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Letter From The Editor

LANKA'S IMAGE ABROAD is a topic that has begun to interest the Sectoral Committee of the National Planning Council on mass media, information culture. For a long time now, Governmental and other circles have been deeply concerned about the image international media, especially news agencies and newspapers, had projected about Sri Lanka. Every time there was a crisis of any kind inside the island, this problem of image building has come up. Recently UNESCO made public its survey of mass media in 200 countries. The survey revealed much of an unsavoury nature. Among them was the fact that though there were national news agencies in 90 countries, most of them still depended on five world news agencies to transmit news about their countries to other nations. These international news agencies were multinational corporations and the accusation was that these news agencies saw news as seen through the eyes of international monopolists: and that their outlook stemmed entirely from unrestrained private profit, unlimited private property and ever-expanding private enterprise. The UNESCO Survey had also revealed that news reports about other countries in the popular newspapers, TV and radio of most countries showed an imbalance: they projected sensational and bad news and "eccentric and unrepresentative" aspects of life. In an article in the *Guardian Weekly*, 6/9/75, its chief Correspondent in Asia, Mr. Wollacott, deplored the attitude of the Western press towards the developing countries of Asia and Africa. After listing the defects from which international news agencies suffered, he went on to comment on the Western press corps which fed these agencies: he said that the entire news gathering organisation for West was "an unrepresentative organisation dominated as it is by American and British news agencies, newspapers, magazines and broadcasting organisations." Barring a few exceptions, the main trouble with the Western press was that its correspondents concentrated on bad news. An instance was quoted by Mr. Wollacott which merits repetition: in the Philippines few Western reporters visited the model land reform projects in the Luzon Province but hundreds of them had visited Mindanao to cover the war between a secessionist group and the army. A Filipino information official had reportedly said: "... it is as if Western reporters feel their job in any developing society is to identify the society's weakest points and then make them worse by exaggeration and unremitting publicity". It has also been pointed out that the Western press corps and the multinational news agencies were mainly interested in reporting famine, war, corruption and governmental incompetence (real and imaginary) and what they thought was repression. The simple fact was that the Western press and news agencies, by and large, had created the impression of being an instrument of the West's political and economic power in the same way as Western diplomats, big business and their armed forces. And by the record of reporting over the years, the Western press and agencies have created the image of a hostile institution. To quote Mr. Wollacott, "In this picture, Reuters, the Associated Press, the New York Times, Le Monde, the BBC and all the rest of them are seen not as separate and diverse organisations but as elements in a system of cultural imperialism which gathers and interprets world news according to Western interests and values and then transmits it back to non western societies, overwhelming their own news agencies and propaganda resources". A cynical commentator in the third world had stated that this attitude arose from the western assumption that they were still the ultimate arbiters of the rest of the world, constituting a new reincarnation of the white man's burden in the nuclear age. Writing in the *Washington Post* in September 1975, Mr. Clayton Fritchey bemoaned the West's lack of objectivity in reporting recent events in India. He said "... there cannot be any balanced judgement on the crisis in India without some understanding and appreciation of the provocations that inspired it. So far all the sympathy in America has been reserved for the Opposition forces in India... On the other hand there has been no condemnation of the anti-democratic, irresponsible, illegal efforts of Opposition extremists to overthrow Mrs. Gandhi by extra-parliamentary means..." Similarly, the complaint has been voiced that the Western press and media were not sympathetic to the new Sri Lanka that was emerging from out of the colonial past. There is no doubt that over the years the international news organisations have concentrated on projecting an image of Sri Lanka as a land of splendid ruins. On the cover this week we have a picture of one of our better-known ruins and which has proved a favourite of westerners who are emotionally enthralled by the spectacle of exotic ruins with a romantic past. We, in Sri Lanka, have ylno ourselves to blame for much of this. Our own propaganda, unfortunately, has glorified our ruins (and the past) and left emergent Sri Lanka to the tender mercies of bureaucratic reporters who make poor propaganda.

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EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Mainly About China

MANY READERS have asked *Tribune* why we have so far not made any attempts to analyse the course of events in China after the death of Chou En-lai or even published interpretative articles-in-depth by knowledgeable writers. We have so far refrained from publishing either comments or articles because the situation was not very clear. Official *Hsinhua* reports only recorded events in the most bureaucratic manner and they were of little help to a paper like *Tribune* which did not publish spot news about current international events but only published interpretative comment. Though *Hsinhua* often sought to interpret world events in terms of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, it never carries any interpretative articles on domestic affairs which differed in any way from the latest and current editorials of the official organ of the Chinese Communist Party, the *People's Daily*. One, therefore, has to fall back upon reports in the western press and on Hongkong-based reports. There were also cautious and guarded *Reuters* and *AFP* reports from Peking which did no more than reflect the current gossip in the foreign diplomatic circles in Peking.

This was clearly shown by the fact that all reports were definite that Teng Hsiao-ping would be confirmed as the Prime Minister. Every newspaper and commentator of repute was certain that Teng would be automatically chosen Prime Minister. Journalist circles in Sri Lanka have gained the impression from Chinese sources that the reports from Tokyo (Japan) reflected and interpreted developments in China more realistically than reports from any other country.

A report from Tokyo dated January 9, a few hours after Chou En-lai's death had been announced had stated: "Mr. Chou's illness had kept him away from active participation in the party and State affairs for the past one-and-half years leaving the burden on the shoulders of the senior Vice-Premier, Mr. Teng Hsiao-ping, and the nine other Vice-Premiers in the State Council. Mr. Teng had been acting as de facto Premier and it is not

clear now whether he will formally step into Mr. Chou's shoes or whether the country will be governed by a collective leadership. The indications are that a collective leadership will take over as Mao himself is over 82 and in any case he has shown a distinct dislike for the day-to-day administrative matters."

An AP and UNI report from Peking on the same day had drawn attention that Teng was number four in the order of precedence. "A 107-member funeral committee, headed by Chairman Mao has been formed. In the committee list Wang Hung-wen, the young leader from Shanghai, is placed Number 2 to Chairman Mao, while Senior Vice-Premier Teng Hsiao-ping is listed fourth.

A report from Tokyo dated January 16 still indicated that Teng Hsiao-ping would be made the Prime Minister: "...Yesterday's memorial meeting climaxes over a week of mourning and lionising Chou in a manner never paralleled before in the case of any other Chinese communist luminary in the over quarter century since the Communist Party assumed power in that country. The Vice-Premier and de facto Premier, Mr. Teng Hsiao-ping, who delivered the memorial speech at yesterday's ceremony, repeated a theme that has recurred over and over since Chou's death that in his death the country had lost "a fine member of the Communist Party of China, a great proletarian revolutionary, an outstanding communist fighter and an eminent long tested party and State leader of the Chinese people."

A report from Tokyo on January 28, when the Central Committee is reported to have gathered in Peking to choose the Prime Minister had stressed that it was Teng who would succeed Chou. A number of reasons were adduced as to why Teng would be chosen. "...There is every indication in Peking that the Chinese Communist Party is currently holding the third plenary session of its tenth Central Committee to name the successor to the late Premier, Mr. Chou En-lai, according to a report appearing here to-day in the nationally circulated *Asahi Shimbun* from its Peking correspondent. The report said it was felt that the new Chinese Premier, would be decided before January 31, which

is the New Year's Day under the old Chinese calendar. It added that the most likely choice for the Premier was believed to be the senior Vice-Premier, Mr. Teng Hsiao-ping who, among the many important posts he holds, is also a Vice-Chairman of the Chinese Communist Party. For the past two years Mr. Teng has been virtually acting as the Premier following the incapacitation owing to cancer of Premier Chou En-lai.

"Among the indications cited by the *Asahi* correspondent for the belief that the Communist Party Central Committee was meeting was the fact that every night for the past few days fleets of luxury cars known to be used by high Chinese Party and Government officials have been lined up for hours in front of the Great Hall of the People where such important party meetings usually take place. Lights have been burning in the Great Hall till late into the night. Further, all regular members of the Central Committee and alternates have been missing from functions given in honour of visiting dignitaries."

When one looks back in the light of events which have taken place since the report was written, it is clear that Tokyo was as much in the dark about Peking as London, Washington or any place else.

Prestigious western journals like *The Economist* had also indicated that Teng would succeed Chou. An interpretative and analytical piece from the issue of *The Economist*, of January 17, shows, in retrospect how far removed from Chinese realities was western knowledge about China. We are citing the comment *in extenso* because it will help our reader to appreciate the difficulties of writing about China.

"China owes Chou En-lai many debts but the greatest of all may well turn out to be the stoic way he bore three years as a cancer victim. If the 78-year-old prime minister had not continued in his protean work—flat out for two years and with a watching brief until only a few months before his death last week—China would now be faced with a succession crisis of major proportions. It may never be known outside of China whether Chou himself or Mao Tse-tung was responsible for re-

habilitating Teng Hsiao-ping in the spring of 1973 and easing his way back from cultural revolutionary disgrace, first into the politburo, and then into the second most important administrative job in the country. But it was unmistakably the gradual running in of Teng—who would have been resisted fiercely if Chou had retired earlier—that has made possible one of the smoothest transfers of power the communist world has ever seen.

"Yet the clichés about Chou being irreplaceable still hold true. If he had died three years ago, in the wake of Lin Piao's failed coup, China could well have quarrelled itself apart. Today it will carry on, securely united and ably administered by Teng and a cluster of other experienced men. But for all Teng's proven abilities, one quality which made Chou En-lai the great political figure he was is missing. This is Chou's talent for compromise and the negotiated solution. At times in Chou's 50-year career this went by the name of opportunism or the canny sense of when to jump to the winning side. But, particularly in the last decade, Chou used this combination of charm, persuasiveness and mental agility both to limit the destructive power of Mao's revolutionary excursions and to turn the unlikelyst of bedfellows into working combinations.

"Teng Hsiao-ping, who will probably take on the title as well as the duties of prime minister before long, cannot be expected to carry on this mediating function for two reasons: he is a blunter, rougher character than the polished, sophisticated Chou; and he must be partisan, where Chou could be neutral, on conflicts concerning the cultural revolution. No country keeps history quite as alive as China does, often going back several millennia for its points of dispute. But the cultural revolution, whose first shots were heard just over 10 years ago, is not so much history as contemporary politics. One issue which has recently polarised the critics and the defenders of the "new socialist things" ushered in by the cultural revolution is the recurring question of educational standards: is it better to give less education to more people or to concentrate educational resources on those most able to take advantage of them? This issue surfaced with some ver-

bal violence in the summer of 1973 when it was combined with scarcely-veiled attacks on Chou En-lai for bringing back such old "reactionaries" as Teng Hsiao-ping. It looked then like an attempt by resentful radicals to win back some of the shortlived power and glory they had enjoyed during the cultural revolution. Some of the same characters are involved in the present campaign, which may well be another such effort (although the educational question is a serious one in itself).

"In 1973 Chou En-lai managed to defuse and deflect both the education dispute and the anti-Confucian campaign which accompanied it. Whether Teng Hsiao-ping would be able now to negotiate with or outmanoeuvre a group of determined radicals in a similar way is an open question. What is also uncertain is how strong and how determined the so-called radicals are today. Their chief representative at court, the only young man in the top leadership, Wang Hung-wen, leads Chou En-lai's funeral list, which means that in spite of his prolonged absence from Peking he has retained his formal position and is now number two after Mao. But Wang holds no known position in the separate government hierarchy and unless he is seen to take over some specific party function (apart from settling disputes in his home territory and then not always successfully) doubts must remain about his real power.

"These doubts may be resolved as a result of a formal party or government meeting to fill the gaps left by Chou and by another member of the politburo standing committee, Kang Sheng, who died in December. But the Chinese are used to living with bureaucratic ambiguity: they made do with an acting head of state for about eight years until they decided to do away with the office and they did without all kinds of ministers during the cultural revolution. What the Chinese do abhor is a power vacuum. But the manoeuvres to fill such gaps as now exist, and such gaps as are bound to open up when more men of Chou's generation die, may well remain hidden, as so much of Chou's China still is."

The *Time* of January 19, 1976 devoted leading page importance to the TOUGH NEW MAN IN

PEKING, meaning Teng Hsiao-ping. The cover picture was that of Teng, not Chou who was on the *Newsweek* cover of January 19. (The *Far Eastern Economic Review* also had Teng on the cover of January 23). The *Time* had taken Teng as the successor of Chou. "...Chou apparently played a role in some major policy decisions up until the last few months of his life, but most of his responsibilities had already been entrusted to First Vice-Premier Teng Hsiao-ping who will almost certainly be appointed Premier. True to his reputation as an administrator par excellence, Chou apparently managed even his own passing from the political scene with dexterity. Sinologists expect no power struggle over Teng's assumption of higher office—at least not soon..." What *Time* seemed chiefly concerned about was whether China would continue Chou's "moderate policies." The question posed was: "...Most important of all to those outside of China, will Chou's belief in cautious detente with the US, Japan and Western Europe, and his unremitting hostility towards the Soviet bloc continue to guide his foreign policy....."

There is no doubt that China under Chou had followed strongly anti-Soviet bloc policies and this had manifested itself in a number of ways in recent times. China has virtually opposed anything suggested or proposed by the USSR—even if the USA did not openly oppose them. For instance, China had refused to have anything to do with the Soviet proposal that there should be a Conference of the Big Five on Nuclear Disarmament. The Chinese have refused to have anything to do with it on the footing that stage by stage disarmament was a farce and that the problem should be dealt with on a once-and-for-all basis. This has led many neutral observers to wonder whether China was seeking to gain time to build a nuclear arsenal whilst having a barrage of rhetoric about the virtues of total disarmament.

On almost similar grounds, China had rejected the proposal to suggest that the Permanent Members of the Security Council should cut their military budgets by ten percent and use

the money so saved to aid developing countries. China herself is believed to spend 40% of its Budget on defence and military affairs, but so hostile is China about anything proposed by Russia that it attacked the proposal with vituperative vehemence. At the last session (30th) of the UN, in 1975, China voted against a resolution "on banning of development and production of arms of mass destruction and new systems of such arms." This anti-Soviet policy of China no doubt pleases the ruling circles in the USA and Europe, but there are indications that this tough aggressive policy on military matters, combined with China's expenditure on military armament, has caused apprehensions in several Southeast Asian countries.

The *Time* magazine gave the reason why it was so concerned about the policies Teng would follow: "...in practice, Teng is the 'new man' in Peking, even though it may be odd to so describe a veteran of 71 who has spent most of his life in China's political wars. The US has always been fascinated by China, whether it was seen as an ally, a fanatical adversary or, as now, a somewhat remote power that has entered into some limited foreign policy partnership with the US. In an increasingly difficult world—Indochina lost, Russian detente severely strained, Southern Europe threatened by Communism, and murky battles looming with Third World—the US basically wants to know whether, in the long run, China will be friend or foe. The man who will shape a large part of the answer is Teng....."

There is, no doubt, an element of wishful thinking in American reactions to developments in China. The USA does not want a return to the virulent anti-US stance ("paper tiger" days) China had indulged in the period before and during the 1966-69 Cultural Revolution. Nor does the US want China to effect a rapprochement with the Soviet Union which will upset the delicate balance of power Washington has sought to maintain after Vietnam.

The *Time* magazine of January 19 presents detailed and revealing information about the life and times of Teng. Among the inter-

esting tidbits cited by *Times* was that Kissinger had first referred to Teng as "that nasty little man." But after a few meetings he is reported to have said "...Teng is a different man than Chou En-lai. He's more bureaucratic. He's more direct. He's more pragmatic. Teng is extremely intelligent."... "Time sums up the little man as "ruthless and arrogant, the tiny (4ft. 11-in) Vice-Premier is considerably different in style from his urbane predecessor. He lacks Chou's subtlety and sinuous charm, not to mention his manners. In the middle of a conversation, he will expectorate noisily into a handy spittoon. 'You must forgive me' he may say. 'I am just a country boy'....."

Time also recalled that "during the early 1960's Teng presided over a gradualist agriculture-oriented, economic recovery programme that undid much of the chaos of Mao's Great Leap Forward project. Apparently he had some differences with Mao over economic policy. 'For the purpose of increasing economic production,' Teng declared in 1962 in a now notorious phrase, 'any by-hook-or-crook method can be applied. It doesn't matter whether a cat is black or white so long as it catches mice.' At the same time, he also suggested that 'the dictatorship be diluted and democracy be expanded,' a remark that was later interpreted as a direct challenge to Mao's belief that the party's reins of power should never be relaxed." As a result of his "links with entrenched bureaucracy," Teng became a victim of the purges spawned by the Cultural Revolution. "Red guard pamphlets mercilessly denigrated him as a dissolute high-living potentate who used his high office to indulge in gluttonous tastes and his bourgeois devotion to bridge and mah-jongg; it was said that he frequently commanded special planes and railway cars to bring his card-playing cronies along on jaunts round the country....."

He was humiliated during the Cultural Revolution. "...At one point he was driven through the streets in a truck with a dunce cap pulled over his ears, jeered at by a screeching, vengeful mob of Red Guards. Eventually he confessed to all charges against him and admitted that his 'thought and attitude were incompatible with Mao's thought'. Teng was forced to resign his party posts, and for nearly

seven years he was in effect a non-person. Some Sinologists believe that Teng spent his years of obscurity reading the works of Mao, Marx and Lenin and visiting communes and factories 'in order to gain empathy for workers and peasants'. He was, however, spared hard physical labour out of consideration for his age. In April 1973, he suddenly re-appeared at a banquet in Peking..by the following January he had been fully rehabilitated....."

Time anticipated "factional challenges for Teng. The dominant group in China now consists of bureaucrats, led by Teng, whom Chou En-lai restored to high positions after the chaos of the Cultural Revolution. These tough veteran bureaucrats constitute a rather exclusive club.. The bureaucracy's inveterate enemy remains a radical clique centring around Mao's wife Chiang Ching.. these potential frictions will not develop until Mao passes from the scene. Says Boston University China scholar Merle Goldman: 'Just as Chou's power came ultimately from Mao, so does Teng's.....'"

After stating that Teng's position would have to be confirmed at a Plenary session of the National People's Congress, *Time* went on to say "...Teng has more enemies than Chou ever had. Many party veterans recall that in the mid-1950's, Teng rose to power by in effect stopping over the dead body of the pro-Soviet Kao Kang, who was then a member of the politburo and the supreme ruler of the provinces of Manchuria. Kao reportedly committed suicide in a Peking prison after Teng's brutal denunciation of him at a 1955 Central Committee plenum. But if Teng is worried about any long knives he has not shown it. He is even indulging in his old epicurean tastes. Just recently his favourite Szechuanese restaurant in Peking, the Cengtu, re-opened, and is packed daily. It had been closed since Teng fell into disgrace back in 1966."

It will thus be seen that the *Time* magazine, probably reflecting Washington, had decided that Teng would be in charge of affairs in China for sometime at least. The *Newsweek*, 19/2/76, also believed that Teng would succeed Chou. "...When the Communist hierarchy meets this week following Chou's funeral, Teng is expected to be

tapped as Premier. Even so, he may be only first among equals. Teng's administration will likely contain powerful rivals like 66-year old Deputy Premier Chang Chun-chiao, a radical who denounced him during the Cultural Revolution. Because of that fact, Chinese political stability in the coming months may hinge in part on Teng's skill in smoothing over differences between party pragmatists like: himself and the more revolutionary party faction that Chang seems to represent.....".

Newsweek then speculates on possible changes in foreign policy under Teng. "...Whatever his ultimate political intentions, the blunt chain-smoking Teng will provide a marked personal contrast to Chou En-lai. And the world's diplomats and dignitaries will miss Chou's unique blend of humour, asringency and sophistication. His countrymen, too, will obviously miss him. 'Without Premier Chou', one Chinese remarked not so long ago, 'I simply do not know what China will do.' Both China and the world must find out."

The Far Eastern Economic Review, which is one of the most knowledgeable on Chinese affairs, in its issue of January 23, had a special feature entitled TENG TAKES CENTRE STAGE and stated that "after two years as Chou En-lai's stand-in, Teng Hsiao-ping has taken a centre stage in Peking's political hierarchy. But who is Teng? And what problems, in any, will the stocky politician face in the wake of Chou's death.....".

The FEER article provides one of the best informed background analysis about the Party and Government hierarchy in China. After examining all the qualities Teng possessed to be Chou's successor, the FEER concluded its piece by Goodstadt thus: "...Unlike Chou En-lai, Teng does not have unlimited patience or a conviction that all contentions are best conciliated. He will seek a consensus but will not spend days in protracted conversation with irate adversaries to persuade them to settle their differences. A strong Chinese tradition prefers gentle mediation and most of the present leadership grew accustomed to this style of administration under Chou En-lai. Teng took the decision to cordon off Hangchow; put public security regiment into the city; arrest trouble-makers; and then mount

a show of force with troops going to work in factories in the first half of last year. Hangchow showed how hard he will fight for strict law and order. Teng Hsiao-ping's trump cards are, of course, the knowledge that there is no one waiting in the wings with anything like the same range of qualifications, and the advantage of having been returned to office with joint approval from both Mao Tse-tung and Chou En-lai. The late Premier's endorsement of Teng's position cannot be wrested from him now.....".

Events have shown how wrong all these assessments and evaluations have turned out to be. But such China watchers cannot be blamed if they go wrong because there is really no opportunity for outsiders to study the situation inside China as adequately as it is necessary to understand developments and anticipate events.

But a great deal has been written about China after Chou. Some of these reports and comments, even if speculative, provide a great deal of informative and interpretative material.

We will conclude the first part of this series in our Notebook on China after Chou with an extract from an article sent to us by a local commentator who wishes to use the pseudonym *Confucius*;

"The cleansing of the Augean stables of the cultural revolution was too much a strain for the health of Premier Chou En-lai. Putting in 16-18 hours of work a day for over three years on end was unbearable, even with the best medical attention. One can but marvel at how the Premier managed to bridge planning gaps, balance budgets, receive ambassadors and businessmen and time and again pacify chiefs of warring factions. Posterity owes Chou a monument if only for making use of his powers to rehabilitate a part of the downtrodden and humiliated intellectuals, the victims of the Cultural Revolution.

"Furthermore, there is a general belief that Premier Chou En-lai must have done more than anybody else in the last decade to oppose Red Guardism at home. Red Guards, for instance, had wanted to turn everything upside down in the apartment of Soong Ching-ling and desecrate the tomb of 'the father of the nation' Sun Yat-sen

at Nanking, but were stopped by Chou En-lai. Radicals were going at the time to hold meetings until final victory by suspending production in the belief that the damage would be made up for by total purges. 'How will you feed the population?'—had countered Chou En-lai and even Mao Tse-tung had to back out. Likewise in the winter of 1967 Mao gave in to Chou's pressure and called off the Red Guards who had besieged the Soviet Embassy.

"Some people tend to believe that it was Chou En-lai who initiated the rapprochement with the United States. This is not correct. For one thing, the Premier had only executed Mao's orders when he invited first Kissinger and later Nixon to Peking. Secondly, Chou, a champion of peaceful co-existence, advocated a balanced East-West approach and warned Mao against a tilt to any one side. Thirdly, Chou En-lai is on record to have joined the critics of Russia much later than others. This is clear from certain Cultural Revolution publications.

"At one time Mao was elbowed aside and Liu Shao-chi took the reins of power. But Liu-Shao chi fell by the wayside under Red Guard pressure. Then came Lin Piao who was proclaimed the heir apparent. Chou En-lai, on the contrary, remained number three for a long time. His stock seemed to rise greatly after the "closest comrade-in-arms", Lin Piao, disappeared. This was probably the reason why he was entrusted with making a report to the 10th Party Congress.

"The Chinese, however, always held Chou En-lai in great respect, irrespective of his titles. They invariably associated his name with reason, common sense and national interests. They also knew that Chou was an enemy of disruptive anarchy under the smokescreen of the class struggle, of mass political purges which only served to cripple the people and degraded the country. Their faith in the Premier was significantly strengthened by his address to the last session of Parliament when he talked about plans to turn China into a powerful nation. That speech was Chou's swan song.

"Numerous facts show that Chou was the exact opposite of Mao. While the Chairman advocated self-reliance and isolation, Chou

stood for the open doors doctrine. While Mao voted for tough naked 'politics,' Chou stressed economics and emphasized that enthusiasm alone would not feed the hungry.

When Mao headed for a border confrontation with Russia, Chou talked about not casting dirt into that fountain from which one has

sometime to drink. The Premier was reported to have repeatedly proposed cuts in the Chinese military budget in favour of general modernization and improvement of agriculture arguing that a nuclear war whether against Russia or America would spell disaster. Therefore he enjoyed strong sup-

port among party cadres, administrators, the military, let alone scientists and scholars among whom he felt in his own element. Even radical leaders like Chang Chun-Chiao used to come to his help

(To be Continued)

CHRONICLE

Feb. 14 — Feb. 27

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; TOCSL—Times of Ceylon Sunday Illustrated; DM—Dinamina; LD—Lankadipa; JD—Janadina; VK—Virakesari; ATH—Aththa; SM—Sillu-mina; SLD—Sri Lankadipa; JS—Janasathiya.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 14: As a first step in streamlining the cooperatives, Mr. S. K. K. Suriarachchi, Minister of Co-operatives and Small Industries, has taken steps to give a new look and changes in the methods of service in nearly 500 co-operatives serving two million consumers in the Colombo district: the modernisations is expected to eliminate queues: the new method will come into force in the Colombo districts within a period of one month—CDN. According to the *Aththa* the promise given by the Minister of Finance, Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike, in his last Budget that synthetic textiles would be made available to the public at reduced prices has become a false pledge though six months have lapsed since the budget. According to the *Daily News* all recruitment at the Government Press has been stayed till the Government takes a decision on the strikers: earlier 325 new workers have been recruited. According to the *Virakesari* several trade unions in the private and public sector are ready to participate in the one-day token general strike to be launched on the 20th of this month: Government is expected to deploy the services of the Army too to help Police to maintain law and order on the 20th—VK. According to Mr. Ananda Dassanayake, General Secretary of the Sri Lanka Independent Trade Union Federation, the trade union by the name "Sri Lanka United Trade Union Federation" which has announced through press statements and over the radio that it will not support the token general strike of 20th is not a trade union that has any connection with the Sri Lanka Freedom Party nor has it any organised working class in it—ATH. Police investigating the Rs. 6 lakhs bank robbery at Wijerama, Gangodawlla, took into custody a lecturer of the Vidyodaya Campus of the University and three undergraduates on suspicion: Rs. 4 lakhs of the loot has been recovered—LD. According to the *Lankadipa* the Governments of Indonesia, Thailand and Burma have pledged to give every assistance to Sri Lanka including rice if and when necessary. The Nigerian Federal Government announced yesterday that a coup attempt to overthrow the Government was crushed:

a curfew was introduced in the country in the interest of national security and public welfare. The United States yesterday condemned as inflammatory and one-sided a draft resolution on Israel action in occupied Arab territories submitted before the United Nations Human Rights Commission in Geneva.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 15: Following a five-hour session of its Politbureau on Friday, the Communist Party of Sri Lanka is expected to take a firm stand on the Government's proposed foreign investment bill: according to the CP it is not necessary to place in the statute books a law holding out so many guarantees to foreign investors when the White Paper on the same subject assures these—CO. Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, Leader of the Opposition, will shortly make a visit to India on an invitation by the Government of India—CO. Mr. Anura Bandaranaike, Chief Organiser of the SLFP Youth Leagues, addressing a meeting in the Uva province said that the SLFP should look back at itself, correct the mistakes and face the general elections in 1977 as a humble, clean and honest party—ST. The annual general report of the Ceylon Workers' Congress read during its sessions currently being conducted in Kandy said that citizens of Indian origin who were granted citizenship under the Sirima-Shastri Pact does not enjoy the same rights and benefits enjoyed by other citizens—VK. According to the *Janasathiya* the attempts by Mr. Hector Kobbekaduwa, Minister of Agriculture and Lands, to hand over the activities of Agency houses to an organisation called Janawasama has been delayed owing to pressures from political and capitalist sources. Several trade unions in the private and public sector are engaged in organising the token general strike on February 20—JS. *Observer* quoted the *Financial Times* of London which said that the British Trade Secretary, Mr. Peter Shore, has appointed a Queen's Counsel and a chartered accountant to investigate two companies with which Sir Oliver Goonetilleke, a former Governor General of Ceylon, has been connected. Foreign Minister of Nepal, Professor Krishna Raj Argal, will arrive in the island on a three-day official tour—CO. Police investigating the Wijerama bank robbery recovered five lakhs of rupees out of the six lakhs robbed: among those arrested in connection with the robbery is a university lecturer, an undergraduate and a son of a lady doctor—CO. Nigerian head of State, General Murtala Muhammed, was assassinated in the abortive coup led by an army officer. Following news of the scandal about aircraft sales abroad, the Chairman of the Lockheed Aircraft Corporation has resigned.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 16: The Department of Education released the results of over 700,000 students who sat the GCE O Level and the NCGE examination in December last year: Dr. Badiudin Mahmud, Minister

of Education said yesterday that this was a record achievement of which not only a small developing country like Sri Lanka but even an advanced country could very well be proud of—CDN. According to the *Daily News* the first weekly gazette since the strike of the Government Press will be out today; the last gazette appeared on January 8. Employees belonging to the post and telecommunication unions decided yesterday not to deliver any letters to the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and to departments that came under that Ministry; the union has decided on this in support of the strike at the Government Press which comes under the Ministry of Broadcasting and Information—JD. According to the *Daily Mirror* investigations following the bank robbery at Wijerama revealed that there are evidence to believe another insurrection by insurgents similar to that of April, 1971, was in the offing: Police arrested four suspects and recovered Rs. 5 lakhs robbed from the Wijerama branch of the People's Bank; the man said to be the leader who masterminded the robbery is still at large—CDN. According to the *Dinamina* the Attorney General's department is searching for the assets in Sri Lanka of Sir Oliver Goonetilleke, a former Governor General of Ceylon, who was fined and jailed in absentia by the CJC (Exchange Frauds). World Bank is satisfied with the development plans of the Government and decided to increase its grant to Sri Lanka for the year 1976—LD. The *Aththa* editorially referred to the non-recognition of the MPLA Government by Sri Lanka and warned the Government not to follow the "Chinese line" in this matter—ATH. Lt. General Olusugum Obasanjo, taking over as head of Nigeria pledged to continue the "dynamic" policies of his predecessor General Murtala Muhammed who was killed in a coup last Friday. Soviet Foreign Minister, Andrei Gromyko, has told the UN General Secretary, Kurt Waldheim, that a Middle East peace conference without the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) could only bring harm to the cause of peace. The three man independent Commission of Inquiry probing the Lockheed scandal met the Prince of Netherlands Prince Bernhard, who is suspected of having received large sums of money illegally through the sale of aircraft to Netherlands.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 17: According to the *Daily Mirror* the Rukman Senanayake issue in the UNP is likely to bring a split in the JR group of the UNP; the group led by Mr. Esmond Wickremasinghe has expressed opinion that Mr. Rukman Senanayake should be pardoned for his conduct during the Colombo South by-elections while a group led by Mr. Cyril Mathew has said that he must be expelled from the party; meanwhile the Dudley Senanayake group within the party has taken strong exception to the publication of the Rukman inquiry committee's findings in the party's Sinhala daily *Dinapatha*. Mr. S. K. K. Suriyarachchi, Minister of Food, Co-operatives and Small Industries, said that during the last four and a half years co-operative societies throughout the island lost Rs. 50 million—CDM. Following the Lockheed Aircraft scandal, Mr. P. B. G. Kalugalle, Minister of Shipping, Aviation and Tourism, has stopped the proposed agreement of Air Ceylon with Air Siam; under the agreement Air Ceylon is expected to lease out a Lockheed jet from a leading finance institution with Air Siam guarantee—CDM. The Government Printer yesterday announced that the Government Gazette is now available for sale at

the Government Publications Bureau; meanwhile the strike at the Government Press with about 2000 workers still out, continues—CDN. According to the *Janadina* the decision of the members belonging to 12 postal unions not to deliver letters and other postal articles to departments that come under the Ministry of Broadcasting and Information was put into operation successfully from yesterday; from yesterday not a single letter was delivered to these departments. Workers belonging to several trade unions in the CTB have agreed to strike on February 20, the day of the proposed token strike—JD. According to the *Aththa* trade unions in the National Paper Corporation decided extend support for workers on strike at the Government Press by not supplying printing and other papers to the Government Press. According to the *Lankadipa* more workers are slowly returning to work in the Government Press. Mr. George Rajapakse, Minister of Health, decided to forfeit the bank guarantee of those doctors who went abroad and failed return to the island on the appropriate date—DM. According to the *Dinamina*, Police searching the house of a suspect in the Wijerama bank robbery found hand bombs, guns and ammunition and literature of insurgents; this house was situated at Nawala. The Prime Minister of India, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, told a mass rally yesterday that the State Government of Tamil Nadu was dismissed last month because it planned violent agitations against the central government. A senior official of the MPLA in Angola said that the war in Angola was not yet over. Iran decided to cut the price of crude oil by 9.5 US cents a barrel in an attempt to boost sales in sluggish market.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18: Mr. T. B. Ilangaratne, Minister of Trade and Public Administration, who returned from India yesterday said that the mutual respect, confidence and cordiality between India and Sri Lanka have been retained intact despite efforts by mischievous elements including sections of the press to disrupt this: Mr. Ilangaratne who met the Indian Prime Minister and other Ministers and VIPs said that at present India's leader's popularity had been enhanced—CDN. The SLFP controlled Sri Lanka Independent Trade Union Federation and the Sri Lanka Independent Government Workers' Trade Union Federation which met on Friday ratified the decision to launch a day's token strike on February 20 in support of the demands of the workers of Government press whose strike is nearing one month—CDN. According to the *Daily Mirror*, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister of India, who addressed a mass rally in Madras over the weekend told that one of the reasons for her dismissal of the DMK Government was because the latter interfered with the internal affairs of Sri Lanka. According to the *Janadina* nearly 5,000 estate workers too would join the one-day token strike on February 20; the JCTUO called on its membership that every member should join the one-day token strike; the JCTUO however exempted compulsory service employees in the Health Department from the token strike—JD. The *Janadina* in an editorial on the proposed token strike said that the Government was keen only in breaking the strike and not to bring a settlement; the paper further said that these same tactics were used by the former UNP Government but instead of breaking the strike it only built up the strength of the working class—JD. The *Aththa* editorially said that with the results

of the GCE O Level and the NCGE students who wanted to continue higher studies are unable to do so owing to the non-availability of text books: the editorial stressed the importance of settling the strike at the Government press which institution is responsible for printing the text books for the higher education. According to the *Aththa* sixteen trade unions in the Postal Department would join the strike on February 20. According to the *Lankadipa* the Ministry of Justice has plans to change the electoral laws before the next general elections and according to the proposed changes the number of meetings a candidate could hold before the polling day will be six, the deposit for contesting will be Rs. 250 and the number of words in a publication on behalf of the candidate would be limited to 8000 words. Annual Sivaratri festival will be conducted at the Thirukedhiswaram temple from February 26 to March 1: special bus and train services will be available on these days. Arab information ministers yesterday pledged their support for all African Liberation movements and particularly the Soviet based MPLA forces fighting for the control of Angola. The Chinese Press charged that "capitalist roaders" had split the communist party's central committee and hinted that a major power struggle was underway.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 19: According to the *Daily News* the Government believes that the existing election laws should be revised in the context of the new Republican Constitution of 1972 and the new Administration of Justice Law: it is understood that shortly a Parliamentary Select Committee will be appointed to consider this question. The Sri Lanka Insurance Corporation will soon open a branch at Maldivé Islands—CDN. The No-Confidence Motion against the Minister of Finance and Justice, Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike, will be taken up for discussion today in the National State Assembly—CDN. All preparations for tomorrow's token strike were being made by trade unions under the JCTUO—CDN. According to the *Aththa* and *Janadina* all preparations are ready for tomorrow's token strike and the entire nation was expected to come to standstill beginning from midnight today: According to the *Virakesari* the question of solving the strike at the Government Press had been handed over to the Prime Minister: the Government has cancelled leave for all state employees and members of the armed forces. According to the *Aththa* the Sri Lanka Government as recognised the MPLA Government of Angola. Former Secretary to the Minister of Education, A. H. M. Farouk, was yesterday sentenced by a Bribery Court to two year's rigorous imprisonment and fined Rs. 10,000: Mr. Farouk was charged before Mr. C. Manohara District Judge, presiding at the special bribery court for having solicited Rs. 1500 as bribe to secure an appointment as a teacher to a resident of Katugastota and having accepted Rs. 1000 as a bribe—VK. According to a trade agreement signed yesterday between the USSR and Sri Lanka, Sri Lanka will export coconut oil, canned fruits and spices to the USSR: Sri Lanka will import machineries and tractors from the USSR—VK. Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, addressing a meeting of the SLFP Working Committee yesterday said whatever hardships she may have to face she would follow the socialist path laid down by her late husband, Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike. The Minister of Education and Agriculture have jointly drawn up a plan to bring under-

graduates in the country's development works—DM. According to the *Aththa* following a decision by the unions in the Postal Department the telephone at the house of the Minister of Information and Broadcasting Mr. R. S. Perera, and telephones in his Ministry and departments that came under the Ministry have become "dead": this follows a decision by the unions to boycott all services of posts and telecommunications to the Minister in support of the strike at the Government Press which comes under the Ministry of Broadcasting and Information. France yesterday became the first major western country to recognise the Republic of Angola backed by the Soviet based MPLA movement. Arab League Secretary, General Mahmud Riad, will hold discussions with Algeria, Morocco and Mauritania in an attempt to resolve the conflict over the Western Sahara.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 20: The Government yesterday announced over the Radio that employees willing to stay overnight in their working places would be given all facilities to do so and the Government Agents were asked to provide the necessary facilities: the Government also announced yesterday that the doors were still open for the strikers to return to work: the announcement said that the Prime Minister yesterday met representatives of two major trade union federations and had discussions in a bid to settle the strike at the Government Press and urged the JCTUO to give up its token strike but the proposals by the Prime Minister were not accepted by the trade union representatives—CDN. The *Aththa* in an editorial on the strike said that the public should understand that this strike was solely for urging the Government to settle the strike at the Government Press and definitely not an anti-Government move by the trade unions: Mr. Batty Weerakoon, General Secretary of the Sri Lanka Workers' Federation, in an announcement in the *Janadina* said that the workers should not be deceived by any announcements by the Government through the Radio that the strike is settled or any other announcements to that effect and return to work: the announcement further said that any decision regarding the settlement of the strike will be conveyed only through the JCTUO and not by any other organisation—JD. Mr. Batty Weerakoon also said that the announcement by the Government that discussions between the Prime Minister and trade union representatives have taken place is totally false: according to Mr. Weerakoon no such discussions have taken place so far—JD. Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, Leader of the Opposition, opening the debate in support of the No-Confidence Motion against Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike, Minister of Finance and Justice in the NSA yesterday said that the Minister by his actions had overstepped the democratic limits and attempted to fabricate statements to the extent of making his political opponents lose their civic rights: Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike, in his reply to the No-Confidence Motion said that foreign exchange racketeers who had almost come to believe that what they had been doing all these years with impunity should be tolerated as a way of life could naturally be expected to stand up and protest: at the end the motion was not put to vote: there was disturbance and confusion amidst which it was announced that the motion was defeated—CDM. According to the *Virakesari* all long distance bus and rail services were cancelled last night in view of the token strike: the paper further said that

the CTB has announced unless an appreciable number of employees returned to work it will be impossible to maintain the service today. According to the *Lankadipa* Government has taken all necessary steps to maintain necessary services and would see to it the general public are not inconvenienced by the token strike. Mr. Stanley Tillekeratne, Speaker of the NSA, announced yesterday the decision of the Constitutional Court which has said that by a majority decision it found that none of the provisions of the Privena Bill was inconsistent with the Constitution—CDN. The DWC announced that the dispute between the Democratic Workers' Congress and the Labour Department regarding the registration of the union has now been settled—CDN. China said that the Soviet Union was the "main source of threat" to South East Asia and called on the countries in the region to oppose what it called "Soviet Aggression and expansion". The US House of Representatives' Intelligence Committee's report disclosed that after the US Intelligence Agencies were caught offguard on India's nuclear test of May, 1974, a series of steps were taken to tackle the problem of nuclear proliferation in developing countries.

state institutions were at a standstill Mr. David Aiers, British High Commissioner for Sri Lanka, will arrive in the island today—CDN. Britain will tighten its security measures at its atomic energy plants to combat the threat of urban guerilla raids. Chinese Acting Premier Hua Kuo-Feng had talks with a West German delegation of the Christian Democratic Union in Peking yesterday.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 22: The JCTUO which met yesterday at the Navarangahala decided to call upon the Government to pay the Rs. 15/- salary increase to all categories of employees in the private and public sector and to increase the minimum wages from the present Rs. 180 to Rs. 250—CDN. According to the *Janasathiya* the JCTUO at its meeting yesterday decided to put forward the following eight demands before the Government: to remove the provisions in the emergency regulations which affected the working class population, to withdraw the proposed Foreign Investment Bill, nationalisation of all banks as pledged by the Government, the minimum salary of a worker should be Rs. 250/-, to pay Rs. 2.50 for every increasing point in the cost of living allowance, the Rs. 15 salary increase to be given to all categories of employees in the private and public sector, to implement the proposals of the L. B. de Silva Commission report with retrospective effect from 1971, to nationalise all industries that affect the day to day living of the masses, as pledged by the Government. According to the *Sunday Times*, the Opposition is of the view that the debate on the no-confidence motion against the Minister of Justice and Finance, Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike, that took place in the NSA last Thursday has still not been concluded because the motion itself had not been put to vote: when the NSA meets on March 2, the Opposition is expected to urge the Speaker to continue the debate. Doctors have brought to the notice of the Ministry of Health that the reintroduction of channelled practice will be a boon to the Government and the public—ST. Police was summoned to the Talangama CTB Depot yesterday to settle a fight between two factions of employees when strikers returned to work yesterday morning—VK. According to the *Sri Lankadipa* Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, has been named as the representative to the United Nation to speak on behalf of the Non-Aligned nations soon after the Non-Aligned Conference to be held in August in Colombo: she is expected to leave for New York in early October to attend the United Nations meeting. According to the *Silumina* soon the importation of ayurvedic drugs will be exempted from FEECS. Soviet Tass News Agency reported that victorious Angolan Government troops have overcome virtually all organised resistance. Doctors in Britain announced that up to one million people have been affected by Britain's worst influenza epidemic for seven years. Indian Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, announced that several Opposition leaders have been released and more would be released soon.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 21: Police said that the one day token strike launched yesterday was very peaceful and attendance in Government offices despite the buses and trains being badly disrupted was very satisfactory: thousands of employees walked to their working places—CDN. The JCTUO will meet today to review the results of the one-day token strike—CDN. The *Daily Mirror* and *Lankadipa* carried front page pictures of strikers walking, cycling and travelling in lorries to their work places. The *Aththa* editorially praised the working class for the successful strike launched yesterday and in a lead news said that the strike had been so successful that this day would go down in history: owing to the employees of the Lake House too joining the strike *Observer* and *Janata*, evening dailies of Lake House, were not published yesterday: the morning papers were late—ATH. Fifty seven passengers who took a bus by force to Kandy on the night of the 19th from the Colombo Central Bus Stand were arrested by the Kadawatte Police: the passengers resorted to this owing to the cancellation of long distance bus services in view of the strike—JD. The *Janadina* had front page pictures of the Central bus stand empty without a single bus; the paper also reported an incident in which Police was said to have brutally assaulted CTB workers of the Mattakkuliya Depot who took part in the strike: the paper had pictures of assaulted CTB workers in the hospital. The *Janadina* in an editorial on the strike said that all attempts by the Government to foil the strike were defeated well and truly. 19th of March has been fixed as the day for the acceptance of nominations for the Ja-Ela by elections—DM. According to the *Daily News* the motion of no-confidence on the Minister of Finance and Justice was defeated in the NSA on Thursday night by a voice vote: confusion prevailed in the NSA at midnight when the vote was about to be taken—CDN. The newly elected Mahanayake of the Asgiriya Chapter, Ven. Palipane Dharmakirithi Sri Gunaratana Chandananda, will be presented with the Act of Appointment by the President Mr. William Gopallawa, today in a ceremony to be held in Kandy—DM. According to the *Virakesari* the token strike of yesterday was a complete success in the Jaffna province and the services at most of the

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 23: Dr. Badiudin Mahmud, Minister of Education, announced yesterday that a open University will be set up within the next six months and this would be modelled on the pattern of institutions in Britain with modifications to suit the local conditions: the Open University will take in students who are shut out from the University for

lack of accommodation and those wish to pursue higher studies while in employment—CDN. President Col. Muammar Gaddafi of Libya told a correspondent of *Daily News* that the non-aligned group should be made really non-aligned and steps should be taken in this direction at the Colombo Summit to be held in August this year. Minister of Health, Mr. George Rajapakse, said that he would soon amend the Compulsory Service Act in relation to doctors who violated its regulations: the amendment the Minister seeks to introduce will compel doctors who violated it and went abroad to return—CDN. According to the *Daily Mirror* more discussions will be held soon between the British team and the Sri Lanka team on the compensations to be paid to sterling company estates nationalised by the Government last October and mutual agreement on the compensation is likely to be reached. Sri Lanka today will commence talks in Colombo with a British team on double tax agreement: this agreement if successful will make Sri Lankians in Britain taxed either in Sri Lanka or in Britain instead of their being taxed in both countries—CDM. The *Janadina* in an editorial told the Government not to underestimate the strength of the working class and take meaningful steps to settle the strike at the Government Press: the paper also called on the Government to investigate the acts of Police violence in the Mattakkuliya CTB Depot on the day of the token strike and punish those who are found guilty. The *Janadina* in a separate news report said that the JCTUO has decided to give the okay for trade union action for the unions in the CTB if the Government fails to investigate the Police assault on CTB workers on the 20th of February, the day of the token strike. According to the *Aththa* 20,000 employees in the private and public sector belonging to the unions of the JCTUO have agreed to donate their one day's salary to employees on strike at the Government Press. The delegates who attended the JCTUO unanimously decided to give all powers to the JCTUO Secretariat to take what ever action it may consider necessary to take to win the eight demands it had put forward before the Government—ATH. According to the *Virakesari* the JCTUO will decide on the future action regarding the strike at the Government Press, today. According to the *Dinamina* the Government cancelled the licence to export tea of a leading Agency House for defaulting payment of customs duty amounting to Rs. 1.2 million. The territorial waters limit for fishing will soon be extended to 200 miles from the present 12 miles—LD. US Ex-President Richard Nixon arrived in China on Saturday on a controversial visit that marked his return to the public spotlight after months of seclusion.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24: Several parents have protested to the Minister of Education that their children who have obtained eight A level passes in the NCGE examination have not been allowed entry to the HNCE classes because they failed to obtain the required gradings in pre-vocational subjects: the parents in their appeal said that the students should be given some relief because the NCGE was held for the first time—CDN. Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, Leader of the Opposition, left for Bangkok on a private visit and will be away for a week—CDN. The JCTUO put off its decision on the next move regarding the strike at the Government Press in anticipation of a reply from the Prime Minister to its request made 1st Saturday to intervene to bring a settlement to the strike—CDN.

According to the *Janadina* the JCTUO gave time till today for the Government to take necessary steps to investigate alleged Police assaults on strikers on February 20th. Employees of the CTB, Peliyagoda, commenced a strike from yesterday in protest of alleged Police assaults on strikers on February 20th—JD. According to the *Aththa* in view of the continued strike at the Government Press students entering the HNCE classes in schools throughout the island which are scheduled to start in March are handicapped without text books. According to the *Daily Mirror* which quoted from an Indian newspaper *Blitz*, Carlos Ramirez Sanchez, also known as the Jackal, the dreaded terrorist who led the attack on the OPEC headquarters some time ago, is presently in Sri Lanka. Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike, Minister of Finance and Justice accompanied by his wife will leave for London on February 29 for medical treatment—LD. Mr. Pieter Keuneman, Minister of Housing and Construction left for Moscow to participate in the 25th CPSU Congress—DM. Ex US President, Mr. Richard Nixon, yesterday had a one hour and 40 minutes meeting with Chairman Mao Tse-tung of China on a wide range of subjects.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 25: Dr. Badiudin Mahmud, Minister of Education, according to appeals by parents of several students who sat the NCGE examination contended that not all students who failed to qualify in the compulsory first language or pre-vocational subjects should be debarred from promotion to the Higher National Certificate—first year—CDN. Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, who yesterday addressed the Government Agents of all districts said that they should be vigilant in their areas and act in concert with the Police in regard to protection of public funds and property: she said that a spate of recent incidents like robberies had created a suspicion of a possible outbreak of insurgency and those suspicions have been confirmed by the investigations that were now being undertaken—CDN. According to the *Daily News* trade union circles are confident that the Prime Minister's formula would end the current month old strike at the Government Press: according to the formula the dismissed apprentice would be interdicted and served with a charge sheet and all other strikers would be allowed to return to work: meanwhile the Government is flooded with complaints that in several state institutions non-strikers who did not participate in the token strike were being harassed by those who struck work—CDN. Police told that Carlos Ramirez Sancho, the international terrorist, is definitely not in Sri Lanka—CDN. The Thulhiriya Textile Mills was closed following disturbances that took place: Police and Army have been summoned to guard the Mills—CDM. The *Aththa* in an editorial referred to reports in the newspapers which said that the loss to the CTB and CGR alone on the day of the strike was Rs.3 million: the paper further said though the government owned papers told this with the indirect meaning that the employees who struck work are responsible for the loss it is actually the Minister of Information and Broadcasting who should be held responsible for this loss. According to the *Janadina* striking trade unions in Government Press decided to continue their strike until their demands are met. The JCTUO in an announcement said that their struggle in regard to the present strike at the Government Press was definitely not to achieve any political ends—JD. According to the *Vir-*

kesari talks between certain leaders of the JCTUO and certain ministers are being held in a bid to solve the strike at the Government Press. From April this year Mahaweli waters will be diverted to the Kalawewa tank—DM. Mr. V. Dharmalingam, Federal Party MP for Uduvil, in a letter to the Speaker of the National State Assembly said that no voting took place on the night of the 19th on the no-confidence motion against the Minister of Justice and Finance, Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike—LD. At the last week's teauctions in Colombo a world record was established when 79 kilos of a Flowery Fannings Special Super Silvery Tip grade realised a price of Rs. 330 per kilo—CDN. The Government of India in a new family planning law published yesterday that it would withhold public loans, jobs, housing and other benefits from couples with more than two children.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 26: In an effort to fill the production gap caused by the allocation of "un-economic" tea lands for the Government's crop diversification program, Ministry of Plantation Industries will bring 17,000 acres of land under tea cultivation, this year—CDN. According to the *Daily Mirror* the Department of Inland Revenue believes that undeclared income or "black money" amounting to over Rs. 500 million is in the possession of big-time businessmen and industrial tycoons in the country. Following the heavy demand for science qualified men, the University of Sri Lanka will absorb more science students to the various campuses: the University will hold a seminar in April this year to discuss methods to provide increased accommodation for students, qualified for absorption to the University, in science subjects—CDM. According to the *Daily News* the JCTUO yesterday postponed deliberations over the Government Press strike till today pending a written official communication from the Government regarding its latest formula to settle the strike. According to the *Janadina* the leaders of trade unions on strike at the Government Press yesterday met the leaders of the JCTUO and indicated that they would continue the strike until the Government intervenes and agrees on a mutually acceptable formula: meanwhile the LSSP Youth League has made arrangements to supply essential consumer items and money to the families of the employees on strike. The *Janadina* editorially referred to the speech by the Prime Minister at a conference of Government Agents last week in which she criticised the activities of the co-operative sector during the past five years: the paper further said this criticism was definitely levelled against the Minister of Trade and Public Administration, Mr. T. B. Ilangaratne, who was Minister incharge of the Co-operatives until the recent Cabinet reshuffle: the paper also said that the Prime Minister sometime ago told the people that under certain reforms initiated by Minister Ilangaratne the masses received some relief from the co-operative movement. According to the *Aththa* under the new reforms the present Minister of Co-operatives, Mr. S. K. K. Suriarachchi, proposed to appoint District Co-operative Authorities: these appointments will take place from next month. Chief Buddhist Priest for Galle and Matara districts, Ven. Malimbada Vajiragnana told a public meeting in Galle that moves are afoot to field Buddhist priests as candidates in the next general elections to safeguard the interest of Buddhism—LD. Dr. Badiudin Mahmud, Minister of Education, will leave for Iraq, Iran, Egypt

and Rumania on February 28, on a two-months' tour—VK. Chairman of the CTB, Mr. J. C. T. Kotelawela, has asked all Depot Managers throughout the island to submit him a report on complaints of inconveniences caused to the employees after the strike of February 20—DM. President Ford of USA named former Pennsylvania Governor William Scranton as the new United States Ambassador to the United Nations.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 27: Ministry of Finance requested the Central Bank to introduce a uniform rate of interest payable by all banks on fixed deposits: this request follows complaints from commercial banks that the National Savings Bank pays a more rate of interest on fixed deposits which in turn resulted in several depositors withdrawing their monies in commercial banks and depositing same in the National Savings Bank—CDN. Agreement regarding double taxation and evasion of income tax was signed between a team of officials from Britain and Income tax authorities of Sri Lanka yesterday in Colombo: one of the features of the agreement was that in future students, teachers and trainees proceeding to UK and doing part-time employment will be exempted from UK income tax on their earnings—CDN. In one of its biggest operation in the sea off the northern coast the Sri Lanka Navy rounded up 38 Indian trawlers poaching in Sri Lanka territorial waters—CDN. Mr. Lakshman Jayakody, Deputy Minister of Defence and Foreign Affairs, at a Press Conference yesterday told that Sri Lanka had grounds to suspect that the DMK of India has interfered in the internal affairs of Sri Lanka—CDM. According to the *Daily Mirror* the LSSP sponsored Ceylon Federation of Labour in a statement issued yesterday said that if the present situation regarding the strike at the Government Press continued it had no alternative but to call on the JCTUO to begin preparations for a general strike: meanwhile the Government and certain trade union leaders are trying their best to settle the strike at the Government Press. According to the *Aththa* at today's Cabinet meeting the JCTUO expects a government formula to settle the strike at the Government Press. According to the *Janadina* Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, told a meeting of SLFP electoral organisers that if the latter were to tell her that the SLFP will not retain power in the next general elections she had no alternative but to follow the pattern in India and postpone the elections: Mr. H. M. Navaratne MP for Minipe and Junior Minister of Agriculture, and Lands, addressing a meeting said, "not to have any hopes for a general election in 1977": he further said that the Government has several development plans and only after implementing these plans and showing the results of it to the country, elections would be held. The Bank Employees Union in a letter to the Minister of Finance explained a number of demands of the employees which have not been granted so far—VK. At a meeting between the JCTUO and the Minister of Industries and Scientific Affairs it was agreed to solve the problems of the employees of the Thulhiriya Textile Mills and re-start work there from next week—DM. The Government is presently holding discussions with the World Bank on aid for the second stage of the Mahaweli diversion scheme—LD. China expressed its support for Zambia and other African nations which had been intimidated by the Soviet Union following the Angolan affairs.

Village Scrapbook (v)

By Herbert Keuneman

TOO MANY PARTINGS

Yes indeed!

I am appalled, looking back and counting up, at how many of today's young village people must be villagers no longer, not in the real sense of belonging in a community; who will not return save on brief holidays; or de-natured, de-ruralized, perhaps de-humanized slightly, to an unforfeited, resentful retirement on pension—if the Government of that day allows them pensions—disaccustomed and unsympathetic in a mere geographical habitat which was once home and loved.

Take this one V.C. area, Ehetuwewa: the young people my wife and I knew as children fifteen years ago. I can think of sixteen (of the hundred or so we knew best) exiled or self-exiled, it makes no difference to the ultimate lost, in jobs that range from University don-in-the-making to domestic service and have only this in common: that as displaced villagers they will have nothing in common any more.

Or take this one single hamlet of Galkadawala....Banders, who works for (of all unlikely milieus in which to seek a young man from the Vanni) the Fisheries Harbour Corporation, controlling a dredger! Kapuru Banda, his younger brother, a switchboard operator in the Electrical Department; Soma, minding a machine in a weaving mill; Subhe, in domestic employment in Colombo..seven from Galkadawala alone, and four of these since only the beginning of the year. The tempo quickens.

Or take just Pinhamy's immediate family: no less than three from there since New Year's Day.

The last to go were Pinhamy's daughters Ukku Amma and Biso Menika (you saw her as the first human subject of the *Desa Nisa* camera) and his 'daughter', his niece through his brother, Ukku Menika.

How they had longed to go! But less—much less, I think—from adventuresomeness as from a lively sense of duty. How long, in the face of three years of drought,

will pride and courage consent to be a drain on the resources of a too large family? Yet, the announcement that their letters of appointment had come was made with little joy. Ukku Amma came where I still lay abed one morning, coming straight from the postman, with an open letter—an obviously official one—in her hand and in floods of tears. Literally, floods: the front of her jacket was already so wet I could see the golden-brown of her skin through. I feared at that moment that the worst had happened and she had been rejected. Almost in tears for her myself I asked the outcome.

'*la-la-labila!*' she sobbed: 'I've got it!'

Ukkuwa is a timid, gentle, retiring child, delicate and slight and shy. Bis is bonny and gay and brave. So when she, too, came in, weeping as copiously, I was not sure how to interpret her tears. But it was the same tragedy: she, too, had been selected! And it was only then it came home to me what a wrench all this represented and what reserves of courage were called for on the part of three girls who had never before but on overnight school excursions or with close relatives spent 24 hours away from home; and how miserably I should miss the friendship and the sight and the mere knowledge of their presence in the village (for of all the Galkadawala people but Banders and Dinga I think I love these two most) but I didn't shed a tear, not while they were with me.

In the circumstances, it might have been tempting male dignity to go to the bus to see them off. I did go, nevertheless, though even their mother, more prudent, stayed home with Dinga and the baby. Pinhamy was there, however, with a stoic face. It was not a comforting occasion. Only little Herat Banda, who carried the *kavum-pettiya* (the tuck-box provided on such occasions to reinforce the beleaguered hearts of exiles by the indirect but infallible route through the stomach) was openly teary, as a still small boy he had the latitude, but conversation was constrained, the girls' mouths kept trembling and the men's were set. We didn't even get to wave goodbye. All three girls secured window seats, but before the bus pulled away they had ducked below the sill.

I looked round for Pinhamy. He had disappeared into the roadside scrub. I don't know why he would do that if his discomposure were no more than Ukku Menika's father, who had come to see his own daughter off, professed. Professed. 'A great loss', said he, 'a great loss. Less and less hands to tend the crops.' It could have been true (his three eldest are already employed and lost to farming) but this year there are no real crops to tend.

There is much to praise, especially in a year like this, in those who make the desertion of a failing village possible. There is much to blame in those who make it necessary. Even when, sad to say, they are often the same people. Maugre all the talk of 'aping' the west, nothing western is more assiduously aped in Ceylon—in all the Third World—than the indurately western interpretation of prosperity. Such an interpretation a great deal of traditional philosophy can find only wholly foreign and cross-grained; but the economic whoremongering goes on, and its pimps insist it is less anti-national than wearing trousers!

In introducing *Scrapbook* I promised to refrain so far as possible from comment. But I cannot forbear a long quotation—not my comment but a western one, and made more than two hundred years ago—a wilderness voice that forewarned, judging in moral and humane terms, how

*'ill fares the land, to hast'ning
ills a prey,*

*Where wealth accumulates, and
men decay.'*

To a readership suffering merely the ill of having been 'western-educated', I should not have to quote more of so familiar a passage. But what if there should be a reader who is securely, albeit he may be unconsciously, western-brain-washed? So, I quote on.....

*'Princes and lords may flourish,
or may fade;*

*A breath may make them, as a
breath has made;*

*But a bold peasantry, their country's
pride,*

*When once destroy'd can never
be supplied.....*

*His best companions, innocence
and health;*

Bloodsucker

And his best riches, ignorance of wealth!

Reactionary? But of course! Continuous reaction is an ineluctable part of the dialectic process! Yet, this is not *per se*, a reactionary reaction so to speak. Socialism, the equitable distribution of wealth, is one thing: do we have to subscribe also—as, alas! we undoubtedly subscribe—to the typically capitalist ideal of affluence?

ILL-NATURE NOTES

Young Sumana (Menike) 6 years old, the youngest of the Pinhamy family, with a niece older than she is, in the absence of the two departed sisters has constituted herself 'my ain particular friend'. Every afternoon now, after I have paid my respects to Nilima Hemamali, she walks back with me from the village to my house. It is a kind gesture I should appreciate even more deeply if I could whole-heartedly approve some of her other friends. Which I cannot.

Bloodsuckers! I imagine: from the bright scarlet that suddenly imbues the bright leaf-green of the heads of some of the species? Or is that imagination?

Be these things as they may, Sum and I were walking together yesterday when she suddenly gave a little shriek and announced: 'Eeeeyi! What a beautiful *chutti* one!' and picked a small but vicious-looking 'bloodsucker' off a bush. Now, I hate the whole lizard tribe, dead or alive, from *Tyrannosaurus rex* to the household gecko; and when Sum thrust the miserable thing towards me never doubting that I should be delighted to fondle it, I skipped back a good pace before recollecting what I might be teaching Sum by my instinctive dread and willing myself to bend down and really look at her to-mestill-loathsome capture. For any creature aspiring to be called a Bloodsucker it was a poor-spirited specimen—it was also quite small: about 8" nosetip to tailtip—and hung unprotestingly in Sum's hand: facts which helped. I am glad I looked, for it was really quite a presentable creature with an unsuspected display of colours as bright as a batik along its back: did you know that *Calotes ceylonensis* (for that is what I think it was, from referring to Deraniyagala's book) has an umber-coloured back—Deraniyagala has it shot with gold; but this I didn't see—with

vivid patterns of olive green and salmon pink pointed with black pencillings?

I might be further on the way to becoming a bloodsucker-expert if not for Sum's subsequent confession. Confession. Confession? Boast! 'ekek ma-va kava: one bit me', she announced, quite without trace of trauma.

'Did it hurt?'

'No! How could it hurt? It had tiny, tiny, tiny teeth.' And she cavorted about, singing 'Tiny teeth, tiny teeth' in transports of delight at having been so singled out for a bloodsucker's attention. She had been poking about near the pineapple bushes, she said, when the *Katussa* 'came out' and nipped her foot. I suppose the wretched thing had a nest nearby, or something?

Wretched thing or not, I should not like to be nipped by a bloodsucker, however tiny its teeth and not from any fear of pain; on the other hand, I do wish someone had taught me to call it *calotes* (or whatever) and had not disposed me to my loathing. How much I might have added to the pleasures of bird-watching could I have augmented that with the not-less colourful delights of—well, of bloodsucker-watching: I know of no other term for the fantastic little beast but that. There is one on my living-room half-wall now. Largish—somewhat over a foot—and rather smartly done up in brown and yellows. I should like to look closer. But lacking Sumana's protection I dare not.

* * *

MAHAWELI—2

Master Plan And Priorities

By R. Kahawita

MAHAWELI is the largest river basin in Sri Lanka. It drains about 4,000 sq. miles of mountains and valleys of the 25,000 sq. miles of Sri Lanka's land mass. About 1,200 sq. miles are in the mountainous regions of its source—almost fully developed, and 2,800 sq. miles in the sub-montane and flat alluvial planes awaiting to be developed. In addition there are another

1,500 sq. miles in the neighbouring basins that can benefit by Mahaweli water.

According to the climatic division of Sri Lanka about 750 sq. miles, above Teldeniya, are in the wet zone benefitting by two rainy seasons, and the rest of the basin including the neighbouring basins are in the dry zone, which have only one rainy season. These seasons are the South West Monsoons—April to July—and the North East—October to January.

During this latter season, rainfall is widespread and all the rivers in the Mahaweli region are in flood; all reservoirs get capacity flow. Also a very high proportion of effective rainfall which, in a normal year, is sufficient to raise a variety of crops without any supplemental irrigation water. This explains why Sri Lanka has almost 800,000 acs. of rainfed paddy out of a total of 1,200,000 acs. of aswedumized fields.

During the South West Monsoons—April to July—the rainfall is negligible in the dry zone from the point of view of cultivations of any kind, and this is the critical period when irrigation water is most needed in the development area. If water is available in Mahaweli, this is the season when diversion is necessary to water the fields in the dry zone. Water will be available in Mahaweli if the South West Monsoon is normal over the 750 sq. miles of the catchment above Teldeniya. If there were to be no river flow during this season due to late rains or failure of Monsoons, diversion or no diversion, cultivations will suffer a setback.

According to the recorded river flow observations, critical years may be two years in every five years. To safeguard cultivations against this high proportion of failures, storage during the North East monsoons, when all rivers are in spate is a prerequisite to intelligent planning of water resources and programming of cultivations. With basin storage of water, it is possible to achieve effective control of flood water and make agricultural programming independent of the vagaries of the monsoons. It is like standby working capital—always available to meet the fluctuations of money supply.

Only a portion of natural rainfall can be used to meet the cultivation requirements, there is what

is known as effective rainfall, viz., that quantum of rainfall that a crop needs before its next watering. The estimated effective rainfall in the project area is 26.7 inches per annum. From a farming point of view any rain more than this is unusable and the Engineer-planner's problem is how to hold back this surplus water and deliver it to the farmer for his next watering if the rains fail. Priorities in development are thus critically linked up with farming requirements and vagaries of rainfall.

The normal rainfall over the planned regions vary from about 200" per annum in the hill country, to about 50" in the lower reaches where bulk of the farming land is available. And in lean years it may be as low as 24" per annum as recorded at several stations—last year—1975 was one such year when there was hardly any rains in the planned region. Mahaweli too was bone dry and diversion would have been nil. One such year is enough to dishearten a farmer and force him to fall back on to his own resources and depend on the pattern of cultivation he was used to before. Every farmer needs a "psychological boost" to keep him in his allotment, without such a boost he drifts back to where he started—subsistence farming. The whole exercise of planning to use Mahaweli water is to pull him out of this type of cultivation and persuade him to take to scientific farming.

The tool in the planners' hand to give this boost to the farmer is water and its management. In Mahaweli, there are seven million two hundred thousand (7,200,000) acre feet of water flowing down the river annually to the sea. The Engineer's problem is how to get control of this volume of water so that he can release it at will to the farmer. Without this control diversion of water in Sri Lanka's rivers is a fiasco. The Engineer of ancient Lanka realised this in no small measure, so they commenced their irrigation systems with storage reservoirs first and diversion thereafter. They scattered the Dry Zone with tanks, small and large, and then undertook transbasin transmission of water in their "Yodi-Elas" of which many have been restored in recent times.

The problem is the same today but in our present ap-

proach to deal with Mahaweli water we have reversed our priorities. In a previous article, I have explained why it was done:— Entirely political without taking into considerations technical and financial feasibilities to make such a national project a success. Many claims have been and are being made, but this will be reversed if development stops with diversion.

For the control of Sri Lanka's rivers, particularly when our source of water is from seasonal rains, storage is the key to successful cultivation. More so when forecasting of the approach of the monsoons is almost impossible. Therefore the primary objective in water resources planning should be to gain full control of river flow, not only to release this water for immediate use but also to supplement the lean years of rain by holding over the surplus flow during a normal year. This aspect of river control creates a new complex on the prudent choice of storage capacities and investment cost, compared to straightforward storage to meet an year's demand. Such "hold over storage", aside being available to regulate the river flow, it provides a tool in the hands of the water managers to advise the farmers the extent of land that should be undertaken for cultivation each season, and the crops to be grown; with a scheme of crop insurance in operation, this irrigation guidance is all the more important today, and it will go a long way to gain the confidence of the farmer, and for him, to go all out for a good harvest.

There are already several irrigation schemes in Sri Lanka designed on this basis though on a minor scale, but never managed that way. One such scheme is Hurulu Wewa in Anuradhapura district—which was mentioned during the high pitched publicity given during the opening ceremonies of Polgolla diversion as a scheme that was going to benefit by the diversion of Mahaweli water. The present situation at Hurulu Wewa is "political creation; a settlement policy was decided against technical advice and more land for two crops a year was settled than the tank could carry in a normal yield year. The storage capacity of this tank is much more than what is required to fill it in a normal year. The extra capacity was provided for

hold over storage to meet the needs of a lean year. But counting of votes was more important than sound technical reasoning. So the number of families to be settled was increased—potential voters in a programme of delimitation of constituencies—with disastrous results to the peasant and the politician.

If this kind of reasoning and policy decisions are allowed to predominate in the apportionment of Mahaweli water, the way our Politicians are going about selling the Mahaweli water, and together with the Political Authorities taking charge of it, Mahaweli project will be a national disaster. As the appellation indicates, the entire outlook may be political and such outlook anywhere in the world is seldom, sane today, the politician sees only the heads that can give him a vote to secure a place in the sun.

The operation and management, efficient distribution and utilization of resources, maintenance and control of the various hydraulic structure, and finally the servicing of financial commitments are a tremendous responsibility of a Government. It is for this reason that the World Bank, who are financing a part of the expenditure recommended the levy of an all inclusive water rate. This is urgent and necessary if this scheme is not to go the same way as other schemes on which we have spent large sums of money, and then have handed over to organisations which cannot appreciate the importance of sound management of national resources.

We rebelled against the recommendations of the World Bank and even called it names and condemned it in and outside the State Assembly as another form of "capitalist colonialism". But when the project gets moving for a few years we will appreciate the value of that recommendation.

Politically it was unacceptable. After having promised the moon and everything else free, it was not possible to tell the peasants that they had to pay for the water they get for irrigating their fields. On the other hand, it was unrealistic to expect a peasant to pay a levy from a subsistence-size holding; when his total income from his holding will not be sufficient to keep himself and his family

above the starvation line. The remedy is not to continue with the minifarm unit of holding and make him a beggar, but to make him a respected citizen by giving him a holding, the income from which can raise him to that level. This was the dream of late Mr. D. S. Senanayake. Today nonetheless, this starving peasant is forced to pay other charges: a Cultivation Committee fee, Crop Insurance premium, a Village Committee tax on land and house, a Productivity Committee levy, a Co-operative share contribution, etc. etc. These are all contrary to what was promised to him at the elections. He pays them, but the peasant does not know for what and what benefits he gets out of it. As far as he is aware he is in the same hole and sees only the world surrounded by the periphery of that hole. What a Government wants is the trust and confidence of the farmer and not the stooges that man these institutions to extort the dues from the peasant. To win that confidence the Government should abolish these levies and introduce a water rate as recommended by the World Bank. The farmer would gladly pay for something delivered to his field; he gets directly involved in it which gives him a right to demand his share of the water and sees that he gets it. Production will go up without a stooge-infested Productivity Committee. Of course this will not provide the "power points" to electrify vote catching; but national resources cannot be frittered away to satisfy the political ambitions of individuals. The collection and use of such a water rate is an administrative matter and should be left to people trained in such techniques.

If the present programme of developing the Mahaweli resources were to be set aside it will be soon discovered that priority number one is large scale storage to give the farmer what was promised on January 8th.

The bulk of the new areas to be brought under settlement are in the Valleys below the Minipe Anicut—near Wetagantota. These river Valleys are sparsely populated, the soils are very good as reported by the F.A.O., and there are several social and economic reasons that the needs of these valleys should be provided before transbasin diversion into areas

where already there is a problem of population pressure on the existing resources. Additional facilities into this area mean a greater influx of population, thus keeping the present problems increasing rather than finding a solution. On the other hand, development of its own basins would attract some of the surplus population into these new areas, as it happened in other development schemes. But there were other political reasons in present day thinking not to go into these basins. However the reasons that prompted the late Mr. D. S. Senanayake to enunciate that a river's own valley should be developed first, other conditions being equal, before transferring river water to the adjoining basins, was to consolidate inter-community relationship, to build up one country, one people with common objectives. This goal seems very distant from what we see and hear today, but who knows, this goal may yet be achieved if wiser counsel prevails among our politician and the different communities.

The master-plan initiated with the early studies was to create a

vast agricultural region, rather than a single river basin, as there is ample water available in the river, if properly controlled, and give full weightage to technical and financial consideration. This line of approach to the problem was followed by the International Organizations that took up the investigations and studies from the point Irrigation Department handed over the work to them.

In those technical studies, the first objective was to achieve control of an average annual yield of 7,200,000 Ac. ft. of water from the Mahaweli Catchment of 4,000 sq. miles. The solution was to construct a series of dams across the parent river for multiple purposes. The highest point of control was in Kotmale river:— a high dam to control floods and hydro-power generation with the highest power potential in the chain of hydro-power development. The area where the dam is located is geologically unstable and further investigations were to be carried out before a final decision is made on its siting. Therefore its priority was left in abeyance.

NOTE

- (i) The material has been collected from various records and reports from 1945 et. seq.
 - (ii) No names have been mentioned except that of the late Mr. D. S. Senanayake, whose prudent policies have enabled the peasants to produce seventy percent of our rice. If those in power know how to manage the Agriculture of this country, this rate of production can be maintained.
 - (iii) An Acre foot of water means the volume of water standing to a depth of one foot over an area of one acre equal to 272,625 gallons of water.
 - (iv) Basin means the total land mass draining into a river from its source to the sea or at its confluence with another river.
 - (v) Watershed is the area over which rain falls and drains into a drainage system.
 - (vi) Catchment is the area bounded by well defined topographical features and draining at a selected point in a natural drainage system.
 - (vii) Effective rainfall is that quantum of rainfall that a plant can absorb in an interval of time.
 - (viii) Maha or Kalapovam is the main cultivation season in Sri Lanka starting with the North East monsoons in October to January with harvesting and crop gathering in February—March. Yala or Siripovam is April to July starting with South West monsoons with harvesting and crop gathering in August—September.
- Meda is March to June, harvesting in June/July for certain crops. Development Area. The river basins into which Mahaweli water is finally issued for irrigation of crops or the areas to be developed to take advantage of Mahaweli water.

The next point of control is at Victoria Falls in the vicinity of Teldeniya. Here again the main feature is power development—second only to Kotmale in power generation. The third dam is at Randenigala, designed to give full control of the river discharge by holding over more than the average run-off from its catchment of 900 sq. miles. At this point full control of the South West monsoon river flow is to be achieved. This water will be available when the entire region in the planned region is experiencing drought conditions. Such hold over storage will ensure a very high percentage of successful cultivations all the year round in the region. Power development at the dam is secondary, but yet considerable.

The other structures in the parent river are Primrose diversion to by-pass the Primrose hill gap which is the cause of flooding in Nawalapitiya, Gampola, Peradeniya, Getambe and some parts of Peradeniya Campus and gardens. At the end of this channel there is power development to be used to develop a domestic water scheme to Kandy, Peradeniya and Campus. This channel will eventually join the channel issuing from Polgolla diversion—the Second point of diversion for transbasin transmission of Mahaweli water. Below Randenigala—the site for large scale storage there are yet another 3,100 sq. miles of catchment, entirely in the dry zone and contributing considerable flow into the parent river through several tributaries mainly during the North East monsoons, but when the entire lower basin is in peak flow conditions, there is the need to hold back some of this water to protect the crops from flood damage and release the water to supplement the South West flow—or Yala season. *Therefore several minor reservoirs have been designed, and some constructed or under construction to control these rivers. These reservoirs together with the control of Maduru Oya, another 900,000 Ac. ft. of storage is available to bring the aggregate storage to nearly six million acre feet. After Randenigala, there are two river barrages, one at Rotalawela with some storage and the other at Kandakadu. The primary function of these two structures is to distribute the river water to the agricultural lands on either banks of the river.*

In the transbasin system to be fed by the Primrose and Polgolla diversion, in the main object is to pass Mahaweli water to Kala Oya basin which has a number of small reservoirs but suffer from water shortages during Yala or South West monsoons; Mahawattu Oya basin, water to be taken as far as Giants tank. Parangi Aru basin, Pali Aru basin, Kanagarayan Aru—Killinochchi Scheme, Ma Oya, Yan Oya basin Vendrakasankulum (Kantalai), Mineri Oya and Amban ganga. There are several reservoirs and restored ancient irrigation works, undertaken during the period 1932-1956, now in operation and accounting for some 200,000 Acs. of paddy fields.

To secure full advantage of the Polgolla diversion, there must be storage, otherwise the water diverted at Polgolla will flow down Ambanganga back to Mahaweli 89 miles below the diversion. According to the hydrological data collected and analysed by the F.A.O. team, flow in Mahaweli is not high during Yala or early Maha season when the farmer needs the water most. This is where storage claims a high priority in the development plans of water resources. This contingency is met by proposals to construct several reservoirs in the transbasin region. Polgolla diversion water is to be stored at Moragahakanda reservoir, which is the key structure necessary to control the diverted Mahaweli water. At this point, storage potential is around 800,000 Ac. ft. from its own catchment and 500,000 Ac. ft. from Polgolla diversion—several times more than the effective storage available in all the tanks in this region. Now that Polgolla has been accepted a priority No. 1, storage at Moragahakanda must be constructed before any other capital works are undertaken in this region, or else what was claimed on January 8th will be an empty promise to mislead the voters and peasants of N.C.P. alike.

The foregoing is a record of the technical studies and plan of development of Mahaweli basin and its adjoining basins. These studies were started in nineteen forties and continued till 1970. The plan provides for the utilisation of six million acre feet of water and develop one and half million acres in varied crops from paddy to sugar

cane, cotton and subsidiary food crops. In addition develop 2,000 million kilowatt hours of electrical energy annually. Whether these targets can be achieved or not, provided other resources like, money, technical know-how, expertise, correct direction and man and mechanical power are available, depends on prudent selection of priorities based on technical recommendations and the needs of the country from year to year.

Politics should not enter the picture at all. This is a national undertaking and whichever the Party in power, whoever is the Prime Minister in our democracy, the work must go on uninterrupted. When a democratic Poll elects a Government it does not do so to destroy what the outgoing Government did or started. Unfortunately this has been our sad record with every general election. How we can save national undertakings from such vandalism is to place these projects above party or parochial politics and make it a national venture in which all the political parties, and from the peasant to the chief executive are involved? Place it outside the pale of Politics so that no individual, however high he may be, cannot claim such works as his brain child. They belong to the nation and the people.

SAFARI — FEB. 6-14

Life And Death

By Alkardi Mugana

February 6,

Safari means journey, visiting places, and anyone who is on his way anywhere, anyone who is travelling, is on safari. We are all on a journey, all going somewhere, travelling through time even the hermit, and we are all on life's journey. That is what this series, the safari, is about, unlike the earlier series, on safari, that appeared in *Tribune* about three years ago and more.

A famous man, Bonaventure, wrote that an even more famous man, Francis, said this: Sinners can fast, pray, weep tears, and mortify their flesh, and yet be unfaithful to God. Bonaventure also quoted Francis as saying; a truly obedient man reasoneth not why

he is moved, careth not there he be placed, and urgeth not that he transferred, and Francis said that the obedient man is truly holy.

So in the matter of property and money. Someone said that all money belongs to the government. After all, government mints it, prints it, all in the sense that one says a man builds a house. He owns the house as if he built it himself. Yet a man who buys a house may deface it, raze it to the ground. Money is not ours in that sense, or governments could never demonetize it, and which is also why taxes are regarded as legal.

In a similar way, all land is God's. It was he put it there. Just as it is illegal to deface coins, so, owners of land are custodians of it, and God put land there so as to feed his people. Owners have custody of it in trust, and that is to help feed God's people, to help give people what amounts to a living wage. As to the rest of mankind, the commandment is clear. We are asked to sell what we have and to give the proceeds to the poor. That is my understanding of what we have heard and read.

February 7,

To revert back to money some- one said, it is money that oils the system. We were measuring teak all afternoon, log by log, turning the logs over where they had lain for months. Just as we were about to finish, a man turned up with a little book which could be used to convert our measurements into cubic feet. We set to next to do this, and we found we were about a hundred cubic feet short of what someone wanted. So we selected two teak trees for sale and we were then fifty cubic feet over what was wanted, by our estimate of the trees. We were so embroiled in this, we could not give our attention much to other matters, and we found that not one of the four cattlemen had cut grass for the calves or for any of the cattle as the regular man who does this was ill. That man had had such a drinking bout, it had incapacitated him for the whole of the following day. I do not think that a man who cuts grass day after day in the heat that we are having, can be much blamed for getting drunk. In contrast to the heat, the nights are cold, and it is unpleasant getting up at four-thirty in the morning, as we have been doing. Yesterday we were unable

to send our evening's milk away, as the lad, who was taking it, had to wait an hour and a half for a bus, and by then it was too late, or so he thought. The buses either did not stop or did not come.

Our men may not have cut grass, but they had a most hectic game of ball last evening, vigorous, and it seemed to consist of hitting each other really hard with a ball, when they were not having their heads down, even the children played with their fathers.

February 9,

We were back in April and May, 1971, with its curfew, on a journey I undertook. First, there were a few friends to see on my first stop. On the way there, in two or three wayside towns there were a few fronts to houses, fronts that were roofed with cadjan, that had been burnt. There was no damage, that I could see in the main trouble spot. It had all started with the way a C.T.B. driver had been handled. Next, the depot, or rather the stand, the main stand, was moved out of town. This put all the men, who had done business round the bus stand, out of business. In the course of years they had built up their business, a service, that was cheaper than in most other comparable places. As they were mostly of one community, it was this community that showed resentment, which escalated into incidents, culminating in one particular one I cannot relate here. Any community clash, if anybody likes to think there was one, was on the fringe, and being on the fringe, there was no community clash at all.

My next stop, also to visit friends, was also like old times. I remember being told then. Do not try to beat the curfew by a minute, give yourself a half-hour's grace. With this in mind, I had to be on the other side of the river before curfew began. There was curfew on one side of the river, and not on the other. Curfew affected the bus service, as no buses could pass through the curfew area after 7 P.M. However, I was lucky, and was able to get to, where I wanted to go by bus.

February 10,

A visitor to this country objected to being stared at. It was one of my party that had done it. Their accent had been English with no trace of an American or Australian

drawl, and when I asked them where they had come from, for I thought it might be Scotland, I learnt it was Canada, Toronto and Quebec to be exact. It was then I heard about their objection, and they particularly indicated the smallest member of our party. I admitted it was a bad national trait of ours, and, on reflection now, I think I should have added, in the countryside, although that is a very loose term, for there are places in the countryside, I should think, where the people are quite well-behaved. These people had arrived from India the night before, and, as I had heard that this business was particularly bad in India, I said something to that effect, and I received the answer that it had got on their nerves, which explained why they were so touchy about it. Coming to think of it, I feel sorry for poor animals in zoos, although I suppose there is one thing worse, and that is not to have anyone come to see one at all.

At this eating-house, I had to foot the bill for our party, and it did not improve my temper that I thought we were grossly overcharged. So I refused point-blank to buy bread for our dinner, although I changed my mind later when I learnt that we were all likely to go to bed hungry. By then they were adamant that I should not buy bread at all, but I managed to have my way.

February 11,

An aunt very ill, and would I go home by the earliest bus, was the message. Over four years in bed with a broken hip, and well over eighty, and now pneumonia; it did not look good. It looks as if it will have to be another four-thirty reveille. It was so this morning. A walk, and then a bus, and another bus, my arrival, a shave while dawn broke, and I did not have much more than two minutes to spare. February 11th commemorated Mary's appearance at the grotto at Lourdes, and I had wanted to celebrate it in an appropriate way. When I passed through Kurunegala, the sick were soon to be blessed after an outdoor Mass, reminiscent of Lourdes, when most of the cures, as I think I heard said, occur during the Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. I could never have felt more ill, and after slipping a coin into the priest's

hand, with a request that he remember me at the mass that was to follow, I left. What struck me as I left, was that it was a happy and a merry crowd of people that was there. I had not realized on my arrival that there were sick and maimed or lame people, there and I had almost resented their, merry faces when I had arrived. I had taken it as a slight on myself, until I realized that they had good cause to be merry, on this day of all days, and my resentment vanished. I just fell asleep over this. I have four hours to sleep in now. I am so sleepy, I keep hearing noises, vehicles that are there outside the house, and yet not there.

February 12,

My aunt was bearing up when I arrived. I have not been present at a death, but my mother has seen many, and she was taking my aunt's situation very seriously. She seemed to think that prayer was important, and just as I make use of what we Catholics call holy water, that is, water blessed by a priest, before I go to bed, whenever I am alone, which is always the case at home, or I am sure to wake up with something going on which I cannot explain. So I noticed that my mother was using it, too, in a room which I would have thought was far from morbid or needing it; which just goes to show that she was taking this question of death very seriously indeed, for there are other, unseen people who have an interest in every man's death.

Joke or no, someone threatened another man with a third man's curses or, rather, he said that the third man would resort to it if the second man did not give a fourth man something which the latter said the former had taken. I thought

it was bad form that the first man had passed on the third man's message, and I forbade a fifth man to pass on the second part of the message which was about the curse. The first man had once brought in a fortune-teller of sorts to find out who had stolen someone's hens. I know that much went wrong at this place for a long time afterwards, and I always attributed it to this trafficking with the devil. February 13,

A death, and then a feeling of sadness at a funeral, a sadness, which was physical, perhaps release for pent-up feelings, a feeling that there was a dichotomy, if that is the word between what is and what had been, and what might have been now. If others felt this way, this did not show it. I have heard of two people falling dead on the reception of news. One was, I think an aunt of Stalin who did just this, when the news was told her that her husband had been shot in a Soviet prison I think it was Stalin's daughter who said so. The other was the Kabaka of Bunganda's sister on being told that her brother had been exiled to England from Uganda.

There were grave-diggers who made no bones that they expected a tip. I had not seen this before. Perhaps the matter had always been arranged before but that people had got old, and, inspite of many funerals, had lover-looked this matter this once. These men followed in all the way from the grave to the cemetery gate; and anxious they were in case they lost their tip. They did not get it. I must say that to have been hi-jacked into giving a tip would have left one embittered. There is time still to go into this matter. tip cannot be reclaimed, but it can be given later. Feelings aside, nothing can be against this. Yet, if money is wanted, who can say, Nay? I have reached a point where my brain just will not work any more until tomorrow. February 14,

Three hours sleep after adding up a column of figures that came out differently each time, and I lay down intending to pursue the matter again. I awoke at midnight and remembered that I had to write this. A visit outside and then a change into a sarong, and here am I. I have to be up at 4.30 A.M.

There is a peculiar state of affairs. Trespass, removing coconut bran-

ches for thatch, and pol pittu for firewood, being caught, exit, and later, abuse by the husband for the man who had tried to do his duty, or who had thought he had, lamentably so. If he had succeeded, if he had done it well, it should have been the husband who got a dressing down after being summoned to take custody of his wife. It all comes, I think, by pedalling soft on this matter of trespass in the earlier days, when it was manifestly for a nefarious purpose. Too much *thouhour vender par*, dont be angry. I wish I could say it in Tamil. All this from someone who gives an impression of being tough James Bond, I suppose, although I have not seen him yet, nor read him.

About cows, I feel that a cow running with a calf is going to bring a cow's yield down. I do not think a cow's udder can work like one's digestion. I do not think a cow manufactures milk on tap. Rather, it is like a water-bottle that is filled when it is empty, for you do not fill, or top up, a water-bottle each time you have a sip or sup. I find it very difficult to persuade the dairymen of this, for they will let the calf run with the cow the first two weeks, the first week alone of which will make or mar that cow's lactation for that calving.

MURDER AT ETILIWETA-I

His Own Executioner?

by R. C. Thavarajah
Retd. Supdt. of Police

He made a brave attempt to be his own executioner. He very nearly succeeded.

The story goes back to over twenty-nine years ago. The scene was the isolated, remote village of ETILIWETA, inaccessible by road and about twenty two miles from Tanamatvila. This was the first murder case I handled. I was not even an year old in the Police Service—an eager but utterly inexperienced 'Rookie'.

Eight exacting months, which seemed an unending expanse of time at the Police Training School, Bambalapatiya, finally came to a

LETTERS
The Tribune welcomes letters from readers. Short letters have a better chance of being published. All letters are subject to condensation for space reasons. Anonymous letters will not be considered for publication. Writers may request that their letters be signed only with initials or a pseudonym but preference will be given to those fully signed and bearing the writer's complete address.

Murder

welcome 'close.' After the unbearable tedium of morning and afternoon parades with rifles, sword, bayonets, thick heavy helmets complete with chin strap, Marine Physical Training in the early hours of the morning which were fairly dark as the clock had been advanced in compliance with the rule of the Day-Light Saving Act during the War-World War II, compulsory boxing bouts with strong burly men of the calibre of Sergeants Selladurai, the 'dark bomber of Ceylon' who annexed the title in the India, Burma and Ceylon Contest, William (now Inspector), De Hoon and others who had their own methods of "toughening" us up, we were jubilant at the idea of being posted to the outstations. It was only then that one had time to relax in the evenings after duty—invariably seeing "Westerns" or "Musicals."

Having scrubbed and freshened up with a liberal application of Yardley's brilliantine to keep the unruly 'mop' on top respectably in place, I had gone to the local theatre. My evening's relaxation had not even commenced when the Big Boss sent for me. The late Mr. R. G. H. VAN CUYLENBERG, Superintendent in charge of Uva Province, was an illustrious and shining example of the Old School of Policemen. He was a meticulously methodical and exceptionally efficient administrator. His loyalty to the Police Service and the country was characterised by the ideology that every single officer under his command should maintain the highest standards of integrity and efficiency not only in field and routine duties but also in the important area of investigation of Crime. He believed in imparting his knowledge and experience to young officers who would, in the fulness of time, serve their country and the service in future making their contribution in the field of Law enforcement maintaining the highest traditions of the Service. He infused an enthusiasm which gave expression to the concept that "Duty performed gives clearness and firmness to FAITH and faith thus strengthened through duty becomes the more assured and satisfying to the soul". He certainly was not the type who shamelessly and servilely craved for elevation in rank under fortuitous circumstances. He was indubitably very correct and every inch the "Officer and Gentleman."

"Does he want to be a cowboy, film star or a good Policeman?" he had asked from a Senior Inspector of the Badulla Headquarters Station. Without waiting for any comment, he had added "I'll give him exactly ten minutes to get into uniform and accompany me to the scene of murder."

We journeyed by Jeep to Bandara-wela, turned off at Beragala Junction and proceeded towards Koslanda where we had to pick up the DMO, Dr. S. A. Bartlett. There was a refreshingly pleasant nip in the rarified heights of Haputale. The clean, fresh air mingled soothingly with the tantalising aroma of the tea leaves being 'cured' in the factories. The grand spectacle of the highland landscape was alluringly captivating. Across the yawning abyss of the valley was the bewitching sight of the Sri Pada. It seemed that the pious hand of Nature had reverently wrapped it with the gossamer veil of the evening mist. We paused to admire the cascade of crystal clear waters of Diyaluma on the way and reached Tanamalwila by nightfall.

The Magistrate, Mr. VICTOR F. GUNARATNE, who most admirably functioned as Public Trustee after that, was already there. We set out the next morning by Jeep, hacking our way through the jungle path. At a certain point, it was impossible to proceed further by Jeep. We then commenced the long trek on foot with a silent prayer that no rogue elephant should decide to cross our path. Mr. V. F. Gunaratne, whose religious ideals transcended all media-sensual, conceptual and intellectual, the epitome of moral, physical and spiritual purity, the true Buddhist who has dedicated his time for study and research in the field of metaphysics, did not show any signs of fatigue. He even refused to be carried in the 'palanquin' which the trackers and the Village Headman had temporarily but ingeniously improvised with gunny and strong poles. As for the Boss, he walked on wearing his favourite 'Snipe boots'. I marvelled at his boundless energy and stamina developed by participation in sport in his youth. I am forcibly reminded of ORLANDO's words in Shakespeare's 'As You Like It':—

O Good old man, how well in thee appears

The constant SERVICE of the antique world!

*When service sweat for duty—
NOT for meed;*

*Thou art not for the fashion of
these times*

*Where none will sweat BUT for
promotion,*

*And, having that, do choke their
service up*

*Even with the having; It is NOT
so with thee!"*

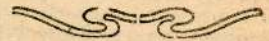
When Dr. Bartlett suggested that we take a short rest, one of the trackers, a hardy son of the village soil sustained not on bacon, ham and eggs but good kurakkan, batthala and manioc decided against it. Rest causes a lassitude which would render resumption of the journey more difficult. He had that rustic wisdom, simple untutored in Universities but unsophisticated, pragmatic, 'Down to earth' commonsense—a rural philosophy which we in the City should learn to appreciate.

Foot sore, exhausted and hungry after covering over fifteen miles on foot, we reached the village of Etiliwela. "Duty first—refreshments later" was Mr. Van Cuylenberg's peremptory command.

THE SCENE OF MURDER. In the humble, wattle and daub dwelling lay the body of a very comely village damsel in a pool of blood. Her naked frame revealed youth, health and the perfect beauty of the female form.

A gaping stab wound marred the upper part of her left breast.

(To be Continued)



NEXT WEEK

MAHAWELI—3

—On Priorities

ETILIWELA MURDER—2

—Eternal Triangle

CPSU CONGRESS

—by K. P. S. Menon

MULTINATIONALS

—American View

MORE ABOUT CHINA

—Cultural Revolution?

Confidentially

CGR And Free Warrants

IS IT NOT A FACT that the Ministry of Transport seems to have woken up to the question of the huge debt owing to the Railways on account of travel on free warrants only after the Tribune (in this column) had drawn attention to this matter on January 17, 1976 (Vol. 20, No. 34)? That if the Ministry had taken any action on this matter earlier, the public was not aware of it? That though the GMR's office was aware of this and had prepared several memoranda nothing seems to have been done either to recover the arrears or to stop the issuing of tickets to departments and corporations which had defaulted? That whilst a ticketless traveller is penalised with a double charge (if not gaol), several departments which owe millions of rupees to the CGR continue to be given travelling facilities which are denied to the cash paying travelling public? That the public and Tribune was made aware that the Ministry had at last begun to take action in this matter because of frontpage stories in the Daily Mirror and the Daily News of March 2, 1976? The Daily Mirror had a striking headline in heavy type entitled RAIL WARRANTS TO BE WITHDRAWN..IF DEPTS DON'T PAY UP ARREARS. The Daily News played the story on a lower key with a less prominent headline NO WARRANTS FOR DEPTS IN DEBT TO RAILWAY? That the reports merit citation for the record? That the Daily Mirror report read as follows: Railway warrants to public servants will be withdrawn if their respective departments do not settle outstanding amounts due to the Railway. This decision was taken at a top-level conference between the Minister of Transport, Mr. K. B. Ratnayake, and Railway officials. The Railway has already informed the respective departments, heavily in debt to the railway about the decision. Already Rs. 41 million is due to the Railway from various government institutions and corporations. This has imposed a severe financial strain on the efficient running of the Railway which is already faced with an acute liquidity problem. The biggest defaulter is said to be the Post and Telecom-

munications Department which owes the Railway Rs. 11.6 million for carrying mail and parcels. The total amount due on holiday and duty warrants to public servants is said to be about Rs. 5,692,941. There are also large amounts due for transporting goods of government institutions. According to Transport Ministry sources, in future, if departments fail to settle outstanding amounts after repeated reminders, the Railway would be obliged not to grant railway warrants to officers of such departments. Meanwhile it is stated that although the transporting of mail cost the Railway Rs. 6 per train mile, the Post and Telecommunication Department pays only Rs. 1.06. It is also said that if the Railway converted the mail wagons to passenger carriages each carrying 90 persons. It could earn Rs. 6 per mile compared to the Re. 1 given by the Postal Department. The General Manager of Railways, Mr. V. T. Navaratne, said that if state corporations and government departments settled their bills earlier, then the Railway would be in a position to provide a better and speedier train services. The Daily News report read: The Railway will not issue warrants this year to a number of Government departments, local bodies and corporations unless it receives the settlement of bills totalling nearly Rs. 29 million. In addition the Railway has informed the Minister of Transport, Mr. K. B. Ratnayake, that the Post Master General has still not settled mail transportation charges amounting to Rs. 11 million due since 1965. A Transport Ministry spokesman said that the non-settlement of bills had increased the Railway's operational loss each year. In 1975 the operating losses of the Railway were nearly Rs. 49 million. The spokesman added that the Railway had received the approval of the Minister to stop the issue of Railway warrants to those Government Departments and other public institutions unless all outstanding bills are settled in full this year. It has also recommended that bills totalling nearly Rs. 5.6 million be written off because the Railway cannot trace old documents to support these bills. This relates to the period 1963 and 1964 and 1968 and 1969, the Ministry spokesman said. One device adopted by Government departments to postpone the settlement of bills was to request the Railway to submit old bills invoices etc., for verification. The Railway lacks the manpower or a proper documentation system to trace these documents which are

over ten years old the spokesman said. In an effort to catch up with defaulting departments the Railway has decided to set up a Credit Control Unit. This unit will keep a tap on all departments who exceed the credit limit particularly on warrants and who do not pay their bills within the stipulated period of one month. That the January 17, 1976, article in the Tribune had mentioned that the arrears were about Rs. 39 or Rs. 40 million? That the official report indicates that the amount was Rs. 41 million? That Tribune had also listed the many abuses which stemmed from the privileges extended to free warrant holders that were denied to the cash paying public in the matter of making reservations? That free warrant holders being only a fraction of the total travelling public it was essentially that some attention should be paid to the cash paying travellers? That the GMR (bless his soul) has handed out this story to the Daily Mirror and the Daily News but had not thought fit to invite Tribune for the news handout or even sent the Tribune a copy of the communique? That is the kind of courtesy which is doled out to the less privileged by the CGR? That the GMR may have no love for Tribune, but this is not the way to establish a better public relations dialogue? That although there has been marked improvement in the CGR in recent months there is a great deal of room for improvement? That the Catering Services in particular have to improve much more? That cleanliness has not yet been established? That the uniform of most of the waiters should be changed more often and laundered more carefully? That most of the cups, tumblers and other crockery in use are only fit for the dustheap and need replacement? That the hot tea must be served in the buffet cars of trains? That the sleeper passengers at the ends of the train, (and who cannot easily battle their way to the buffet car through overcrowded compartments) should be served (as in the old days) by a waiter who takes a tray around? That waiters had been willing to do this when they sold liquor and there is no reason why they should carry short eats and non-alcoholic beverages? That the GMR should make a journey in disguise in a long distance train to know what is what?



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