim leaders are going to beat their breasts and exercise their vocal chords in "defence of Islam".

The Davasa group's Tamil Sunday paper, *Chintamani* (14/5) reported one Mr. M. H. A. Mohamed being cabled by the Riyadh-based Rabidatul-Aalami-Islam (World Muslim Congress) about Muslim theologians being murdered by the "Red Revolution", and asking him to intervene—to organise prayers in mosques here.

One thought that the Afghan revolution is interested in liquidating poverty establishing democracy and not installing an inquisition against the Islamic clergy, although most of them are guilty of collaboration in perpetuating a social and political order alien to the spirit of Islam.

By the way, one did not see the Rabita or its local outfit unfolding the flag of Islam during Yahya Khan's sordid rape of East Pakistan in 1972.

With this exception.

Dr. Kaleel proved himself to be Dictator Yahya Khan's most consistent apologist here. And of course, "Islamic Socialism" not to be outmanoeuvred, Badiuddin Mahmud went about dispensing ministerial patronage to the so-called Pakistan Film Festival at the Savoy.

One pertinent question. Are these gentlemen really interested in the Islamic peoples or the assortment of "Islamic" oligarchies?

Manifestly, Rabita at Riyadh is agitated over events in Kabul. Understandable.

But, how could these gentlemen having their beings in a society committed to democratic ideals get agitated when the will of the people prevails in Afghanistan?

Let them not talk about constitutionality. When the people are denied, as they were in that

country, of the machinery for registering the popular will, they take recourse to other means.

The Revolutionary Council in Kabul has specifically stated that it would be guided by the principals of Islam in domestic as well as foreign policies.

Mr. Mohamed could cable this news to Rabita with this footnote: it is un-Islamic to publicly execute two people of different pedigree for the "sin" of falling in love!

In the meanwhile, according to *Thinakaran* (18/5), Dr. Kaleel not to be outdone by Mr. Mohamed has summoned his name-board organisation, the All-Ceylon Muslim League, to discuss "Red persecution" in Afghanistan.

How about giving a little attention to victims of persecution closer home at Negombo, the result of the so-called anti-Qadiani jihad last month?

A.A.L

Navala.
24th May, 1978

* * *

Citrus Growing

Sir,

I still remember quite vividly the Agricultural Society of Ceylon which blossomed to the present Department of Agriculture about 40-60 years ago and how this infant Society gradually grew to elephantine proportions. The first Director of Agriculture if I remember right was Mr. Lyne. What a variety of crops that department introduced into Ceylon as compared to now.

The much maligned European planter grew coffee successfully until a leaf disease devastated coffee plantations completely, but the planter did not surrender. He started all over again to grow tea

and left a legacy which is one of the chief income earning industries of Sri Lanka. I have singled out this industry to illustrate that the foreigner had foresight and saw far beyond the horizon and did not give up planting and go home until forced.

I now refer to the scarcity of citrus (sweet oranges) in this country where at one time Bibile was famous for its luscious oranges produced by the thousands and sold five cents to ten per fruit. The whole citrus plantation—like the coffee leaf virus was devastated and since then up-to-date no attempt to grow citrus in any part of the Island was dreamed of. There are sporadic small plantations here and there. Like Bibile orange fields going to 'sleep' so did the Department of Agriculture in this respect. Citrus is grown in some up-country estates at random. They grow very well and I have seen ripe 'golden' oranges by the hundred on a single tree. Citrus grows in any part of the country except on marshy land.

To-day, when there is a seasonal glut of oranges a fruit sells at 40-50 cents each. During the off season Rs. 1/- to Rs. 2/- each, or more. There is a great potential for citrus (sweet orange, sour, grape fruit etc.) The Minister of Agriculture should prod the officers under his Ministry to grow citrus on a large scale especially in the context of idling canning machines at Attanagalla.

The citrus industry booms in Florida (USA) These oranges bring in one form or other to the breakfast table of America and other parts of the world. During the USA harvest in 1978-77 about 250 million boxes of oranges and another 70 millions of grape fruit were harvested. The United States provide about one third of the total world supply of citrus despite the fact that most citrus is turned

to juice. Citrus is the most popular fruit sold in USA market ranging only behind potato. Besides Florida and California citrus is grown in Texas and Arizona. There are seedless oranges in France and few other countries. In 1946 the USA started to convert the orange juice in a 'concentrated' form. After removing all the water the juice is frozen. One has only to add water before it is served. The juice market has proved so lucrative that 85 per cent of the annual citrus crop goes to juice.

Now here is an opportunity for the Minister of Agriculture to put more 'juice' into the various Agricultural Officers under his Ministry to do some practical work in opening up large citrus plantations in suitable areas and encourage .

Virus free seedlings could be imported and distributed at a nominal rate to the enthusiastic entrepreneurs who are not myopic and expect a quick return for money invested. The demand for this fruit is very great, recommended by many physicians to the healthy, sick, invalid and hospitals.

I write this article as a layman though I was employed in the department not as a scientist nor an agriculturist. My suggestion is not only advantageous to the present generation but those yet unborn.

George L. de Silva

Puttalam Road,
Kurunegala.
9.5.78

* * *

Is The Boss Wrong?

Sir,

These days, I was reading, for the nth time, the magnificent letters of St. Paul, the fiery, combative, antilegalistic Paul of Tarsus.

I was struck, somehow, that, whenever he deals with the rela-

tions between servants and masters, St. Paul insists very firmly on reverence, urging servants to practice obedience and submission, trying to "give their masters satisfaction, avoiding any indelicate behaviour or contradicting them, showing, on the contrary, a perfect fidelity" (Tit. 2/9). And he prays, and he asks for public prayers for those in authority, in places of responsibility, so that we may live in peace and quietness, spending our time in godly living (1 Tim. 2/2). Nor did the references I looked up surprise me less. St. Peter, for instance, kept urging: "Be submissive to your masters, with all respect, not only to the kind and gentle, but also to the overbearing (1 Pet. 2/18).

My conscience began to prick me. How different all these God-inspired words sounded from the way I found myself talking or acting. At the mere mention of "labourers, workers", it has become fashionable to get red-hot in the face, and at once, without much discrimination, take up the cudgels in their defence, never doubting that at times there might be another quite different side to their story.

"Ecrasez l' 'infame'!" (crush the infamous master)—we begin to howl with the popular prophets of the day,—these weather-cock prophets, quite ready to crow, if it suits them—"Long live the benefactors of the people!" the benefactors being the new masters, no less interested in themselves than the former ones."

Is this attitude correct?

No doubt, any worker has certain basic rights. But has he only rights? no duties?

No doubt, some unworthy masters try to cheat labourers of their just wages. But don't some labourers cheat their masters of their just work—the honest hard work Jesus exemplified at Nazareth?—

See how they absent themselves without a valid reason. And when they are on the spot, see how shoddily, how slowly they shirk their work—when they work at all, that is; see how they expect no end of *santhosams* for work they are paid to do, and then, with no qualms of conscience, they proceed to collect their full wages, and bonuses, too.

Is all that correct?—Can you say that greed and unjust gain is to be met with, only among the masters? Is the 7th Commandment meant for them only? The foul spirit of capitalism may enter the heart of anyone; some of the worst capitalists may be found among the "poor".

"Be fair, then! Don't become a fanatic, either way. Keep an even, detached mind, ready to stand up for justice and truth, wherever you see it, whether on the side of the workers or of the masters. Don't imitate the foolish parents who cannot but take the defence of their spoilt child, whether he asks for bread or for the moon, whether he is bullied or bullies.

Why not imitate St. Paul and teach the servants, the workers to pray for those holding responsible posts, rather than continually calling them names? There is no christianity where there is no charity."

At this, a thought flashes across my mind:—the way some leaders of labour unions at times speak or write. Let alone the reverence and respect St. Peter recommends even with an overbearing master, do they try at least to make sure of *all* the facts, before embarking on a war of nerves, with threats of fire and brimstone, thus bullying and victimizing the very people they call victimizers?

Masters, too, are human beings and have a right to being approached with a certain regard and tact.

There is a way and a way of asking for redress. Why take at once the bull by its horns?.....

I remember the day when some estate labourers demanded pipe-borne water to their "lines". They thought of nothing better than going straight to their Union. And the bickering began. After two years, the superintendent had still not moved a finger. It was the quiet, respectful and friendly talk of a general priest that shook the rock, and obtained the water to the "lines".

We are so fond of the ways of Pope John, and his revolution. Well, why not take your cue from him? A friendly dialogue, a jovial reparatee, perhaps a pat on the shoulder could solve more problems than an avalanche of vitriolic letters. "Meekness is the perfection of strength," used to say good Pope John.

C. Jannaccone, S.J.

Deniyaya.
10.5.78

* * *

Domestic Inquiry Should Not Be The Last Word

Sir,

I am a regular subscriber to the *Tribune* and consider the nature and content of articles in your journal to be of a high standard. I shall be grateful if you will publish the following comments in response to the article on "White Paper on Employment Relations" (2) *Termination* published in the *Tribune* of 6th May 1978. This is a matter which concerns me personally as my own employment has been unfairly terminated.

I wish to endorse the comments in your article on termination of employment as envisaged in the White Paper on Employment Re-

lations, particularly regarding the need to protect the interests of workers at 'domestic inquiries'. The infirmities in both existing as well as proposed legislation are evident if we examine the manner in which the services of a senior executive in a private multi-national organisation were terminated recently.

The officer concerned made a complaint to the management regarding an incident in office involving a dispute with another officer. The management decided to hold an inquiry conducted by an outsider. The officer was not advised at any stage that action was contemplated against him, nor was he given the name of the inquirer. Neither the proceedings at the inquiry nor the inquirer's report were made available to the officer.

Although the executive concerned was able to furnish substantial evidence to justify his complaint, the inquirer held against him without giving valid reasons for rejecting his submissions. Adding insult to injury, the management decided to terminate his services immediately without calling for an explanation from the executive. The officer's protest that the inquirer's findings were unjustified, was disregarded by the management.

Although this is a clear case of arbitrary termination, the employer was able to take advantage of a situation and dismiss an employee on the pretext of having conformed with necessary procedure for doing so which he may attempt to justify as being valid under existing labour laws.

It is vital that employees be protected against such arbitrary action by unscrupulous employers. And this can be facilitated by legislation which ensures that employers obtain sanction of an independent authority before terminating services of employees for

any reason. I do not consider that a properly conducted domestic inquiry, prior to termination can be an adequate safeguard to protect the interest of employees, as an employer can always have an unfair advantage by sponsoring such inquiries.

Aggrieved

Colombo.
18.5.78

* * *

Widows & Orphans Pension Scheme

Sir,

Originally under the above Act bachelors on retirement at 60 were entitled to a refund of 50% of their contributions to the W & O P Scheme at the rate of 4% of salary but during the 1970-77 regime the act was amended to permit the refund of 100%. Although widowers without minor children at retirement at 60 are, having regard to the provisions of the W & O P Scheme themselves bachelors, they are altogether denied this or any similar concession although during their entire service they would have contributed from Rs. 4,000/- to Rs. 12,000/- according to the scales of salaries drawn by them.

During the colonial era a few cadres only were eligible to contribute to the W & O P Scheme but since independence the cadres eligible to contribute have increased over 300 fold which is a very good thing but the pensions bill of public servants and their widows who survive them is becoming more than this Island can afford and considering the fact that old age pensions for all citizens is long overdue in Sri Lanka it behoves the State to have one common pension fund by pooling the W & O P and Provident Funds

and making it compulsory for all employees to contribute at least 5% towards their pensions on retirement or pensions to their widows and orphans.

This is a matter that should receive the immediate attention of this allegedly dharmista government which should also direct the judicial commission which will shortly inquire into the misdeeds of the 1970-77 regime to investigate as to how the iniquitous amendment of the Act referred to above came to be made. It may have been the work of certain top brass bachelors nearing retirement.

I read in the *Time Magazine* of 20/3/78 that one factor, that enabled the three month old devastating strike of the highly paid coal miners in the USA to be broken was the offer by the employers to replenish the coal miners' pensions fund which was broke. Even in rich industrialised countries pensions bills increase so much as to cripple the funds.

R. W. W.

5, de Alwis Avenue,
Mount Lavinia.
6.4.78



SNIPPETS

By plucking her petals you do not gather the beauty of the flower.



The flaming fire warns me off by its own glow. Save me from the dying embers hidden under ashes.



Literature exists to please, to lighten the burden of men's lives. To make them forget their sorrows and their sins, their silenced hearths their disappointed hopes, their grim futures.



The foolish man seeks happiness in the distance, the wise grows it under his feet.

QUIDNUNC'S

● Prince Charles ● Sugar Cane Loans ● CGR Tenders ● Locos And Workshop ● CTB

A QUIDNUNC, according to the Shorter Oxford Dictionary, is "one who is constantly asking 'what now?', 'what news?' hence an inquisitive person, a gossip. The word comes from the Latin, *quid* (what) *nunc* (now)—*what now?*—and is defined in Websters Dictionary as "one who seeks to know all the latest gossip." Our own era, especially in Sri Lanka, is admittedly the *Quidnuncs'* Golden Age. Gossip is now a marketable commodity. The stories our *Quidnuncs* bring are based on a substratum of truth and *Tribune* publishes them only if the fire from which the smoke has arisen has some kind of reality. Apart from a few kite-flying stories to provoke investigation, most stories in this column have bite enough for a daily paper to go to town with a banner headline.

*ROYALTY. More than one *Quidnunc* was amused by the fuss made by the *Ceylon Daily News* (19.5.78) and the *Sun* (19.5.78) about the fact that (Crown) Prince (of Wales) Charles had failed to get off his air-craft en-route to Australia at 3 a.m. in the morning to greet some local VIPs who had gathered at Katunayake to pay homage to him. The UK and Australian High Commissioners in Sri Lanka, their encouragers, the Sri Lanka Deputy Minister (Acting Minister) of Foreign Affairs, Ranil Wickremasinghe the chief protocol officer of our

Foreign Officer, Manel Abeysekera, and a few other catchers had waited for hours in the early hours of May 18 at Katunayake airport for the princely visitor and other British VIPs on that plane flying out to attend the funeral of the former Australian Prime Minister, Menezies.

The Prince did not get out of the plane. None of the VIPs also did. Both the *CDN* and the *S.n* suggested that he preferred his beauty sleep to meeting the Sri Lankan Deputy Foreign Minister. The *Sun* went to town with a three column viciously biting front page blast against Prince Charles. The *Daily News*, on a lower key, tried to be facetiously funny with a skit on "Hamlet Without the Prince at Katunayake." These two pieces, written with indignation and anger, were undoubtedly prompted because Sri Lankan dignity and ego were deeply injured by the Prince who had not tumbled out of his "eider-down" bed to salaam Sri Lankan dignitaries. The *Daily Mirror* very wisely played down the story although certain sections of Sri Lankan officialdom seemed to have got hot and bothered about what they thought was a major *faux pas* on the part of Prince Charles—or the arrogant boorishness of a white ruler.

Quidnuncs say that if anybody has to be blamed it must be (a) our Foreign Office and (b) the UK High Commission in Sri Lanka, for not making proper confirmed arrangements to make sure that the Prince would get off the plane. It is not likely that such a highly trained royal public relations man would commit a *faux pas* or be guilty of boorishness. The *Time Magazine* of May 15, has a cover story of H.R. H. Prince Charles as "A Most Uncommon Bloke" and there is not the slightest doubt that Prince Charles would not have slept through at Katunayake if he knew that he had a duty to get down.

And old and senior *Quidnunc* tells us that a Crown Prince or a Prince of Wales would have responded to an invitation to get down at Katunayake only if he was "properly met", that is, he has to be met by the Head of the State of the country he was passing through. The *Quidnunc* said that similar problems of protocol had arisen when the Crown Prince Edward Windsor (who later abdicated as king) had visited Inoia when he was the Prince of Wales. He had to be met by the heads of several princely States, not by their deputies, even if they were princes of the ruling royal house.

It is no doubt wrong to expect President Jayawardene to get out of bed at 3 am to meet the stripling prince for a few minutes, but Sri Lanka officials should have known better than to expect Prince Charles to get out of his bed to meet a Deputy Minister!

If any of our readers have information which is contrary to what our *Quidnuncs* have told us about protocol, *Tribune* will be pleased to publish the same. We are not experts on protocol, and we do not ourselves give a damn about protocol, but in the world where protocol matters, the game has to be played according to the rules.

***AGRICULTURAL CREDIT.** There has recently been many governmental statements in the media that agricultural credit would in future be tightened up, that those who have defaulted on the Maha loans would not be given loans for Yala. All this is excellent, but what about the irrecoverable loans of the Maha lending-spree. *Tribune* will examine this problem and the whole question of agricultural credit shortly, but in the meantime our *Quidnuncs* have brought in a story which throws light on the attitude of certain sections of officialdom on the question of agricultural credit. It is known, said our *Quidnuncs*, in "responsible poli-

tical quarters" that the Government Agent, Amparai, had complained to the authorities that preliminary investigations by him had revealed the loans totalling 4.7 million rupees had been issued for sugar cane cultivation for Yala 1978 in the Amparai District for an extent of 2,000 acres—although the statistics showed that the total sugar cane area of private cultivation was only 600 acres and also that the target for new expansion for the area was only 50 acres.

What was surprising was that despite the reduction in the price of sugar from Rs. 5 to Rs. 3 per lb. that such a large volume of loans should be taken to bring new land under cultivation. Over 500 persons had taken these loans, but the *bona fides* of a large number were doubtful. What made everything suspicious and provoke allegations or irregularities and corruption was that the loans were issued liberally without any care being taken to verify information provided by the applicants.

The complaint from the GA had come in March. *Quidnuncs* say that somehow or other the complaint had reached the ears of the President who had ordered an inquiry presumably by the Central Bank or some other authority other than the lending authority which is under the Minister of Agriculture and Lands.

It is now June, but no inquiry has yet taken place. *Quidnuncs* say that the file has been shunted from one desk to another, from one authority to another—all with the aim of getting the inquiry to be forgotten or to be held by the lending authority or Ministry of Agriculture—so that everything is white-washed.

The President has too many things to chase, but unless he follows up at least one or more matters where he makes orders to ensure that his orders are car-

ried out, there will be no point in his making any orders at all. The Amparai sugar loan matter, say our *Quidnuncs*, is one matter the President should check to see if his orders have been carried out without dilly-dallying delay.

***RAILWAY COACHES AND ENGINES.** There was an official announcement that 150 railway coaches or waggons have been ordered from Rumania. It was also said that the inside seating arrangements would be different from the carriages under the last order. Those who have used the old carriages—which the LSSP administration had brought down—know that to travel in them for long distances is veritable hell. *Tribune* has written so much about the "Rumanian passenger carriages" ever since they were put to use in 1975 that there is no need to say more. *Quidnuncs* say that everyone in the CGR is tight-lipped when asked about the seating arrangements in the new carriages. But all commuters live in trepidation and fear as to what they are in for in the new Rumanian carriages. *Tribune* will reserve its verdict until the carriages are received and put on the rails.

Quidnuncs say that there is still a great deal of "gossip" about the locomotives' order. At one time, it was thought that Japs had beaten the West Germany by many lengths in regard to this tender but when the final results were announced it was found the requirements were divided fifty-fifty between the Germans and Japs on the lines of credit they had respectively made available (the Rumanian coaches are also on a line of credit). *Quidnuncs* say that until the President intervened in a discreet manner, there was a lot of talk about juggling with some specifications to favour one party or other. It is not known how these problems were resolved, but the

orders have been placed with the two tenderers who were neck-to-neck without any one of them being thrown out by the other.

One matter, *Quidnuncs* say, about which the President may not know, is that when the tenders were called the Secretary to the Ministry of Transport had written to the Institute of Engineers to send a delegation to evaluate the tenders from a technical angle at the appropriate time. In the rush and tumble of the initial battle where one tenderer sought to knock out all others, the Institute of Engineers was forgotten and the tenders were evidently evaluated by others, whom *Quidnuncs* fear, might have had vested interests in the matter. The Institute of Engineers had been called in to evaluate tenders because they would be an independent group unlike the departmental officers in charge of the tender.

All's well that ends well, but the Cabinet, which will in future supervise all tenders over one million rupees, must pay due heed to the Institute of Engineers on all tenders on which they may be of assistance.

***QUESTIONS ABOUT LOCOS.** Though the orders have been placed for the locomotives (16 from Japan and 16 from West Germany), *Quidnuncs* say, that many questions continue to be asked. Why were the prices agreed on so fantastically high—about Rs. 120 million for the Jap and Rs. 190 million for the West German engines respectively: total Rs. 310 million. In 1968, the price paid for 87 locomotives was only Rs. 61 million or thereabouts. World prices, though they have gone up, they have not escalated so much as to justify the prices paid by Sri Lanka. *Quidnuncs* report that comment in many quarters is that the prices on the credit line are generally higher than for spot cash

or even normal banker's credit—but that the prices now agreed upon need a lot of explaining. Is it because the engines ordered are fitted with extraordinarily high motive power engines or horsepower? *Quidnuncs* say that these locomotives ordered have far more power than our tracks can take. The higher the power, the higher the price and the higher the commission for the local agent, say our *Quidnuncs* who reminded us of the sad fate of the extra high-powered engines ordered some years ago. Furthermore, our *Quidnuncs* assert that the Jap engines are of better specifications, quality and calibre than the West German ones—which have been bought because of the line of credit. *Quidnuncs* say that they will have more news shortly.

***RATMALANA WORKSHOP.** In spite of tall claims that matters had improved in the Ratmalana Workshop, *Quidnuncs* say that the work is slower and the backlog has increased. Whereas in the past about 300 carriages were held up, today there are 400. And the story is the same in regard to wagons and engines. Could it be that the accumulation is due to running the existing rolling stock to extinction in the attempt to run a service that CGR resources cannot sustain? With the workshop working at snail's pace, the CGR may grind to a halt. And even the new imports may not be able to help. In fact, *Quidnuncs* say that if all the engines and wagons that are idle now are repaired, there would be no need to import any more.

***C.T.B. NEWS.** *Quidnuncs* say that a VIP connected with the CTB will shortly leave for the UK, Europe and elsewhere on a "private" visit (holiday, perhaps). But, say the *Quidnuncs*, there was overtime work done recently in the

indenting and tender section of the CTB preparing lists of all pending and possible orders with the names and addresses of suppliers in UK, Europe and elsewhere for the VIP. Why?

* * *

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

By Ariel

Sri Lanka And The World

World events continue to take most puzzling, the most unexpected and the most contradictory turns and twists in every country, in every region, on every continent and in a global sense too. It is impossible, in a single weekly newspaper article, to keep abreast of all these sharp zig-zags. It is only possible to refer to a few more salient events. There is however so much to write about on so many items that columnists like the writer are so baffled not only about what to pick on every week but also how a non-aligned nation like Sri Lanka can look at them.

This country is not vitally interested in much of what happens in the world although some of these events have a serious impact on the present and future of this nation. We in this island tend to exaggerate the island's position under the sun and pretend that it is big enough to have a say on everything that happens in the world. The Chairmanship of the Non-aligned Movement — which was a testimony of the work Mr. S. W. R. D. and Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike had done for non-alignment—has tended to further inflate the Sri Lankan ego in regard to its own importance in the world. But, coming down to brass tacks,

it not easy to say what view Sri Lanka can or should take on specific issues—like confrontations, alignments, tensions, conflicts, mergers and unions between different countries that arise in the world every day.

What can Sri Lanka say about the change of government in Kabul? We can only repeat the stock formula that changes of government are internal matters of the people of the country and proclaim that there should be "no outside interference". But so far as the geopolitical tussles, plans, apprehensions and policies of the big, medium and small countries, especially those around Afghanistan are concerned, Sri Lanka is just not interested. How far can Sri Lanka be interested in the Kampuchea-Vietnam border fighting or in the China-Vietnam quarrel about the fleeing Chinese or being chased out of Saigon? Foreign policy, it is rightly said, is a reflection of a country's national interests, and what are the national interests of Sri Lanka in regard to happenings in Indo-China.

But, it has become a matter of a high-souled prestige, in the contemporary era, for every country to "take a stand" on every development in the world. The SLFP-UF Government (1970-77) had made it a matter of axiomatic high principle to comment on as many matters of international significance as possible—from the non-aligned angle (anti-imperialist, anti-neo colonialist, etc. etc.). In the first flush of coming to power in 1970, the SLFP-UF government, rushed in (to issue statements) where even greater non-aligned angels feared to tread; but as time went by and the SLFP (in particular) learnt that it was best not to tread on certain international corners or rub certain governments and countries up the wrong way, and the result was that the Sri Lanka government of Mrs. Bandaranaike

developed a special kind of caution in what it said even at summit meetings of the non-aligned. But repetitive slogans against imperialism and neo-colonialism were regularly repeated although the SLFP tried hard, in the last stages of its existence, to find IMF organised neo-colonialist solutions to the country's economic problems.

The UNP government of J. R. Jayawardene, though it paid lip service for electoral demagogy and international *status quoism* paid to non-alignment, is as far removed from anti-imperialism and anti-neocolonialism as Sri Lanka is from the planet Uranus, and for this reason the UNP government is not basically prompted by emotional or rhetorical compulsions to make the kind of soul- uplifting statements on any matter.

Many writers and columnists in the *Tribune* have complained that the new Dharmista UNP government has been silent on several matters of global urgency and importance. It was wrong to have expected any statements or policy stances of any kind from the UNP government. It had won the election on an avowed policy of inviting the neo-colonialist-inspired IBRD with its IMF-backed cohorts of "foreign investors" to help Sri Lanka out of its economic mess. This being the case, no one should have expected the UNP government either to make fiery denunciatory statements about every act of injustice committed against a non-aligned or third world country or indulge in the usual tirades against imperialism and neo-colonialism which are regarded as the usual pass-words for a country to be regarded as "progressive" "non-aligned" or "a champion of national liberation". Recent history has shown that a large number of governments and politicians who use their bombastic code (pass

words do not mean what they say and that they engage themselves in this exercise only because it is one way of making the best of many worlds. There is no point in digressing on this subject.

But the new Sri Lanka government has made statements on the Middle East and Southern Africa—these are matters on which everybody is agreed and little rhetoric is necessary to drive the point home. The new Israeli interpretation of Resolution 242 makes it clear that Israel does not want peace—there is no doubt that it is the Arab States like Egypt that desperately need peace. Israel seems determined, with full backing from the USA, to postpone peace until it gets all it wants by raising new demands and interpretations each time, Egypt or the Arab states make new concessions. Whoever heard of Israeli settlements in the Sinai before?

The Middle East is in a terrible mess, and the odds seemed to be stacked up against the Arabs. Israel will have its way in the Middle East for a long time to come and the world will have to learn to live with this reality. But how long can Egypt keep going on a "no war, no peace" basis is hard to say—the economic situation is daily getting worse. Statements from countries supporting Egypt and the Arabs, and the non-aligned Bureau, and even resolutions of UN Assembly have little or no meaning. The conscience of those who support the pro-Arab, anti-Israeli resolutions may be soothed by such statements and resolutions, but little is achieved by all this.

Sri Lanka also joined all other non-aligned countries in condemning the developments in Southern Africa—Rhodesia, Namibia. The Bureau meeting at Havana did not produce anything sensational, but the unity by consensus was maintained. The full texts of the

resolutions adopted at Havana are not yet available and even preliminary examination of the meeting is not possible. However the fear that unity may be impaired by the attempt of some countries to set up a machinery to resolve "internal" disputes and quarrels within the community does not seem to have pushed to the point to cause disunity.

From Havana, the scene has moved to New York where a special UN Sessions on Disarmament has opened. Sri Lanka distinguished itself by pressing hard for J. R. Jayawardene's suggestion for a World Disarmament Authority. Sri Lanka's spokesman, Minister of Finance, had also wanted 1980 to be declared a World Disarmament year and May 23rd be the World Disarmament Day. With these highlights, Sri Lanka has plunged headlong into the campaign for total and complete global disarmament.

Even as the UN Disarmament sessions got under way, there was fighting in Kolowezi in Shaba (in Zaire) where rebels were driven out by French and Belgian paratroopers when Mobuto's troops failed to defeat them. The USA and other western powers have accused Cuba of training and arming the Shaba rebels and the Soviet Union for backing the adventure. President Carter has gone so far as to hint that if Russia and Cuba continued to "interfere and intervene" in African states to the extent they were now doing, it would endanger detente, the SALT talks and even peace. National Security Minister Brzezinski after his visit to China has come out openly against the Soviet Union accusing her; as China does, of trying to become the dominant "hegemonistic" power in Europe, Africa, Middle East, the Indian Ocean and Asia. Brzezinski according to US newspapers and

magazines is said to be adopting a more hardline "cold war" position against the USSR than the stand taken by Secretary of State Vance and the State Department. How this "conflict" in the US administration will resolve itself is hard to say.

In Ethiopia, the government has started making headway against the Eritrean rebels as the demands in the USA increase for a withdrawal of Cuban forces and Russian advisers from that country. In the Far East, tensions between China and Vietnam seem to be increasing whilst conditions in the Philippines continue to be fluid with the Moro separatists once more on the march.

China seem anxious to edge her way into a strong position in global matters with fierce anti-Soviet statements and calculated attempts to induce the UK, USA, NATO and the West to start a new cold (or even hot) war confrontation with the Soviet Union—no doubt to ease Soviet pressures on the Chinese borders.

A press delegation from Sri Lanka to China has just returned to the island and the first article by one of those who made the trip—S. K. Manikka Aratchi—has appeared in the *Sunday Observer*, 28/5/78. It is a routine kind of article so far and many await the other articles in this *Sunday Observer* series and also articles by others who went on the delegation. This is the second press delegation from Sri Lanka to China, the first having gone in 1958—twenty years ago.

The one question that many interested in China want to know more is about the scope of the decisions (and compromises) arrived at the recent sessions of the National People's Congress in Peking. This was the first major Congress after the liquidation of the influence of the Gang of Four

and what interests students of politics is to know the kind of balance and stability in the new "collective" leadership—to evaluate how long and how far the Congress decisions will go.

The articles from those who went on the Press Delegation may provide some of the answers. So far, our information on this and other questions have come from Hongkong, Tokyo or the West. One hopes that the impressions and information gathered by Sri Lankan pressmen on this topic will be of great help to understand the current situation in China. This column will further examine this question in the light of the articles that will appear in the coming weeks in Sri Lanka papers by members of the press delegation.

* * *

SRI LANKA CHRONICLE

May 18 - May 21

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.

THURSDAY, MAY 18: Sixty five persons, believed to be pioneers of the Liberation Tiger Movement are among those to be added to the list of 'The Most Wanted Men': biographical and personal details of these men are now being

compiled; many of them are from the Northern and Eastern Provinces and from Colombo; some of them have been wanted by the police since 1971 for various bank robberies, murders etc; police claim that they have evidence that some of them are directing operations in this movement. The floods that have inundated many parts of the island during the last few days are fast subsiding. Vamadevan who was arrested last week in connection with the Murunkan killings was produced before the magistrate on Tuesday night and remanded till May 26. The Justice Minister will soon table in the NSA, legislation to enable the setting up of a legal aid scheme for poor litigants. A 'passport explosion' is on at the Department of Immigration and Emigration; on an average 20,000 passports are issued every month—CDN. Widespread publicity given to the persons wanted in connection with the Murunkan killings of the four police officers is reaching rich dividends and more arrests have been made. The Director of Social Services said yesterday that he would require immediately Rs. 10 million for flood relief—CDM. The establishment of a Non-Aligned bank to break the monopoly and the dependence of the developing countries on the World Bank and the IMF will see the light of day at the ministerial level meeting of the Co-ordinating Bureau scheduled to open in Havana tomorrow. Detectives on the trail of the suspects wanted in connection with the slaying of four CID officers at Murunkan do not rule out the possibility that some of them may have left the island—SU. According to the bill proscribing the Tamil Liberation Tiger movement, any money, property, moveable and immovable goods suspected to be used by them or by those connected with them can be confiscated by the state—DP. Insidious moves

are apparently being made by the Liberation Tiger sympathisers abroad to canvass support for their 'cause' from foreign governments and other organisations—CO. In view of the recent floods in several parts of the island outbreaks of bowel diseases have been reported from a few areas; the Health Department is taking necessary steps to arrest it—IDPR No. 38. The Minister of Irrigation, Power and Highways has taken steps to stop cutting down trees in the Horton Flains—LD. Over 900 varieties of medicines are now sold at the reduced price—DM. The People's Bank and the Bank of Ceylon have only been able to collect only 1% of the 400 million rupees granted as agricultural loans in the Maha paddy season. The Agricultural Ministry is studying the feasibility of producing sugar from sugar beet in this country—DW. Relief columns of Zaire troops headed yesterday for Shaba Province where the forces of President Mobutu Sesse Seko are fighting the *Angola-based Congo National Liberation Front which has launched its second attack in just over an year on Zaire's copper rich southern region. The Indian government may find it virtually impossible to take action against former PM, Indira Gandhi on the basis of the Shah Commission of Inquiry's findings—CDN. Heavy fighting raged in Eritrea yesterday after the Ethiopian army took the offensive against secessionist guerrillas and broke out of the besieged capital of Asmara with 20,000 troops the guerrillas reported—SU. Egypt has officially asked the US to end the activities of the American oil companies in Sinai territory and in all off shore wells of the Sinai Peninsula occupied by the Israelis in 1967. President Carter sought to assure American Jews yesterday he was not trying to weaken Israel following his policy victory in getting the Senate

to approve sales of war planes to two Arab states—CDM.

FRIDAY, MAY 19: The PM told the NSA yesterday that the UNP government was committed to preserve law and order and will not condone or tolerate 'elements perpetrating acts of violence in the name of democracy in certain parts of the country'; he also said it was the primary duty of the opposition to ensure that law and order were maintained, no democracy could prevail in a country where there was room for violence in the slightest degree. The second reading of the Criminal Procedure Bill was passed by a majority of 109 votes. The timber trade is protesting against a price increase on timber announced by the State Timber Corporation. Two CID officers returned home after a ten day stay in India where they made a detailed investigations into the 'indian connection' of the Liberation Tiger movement—CDN. The leader of the Opposition speaking in the NSA yesterday, deplored the Murunkan killings and violence of any type. The PM disclosed in the NSA yesterday that the Criminal Procedure Code Law would be operative for a maximum period of one year. Police now believe that seven persons were involved in the Murunkan killing of the four police officers last month and CID investigators have been able to establish the identity of the other three wanted men. HRH Prince Charles heir to the throne of Britain preferred to sleep on rather than alight when the plane he travelled in en route to Australia stopped here for refuelling—SU. Four Belgian airforce planes left Brussels today for an undisclosed destination amid mounting signs that an international operation was under way to rescue whites trapped by the fighting in Zaire's Shaba Province—SU. Condemned ex-PM Zulfikar Ali

Bhutto was moved to jail in Rawalpindi yesterday in preparation for the hearing by Pakistan's Supreme Court of his appeal against his death sentence—CDN.

SATURDAY, MAY 20: Vesak poya day which marks the birth, enlightenment and the Maha Parinibbana (passing away) of the Buddha will be observed tomorrow by Buddhists all over the island in the practise of dana, sil and bhavana. The President in his message said that vesak had a four fold significance for Sri Lankans, the fourth being the birth of the Sinhala nation which started with the mission to protect Buddhism for a period of 5000 years falling on this very same day. The bill proscribing the Liberation Tiger of Tamil Eelam and Other Similar Organisations was passed in the NSA yesterday by a majority of 106 votes—CDN. The Minister of Justice speaking in the NSA yesterday said the new constitution would guarantee the rights of Tamils as equal citizens in Sri Lanka; the Minister asked the TULF to stop its Jakkyl and Hyde policies—CDM. The Ministry of Trade will negotiate for the sale of 40,000 tons of rice bought under the rubber-rice pact from China—CDM. The Tamils for Peace Movement—formed with the avowed aim of countering the spread of terrorism in this country—has circulated a policy statement to all peace loving people in this country—SU. A five man committee headed by the Secretary to the Ministry of Higher Education has been appointed to re-organise the campuses. The Minister of Industries has decided to expand all profitable industries under his ministry—DW. France announced today that its troops had gone into action in Zaire to protect French and other foreigners trapped in the embattled town of Kolwezi. NATO defence Ministers were told yesterday that

the military capability gap between East and West continues to widen in favour of the Communist bloc's Warsaw Pact—CDM. The US sent seven light range military transport aircraft to Belgium to help in the rescue of Europeans trapped by fighting in the Southern Zaire Province of Shaba. The family of deposed Afghanistan President Mohamed Daoud and his family members of the Afghan Royal family are to be put on trial by the Communist led regime which seized power last month—SU. Australians today paid their last respects to former PM Sir Robert Menzies who dominated political life in Australia for more than two decades—CDN.

SUNDAY, MAY 21: The police have failed to find any lead to many of the gang robberies, burglaries and thefts that took place in Colombo and the suburbs in the past three weeks. Inclement weather has curtailed the erection of many pandals and other decorations this Vesak and the accent is on religious observances and the giving of alms. A modern development complex to cater to social and administrative needs of the people will be built in a selected town in each electorate. The BIA will be guarded by armed personnel as an additional security measure; entry to the terminal building will be restricted to a maximum of seven permit holders for every passenger on payment of a nominal fee—ST. A very special welcome is in store for the President if he visits Havana next year to attend the Non Aligned Summit Conference; this was what Minister Hameed was told by the Cuban PM in Havana. The Minister of Industries will lay the foundation stone for the giant flour milling complex to be built at Trincomalee tomorrow—SO. President Jayawardene has personally written to all heads of state and governments on the need to

set up a World Disarmament Authority under a UN system Foreign Minister Hameed told Non Aligned leaders in Havana. The Minister of Textile Industries has disclosed a plan to bring 2000 acres of land under cotton cultivation through which it is hoped that Sri Lanka would become self-sufficient in the supply of yarn for its textile industry within the next two years—WK. The TULF has expressed its objections to the government regarding the posters that were issued with the photographs of the 38 most wanted men who are allegedly connected with the Liberation Tiger movement—VK. Some African countries have invited Buddhist monks from Sri Lanka to preach the Buddhist religion in these countries; in connection with this many monks will visit Ghana shortly—RR. Anti-government rebels killed 44 white European men in Kolwezi yesterday only hours before two French paratroopers dropped into Southern Zaire mining town on a rescue mission. The US said yesterday that the rebels who invaded Zaire's Shaba Province were trained by Cuban in Angola and supplied by Soviet and East European weapons which they were using in fighting; but Whites have said that it could not be confirmed that any Cubans were themselves involved in the Shaba conflict—ST. Belgian paratroopers have taken complete control of Kolwezi airport in Southern Zaire and Belgian planes have begun landing there with reinforcements the Belgian defence ministry announced yesterday—SO. A senior Italian secret service officer claimed that murdered ex-PM Aldo Moro revealed national secrets including military ones to his Red Brigade kidnapers.

Confidentially

More Fishy Business

WAS IT ANY SURPRISE to our readers that the *Ceylon Observer* published a front-page banner headline story on Thursday, May 25, entitled **PRESIDENT HEADS COMMITTEE: HIGH POWERED TEAM TO PROBE MEAT, FISH SUPPLY?** The report by Manik de Silva, who has recently been scooping many top "Governmental" stories, read: "The President, Mr. J. R. Jayawardene, is heading a high-powered Ministerial Committee which will examine the production, supply and distribution of fish, meat and eggs. The other members of this Committee are the Prime Minister, Mr. R. Premadasa, the Minister of Agriculture and Lands, Mr. E. L. Senanayake, the Minister of Food & Co-operatives, Mr. S. B. Herath, the Minister of Trade, Mr. Lalith Athulathmudali and the Minister of Fisheries, Mr. Festus Perera. Informed government sources said that the composition of the committee itself was indicative of government's concern about the high prices of essential proteins as well as periodical scarcities that drive prices even higher. Recently, the Ministry of Fisheries licenced foreign trawlers to fish in Sri Lanka waters for the payment of a royalty on catch as well as supplying a part of their catch to Sri Lanka at agreed rates. The authorities hoped this would improve supply and bring down prices...? That apart from stating this the report did not say anything to clear up the mystery about the foreign trawlers licenced to fish in our territorial waters? That whilst *Tribune* has also been writing a great deal about livestock, meat, poultry and eggs in recent weeks, our prime target has been fish?

That the increase in the price of fish in Sri Lanka in the last few months is so much of a scandal (man-made) that it has engaged our special attention for many weeks? That a *Tribune* reader came to us today (26.5.78) with the information that to entertain a visitor from Australia (who wanted to eat Sri Lanka fish) his wife had to pay Rs. 22/- for a pound of seer at the fish market in Pettah? That this is, so far, undoubtedly an all-time record price for seer? That whilst a Presidential Committee of Ministers will look into this matter, the *Sun* on Friday, May 26, published an interesting item under the headline **SINGAPORE TRAWLERS ORDERED TO LEAVE** with the report: "Licences granted to six Singaporean trawlers have been cancelled by the Minister of Fisheries, on the ground that they violated the terms and conditions. The Chairman of the Fisheries Corporation, Mr. Oscar Fernando, told the *Sun* yesterday that the contract for fishing had been for one year and renewable. The trawlers he said had violated the 25-mile limit rule and there was no alternative but to cancel their licences. He also disclosed that many trawlers did not strictly adhere to the other terms of the contract, including the agreement to hand over 40 per cent of the catch to Sri Lanka. In the light of this, the Minister is now reviewing the position of issuing any further licences to foreign trawlers to fish in our seas." That readers will recall that *Tribune* has been demanding the cancellation of all licences given to foreign trawlers? That the report states that the licences of six Singaporean trawlers had been cancelled? That the public do not know the number of trawlers which the Ministry had licenced? That nobody seems to know the number still operating in our seas? That even our best investigators and sleuths have been unable to get this information? That

it will be interesting to know why this is being kept a dark (and dirty) secret? That the *Sun* report also raises other vital questions? That apart from violating the 25-mile rule, the Chairman of the Fisheries Corporation told the *Sun* that the trawlers "did not strictly adhere to the other terms of the contract, including the agreement to hand over 40 percent of the catch to Sri Lanka?" That what it means is that the licenced trawlers, as we had anticipated and predicted, have cheated all along the line? That though the Chairman of the Corporation has not disclosed the specific terms of the contract they had violated, the Presidential Committee in the national interest should disclose all? That it would be interesting to know if the trawlers had ever disclosed their total catches on which royalty had to be paid? That it will be necessary to know the royalty, if any, that was collected? That it is a sad admission on the part of the Chairman that they had not handed in the 40 per cent of the catch on which the Ministry of Fisheries had presumably expected to build up their much-publicised buffer stocks of 34,000 tons (that turned out to be a fictitious fairy tale?) That the Ministry must disclose, at least now, the number of trawlers that were licenced to operate in our waters for the public to have an idea as to how long our fish famine will continue? That the Ministry of Agriculture wanted those who steal agricultural produce to be whipped and lashed? That something worse must be meted out to those whose negligence, inefficiency and/or corruption has led to fish-extinction bonanzas that privileged foreign trawlers were licenced to enjoy? That even the most elementary precautions do not seem to have been taken to ensure that the terms of the contract were compiled with?

For All Your Requirements of

PAPER

Manufacturers of
MONITOR'S EXERCISE BOOKS
DRAWING BOOKS
ACCOUNTS BOOKS
C. R. BOOKS ETC. ETC.

GLOBE INDUSTRIES

95, PEER SAIBO STREET, COLOMBO - 12.

TELEPHONE: 32992

Retain Your
Original Documents
And Submit

**EXTRA COPIES
OF**

LETTERS
• CERTIFICATES
DEEDS
INVOICES
PLANS
SURVEY DRAWINGS
BOOKS

Rapid Service
with
Latest Photocopying Equipment

STUDIO TIMES
TIMES BUILDING
COLOMBO-1:
TEL: 21331