

# TRIBUNE

## Doctor's Strike plan of action

*The report of the three-man Committee appointed by the Minister of Health to inquire into matters relating to the abolition of private practice and the readjustment of government of doctors' salaries, and the acceptance of the report by the government have precipitated a strike by the Government Medical Officers' Association.*

The Association meets on Sunday to consider the report of the Committee and take "necessary action". The nature of the "necessary action" is now beyond doubt—a total strike by government doctors all over the island.

The *Tribune* has felt the pulse of the office-bearers and senior officials of the Association as well as a cross section of the rank and file of the Association to gather their reactions to the report of the Committee. All are unanimous in the view that the government has capitalised on the nobility of the profession in rejecting the recommendations of the G.M.O.A. for the abolition of private practice and the readjustment of their salary-scales. They are also unanimous in their opinion that

strike action as a last resort was now called for.

### WIJERAMA

The *Tribune* reliably understands that a vote of censure would be moved at the Special General Meeting of the G.M.O.A. on Sunday on Dr. E. M. Wijerama, the nominee of the G.M.O.A. on the Implementation Committee, and one of the signatories to the report. Although the vote of censure is strongly worded, it is likely to find almost unanimous support at the meeting.

The *Tribune* has reliable evidence to prove that it was Dr. Wijerama who had drawn up the salary scales, which the G.M.O.A. embodied in its memorandum to the Implementation Committee. Dr. Wijerama had also consistently advocated the abolition of private practice and was a staunch supporter of the salary scheme recommended by Dr. Cumpston, which was, in fact, much higher than the salary scale submitted in the memorandum to the Implementation Committee.

The G.M.O.A. therefore cannot understand how Dr. Wijerama came to be a signatory to a report which recommended a scale of salaries which was "shockingly low".

The G.M.O.A. also feels that the report of the Implementation Committee perpetuates the principle of private practice in the guise of service at "paying clinics". Private

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practice which was formerly indulged in doctors' homes and chambers is now being brought to government hospitals and institutions and given State blessing. Also a sharp division is being created in the class of patients who come to the hospital for treatment—the paying class and the non-paying class. This division the G.M.O.A. claims perpetrates an injustice on the class that cannot afford to pay, and in no way assures that class of a decent medical service, and decent medical facilities.

### PUBLIC

The G.M.O.A. is seeking to enlist the support of the public for its strike action. It depends on the sympathy

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## TRIBUNE

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In last week's issue published on Friday we scooped the report of the Implementation Committee appointed by the Minister of Health to go into matters relating to the abolition of private practice and the readjustment of salary scales of government doctors, over all other newspapers.

Two weeks before that we again scooped the SLFP-UNP merger story, which dailies picked up, just as they did the doctors' salaries recommendations.

This week we publish the latest moves in the Government Medical Officers' Association and the reactions to the report of the three-man Committee.

The *Tribune* modestly claims that it is in the know of things and fearlessly publishes what it knows.



## FILMS

# JUBAL

Glenn Ford, Ernest Borgnine,  
Rod Steiger

### At the SAVOY

This film has been described as one of those ordinary run of the mill Westerns. But there were certain differences that made all the difference and which I thought lifted it out of the common rut. We start in the manner common to all Westerns which claim to be different. We see a lone man walking or riding the beautiful range, running away from himself and heading for nowhere in particular. In due course he falls among friends or thieves. And then the fun starts. In this film Glenn Ford a lone cowboy rolls down a mountain and is picked up by Borgnine, a rancher in the neighbourhood. Is taken home fed and introduced to the other cowhands and is engaged on the spot with no other credential than the fact that he can sit a bucking broncho. So far so good. But the trouble starts when Ford is introduced to Borgnine's wife who before he can even say How do you do, falls in love with him and begins to desire him in no uncertain fashion. Ford now begins to tread on the corns of his friend and an-

other cowhand played by Rod Steiger who feels he has a claim on her affections. Ford heroically resists all the blandishments on the part of Valerie French to vanquish him, on the ground of his loyalty and friendship for his boss and benefactor. But a whispering campaign is started by Steiger and Borgnine begins to believe that his wife has been carrying on with another man. And when that man happens to be the chap he went out of his way to help, he goes completely berserk. Jealousy and what he thinks is base ingratitude gets the better of him. He doesn't even give Ford a chance to explain and attempts to shoot him and Ford is obliged to kill him in self defence.

The film is completely dominated by the personalities of Ernest Borgnine as the cuckold and Rod Steiger as the villain of the piece. Borgnine is an actor of the old vintage, like Wallace Beery and really gets his teeth into every character which he portrays on the screen. Rod Steiger plays a most convincing villain. He is outrageously good. Valerie French as the prime enchantress was superb. No eyes have portrayed the eloquence of longing better than hers. We shall no doubt be hearing very much more of her. Glenn Ford was quite adequate. But he had the great handicap of having fallen among actors in this film.

N

## Doctor's Strike

*continued from first page*

thy of the public, in its struggle for better conditions of employment and the abolition of private practice. A strong section of the G.M.O.A. will press at the Special General Meeting of the Association, that despite the total strike, an efficient service be provided for deserving and emergency cases, among members of the public.

For this purpose a case will be made out for the setting up of consultation rooms in House Officers' Quarters, near the Hospital, where patients will be examined and prescriptions given. The patients will be told to get their prescriptions dispensed at the General Hospital. Patients who are deemed emergency cases, and have already been admitted to hospital will be attended to by an "emergency skeleton staff" which will be on duty in shifts, and will be available for the 24 hours of the day.

This emergency skeleton staff system will apply to all the provincial hospitals, and every effort will be made to see that no member of the public suffers or dies for lack of medical attention.

The doctors will however refuse to deal with administrative duties, such as filling up of forms and bed-head tickets etc. and the strike is expected to paralyse the working of the hospitals without causing undue suffering to patients.

At the time of going to press, there is a strong move among government apothecaries to join the strike of doctors in sympathy. A decision is expected today or tomorrow.

Private practitioners have also supported the demands of the G.M.O.A. and a number of them have already expressed their willingness to loan their clinics and dispensaries to Government doctors who will treat patients to go to them free of charge.

The *Tribune* does not publish today other strike plans of the Association, on a request made to the Editor by the G.M.O.A., as these plans are considered "secret".

### Action

While the G.M.O.A. is preparing itself for direct action to obtain redress and whilst some of its

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## REGAL - 2nd colossal week

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# British Policy

Britain's attack on Egypt has shocked the world. Above all, it has shocked the Britons themselves. It would indeed be hard to point to, another period in history when the policy of the British ruling class was so much at variance with the interests of the nation. 'Folly!' says the *Liberal Manchester Guardian* and the *Labour Daily Herald*. "Folly on the grand scale", seconds the *News Chronicle* while the *Economist* characterizes the attack on Egypt as a "gambler's throw". Desmond Donnelly, Labour, declared in the House of Commons on October 31: "WE ARE SITTING ON THE BLACKEST DAY IN THE HISTORY OF THIS COUNTRY SINCE MUNICH."

Some Western commentators apparently believe that the British government embarked on the Suez gamble in a fit of temporary insanity. This is not so. The "blackest day" might have been foreseen. *It was a logical outcome of the policy Britain has been conducting in the Middle East, a policy compact of reckless ventures, faulty inferences and gross blunders.*

## Curzon's Plans

For nearly two centuries the local centre of the British colonial empire was India, a vast country with a population only a little smaller than that of the European continent. British industrial and financial capital was largely built up at the expense of the Indian peasants. The British plutocracy developed a particular appetite for the gold of Asia, and its foreign policy was increasingly tinged with the colour of the metal. Even in our century, Lord Curzon elaborated projects for extending the Anglo-Indian empire to the Pacific Ocean in the East and far beyond the Himalayas in the North. The futility of these projects became patent in the succeeding decades, but the yearning for the wealth of Asia did not diminish. When World War II ended, the axis of the empire still passed through the Hindustan Peninsula. But only three years later the imperialist expansionists were forced to retreat west-ward.

After India and Burma secured their independence and a second great socialist power, People's China, had risen in the Far East the fulcrum of British colonial policy was transferred from South-east Asia to the Middle East. London decided that the zone stretching from the Lower Nile to the southern shores of the Caspian, and area inhabited by 80 million Arabs and Iranians and already under Britain's influence, must be made to compensate her in some degree for the loss of her political military and partly economic positions in India. Curzon's successors believed that the new plan was based upon impeccable premises, that nothing could prevent its realization.

Economically, the Middle East was no compensation for the huge Indian market, but it could offer British capital something no less valuable namely the richest oil empire in the capitalist world. Two thirds of the capitalist world's oil exports fall to the share of the Middle East. Between 1937 and 1955 oil production in this area multiplied tenfold, and now cons-

To many the actions of the British in Egypt seem inexplicable. This article, which will be continued next week, and which we publish by courtesy of the *New Times*, reveals some of the motivating forces behind British strategy in the Middle East in terms which Afrasian peoples can fully appreciate.

stitutes one quarter of the total output of the capitalist world. Some 80 percent of the crude oil supplies of Britain and other West European countries have in late years been procured in this area. Middle East oil is the "motive power" of the British armed forces and of British key industries wrote the *London Daily Mail* and categorically concluded that "the supplies must be protected at all costs." The Tory paper was expressing the opinion of the British imperialist politicians.

## Reason Why

The conclusion was false from beginning to end. Nobody had ever thought of contesting the importance of Middle Eastern oil to Britain. Possessing no sources of supply of her own she has a special interest ensuring deliveries of oil from this area, which incidentally is much cheaper than American oil. *But the necessity of obtaining a*

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## THE PEOPLE'S CAR



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# British Policy

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commodity from a foreign territory does not necessitate, nor warrant, the seizure of that territory. Britain for instance, does not attempt to colonize the United States or Canada although she is vitally interested in supplies of American and Canadian wheat. There is nothing to prevent Britain from obtaining all the oil she needs in the Middle East countries through the usual commercial channels. These countries are themselves interested in selling the overwhelming proportion of their oil output, not being able to consume it themselves. There was never any question therefore of the Arab oil fields being "closed" to British consumers.

What was at issue was something quite different. The seizure of the 16,000 million tons of oil belonging to the Arabs and Iranians, the absorption of their "date and camel" economy by Shell and AIOC (Anglo-Iranian Oil Company) was intended not so much to ensure Britain's fuel supply and thus solve one of her acutest economic problems as to guarantee the British monopolies a new and unparalleled source of enrichment. The daily output of a Middle East oil well is 380 times as great as that in the United States. Thanks to this and to extreme cheapness of local labour the cost of producing Middle East oil is only about one tenth of its selling price. The rate of profit on Middle East oil is therefore unprecedented. For these reasons alone after World War II the imperialists of the old school considered that the Middle East would be an ideal "compensation" for the loss of India.

## Military Strategy

There was another reason, rooted in the military and political concepts of this school. They considered that Britain's withdrawal from India and Burma did not diminish but on the contrary, greatly enhanced the military importance of the Middle East for British "global" strategy. After World War II no country threatened war on Britain and nothing compelled her any longer to girdle whole continents with military and naval bastions for the protection of her imperial communications. But

here too the old-fashioned imperial politicians were proof against the dictates of common sense, it was not the protection of their communications they were thinking about. Since India, which had supplied a substantial part of the manpower for the colonial armies, had dropped out of the British military chain, it was essential, they argued to fill the gap by drawing on the Arabs and other nations west of India for use on the southern frontiers of the Soviet Union. As the Curzons of the forties and fifties conceived it, the zone between the Nile and the Caspian had become a "vital strategic area" for Britain. This idea too, was false and baseless. Nevertheless it became the foundation of Britain's postwar Asian policy.

Accordingly the centre of gravity of Britain's system of imperial military bases reorganized after the war was shifted to the Middle East. It was the Attlee Cabinet that undertook the building of a strategical "triangle" of which the Mediterranean bases in Malta, Cyprus and the Suez were to constitute the northern angle and the African bases in the Sudan, Kenya and Nigeria, the southern. It was, as it were, to be a spear, with its head in the shape of bases in Jordan, Iraq and Persian Gulf area — cutting in a northeasterly direction through the Middle East. Such was the new "strategical" significance ascribed

to the Arab area by people who mentally were still living in the era of Kipling.

## Tie-Up

In pursuance of the decision to concentrate imperial power on the Middle East, direct contact was established between military circles and the oil interests. Field Marshal Alanbrooke, former chief of the Imperial General Staff, was appointed director of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company; Admiral Cunningham former Commander-in-chief in the Mediterranean, was inducted into the board of the Iraq Petroleum Company, while the board of the Suez Canal Company, likewise dominated by the oil interests, was reinforced with Lord Hankey, long-time secretary of the Imperial Defence Committee, Sir Alexander Cadogan, former Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and Sir Francis Wylie, former Ambassador to Afghanistan and leading figure in the old Anglo-Indian intelligence service.

*Interest in the Middle East was prompted by yet another consideration the most important although the most carefully concealed. The imperial diamonds had never given up the idea of restoring the former colonial might of the British empire and bringing India, Burma and Afghanistan again under British influence in*

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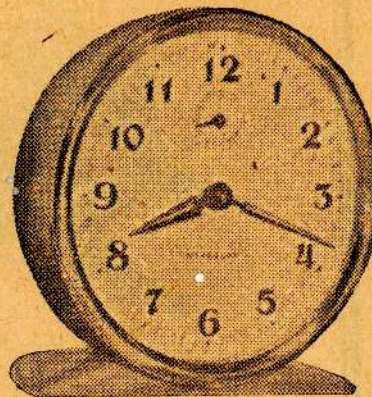
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# CONSPIRACY

All but the gullible realise that the Hungarian situation has been misrepresented and exaggerated by interested groups, inclusive of our capitalist press. It was both a pincer movement against the Soviet Union and a well-timed move to divert the mounting public revulsion against the Anglo-French and Israel aggression to the horror comics of Hungary. The Suez Canal crisis was indeed created by the U.S. sabotage of the promised World Bank loan to Egypt in connection with the Aswan Dam. While the Anglo-French forces are facing an inglorious exit in the same shifty manner with which the aggression was made, it pays other groups to highlight "atrocities" in Hungary.

According to authentic reports, after careful investigations, it is now proved that the conspiracy against the Hungarian Republic has had a long background of preparation: Poland's justifiable grievances were met by Soviet concessions. In Hungary, the situation was more involved. There was legitimate dissatisfaction of certain sections of Hungary's population, and perhaps the regime lacked vision. The new Soviet liberating policies nonetheless afforded ample chance for conspiratorial activities.

## Organised from Abroad

The espionage groups of Western Germany, hand in hand with the German espionage and subversive organisation, worked in preparation by organising "national committees" composed of Hungarian and other emigres and SS men. International reaction controlled the counter-revolutionary actions from Sarzbourg, on the maintenance of which centre the U.S.A. has spent million of dollars. The counter-revolutionary underground bided its time to deal the working people there, blow, and it was well-aimed.

On October 23, three hours after the student demonstrations began in Budapest, the counter-revolutionaries began their uprising delivering arms from Csepel island to fixed places where rioters awaited the signal. How otherwise could a few

hours after the uprising there appear thousands of red-white-green flags, special arm bands, trucks, motor cycles and guns? The hated Horthy officers seized radio stations, post and telegraph offices, railway stations, bridges spanning the Danube, Parliament, newspaper offices, the Defence Ministry, etc. It was a real working out of a military plan under leadership of former officers.

These pogrom-makers of old raided the premises of party committees, murdered communists and labour leaders. Thus was the population intimidated, chaos created and the army demoralized to such an extent that the Red Army had to be called in. The rising in Budapest was a signal for risings elsewhere. Thousands of criminals were released. In Vacok alone the Horthyists released 400 prisoners and supplied them with arms. Naturally they plundered and murdered, and all these sins were laid at the feet of "horrid communists."

## U.S. Responsibility

But facts were otherwise. Kovacs Djula, a Horthyist army major who was 4 years in prison became the Vice-Chairman of the new city "Revolutionary Committee." The former Horthyists who had fled from Hungary were waiting in the American occupation zone in Germany and at the signal poured into Hungary. These were the so-called "liberators", and the refugees to whom the Americans have so charitably offered asylum. All the bankers and princes who had fled from Hungary suddenly reappeared with passports of the Federal Republic of Germany.

The "rioters" — the hirelings — were sure the U.S.A. would not forsake them. These Horthy fascists are today in the U.S.A. President Eisenhower announced on December 1 that the number of Hungarian refugees to be allowed into the United States will be increased to 21,500. Why this magnanimity?

After all, America's principal headache and affliction is still the

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# Conspiracy

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Soviet Union and events in the past have proved that her foreign policy is calculated to minimise and even prevent Soviet influence in the world. Hence the benefits she derives from the Hungarian "situation" are rich and great. While condemning Red Army excesses we must however realise why it was called in and what a chaotic situation it had to take in hand.

It is amusing indeed to read articles on the "Red Terrors" in the local dailies inspired by certain interested news agencies. One appeared on November 1<sup>st</sup> in the *Daily News* by Eldon Griffiths, described as a "student of Soviet affairs, as one who travelled with *Liberation Fighters*' from Vienna to Budapest, who set up his headquarters in the Duna Hotel and which was commandeered by Russian troops." Where did he go then? He is, in the same introduction, reported as having "escaped to the U.S. Legation (where Cardinal Mindszenty had also taken refuge."

Now let us come to this Cardinal Mindszenty. The *Times of Ceylon*

on December 6 reported bloodcurdling atrocities this person faced at the hands of the Reds. He is supposed to have been stripped naked, beaten, rubber hosed questioned without sleep until he collapsed. But his state of collapse did not prevent his selling his story of captivity to the *Look* magazine for 250,000 dollars: Well done, Cardinal!

The more recent reports from Essen record how Hungarian emigres in Western Germany were granted "holidays" at the end of October to reach Hungary via Austria where they joined in the rioters detachments.

## British Policy

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*one form or another. What was actually contemplated was a redivision of Asia in partnership with the United States.*

The establishment of British political and military supremacy in the Middle East was regarded in reactionary circles as a first essential to ensure Britain's participation in such a redivision. They believed

that, with control over the Arabs and Iranians in their hands, they would be entitled at a suitable moment to demand the re-establishment in one form or another of their control over India, Pakistan, Burma and Afghanistan. To the minds of Curzon's spiritual heirs and successors there was nothing unfeasible in this fantastic proposition.

Besides all else, military domination of the Middle East would make it easier to maintain by force the British colonial regimes in Africa, whose hold was slipping. The Middle East as a means reassembling the disintegrating colonial empire such was their (top secret) doctrine, and it explains the third reason for the Middle Eastern mania of Britain's reactionary politicians after World War I.

All this determined their decision to fit themselves against history, which had manifestly decreed the end of the colonial era throughout Asia both in the Far Eastern and South Eastern area, and in the Middle East. For eleven years now, ever since 1945 they have been waging a continuous struggle against history in the Middle East.

With what results?

To be continued next week

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# WEEK by WEEK in CEYLON

## ★ MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

### ★ PREMIER

There has always been a tendency among the citizens of Colombo to vote Left, and the Municipal Council elections on Saturday, will prove whether that tendency is a reality or merely inspired by an desire to vote anti-right.

If a Left administration is returned to power — that is an administration composed of Lanka Sama Samaja Party members and Communist Party members — then there is a strong claim to call Colombo a Red City.

For in Saturday's elections, there is the Right-wing Party (the United National Party), the People's Party, (the Mahajana Eksath Peramuna) and the Left Parties, (the L.S.S.P. and the C.P.) and the Independents.

The contest is therefore really three-cornered, the Left, the Right and the "Socialist" (MEP).

The M.E.P contests the C.M.C. elections for the first time, and this is the first time the city elections are being held after the party came into power. The Prime Minister explained at a Press Conference immediately after his arrival from the United Nations, that the strength of the party lies in the rural areas and not in the urban areas, and that it was perhaps the reason why M.E.P. candidates were not returned to power in a large number of local areas.

On the other hand, it cannot be overlooked, that the elections held soon after the M.E.P. was swept to power, ought in the normal ignored course of events, have swept party candidates in local areas too to power. And it also cannot be that electors would have judged the party by its achievements after it came to power. Had the M.E.P. honoured its election pledges of the General elections, been absolutely fair to minorities, and kept the economy of the country at a fair level, then there would be no reason to think that the party would suffer in popularity.

Citizens of Colombo, it can be fairly presumed, compose the think-

ing public of Ceylon, and if they reject the MEP, they do so because they are fairly convinced that the party's achievements, are nothing to be proud of and unworthy of being paraded before them.

The temporary split in the ranks of the MEP, which nearly caused a breach in a party, has been temporarily patched up, and all SLP and VLSSP candidates are contesting under the common banner of the MEP. The MEP faces the polls at a time when there is much disension in the Colombo Harbour, when a strike by government doctors is imminent, and when the financial stability of the country is threatened with dire disaster. If it is returned to power in the Colombo elections, then it can fairly be said that the MEP government has come to stay. The MEP contests all 31 wards in the city.

#### U.N.P.

The United National Party contests 29 seats. Its main plank at the elections is the "failure of the MEP". UNP stalwarts have time

and again, on election platforms, pointed out the defects of the MEP government during the past few months, and the chief argument was that the MEP had failed to deliver the goods. Apparently the claims of the UNP have found favour with the people not only in principal towns but in a large number of semi-urban areas, and many Independents with decidedly UNP connections have been returned to power.

A large number of persons belonging to minority groups, both religious and racial, and who do not favour the Left, have switched their votes to the UNP, and voted anti-MEP. The United National Party candidates at the forthcoming elections are tried and experienced men, and some of them senior Councillors; as a Party, they have held the reins of office in the Council, and it is quite likely that many of them might be sent back to the Council, not because of the popularity of the party with the citizens of Colombo but because of

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*Tribune* has so far been critical of the GMOA's threat to strike if Government did not meet its demands in a reasonable manner. We had felt that the medical profession was one which should not resort to strike weapon in view of its relationship to the sick and infirm. We were also amused by the poor logic the GMOA displayed in setting out reasons as to why it was perfectly ethical for Government medical officers to strike. We must confess that we took up a rather forthright view against strike action by doctors on the footing that the MEP Government, which claims to be "socialist," will unlike its predecessor be more alive to the just claims of the medical practitioners it employs. But the fact that this Government has accepted the utterly incomprehensible report of the Implementation Committee and has sought to give effect to it has driven us to the conclusion that the present Government seems to be as callously inhuman as the worst "non socialist" government which can be conjured up in any part of the world.

In these circumstances, it would be wrong for us to tell the doctors that they should not strike. We cannot see any other way in which at least some of their grievances can be reasonably met. This "socialist" Government does not seem to know any other language than the strike weapon when it comes up against sections of society and their trade unions which are not "controlled" by Cabinet Ministers. The utter haste in which Government has rushed to make the Port an essential service in order to give Philip Gunawardena's union another chance to rehabilitate itself among workers (who have become progressively disillusioned with this Government) is clear indication that the Government is partisan.

#### Surreptitious

Without any hesitation we can assert that any sensible Government

would have rejected the *Canekeratne Report* even if it was unanimous. It stages us that a Government which makes so much noise about its being "socialist" can accept the enshrinement of private practice by government doctors in the surreptitious manner suggested by the Report. Even the *Lake House* organ, the *Observer*, could not but remark in an editorial last Tuesday that it was significant that the *Canekeratne Report* was responsible for "the perpetuation of the practice whereby Government doctors paid out of the tax payers money are permitted to exploit their patients for private gain. The *Canekeratne Committee* seems to have fumbled badly on this point. When the GMOA recommended the payment of allowances for doctors who attend to patients outside the hospital, they obviously had in mind an allowance for extra work done after hospital hours and outside the scope of their normal official duties in hospital. The *Canekeratne Committee* has taken over this idea of an allowance and suggests that it should be paid to doctors attending privileged clinics for work done in the performance of their official duties in hospitals.

"By what principle of logic or common sense can this be defended? In fact, this colossal *faux pas* seems to suggest that the *Canekeratne Committee*, for all its avowed acceptance of the abolition of the principle of private practice, has done its utmost to preserve the old evils in a new guise. The total impression given by the Report is that the *Canekeratne Committee* was not an Implementation Committee directing its inquiries towards how the Government's declared policy of abolishing private practice and raising doctor's salaries could best be carried out, but a Committee which has devoted itself to providing a formal framework for the continuance of the present defects in the medical system."

#### Judas

We have quoted from the editorial of the *Observer*, in extenso, because it sums up our attitude to the Report. On the ground of the per-

petuation of private practice alone the Government should have rejected the *Canekeratne Report* out of hand. The fact that Dr. Wijerama, the GMOA representative on the Implementation Committee, has thought fit to append his signature to this Report is no reason why the Government should go back on its accepted policy of the abolition of private practice. That the GMOA was not able to pick on a more steadfast representative than Dr. Wijerama is unfortunate, but even Jesus Christ found a Judas Iscariot among his twelve chosen disciples.

The question of salaries are important, but these are matters in our view which are capable of further negotiation and revision as the Prime Minister has suggested. But there can be no hedging about the question of private practice for government doctors. It has been recognised by numerous experts and the public of Ceylon that all the present ills of the medical system stem from this reprehensible practice whereby state-paid doctors use their position to extract unconscionable fees from patients under the guise of "consultant private practice."

Before it is too late the Government must reject the *Canekeratne Report*. An Implementation Committee should stick to its terms of reference, and not seek to continue old policies under new pretexts. Government should call for another Report, or failing that appoint a Committee that will not go beyond the scope of work entrusted to it. If Government is so purblind as to want to justify the *Canekeratne Report*, the public will have no option but to extend the widest support to the strike or any other action the GMOA should choose to take. There are bound to be inconveniences, but if the doctors will help the urgent and the distressing cases, the public will no doubt rally to the doctors' cause to wipe out an evil in our medical system which debases not only the profession but humanity itself.



# JUST BRIEFLY

BY  
SERENDIB

❖ SIVARAMAKRISHNAN

❖ WIJERAMA

❖ STANLEY de ZOYSA

It is not often that the fraternity known as the Press get together in Ceylon, but on last Sunday a very representative gathering of all connected with newspapers and publicity met at Mount Lavinia Hotel to say goodbye to Sivaramakrishnan, Press Attache of the Indian High Commission, who is leaving the island after a three and a half years spell of work here. The number of top press personalities as well as rank and file journalists who went to Mount Lavinia last Sunday evening is a tribute to Siva — as the guest of honour was popularly known.

Without offence to anyone, I must say this for Siva. He has been the most remarkable Press Officer of any foreign legation in Ceylon since 1917. I have had something to do with the world of newspapers and publicity from the time India and Ceylon have won their independence, and I have met and known a large number of press officers attached to foreign embassies. If I have not met any such officer, it was due to no fault on my part. The fact that Press Officers of a particular country have studiously avoided meeting journalists like myself is only a reflection of the poor public relations work by diplomats of that country and it probably accounts for the totally incorrect assessment the press officers of such countries made about the last General Elections.

Sivaramakrishnan was one of the few "foreigners" in the island who was able to read the writing on the wall. And this was for a very good reason. As Press Officer he had sought and met not only all journalists from the top to the rawest cub reporter but also people from all walks of life. He was able to do this because he had no inhibitions about the kind of people he should meet. His characteristic geniality and his warm feeling for fellow human beings combined to make him friendly with all he met.

Press Officers of other countries have usually tended to "mix" only with the top and elite in the press

world as well as the social life of this country with the result that they were only able to obtain a distorted view of what was really happening in this island. The crude and clumsy efforts of such officers to "mix" with the lower order of journalists and "others" were attended with such a mighty sense of "patronage" of being representatives of the Great Powers that their efforts at fraternising always did more harm than good.

Journalists, writers, artists, and all others who have met and known Sivaramakrishnan will miss him. Those of us who have known him well will realise that in Sivaramakrishnan India has a Press Officer with great potentialities, and if the Indian Foreign Service is not able to utilise his talents to the fullest, the loss will be India's. For, I am sure, that in whatever country he is posted he will, within a very short time, be able to establish such contacts on the basis of personal friendship that he will be able to correctly assess the main streams of life and activity in that country.

## GMOA

Speaking of pressmen brings me to a question that many of them asked me as to how *Tribune* was able to scoop the report of the Implementation Committee last week. *Tribune*, although a weekly which devotes itself to commentative news rather than spot news, has often been able to scoop first rate news. The Doctors' Report was something which newshounds of all papers were anxiously after, but the "luck" that sometimes befalls a newsgetter was the lot of the *Tribune* sleuth.

There were a few variations, but the bulk and content of the official report was found in the *Tribune* nearly 48 hours before the report was released. With the copy of the *Tribune*, I am told, reporters of a particular paper "tackled" the different members of the Committee who had by that time not got over the shock of seeing the *Tribune* story. How did the Report leak? I am told that members of the Commission refused to "deny or admit" — but their silence was

significant and an evening paper published the gist of the *Tribune* story in its own words.

## Dr. Wijerama

My good friend Sherlock Holmes who has been away on long vacation, has returned, and the first piece of under-cover news he has brought me is that Dr. Wijerama who was the GMOA representative on the Implementation Committee is likely to be asked to take up one of the new diplomatic appointments that are expected to be shortly made.

Sherlock Holmes was not definite whether it was Dr. Wijerama who was keen about the job, or whether it was the Government talent scouts in their quest for able diplomats who had spotted Dr. Wijerama. In any case, a person who can successfully tight-rope-walk between the GMOA and a reluctant Government has successfully qualified to fill any diplomatic post in the world. Further, at the moment, no member of the medical profession has yet graced our Diplomatic Service and it seems only fitting that Dr. Wijerama should have the honour.

But what worries me is how this appointment can be justified in view of the serious shortage of doctors, particularly when such a large number are dissatisfied are threatening to quit the service. Can the Medical Services in the county afford to lose the valuable services of Dr. Wijerama?

## Stanley de Zoysa

I wish to refer to the broadcast appeal made to public servants last Sunday by the Minister of Finance, Mr. Stanley de Zoysa.

It must be said at the outset that I consider, Mr. Stanley de Zoysa one of the responsible members of the Cabinet and his speeches and actions have always merited serious consideration. He has stood by all the promises he made to public servants, and they in turn have recognised this fact. Quite recently he re-employed all public servants who had been dismissed for trade union

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activities by the last government; he made permanent a large number of public servants who had been in government employment as temporary hands for a number of years. He has given a fair deal to public servants who were likely to be affected by the passing of the Official Language Bill, and has put into effect a scheme by which those who did not know Sinhalese would not be put out of employment or find themselves unwanted in the public service. He has appointed a Commission to go into the anomalies in the public service with a view to adjusting them. In short, the Finance Minister's record of service has been satisfactory.

But when Mr. de Zoysa strays from his Ministry, and tries to explain matters pertaining to other Ministries he turns into a poor advocate of a weak cause. Referring to the declaration of the port as an essential service, and the reasons for the government's decision for the declaration, he said: "Various political parties find it necessary for reasons known to themselves to try to embarrass the government in its work," and "It has been suggested that this was a deprivation of legitimate trade union rights and that it was a retrograde step. I wish to assure Public servants, in particular, and workers in general, that this government has no intention whatever of taking away their legitimate rights. I wish to assure them also that this government has no intention of allowing a small group of workers to hold the country to ransom".

Now, no amount of assurances from Mr. de Zoysa can detract from the incontrovertible fact that the declaration of the Port as an essential service was an emasculation of trade union rights of Port workers. The government had recognised trade unionism and its concomitant weapon, strike action. Does the Finance Minister argue that once the weapon has been snatched away by law from workers it does not amount to a deprivation of trade union rights? Dr. N. M. Perera said immediately after the declaration of the Port as an essential service that even the U.N.P. had not acted in such a manner. He was voicing the senti-

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the personal influence of the candidates in their own wards.

The C.P. and the L.S.S.P. have put forward 19 candidates each. The L.S.S.P. administration of Colombo though brief was rewarding and the citizens of Colombo know that the L.S.S.P. gave the city a clean administration. Language and religious issues, although they have been raised, do not weigh the scales against Left candidates, and the voters are not likely to be tricked into casting their votes on those issues.

The Left parties have a progressive programme of work for the city and it is on that they are likely to be returned. Side issues, however forcibly they may be projected into the forefront, are not going to carry the voters away.

Unfortunately the Left parties — the L.S.S.P. and the C.P. have not been able to put forward a joint list of candidates, and they will be contesting each other in as many as nine wards. If they had been able to put forward a single list, the elections would be a one-horse race. Such disagreements has always been the curse of the Left parties.

## Premier

The Parliament met this week after a prolonged adjournment, and the Premier who returned last weekend to Ceylon after his visit to the UNO reported to the House the impressions he had gained on the tour. There was nothing new in what he said about international events, for what he said in the House was only a repetition of the Press Conferences he had held in New York, London, Karachi and Colombo.

ments of a large number of people interested in trade unionism. Why is Government so anxious to condemn the NLSSP union, when it is known that it is the official patronage extended to Philip Gunawardena's union that is the basis of all the trouble in the port?

What might be considered significant and new was his announcement that in a few months time the Ceylon flag would be flying over Katunayake and Trincomalee. He did not disclose further details about the "facilities" that would be provided to the British even after the bases are taken over by Ceylon. The Premier also emphasised that he had taken up the question of the refuelling of the *Superb* and *Newfoundland* and that he had been assured "at the top" that these vessels had called on a routine visit to Trincomalee and that they had not taken part in the Suez episode.

Premier Bandaranaike also wanted the Government doctors to give the Canekeratne Report a chance and that modifications and revisions could be contemplated later. What the Premier was asking was that the GMOA should accept the principal of private practice as dressed up by the Canekeratne Committee. He also uttered some heroic words about Government taking stern measures against those who resort to strike and repeated the customary metaphor about Government not being daunted by a pistol being held against it as a threat.

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# WORLD AFFAIRS

BY  
ARIEL

👑 BRITAIN    👑 MILITARY PACTS

👑 US STRATEGY    👑 CHINA

Although it took the British a long time to decide to quit Egypt, at the time these notes were written it was reported that more than half the expeditionary force had been withdrawn. Whilst there was world-wide relief that the Anglo-French forces had begun their withdrawal, in Britain there seems to be anguish of the most serious character. Undoubtedly Eden's Suez adventure is "the most disastrous episode that British foreign policy has produced in this century."

Apart from the decline in Tory morale, England is today faced with a grave economic crisis. Meanwhile, the staggering rise in the price of petrol and other fuel oils, and other internal measures, have evoked protests from both industrial and trade organisations as well as from organised labour," says Shelvankar in a despatch from London to the *Hindu* on December 5. "It means higher prices all round, higher production costs, higher transport costs, higher rents and living costs and higher taxes....."

The painful truth is, that Britain is no longer the wealthy and powerful country she used to be, according to the *Financial Times* of December 5. "The effort to keep up appearances has bankrupted many a family of ancient traditions," comments this paper in a rather melancholy tone. "First the lands are mortgaged, then the servants go and finally the roof falls in. Britain now stands somewhere between the second and third stage."

The *Financial Times* and the *Daily Herald* for once were agreed that Britain now has to cut her coat according to her cloth, and that Britain must make a start from "ceasing to pretend she can afford the colossal sum of 1,500 million pounds a year on defence forces which she is unable to use anyway."

## Military Pacts

What the obvious and the commonsense way out of the economic

impasse for Britain is to cut her unnecessary defence expenditure and start trading with all countries in the world irrespective of their ideologies, and without any more territorial or imperialist ambitions, the Tory Government still seems determined to continue its old policy of military pacts and the cold war. The NATO powers are in conference this week in Paris and the US has expressed its willingness to aid Britain financially (it is presumed that this offer is valid only if Britain is prepared to continue tailing the U.S.). The Baghdad Pact Powers are scheduled to meet in Karachi shortly and the SEATO Powers are also due to meet soon. According to an inspired news report emanating from Karachi it appears that "intense diplomatic activity is now going on over a move to link the Baghdad Pact with the NATO and SEATO military alliances to strengthen the West-sponsored defensive ring in global strategy....."

Afro-Asian sentiment is that all military pacts should be scrapped,

but the USA, which temporarily combined with the Afro-Asians to reduce Britain to a third or fourth rate power in the Middle East, has once again started feverish activity in trying to prop up the power of the Western Powers with the military pacts and an intensification of the cold war. The US, inspired propaganda barrage over events in Hungary and her anxiety to send "observers" into the country and her neighbours show how anxious she is to keep world tension mounting through cold war tactics. The fact that the USA would not move a little finger when Afro-Asians called for US intervention in Algeria, Cyprus, Kenya and other colonial territories has not been forgotten. It will also be recalled that the US supported Portugal over her possessions in India.

## Mask Down

With the renewed cold war-military pacts tactics of the USA, the mask which Washington assumed

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# World Affairs

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as a champion of under-developed countries and as a fighter against colonialism has been torn off. And the "tearing down" has been done by the USA herself. Ernest Corea, the *Ceylon Observer* Special Correspondent at the United Nations in a despatch on December 5 stated: "A few days ago, diplomats here were wondering what Russia would do to get back the diplomatic advantage stolen from them by the Americans who had worked their way into Asian good books. The problem does not exist any longer, as America has done the needful by a brash attempt to widen the scope of the resolution calling for observers into Hungary so as to enable them to drop into as many countries as they wish..... Afrasian countries which had earlier berated Russia for its Hungarian activities, turned round on America. Ambassador Gunawardene who made an eloquent enunciation of the Afrasian viewpoint, rocked a sleepy Assembly back into life with a vigorous speech explaining why Ceylon abstained from voting....."

Other press reports indicate that whilst the Secretary General was negotiating with the Hungarian Government and was on the verge of getting approval from Budapest for his visit, the US precipitated the resolution to enable the UN to send observers to all socialist countries with the result that the Hungarian Government declined even to admit the Secretary General. Afrasian opinion at the UNO is strongly of the view that America's crude cold war tactics was the cause of the sudden stiffening of the Hungarian Government's attitude.

It was not so very long ago that Washington made no secret of the fact that it wanted the downfall of the Nasser Government. It was with that aim that America refused to let the World Bank to assist Egypt to build the Aswan Dam. Dulles and his friends had hoped that Nasser would fall if he was unable to build the Dam. The nationalisation of the Canal had staggered Washington as much as it did London and Paris, and it will be recalled that America had stood with Britain for the "internationalisation" of the waterway.

Admittedly, the real reason why the USA suddenly decided to support the Afrasian nations in the

Suez dispute after Eden's military adventure was because she did not want the USSR to steal all the thunder as a champion against colonialism and also because she wanted to emerge as the most powerful Western nation in order to safeguard American (mainly Rockefeller) investments in Middle East oil.

## China

If there had been any basic change in US foreign policy after the Suez adventure of Eden (and after Eisenhower's re-election), this would have reflected itself in her attitude to the cold war, in particular to the Eastern European States and the People's Republic of China, and also the question of military pacts.

It is recognised by all thinking sections of civilised humanity that world peace can be secured only if all military facts are scrapped and foreign bases liquidated. To ask Russia to withdraw her troops from Hungary without at the same time insisting that America should recall all her troops in Western Germany is unrealistic, and in fact is only an echo of the cold war propaganda that emanates from Washington. Premier Bandaranaike in a press interview at Karachi, in explaining the C-Powers stand, emphasised that NATO, SEATO and BAGHDAD pacts preceded the WARSAW agreement, and if the former were scrapped the latter would automatically dissolve itself.

In this context, it is significant that Washington has redoubled its efforts to build up NATO, SEATO and the Baghdad pacts and it possible link them into one unit. This is cold war at its worst. To make matters worse, the continued refusal to recognise People's China is folly which can only arise from the mistaken logic of cold war politics.

## Chou

The visit that Chou has just paid to India and the enthusiastic welcome he had received in all parts of the country he went to is an indication that Asian solidarity based on Indo-Chinese friendship is growing. It is with the strength of such support and the support of the majority of the Afrasian Powers that Nehru goes to Washington this week to meet Eisenhower. Many questions of international significance are bound to be discussed but three questions of extreme urgency are likely to figure in their talks: military pacts (and the

misuse of arms supplied under NATO, SEATO etc for aggression), the lessening of international tension (and the recognition of the Peking Government is intimately bound up with this question), and the future of Indo-US relations (with India following her independent policy as Egypt had done—thereby having earned the wrath of the Western Powers).

From all reports it would seem that Nehru is not likely to make much headway in the question of military pacts and the cold war, but Washington (after the Egyptian experience) may be willing to concede economic and financial "aid" (at fairly high rates of interest) to India. In the meantime, Chou who has been described as "one of the ablest diplomats of the century" has indicated that China might solve the Formosa question peaceably by inviting and offering a high post to Chiang Kai Shek. The office of President of the Republic has been mentioned. If Peking is able to solve its dispute with the "nationalists" in Formosa in this way, the China Lobby in Washington will find itself without anything solid to stand on.

Pakistan, caught in the vortex of cold war politics, has worked itself into a frenzy against India. This has been interpreted as American cold war tactics in order to cramp the style of Nehru and the Colombo Powers. The fact that Premier Sunrawardi "dodged" meeting Premier Bandaranaike is a clear indication of the way the wind is blowing. But Chou is scheduled to visit Pakistan this week. What will come of it?

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# RAMYALATHA

Producer Nayagam, who had been a pioneer in the production of films in Sinhalese has broken new ground in his latest release RAMYALATHA. It is the first Sinhalese film which I have seen without the customary happy ending *finale*.

RAMYALATHA is based on the Indian DEVADAS which had a successful run all over India. Although, the Sinhalese version owes much to the Indian original, it has been adapted to meet the tastes of the Sinhalese audiences in this country. But I do not know how far local film goers will appreciate a straight emotional tragedy with a great deal of moralising without the inevitable happy ending. The picture is heavy going, and it is yet to be seen how it will go down with urban and rural folk in Ceylon who have been brought up on highly escapist themes and phantasies of music, dance, love comedy with a pinch of "tragedy" thrown in to have a veneer of "realism" which has somehow been associated by film-makers with sorrow and misery.



Clarice

Although I left the theatre with the feeling that RAMYALATHA was not up to some of the earlier

productions of Mr. Nayagam like AHANKARA STHRIE and MATHALANG, I could not but admire this production for it was made completely in the Sri Murukan Studios at Kandana. Technically, the film was of a high quality compared to the other Sinhalese films that have appeared in Colombo recently.

Clarice stole the show. Undoubtedly she is one of the most talented of film actresses in the island today. She had a difficult role to portray, and somewhat different from the parts she has so far played, and I must say that she impressed me as a versatile artist with a future. Rita Ratnayake also rendered her trying role in a competent manner. Aruna



Aruna Shanti

Shanti, among the men, was undoubtedly the most standout actor. But the men, it seemed to me, had a tendency to over-act their parts for effect. Or, was it that the Director's conception of tragedy was that intense emotion was tied up with long

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# RAMYALATHA

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drawn-out scenes of heavy sentimental dialogue and soliloquy?

RAMYALATHA is not entertainment in the sense Sinhalese audiences have so far known; but as a different kind of film, which for the first time reaches out to tragedy, this picture is worth seeing. In a country where sermonising is still very pronounced and where parents and teachers still believe that education should be imparted in moralised lessons, RAMYALA-

THA is likely to strike a sympathetic chord in a large number of people.

For those who want to see how grim and tragic life can be as a result of alcoholism, RAMYALATHA is the film to see. The story gripped me to the end, in spite of several long-drawn sequences (which might have been suitably edited), and I am sure that the story content alone with the splendid performances of Clarice and Rita should be sufficient to make the film worthwhile.

S.A.

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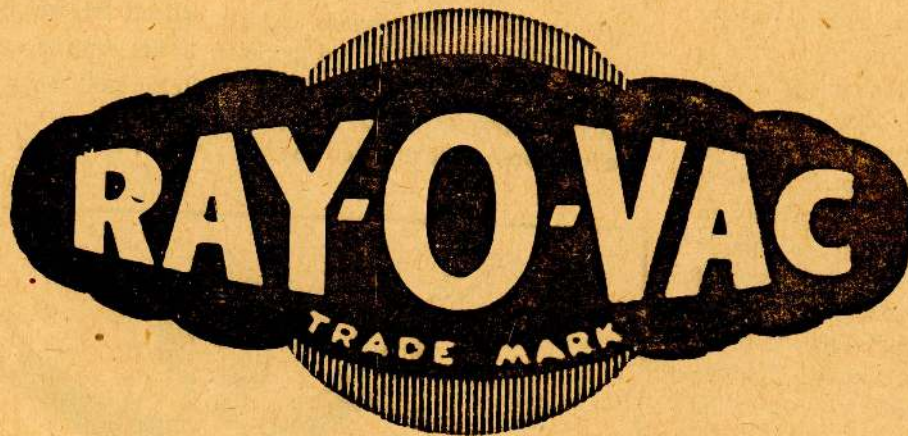
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# Doctor's Strike

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members are making serious preparations to go to gaol in the eventuality of the Government declaring the medical service an essential service, the Government is displaying vacillation and uncertainty, on the one hand, and bullying tactics on the other.

Instead of calling for representations from the G.M.O.A. on the merits of the Report of the Implementation Committee and having discussions on that basis, the Cabinet decided to accept the Report forthwith: a report which runs contrary to the avowed Government policy of abolition of private practice. Together with this, the Prime Minister thought fit to utter threats against the doctors should they protest in some effective manner: Such threats may be good enough for the laird of Horagulla (vis a-vis serfs and tenants) but is certainly not good enough for a Prime Minister of this country (particularly in dealing with a responsible profession like the medical).

Press reports also indicate that government circles have not only thought of declaring the medical

services an 'essential service' but also of "reporting" striking doctors to the Medical Council for unprofessional conduct. If the Government has no other solutions to urgent problems than these puerile exhibitions of petty power, it reveals bankruptcy of the highest degree. And the question may reasonably be asked why the high pandrams who have now thought of "reporting" striking doctors to the Medical Council have not thought of doing the same to Government "specialists" and other such medical racketeers in the profession who have made blood money from patients through the evil system of private practice.

*Threats and counter threats in a matter like the present dispute between the G.M. .A. and the Government will not do anyb dy any good. Settlement must be reached as quickly as possible, and it would be good for Government to realise that the sympathy of the public is by far and large with the doctors and the G.M.O.A. in spite of the valiant*

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efforts of the "Times" group and the "Daily News" (not the "observer") to sugar coat the Report of the Implementation Committee.

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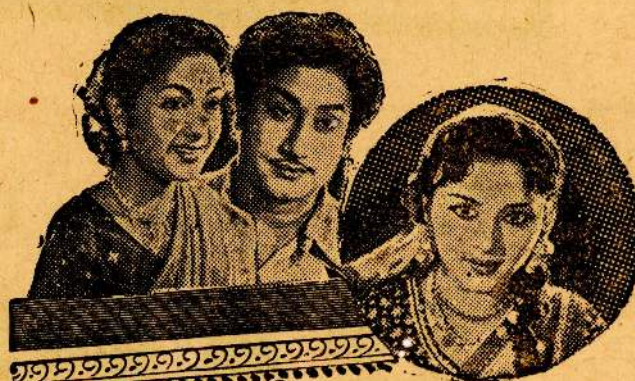
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