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# TRIBUNE



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# TRIBUNE

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## Letter From The Editor

THE SEMI-OFFICIAL *Ceylon Daily News* on Tuesday, September 23, had a tiny little fragment of news on its back page under the heading STEEP DROP IN PADDY PURCHASE UNDER GPS. The report merits reproduction in full: Paddy purchases by the Paddy Marketing Board this year recorded a steep drop compared with the purchase under the Guaranteed Price Scheme in previous years. Paddy purchases by the Board during the first six months of this year totalled only 8.3 million bushels which is 6.9 million or 45.4 percent lower than purchases during the same period last year. Purchases under the GPS since 1972 have been on the decline. In 1972 total paddy purchases were 26.3 million bushels. In 1973, purchases dropped to 22.9 million bushels while in 1974 it dropped further to 20.8 million bushels. This year's collection is expected to be even lower despite the progressive increase in the guaranteed price of paddy of Rs. 14 per bushel in 1972 to Rs. 33 per bushel last year. The PMB has however been progressively increasing its purchases of sorghum and maize. This is a sorry picture about rice production in Sri Lanka and the tragedy will be more manifest if the figures for 1969, 1970 and 1971 are taken into consideration. Many publicists are tempted to ignore the PMB (really GPS) purchases in 1969 and 1970 last they be accused of indirectly bolstering or praising Dudley Senanayake's *Grow more Food Campaign*. Whatever one's opinion about Mr. Dudley Senanayake as a politician or a statesman, there is no doubt that he succeeded in offering inducements to farmers and agricultural producers to increase production and this fact was reflected in governmental paddy purchases in 1969 and 1970. A new era in land tenure opened in Sri Lanka in 1972 and 1973 with the adoption of the *Land Reform Law* the *Agricultural Productivity Law* and the *Agricultural Lands Law*—and rounded off this year with *Sale of (State) Lands Law*. The recent amendment to the *Land Reform Law* brings in public companies (including sterling companies) within the scope of the Law. New institutionalised agricultural organisations have been set up under various names: collective farms, state plantations, janawasas, educated-youth colonisation schemes, youth council farms, co-operative farms and a whole lot of such organisations with even more high-sounding names. The Government is full of hope that these new agricultural units, with an emphasis on public or collective ownership, together with the new class of small landowners—which it is hoped will emerge from Land Reform Law and the Sale of (State) Land Law—will be able to solve the problem of food production in double-quick time. The big shortfall in production since 1972 has been variously explained: the travails of the changeover to a new era in land ownership and production the persistent drought (and partial drought which has curtailed cultivation many areas, and the activities of so-called "reactionary saboteurs" in the bureaucracy and elsewhere. These are the stock excuses. Each of them contain a partial truth. But, will not satisfy persons who are genuinely interested in the present and the future of the country. The question is why paddy production has dropped so markedly. The drought alone cannot fully explain the drop. Anyone going round the traditional paddy producing areas, if one is honest with oneself (most administrators are not), will realise that farmers and the peasant community are not cultivating as much paddy as they possibly can or even as much of other possible crops: and that this shortfall will continue. The public sector agricultural units will not come up to scratch for a long time to come. If the private landowning farming community responds to the call for increased production, Sri Lanka will be self-sufficient in food. But why are farmers so apathetic? Why have they not been induced to cultivate more paddy? We would invite comments and contributions on this question from our readers. We have a jackal, a *nariya*, on the cover and we would like our readers to tell us why we have coupled the *nariya* with the drop in food production. Interesting and pertinent replies will be published in the *Tribune*. Why is the *Nariya*, in our view, the symbol of the drop in paddy production?

## EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

# Bandaranaike Centrism

**BANDARANAIAKE COMMEMORATION DAY** comes this year at a time when a new political situation has begun to emerge in Sri Lanka. The continuing interest in SWRD Bandaranaike, in what he said, in what he did, and the impact he had on the contemporary history of the island, is testimony he has earned an outstandingly pre-eminent place among the galaxy of people who have shaped the destinies of Sri Lanka through the ages. His greatness as a man of letters, as a politician and a statesman transcends generations. His niche in history will survive as long civilised life flourishes in Ceylon.

*Tribune* had recognised the importance of S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike ever since it began publication in May 1954. At that time there were, broadly speaking, three political options before the common people. There were the mirage-like day dreams of the orthodox ultra-conservatives whose programmes and policies were already anachronisms, if not antediluvian. Then, there were the boastful ramblings of the ultra-revolutionaries who promised the millenium in one swift fell blow. And, finally, there was the centrist middle path to democratic socialism. To many S. W. R. D.'s middle path politics, although the latest trend on the political scene, seemed not only the least harmful of the three possible evils but also one which could carry (with suitable emotional trappings about the language and religion of the majority community) the bulk of the voters in a general election.

It is significant that this centrist trend had begun to dominate in practically all newly independent countries in the region. In South Asia and Southeast Asia, the mainstream of political thinking and action began to converge on centrist policies (and programmes) seeking to find ways and means to reach out to various kinds of egalitarian societies under the magic spell of socialism that had

brought unbelievable changes in what was once the Tsarist empire, in Eastern Europe and in China. Many of the newly independent countries of the region had started off with parliamentary democracy on the western model but only a few (India and Ceylon) have remained "democratic" so far, whilst many others have edged into totalitarianism of different kinds (Pakistan, Burma, Indonesia), but even totalitarian regimes could be sustained only on centrist economic programmes with over-sized emotional claptrap to beguile the masses.

SWRD and the SLFP represented this centrist trend in Ceylon just as the Gandhis, Nehrus and the Congress were the bedrock of centrism in India. And, there is no doubt that centrism has preserved "democracy", even in misshapen form, in India, and Ceylon. So far as this country was concerned, it was SWRD and the SLFP that had succeeded in keeping Ceylon on the middle path of parliamentarianism and democratic socialism. If Sir John Kotelawela had his way or if he had won the 1956 elections, with the two-thirds majority his astrologers and political advisers had promised him, this country would certainly have drifted into the orbit of CENTO and SEATO and gone the way Pakistan went. On the other hand, if the SLFP had not emerged as a liberal democratic (bourgeois) party to offer the common people a democratic way to socialism, the ultra-left wing idealists and romantics parading as "revolutionaries" might have dominated the scene and swept into oblivion with blood and savagery the diehard MI 5 cohorts of Sir John, and thereafter led this country through years of bloodbaths and internecine civil war.

Some pundits and theorists believe that power secured through the barrel of a gun alone is the only kind of power that could genuinely emancipate the under-privileged and exploited masses, but with the global balance of power tilting in favour of the socialist world (and the countries in the so-called Third World), the common people in many countries of the developing world have been at-

tracted by peaceful, parliamentary and democratic methods of change and development, even though the process may be gradual and slow.

S. W. R. D. BANDARANAIAKE had sensed this compelling desire of the common people to adopt centrist (middle path) policies to bring about the much-needed transformation of society. This is why SWRD was compelled to leave the UNP, but he did this gracefully (though DS had virtually kicked him out). His speech in Parliament, when he crossed over, was (and is) a classic as a political testament besides being an incisive interpretative analysis of the politics of that period. (Many who recently had to make similar statements on crossing over would have done well to read this speech. SWRD did not descend to abuse; libellous insinuations, smear campaigns and character assassination in order to show why the UNP did not want him and why he did not want to stay in the UNP. He had paid appropriate compliments to DS although he did not deserve them in the measure handed out by SWRD. The parting was bitter, but it was done with the decencies which make human life worth living).

SWRD and his SLFP did not make much headway in the snap (save the country from the flames of Marxism) General Elections in 1952 which Dudley had sprung upon the country shortly after his father's untimely death in order to show that he had popular backing in the Premier Stakes—the document by that name, we hope, will be published by some enterprising person after more of the leading dramatic personae of that sordid episode pass away have departed from this world. But SWRD knew where he was going and how he was going to get there. He mobilised the under-privileged of all communities and castes against the heavy-bottomed patriarches of the UNP. He formed a loose coalition (MEP) of such underprivileged on highly inflammable and emotional slogans. He even entered into a no-contest electoral agreement with the left-wing LSSP and CP. And he swept the polls in April 1956 to reduce the UNP to a rump of six.

Unfortunately, neither his coalition allies in the MEP nor his no-contest allies in the Left ever appreciated

the wisdom and validity of his centrist (middle path) policies. Some wanted to stampede the first Bandaranaike government to the extremes of language and religious chauvinism. This coupled with the provocative vituperative and adventurist policies of the UNP to exploit such extremist trends in the MEP, triggered the communal riots of 1958. The Left assumed an air of indifference towards the realities of the Government's policies (even nationalisation of bus transport and the port services) and claimed it was only interested in promoting the rights of the unionised workers on a sectarian basis by calling strikes at every turn. (The communal riots of May were preceded in April by LSSP-CP inspired strikes of the GCSU and other trade unions). The chauvinist extremists, the UNP and the LSSP-Left, called SWRD names and abused him for his middle path centrism. They had no alternative policies to offer but they felt that abuse was enough to debunk SWRD.

The communal riots engineered by diehard elements of many varieties from practically all parties and groups was a major attempt to destabilise the centrist movement which SWRD had set in motion in Ceylon. But this attempt failed and SWRD succeeded in re-establishing law and order before the end of 1958, but the fire which the extremists—in the MEP, in the UNP and in the Left—had directed against SWRD and his middle path policies, from all sides, had made it easy for assassins to shoot him on September 25, 1959. This was the second attempt to destabilise SWRD's middle path centrist policies. Many then believed that this attempt at de-stabilisation had succeeded.

Reactionaries on the one hand and Revolutionaries on the other hand, had, it is known, begun to find it difficult to destabilise centrist policies in this region. They had failed to destroy Bandaranaikeism in Ceylon and Nehruism in India through the communal riots, parliamentary defections, ministers' revolts and what not. It was only thereafter that they had thought that the assassination of

**Bandaranaike would eliminate the hold of middle path centrism in this island.**

The UNP believed that SWRD's centrism had been given a decent burial when his mortal remains were placed in a mausoleum in Horogolla. The UNP believed that it would be able to sweep the polls in March 1960 with Dudley Senanayake brought back to lead the party (from his temporary retirement after the August 1953 Hartal.) The LSSP was even more cocksure when it fielded 109 candidates and Dr. N. M. Perera and his supporters were certain that he would be the next Prime Minister. Mr. Philip Gunewardene's MEP had also run over a 100 candidates. The SLFP went reluctantly in to the fray because it had not yet been able to get over the trauma of the assassination of SWRD. Nevertheless, the SLFP was a close second to the UNP which was the largest single party but without a working majority. The LSSP's dreams of forming a majority Government by itself with NM as Prime Minister were shattered because the LSSP was able to win 10 seats only. The MEP fared no better.

AFTER THIS, it had begun to dawn on the LSSP and the CP that SWRD's centrism had great political validity in a developing third world country like Ceylon. (Incidentally, *Tribune* had recognised the significance and potentialities of middle path policies right from 1954 and for this *Tribune* had been abused by the UNP, on the one side, and the LSSP on the other—both these parties at that time, as now, believed that vulgar abuse, dirty smear campaigns and the libellous character assassination were enough to eliminate political enemies and intimidate and blackmail make papers like *Tribune* into silence. Even today, when the UNP has shown signs of change, the LSSP has not grown out of this habit, but abuse which succeeded in its blackmail in the early years no longer has the same damaging impact. And what is important is that common people today have no use for abuse or vulgarity any more—only a few degenerate white collar workers and some perverted intellectuals seem to think that vulgarly abusive slogans against the PM, Anura and the Rat-wattes will bring the revolution nearer.

This growing awareness of the importance of the SLFP had led to the no-contest electoral agreement between the SLFP and the Left Parties (with the MEP out of it) for the July 1960 elections. Under the leadership of Mrs. Bandaranaike, the SLFP was swept into power in a dramatic manner with an outstanding majority. But the LSSP (and to much smaller extent the CP) continued to snipe against Mrs. Bandaranaike Government with continuing polemical attacks and a series of semi-permanent strikes. But in this process, the realisation had begun to dawn on them that some kind of centrism mixed with emotionalised slogans on language and religion alone would pay dividends.

The attempt to get the three Left Parties, LSSP, MEP and the CP, together into the United Left Front in May-August 1963 was an attempt to infuse the bookish and unrealistic policies (and programmes) of the LSSP and CP with the appeal of MEP (Philip Gunawardene's) language and religious emotionalism. But before the ink on the ULF agreement (signed on August 5, 1963) had dried, the LSSP had left its two partners alone to join the SLFP in a two-party coalition in June 1964. Disillusioned, the MEP had drifted to the UNP (at this time Dudley had realised that only a coalition of several parties could win a majority in any Ceylon elections and offered many inducements to Phillip to join his coalition—in the same way he had won over elements from the SLFP itself.) The CP, however, had tailed behind the LSSP and had patiently supported the SLFP-LSSP coalition. This first coalition SLFP-LSSP government met with an unfortunate parliamentary defeat in December 1964 because the Government had sought to depart from the middle path policies of SWRD in the manner it had sought to take over Lake House and also in a number of other matters—under the influence of LSSP quick-revolution adventurism.

The UNP had won the 1965 elections for many reasons but one of them was that the SLFP-LSSP coalition had not pursued centrist middle path policies. In the Opposition, the SLFP, LSSP and the CP had come together (but if the UNP had followed a more flexible

and realistic policy towards its opponents, the United Front may never have come into being. But the dominant sections of the UNP had indulged in witch-hunting through brutal and dirty methods, and this had driven a large number who otherwise may have remained neutral to support the United Front.) The Common Programme of the United Front signed in 1968 was basically a document of compromise where the LSSP and CP had insisted on incorporating in it policies which were far from being centrist or middle path, but by using suitable idiom and jargon they were made to appear centrist. Such casuistry led to the different interpretations the different partners of the UF began to put forward in regard to some of the provisions of the Common Programme leading to stresses and crises inside the UF more specially after 1973.

In this 1970-75 period, there is no doubt that the middle path policies of SWRD and the SLFP had suffered a major eclipse and the LSSP view of the vaguely and unhappily worded Common Programme was accepted as the height of Bandaranaikeism through the demagogic rhetoric of that great LSSP advocate Dr. Colvin R. de Silva and the manipulative dexterity Dr. N. M. Perera was able to use from the commanding heights of the Treasury.

It is one thing to say that one has no use for Bandaranaike centrist, but it is another matter to pretend that sectarian and adventurist Trotskyite policies were the essence of Bandaranaike's middle path policies. But, by this device, the LSSP had been able to push through ultra-left and self-defeatingly unrealistic policies under the garb of Bandaranaikeism and the Common Programme. In this phase, the LSSP proclaimed itself a greater devotee of Bandaranaikeism than many veteran SLFP intellectuals who did not know how to stop the wholesale submergence of SLFP centrist in LSSP extremism.

On many occasions right from May 1970 onwards, *Tribune* had pointed out the dangers arising from LSSP adventurism. Each time we did this we were abused by the LSSP and were therefore misunderstood by the SLFP because such criticism on our part (really analysis about the policies that were being pursued by the LSSP) was regarded as being anti-government. Even during the

1965-70 period, our attempts to point out that SLFP centrism was being eliminated by hidden LSSP extremism was the cause of much misunderstanding about *Tribune's* views and role. And whenever we had pointed out that even the UNP was slowly drifting towards centrism—as many parties in India were doing—and spotlighted some UNP programmes and policies that had won popular acclaim because of their centrist validity, we were accused of having sold our satanic soul to the UNP.

THE ATTEMPT to mix extremism and centrism in the manner in which the LSSP has done has brought the country to the verge of economic doom. In India by way of contrast, Indira Gandhi's strictly centrist policies have brought great developmental and economic advances—in spite of more complex political problems. It is not possible to reach out to socialism through hotch-potch Trotskyite sectarianism as has been tried out in Ceylon after 1970. One way to attain socialism is to discard parliamentary democracy and for a "party of the peasants and workers" to grab dictatorial power through blood, violence and war, and transform society through *diktats* which would ultimately receive popular consensus. This is the road suggested by N. Shanmugathan and he roundly condemns the CP (and the LSSP) as revisionists who had sold their marxist souls (if they had any left) to the devil of parliamentary democracy. Many other ways have been suggested to attain Socialism and the Common Programme of the UF was one such attempt through a hotch-potch programme under the garb of Bandaranaike centrist. But this attempt has failed disastrously.

During the last two years, the SLFP which has politically matured and which has acquired new cadres of intellectuals and thinkers, has begun to re-think what has been done by the UF government in the period 1970-75. It is true that a great deal of weighty, attractive and radical legislation has been placed on the Statute Book, and some of it has been implemented. But hotch-potch policies have brought the country to the brink of economic disaster and internal political confrontations of the most dangerous nature.

Mrs. Bandaranaike's determination to re-assert the validity of realistic centrist policies, going even to the extent of parting company with the LSSP, is a clear indication that there is widespread pressure within the SLFP for a new adherence to Bandaranaike centrist. This is the real crux of the present political crisis.

It will be the supreme, and probably the final test, for Bandaranaike centrist. If its fails to deliver the goods especially in the field of economic and developmental matters in the next two years, the people of Sri Lanka (especially the younger generations now coming of age) will have no use for centrist or Bandaranaikeism. But if strictly centrist policies do better than the LSSP-orientated policies since 1970, they will become the dominating philosophy of this country for at least another 25 to 30 years. Even the UNP (the new UNP which emerging from the shadows of agonising re-appraisals) has seen the writing on the wall and is making every effort to give itself a centrist image.

*Tribune* is not an addict of centrist or centrist philosophy, but its pragmatic eclecticism has enabled it to recognise the potentialities of centrist (as compared to extremism, sectarianism and adventurism) as a major political force in Ceylon and also the whole of the developing world in the matter of winning mass popular support to take the common people forward definite objectives such as socialism. Centrist is a major reality in the current political situation and it cannot be wished away by indulging in personal abuse. Perhaps the most important contribution SWRD Bandaranaike has made to contemporary politics is that he has defined centrist policies for this island in a way that they have persisted even after his untimely death and they have also survived even after the eleven-year trauma of close association with sectarian adventurism of Trotskyist leftwing vintage.

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## CHRONICLE

Sept. 10—Sept. 16

A 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; TOC—Times of Ceylon; DM—Dinamina; LD—Lankadipa; JD—Janadina; VK—Virakesari; ATH—Aththa; SM—Silumina; SLD—Sri Lankadipa; JS—Janasathiya.

**WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 10:** A summit between the leaders of the Communist Party (Moscow wing) and the SLFP will be held shortly to design a program for the future as a United Front in the absence of the LSSP: this meeting will be attended by the Prime Minister on behalf of the SLFP and Mr. Pieter Keuneman, Minister of Housing and Construction and the President of the Communist Party, on behalf of the Communist Party—VK. The Chief Government Whip and the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, Mr. K. B. Ratnayake, following a directive issued by the Prime Minister has informed all members of the Government Parliamentary Group to be present in the National State Assembly on sitting days and exercise extreme vigilance at all times till the termination of the day's work in order to counter any possible Opposition manoeuvres—CDM. The SLFP backbenchers had requested the Government to purge its administrative machinery of all LSSP, elements—CDM. The SLFP Parliamentary Group will meet on the 17th of this month and will discuss in detail the new political situation after the LSSP was ousted from the United Front—LD. The leader of the LSSP Dr. N. M. Perera, with the support of the independent MPs in the Opposition is making attempts to become the leader of the Opposition and for this he will seek the support of the Federal Party too—LD. The JCTUO which met for the first time since the ousting of the LSSP from the Government yesterday decided to go ahead unitedly: the JCTUO is a body of trade union organisations constituted by representatives from Sri Lanka Freedom Party, the Lanka Samasamaja Party and the Communist Party (Moscow wing)—ATH. The *Janadina* editorially commented that it will not be a wonder if the new Minister of Finance who just returned from America and who was sworn in America, does something to ensure a victory for the SLFP in the next general elections resorting to actions which even the former Finance Ministers like Mr. J. R. Jayewardene and Mr. Wanninayake did not do. The General Secretary of the Revolutionary Marxist party, Mr. Bala Tampoe, in a statement to the newspapers said that it was the Prime Minister who should take up the responsibility for breaking the United Front and said that the capitalist class did not like the Finance and Plantation portfolios to be in the hands of the LSSP at a time when the capitalists are struggling in an economic crisis—VK. The new Minister of Transport, Mr. P. B. G. Kalugalle, decided that in future jobs in the C.T.B should be equally distributed to applicants from all electorates—DM. Egypt and Israel yesterday began working out details of how to implement their interim peace agreement which was signed in Geneva five days ago.

**THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 11:** Finance Minister, Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike, yesterday paid his first official visit to the Ministry which he quit 13 years ago when he resigned from the Finance portfolio and conferred with officials for over four hours: the Minister told the *Daily News* he was assessing the situation. The multi-million rupee bus terminal at the Central Bus Station in Colombo is to be reviewed: Transport Ministry sources said yesterday the cost is being reviewed as queries have been raised whether the country could afford such heavy expenditure on a project of this nature at this juncture—CDM. The Minister of Finance, Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike, met the Prime Minister at her official residence, Temple Trees, and discussed several matters including the bringing down of the cost of living: consequent to these discussions it is expected that very soon prices of several essential commodities will come down—VK. The LSSP, at the end of this month, will commence talks with the Left movements in the country and other trade unions on the question of forming a United Leftist Front—VK. The *Aththa* editorially welcomed the decision of the JCTUO to work unitedly and said that it was a good sign that the working class remained united. The Government decided to take stern measures on those who employ and give shelter to illicit immigrants—LD. The President of the Vidyalankara Campus of the University of Sri Lanka yesterday withdrew the suspension orders on 11 of the 15 undergraduates: these undergraduates were suspended indefinitely following disturbances at the Campus on August 22: the suspensions were withdrawn after the students concerned apologised to the authorities and the President said that the suspension on the other four students too would be withdrawn after they tender their apology—CDN. The International Labour Organisation's Eighth Congress of the Asian Region will be held from September 29 at the BMICH—LD. President Ford of US vetoed a Bill to extend for six months Price Controls on about two third of all the oil drilled in the United States: he said that to have signed the measure would have prolonged US reliance on foreign oil.

**FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 12:** According to the *Daily Mirror*, the President of the UNP, Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, has already told his party men to be in a state of preparedness for a general election: all party branches have been instructed to warn their members of the possibility of an election being held at any time. The Central Committee of the Sri Lanka Communist Party (Moscow Wing) will meet today to decide on its future in the United Front and it is learnt that a section of the C.P. is against the idea of staying in the UF—VK. According to the *Janadina* several UNP staff officers in government institutions have joined hands with reactionary elements in the SLFP and were getting prepared to sack progressive minded workers in state institutions. The LSSP holds a mass rally at Hyde Park, Colombo today and the three LSSP Ministers who were removed from the Cabinet will address the rally—ATH. The Central committee of the UNP of the Dedigama electorate has written to the President of the UNP, Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, to lift the suspension orders imposed on Mr. Rukman Senanayake, MP for Dedigama—DM. The Ministry of Irrigation, Power and Highways, in a statement to the press, said that ninety percent of the acquisition of private lands in Polgolla, Bowatenne and Kalawewa areas under the

first stage of the Mahaweli Diversion scheme has been completed and this part of the project which has been estimated at Rs. 330 million is expected to be finished on the date targeted for completion i.e. in November—CDN. The Director General of Education said that there will be no change whatsoever in the new NCGE examination that is to be held in December this year: complaints had been made by parents of 180,000 odd students sitting this examination that syllabuses have not been covered fully and as such they wanted some changes made in the examination—CDM. The Colombo Ayurvedic Medical College will be raised to the state of a University from the beginning of next year—DM. According to the *Virakesari* the popular English daily *Madras Hindu* in an editorial has said that if Mrs. Bandaranaike, Prime Minister, understands the problems of the Tamils and comes to an understanding with that community her position in the country will be stabilised. Mr. Sanjay Gandhi, son of the Indian Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, has delivered a stinging attack on the Indian Government's economic policies. Egypt denied a Palestine Radio report from Baghdad of an attempted assassination of President Anwar Sadat.

**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 13:** The Ministry of Justice refuted a statement by the former Minister of Finance, Dr. N. M. Perera, in the NSA on September 3 that budget proposals decided upon on July 16, 1975 had still not passed into law because of delays on the part of the Legal Draftsman's Department: the Ministry said that on no occasion had there been any protest by any Minister that legislation regarding budget proposals had been delayed by the Legal Draftsman when progress reports from his department on legislation sent by every Ministry were brought up before the Cabinet—CDN. Mr. T. B. Ilangaratne, Minister of Foreign and Internal Trade, together with a team of officials will visit Peking in November this year to finalise next year's trade protocol with China under the Sino-Sri Lanka rubber for rice barter agreement: a Soviet trade team headed by the Soviet Trade Minister will visit Sri Lanka in January for talks with Mr. Ilangaratne and to conclude the Soviet-Sri Lanka bilateral trade agreement for the next five years and the trade protocol for next year—CDN. The LSSP leaders addressed a mass rally held at the Hyde park yesterday: Dr. N. M. Perera, former Minister of Finance, addressing a meeting said that the LSSP though left out of the UF has a bright future because the people wanted socialism: he further said that the present Government will not last for more than six months because it was playing hide and seek with the help of mudalalis—CDM. According to the *Janadina* Dr. Perera said at yesterday's meeting that though the Prime Minister has said that the Executive Committee of the SLFP approved the removal of the LSSP from the UF he would like to remind the masses that Hitler too had a group of followers behind him who approved all decisions taken by him. The *Janadina* editorially said that the nation will never forget the services done by the three LSSP ministers in the development of economy, transport and plantation industry. The Central Committee of the Communist party decided that no new agreements would be signed between the party and the SLFP and the CP would press the SLFP to implement active socialist policies: the Centreal Committee also decided not to quit the government and to meet the Prime Minister on September 15 at

the Temple Trees to clarify the party's position in the United Front—VK. All 13 accused in the case arising out of attacks on the US Embassy in Sri Lanka and the murder of a Police Inspector were yesterday acquitted by a High Court Judge on a unanimous verdict of not guilty by the Jury—ATH. The Government has decided to do away with five public holidays from next year: Deepavali festival day, Mahasivaratri day, Good Friday and Ramazan festival days will not be public holidays from next year—LD. Mr. G. I. D. Glenville, representative of the sterling company estates to be nationalised, will hold talks with Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Hector Kobbekaduwa, on September 16 in Colombo on the question of compensation to be paid to these sterling company estates—LD. The Soviet representative in the United Nations on Thursday proposed an international treaty banning all nuclear weapon tests. Egypt yesterday closed down the Voice of Palestine Radio station—24 years after it announced that President Anwar Sadat had been the target of an assassination attempt.

**SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 14:** The former Minister of Finance, Dr. N. M. Perera, in an interview with the *Times of Ceylon Sunday Illustrated* has said that devaluation was not the answer to Sri Lanka's economic ills: he has further said that in spite of the IMF officials' constant pressing for devaluation he has always fought against the idea. Finance Minister, Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike, addressing a public meeting in Bandara-wela said that Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, President of the UNP, had asked the people to be ready for a general election but he wished to ask Mr. Jayewardene whether the UNP would work for the welfare of the people apart from remaining in power, in the event of victory—ST. The Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, will preside today at a mass rally at the Bogambara Grounds, Kandy, to celebrate the 24th anniversary of the SLFP—CO. The Government is making arrangements to hold a massive festival of music and dance to the delegates of the Non-aligned nations conference to be held in August next year: the Government hopes that this will be the biggest ever festival of music and drama ever to be held in this country and all items at this festival will be confined to the traditional Ceylonese culture—SM. The granting of housing loans which was suspended for some time now will recommence from tomorrow—SM. The leaders of the LSSP are actively engaged to bring a settlement to the dispute within party ranks who hold different views on the ousting of the LSSP from the UF; a section of the LSSP held the view that Dr. Perera should not have uttered what he had said at the Hartal commemoration meeting held on August 12 while the other section was of view that the Prime Minister was wrong in sacking the LSSP Ministers—SLD. The selection to the Universities, on the line of standardization of marks will be reviewed by a ministerial committee and it is expected that efficiency of students at the GCE A Level examination will be given first preference in selections—VK. Mr. Bala Tampoe, General Secretary of the Ceylon Mercantile Union, in a statement to the press said that the LSSP by signing an agreement with the SLFP in 1968 had deceived the working class and the peasants of this country and in turn now they were deceived: he further said it looked funny for them to say now that the Prime Minister did not have experience in politics—VK. The Colombo Hindu Youth Association has lodged



strong protest to the Government on the decision to do away with five holidays from next year—VK. Portugal's military rulers, reacting to persistent rumours that ex-President Antonio De Spínola might return to Portuguese territory, said he would be arrested and tried if he did so. Police detected a man carrying a revolver just before President Ford was scheduled to address a meeting in St. Louis: commenting on this the President said that he will never allow a government elected by the people to be held hostage at the point of a gun and therefore has no intension of cutting short his public appearances.

**MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 15:** Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, addressing the mammoth gathering at the Bogambara Grounds Kandy, yesterday said that even though the United Front did not exist any more the Government would go ahead with its progressive policies and keep the promises made to the people: she further said that even during the period 1960 to 64 when the SLFP was the sole party constituting the Government it implemented many progressive policies such as the nationalisation of petroleum, insurance etc: she added that even though the LSSP was now accusing her of capitulating to the Americans she was not under America or any other country simply because the LSSP left the Government it does not mean that the Government was going rightist: this meeting was held to commemorate the 24th SLFP anniversary—CDN. The Central Committee of the Communist Party (Moscow Wing) in a statement said that the committee was of the opinion that the overwhelming majority of the CP were unhappy about recent developments and were seeking ways and means by which the unity of the progressive forces can be re-established in this difficult and complicated situation: the statement was issued by Mr. K. P. Silva, Chief Organiser, of the Communist Party—CDN. The *Daily Mirror* posed the question whether some bureaucrats had blundered in drawing up the holidays for 1976 where five holidays of Hindus, Muslims and Catholics had been omitted: the paper further said that the Government at no stage decided to do away with these holidays. The Ministry of Finance directed all heads of institutions and departments under this ministry to submit a report of all new appointments and promotions during the last six week period—LD. Dr. N. M. Perera, former Minister of Finance, speaking at a meeting in Panadura said that it should be found out whether the taking of oaths of Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike as Minister of Finance in Washington before the Ambassador of Sri Lanka in the United States was legal—JD. Nearly 18,000 students have qualified for selection to the University on the results of the GCE A Level examination results which was released this week: out of this only 3,600 students will find accommodation to the university—DM. Continued disagreement between the rich industrialised nations and the poor developing countries forced the cancellation yesterday of a scheduled special meeting of the United Nations General Assembly.

**TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16:** Finance Minister, Mr. Dias Bandaranaike, told yesterday that he would present the 6th Budget of the Government on November 5th and incidentally this day was his birthday: he further said that this was the day fixed by the former Minister of Finance, Dr. N. M. Perera—CDN. Yesterday the new Finance Minister visited the Treasury and met

the staff there: in the course of his discussions with his staff the Minister said that he would completely re-organise the administrative and routine work in his new Ministry in the next three weeks—CDN. According to the *Daily Mirror*, all indications are that budget this year would grant some measure of relief to the masses. The re-constitution of the Cabinet is expected to be finalised this evening and the new Cabinet is likely to be sworn in tomorrow and is expected to include at least three new faces—CDM. At a mass rally held on Sunday Mr. Leslie Goonewardene former LSSP Minister of Transport and the MP for Panadura, invited the Communist Party of Sri Lanka, the progressive forces in the SLFP and all other left movements in the country to join hands together to form a United Left Front—JD. The *Janadina* commenting on the Prime Minister's speech at Kandy where she said that she would neither go left nor right but would follow the middle path policies of late Mr. Bandaranaike said that this Middle Path policies would never solve the problems of the country. According to the *Aththa* the price of sugar and flour could now be reduced because the price of these two items had come down in the World Market. The *Aththa* editorially said that those SLFP speakers who said that the LSSP has now stopped blaming the UNP and instead were blaming the SLFP in turn blame only the LSSP for everything and not the UNP: the editorial further said that this attack on each other will strengthen the UNP's reactionary moves and the masses must be united in defeating the reactionary moves of the UNP. The Minister of Finance was actively engaged in preparing a scheme where he expects to provide employment for 100,000 unemployed youths—VK. In view of the political situation in the country the Prime Minister has indefinitely postponed her trip to Asian countries: the Prime Minister was earlier scheduled to visit Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, and Japan to have discussions with heads of those states on the Non-aligned nations conference to be held in Colombo next August—VK. Mr. W. K. Samaradasa, an MMC of Colombo, belonging to the LSSP resigned from his party yesterday: in a statement to the press he detailed how the LSSP gave him a step-motherly treatment because he belonged to the lower rungs in the society—DM. Five Palestinians occupied the Egyptian Embassy in Madrid and said that they would blow up the building if Egypt did not denounce its ceasefire agreement with Israel: and the Palestinians held the Ambassador and two other officials as hostages: two senior officials from the Egyptian Foreign Ministry left for Madrid to obtain the release of the Ambassador and the officials held hostage. Delhi's High Court ruled in a Habeas Corpus appeal that the Government failed to satisfy that a leading journalist, Mr. Kuldip Nayar, Editor of a press news service, had been lawfully detained. The Soviet Union approached the Government of South Vietnam about establishing a naval base at Cam Ranh Bay according to *Time* magazine.

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## NEXT WEEK

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- WHAT'S GOING ON IN LAKE HOUSE?
- FOREIGN COMMENTS ON U. F. BREAK UP

**TOWARDS A NEW  
ECONOMIC ORDER—3**

**Trade,  
Development And  
Production**

By Dr. Henry Kissinger

THE THIRD BASIC AREA for our attention is trade. Improving the world trading system will magnify our success in every other sphere of the development effort. Trade has been a driving force in the unprecedented expansion of the world economy over the last thirty years. Comparative advantage and specialization, the exchange of technology and the movement of capital, the spur to productivity that competition provides—these are central elements of efficiency and progress. Open trade promotes growth and combats inflation in all countries. For developing nations, trade is perhaps the most important engine of development. Increased earnings from exports help pay for both the imports that are essential to expand production and the food for growing populations. These earnings reduce dependence on aid, limit the accumulation of debt, and help finance essential borrowing. Growing export industries can provide jobs and increase the government revenues necessary for development programs. It is no accident, therefore, that the success stories in development of the past three decades have been those very countries that have taken full advantage of the opportunities in world trade.

But today the global trading system is threatened by the most serious recession since the Second World War. We face the danger of proliferating artificial barriers, and unfair competition reminiscent of the 1930's which contributed to economic and political disaster. Every day that economic recovery is delayed the temptation grows to restrict imports, subsidize exports, and control scarce commodities. Concerted action is necessary now to safeguard and improve the open trading system on which the future well-being of all our countries depends. The multilateral trade negotiations now taking place in

Geneva are central to this effort. They will have a profound impact on the future of the world economy and the prospects for development. If these negotiations fail, all countries risk a slide into an increasingly fragmented, closed world of nationalism, blocs, and mounting frictions. If they succeed, all countries will benefit and there will be major progress toward a co-operative and prosperous world. Many of the less-developed nations are emerging as important commercial powers. But developing countries need assistance to take better advantage of trading opportunities, especially to help them open up new markets. In revising rules to govern trade we must take account of their particular needs. In this connection regional, trading associations can help many small countries by providing the economies of scale which result from larger markets. Thus success in the negotiations depends critically on promoting the interests of the developing countries. For if they do not help to make the rules, assume part of the responsibility to maintain a stable trade system and share in the benefits of trade, the rules will be subject to increasing challenge, the stability of the system undermined and the benefits for all nations jeopardized.

THE UNITED STATES therefore, believes that a major goal of the multilateral trade negotiations should be to make the trading system better serve development goals. Let me briefly outline our policy. First, there must be fundamental structural improvement in the relationship of the developing countries to the world trading system. In the earlier stages of their development, they should receive special treatment through a variety of means—such as references, favourable concessions and exceptions which reflect their economic status. But as they progress to a higher level of development, they must gradually accept the same obligations of reciprocity and stable arrangements that other countries undertake. At some point they must be prepared to compete on more equal terms, even as they derive growing benefits. Second, we must improve opportunities for the manufacturing sectors of developing countries. These provide the most

promising new areas for exports at the critical stage in development but the tariffs of industrial countries are a substantial obstacle. To ease this problem the United States has agreed to join other industrial countries in instituting generalized tariff preferences to permit developing countries enhanced access to the markets of industrialized nations. I am pleased to announce today that the United States program will be put into effect on January 1, 1976. And before that date, we will begin consultations and practical assistance to enable exporting countries to benefit from the new trade opportunities in the American market—the largest single market for the manufactured goods of developing countries.

Third, in keeping with the Tokyo declaration, we should adapt rules of non-tariff barriers to the particular situation of developing countries. In setting international standards for government procurement practices, for example, the United States will negotiate special consideration for the developing countries. We will also negotiate on the basis that under prescribed conditions, certain subsidies may be permitted without triggering countervailing duties for a period geared to achieving particular development objectives. Fourth, we will work for early agreement on tariffs for tropical products, which are a major source of earnings for the developing world. Moreover, the United States will implement its tariff cuts on these products as soon as possible. Finally, we are ready to join with other participants in Geneva to negotiate changes in the system of protection in the industrialized countries that favours the import of raw materials over other goods. Many countries impose low or no duties on raw materials and high duties on manufactured or processed goods, the tariff protection increases or "escalates" with the degree of processing. Nothing could be better calculated to discourage and limit the growth of processing industries in developing countries. The United States will give high priority in the Geneva negotiations to reducing these barriers.

The developing countries have obligations in return. The world needs a system in which no nation, developed or developing, arbitra-

## Primary Products

rily withholds or interferes with normal exports of materials. This practice—by depriving other countries of needed goods—can trigger unemployment, cut production, and fuel inflation. It is therefore as disruptive as any of the other trade barriers I have discussed. We urge negotiations on rules to limit and govern the use of export restraints, a logical extension of existing rules on imports. The United States will join others in negotiating supply access commitments as part of the reciprocal exchange of concessions. But commodities can be addressed only in part in the context of the trade negotiations. For some serious commodity problems, special arrangements and different institutional structures are required. Let me now turn to that subject.

**EXPORTS OF PRIMARY PRODUCTS**—raw materials and other commodities—are crucial to the incomes of developing countries. These earnings can lift living standards above bare subsistence; generate profits to support the first steps of industrialization; and provide tax revenues for education, health, and other social programs for development. The history of the United States—and many other countries—confirms the importance of commodities. But this path can be precarious in an uncertain global environment. Those developing countries which are not oil exporters rely on primary commodities for nearly two-thirds of their export earnings. Yet their sales of raw materials and agricultural products have not grown as fast as those of industrial countries. Agricultural commodities, particularly, are vulnerable to the whims of weather and swings of worldwide demand. The market in minerals is especially sensitive to the pendulum of boom and bust in the industrial countries. The result is a cycle of scarcity and glut of under-investment and over-capacity. Developing countries are hit hard by commodity cycles also as consumers; higher prices for energy imports, swings in the price and supply of food, and greater costs for other essential raw materials have been devastating blows, soaking up aid funds and the earnings by which they hoped to finance imports. All this can make a mockery of development

But the problems of commodities are not the problems only of developing countries. The industrialized countries are in fact the largest exporters of food and most minerals. Gyrating prices complicate economic decisions in industrial countries. And consumers in industrial countries have painfully learned that high commodity prices leave their inflationary impact long after the commodity market has turned around. Therefore, both industrial and developing countries would benefit from more stable conditions of trade and a expansion of productive capacity in commodities. Many solutions have been put forward to benefit producers of particular products—cartelization, price indexing, commodity agreements and other methods. But reality demonstrates the interdependence of all our economies, and therefore the necessity for approaches that serve global rather than narrow interests.

The most vital commodity in the world is food. The United States is its largest producer and exporter. We recognize our responsibility. We have also sought to make international collaboration in food a model for realistic and co-operative approaches to other international economic issues. The United States policy is now one of maximum production. At home, we want a thriving farm economy and moderate prices for consumers. Internationally, we wish co-operative relations with nations that purchase from us, an open and growing market, and abundant supplies to meet the needs of the hungry through both good times and bad. For hundreds of millions of people, food security is the single most critical need in their lives; for many it is a question of life itself. But food security means more than emergency relief to deal with crop failures, natural disasters and pockets of famine. It means reasonable stability in the availability of food in commercial markets, so that harvest failures in some parts of the world will not make food impossibly expensive elsewhere. We have seen with dramatic frequency in recent years how the international food market, strained to capacity, can shake the international economy. Its fluctuations have accelerated inflation, devastated developments plans, and

wreaked havoc with human lives. Yet in good times, the world community has not summoned the will to take obvious corrective steps to stabilize the market structure.

The United States believes that a global approach to food security—which contains elements that can apply to other commodities—should follow these basic principles: (1) The problem must be approached globally, comprehensively, and co-operatively, by consultation and negotiation among all significant producers and consumers; (2) Producers should recognize the global interest in stability of supply; and consumers should recognize the interest of producers in stability of markets and earnings; (3) Special consideration should be given to the needs of developing countries; and (4) Where volatile demand is combined with limited ability to make short-term increases in production, buffer stocks may be the best approach to achieving greater security for both consumers and producers.

**AT THE WORLD FOOD CONFERENCE** last November, which was convened at our initiative, the United States proposed a comprehensive international co-operative approach to providing food security. We proposed an international system of nationally-held grain reserves, to meet emergencies and improve the market. The United States has since then offered specific proposals and begun negotiations. But the international effort lagged when improved harvests seemed to diminish the immediate danger of worldwide shortage. My government today declares that it is time to create this reserve system. If we do not, future crises are inevitable.

Specifically, we propose: (1) To meet virtually all potential shortfalls in food grains production, total world reserves must reach at least 30 million tons of wheat and rice. We should consider whether a similar reserve is needed in coarse grains. (2) Responsibility for holding reserves should be allocated fairly, taking into account wealth, production and trade. The United States is prepared to hold a major share. (3) Acquisition and release of reserves should be governed by quantitative standards

such as anticipated surpluses and shortfalls in production. (4) Full participants in the system should receive assured access to supplies. Among major producers, full participation should require complete exchange of information and forecasts. (5) Special assistance should be extended to developing countries that participate, to enable them to meet their obligation to hold a portion of global reserves.

The United States is ready to negotiate the creation of such a system. Let us move ahead rapidly. And let us apply the same approach of co-operation to other primary commodities that are similarly beset by swings of price and supply—and that are similarly essential to the global economy. There is no simple formula that will apply equally to all commodities. The United States therefore proposes to discuss new arrangements in individual commodities on a case-by-case basis. Buffer stocks can be an effective technique to moderate instability in supplies and earnings. On the other hand, price-fixing arrangements distort the market, restrict production, and waste resources for everyone. It is developing countries that can least afford this waste. Restricted production idles the costly equipment and economic infrastructure that takes years to build. Artificially high prices lead consumers to make costly investment in domestic substitutes, ultimately eroding the market power of the traditional producers.

Accordingly, the United States proposes the following approach to commodity arrangements: (1) We recommend that a consumer-producer forum be established for every key commodity to discuss how to promote the efficiency, growth, and stability of its market. This is particularly important in the case of grains, as I have outlined. It is also important in copper where priority should be given to creating a forum for consumer-producer consultation. (2) The first new formal international agreement being concluded is tin. We have participated actively in its negotiation. President Ford has authorized me to announce that the United States intends to sign the Tin Agreement, subject to Congressional consultations and ratification. We welcome its emphasis on buffer stocks, its avoi-

dance of direct price-fixing, and its balanced voting system. We will retain our right to sell from our strategic stockpiles, and we recognize the right of others to maintain a similar program. (3) We are participating actively in negotiations on coffee. We hope they will result in a satisfactory new agreement that reduces the large fluctuations in prices and supplies entering the market. (4) We will also join in the forthcoming cocoa and sugar negotiations. Their objective will be to reduce the risks of investment and moderate the swings in prices and supplies. (5) We will support liberalization of the International Monetary Fund's financing of buffer stocks, to assure that this facility is available without reducing their drawing rights.

I have already announced by government's broad proposal of a development security facility—a more fundamental approach to stabilizing the overall earnings of countries dependent on commodities trade. My government also believes that an effective approach to the commodities problem requires a comprehensive program of investment to expand worldwide capacity in minerals and other critical raw materials. This is basic to the health of both industrial and developing economies. There are presently no shortages in most basic raw materials; nor are any likely in the next two or three years. But the adequacy of supplies in years to come will be determined by investment decisions taken now. Because the technology for processing lower-grade ores is extremely complex, and the financing requirements for major raw material investments are massive, new projects take several years to complete. In some countries, the traditional source of funds—private foreign investment—is no longer as welcome, nor are investors as interested, as in the past.

The United States therefore proposes a major new international effort to expand raw materials resources in developing countries. The World Bank and its affiliates, in concert with private sources, should play a fundamental role. They can supply limited amounts of capital directly; more importantly, they can use their technical managerial and financial expertise

to bring together funds from private and public sources. They can act as intermediary between private investors and governments between private and public effort by providing cross guarantees on performance. World Bank loans could fund government projects, and provide for the need infrastructure, while the International Finance Corporation could join private enterprise in providing loans and equity capital. The World Bank group should aim to mobilize 2 billion dollars in private and public capital annually. In addition, the United States will contribute to and actively support one new United Nations revolving fund for natural resources. This fund will encourage the worldwide exploration and exploitation of minerals, and thus promote one of the most promising endeavors of economic development.

(To Be Concluded)

## GAME RANGERS AND PARK WARDENS

### Wild Life Conservation

— a comprehensive resolution —

The following resolution was adopted at a meeting of Game Rangers Association (which includes Park wardens) held at 10 am. on September 1, 1975 at the wildlife Nature Protection Society headquarters on Chaitiya Road, Colombo I.

We the members of the Game Rangers Association, of the Department of Wild Life Conservation, do hereby affirm that we have lost all confidence in the present administration of the Department of Wild Life Conservation for the reasons given in the annexure which follows. (Excerpts of which are published below—Ed.)

In view of these contentions, we the members of this Association resolve that since the actions of the department's directorate have failed to take adequate steps to conserve the wild life of the nation and in

addition brought ridicule upon the department and its officers on the floor of the National State Assembly, in the National Press and in the eyes of the General Public, a solution to the maladministration of the department has to be found immediately.

Therefore, we further resolve that to re-establish the prestige of the department and to safeguard the wild life of the nation, the Government be requested to implement the L. B. de Silva Salaries & Cadres Commission recommendation and amalgamate the department with the National Zoological Gardens. We further resolve that the amalgamated departments be placed in charge of the present Director of the National Zoological Gardens, Mr. W. L. E. de Alwis, a qualified scientist and conservationist of international repute, who efficiently and impartially administered the two departments for five years (1965-1970) and in whom we have absolute confidence and to whom we will willingly extend our fullest co-operation.

1. The steady deterioration in the administration of the department has caused disruption, disunity, dissension and frustration among the field staff in general and our membership in particular.

(a) The department had appointed Arts Graduates as Grade I Rangers on the Graduate Trainee Salary scale. These appointments have been made contrary to the Gazette notification No: 86 of 16.11.73 which specified science Graduates. The Director has also designated these officers as Game Rangers (Grade I) contrary to the L. B. de Silva Salaries and Cadres Commission recommendation that they be designated Graduate Trainee Guides and placed them on a Salary scale on par with Grade II Rangers.

One of these Graduate Trainee Guides, has been recently appointed as Game Ranger Grade I over several senior Game Rangers with 18 to 25 years of service.

(b) These Graduate Trainee Guides are being kept at the Head Office in Colombo and are not performing any duties connected with wild life conservation.

In addition to these officers, two other Game Rangers (one of whom has now being appointed as a Taxidermist inspite of having no qualifications for this appointment) are also being kept in the head office. These officers, it is claimed, form part of the "Flying Squad" whose record of detection and prosecution have been derided by the press and is well worth investigating...

2. The neglect of the conservation programme stems from the ignorance of the fundamentals in wild life conservation. This policy has endangered the wild life of this nation which has offered protection to wild animals from time immemorial.

(a) The carrying out of an unfettered policy of commercialisation in our National Parks which are contrary to all universally accepted principles of wild life conservation and park management. These policies are leading to the inevitable destruction of these National Parks evidence of which is already clearly seen.

(b) The neglect of detective work as a result of the closure of a large number of ranges in well known poaching areas; withdrawal of vehicles from the field for use of the directorate in Colombo; the retention of favoured Game Rangers in the head office, has resulted in the increase of poaching activity all over the island and the destruction of bear, deer, sambur, peafowl, flamingo, jungle fowl and leopard whose skins are being smuggled abroad on a large scale.

(c) The deliberate neglect of Elephant Control work in the country by withholding competent staff, vehicles, travelling, thunderflashes and other equipment necessary for such activity. The deliberate dis-organisation of Elephant Control work has resulted in the destruction of both food crops and elephants.

3. Another major cause of dissatisfaction amongst the members of our Association, is the bringing into the directorate of two Veterinarians for the reasons that:

(a) By Circular No: 34 the Director stated that the prime responsibility of Mr. Shelton Atapattu would be, "studies for the con-

servation of elephants"; "studies of species population in our Parks"; "studies on maintaining balances between predators and prey;" "studies on bird migrations and pathological studies on dead animals" amongst other things. None of these duties have been carried out ....

(b) The disgrace brought upon the department and its officers by the capture operations in a most negligent, inefficient and callous manner resulting in the death of deer at Horogolla; elephants at Angunukolapelessa and buffalo at Yala. These massacres were highlighted in the National State Assembly and the national press resulting the department being disgraced in the public eye in Sri Lanka and abroad.

(c) The Department's involvement in the following matters should be specifically investigated; (i) Neglect in post-capture care of the Minneriya Tusker (ii) Purchase of excessive quantities of drugs for the treatment of this tusker and failing to use them on the animal (iii) Illegal and irregular sale of this tusker for Rs. 20,000 (iv) Neglect of duty as regards injured elephant of Meegolawewa (Polonnaruwa) which died unnecessarily (v) The neglect of the injured elephant at Kondawatana Tank (Amparai) inspite of repeated request by the G. A. Amparai for the past eight months. (vi) The order to shoot (with two S.G. cartridges), burn and destroy an elephant at Tabbowa recently (vii) The instructions concerning the loading of an injured elephant on to a RVDB Scammel which led to its death when it toppled off the vehicle and died (viii) The major role in the massacre of elephants at Angunukolapelessa and (ix) Buffalo at Yala...

4. The Department is also guilty of the unconscionable waste of public funds in the most arrogant manner.

(a) By constructing a bridge across the Menik Ganga at Warahana, which serves no useful purpose to either man or beast. (ii) By constructing huge, ugly and expensive gates at the entrances of the National Parks at Ruhuna and Wilpattu. (iii) By constructing circuit bunga-

lows and officers quarters without proper supervision which has resulted in shoddy work being carried out by the contractors. These bungalows have also been sited at places which have no water and some of these sites chosen by unqualified people who have no idea whatsoever about the siting of park bungalows.....

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## MORE AND MORE

# Elephants Die Unnecessarily

The Daily Mirror of September 17 had a true story under the heading THE SLAUGHTER GOES ON ...NINE ELEPHANTS DIE IN TWO WEEKS. The report read as follows:

*This photograph (of a dead elephant—Ed.) was taken last Sunday half a mile from the Wild Life office at Palatupana, Yala. The elephant was lying dead in small pool of water fifteen yards from the Yala-Kirinda road. It was clearly visible to all tourists passing by as they drove in and out of the Yala National Park.*

The park is closed this month to local visitors. There was no evidence of an autopsy having been held at the time the photograph was taken. The elephant has been lying in this pool since September 10, according to villagers living nearby.

The press has highlighted in the past two weeks the death of two elephants at Amparai, five elephants at Palagala in the Anuradhapura, district the plight of an elephant stuck in the mud in an abandoned tank near Mankulam and the return of the herd that was nearly decimated (by capture) at Angunakolapelessa.

It is also reported that yet another elephant—peppered with SG pellets and hobbling on three legs—is stranded and unattended on island in the Senanayake Samudra. One more elephant has fallen dead near Gannoruwa and at least 14 of these majestic animals have died in the Anuradhapura district, since the beginning of this year.

Honourable gentlemen like Mr. Rodney Jonklaas (B.Sc.—Zoology, mark you!) and a former chief of the Wild Life Conservation Department, who wrote a notorious Advisory Council Memo believe (quite sincerely, no doubt) that Wild Life in the food growing areas should be destroyed to enable man to survive.

It is because of this approach that the Department had withdrawn all game rangers and wardens to a few reserves and to Colombo.

But this stupid policy has now raised an uproar. There is no reason why the surplus animals like elephants and buffaloes cannot be caught and tamed. We are publishing this week an article, with acknowledgements to the *Hindu*, how surplus elephants are caught and domesticated and later trained for work. Kerala's Forest Department uses these elephants for work and what is in excess is sold by auction. The same thing is done in the states of Mysore and Tamil Nadu. We have published a small item about the elephant training camps in Tamil Nadu.

The gentlemen of our Wild Life Department have attempted to capture the surplus elephants in some areas and their efforts were so amateurish that they slaughtered the vast majority of them. These Wild Life Department experts will do well to read these articles and ponder why they cannot do what is done in India with surplus wild life—without letting them be killed, wounded (to suffer and die in stages).

## IN KERALA

# Surplus Elephants Are Caught And Trained

AMONG THE ELEPHANTS in the Kerala forests, those in the Konni area (Quilon district) are known for their good shape, appearance and bearing. For this reason, they attract more buyers and fetch higher prices in the Forest Department auctions.

The history of catching elephants at Konni dates back to earlier than 1810. The first authentic record is in the memoirs of Lieut. Arthur (1810) according to whom the Government used to permit people to dig pits in the forests on payment of a tax per pit for trapping the elephants. Elephants so taken captive became the property of the person who dug the pit. Mention is also made in the memoirs of parties of shikaris and lumbermen digging pits around their forest camps with the twin object of protecting themselves and of capturing wild animals.

In 1810 or thereafter, departmental pit-digging was started while still allowing private persons to have "inam" pits. But the elephants captured in the "inam" pits were required to be sold to the Government at Rs. 150 an animal. This system was stopped in 1875 as no watch was kept and the elephants, in a majority of

## IN TAMIL NADU

### TRAINING CAMPS FOR ELEPHANTS

There are three elephant camps in Tamil Nadu, at Mudumalai in the Nilgiris, at Varagaliyaru in the Anamalais and at the Government rubber plantations near Nagercoil in Kanyakumari district. In these camps the wild elephants are domesticated and trained to obey commands. **Forest officials who have watched the increasing concentration of calves among elephant herds in the forests of Tamil Nadu hold the view that the elephant population was increasing.**

The Tamil Nadu Forest Department has in the training camps 68 elephants. This number is considered sufficient to meet its requirements and the capture of elephants is to be stopped for the next two years. The Department may take up problems relating to the preservation of elephants during this period. Elephants are tended well in the camps owned by the Forest Department. But those sold to temples are not looked after all that well. The fall in temple income has led to cuts in spending on the maintenance of elephants.

## On Domesticating Elephants

cases, were left to die in the pits. In 1873-74, the then Conservator of Forests suggested switching over to the khedda system as in Mysore. Khedda operations were initiated at Konni on the Kallar river banks in 1874-75 but actual capturing began in 1877. This was continued for nine years and 100 elephants in all were captured. By this time, the animals became aware of the khedda barricade and seldom visited the surroundings. The khedda was found to be uneconomical and abandoned and the pit method was revived.

**ELEPHANT CAPTURE** has been carried out at selected sites all over the Konni division. Of late with the conversion of most other areas into plantations, the operation is confined to the eastern portions of the division (Kannarappara to Thora), about 15 to 20 miles from Konni by road. Capturing is between December and April.

Capturing involves digging and covering pits taking the animals out of the pits and keeping the captive elephants in stockades. Nooses are put around the trapped animals which are led to the stockades with the help of tame elephants.

In the last six years, 45 elephants were captured—five in 1968-69, 11 each in 1970-71 and 1971-72 and nine each in 1972-73 and 1973-74. There was no capture in 1969-70. Of the 11 taken captive in 1970-71 one named Ajitha died. Moni, captured in 1970-71, was retained for departmental use. Against an expenditure of Rs. 28,000 on the upkeep of these animals, their sale fetched over Rs. 7 lakhs.

Seven elephants (five of them tuskers) were caught this year. One of them, a tusker died. Besides the new captures, the Forest Department has five decoy elephants, all tuskers, in the Konni camp. Another elephant camp is planned to be opened at Thennalai-Aryankam. Already there are five camps—at Konni, Malayattur, Kodanad, Sungam and Muthanga.

An interesting recent catch was an albino elephant calf, which has been christened "Kennedy". Only six months old, it performed its first assignment of handing over to the Forest Minister the materials for laying the foundation stone of the Forest Research Institute at Peechi (near Trichur).

For the first few days after capture, the animals display a ferocious temper. Bamboos, grass, bark of trees are the normal diet of elephants. The departmental working elephants are given rice, wheat, horsegram, jaggery and chicken masala. They are fed twice daily at 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. and in between given cut fodder and coconut leaves. While being trained, the new captures are given sugarcane. The scale of diet is fixed on the advice of a veterinary surgeon. The animals are washed daily and medicine is applied to wounds sustained by them during capture. Slowly, the animals become tame, allow people to go near them and begin taking food from the mahout's hands. Within two to three months, they become completely tame and start obeying the orders of the mahout.

To animals are then taken out of the cage with the help of the decoy elephants and taken for bath in the rivers. Slowly, this escort by decoys is stopped and they go about led by only the mahout. It takes another month or two for it to obey the mahout's orders well.

**ELEPHANTS REQUIRED** for departmental use are retained and trained; and within another six months, they become good working elephants and are used mostly for thinning operations in the teak plantations, dragging and stacking timber, collection of poles required by the State Electricity Board and the Telephones Depart-

The cost of training an elephant amounts up to Rs. 10,000. There is enough work for the eight departmental elephants round the year and their maintenance cost is more than covered. The best working age of an elephant is between 15 and 35.

Instances of escape of departmental elephants are rare. One such instance some years ago was that of Anantapadmanabhan (in the Malayattur area), which bolted from the camp. But he came back on its own to the Konni camp with its chains on.

Elephants not needed by the department are sold in auction to temples and other religious institutions or gifted to zoos or export-

ted. Foreign demand is for elephant calves because of the problem of airlift. Mosques use elephants for carrying 'chandana-kudams.'

Elephant auctions are conducted once or twice a year in Kerala. The District Forest Office at Kodanad, about 50 kms from Cochin, is a well-known auction centre. The bidders, including circus company managements, determine the price of an elephant according to its height, age, sex and tusks. Surenderan, a 194 inches tall eight-year-old tusker, fetched the highest price of Rs. 22,100 in this year's auction.



# Inania of this, that and the other

## Robbers / Bandits

By Inna

Bribery is a scourge in rural areas.

Another scourge is the living personification of tanha (greed) the local *mudalali*, who knows no law except the law of extortion, and who knows no happiness save that which he gets on lowering the scales and pricing high. Some *mudalalis* charge an extra five cents for every bundle of rope they bring up from certain areas of Sri Lanka up to the hills. "Petrol is so costly" is their reiterated plea!

*Mudalali*—one said it meant 'medal-ali' (an elephant as regards money)—whatever the origin of the word, the reality is in rural Sri Lanka. It is the bane of the village, the scourge no. 2 of the rural areas. From a recent Pilot-Survey of Uva done by some ministry students, we obtain the following, from a 25-page Report:

"In the small town of B—and its village area, food distribution and trade are run by rich *mudalalis*. One owner (J) has ten to fifteen lorries; is agent for oil; has monopoly of fruits like oranges; buys for a pittance (Rs. 10 or 20/- a hundred and sells in Colombo for 60-70 cts each. Most traders from the South are exploiters or have strong exploitative tendencies" (p. 8/1) May 75.

—"In the town and village area of K—, *mudalalis*, middle-men,

traders are from Galle and Matara area. Some of them have come 30-40 years ago. The wealth and labour of the villagers is exploited. The mudalalis offer no service to the village but exploit its resources, using them for their own benefit; their children get the best education and these blackmarketeers cheat the poor farmer by lowering the price of produce and by using unrecognised scales. Therefore the poor farmer suffers injustice at the hands of these mudalalis" (p. 3/II, NG) July-Aug. 1975.

—another report said: "Most of the mudalalis from the south have risen from the ranks to be a rich tribe. Most of them are owners of two to three lorries each" (ibid p. 5/II, FP) July '75 —At W., we went into a 'hotel' for a cup of tea. A 'talagully' small as ever was 50cts. This is a 600% profit! (Measure of tala is 4 Rs.-; half-bottle of honey is 5 Rs.; 150 talas could be made with a measure; add wrapper and labour (as they are paid now) and it costs 8 cts each to make). (p. 7/II LR) July '75

—The town "of K-seems to teem with mudalalis who extort, tip scales in their favour and lend with exorbitant interest". (P. 9/II, PJ) July '75

—In the village of B. and its small town-area, mudalalis are the bane of village existence. Our host mentioned some 'big' names of mudalalis: all from Ruhuna, and "all are exploiters". Only one is a helper of the people, he said. In his tea-room and in one or two shops, the waiters and salesmen have been there a long time, either because of their satisfaction with the salary or because they are too weak to complain. "I think it is the latter", said my interlocutor-host" (p. 12/II M) July '75.

What do we do next?

Where do we go from here?

The government, with all the goodwill it musters, opens up and develops these lands little by little but steadily and surely, but these men make life a hell for the poor people, the backbone of our country. True, we must never despise the bridge that carried us over—be it coalition partners or mudalalis' money—but when the bridge starts rotting, it must be removed and replaced by an honourable, sturdy one full of integrity.

If the fence starts eating the corn, what do we do? say the knowledgeable farmers. Here too, "the rich getting richer and the poor are getting poorer". Two four group were astounded that a simply-gorgeous thali of Tamil make adorned the neck of a young, daughter of a mudalali in B. a far-away village.



KAZI—22

## Cattle On A Coconut Estate

By Anatory Bukoba

June 9.

Dairy farms do not let cows suckle their calves, but it is the custom to let them do so in Ceylon, and so it is virtually impossible to gauge how much milk these cows give, as we do not know how much the calf takes. When a farmer says he gives the calf the milk in one teat, it must be through the medium of a bucket if he really means what he says. When a cow is used to suckling its calf, she usually goes dry if the calf is taken off her, as happens if the calf dies. Six or seven bottles is what a cow may give, if the calf has access to her during the day when she is milked once a day in the morning. When she is started on afternoon milking as well, the milk she gives in the morning does not decrease. If a cow without a calf was not milked for a few days she would go dry. Stripping a cow's udder right out, increases the quantity of milk that udder yields, the milk that udder makes. Good feeding increases the quantity of milk, especially pre-natal feeding, and plenty of food will prevent the milk from decreasing when good feeding is continued after the birth of the calf. The best way, even if it is not the quickest, to increase the milk yield of the cows in a herd is to cross the cows in the existing herd with a bull that comes from good milk-yielding stock. This is breeding up.

Milkers are many, but good stockmen are few. A good stockman will see the first signs of a

disease and sound its knell. A bad stockman will let a disease get a good hold on animal, and he may then act too late. Bulls should be as fierce as dogs ought to be. A bull knows his man as a horse rider. He knows, he almost smells who is going to be boss, he or the man, just as in horsemanship. Bulls have to be led not driven, in confined spaces, and the training for this must start early, or the bull will become intractable. The way it is done on this estate, with a large ten months old bull, is to pass a thin rope round the bulls horns, and then to draw the end of this rope through the bulls copper nose ring, so that too much weight is not placed on the nose. The day will come when the rope will be tied right on to the nose ring. That day will be when the bull becomes a force to be reckoned with, when he has to be controlled through his nose. If you can keep a bulls head up, there is much less chance if his horning you or knocking you down. When a bull wants to lower his head he just lets gravity do it for him.

People follow fashions very easily. The present craze is for dehorning cattle. Bulls use their horns for more than just defence, as anyone who has seen a bull horning the ground will see. They use their horns to throw earth over themselves when flies worry them. A trained scientist will not accept this, for, for him every reason has its roots in chemistry. He will not recognize any other discipline. An illness which animals from cool climates tend to develop is baldness round the eyes, together with a growth which looks like a seal. In fact it is not unlike Seabies certain kinds of oil will keep flies away from an animals body, and it is a help in curing this too.

Stockmen must know how to spend time with their herds. Time apparently frittered away doing nothing is often time well spent, if it is not used in just passing the time all this comes from observaion, not books. The proper care of animals should be presenting us constantly with little problems. The good stockman recognizes each problem and deals with them. He does not ignore these. Stud bulls cost a great deal of money. A bull should be judged for its



work and not its connections. It takes time nine months of pregnancy for a cow. Two years of growth, and another pregnancy. Most people will not wait that long to prove the works of a bull.  
June 18,

Permits must be got to move cattle armed with a veterinary clean bill of health for the stock. You go to the Kachcheri for the permit, or, in some places, to the local, quite senior, officer of the central government. Sometimes these ask for the number of the lorry that will be used. One man had to go three times for the permit because of an adamant staff officer, who failed to tell him, on the first visit, all the information he would have to furnish; they did it piecemeal. Animals usually take to lorries quite well; it is more difficult to get them off it. It is better to cover the bottom of the lorry with dried grass or straw, so that the animal does not slip on its own excreta. Cut grass for them to chew helps to keep them quite on the journey.

Stud bulls have to be replaced every few years, say two or three, so that they do not mate with their own progeny, and they must be replaced from outside the herd. This estate keeps a bull bred there, as the second stud bull—this is in case of accidents to, or the illness of, the first stud bull. It is also good to have a spare bull in case several services come up together. A bull would not normally serve more than two cows in a week.

Bulls that are tied up all day, outside, should have their places changed at least once or twice or three times, during the day, so that they do not run out of something to eat. It is possible that stall fed animals eat more bulk than those allowed to graze, and if this is true, it is because of the same principle that works in sweet rationing, and, as in Ceylon few days ago, in the rationing of flour, namely that people and animals will consume the whole of what is on the ration, as in stall-feeding, than where they can eat *ad lib*, as in grazing.

Stud bulls are usually kept inside as this conserves their energies, being kept cooped up, must stimulate their sexual energies. You have this in the advent of the industrial era and of the popula-

tion explosion together, for industrialism leads to sedentary life. It is remarkable that the more hectic sports coming in with the industrial era, for they were a way of working off these energies. It is also remarkable that just as mechanization was intended to be labour saving, and also a refuge for man from the uncertainties of his existence, from dependence on the divine providence, so simultaneously were all his hopes and calculations upset by an enormous increase in the population and the largest population were in the medically backward countries, India and China, proving that it was not all a case of the decline in the mortality rate. God is the harbinger of population growth. He is also the custodian of our food crops, of the rain and the grain.

Extra feed for calves accelerates growth, but, as in everything else, the increase in weight must be weighed against the costs of achieving it. A small animal has its uses as much as a big one. The Jersey, for instance, is traditionally a small cow, and so in the beef Galloway.

All this seems a far cry from coconuts. Managing a coconut estate is not as simple as it used to be. An estate is meant to produce more than coconuts now, and quite rightly, too, but it means, more work and more time. It ought to mean, too, more hands.

## BUILDING A VILLAGE HOUSE (50)

### Sitale Gets The Dish (2)

—concluded—

By Herbert Keuneman

I DON'T KNOW whether they beat Sitale up, at the Police Station, or not. Sitale himself says No, but rumour—and village rumour can be surprisingly well-informed—says Yes: two blows. And then, of course, there was that policeman I met a few days later who said: 'Soon as we hit him he will tell'.

Whatever actually did take place, Sitale unquestionably had 'told': about two spoons he had

taken and sold; although he need not have confessed to these, as far as I can see, since by his own confession to me he had disposed of these as long ago as the 10th of July and the Police had certainly not found them when he had been arrested while trying to dispose of the Thermos jug. On the other hand, he had volunteered not a word about the dish.

Two blows, two spoons. I wonder how many it would have taken to bring the dish to light? or whether under 'human rights' Sitale should have been spared blows altogether and I should have been deprived of my property? How few even of the simplest questions of Justice afford simple moral answers!

Judge my surprise when, as my train drew into Galgamuwa station, the first person I recognized was Sitale himself who greeted me with a rueful but I would not say ingratiating grin. P.B., whom I had written and asked to meet me, was on the platform, too; and if Sitale seemed at first a little unsure of my own reception of him, there certainly seemed no embarrassment whatever between him and P.B.

The latter had hired a car for me (there was too much luggage, including the stores I still needed to purchase in Galgamuwa, for us to take a bus) and at the Petrol Shed, which made one of our calls, I contrived to get Sitale aside and asked him what was this that had happened? He confessed that he had, indeed, been tempted and had yielded—he did not know what had taken possession of him when he did so—to perform an act of '*balu vada*': an act of a cur. I asked what were the things he had taken; and he replied Two spoons and the Thermos jug. He said he had been paid Rs. 50 for the two spoons—anybody who actually paid Rs. 50 for those two spoons must have been mad—but that the Police had promised him that if he presented himself at the Station and 'returned' the Rs. 50 they would see matters settled. I confess that I still do not understand how such a settlement was to be arrived at: whom was the Rs. 50 to go to? The receiver? But the Police already had the spoons. I reminded Sitale that if I made a formal complaint he could hardly avoid being convicted, having been caught with part

of the loot on him, and that if he was convicted (while under probation, as he already was) he could hardly expect to avoid jail. He agreed but still seemed to pin his faith upon a settlement.

I then asked him about the missing dish. But this he professed to know nothing about, implying—or intending, I think, to imply—that P. B. would know more about this item than he himself did.

I WAS, OF COURSE, well and long aware of ill-feeling and jealousy between P.B. and Sitale and might have been inclined to allow the latter at least some of the benefit of any doubt, for there is little a Ceylon villager—anyway, the new Ceylon villager—will not do to damage a rival; but it was too much to believe in two more-or-less simultaneous thefts by rival thieves or that the loss I should hear most about from P.B.'s own people would be the one P.B. had inflicted. Nevertheless, the shadow of a doubt remained, and I promised Sitale I should make no formal charge against him unless when I had had time to go more fully into his escapade it became clear he had been lying. Accordingly, Sitale remained in the car, quite amicably with P.B. and the driver, while I went into the Police Station on the way home and had the interview. I described last week. I did not bring up the mysterious question of the Rs. 50 (of which Sitale had spoken as though he had it in his pocket) and it has not been raised since.

This was a Wednesday. As I have stated, the Police did not come (as promised) on the Thursday morning, nor in the evening, nor on the Friday nor Saturday; nor, for that matter, on Sunday. Nor Monday. On Friday, however, Sitale turned up with his mother.

By that time I had discovered, naturally, which was this particular dish which was missing. I had also discovered that, apparently, of the housekeeping money I had left with him he had not spent a cent towards its rightful use which was (chiefly) to keep the frig burning. Banders and Dinga had returned from Colombo to find the flame almost out—it was yellow and smoking—and the tank all but empty. P.B., of course, had not once thought to look at the frig even after Sitale, to whom

he himself had relinquished the charge of it, had been several days absconding. If it had burnt down, not only should I have lost a new wick—at six times the price I used to have to pay for one—but also all the stores I count on the freezer to preserve; and (though the Government position seems to be that a frig is a bourgeois luxury to maintain which I should deservedly pay through the nose) the drugs both the local Sanitary Inspector and the local hospital entrust to me to keep under refrigeration!

(Incidentally, the local price of kerosene has risen to Rs. 4/00 per gallon; just as the local price of off-ration sugar has risen to Rs. 8/50 per lb. and Price Control doesn't give a damn.)

SITALE'S VISIT brought little immediately about. His mother tearfully protested his innocence and that of her whole family, until I reminded her of the scarcely innocent activities of her husband and elder son; and Sitale continued to insist that he knew nothing of any missing dish and that he had stocked up with no less than 4 gallons of kerosene, implying as before that P.B. had disposed of both. As for the kerosene, said he, he could produce a bill for it, and forthwith did: a hand-written scrap of paper which he produced readily from a drawer in the kitchen. I expressed my doubts of it; but that, he swore, was the way all the kerosene bills he had ever brought home were, and I to be truthful could not recollect if this were so or not. He even named the *kade* where he had bought the oil.

After he had gone I checked the drawer whence the bill had been taken, to see if there were indeed more. There was none. I therefore sent the bill off to the *kade* Sitale had named, to ask had it really been issued there; but the *mudali* and both salesboys disclaimed it. Moreover, they pointed out that the rate shown was the old (though even then blackmarket price—but, needless to say, they didn't use the term—of Rs. 3/80 per gallon. I now had something on which I could definitely pin Sitale down, so on Saturday morning I sent a message to him to ask whether he would see me again, and he came, immediately, without eva-

sion. Meanwhile, I had come across in the same drawer in which his concocted 'bill' had been left ready another, more curious document:

6

Konwewa

WIJERATNE

*bandesi-mundu 50.00*

I do not pretend that I can tell for certain, even now, what this slip represented. But 50.00 seemed obviously Rs. 50; *bandesi-mundu* is the local term for a signet ring; Wijeratne is one of Sitale's aliases; and Konwewa is the village at the far end of the Ehetuwewa bund and struck me as the sort of false address a simpleton like Sitale might think it safe to give in a shady deal. In fact, the whole mysterious little chit struck me (I don't know why) as the kind of 'receipt' so naive an individual as Sitale might tend to think safeguarded him in some way—even unsigned as it was—if he had stolen a signet ring, or could it even have been 6 of them? if he had sold them to a fence. It is astonishing how much faith a villager, even an otherwise sophisticated one, still puts in 'a writing' no matter how noncommittal, especially if it be signed over a postage stamp. I admit this was the first time I came across faith pinned on an unsigned document! but I cannot avoid the conclusion that the enigmatic script possessed for Sitale more significance than showed. Maybe he is a *kattaya* not yet graduated to being a *suraya*!

I know this must seem tremendously far-fetched, and it probably is, and when (on Monday) I offered the slip to the Police they scorned it and probably rightly, and to this day I do not know what the slip portended; but it is quite true that when Sitale appeared next morning and I first of all showed him the slip and asked what it meant he seemed thoroughly uncomfortable and embarrassed though he denied point blank that he knew anything about it. Perhaps he didn't; and perhaps my impression of his embarrassment was pure imagination; but at all events, when I now proved to him that his story of having purchased kerosene could be nothing but an invention he suddenly admitted that it was. Equally suddenly he followed this with the admission that he had, also, stolen the entree dish.

Never mind the *cliche*, you could have knocked me down with a feather! What had induced the confession? In fairness to myself—and perhaps, in an oblique way, in fairness to Sitale too—I should like to make it clear that there had never been any severity or rancour in my questioning, and I had promised from the outset that I quite genuinely wished to avoid making a court case of the issue because a spell in prison would almost certainly ruin Sitale (turning him, by association with hardened criminals, from a comparatively innocent and rather silly delinquent into a vicious and cunning hardened criminal himself) and I should like to think this was the guerdon of forbearance as well as a mark that Sitale was nowhere past a decent response to sympathy or affection. Be this as it might, he promised faithfully to bring back the dish and restore the mis-appropriated house-keeping money by that evening.

TO MY DISAPPOINTMENT—and somewhat to my surprise—he failed to do so. He came on Sunday morning, however, almost crying, and begged me not to go to the Police—I had not yet intended to do so—and he would bring the dish and the money that day. I was near crying myself, his distress was so great, and I told him that as regards the money he could retain what I should have paid him for the previous month (though he had worked only 20 days of it) and he went off looking a great deal brighter. About noon he came in again, of his own accord, riding a bicycle and looking very cheerful and said he was on his way...and then he vanished.

I gave him twenty-four hours and then, with great reluctance, went to the Police Station. What I hoped was to engage a sort of unofficial police co-operation: I knew where the dish—all I really wanted back—was now (Sitale had told me, and I did not doubt that if he had already recovered it he would by now have brought it to me) and my real quarrel was with this receiver and with all the other disgusting tribe of fences who encourage dupes like Sitale in their thieving; but this proved not a police view of the matter at all. They were willing enough to arrest Sitale if I lodged a formal charge against him. But as for the fence, all they offered was the

bizarre suggestion that I go and ask the man if he had a dish like mine for sale! and if he had, then they would charge him!

The fact was everybody was too busy with a *shramadana* project to provide a new police parade ground to be much interested in the loss of a single dish or the salvation of a single petty thief. Admitting that a *shramadana* project could be an excellent public-relations gimmick, I tried to suggest it might be at least a comparable one to demonstrate that the Police were as willing and able to reconcile and rehabilitate a scapegrace as to pursue and prosecute him. But this is simply not the case. The Police are for Punishment (or so they see themselves, despite any public-relations blablah that the new Official Image may call for) just like a doctor, in the old days, might treat a dozen cases of typhoid yet concern himself not at all with a well that infected them!

SO AWAY I had to come with the Inspector's placebo that 'an officer' would call that evening, and the effect even of that somewhat diminished by the flat contradiction by one of his subordinates that if anyone called it would be not that evening but next morning. As it happened, both were over-optimistic: when the officer did call it was the next evening! He proved a very pleasant young man; but quite what he accomplished—or had sought to accomplish—I am not sure. I fear he was sent to arrest Sitale, after all. Happily, Sitale saw him and ran away.

It could—but need not—have been the actual appearance of a constable that led to the next development. All I can say is that Sitale came the next morning bringing the dish (and what money he still owed) with him. Pinhamy's people swear he would never have come if the constable had not. But I incline, myself, to Sitale's explanation.

According to Sitale, when he came in that Sunday noon looking so happy and relieved it was because he had succeeded in raising the money to return what he owed me and buy back the dish from the receiver for the price—Rs. 15/00—he had been paid for it. But when he offered this sum the receiver demanded Rs. 30.

So that is how matters stand. The receiver scot free, indeed the better off for his double dishonesty. The police image in no wise improved beyond its village picture as of a sort of *tonton macoutes*. Sitale with perhaps another small crime behind him to raise the further Rs. 15/00 he had needed, and anyway now with nothing better to do than thieve again: next time a little more judiciously.

## POINT OF VIEW

### Why Did The U.F. Break ?

The political *volte-face* of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party would appear traumatic to those who have confined themselves to an empirical study of events. A careful examination of the origin and history of the SLFP will however lay bare the fact that the current metamorphosis is in fact consistent with the historical evolution of the SLFP.

The SLFP sprang up in the rural areas a quarter century ago on a middle class social base that had upto then been denied political expression due to the domination of the feudal landowners of the UNP. This wide petit bourgeois base accepted for its leadership the emerging rural elite group of traders. This embryonic national bourgeoisie had made economic gains during the war when local food production assumed importance and when money entered the rural economy breaking down the prevalent structure.

THE NATIONAL BOURGEOISIE was thus in competition with the urban elite group of professional and commercial elements. The latter were the by-products of colonial rule, anglicised and alienated, the intellectual leaders of the UNP.

1956 was a revolt. A revolt by the mudalalis who led the rural petit bourgeoisie against the feudal aristocrats in the village and the compradore bourgeoisie in the towns. It was the mudalalis who self consciously set out to replace the largely feudal socio-economic structure of this country with a modern capitalist one.

Unlike the anglicised bourgeoisie that confined its economic

activity being merely appendages of the west—to being commission agents for western industries—the new mudalalis pioneered industry and nationwide trade. They created a comprehensive state—capitalist sector to provide an infrastructure of basic industries that provided inputs for local industry. In addition it became a sector that could resort to state funds to provide large scale investment for projects like petroleum projects beyond the means of local entrepreneurs.

To carry out this bourgeois revolution the SLFP had first to out-manoeuvre the dominant urban and rural social groups represented in the UNP. This called for a strategic political alliance with the working class parties. Thus from 1956 we have had no-contest pacts, peoples fronts and united fronts. The basis of these fronts were the anti-imperialist anti-feudal programmes that the SLFP has effectively and successfully led.

THE TAKE-OVER of the British bases, the nationalisation of foreign petroleum and insurance, the current nationalisation of British Banks and estates, the recognition of Socialist countries and the commitment to nonalignment are all facets of this anti imperialism. In the rural areas likewise a successful antifeudal programme which began with the Paddy Lands Act in 1958 has now reached its climax with the far reaching Land Reform Law.

While these significant economic changes were taking place in the last two decades there were occurring parallel social changes. The UNP propelled by objective conditions changed. J. R. Jayewardene led a successful revolt against the economically weakened feudal elite group represented by the Senanayakes. The Urban bourgeoisie which he leads has with time come to terms with the national bourgeoisie. The cultural chasm is being bridged through social and economic integration. Through matrimonial and business partnerships the bourgeoisie has evolved into a homogenous group. Thus the Fifty-six Revolution has changed the structure of society, particularly in terms of the relationships between its elite groups.

Now that a significant portion of the anti imperialist programme has been completed, now that

the feudal aristocracy has been restrained if not liquidated, the political prerogatives of 1956 cease to exist. The bourgeoisie has emerged as a composite social group that can consolidate its position and progress without any further class alliances. Thus the rationale for a political front with the working class ceases to exist.

IT IS TRUE that the CP continues to remain in an alliance with the SLFP, it is true that the UNP is not anxious to coalesce with the SLFP, it is true that the SLFP has radical elements who are vocal in their opposition to a merger with the UNP—just as much as there are UNP extremists who have broken away and will continue to drift away from the party as it moves into an alliance with the SLFP.

Nevertheless the writing is on the wall and a polarisation in Parliament and outside it as well will take place. The pace of course will be determined by numerous factors, factors over which we have no control.

What is pertinent is that a fact contained chapter is our island's political history has now been completed. And it is only by appreciating and acknowledging this that we can hope to keep track of events that are going to unfold in the days ahead.

JAYANTHA SOMASUNDARAM

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## TRAVELOGUE

### By Train To Kandy

By Ina Trimmer

The journey by train surpasses the roadway for though it is devoid of rural scenes and village life, the magnificence of the scenery, the varied types of landscape through which the railway passes, the pageantry of valleys and mountains with cloud effects ever on display, the panorama of earth and sky, make this track one of the most beautiful in the world. It is a journey which can never pall or lose its thrill and appeal to the most hardened excursionist.

The first part of the journey by rail from Colombo lies through paddy fields and grass lands. Vegetation grows lush in these steamy

low-country plains and every kind of tree seems to push its way into the sun—the heavy leaved dark green mango, jak with its burden of gigantic yellow brown fruit, the pencil slim arecanut palm with its spathes of scented, pale cream flowerets, groves of coconut, plantations of plantain (banana) with the bunches of fruit proposed up with poles to keep them from crashing to the ground.

On the left while passing Hunupitiya Station, the second after leaving Maradana, can be seen an interesting agricultural experiment. Here Messrs. Baur & Co., owners of the great fertilizer manufacturing plant on the right, have demonstrated in contiguous plots the effect of various artificial fertilizers on the coconut palm.

Two or three miles beyond the Ragama Station, third from Maradana, Adam's Peak, Ceylon's Holy mountain shows itself on the right, far on the sky line. Its cone-shaped peak cannot be mistaken.

AT POLGAHAWELA STATION, the Northern line to the Indian Ferry, to Batticaloa, Trincomalee, and Jaffna, branches off on the left. The platform is full of bustle. Cries of "Kooroomba" (young coconut), "Kaddalay" (Gram), "Lamnat" (Lemonade) assail the

#### S. L. B. C.

IS IT NOT TRUE that there is a great deal of speculation why the Sinhala Channel One (National Service) had suddenly gone off the air ten minutes before its scheduled time on Monday or Tuesday morning, this week. That this service was scheduled to stop at 8 am? That it abruptly went off the air without a word of explanation at 7.50 am? That at the time the broadcast was cut off Sinhala music was being played? That inquiries at the SLBC show that there was no power failure of any kind that morning? That there was a great deal of humming and hawing when questions were asked about this matter? That the closest one was able to getting an answer was that some VIP in the SLBC had ordered the Technical Branch to take the broadcast off the air?

travellers' ears as vendors rush up and down trying to sell their wares. Kooroomoba can be bought for a few cents and the passenger can quench his thirst with a delightful drink that is cool, and safe, and clean, if he will but place his mouth to the opening which the vendor will cut into the shell for him. If he wishes he can eat of the milky white softness of the coconut inside, for a spoon will be provided cut out of the green husk. Both the water and the coconut are delicious and thirst quenching.

At Rambukkana, 52 miles from Colombo, an extra engine is attached to the train, behind. The famous Kadugannawa Incline is now ahead.

The climb begins a few miles from the Rambukkana Station, rising from 290 feet above sea level to summit level of 1700 feet, near Kadugannawa Railway Station 12 miles away. In spite of the two powerful engines progress is slow and the train mounts upward at the low speed of 12 miles an hour. There is exhilaration in that leisurely pace for the train seems imbued with life, a strange dragon-like creature that shrieks, and puffs, and groans painfully amidst scenery that is of the loveliest in the world.

In front looms Allagalla that mighty cliff from whose sullen heights those guilty of high treason were hurled to their death in the days of the Kandyan Kings.

Along the granite escarpment of its steep slopes the train crawls, towering cliffs on the left 2500 feet above rising but a hand's breadth from the track, and as close on the other side, a sheer drop of a thousand feet or more. All Ceylon seems to lie in the depths far below, a gigantic relief map where streams and rivers weave an intricate pattern of silver through hills and valleys interspersed with plantations, gardens and forest. The country is bursting with verdure. Conspicuous in the vast sea of green are the silvery leaved Kekuna tree with flower like foliage: the Pride of India (*Lagerstroemia flos-reginae*) Sinhalese Marutha, ablaze from April to September with beautiful spikes of pink and mauve blossoms; and that giant of palms the Talipot (*Corypha-Umbraculifera*) which blooms only in its hundredth year and then dies in the height of its glory, its life out-poured

in the magnificent gush of feathery white flowers borne straight aloft an 80 feet stem.

Ever upward pants the train, round curves so sharp that often it is possible to see both engines at the same time. Over narrow embankments and gorges cleft into the living rock dripping and slimy with constant rain, through deep cuttings and the cimmerian darkness of tunnels, one of which, Moragalla No. is 365 yards long, up the steep gradient of 1 in 45, the train crawls. So narrow is the track, so vertical the precipice that it seems as if nothing but a span lies between safety and perdition. Sensation Rock, soon after tunnel No. is well and truly named. Here the track dwindles to a mere thread. Overhead hangs a mighty excrescence of granite, below abysmal depth losing itself in a sea of verdure.

EVERY TURN, each twist, exposes fresh loveliness. Scarred mountain faces give way to smiling valleys, and waterfalls cascade in silver fragments over boulder and crag.

The lovely Dekande Valley comes into view far below, and as we look down in the greenness of rice fields and plantations, on hills and valleys that lose themselves in the distance, we see the world as from the air yet with better perception and greater awe, for we have, wherewith to gauge our height, and we realise how wonderful is this experience. Utuwankande is a sharp spear into the sky, grim and menacing. Beneath us the fields rise tier upon tier, a vast amphitheatre of fertility and verdure; and at the edge of the world where the valley disappears in flatness, the road to Kandy winds ribbon like through the surrounding green.

Ehelapola the prime minister of the last King of Kandy, he whose wife was foully murdered by the King, lived by the edge of this road in a house with a tiled roof. At that time it was the prerogative of royalty only to live under tiles; the rest had thatched dwellings.

Still the train mounts higher and yet higher. There is a tang in the air and from the mountains the breeze comes cool and refreshing. The hills are no longer aloof. They close in on every side and with that great rectangular

block of stone Bible Rock in the foreground, they rise range upon range till they merge into the blue shadows of the distance.

The Incline is over. At the Kadugannawa Pass, road and rail track meet. Here is the gateway to the Kandyan country, a narrow passage between the mountains which the Sinhalese kings guarded jealously, a coign of vantage whence their sentinels watched the plains for advancing enemies. Thousands were employed in this service, for day and night searching eyes gazed out for danger ahead. A hill close by is still known as Balanakande (Scout's Hill) from where a yet more extensive view could be obtained. It is said that some even climbed trees on the cliff to enable them to see further.

At Kadugannawa Station the extra engine is detached and a gentle descent carries the track down to Kandy.

The Mahaweliganga is crossed within sight of the road bridge. In the floods of August 1947 the railway bridge thought to be indestructible was completely washed away in a night. Only the piers were left.

The journey is all too short but memory will long hold the thrill and delight of it, an unforgettable experience to be treasured always.

#### POSTAL

IS IT NOT TRUE that the Snoopers column in the *Daily Mirror* on Saturday, September 19, had an interesting piece about possible developments in the Postal setup? That this was a follow-up on what many daily papers and the *Tribune* had spotlighted on several occasions? That the *Daily Mirror* hinted that discrimination in the way the different officers involved in the affair would be treated would be contrary to the principles of natural justice? That favoured ones should not be treated differently from lesser shooting stars on the outer periphery of the postal orbit? That the *Daily Mirror* has done well to focus attention on this matter of great public interest? That it will be a major travesty of justice if those who take the "law" into their own hands in order to promote their personal interests are permitted to go scot-free.

# Confidentially

## End Of The Times Of Ceylon

IS IT NOT A FACT that the demise of the *Times of Ceylon* as from September 6 is a matter for deep regret? That the sorrow about the unhappy end of a 129-year old paper was not very great because those who knew anything of the Fourth Estate in Sri Lanka were aware that the end of this paper had been in sight a long time ago? That the *Times of Ceylon* had really ceased to exist as a daily newspaper of consequence many, many, years ago, but its clinical death had been delayed by various artificial infusions of loans and credits until September 6, 1975? That for more years than one cares to remember the *Times of Ceylon* had lingered on in a semi-vegetative state of suspended animation? That those who had cared for the *Times of Ceylon* as one of the oldest papers in the island had long ago written it off as a living paper? That many will not now remember that the Editor of *Tribune* had once been the Lobby Correspondent of the *Times* (and a feature writer) nearly thirty years ago in the heyday of the Frank Moraes era? That many people will not know the efforts that had been made when the *Times* had fallen into dark and evil days to resuscitate it with various kinds of artificial respiration? That all these efforts had proved futile? That the very vigorous *Daily Mirror*, which was successor to the shortlived *Morning Times*, made a heroic endeavour to bring the *Times* back to the days of its pristine glory? That in spite of the magnificent effort of the redoubtable pen-is-mightier-than-the-word journalist Reggie Michael, who had taken the *Daily Mirror* to dizzy heights of popularity and readability, the *Times* group could not emerge from the dark-ness which had enveloped it? That internal dynastic quarrels did not give any chance to the journalists who worked on the paper to pull it out of its travail? That in the end it was the journalists who were sacrificed at the altar of power politics within the *Times* group? That the *Daily Mirror* and the *Times of Ceylon* had limped

along in the most erratic and haphazard manner for a long time? That gossip in the newspaper world had written off the *Times* Group of papers as an *about-to-die* outfit many times in recent years? That the *Times* had somehow succeeded in keeping afloat in spite of the worst prognostications of people who claimed to have inside knowledge? That in the last weary days when the end had been expected the *Daily Mirror* had shown surprising verve and kick in publishing news which was being suppressed, slanted or blacked out by *Lake House* under its new management? That virile reporting and blood-thirsty editorialising cannot by themselves save a big newspaper combine these days? That when the worst was being expected to happen to the *Times* group every day, the city of Colombo was awakened to heartening news that a powerful syndicate of purposeful SLFP mudalalis, led by the all-conquering Dasa, (the *bete noir* of the LSSP gem mudalalis) had taken over the running of the *Times* with a view to acquiring the same at the appropriate time? That this takeover of the management gave new life and pep to the *Times* Group? That the new managerial team did not take long to learn that the *Times* group could not be saved without major surgical operations and unlimited transfusions of new blood in the form of new capital (a rare commodity in Sri Lanka after the whirlwind devastation let loose on public as well as private capital by LSSP class-struggle wizards)? That the first surgical casualty in this *Operation Save-Times* was the 129-year old *Times of Ceylon* which was in the last stages of senile decrepitude? That to save the *Times* it would mean a complete overhaul of the whole setup which would take time, money (millions of it) and a great deal of energy? That the new group, in which Anura Bandaranaike seems to be playing a major role, has bought strength to the surviving *Daily Mirror* (which was at the moment of decision) in a better state of health than the *Times of Ceylon*? That many sentimentalists feel that it would have been better for the *Times* with its 129-year tradition to have been kept going and the much younger *Daily Mirror* sacrificed at the altar of rationalised management requirements? That this a

matter that can be argued many times over without coming to a decision? That now that the decision has been made and implemented it is futile of the highest order to keep arguing this matter anymore? That it will be more profitable to see what the new management of the Group will make of the *Daily Mirror*? That there is no doubt that the *Mirror* has brightened up a great deal and that it contains a great deal of political news which the *Lake House* studios avoid, slants or blacks out? That in the SLFP-LSSP controversy from August 12 right up to September 1, while *Lake House* had done its best to sustain that mirage that the differences would be patched up (virtually the LSSP line), the *Daily Mirror* had followed the realistic line that a break was inevitable? That the *Daily Mirror* news proved more accurate? That even though it had an SLFP slant, the *Daily Mirror* had more political news of significance than the *Lake House* papers? (That incidentally the only other daily which has a large amount of political news is the *Virakesari*!) That today, one looks to the *Daily Mirror* for hot news from sources close to the Establishment? That more often than not the *Daily Mirror*'s tips and hints have proved correct? That it is significant that the *Daily Mirror* is making a worthwhile effort to maintain a balance in regard to news-reporting? That the LSSP and Dr. N. M. Perera get a good coverage? That the Sunday edition gave the ex-Finance Minister a frontpage spread in regard to his views about devaluation? That this was something *Lake House* would not have done? That this was something the LSSP press will not accord to its opponents? That editorially the *Daily Mirror* has lambasted the LSSP but it is encouraging to see so much space for LSSP in the *Daily Mirror*? That it is still not yet possible to say whether the *Times* group with the *Daily Mirror*, *Sunday Illustrated* and *Lankadipa* can pull through into solvency and thereafter prosperity? That there has been a large-scale lay-off that will by itself generate new problems of its own? That there is a large intrusion of new government advertising in the *Times* group publications but whether this alone can set the finances on an even keel is doubtful?



## *A Snake Stone*

A stone that sticks to the wound caused by a snake bite and falls off when the patient is out of danger may sound very much like a fairy tale. But it is true. Here are a few facts.

Deep in the wild of Brazil a Jesuit Missionary came across remnants of a once famous Red Indian Tribe. All the years he worked among them, he noticed that among thousands of patients no one was ever brought to him to be treated for snake-bite. Yet, he knew the country well and he knew people were actually stung by snakes. One day, it transpired that the old village doctor had an infallible remedy for such snake-bites. Was it just sorcery or magic? Did he use any charm or chant any mantram? No, he only applied a small black stone to the wound, the stone stuck to the wound and fell off only after the patient was cured. Try as he may the missionary could not obtain the secret from the Red Indian. Yes, he had been good to them, he had been like a father to the tribe. But that was a secret handed down from his forefathers and that secret he meant to keep for his family. On his deathbed, however, the old snake bite specialist sent for the Missionary and revealed the secret to him. Diffidently at first, then with greater confidence, the missionary made large use of the wonderful stone. The results were quite amazing. The snake-stone of the old Red Indian Chief worked wonders. The missionary sent samples of it to his brethren working throughout South America and in far away Central Africa. From everywhere came news of the wonderful cures effected. But the formula of the wonder stone remained a dead secret. Hundreds had used it, thousands had been cured by it, yet, no one knew the secret but the old missionary from South America. How is it then we are in possession of the secret? Yes, strange though it might appear, we keep the secret now. It is a long cry from Brazil to Ceylon but the long and short of it is that the dying missionary confided the secret to two nieces and these, when unable to make any use of it entrusted it to a missionary leaving for Ceylon who in his turn left it to us.

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