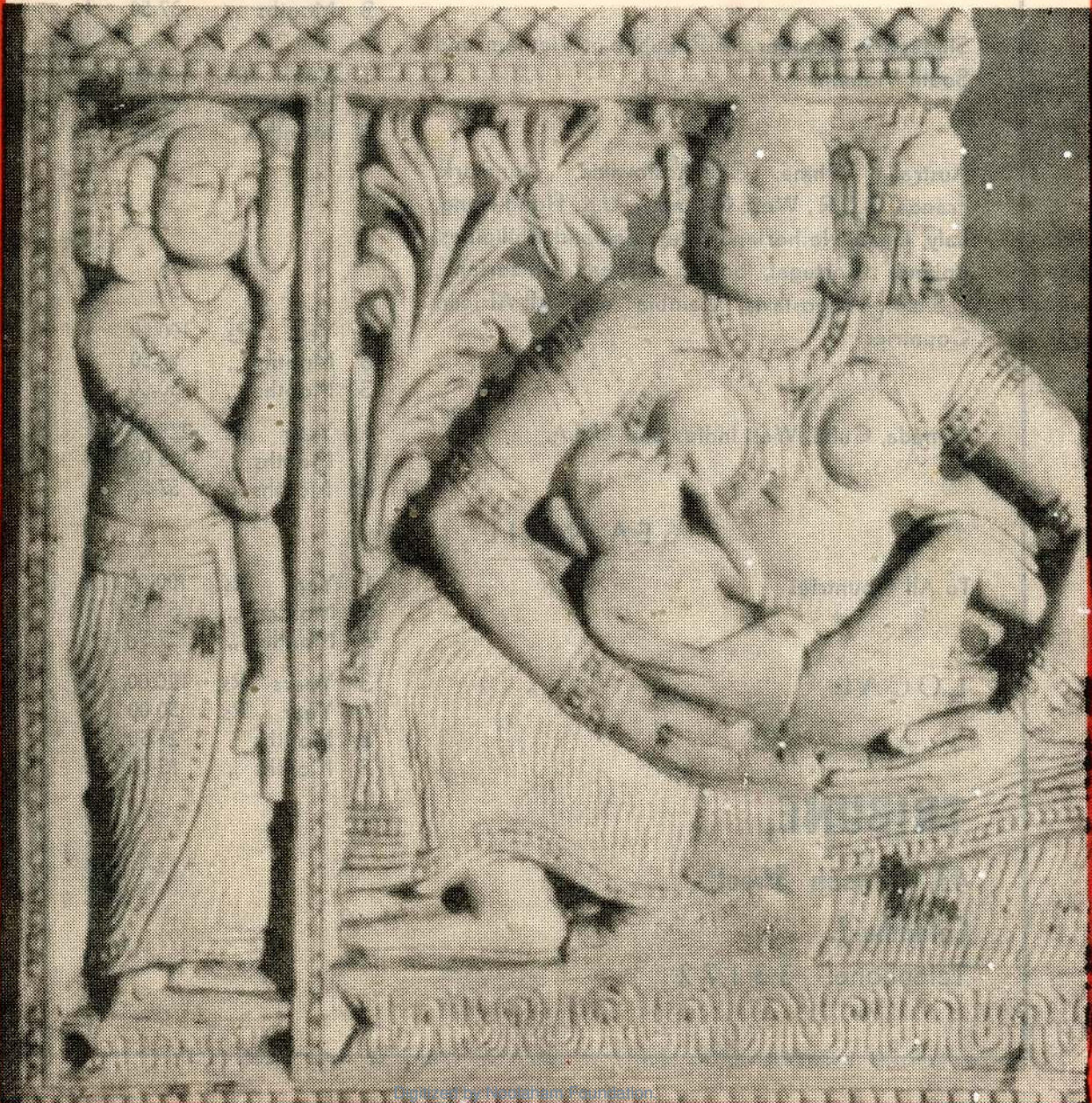


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Letter From The Editor

MAKING ELECTION FORECASTS is one of the hazards of political journalism. *Tribune* has fought shy of making such predictions, but the compulsions of interpretative writing make it necessary to hazard guesses, some of which come very close to the mark and others prove totally incorrect. There have been five general elections since *Tribune* came into existence in 1954, and the sixth will be held in a few days time: that is, in April 1956, March 1960, July 1960, March 1965, May 1970 and finally on July 21, 1977. In April 1956 and July 1960, *Tribune* had correctly anticipated that the SLFP-led electoral alliances would win decisive victories, and in March 1960, it had not been sure which party would come out on top. But, *Tribune's* expectations had proved totally incorrect in March 1965 and May 1970. In 1965, *Tribune* had predicted that the SLFP-LSSP-CP would sweep the polls, and in May 1970 it had thought that the UNP and its allies would be able to retain power. This time, in the elections next week, *Tribune's* evaluation from all available information is that the UNP will emerge as the largest single party but that it is impossible to hazard a guess as to the number of seats the UNP, the SLFP, the ULF and the TULF will individually win. Guesses, there are in plenty, but they are of little help. But, for the record, it would be useful to mention that the guesses of those who claim to be "neutral" is that the UNP would get anything from 75 to 85 seats, the SLFP from 40 to 50 seats, the ULF from 15 to 25 seats and the TULF from 15 to 20 seats. UNP enthusiasts, however, say that the UNP will get around 90 to 95 seats, SLFP loyalists claim that the SLFP will get a minimum of 70 seats and may even get over 100 if an election "avalanche" should start in their favour at the last minute, the ULF's most fanatical supporters assert that the minimum they would get will be 20 seats and that with a little "luck" (an unmarxist thought!) they would get 33 to 35. No newspaper likes to make predictions or guesses because of the consequences that usually follow predictions that go wrong. The winning party in every election in Sri Lanka has done everything to weaken, denigrate or even destroy newspapers—be it a daily, weekly or even an irregular periodical—that has either campaigned against it or "predicted" that it would lose. It is not necessary to recall the history of journalism during the last thirty years to show that every political party, without exception, has so far followed the tradition of "victimising" not only papers and journalists who worked against it but also even those who made "predictions" that the particular party would lose. For the present, it will suffice to say that *Tribune* has suffered, (at different times), at the hands of every party in the 22 years of its existence, (though it has enjoyed benefits and privileges from the SLFP from 1956 to 1965, no doubt because *Tribune* had tilted very much in its favour). It is our hope that after the forthcoming elections, a new spirit of press freedom coupled with a right for journalists to express their views freely (but with due sense of responsibility) will prevail. To the credit of Mr. J. R. Jayawardene, it must be said, that he is the only leader of a political party who has made positive assertions about the need to maintain press freedom and enable journalists and others to express their views freely. The UNP's record in this matter suffers from all the blemishes which every other party has been guilty of. Mr. Jayawardene, by implication, says that he has turned over a new leaf, and if the UNP is victorious and if it will, at least, not carry on a vendetta against those papers which opposed it, it can be said that it will truly usher in the new epoch in the Fourth Estate. The leaders of all other parties have paid little or no attention to the question of press freedom during the current election campaign. Many of them only proclaim old clichés and rhetorical slogans that "under capitalism" freedom is a mirage (and so on and so forth!), and they repeatedly refer to the fact that the UNP had at one time obstructed the publication of papers like the *Aththa* and the *Janadina*. At best, all political leaders, bar Mr. J. R. Jayawardene, have only made negative and apologetic statements about freedom, and after what happened in India under Indira Gandhi during the Emergency, this negative approach is not good enough. Newspapers, journalists and those who believe in freedom cannot be happy about the way the press was treated during the seven years of the United Front-SLFP rule. The taking over of Lake House, it was said, would end the monopoly of a press baron, but all know that it turned out to be only a case of jumping from the frying pan into the fire—and this is admitted even by the one-time partners of the UF, the LSSP and the CP. From colonial times to the present day, the government in Ceylon has always manipulated to have a "managed" press. By and large the big national daily groups in this country have been "managed" for the benefit of different (and often contending) sections of the Establishment and Ruling Hierarchy. Will it be any different in the future?

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EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Sri Lanka And The World

Colombo, July 13,

We have used on the cover this week a sculptured panel from one of ancient ruins which shows a mother nursing her child. Artists and sculptors of old did not need titles or headings to explain what their art intended to convey. With many artists today, it is mainly a guessing game—but we will not be sidetracked into discussing the merits and demerits of modern impressionistic art. What we have on the cover is a straightforward work of art glorifying (if that is the appropriate word) a mother. Emotionally-minded persons will be tempted to title the piece THE MILK OF HUMAN KINDNESS, but the cynic and the presently indignant will probably want to use the picture to preach a sermon on the milk situation in the country today.

Not so long ago, an organisation used the official and semi-official media in Sri Lanka to raise a hue and cry about the virtues of mother's milk, but this was done partly to offset the near-total breakdown in the supplies of milk and milk powder. Even today, whilst the officials in charge of the Milk Board use the media to proclaim that Lakspray, and Milk powder are available in plenty, the ordinary householder is not able to get what he wants without using devious subterfuges to get the same from the co-ops. *Tribune* has recently spotlighted the mess in the milky world. Every newspaper has drawn attention to the deplorable state of the milk business in Sri Lanka, but the governmental authorities seem to be blissfully ignorant of what is going on—and even if they know that something is wrong they seek to hide the truth from the public. But, little by little, the truth has begun to come out.

The *Sun*, on Monday, July 11, had a striking frontpage headline entitled 200,000 BAGS OF LAKSPRAY STUCK IN THE PORT: ENOUGH IN THE MARKET SAYS MILK BOARD BOSS. The report merits quotation—even if it is only for the record:

While Lakspray is out of stock everywhere, 200,000 packets containing 56 pounds each remain stored in the godowns at the harbour for the past two months. Informed sources say that the National Milk Board has not taken any action to clear this stock. A spokesman for the Port (Cargo) Corporation told the *Sun* that as a result of the Lakspray not moving out of the go-downs for such a long time, the Corporation was facing a problem of storage space for other items.

The spokesman warned that the Lakspray was exposed to rats and sea-breeze and a large stock could go bad if not cleared immediately. When the Chairman of the Milk Board was contacted by the *Sun* on this matter, he said this situation had arisen for want of storage space. The Lakspray in the go-down is cleared in required quantities and removed to the packing centre at Maddumagala, he explained. The Chairman also claimed that there was no reason for a shortage of Lakspray in the market. Last month the Commissioner of Co-operative Development was issued with 1,900,000 one-pound packets of Lakspray for distribution. This month an increased quantity had been already issued, he said.

The complacency of the Chairman of the Milk Board is something which will leave every thinking person aghast. How he can say that the market has enough stocks is a statement that is untrue as it is hypocritical. But, to come back to the cover picture, in the context of the General Elections next week, it is a moot point whether the 1977 general election in Sri Lanka can be termed the LAKSPRAY ELECTION, or the CANNED FISH ELECTION, or the PARIPPU ELECTION. Some may be tempted to call it the THIRTY INCH WIDTH TEXTILES ELECTION. The more disgruntled will of course, say, that it is the ELECTION of the CRA CARS which have flooded the country.

Rustics and youths gape at these 6 and 7 Sri wonders and say rude things about the import of such cars when such true "essentials" like sulphur needed for agriculture (especially for onion and chilly growing areas) has not been imported this year—there is a popular belief that some bureaucrat had forgotten to order

it or call for tenders. Without sulphur, which is used as an additive with insecticides, hundreds of acres of chillies and onions have succumbed to pests. Onions are now over Rs. 6 a lb, and chilly prices (whatever tough requisition measures are taken), will slowly keep mounting as the weeks go by because production has been inhibited by the lack of one essential ingredient to fight pests. A packet of one pound of soluble sulphur which was sold at Rs. 1/00 a lb some years ago cost only Rs. 5 last year. This year the little available on the blackmarket fetches over Rs. 35 a lb—but even at this price it is not available.

Tribune has said a great deal about the elections in recent issues. We have received bouquets as well as brickbats for what we wrote, but in the nature of things this cannot be avoided. Most people who disagree with our viewpoint do not attribute any motives to us: but there are others who seek to explain our views by attributing political, racial, linguistic or other reasons to dismiss our logic as being tainted.

In this issue, we have published a number of articles from other writers and commentators on the elections, at least on various aspects of the elections. For the rest, we will await the verdict of the poll on July 21. As we announced last week, the next issue of *Tribune* will be delayed by a few days to publish some preliminary analyses of the elections.

If one goes by the headlines and election meetings' columnage in the Lake House newspapers, it would seem that Mrs. Bandaranaike and the SLFP would be swept back to power without any difficulty. She has repeatedly asserted that she will be "called upon to form a government on July 22". The UNP leader, Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, seems to be equally certain that he will form the Government. The ULF and the TULF are fighting hard to get as many seats as possible so that the gap between the two giants is narrowed down to the point where each of them will have a decisive voice in government-making. As we have said elsewhere in this issue, *Tribune*, has had a fifty-fifty record of success and failure in predicting the outcome of general elections since 1956.

It is, however, our view that this time, the odds are very much

in favour of the UNP, but we are totally indifferent to the outcome because we have no stakes in this election business. Like many others we feel that the elections game and consequential politics (and politicking) in Sri Lanka is still a matter of Tweedledum or Tweedledee. But, the mood of the people seems to be that a change in governmental style would let in a breath of fresh air into the administration—for sixteen years during the last twentyone years it has been a one-way run.

This year, 1977, has been rightly termed the YEAR OF ELECTIONS. Many elections have taken place in different parts of the world with fateful consequences. In March, Pakistan and India went to the polls. Bhutto had sought to retain power by rigging the elections in a clumsy and amateurish manner and even the normally pliable and subservient masses of Pakistan rose up in revolt. Whether this "revolt" was staged and financed from abroad is one of the "ifs" of history, but there is no doubt that the dazzling career of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto had ended with the army take-over to hold the elections in October (but the question is whether the elections will be held at all for a long time?)

In India, the Congress which had ruled the country for 30 years was swept out of power in a way that has left the world astounded. Indira Gandhi, who had been called the "Empress of India" for the charismatic hold she had on the masses, is already a relic of the past. Whether she or Bhutto can ever stage a comeback is doubtful, and even if they do, it will be only for a fleeting moment of time to flicker and pass away. Too many skeletons in the governmental cupboards of Bhutto and Indira Gandhi have been bared to the public gaze and it will be extremely difficult for either of them to win the confidence of the "masses" again.

In Bangladesh too there was an election of sorts recently when bossman General Zia had a "referendum" to find out if the common people had confidence in him and his policies. It was an election to secure "electoral" support for Zia's "personal" rule. He seems to be doing a great deal to bring Bangladesh to the state of normality required for any growth or progress. Bangladesh's man of the century, Mujibbur

Rafman, was liquidated in 1975 in a massacre of his family, and the coup was possible because of the weaknesses of his administration and the widespread corruption that had been tolerated in high places.

Corruption has also riddled the administration of Bhutto and Indira Gandhi. The Army Council running Pakistan has promulgated the Islamic Shariat law (this was one of the demands of some of the constituent parties of opposition PNA) and those who hereafter rob steal or misappropriate private or public property, will lose their arms (but such amputation, as in Gaddafi's Libya, will be done under anaesthesia). The Janata Party, in India seems to think that it is enough to expose Congress corruption through Commissions of Inquiry without taking adequate steps to see that the Janata administration itself does not slip into the morass of corruption.

Elections in Israel in May swept out the Labour Party which had ruled the country for thirty years. Likud regime has created a new situation in the Middle East. Hawkish Likud ministers seem to believe that a tough attitude—eg. that they will retain the West Bank (Judea and Samaria)—will bring ultimate peace and stability to the area. The Likud government has no use for the PLO. It refuses to have a Palestinian home anywhere around the Jordan. The latest suggestion is a revival of the "Allon Plan" whereby the West Bank would be "shared" between Israel and Jordan—civil administration by King Hussein of Jordan and security and military control by Israel with the Palestinians given the right to be residents of the territory together with new Jewish settlers. Whether the USA will be able to pressurise Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Syria and Jordan to accept the "Allon Plan" is one of the moot questions of the day. Already, many Arab countries led by the PLO have denounced this plan, and neither the USA nor Israel will have an easy time in the attempt to bring peace and stability to the Middle East in this way. Spain held elections after 40 years to elect a government of a "democratic christian centrist" character led by Suarez. Whether Suarez and King Carlos will be able to bring Spain into the mainstream of the parliamentary system that prevails

in western Europe is yet to be seen.

It is even more difficult to say whether "democratic elections" in individual countries will help the world to overcome problems that threaten to bring economic and political disaster very soon—and thereby trigger a general war. The North-South dialogue in Paris ended in a total failure with the main and central question of third world debt untouched. The Eurodollar world has now to find ways and means of recovering its debts (more importantly the interest payments) and this might lead to limited wars if not worse. President Carter is not having his way even inside the USA where the Senate and Congress have rejected his energy and nuclear policy and have voted to proceed with the fast-breeder plutonium scheme for developing energy. Carter has preached sermons to the world about stopping fast-breeder stations and plutonium manufacture and has used USA's big stick to demand that countries like France, West Germany, Brazil, Pakistan and others stop all attempts to further the growth of re-processing nuclear fuel and the use of plutonium. To back his policy, Carter had wanted the fast-breeder programme in the USA to be stopped, but he seems to have failed in this effort.

There are many responsible, scientists who do not agree with Carter's thesis about plutonium and think that plutonium is no more dangerous than a number of substances which are readily available in the world today. It has been suggested that the Carter administration's hysteric antagonism to plutonium is only a smokescreen to cover the plans of vested interests in the USA (which had backed him into the White House) to make other existent energy resources more profitable than they are today.

An even greater threat to world than plutonium is debt. Only a new monetary and economic order, envisaged in the resolutions of the Non-aligned Summit or the Group of 77, can save the situation. This will entail the cancellation of several hundred billion euro-dollar worths of debt and this is what the "rich" world of the "haves" are resisting—they did not even want to talk about it in Paris.

Mexico, which is on the verge of an IMF-induced financial bankruptcy, has to pay US \$ 5 billion as interest (and part repayment) to the New York Banks before September and there seems to be little prospect of the debt being repaid.

David Rockefeller, the undisputed emperor of the Eurodollar world had gone to Mexico last

week but it is not known whether he has been able to devise any compromise to overcome this difficulty—because if Mexico defaults it will set in motion a chain reaction in regard to the US \$ 300 billion third world debt to the Eurodollar banking system. The Arab and OPEC countries have refused to pump more money

into the IMF so that the IMF could "lend" the same to the third world countries to repay the debt—and not to help economic growth or development.

The problems of the world are more difficult and complex than the problems facing individual countries—but they are all intertwined and inter-connected.

SRI LANKA CHRONICLE

June 21 — June 30

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

CDN—Ceylon Daily News; CDM—Ceylon Daily Mirror; CO—Ceylon Observer; ST—Sunday Times; DM—Dinamina; LD—Lankadipa; VK—Virakesari; ATH—Aththa; SM—Silumina; SLD—Sri Lankadipa; JD—Janadina; DP—Dinapathi; SU—Sun; DW—Dawasa; CM—Chinthamani; WK—Weekend; RR—Rivirasa; EN—Eelanadu;

TUESDAY, JUNE 21: The government will offer entrepreneurs tax incentives for setting up modern rice processing factories to get over the paddy milling crisis; incentives offered will be on the same lines as those given to the tourist hotel trade—tax holidays and foreign exchange to purchase equipment. The People's Bank and the Commissioner of Co-operative Development have jointly stepped up security measures in the country's 506 rural banks following a spate of robberies reported in the past few weeks. The first phase of the Channelled Consultation Scheme through co-operative hospitals came into operation officially yesterday in 20 centres in the country. The President of the CWC, Mr. S. Thondaman in a press statement said yesterday, that the Ceylon Worker's Congress had not entered into any agreement with any major political party about supporting their candidates in their electorates. The Minister of Agriculture and Lands has re-organised the Agricultural Insurance Board so that it could play a more dynamic role in the government's efforts to increase agricultural production.—CDN. Since the candidates and police did not see eye to eye on the question of whether it was an election offence to display banners, posters and handbills, the matter has now been referred to the Attorney General. The strike by Registered and Assistant Medical Practitioners enters its 20th day today without any prospect of settlement. The nine trade unions at the BIA yesterday decided not to launch on their threatened strike. Seven customs officers of the Galle customs who were arrested in connection with a complaint of bribery were ordered to be remanded when they were produced before the Chief Magistrate, Colombo. A 'radical group' is trying hard to wrest the leadership in the GCSU, it is reliably understood.—CDM. Nearly 100,000 public servants deployed for election duty will be called upon to swear an oath of secrecy in order to ensure a fair and impartial poll. The Islamic Socialist Front which claims to have 225 branches in Sri Lanka, has decided to support the SLFP at the coming general elections. Two more Deputy Ministers, Mr. Ananda Sirisena, (Food and

Co-operatives) and Mr. Neal de Alwis (Finance) have relinquished their posts since June 18.—SU. The Leader of the LSSP, Dr. N. M. Perera has said that if the ULF comes to power, the problems of the country will be solved within two years.—VK. The leader of the Opposition has stated in a meeting that when he became the PM, he would make Mr. K. W. Devanayagam a member of his cabinet.—DP. In 1971 the Ministry of Planning set up 56 Goviviya-paras under the DDC's; in June 1976 all of them have been shut down.—DW.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 22: More students—around 18,000 from 600 schools—have enrolled themselves to pursue the School leaver's project introduced by the Ministry of Education two years ago under the new educational programme; the program began with about 3,000 students; it was designed to cater to GCE O' level and NCGE students who failed the exam twice and to whom other opportunities of pursuing higher studies were limited. The Bank of Ceylon has decided to expand its network of agricultural service centres in order to assist the peasantry with funds to increase the production of paddy and non-traditional exports. Patients are once again being admitted to paying wards in the General Hospital, Colombo after a lapse of about two months. One hundred acres in the catchment areas surrounding Labugana and Kelatuwewa have been planted with *Alstonia* and *Pinus* in order to protect the forest cover of these two reservoirs, says the conservator of Forests in his administrative report for 1976. The Attorney General has ruled that it is an offence for anyone to put up banners, posters or handbills outside the house, or any public place. The Commissioner of Elections has requested the Ceylon Petroleum Corporation to arrange for adequate stocks of fuel and oil to be available both in Colombo and in the outstations for the use of Returning Officers, the Police and the CTB. As the Department of Health has not yet informed the authorities of the Colombo North Co-operative Hospital the particulars about the doctors, not a single patient or doctor turned up at the hospital yesterday—the first day of the operation of the new Channelled Practice Scheme. Members of the Sri Lanka Ekabaddha Bhikku Bala Mandalaya under the auspices of the Pancha Maha Bala Mandalaya will do house-to-house visits in some electorates to explain to the people the importance of returning the SLFP to power.—CDM. Post offices throughout the island will be kept open till midnight on election day. Mr. M. J. Tissanayagam has been appointed Director of Information. Employees of the Chartered Bank came out on strike yesterday, in protest against the suspension of a union official. A Maldivian cargo vessel bringing food to Sri Lanka is reported to have sunk off Cape Comorin in the Indian Ocean last Saturday; it was carrying dried fish, coriander and cummin seed. The PM yesterday assured the Tamils that she would

find a solution to the language problem, after the present government was given a fresh mandate on July 21. The price of seer fish at St. John's Market, Pettah reached an all-time high of Rs. 10 a pound yesterday. Six more ships carrying rice for Sri Lanka are lying in the Trincomalee Port undischarged. Mr. V. D. de Lenerolle, eminent journalist, poet and writer died on Monday night; he was 83—SU. A 17 million dollar Asian Development Bank credit has been negotiated in Manila last week for completion of the hydro-power development projects under the Maskeliya Oya Scheme. Last year was a boom period for the rubber industry in Sri Lanka; according to the latest statistics compiled by the Rubber Department, production-wise there was an increase of 3,413 Metric tons, consumption of natural rubber showed an increase of 677 metric tons; last year's rubber exports increased by 4,843 metric tons—CO. The World Bank has promised 4 million 22 lakhs of American dollars worth of aid to complete stage II of the Mahaweli Development Project—DM. Mr. Anura Bandaranaike has said at a meeting at Hakmana, that they wanted to have a peaceful election and if the UNP create trouble, they would postpone the elections for another five years, or they are even prepared to do away with elections forever—DW.

THURSDAY, JUNE 23: The Board of Directors of the Building Materials Corporation has been blamed for the overall maladministration of the BMC; this maladministration gradually led to a big fraud in a cement sale amounting to Rs. 1,034,558.50. 27 doctors, some of them specialists, have opted to join the Health Ministry's Channelled Consultation Scheme through co-operative hospitals after the government re-introduced this scheme beginning from June 20. Locally manufactured firearms are freely available in the underworld despite heightened police vigilance and the rounding up of two gangs engaged in the business. The Attorney General has ruled that it is an offence for any person to exhibit election propaganda material such as flags, banners, handbills, posters etc. either at public places or even on walls outside private premises. Sri Lanka's bulk tea export to Pakistan is likely to increase considerably; this is because the Pakistan government has proposed to waive import and excise duties on bulk tea. The Colombo Municipality is planning to introduce polythene bags to remove garbage from households instead of the present system of using dustbins; arrangements are already under way to launch an experimental drive in this connection in certain selected parts of the city shortly. The Minister of Power, Irrigation and Highways yesterday appointed Mr. T. Sivaganam, acting Chairman of the Ceylon Electricity Board in addition to his own duties as Secretary to the Ministry. Prof. Howard Wriggins, Head of the South Asia Department of the Colombia University, is tipped to be the new US Ambassador to Sri Lanka—CDN. Shareholders in the twenty two business undertakings vested in government since 1972 are perturbed over the delay in the payment of compensation. Members of the Association of Medical Practitioners who went back to work on June 14 on an assurance given by the Minister of Health that negotiations would be held on June 17, have now come out on strike again—CDM. More than 1,500 employees of the Ceylon Electricity Board's Head Office will stage a 'sit in' demonstration outside their offices from today protesting against the removal of the Chairman of the Board Mr. D. P. Chandrasinghe. The govern-

ment has granted permission to enable the purchase of rupee tickets to New Delhi—SU. Work on the Ceylon Fisheries Harbour Corporation's Rs. 1.3 million refrigeration plan in Chilaw is nearing completion and Corporation sources are confident that all equipment could be installed and production of ice started before the end of this month—CO. Much of the land taken over under the land development was taken over without permission of the Land Commissioner; thousands of acres have been made use of by MP's; Now the GA's are having difficulties in getting it approved—LD.

FRIDAY, JUNE 24: The most modern and highly sophisticated communications network in Asia and the Far East, with 350 direct links, will be operated by the police at next month's General Elections; hence this year's results will be broadcast by the SLBC much earlier than in previous general elections. The Police will permit the display of posters on the day of an election meeting in and around the place where such a meeting is to be held—CDN. Employees of the Ceylon Electricity Board yesterday launched a lightning strike in protest against the sudden removal of its Chairman by the Minister on Wednesday. The number of medical officers who have opted to join the Channelled Consultation Scheme has now risen to 37. Many University teachers are perturbed at what appears to be a deprivation of their political rights; yesterday a meeting was held at the Colombo Campus to discuss the eligibility of university teachers to contest a parliamentary seat on leave from the university. About 12,000 employees of the State Engineering Corporation and the Buildings Department are to be laid off with pay because the two state organisations are unable to go ahead with their construction projects; the main reason for this is the shortage of cement. Yesterday's 'sit in' protest by about 1,500 workers of the CEB showed signs of spreading to the Board's Provincial installations as talks between union representatives and the management ended in deadlock.—SU The Central Committee of the Sri Lanka Malay Workers and Students Socialist Front has announced its decision to support the SLFP at the forthcoming general elections. Train services came to a grinding halt this morning following Railway Guards sending in sick notes in protest against the interdiction of two railway guards. A total of 310,000 candidates will sit the GCE 'O' level examination this year; this is the smallest number to sit this examination in the past five years—CO. The rural Bank in Nallur was robbed in broad daylight yesterday; three of the five suspects were caught within a few hours. Last year during the Yala season almost 3,000 acres were abandoned because of the drought—EN. With 27 days to go for the elections, on platforms in the North, hot debates are raging regarding the separate Tamil State—VK.

SATURDAY, JUNE 25: The Joint Front of Trade Unions in the Ceylon Electricity Board comprising 23 unions yesterday assured the Minister of Irrigation, Power and Highways that it will not participate in any strike action; the assurance follows a strike launched by a section of employees on Thursday protesting against the removal of the Chairman. 3,000 reservists will augment the strength of the police force on election day; but they will not be directly involved in the National Security Operation. The government has offered the use of an Air Force helicopter to the UNP leader for his election campaign; this offer has apparently been made to all leaders of recognised parties, and

they will have to pay the normal fare for their flights—CDN. Over a hundred prisoners who were convicted for involvement in the 1971 insurrection including the JVP leader, Rohana Wijeweera yesterday commenced a hunger strike at the Magazine Prison at Welikada. A JVP spokesman said yesterday that they were protesting against the denial of certain rights the prisoners normally enjoyed after a new administration was put in charge of the magazine prison. Government Medical Practitioners who were recalled on strike on Monday, have decided to go back to work. The Railway Guards who reported sick en masse yesterday morning were back at work the same evening; their absence in the morning completely paralysed the rail service in the afternoon and disrupted to a certain extent the services in the evening. Leave for all Ceylon Electricity Board employees has been cancelled with immediate effect—CDM. Army, Navy and Air Force personnel were yesterday moved in to guard some of the key installations of the CEB in the wake of the trade union action by a section of the employees. Several ASP's and Inspectors in the Dompe-Attanagalle area have been transferred to other stations with immediate effect—SU. Work on stage II of the Mahaweli Development Project at Moragahakanda has begun—DM. To meet the current shortage, 1 lakh tons of cement will be imported; this is because the CWE, BMC and the State Engineering Corporation are badly in need of it to proceed with much of their work.—LD

SUNDAY, JUNE 26: A number of 'stateless' persons who were selected for Sri Lanka citizenship under the Indo Sri Lanka agreement of 1964, have declined the offer and opted to be repatriated to India. Residents in some Colombo areas and several suburban areas were on Friday without electricity following a blackout caused by Ceylon Electricity Board employees in protest against the removal of the Chairman; an official of the Ministry commenting on the situation said that the power failure was the result of sabotage by certain employees of the CEB who had damaged the transformers at the Head Office at Fort and Pamankade. The Ceylon Bank Employees Union on why they are striking states that they are the only category who have not received a salary increase in the last ten years despite the unprecedented rise of the cost-of-living index from 112 to 200; their salary structure had not changed during the last twenty years—SO. The entire country was plunged in darkness shortly after 8 p.m. last night following a complete breakdown in power supplies; according to unconfirmed reports reaching Colombo this is said to have been a sequel to a disruption at the Polpitiya Power Grid, some 14 miles off Laxapana; it is supposed to be an act of sabotage. The Prison authorities last week foiled a jail break attempt by a group of prisoners at the Magazine Prison now serving sentences for offences connected with insurgency. A massive co-ordinated security plan to prevent the outbreak of violence after the general elections on July 21 is now being prepared by the Police: they will seek the help of the Navy and the Air Force to put this plan into operation—WK. Fruit producers who produce for export will very soon be able to import CRA cars because the government is taking steps to grant them CRA concessions like the other exporters of non traditional products—CM. From tomorrow a new direct bus will be running between Jaffna and Colombo.—EN There was no issue of the Times Group newspapers today.

MONDAY, JUNE 27: Senior engineers of the CEB and technicians were yesterday rushed to Laxapana to locate the fault responsible for the disruption of electricity of the entire island from Saturday night; it was the first island-wide disruption since the CEB was inaugurated and a government spokesman said that first indications were that sabotage on the part of someone at Laxapana was the cause of it; a similar act of sabotage blacked out part of Colombo and Dehiwala on Friday. According to a communique issued by the Ministry yesterday evening, engineers and employees of the CEB who are not on strike restored power while representatives of the Joint Front of Trade Unions were discussing matters at issue that led to an island-wide power failure with the Minister. The threatened bank strike may not take place because agreement was reached on principle between representatives of the Commercial Banks Association and the union to revise the salary structure of bank employees—CDN. Power supply is expected to be restored today to all parts of Sri Lanka; personnel of the CEB and technicians of the Sri Lanka Navy last night successfully commissioned several Turbine Generators at the Laxapana, Polpitiya and Wimalasundera Power stations. The resolution which is said to have been passed to support the SLFP at the forthcoming general elections at a general meeting of the Islamic Socialist Front was not properly constituted according to one of its senior Vice Presidents—SU. The Ceylon Electricity Board expects to restore power services islandwide after noon today. Twenty persons were injured this morning when two trains collided close to Ganemulla—CO. The Trade Union Federation of the CEB in a statement to the press has stated that they did not resort to any acts of sabotage as the government alleges and they have asked the general public to be careful in believing such deliberate government propaganda—VK. Because of the large amount of imports of cloth, much of the cloth produced locally is lying in the stores of the Salu Sala; it has been suggested by the Advisory Council to make arrangement to issue this cloth outside the ration—ATH.

TUESDAY, JUNE 28: Electrical power was restored in Colombo city at 11.30 a.m. yesterday; one and a half hours after the Joint Front of Trade Unions in the CEB called off their strike; power was restored throughout the island one hour later; the trade unions called off their strike after negotiations with the Ministers resulted in an eight point agreement; the main demand of the front—the re-instatement of the Chairman was not granted by the Minister. Twenty three persons were injured, five seriously, when the Colombo-bound Badulla night mail crashed into the 3.20 a.m. train from Maho which was halted at Yagoda station early yesterday morning; railway officials making inquiries on the spot into the cause of the crash said the colour light system had failed and the down train from Maho was forced to halt at the station.—CDN. The IGP has alerted all insurgent bureaus to keep a watch for any subversive activity in their operational areas. The Customs which has no launches of its own in seaworthy condition, has to hire them from the Colombo Port Commission paying Rs. 200 per hour. The City Police carried out a cleaning out operation in the early hours of last Saturday and removed all election posters, banners and flags in the Colombo area. Members of registered and Assistant Medical Practitioners unions will tender their resignation from the dept., this is one of

the resolutions adopted at a special emergency meeting on Saturday—CDM. Over 12,000 employees belonging to the country's state-owned and private commercial banks are poised for strike action tomorrow, posing the threat of virtually crippling the banking sector. The CMU branch of the Janawasama Head Office is expected to come out on a token strike today at 10 a.m. over 15 outstanding demands. The government yesterday ordered a full probe to ascertain who was responsible for the acts of sabotage at the Power installations at Polpipitiya and Laxapana which plunged the country into total darkness on Saturday night. The case in which Mr. J. R. Jayewardene is suing Lake House for a news item in the *Dinamina* of October 23 1976, which he states is false and defamatory of him and the UNP came up for hearing before the District Judge, Colombo yesterday—SU. Mr. A. Thiagaraja former MP for Vaddukoddai and a present candidate for the same seat asked what work those who boast of establishing a separate state in the North and East have in a NSA in the South—DP.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 29: The Executive Committee of the Ceylon Bank Employees' Union yesterday decided to suspend the strike which was scheduled to take place today, pending the reaction of its general membership to the managements' offer; this will be ascertained on Saturday. An attempted jail break by inmates of the 'insurgent section' of the magazine prison has been reported to the Justice Ministry by the Commissioner of Prisons. The Railway has launched a top level inquiry into the cause of the railway accident at Yagoda Station on Monday morning injuring 23 persons. The Police have drawn a blank in their search for Dr. Tabor Albrecht, the West German scientist who has been missing since February this year. A number of persons have been arrested for obstructing the Police in carrying out their duties regarding the use of loudspeakers at election meetings throughout the country. UNP leader Mr. J. R. Jayewardene said at a meeting at Matale that there would be a strike at Lake House before the general elections. Ten more Districts will have Janata Committees; the Commissioner of Janata Committees said that Ministry sanction for establishing 250 more Janata Committees has been received. Prof. K. K. Y. W. Perera of the Katubedde Campus was yesterday appointed Chairman of the CEB—CDN. Twenty prisoners who were convicted for offences connected with the 1971 insurgency, including Rohana Wijeweera have been admitted to the Prison Hospital as they were considered weak following a hunger strike. A certain section of the university teachers feel that the dons who resigned their posts of deanships and heads of departments should be re-appointed or elected again. Bishop Cyril Abeyanaike, Bishop of Colombo of the Church of Ceylon, has given notice of his intention to retire this year—CDM. According to the Commissioner of Prisons, there is a likelihood of a settlement of their dispute soon; the prisoners demanded the removal of the officers on the grounds that the search of the prison wards and the discovery of spikes and other such contraptions in the ceiling was a part of a conspiracy against the prisoners. The employees of the Janawasama at Colombo, Kandy, Hatton, Ratnapura and Badulla came out on a token strike yesterday in protest against the government refusing to accede to their demands; a demonstration by the employees of the Colombo office was banned by the Police. The Sri Lanka Political

Victim's Front has come down hard on the grave injustice of victimisation if it's members by the government through the abuse of political power—SU. In Kantalai, under the Seruwila electorate a terrible clash between supporters of two political parties was stopped by the timely intervention of the Police; 21 were however injured—VK. Over a hundred temporary employees of the CWE went on a 'amuda pelapaliya' yesterday morning asking to be made permanent—LD. The cultivators in the Rajarata are unable to cultivate this Yala season, as the Mahaweli waters have not been distributed in time—DW.

THURSDAY, JUNE 30: Over 50 persons have had their passports impounded and have been banned from leaving the island; a Police spokesman said yesterday that those affected by the travel ban were well-known smugglers, 15 of them from the North, persons convicted of foreign exchange offences and others who were being investigated by the CID for alleged economic crimes. Combined effort of doctors, nurses and minor employees in the two women's hospitals in Colombo saved the lives of 40 premature babies who would otherwise have died in their incubators during last week's power failure. The story of a jail break by Rohana Wijeweera and others were fabricated by the government and capitalist circles to suppress the JVP movement inside and outside the prison, said Mr. Upatissa Gamanayake, acting leader of the JVP at the Hyde Park meeting yesterday in protest against the government's attitude towards the JVP prisoners. The hunger strike launched by the 120 prisoners was called off in the early hours of Tuesday morning after the Secretary, Ministry of Justice agreed to inquire into some of the reasons that sparked off the hunger strike—CDN. The Ministry of Justice yesterday showed pressmen the numerous implements turned out by the insurgent convicts at the Magazine Prison which the authorities claimed were to be used for a possible jail break. The Committee of Management of the Bank of Ceylon Staff Officer's Association has unanimously decided to stage a day's token strike tomorrow as a protest against the Finance Ministry's unwillingness to negotiate and arrive at a settlement of the Association's demand for a salary revision. A large number of lecturers and Professors representing all the campuses of the University of Sri Lanka met last week and formed an organisation called the Sri Lanka University Teacher's United Front to support the UNP in the election—CDM. Consumers throughout Sri Lanka will receive a double ration of food items by July 18; this is in terms of a scheme worked out by the government to ensure sufficient food stocks are available during the general election week. Capital aid and technical assistance under the Colombo Plan now totals more than 45 billion US dollars. A new instant tea factory was declared open by the Minister of Plantation Industries at the Ekala Industrial Estate yesterday despite an explosion at the factory the night before. Nurses, midwives and minor employees of State medical institutions will have only eight hours of work each day, from tomorrow—SU. The second largest minority in the island, the Muslims, are in a dilemma because of the conflicting points of view put forward by the Muslim League and the Muslim Socialist Front with regard to whom they should support at the elections—VK.

A MAVERICK VIEW

On The Tamil Problem

To The Editor,
The Tribune, Colombo 2.

Dear Sir,

I enclose for publication in your popular journal, my "appeal and advice to the entire Tamil people and Tamil Voters of Sri Lanka for the 1977 General Elections", which speaks for itself.

You will be doing a great service to the Tamils in particular and to Sri Lanka in general if you were to be kind enough to give the fullest publicity to the facts stated in my appeal which should help and influence intelligent and independent voters to exercise their sacred and precious vote in favour of candidates who will not blindly follow the dictation and arrogance of "Idi Amin Amirthalingam & Co", who are trying to stampede the Tamil voters into voting exclusively for all their so-called TULF candidates, some of whom are not fit enough or mentally and intellectually equipped to decide the future of the Tamils in Sri Lanka, in a wise, responsible and statesmanlike way, when the occasion arises. Some of the TULF "leaders" are trying to cash-in on the death of their so-called "Thanthai", "Periavar", and "Mogharignar", and defy him with their crocodile tears and sycophantic adulation, and mislead the Tamil masses, who are not aware of all the foolish and unwise decisions at critical times in the past, which have landed us all in the present messy and tragic situation. You are free to publish this letter along with the annexed appeal of mine.

Thanking you

Yours sincerely,
Wijaya Indra

My dear Tamil brothers and sisters

The Tamils in Sri Lanka are now in an extremely difficult, painful and pathetic condition on the eve of the forthcoming General Election which is to take place on the 21st of July 1977. The Tamils have been brought down and reduced to this pathetic and helpless condition by the lack of proper and wise, far-sighted leadership ever

since the greatest and wisest Tamil Statesman and Patriot Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan died in 1930, on the eve of the introduction and implementation of the Donoughmore Constitution in Ceylon.

The first fatal mistake the then leadership Tamils made in early 1931, was the Boycotting of the first State Council General Elections in 1931, on the pretext of demanding "Sampoornana Swaraj" because the Tamils were dissatisfied with the total lack of provisions for the protection of Tamils and Tamilian interests all over Ceylon. This foolish and unwise boycott of the first State Council in 1931, played the entire Tamil community into the hands of the majority Sinhalese community and the Muslims, who jointly seized power in 1931 and formed the first Board of 6 Sinhala Ministers and 1 Muslim Minister, while the Tamils were totally unrepresented on the board of Ministers, because of that fatal and foolish boycott. Ever since then, from 1931 up to date, the Tamils have been rolling downhill due to lack of proper wise, and realistic leadership, and we, the Tamils are now where we are in the present pathetic and helpless condition, as objects of ridicule and pitied by everyone.

After the death of Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan in 1930, the late Mr. G. G. Ponnambalam took over the leadership of the Tamils after forming the All Ceylon Tamil Congress, and thereafter demanded fifty-fifty before the Soulbury Commission.

When Mr. Ponnambalam failed to get his fifty-fifty demand from the Soulbury Commissioners, he very foolishly and unwisely let himself down by compromising his leadership of the Tamils by accepting a solitary Ministership for himself in the UNP cabinet and 2 parliamentary secretaryships for the Tamil Congress, under the leadership of the late Mr. D. S. Senanayake, who became the first Prime Minister under the Soulbury Constitution.

By thus falling a victim to the machinations, manoeuvrings and manipulations of the late Mr. D. S. Senanayake and his clever, cunning and unscrupulous ally and political associate, Sir Oliver Goonetilleke, Mr. Ponnambalam destroyed his own political image and ruined his political career and political leadership of the Tamils, by sur-

rendering his political independence to the Sinhala UNP Leader Mr. D. S. Senanayake, who had very cleverly politically-trapped and subjugated and brought under his control the erstwhile Tamil Leader Mr. G. G. Ponnambalam! This very unfortunate development led to the breakaway of the late Mr. S. J. V. Chelvanayakam from the Tamil Congress and the formation of the Federal Party by Mr. Chelvanayakam. Therefore, from 1948 onwards upto the date of his death on 29th April 1977, Mr. Chelvanayakam was the Supreme Commander of his Federal Party, and must be held responsible for all the final decisions of the F.P., some of which were very unwise, unrealistic and impractical, which in consequence had aggravated the tragic situations and the problems of the Tamils all over Ceylon.

1. The first glaring mistake made by the Federal Party was immediately after the General Elections of March 1960, when the late Mr. Dudley Senanayake, the Leader of the UNP, was struggling desperately to form the Government and pathetically sought the help and support of the F.P. with which help Mr. Dudley Senanayake could have formed a fairly stable Government. But, Mr. Chelvanayakam and his F.P. laid down certain terms and conditions all of which Mr. Senanayake was unable to agree to then, because of the political repercussions and consequences he would have had to face from his opponents, the S.L.F.P. and other reactionaries, who would have created enough trouble for him if he, Mr. Senanayake, had acceded to Mr. Chelvanayakam's demands. Mr. Senanayake therefore pleaded with Mr. Chelvanayakam and his F.P. not to demand the pound of flesh and insist on all the demands, but to be patient, and that he would do his best (after he had formed and established his Government) to satisfy the F.P. demands gradually.

To this pathetic and pleading appeal of Mr. Dudley Senanayake in March 1960 Mr. Chelvanayakam and his F.P. turned a deaf ear, aided and abetted by the SLFP, the LSSP and the CP who were all out to defeat and frustrate Mr. Dudley Senanayake and his UNP Government at the voting on the Throne Speech.

Mr. Chelvanayakam and the FP, relying on the false promises of

the SLFP, the LSSP and the CP, voted against Mr. Dudley Senanayake's UNP Government then, and the Government fell, and Parliament was dissolved, and we had the 1960 July Elections (after the SLFP, LSSP and the CP had formed a no-contest pact) with disastrous consequences to the Tamils!

The SLFP, romped home with an overwhelming majority, and Mrs Bandaranaike formed an exclusively SLFP Government in July 1960, which thereafter rode rough-shod over the Tamils and clamped all over the F.P. MP's in jail when they, the FP launched the prolonged satyagraha campaign opposite the Jaffna Kachcheri.

As everyone knows, an Emergency was then declared and the Tamil Satyagrahis were badly mauled and beaten-up and molested!!! If instead, the F.P. had helped Mr. Dudley Senanayake in March 1960, then the above situation would never have arisen and the present bitterness and tragic course of events and developments, could all have been avoided. The FP had instead helped to create the Biafra it wanted, leading to the present clamour for a separate Tamil State, which if not realized or granted, could lead to the complete humiliation, suppression, exploitation and annihilation of the Tamils, by not only the Sinhalese but by Muslims like Badi-ud-din Mahmud.

The second glaring and idiotic mistake made by Mr. Chelvanayakam and his FP was, when in 1965, Mr. Dudley Senanayake and the UNP sought the help of the FP again to form the Government. This time also, the FP missed the bus! The UNP and Mr. Dudley Senanayake were willing to give the FP 4 Ministries and 4 Parliamentary Secretaryships out of 16 Ministries and 16 Parliamentary Secretaryships in order to form the UNP-FP Government.

But, Mr. Chelvanayakam and his FP for some puerile and foolish reasons did not want to accept or hold office with the UNP, because they then feared the possible taunts of the Tamil Congress and Mr. G. G. Ponnambalam, that the FP were out for Ministries under a UNP Prime Minister! So they, very illogically, decided to let Mr. M. Tiruchelvam, who was not even an elected MP, to join the UNP Cabinet of Mr. Dudley Senanayake and watch the FP interests

from there!! This was a very foolish and unwise decision of Mr. Chelvanayakam and of his FP because Mr. Tiruchelvam had no elected status as an MP to stand on, and therefore did not have adequate strength in the UNP Cabinet to press home his points on behalf of the FP and the Tamils. If instead, Mr. Chelvanayakam and the FP had insisted on the 4 Ministries and 4 Parliamentary Secretaryships out of a Cabinet composed of 16 Ministers, then the Tamils would have had a 25% representation on the Board of Ministers (Cabinet) and would have thereby had adequate strength in the Cabinet to have got through the District Councils Bill within 3 months of their joining to form the Government. Instead, the FP wasted 3 1/2 years in the UNP Government without achieving anything tangible for the Tamils, and left the Government under the pretext of some dissatisfaction over "Koneswaram"! While the FP wasted the precious time and years of the Tamils, the Sinhalese and the Muslims have been entrenching themselves more and more in power, at the expense of the Tamils!

The cumulative effect of all these follies of the FP, is that the unfortunate and unhappy Tamil Youth (boys as well as girls) are now out on the streets unemployed and now branded as criminals and undesirables, who out of sheer frustration and bitterness, are beginning to take the Law into their own hands to settle their unredressed grievances.

3. The third glaring mistake of the Federal Party, is that it had tacitly agreed to the Repatriation of 525,000 Tamils of Indian Origin who, and whose parents and grandparents, had been born and bred in this country and who to all intents and purposes, and from humane and fundamental human rights considerations, should all have been granted citizenship rights in this their motherland, without being thrown away and driven away!

4. The fourth glaring mistake of the Federal Party is, that while paying lip-service to the Tamils, it is systematically surrendering the Tamils and Tamilian areas to the Muslims in the Eastern Province!

The Federal Party, now masquerading as the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF), in its vain efforts to win over the Muslim

in the Eastern Province, is sacrificing the interests of the less favoured Tamils like Mr. Thangathurai, Ex-MP for Muttur, to please and 'placate' the Muslims.

The Federal Party leaders, in their own peculiar and specious way of thinking, arguing, manoeuvring and manipulating, have forgotten certain fundamental facts regarding the Tamils, and their traditional areas, from ancient times from Time Immemorial.

The ancient Tamils were all Hindus and their traditional lands were the Northern and Eastern Provinces. The Federal Party Leaders are now putting through horse-deals with the Muslims in the Eastern Province in the vain hope of winning their support for FP demands, at the expense of the Tamil-Seas like Muttur. But, the Muslim MP's, after winning their elections with the help of the Tamil votes, will always jump over the fence, and join hands with the Sinhalese UNP or SLFP Government, whenever the plums of office are thrown to them. My appeal and advice to the Tamil people and the Tamil voters all over Ceylon at the forthcoming General Elections of 1977, is to exercise their precious and sacred vote very carefully after assessing the true worth and value and genuineness of the individual Tamil candidate who seeks your vote at the forthcoming General Election, without blindly voting for the labels under which candidates may be sponsored by very cunning, ambitious, scheming and arrogant Tamil Party Leaders who have messed-up and ruined the Tamils during the last 25 years since 1956. Tamil patriotism is not the monopoly of only some of these specious and loud-mouthed professional political party leaders who are so arrogant, haughty and dictatorial, that they are incapable of assessing the true worth and value of some individual men of maturity, wisdom and true patriotism, who have also sacrificed their lives, time, energy and wealth for the cause of the Tamil People whom they love so dearly, without climbing political platforms all the time, and making cheap political communal rabble-rousing speeches, and eternally singing the praise of Dead Politicians who have achieved nothing tangible but misled the gullible Tamil masses blindly and

obstinately into the barren wastes and political wilderness, ever since the late S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike in 1956, raised the chauvinistic and rabble-rousing "Sinhala Only Within 24 hours" cry, which automatically and instantaneously divided the Ceylonese Nation in 1956, into the "Sinhala Nation" and the "Tamil Nation" in Sri Lanka, with disastrous consequences to the entire population of Sri Lanka, who were a happier, united and peace-loving people prior to the 1956 general Election.

R WIJAYA INDRA.

Founder And General Secretary,
Democratic Socialist Party.

FRUSTRATION TO SEPARATION

A Sad Story Of Broken Promises

by James T. Rutnam

In my article on the "Dilemma of the Tamil Voter", published in the *Tribune* of 9 July, I gave a short list of broken agreements contracted between the Sinhalese and Tamils from September 1918. The majority community stood to gain by lulling the Tamils into a false sense of security, for in the struggle against the British Raj during Colonial times, the Sinhalese were able to argue that the people of Sri Lanka were united in their demand for Self-Government.

Both the Donoughmore Commissioners and the Soulbury Commissioners nevertheless took great pains to include in their recommendations some devices and provision to ensure that the Tamils were protected from any eruption of Sinhalese chauvinism. There was one glaring instance where the Sinhalese made it a point to show that they were not communal-minded. That was regarding the election of Ramanathan for the Educated Ceylonese Seat in 1911 when he contested Dr. Marcus Fernando.

Ramanathan and his brother Arunachalam had been the only Ceylonese supporters of William Digby when he published his book and articles for Representative Government for Sri Lanka as far

back as 1876. No Sinhalese, not even James Alwis, supported Digby at the time.

In 1923 when the Tamils became first aware of the sorry pass to which they were brought to, D. B. Jayavillika referred to the election of Ramanathan as an instance where the Sinhalese rose above, "racial and religious differences in public matters." This is not correct. The Tamils had a large proportion of voters in the Educated Ceylonese Electorate. The breakdown was as follows:

Educated Sinhalese and	
B. Class Burghers	.. 1800
Tamils	.. 1166
	2966

The Result as declared on 13 December 1911 was as follows:

Ramanathan	.. 1645
Fernando	.. 981
Majority	.. 664

Apart from the decisive weight of Tamil electors, there was one other consideration that tipped the scales. Poor Fernando was a member of the Karava Community, a caste politically and socially frowned upon by the motley crowd of Sinhalese who called themselves or imagined themselves as Vellalas or Goigamas. To be correct they were in early British times classified as Vellalas No. 1 and Vellalas No. 2. Even today, however much we have advanced through the spread of education and communication, these differences continue to exist.

I was shocked to read in the newspapers that the Sri Lanka Buddhist Congress, a centre of Buddhism, a world Religion, had ratified a motion to change the name and style of Sri Lanka to "The Buddhist Republic of Sri Lanka". Thailand has not done such a thing. Burma too has not done it. India our nearest neighbour is a secular State, an index to its sense of humanity and brotherhood.

The irony of it is that this motion was ratified by a body which has its President one of the most distinguished and most liberal sons of Sri Lanka, R. S. S. Gunawardena. Wouldn't it be better for Gunawardena and his Congress to address themselves first to the removal of unbuddhistic practices in the very heartland of Buddhism in Sri Lanka at Asgiriya and Malwatta in Kandy? I feel ashamed to say it.

Buddhism in its pristine purity is not practised in Sri Lanka.

Could Gunawardena's sons or grand-sons or brothers or nephews ever become ordained as bhikkus in the Siyam Nikaya? No, for it is only the so-called Goigama that could be so. Better reform your household before you attempt to reform the world or announce that you are truly from a Buddhist State.

This title is inappropriate for various reasons. Firstly because it is unbuddhistic as it excludes so many of the citizens of this country, and is so unconcerned about their feelings. Secondly because it connotes Pride and Hate both unbuddhistic qualities. Aggressive or militant Buddhism is self-contradictory. Thirdly because Sri Lanka is composed of two nations with separate cultures and languages.

Any move like changing the name of Sri Lanka as proposed would only become an added argument for the cause of Separation. Eelam proposes to be Secular, Socialist and Tamil, but it will be known to the world only as Eelam.

This brings us to where we began. I have already in the issue of 2 July of the *Tribune* reproduced Bandaranaike's speech where he declared that a Federal System of government was the only solution to our political problems. Fifty-one years later this is again calling for urgent consideration. Now let us ask ourselves how truly the promises embodied in the following two solemn agreements signed by the Prime Ministers of the SLFP and UNP Governments had been honoured. These agreements may now seem out of date. The TULF is asking for Separation in the context of the present worldwide demand for independence by ethnic groups, small or large, on the basis of separate race, language, culture and geographical identity. But these documents are still of interest to show to what state of frustration the Tamils had been driven to.

BANDARANAIKE — CHELVANAYAKAM AGREEMENT OF 26th July, 1957

Part A

"Representatives of the Federal Party have had a series of discussions with the Prime Minister in an effort to resolve the differences

Documents

of opinion that had been growing and creating tension.

"At an early stage of these conversations it became evident that it was not possible for the Prime Minister to accede to some of the demands of the Federal Party.

"The Prime Minister stated that from the point of view of the Government, he was not in a position to discuss the setting up of a Federal Constitution or regional autonomy, to take any step that would abrogate the Official Language Act.

"The question then arose whether it was possible to explore the possibility of an adjustment without the Federal Party abandoning or surrendering any of its fundamental principles or objectives.

"At this stage the Prime Minister suggested an examination of the Government's draft Regional Councils Bill to see whether provision could be made under it to meet reasonably, some of the matters in this regard which the Federal Party had in view.

"The agreements so reached are embodied in a separate document.

ADJUSTMENT

"Regarding the language issue, the Federal Party reiterated its stand for parity, but in view of the position of the Prime Minister in this matter they came to an agreement by way of adjustment. They pointed out that it was important for them that there should be a recognition of Tamil as a national language, and that the administrative work of the Northern and Eastern Provinces should be done in Tamil.

"The Prime Minister stated that as mentioned by him earlier it was not possible for him to take any steps that would abrogate the Official Language Act.

"After discussions, it was agreed that the proposed legislation should contain recognition of Tamil as the language of a national minority of Ceylon, and that the four points mentioned by the Prime Minister should include provision that, without infringing on the position of the official language as such, the language of administration of the Northern and Eastern Provinces be Tamil, and that any necessary provision be made for the non-Tamil speaking minorities in the Northern and Eastern Provinces.

"Regarding the question of Ceylon citizenship for people of Indian descent and the revision of the Citizenship Act, the representatives of the Federal Party put forward their views to the Prime Minister and pressed for an early settlement.

"The Prime Minister indicated that the problem would receive early consideration.

"In view of these conclusions the Federal Party stated they were withdrawing their proposed *sayagaha*."

Part B

1. REGIONAL areas to be defined in the Bill itself by embodying them in a schedule thereto.

2. THAT the Northern Province is to form one regional area whilst the Eastern Province is to be divided into two or more regional areas.

3. PROVISION is to be made in the Bill to enable two or more regions to amalgamate even beyond provincial limit; and for one region to divide itself subject to ratification by Parliament. Further provision is to be made in the Bill for two or more regions to collaborate for specific purposes of common interests.

4. PROVISION is to be made for direct election of regional councillors. Provision is to be made for a delimitation commission or commissions for carving out electorates. The question of MP's representing districts falling within regional areas to be eligible to function as chairmen is to be considered. The question of Government Agents being regional commissioners is to be considered. The question of supervisory functions over larger towns, strategic towns and municipalities is to be looked into.

5. PARLIAMENT is to delegate powers and to specify them in the Act. It was agreed that regional councils should have powers over specified subjects including agriculture, co-operatives, lands and land developments, colonisation, education, health, industries and fisheries, housing and social services, electricity, water schemes and roads. Requisite definition of powers will be made in the Bill.

6. IT was agreed that in the matter of colonisation schemes the powers of the regional councils shall include the power to select allottees to whom lands within

their area of authority shall be alienated and also power to select personnel to be employed for work on such schemes. The position regarding the area at present administered by the Gal Oya Board in this matter requires consideration.

7. THE powers in regard to the regional council vested in the Minister of Local Government in the draft bill to be revised with a view to vesting control in Parliament wherever necessary.

8. THE Central Government will provide block grants to the regional councils. The principles on which the grants will be computed will be gone into. The regional councils shall have powers of taxation and borrowing.

THE DUDLEY SENANAYAKE CHELVANAYAKAM AGREEMENT

No. 16, Alfred House Gardens,
Colombo.

24th March, 1965

My dear Dudley Senanayake,
I have to refer to the discussion which I and the members of my party had with you. In view of the agreement which we have arrived at, I wish to make it clear that my party will give you its support in forming the new Government.

With kind regards.

Yours sincerely,

Sgd. S. J. V. Chelvanayakam

AGREEMENT

Mr. Dudley Senanayake and Mr. S. J. V. Chelvanayakam met on the 24th day of March 1965 and discussed matters relating to some problems over which the Tamil-speaking people were concerned, and Mr. Senanayake agreed that action on the following lines would be taken by him to ensure a stable Government:—

1. Action will be taken early under the Tamil Language Special Provisions Act to make provision for the Tamil language to be the language of administration and of record in the Northern and Eastern Provinces. Mr. Senanayake also explained that it was the policy of his Party that a Tamil-speaking person should be entitled to transact business in Tamil throughout the island.

2. Mr. Senanayake stated that it was the policy of his Party to amend the Language of the Courts

Act to provide for legal proceedings in the Northern and Eastern Provinces to be conducted and recorded in Tamil.

3. Action will be taken to establish District Councils in Ceylon vested with powers over subjects to be mutually agreed upon between the two leaders. It was agreed however that the Government should have power under the law to give directions to such Councils in the national interest.

4. The Land Development Ordinance will be amended to provide that citizens of Ceylon be entitled to the allotment of land under the Ordinance. Mr. Senanayake further agreed that in the granting of land under Colonisation Schemes the following priorities be observed in the Northern and Eastern provinces:

- (a) Land in the Northern and Eastern Provinces should in the first instance be granted to landless persons in the District;
- (b) Secondly to Tamil-Speaking persons resident in the Northern and Eastern Provinces, AND
- (c) Thirdly to other citizens of Ceylon preference being given to Tamil citizens resident in the rest of the Island

Sgd:—Dudley Senanayake
24/3/65

Sgd:—S. J. V. Chelvanayagam
24/3/65



SIRIMAVO OR JAYAWARDENE ?

The Choice Of The Nation

—and the President's discretionary powers—

by James T. Rutnam

Election Day is on 21 July, five days from today. The vote is secret. There are many voters who had already made up their minds. There are still others who are swinging from Tweedledum to Tweedledee. But most of the candidates have not abandoned Hope. Something will happen they say. Some believe in the stars and

their horoscopes, however contrary to stark reality this may seem.

Very few among those who had performed their civic duty that day will have a full night's sleep. The air will be thick with rumours of wishful anticipation and bussing with radio waves that will spell out the naked truth. There will be hurrahs and rabanas sounding on one side, and on the other there will be wailing and gnashing of teeth, some with astonishment, some with resignation. That is Election Day.

Jayewardene had very well struck the right note when he declared at Elpitiya, "All Parties should shed differences once the General Elections are over and launch a united effort to develop the country and create a new society in place of the old one." This is the wish, I would say, of every decent man in this country. I am sure the UNP will remember this in the hour of defeat, if by some quirk of fate this should happen.

Sirimavo Bandaranaike will no doubt echo every word of Jayawardene's admonition to the people. But should the fates go against her, would the SLFP remember it? I have no doubt it would, under the leadership of a cool and collected and sagacious leader.

I do not wish to prophesy nor wishfully hope. But as things look at present the grim struggle between the reinvigorated and allegedly reformed socialist UNP, and the former radical group, which is presently tarnished, though only to some degree, by the arrogance and corruption of Power of a few, the jobbery and pressures of family bandysim, and the stupidity of little men and unworthy stooges is taking a see-saw character.

It is difficult to judge who will finally emerge at the fateful hour, the SLFP leader or the UNP leader. In any event we shall have a newly appointed Prime Minister on 22 July. It is obvious that this will be Sirimavo or Jayawardene provided she or he had been returned to Parliament.

The President's so-called discretionary powers in the case of appointing a Prime Minister or declaring a dissolution of Parliament are limited and not absolute. These are however very impor-

tant powers which are generally exercised according to Parliamentary convention.

The course of action remains clear-cut in a two-party system such as the one that obtained in the past in the United Kingdom, when there were only Tories and Whigs or Conservatives and Liberals. With the advent of the Labour Party, the extent and limit of the so-called discretionary power of the Head of State became confused and complicated in critical situations where no single party was in a position to command an absolute majority.

This problem was faced by the Parliaments in the British Dominions too, and we have several works written on the subject by leading lawyers and experts on Constitutional Law.

I remember very well the unfortunate situation that followed the March 1960 Elections in Sri Lanka. The Governor General, Oliver Goonetilleke, called Dudley Senanayake to form a Government. His Party, the UNP, had the largest number of members, although it could not command, as such, an absolute majority in Parliament.

Christian Bishops' Memorandum

An historical document has been written ecumenically by all the Christian leaders in Sri Lanka: a Memorandum to the Prime Minister on the situation of the Plantation Workers. The document will remain 'historical' first because it is an 'ecumenical' one: i.e. written together; and secondly because the Christian leaders for the first time in the history of the Church in this country step down to take sides with the forgotten, cornered Plantation Workers and discover in their welfare and human development a bridge towards communal national unity and brotherhood, in the best tradition of the Sinhalese Buddhist majority accustomed to live in harmony, co-existence and pro-existence with the other groups. The few sad incidents of injustices and cruelties committed of late by a few are strongly condemned by the Christian leaders.

Pia Ciampa, S.J.

On facing the House, Senanayake was defeated. The Prime Minister had the inherent right to advise a dissolution and the Governor-General had the right to accept or reject such advice. But the circumstances were unusual. The first mistake was committed by Goonetilleke himself in wrongly estimating that Senanayake was likely to command a majority in the House.

The obvious course now left to the Governor-General was to reject the defeated Prime Minister's advice and call upon the leader of the united opposition to form a Government. But unfortunately this leader was an individual named C. P. de Silva who hailed from Balapitiya. He was not called. Thereby hangs a tale.

The Governor-General succumbed to a gigantic pressure campaign of the *Daily News* which went to the extent of seeking legal opinion in England from one of the most eminent authorities on Constitutional Law, Professor S. A. de Smith, a white South African. He was at the London University at the time. Later he became Downing Professor of the Laws of England at Cambridge. He is now dead.

The legal points involved were very interesting. They excited both Professors and students. H. V. Perera, our most distinguished lawyer, refused to commit himself although his name was bandied about. Dudley Senanayake had worked in his chambers as a young lawyer, nevertheless Perera honourably stayed out. Ivor Jennings was approached, but he refused to give an opinion that would support a dissolution.

It was left to S. A. de Smith to walk (in a professional capacity) into the spider's web. He supported a dissolution though equivocally and this was splashed out in the *Daily News*. de Smith hardly expected students in faraway Sri Lanka to have read his own article on an identical problem in the then latest edition of Halsbury's Laws of England where he had expressed a contradictory view. This was exposed by the *Tribune*.

However, Senanayake and the Governor-General had their own way. But de Smith's reputation was saved because of the obscurity of the *Ceylon Daily News*, where alone his opinion appeared.

The problem may arise again now, if no single party were to obtain an absolute majority. The President is charged at short notice, on the morrow of the Elections, to appoint as Prime Minister a "member of the National State Assembly who, in the President's opinion, is most likely to command the confidence of the National State Assembly." May he not make the mistake that Goonetilleke made if such a crisis occurs.

ON JULY 21

The Ballot

The long awaited general election is drawing near and a few thoughts on the Ballot would be pertinent. H. W. Percival in his book 'Democracy is self government' writes thus "Democracy is government by the people, in which the sovereign power is held and exercised by the people through those whom the people choose from among themselves to have as their representatives. And those of the people chosen to govern are invested solely with the power given them to speak for the people and to govern by the will and power of the people through their peoples vote by ballot." He goes on to say that "The ballot is not merely a printed sheet of paper which the voter makes his mark and which he drops into a box. The ballot is a precious symbol—it is a symbol given by the people as a sacred

trust reposed in each member of the public, the symbol by which each one of the people is pledged to use the right and power vested in him by his vote, the might and the power to preserve, under law and justice, equal rights and freedom for each and for the integrity of all the people as one people."

In Sri Lanka we have some of the most welcome election laws and the ban on posters and writings on the walls etc should gladden the hearts of our Environmentalists.

In the context of next week's election the following verse by Gilbert Josiah Holland is worth quoting:—

God give us MEN. The time demands
Strong minds great hearts, true
faith and willing hands:

Men whom the lust of office does
not kill;

Men whom the spoils of office
cannot buy;

Men who possess opinions and
a will;

Men who have honour; men who
will not lie;

Men who can stand before a
Demagogue

And damn his treacherous flatteries
without winking;

Tall men, sun-crowned who live
above the fog

In public duty and in private
thinking.

Would it not be interesting to ponder for a while how many of the erstwhile candidates would live up to these ideals?

Dr. R. Pararajasegaram

54, Dharmapala Mawatha,
Colombo 7.

ACBC

IS IT SMALL WONDER that a majority of the Tamil and Muslim communities in this country will vote for a political party, the TULF, that has as its main election policy the formation of a separate Tamil State, when seemingly august bodies like ACBC (All Ceylon Buddhist Congress), founded in the name of the Buddha, that paragon of tolerance and compassion, passes a Resolution asking for Buddhism to be made the National Religion and Sinhala the National Language in a country that is multi-racial, multi-lingual and multi-religious?

The cause of Buddhism, or for that any religion, cannot be furthered by such resolutions, or slogan shouting or picnic visits to places of worship, before press photographers, on Nomination Day etcetra. The cause of religion can only be fostered by the true practice of doctrines passed on to us by religious leaders. It is the absence of such practices amongst the people, especially the so-called leaders, and the hypocritical recourse to resolutions and slogans, that has led to the youth all over the world to rebel against religions and religious bodies that pretend to further their cause.

Colombo 3.
July 12, 1977

Broken-hearted

TAMIL NADU

Problems For MGR

— DMK Still A Force —

New Delhi, July 3.

The inordinate delay in the formation of the government by All India Anna DMK leader, M. G. Ramachandran has raised doubts about the AIADMK's ability to give a sound administration to Tamilnadu. Though the government has now been sworn in, doubts persist and they have a basis in the alignment of political forces in the state.

An analysis of the votes cast in favour of the various political parties sheds light on the shape of things to come.

The AIADMK has won 130 seats and polled 30.6 per cent votes. The DMK got only 38 seats but secured 24.04 per cent of the votes cast. Because of the Cong-O's decision to convert itself into the Janata party with a new flag and a new election symbol most of the Cong-O workers and followers switched over their loyalty to the Congress. The result was that the Janata got only ten seats and polled 16.4 per cent votes while the Congress bagged 27 seats and polled 17 per cent votes. The CPI which came out of the AIADMK Congress CPI alliance in force during the Lok Sabha election because of AIADMK's refusal to allot a fair share of seats to the Congress won five seats and polled 2.9 per cent votes. The trade union based CPM which is a negligible factor in the state politics, jumped on the MGR bandwagon the moment the Lok Sabha election alliance broke down and won 12 seats and polled 2.79 per cent votes. It is evident that neither the seats won nor the votes polled by the CPM reflect its actual strength. On the contrary, the seats won and the votes polled by the CPI in the face of the DMK and AIADMK opposition reflect the strength of its mass base.

IN A WAY the break-up of the Lok Sabha alliance was good for state politics as it has brought into focus the relative strength and appeal of the main political parties. Even so, it is interesting to visualise the picture that might have emerged had the Lok Sabha

alliances been in operation during the Assembly election also.

Had the two major alliances namely the AIADMK-Congress front and DMK Cong-O-CPM front, been maintained the former would have polled nearly 51 per cent of the votes and the latter around 43 per cent votes. In the neck and neck fight the AIADMK-CPI-Congress front would have a comfortable majority capable of giving a stable government. That this did not happen has left the AIADMK in a vulnerable position.

Another fact that has to be noted is that the two DMK's together polled 54.6 per cent votes while the four all India political parties—the Janata, Congress, CPI and the CPM—polled only 39 per cent votes. In other words, in case the AIADMK fails to deliver the goods and a fresh alignment of forces takes place, it is the DMK that will be the greatest gainer. The Congress along with its allies stands a good chance to emerge as the second largest party, provided the party is freed from self-seeking faction bosses and a sense of commitment is infused among the existing and potential cadre.

AN OVERVIEW of the situation is all the more necessary because of the built-in crisis potential in the political configuration.

The pattern of voting is revealing in yet another sense. There was nothing like a MGR wave in the election, since a mere 30.6 per cent votes do not constitute a wave. Secondly, the DMK won most of the urban seats. For example, 13 of the 14 Assembly seats in Madras city went to the DMK. The 14th seat was lost by a narrow margin of 900 and odd votes. Other urban centres showed more or less the same trend.

A good part of MGR's electorate constitutes women voters. In at least 38 of the 130 constituencies where AIADMK won, the number of women voters was higher than men. Wherever women turned up in large numbers MGR's candidates won.

Political observers might be intrigued by this phenomenon but not DMK chief Karunanidhi. MGR, a matinee idol is known to the women folk as a virtuous hero, who fights against evil, kicks drunkards, defends women's honour and loves the poor. Apart from

his oration MGR's celluloid image has always been a strong point of the DMK till the party split in 1972. The late Annadurai used it to tremendous advantage. So did Karunanidhi before he fell out with MGR. The DMK leaders naturally feel that the hard realities of political and administrative life will not be able to sustain the celluloid image of the AIADMK leader.

Already joking for ministerial jobs has divided the AIADMK legislature party. Last week, three AIADMK legislatures in Pondicherry were "safely missing". Another 20 MLAs of AIADMK were missing in Tamilnadu. One local newspaper chain owner looked after ten AIADMK legislators and one of his in-laws took the rest into his "safe custody". Both were pressing the Chief Minister elect for their share in the Council of Ministers. There are many other claimants to ministerial jobs which is proving a constant source of irritation to the Chief Minister elect.

On the eve of the election, three important DMK leaders, Nedunchezhiyan, K. Rajaram and Madhavan, left the DMK to form the Makkal DMK. They did not contest as the AIADMK declined to reach adjustment of seats with them. Their claim to ministerial jobs is now being pressed by S.P. Adityan, owner of *Dina Thanthi* chain. Adityan is a supporter of MGR. Many people feel MGR needs to be saved from his friends and supporters.

M. G. Ramachandran's CPM allies cannot be counted on in any emergency. The danger is that the CPM may exact its price before it comes to MGR's aid. The only people who may come to MGR's rescue are the Congress and CPI legislators. MGR's thoughtless rejection of electoral alliance notwithstanding.

Apart from a lack of parliamentary and administrative experience MGR is handicapped by his elemental idealism. As if to compensate for it, he has decided to appoint K. Manoharan as the floor leader. This may appear sound on the surface. But in practice Manoharan may prove to be a liability rather than an asset. That is how at least some knowledgeable people feel.

So far as MGR is concerned, he is said to have never been so much concerned with power as

with demonstrating to Karunanidhi where the DMK's real source of strength lay. This he has convincingly achieved. And no one knows the implications of MGR's attitude towards power than Karunanidhi. In Tamilnadu political parlours Karunanidhi is considered the shrewdest politician next to the late Kamaraj.

The Janata Party is a stillborn. It does not seem to have any future in Tamilnadu. P. Ramachandran, Union Minister for Energy, has lost heavily in his home state. Old Cong-O cadre consider him a betrayer of Kamaraj's heritage. Most of them have gone over to the Congress. Those who cannot reconcile with the State Congress leaders for personal or factional reasons are thinking of reviving the Cong O. This may further weaken whatever exists of the Janata Party in the state. Health Minister Raj Narain's antics coupled with the pressure on central secretaries to transact business in Hindi has revived the misgiving of the non-Hindi speaking people about the imposition of Hindi on unwilling sections of the population.

No one expects P. Ramachandran to stand up to the bullying tactics of Raj Narain and his kind. He has in fact, been written off by the people as a defender of the state's interests. There is a similar feeling about M. G. Ramachandran. It is widely felt that he is too soft to stand up to the centre's pressure. On the contrary, MGR is expected to fall in line with the centre for a variety of reasons. In other words, the DMK alone will be able to re-emerge as the defender of the state's interests.

Those who want to draw Tamilnadu into the national mainstream look towards the Congress. Unfortunately, the state Congress leadership is too weak and divided to take advantage of the present situation. The Pradesh Congress chief is too gentle to put the self-seeking factionalists in their place. His personal commitment to Indira Gandhi and the New Delhi caucus is another inhibiting factor for those who want a clear break from the past. Still, Mooppanar has wide acceptability, if not for his leadership quality, but at least as a person who can keep the party going.

There is a question mark about MGR's capacity to manage the malcontents in AIA-DMK. If he succeeds in keeping

the party intact and acquires administrative skill, he may be able to give a stable administration. But this is a big if. Almost all the political parties are working out their strategy on the apprehension that MGR would not be able to manage the show.

In the not unlikely event of defections from the AIA-DMK, the state may be faced with political turmoil. In such a situation the party that stands to gain the most is the DMK.

Ganesh Shukla
—New Wave

A-TRAGIC STORY

Sugar

—past regrets, future hopes—

by R. Kahawita

Almost after ten years "sugar" as an agricultural product in Sri Lanka has hit the headline and as an important announcement on S.L.B.C. A French organisation is to co-operate with the Government to establish a sugar complex on the left bank of Uda Walawe irrigation project.

The sugar complex has been re-named "Samanalakanda Sugar project"—may be as usual, for the ruling political party to claim the "think Box". Whatever names are called, it is the same sugar complex started by the previous Government in 1967 and since then abandoned till it hit the headlines under a different name.

Simultaneously the S.L.B.C. announced on the 18th, 9.15 news broadcast that England has given a gift of 250,000 Sterling pounds to develop the Sugar Complex under Gal Oya. This project was started in 1954 and then abandoned in 1956 after the M.E.P. came into power. It languished in a state of neglect and riddled with indiscipline till 1965 when it was taken up for development by the previous Government. Once again it was relegated to the back of beyond in 1970 when the U.F. came to power.

To detract from the main project, growing of sugar cane became pet schemes of Political authorities and today we have small plots of cane

dispersed over the country and a few jaggery making units. The subsidies were good and attractive but was never able to hit the news as a successful story. It may be the powers to be are of the impression that the people have forgotten that there were three sugar projects started by the UNP so they have been revived to hit the news and because the country is paying through her nose in foreign exchange to maintain the 3/4 lb. per month per consumer.

Ever since the cultivation of sugar cane, as a commercial crop, was started in Sri Lanka it has had set-backs due to political meddling on the one hand and rivalry to earn commission on the other hand. THE YOUNGEST SUGAR PROJECT is the sugar Complex on the left bank of Uda Walawe. After the main scheme was completed, the development plans provided for the cultivation of 16,000 Acs. of sugar, complete with a modern factory and distillery to process molasses. By 1970 when the UF Coalition came into power the R.V.D.B. had spent six million rupees in developing 2,000 Acs. of land, establishing 600 Acs. of nurseries and testing plots, experimental laboratory, offices and buildings for staff and stores, irrigation channels and roads, an open pan sugar boiler and a 60 ton Khandasari Sugar mill. All these have gone down the drain since the UF Coalition came to power. And now, I suppose the project is revived though may have to start from scratch, but the slogan will be—"We did it."

I said there was commission rivalry earlier. This was one reason why "the Dudley regime" could not push ahead fast enough to complete the project during his term of office. Then also, there were two factors in the run to develop and operate the sugar complex—a French organisation and an American group. Why the project got bogged down is a sordid tale to relate. Let us forget what has gone by and reiterate the project as planned then. This is more important to compare notes with the project then and the one under negotiation now then relate our anti-national activities to destroy our own prosperity.

The 1967 proposals were:

(a) To set up a sugar Refinery located in the North of Colombo close to Kolonnawa Railway to refine imported raw sugar. The refinery was to have a capacity of 220,000 tons—the Island's total annual requirements of sugar. The saving in Foreign Exchange in 1967 was around 3,000,000 Sterling pounds and today it may be 12,000,000 Sterling pounds. Raw sugar is always available outside the contract or agreement prices and raw sugar is always cheaper than refined sugar from 15 Sterling pounds to 50 Sterling pounds a ton. The refined sugar is to be packed automatically in "consumer units" so as to prevent wastage, contamination and adulteration in transport as it happens today quite often deliberately at retailing and storage points. This was a two year programme.

(b) In the meantime, 16,000 Acs. of cane were to be developed on the left bank of Uda Walawe with a crushing target of 12,000 Acs. annually to produce 50,000 tons of raw sugar at the factory. This was a six year programme and if the project was pushed through we would be having 16,000 Acs. of cane instead of 16,000 Acs. abandoned land complete with all the facilities for irrigation. The Irrigation channels were completed by the new disbanded "Land Army".

(c) Together with the development of Uda Walawe sugar, the two sugar complexes at Kantalai and Gal Oya were to be revitalized, which were allowed to deteriorate since 1956.

This was a five year programme to open up about 30 000 Acs. at the two points and bring the cane supply to the capacities of the two mills already set up. At these two points the target figures of sugar production were 90,000 tons of plantation sugar. If the plans were pushed through irrespective of Political changes, Sri Lanka would have had almost 140,000 tons of locally produced sugar by the end of 1974. This amounts to almost 3/4 ths of our annual requirements leaving a quarter to be imported as raw sugar to take advantage of fluctuation in world sugar prices.

NOT LONG AGO the sugar price in the international markets skyrocketed to levels never before experienced in the sugar trade. If the three schemes were allowed to push through as planned, by now the country would have recovered the entire capital investment, and also have had a link in the export market. To estimate what the country has lost during these nine years will be an interesting exercise to a patient reader.

Our planning and political vindictiveness is such that after almost 25 years of sugar cane growing we are still at the beginning. The United Front Government, as admitted by our Prime Minister, was a joint venture to destroy the United National Party at any cost. In that operation the country has lost millions and millions of rupees in one project alone. As a school boy would say—"What is the use of crying over split milk", let us move forward to implement the projects whatever the election results would be on the 21st of July.

Let me put back into the picture the sugar project as planned in 1968: (a) 200,000 ton sugar Refinery in Colombo. (b) revitalize the Kantalai and Gal Oya sugar complexes (c) Development of the sugar plantations and factory under Uda Walawe left bank and (d) the three factories at Kantalai, Gal Oya and Uda Walawe to produce raw sugar to be refined in Colombo. The copies of detailed studies of this comprehensive project, Financial feasibility reports, Terms and conditions under which the Foreign collaborators were going to work, and the forms of agreement with them, should be available with the Central Bank in the Wing where Mr. Michael Seneviratne was working, in the Planning Secretariat where Dr. Gamini Corea was working, and in the offices of the RVDB also with the Sri Lanka Sugar Corporation which threw the first spanner into the machinery.

WITH UNEMPLOYMENT FIGURES soaring in all fields, the sugar complexes as outlined above will provide employment in a variety of fields, from cane farmers to highly skilled technicians, specialists and experts in a number of technical disciplines. This is a new agricultural venture into which we could recruit educated and enlightened youths to take cane farming and develop for themselves a higher standard of

living and secure a steady income. We expect to deal with the employment potential in another article.

Earlier we said that to detract from the main sugar complexes, sporadic sugar plantations on a peasant scale were started by the UF Government. These need not be abandoned. These cane fields should be rationalised to give the grower an adequate income to survive 9 to 12 months of the growing period and expand each "pocket" to 300 to 500 Acs. so that the cane can be processed to produce raw sugar in a Khandasari Sugar mill, the raw sugar to be refined at the central refinery. These mills are not expensive and are suitable for this kind of plantations. It will also be necessary to develop varieties of cane that can stand droughts and yet give high yields without irrigation. Manufacture of jaggery is a waste of effort and a waste of subsidies given for planting cane. A new outlook has to be given to this kind of peasant sugar farming.

With international organisations committed to give aid to developing countries, there should not be any difficulty to find the money to finance the project. India can supply all the cane crushing machinery, England refinery machinery America Agricultural expertise, France sugar technology, Italy and Switzerland sophisticated packing machinery. These should come as project aid and it is up to us to see that we adhere to the programme and benefit by the aid given.

Sugar still has a world market, a market that should expand yearly and cane is a tropical crop. It is up to us to venture into this field now.



The next issue of TRIBUNE, dated July 23, will be released a few days late and will carry a preliminary analysis of the election results.

PENSIONS FOR MPs

Why The Injustice To Public Servants?

There are many Public Servants who, well after 25 years service have retired, and are still languishing for their pensions. Some of these have to wait well over an year to realise this. In addition to these, there are widows whose husbands have died in service, and, as can well be imagined, are in dire need of their husbands pensions (though it be only one years pay). While these unfortunates are languishing in their misery on the sides, overlooked and bypassed, we read in our mass-media of the Government's boastful articles that the M.P.'s Pensions have been finalised and that their pay cheques have already been issued.

Oh! good! but what about those others who are living in dire need and who have actually earned their dues? Is there none to give them a thought? Why this unholy hurry to attend so urgently to dues of the MP's (the bill was only approved very recently) who are supposed to have come forward to serve the masses at great tribulation and sacrifice to themselves? As almost everyone is aware the MP's Pension Bill was passed almost unanimously. I wonder what the quantum of payment of MP's under this scheme is? As I understand the MP's qualify even with a minimum of five years, whereas, the minimum for a Public Servant is 10 years, and that too, only if he is medically condemned.

I believe that it would only be fair enough if the same condition as applicable to Public Servants be made applicable to MP's too. It is indeed enlightening for the Public to realise how our Parliamentarians are capable of serving themselves to the best of everything, while at the same time decrying the tendencies of their lesser blessed countrymen in seeking for a much needed relief. How they howl and lament in the august assembly and public platforms whenever the hard pressed public servant requests for a pay rise commensurate with an ever soar-

ing living index, claiming that, while, accepting the facts that times are difficult for everyone, the finances of the country could ill afford such inconsiderate demands of a minute section of the public when the Major portion too suffer the same disabilities. Their excuse being their inability to meet these demands on an ailing economy.

This same reasoning does not appear to apply when they manoeuvre to allocate to themselves a choice piece of the same hard to afford cake. This too in addition to the numerous benefits they enjoy by virtue of their being our elected representatives. We are only too well aware that they do not have to suffer the agonies of standing in queues, whether it be the co-operative, the bus, the textile, the dryfish, the Lakspray or the hard to get synthetics. We wonder whether they ever suffer from shortages like the rest of us mortals do: It should have been more sensible and better appreciated had they in turn put forward their demands in a referendum, to the people, who, after all is said and done, we will have to foot all these bills. How much more decent and exemplary it would have been had they sought the blessings of the people, who, in accordance with their constitution (foisted on us) are supposed to be supreme and from whom they are supposed to derive their authority, before enacting a self serving, unilateral piece of legislation. This would have afforded the people the chance of proving the sovereignty of the people in practice (and not only in print) of either rewarding them for the services rendered to the nation or refusing it if they have let them down. I do not think we would have to wonder overmuch what a referendum would have brought about.

We are only too well aware how often our representatives declare themselves as being prepared to undergo abject sufferings in the cause of serving the nation, but the moment they are elected they conveniently forget all the promises made during the election campaign. We read now that the Pensions of all entitled MP's have been finalised and all applications met with expeditiously. Hossana! To those who have much—more

shall be given and, from those who have but little even that little too shall be denied—such is the foresight and generosity of our leaders. Verily! What an unholy hurry has been evinced by the powers that be to meet this so urgently. I believe the public is only too well aware as to how many of our MP's both past and present are on the verge of starvation. Dio! Mio! how these so called saviours of the nation have banded themselves together on this price occasion to serve themselves with a self serving piece of legislation, when almost on all other occasions they are vehemently divided even if they be measures that would bring about benefit to the nation and the country. What an example of one sections greed inspite of the fact that many others suffer through dire need. Are these the specimens of those whom we are supposed to look up to? Then may God help us—But such is politics (or should it be named politricks which appears to be more apt.)

It is not really surprising that nearly 90% of our representatives voted in favour of this piece of legislation. This in addition to the numerous other benefits and privileges enjoyed by them, to mention a few FREE Railway Warrants, FREE postal facilities, FREE Telephone facilities, SUBSIDISED Accommodation, food, and drink at the SRAVASTI (The poor mans home). PRIORITY and availability of cars at SUBSIDISED rates (since it may be considered INFRADIG for such AUGUST persons to rub shoulders with us (mere mortals in public transport), Diplomatic IMMUNITY which insulate their persons, bag and baggage from the prying eyes of the customs, whenever they travel abroad whether it be on official or private business. No wonder there is such an unholy scramble for nominations, but, truly the ones who ultimately gets scrambled are the voters who voted them in. May God have mervy on the undiscerning voter. It is therefore imperative that the voter give serious and deliberate thought to this weighty question and only vote for the most deserving candidate in the field irrespective of their party affiliations. It should be up to the hierarchy of the Party to nominate the most eligible and sincere applicant and not anyone

on personal loyalties, who is incapable of honouring the trust placed on him.

If remember correctly there were, however, a few MPs who were not only against the bill but who voted against it quite openly thereby proving the sincerity of their convictions. May God and man bless them for their honesty of purpose. It behoves us therefore to unfailingly remember such individuals, by rewarding them with a return to the NSA at the next elections. Such personages could very well prove to be the sincere and honest statesmen whom the nations is searching for at this moment of uncertainty and crisis. At least they have proved that they are capable of honouring the trust placed in them. Let us be guided by the proof of their actions and not the vociferous promises held out like carrots and every elections. The voter has had a surfeit of these never kept promises in the past and should be guided by their bitter experiences. This occasion could very well be the last chance the public gets to use their votes in spite of the fact that all parties stand for varying degrees of DEMOCRACY and SOCIALISM. Hence let us vote judiciously after adequate thought and deliberate determination. In this we could very well learn a lesson from the recent Indian Elections—a lesson we could well emulate.

Too many of us have had to suffer, at the hands of a political elite, who has shaped decisions but never had to account for their mistakes, nor, suffer from injustice. When unemployment prevails they never had to suffer the travails of standing in line looking for jobs which (in our country) more often than not go to the politically patronised. When deprivation results from a confused, bewildering and often lopsided welfare system, they never do without food, clothing, or a place to sleep. When the Public Schools are inferior and torn by strife and strikes (often caused by our all knowing and all perfect administrators), their children are sent to exclusive private schools—often abroad. When the bureaucracy is bloated with power and often confused, the powerful always manage to discover and occupy niches of special influence and privilege. A lopsided income tax structure well serves their needs.

Therefore let us be vary in the men we vote for. GOD SAVE US FROM OUR HALLOWED SAVIOURS!

Candida

Kattuwa,
Negombo.
27th June 1977

SAFARI

June 9 - 19

by Alkardi Mugana

June 9,

This week, from Monday to the Friday, I am without a wristlet watch, while the part of it that attaches the watch to the strap is being repaired. My pocket watch is the only time-piece on the estate, and without it nobody would know when to summon people to work, when to start them off, and when to knock off, let alone when to start the morning's and the afternoon's milking. I have a small alarm clock which I use when I really need an alarm, but, if I remember correctly, the time is too erratic to rely on it for a whole twenty-four hours. I wonder how I can relate this to what affects me most today, a point brought home, I think, that empires come and empires go, meaning that institutions actually break up; that one man sends another away, only perhaps to be sent away himself in turn, or to send himself away. The pointer perhaps, a little more heart than head.

June 10,

There was a message to say that there was no money for these people now, apart from my allowance and a little I earn. I had not a cent, and so, without hesitation I resorted to him who has asked us never to worry about these matters, because he has assured us that he is the universal provider and that when things seem bad, we have only to have faith. So I went out about my business after dinner, and when I came back, a question or two settled the matter. This is far better than to have to go and look for the money, which means a buyer or two, at the other end. It is more than a question of just that Money or No, these people have to live. They must

have their food. So we do not ask for money; we are taught to ask for today's bread, for us, yes. Need more he said?

June 11,

A man, who was fairly well dressed, came to me on the road. We had just passed each other and the way he turned round to engage me in conversation, I knew he was out for a *dime*. He had no sooner opened, his mouth then I came straight to the point. I was right. I gave him the smallest coin we have in this country, enough to get him to the Fort and the Pettah, and I walked on. Then I thought I had better find out more about the man, and I stopped. He came up to me. I told him he was not the first respectable looking man I had met, who made a point of touching everyone, acquaintances, for money when he met them on a public highway. That man had always had a good story with him and it was only his wheedling voice, so characteristic of the brood, that gave him away. Anyway I could not afford to take a risk about his *bonafides* and I gave him a coin which enabled what I had given him first.

June 12,

A crowded canvas everyday makes it hard for me to write a few lines on just a detail or two, on an event or a thought, to single out one as more important than another. In writing what I do, I am moved more by the spirit than by my head. My head does seem to be hurting these days. I was advised to get a lumbar puncture to see if I had anything toxic in the brain. I grudge the time in hospital, the time I shall have to spend there for just this. A man wants to leave his job and join me. A friend tries to tell me in half an hour something about accountancy that it takes a man a month to learn. I am heart-broken about some cattle that I shall probably not see again, and I am sorry for a number of reasons that I shall not go into here. There are a number of matters that have to be regularized, and to do the right thing is like taking a plunge into water off a diving board.

June 13,

Well, I nearly become the owner today of more money than I have been the owner of for years. At the last moment my donor found that she had forgotten her cheque

In Ceylon Today

book, legally at my special instance, even though the idea was not mine, she will continue to be part owner. With a friend I discussed trying to relieve the pressure on people who try to make their land support a unit of labour per acre. The financial burden is now being well nigh insupportable as regards this, not to mention the time factor in maintaining such a large number on the check roll and EPF, and the actual burdens of secretarial work involved; a unit of work understood as one working man and his dependants. We also discussed compensatory factors such as the creation of a new society based on private ownership, a corporate society, hierarchical, which will make check rolls and E.P.F. quite unnecessary.

June 14,

Lying in reading, and up for a late breakfast; then a lift into the Fort, a letter delivered, money deposited, a document collected and three visits to friends only one of whom was in. A service of thanksgiving, an investigation which proved abortive and, on second thought a visit which had unexpected results. Such was my morning. I spent the rest of the day in, and friends of the house arrived. A little girl of seven danced superbly, promptly to a gramophone record, the stage version of the Sound of Music, and she sang. She danced and sang by tunes, she knew every word of each tune. I do not think her dancing could have been bettered anywhere. She was watched by the grandfather, her father, her mother, and an uncle. Which reminds me that the finest show I have seen in my life was *South Pacific*, as it was done by St. Bridget's Convent.

June 15,

A letter to say that two bullocks, which were earmarked for the cart long ago, had fallen down. The veterinary surgeon had been called and he had recommended inoculating the herd and advised giving each animal concentrates and a mineral mixture. We have had two droughts in succession, the second caused by the failure of the South-West monsoon. The first was the usual dry spell we get after January. It was only the April rains that did not fail. The second spell of dry weather must be hitting the cattle badly, especially as their grazing

ground has been much reduced by interplanting, and their fodder grass by subsidising crops. For the first time I am writing this before dinner as I have a long journey before me tonight and much walking at the other end.

June 16,

This I write by daylight. The wind blows strongly in gusts. I am writing under a large rock and on a cement floor. The people I came to visit were out when I arrived about 4.30 a.m. There is no place where I can buy breakfast for miles around, but I had to take a chance somewhere and a family which had some hoppers left over, offered me that and plantains without my asking and then took no payment. I went on to another establishment, and just as I was about to settle down, the man I had come to see came along looking for me, as he had heard I had arrived. In spite of the cement floor, this is almost like living in a cave, on an elevation with a good view all round in front of us; and, in fact, it is a cave, the sort that Veddahs used, the kind that provides you with at least protection from rain. There is a small community here, and the newest member of it joined today. He is already quite at home. The oldest member of this small community is sweeping outside, as I write this.

June 17,

Staying here a day has made me very introspective, wondering if I should be here at all, because there are calls on me elsewhere; and this has led me to go over my life, recalling incidents long forgotten, and trying to analyse them. I have also gone over my many mistakes and failures, and I now tried to recognize the man I am. All this does not lend itself to much happiness; and then I remembered that joy is the face we are asked to show, for we are told to let nothing get us down. I am writing this in the cool of the evening, with not much time to go to dine and I am wondering whether I should stay on tonight, which was my original intention, or depart and return to the place where I would be if I was not here. All this has nothing to do with the people here. They are the innocent victims of my melancholy. At the care of it all is my anxiety about the cattle, and I cannot help feel that the clue to this is correct

man management, but all this is not going to help if I find a couple of animals dead when I get back. animals I might still have found alive if I had gone to the estate instead of coming here. Then, ordering injections, when I had not been told what injections it was the veterinary wanted to give in retrospect sounds foolhardy.

June 18,

Well, I have still not reached the estate, and chiefly because of a birth day. Then there was a guest, and there is an Arabic or Chinese saying that no visitor is an interruption or an intrusion. So I have missed the last bus, and I have my rights on the one after midnight. Shriveen I was today. It lifted a whole load off my mind, and that is the only reason I mention it—I cannot imagine how anybody can have peace of mind who is unable to make use of this exercise and yet most of the people in the world are out of reach of it, and certainly in Ceylon, manage to be cheerful and show it. Perhaps it means that a little sorrowing is not amiss. Christ put mournfulness among the beatitudes. Paul tells us to let nothing make us anxious. Christ said he came to bring a word and yet one of the commandments is, do not kill. He said, unless you hate your father and mother, you cannot be my disciple. Yet, the fourth commandment.

June 19,

Here am I at last. Lay in this morning. Half the morning was not through when there were the usual people to see me. Some times, having gone away and then come back to offer a higher price for the cattle. It is a game to see if I will call them back, rather, to offer a lower price, or accept their terms. I had a shot in the arm when, in our course of counting the cattle in the river, I learnt that an animal I had been given to understand was dead, or I had presumed was dead, was still alive. This bullock had outlived the other that had fallen with after him, and which had been a good deal fatter which was why I had written him off. There were holes in his feet and side, holes caused by crows and maggots, but he was chewing the cud while lying flat on the ground and was apparently quite happy. A little later a cattleman lied when he said he had been

given and refused water, for I found the water could not have been proffered and had promptly drawn a quarter of a bucket of it. We had to move him first so that he could get at the water, or rather move obstructions so that he could do so.

AN ELECTION SERMON

The Squirrel Cage

By Kumar

We have a lovely squirrel cage in our garden. It is a beautiful house with a tree stump in the middle which the squirrel loves. It is swinging up and down, right and left, all day and never seems to tire. It has food and water trays and a nice little room to retire into. It is happy and no doubt feels it is achieving something.

Democracy, as practised in what is called Third World Countries reminds me of my squirrel cage. The Western News media, the most powerful weapon for indoctrination, tirelessly extols the virtues of "democratic" governments. To qualify for a 'democratic' government there must be more than one political party, there must be periodic general elections for an Assembly and the party that wins the majority of seats (not necessarily the majority of votes) forms the government for a few years. The other party or parties go into opposition and it is their function to obstruct the government in every possible way. Every party that wins a general election does so by highlighting the mistakes of the previous government which has caused the hardships the people are groaning under and promises to put everything right. Extravagant promises are made which they are unable to keep. The disappointed voters get fed up. Their only option is to await the next general election and throw this government out and instal the opposition, whose past failures seem small compared to their present predicament. The whole process is repeated over and over again. This is hailed as a triumph of democracy. We have thrown out the UNP and put in the SLFP and vice versa for almost a generation. We are about to do it again and the capitalist news media, both

foreign and local, single us out as the only 'democratic' country in the Third World to do it so regularly.

Unfortunately, the living conditions of the mass of the people in Sri Lanka are getting steadily worse. The cost of living is on an ever ascending spiral and inflation is reducing the purchasing power of the rupee and wages salaries and pensions are reduced to half or less of their original value. There is widespread unemployment and for every one who gets a job there are ten disappointed.

It is only in socialist countries there is neither inflation nor unemployment. That is why all 'democratic' countries in the Third World claim to be socialist. In Sri Lanka both the UNP and the SLFP proclaim they are socialist. But we have been trained by the British and love 'democracy'. So we compromise and call ourselves, 'Social Democrats' which necessitates the two party system and all the headaches it entails.

Of all our colonial masters the British were the cleverest. It will be noticed that in all the former British colonies 'democratic' governments are functioning and British interests there are as strong as ever, if not stronger. The outstanding exception is Rhodesia, where an arrogant white minority defied the British plans for the usual 'democratic' government and seized power. A strange paralysis seized the British, who ruthlessly suppressed any attempt at rebellion in their colonies by coloured people. For over a decade the unlawful Smith government prospered with the overt and covert support of South Africa, the USA and others. But what happened in neighbouring Angola and Mosambique has alarmed the British and their chief supporter, the USA. The Portuguese were not as smart as the British. They did not believe in this 'democratic' nonsense and ruthlessly suppressed any notions of independence. Naked repression begets resistance and national liberation struggles have been going on over a decade in the Portuguese colonies in Africa, with the help of the socialist countries. Unfortunately for the capitalists, Left-leaning soldiers seized power in Portugal and freed their colonies. The national liberation parties took over power and installed governments. The rich capitalist countries,

led by the USA, who have invested heavily in Africa to exploit the vast mineral wealth there, are alarmed and all the activity now in Southern Africa is a concerted plan by the capitalist powers to safeguard their interest in Africa. Even South Africa, that bastion of white supremacy for generations is under pressure. Carter has sent the negro Andrew Young to South Africa to tell the South African Businessmen that they stand to benefit if the policy of Apartheid is given up. He points out that there was a business boom in the USA after the civil rights movement there.

We in Sri Lanka, being in the squirrel cage called Parliamentary Democracy, must make up our minds whether we are to be content to turn out the SLFP only to instal the UNP, which we rejected last time. Our living conditions are getting worse and will continue to do so till we are able to break out of the squirrel cage and form a government of the common people, who will utilise all their resources in a spirit of self reliance, without depending on 'aid' and provide the basic needs—food clothing, shelter, employment, schooling and health care—to every one in Sri Lanka.

HISTORICAL

Beginning Of The Left Movement In Ceylon

by Basil Perera

This is an excerpt from a paper read at the International Scientific Conference on the "Great October Socialist Revolution and the National Liberation Movement of the Peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America", held in Baku on 26th-28th May, 1977, under the auspices of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R.

The October Revolution took place at a time when the national movement for independence in Sri Lanka was just beginning. In fact, the first conference on constitutional reforms in my country took place just five weeks after the victory of the October Revolution. The imperialists, of course, accused

even the bourgeois national leaders of "drifting into Bolshevism."

The reply of Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam, one of our pioneer nationalist leaders was to say that "we are in very good company." Sir Ponnambalam showed that he was aware of the new forces in the world unleashed by the October Revolution and acknowledged the new favourable situation created for the freedom movement in Sri Lanka by the victory of the October Revolution.

With the birth of the organised working class movement in Sri Lanka in the early 1920's, Lenin's ideas began to influence developments in a more decisive way. In September 1925 the first workers' newspaper called *Kamkaru Handa* (Workers' Voice) run by the Ceylon Labour Union led by the pioneer labour leader, A. E. Goonesinha, carried two biographical articles on Lenin under the title "The brave leader who brought liberty to the Russians." In these articles Lenin was highly praised as a champion of the oppressed classes to be admired for his "manly lion-like qualities and strong personality."

The *Kamkaru Handa* also wrote that "Lenin revealed how the world war was begun by the powerful nations which wanted to loot the wealth of the weak nations, and by the rich who wanted to grab the possessions of the poor."

Following the world capitalist economic crisis of the late 1920s, a section of the radical intelligentsia in Sri Lanka disillusioned with the compromising bourgeois national leadership, began to study the teachings of Lenin, the experiences of the Soviet Union and the achievements of socialism. By this time adult franchise had also for the first time brought, the masses into the political arena as a major factor. These two circumstances led to a radical turn in the political affairs of the Island.

Progressive Youth Leagues were organised, paving the way for the formation of the first socialist party in Sri Lanka, the Lanka Sama Samaja Party (Ceylon Socialist Party). The national liberation struggle thus gained a new impetus. For the first time, the slogans of complete national independence and socialism were raised and the movement that raised them was actively inspired by the achievements of the October Revolution.

This inspiration and influence were seen in the speeches at the inaugural public meeting of the Lanka Sama Samaja Party in 1935 when speaker after speaker referred to the Soviet Union's example and what our country could learn from it. It was also expressed by the first President of the party in his Presidential Address to the party's first conference in 1937 when he said: "The place of the USSR in world politics is beyond ordinary importance. It is to her that the international working class movement ultimately looks for the concrete exemplification of the hope that animates it. Every rise in the standard of living of the USSR, every little growth in her relative strength, infuses into the oppressed of the world fresh courage to continue the desperate struggle in which they are engaged."

Unfortunately, the Lanka Sama Samaja Party split in 1940 when certain leaders of the party came under the influence of Trotskyism and expelled the Communists and other pro-Soviet elements from it. The latter came together to form the United Socialist Party, the precursor of the Communist Party of Sri Lanka. Its official organ the *United Socialist* editorialised in its very first issue: "The path of advance for our people is, as in India, the path of building up a wide people's revolutionary movement for national liberation. The beginning of this movement must lie in the consolidation of the political working class organisation which bases itself firmly and consistently on the principles of socialism. In this connection it is important that under conditions in Ceylon it is possible and essential to develop the alliance of the urban and the rural workers, because the acute agrarian crisis is fast revolutionising the latter. In its struggle for liberation this political working-class movement will draw in its allies, the rural peasantry, the students and even those sections of the one-time land-owning class which have, since the world economic crisis of 1930 sunk into the ranks of indebted petty-owners."

The editorial also said: "We in Ceylon have valiant and enormously powerful allies in our fight against exploitation, war and misery... Our front is the world front of the USSR, the workers of the capitalist countries, the entire colo-

nial people fighting for emancipation. Under modern capitalist conditions to realise this bond of unity is absolutely necessary." Lenin's theory of the three mainstreams of the world revolutionary movement was thus finding new adherents in Sri Lanka.

The Soviet Union's magnificent contribution to the defeat of fascism during the Second World War and also its role in the postwar period greatly helped Sri Lanka, like many other countries, to advance her own fight for independence. The war ended with the smashing of three major imperialist powers—Germany, Italy and Japan—and the considerable weakening of British, French, Dutch, Belgian and Portuguese imperialism. All this created favourable external conditions which the independence movements in a number of countries, including Sri Lanka, were able to use with advantage.

Unable to rule in the old way, British imperialism changed its tactics from direct colonial rule to indirect rule through its faithful servitors by granting a formal independence to Sri Lanka in 1948. It was sought, in particular, to separate our people from the peoples of the Soviet Union and other countries of the socialist camp which had come into being following the end of the war. But the progressive forces, spearheaded by the Communists, conducted a major political battle to end the discriminatory and restrictive policies of our leaders from 1948 to 1956. The demand for the establishment of diplomatic trade and cultural relations with the Soviet Union and other socialist countries became one of the main slogans of the political struggle that led to the defeat of the government of the comprador bourgeoisie in 1956 and the return to power of the government led by Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike.

With the establishment of diplomatic and other relations between Sri Lanka and the Soviet Union in 1956 the influence of the October Revolution began to be felt in our country not only in the realm of ideas but also in the material field....

POINT OF VIEW

Jesus Was No Sissy

Tribune, June 18, 1977

The Review entitled **JESUS WAS NO SISSY**, published in the **Tribune** of June 18, 1977 was written by our regular contributor **Jayantha Somasundaram**, but the name was inadvertently missed in the printing.

Fr. Tissa Balasuriya is surely right when he stresses the revolutionary spirit of the Gospels, provided we don't understand him to mean by "revolution" the violent, sabre-rattling, head-chopping type, the revolution with a Molotov cocktail in one's hand and the blood-curdling slogans of hatred and revenge on one's lips.

Jesus' revolution has to take place first of all in the hearts of men, ridding them of their natural greed and lust to dominate—something that afflicts everyone coming into this world, the rich as well as the poor, the oppressor as well as the oppressed.

There is no doubt that Christ was against all hypocrisy and sham, that he wanted us to thirst after justice; yet you need not go very far in the reading of the Gospels to find, and in greater abundance, another kind of utterances; "Blessed are the meek, blessed are the peacemakers..." We cannot change the Gospels according to the fashion of the day, and if the Church even now urges all to imitate Christ's humility and justice in charity. It is because He first said: "Learn from me who am meek and humble of heart". Now, this is the kind of interior revolution—the foundation and spring of any external, durable structural change—that the Church has promoted in every age or place.

It baffles one, therefore, to read that "the Church degenerated after Constantine, when the religion of the oppressed slaves that was Christianity became, with Constantine, establishmentarian" (Ibi, p. 21). Ahimsa Christianity, the religion of slaves?

Was Jesus a second-rate, feckless Spartacus? However much I cudgel my brains, I fail to grasp on what historical grounds that

statement is based. Sure enough, the crowds that followed Jesus were ordinary common people. Does that mean they were slaves? Nowhere do we read that the first Christians and St. Paul's converts at Corinth, Philippi were mainly slaves; and if St. Paul could take interest in and plead for one Onesimus, a slave, it was because the latter's master was already a Christian. Did not Tertullian already in his time rightly boast: "We Christians have filled your towns, your army, the Emperor's very house"? Were those all slaves?

"After the conversion of Constantine, the Church degenerated, became part of the Establishment". Does this mean that all the liabilities, the shackles of the persecutions were cast aside and Christians were allowed to practice, were even protected by law and defended against unjust attacks? If so, does there seem to be anything so frightfully objectionable in that? That is the minimum, I should think, that any decent government is expected to guarantee to any religion.

But perhaps the meaning is something else, i.e. that the Church became subservient, a cowardly obedient lackey of the Emperors, and gave up the former struggle for right and justice. That is, no doubt, to degenerate. But does that statement stand the acid test of historical facts?

Once Constantine went to his Creator, we read of almost ceaseless conflicts between the Church and the Emperors, who wished to rule and decide on things that were not of their competence. Who does not know that the emperors Julian and Valens persecuted the Church as cruelly as Nero or Diocletian? No one persecutes a wholly complying vassal or servant.

Did the Church give up the defence of the innocents and poor after Constantine? Why then did St. Ambrose forbid the Emperor Theodosius himself to enter the church, until he repented of the massacre of 6000 innocents at Thessalonica? Why did St. John Chrysostom face the wrathful Empress Eudoxia and suffer exile and death rather than keep quiet before a patent injustice done to an ordinary citizen? These are just two shining examples; they are certainly not the only ones.

No, the external arrangements may have changed with Constantine: the Church did not change its nature. As Christ wanted it, so the Church remained—*semper eadem*.

Likewise, it cannot but cause surprise and concern to hear that "Christ did not come to establish an institutional Church, but the Kingdom of God" (Tribune, p. 22)—as if the Church were not the "germ and beginning on earth of that very Kingdom (Vat. II, The Church, n. 6—"the initial budding forth of that Kingdom").

The reader will thank me for sparing him another disquisition to prove that Christ did establish an institutional Church as he can very well satisfy himself with the lucid and abundant exposition on the Church's hierarchical institution in Chapter III of THE CHURCH in the documents of Vatican II.

Perhaps, in the past, for polemical reasons, the divine institution of the hierarchy may have been overstressed, and now we speak more of the Church as "People of God", as a community. But that should not lead us to believe that whatever was taught up to now about the divine institution of the Church was all wrong. That would be running into Scylla while trying to avoid Charybdis.

I find it strange, too, to read that "the Romans had no idea of human freedom". O Gracchi, O Cato of Utica, O Cicero of the Philippics, in vain did you die! Your love of freedom was of the spurious type; we had to wait for the Russians and other communist countries to teach us what true freedom and guaranteed human rights mean....

At the same time, can we say that the Romans were "the cruel conquerors of the Jews"? Was it not the Jews at the time of the Maccabees that took the initiative and asked the Romans for a compact of friendship and mutual defence? Did not the Romans allow the Jews their own kings and send governors only at the request of the Jews when their Kings became unbearable? Is that the way of cruel conqueror?

I fear that no praiseworthy cause will be served, if, by paying scant respect to historical truth, we undermine the confidence of any intelligent reader in whatever else we wish to prove.

C Jannaccone SJ

LETTERS

Burghers

Sir,

The Prime Minister claims the kudos for the State reception to the Pope and by inference leaves the impression that the UNP was opposed to it or at least would not have initiated it. On a previous occasion it was even stated that the late Mr. Dudley Senanayake let slip an opportunity for civic honours to the Pope when Prime Minister from a fear that he would be offending the Buddhists. It is surely absurd to suggest that the Buddhist population can or would be offended at such a State invitation to the head of a religious body.

When the Prime Minister assumed office in 1970 a communication was forwarded to her in the name of the Burghers advising her that when the history of Ceylon comes to be written, it will not be the measure of free rice or the Mahaveli Diversion Project that will be recalled but the disaster that overtook the country from the National Languages and the Free Education Scheme. This was expressed in the freewill of God and had been confirmed in a vision by the Son of God and reported to the Pope for a pronouncement. Such was the substance of the message sent to the Prime Minister and also to the UNP and to Mr. Pieter Keuneman of the CP and Mr. Colvin R. de Silva of the LSSP.

It is wise to recognise that in wooing the votes of the public none of the Parties can claim to have the whole truth. It is an insult to the intelligent sections of the Christians to suppose that a formal invitation to the Pope to visit Ceylon will influence them to cast their votes for the SLFP.

H. C. G. Van Dort

29/1, Sumaparama Road, Mt. Lavinia. July 2, 1977

Press

Sir,

There is more in your theme on "Journalistic Ethics", (Tribune June 4) than what your elegant evaluation reveals. There is downright

arrogance, on the part of our Journalists. In others, there is the feeling they are infallible. And the controlling Editorial hack feels the Nation has given him the right to select Feature Articles, to suit his taste, fancy. Not yours, not mine.

It a sad commentary on local Journalism, that we still don't have the Free Lancers to displace Foreign ones. Foreign material has to be paid for; to the advantage of an itinerating Editor. But local articles, paid for once upon a time are not paid, even if published; because the Editor did not invite them. The "Nikkang" complex has taken root! Its so crazy, irrational and illogical—this Editorial prerogative. Pray, how can the Editor, be-little an article, that has won it place through his approval Or is it that the Editor must first have access to the Free Lancer's mind, before the invitation goes out to the Free Lancer? Stupid.

Do such invitations go out at all? Yes they do. The invitees are foreigners or the privileged, who do not disagree with Editorial policy. The whole thing stinks.

The Sunday Observer has to be democratised for space allocation. More than 54% of Newspaper space is for the Capitalist-oriented advertisements. About 2% space goes for Sri Lankan Free Lancers and 10% to 7% for local News and sports. There is 9 patent dependence of the Press on capital list Advertisers.

Without the Advertisers, a paper fails. And when a paper's influence dwindles, the state fails. That's the vicious cycle, that smears the mere concept of a Free Press. It is a fiction.

John B. Kumarakulasinghe

Batticaloa. 10.6.77

MALAYSIA

Rubber Leads Record Year

Kuala Lumpur,

AN UPSURGE in rubber exports following the recovery in international markets last year led a strong export growth which boosted Malaysia's trade surplus to a

record ringgits 3,721m. Bank Negara has stated in a report.

Export receipts for 1976 rose 45.5 per cent to a record ringgits 13.4bn., pushing the growth in gross domestic product to 11.3 per cent. from 2.2 per cent. in 1975, the Central Bank said in its annual report. But it predicts slower expansion in 1977, with export growth easing to about 12 per cent, and current account surplus declining to around ringgit 135m. from 1,73bn. in 1976.

Export receipts from rubber rose by 53 per cent. in 1976 to ringgit 3,117m.; timber receipts rose by more than 110 per cent. to ringgit 1,175m; tin by 25-26 per cent. to ringgit 1,536m; petroleum by 105 per cent. to ringgit 1,716; while copper receipts rose to ringgit 75m. from 11.3m. The only major export to register a fall in receipts was palm oil which, following a sharp drop in prices, declined to ringgit 1,154m. from 1,310m. The marked growth in exports helped push net external reserves to ringgit 6,250m. up 2,320 from 1975, the bank said..

Meanwhile inflation continued to slow. The consumer price index rose 2.6 per cent compared with 4.5 per cent. in 1975 and 17 per cent. in 1974. Growth in 1977, though slower, will be sufficient to support a 9 per cent. rise in gross domestic product and will be more evenly spread than last year, the bank said. This reflects the Government's desire to consolidate economic gains, ensuring sustained growth while keeping inflation down to present levels, and creating a more favourable investment climate.

"The main impetus for growth in 1977 is expected to originate in the domestic sector, led by private investment expansion, continuing expansion of consumer spending, and rising Government expenditure," the report said.

"Export price rises are likely to slow, increasing by 3.5 per cent. for the year against 23 per cent in 1976".

Wong Sulon -Financial Times

Confidentially

• Tamil Bigotry

DID IT NOT COME AS A SURPRISE to many that the new weekly *The Independent* had to change its printers a fortnight ago? That from its inception it had been printed at the *Sutantiran Press* (Ceylon Newspapers Ltd.)? That this press belong to some of the big wigs of the Federal Party and prints the *Sutantiran*, the "unofficial organ" of the FP? That the *Sutantiran Press* also undertakes commercial printing whenever any customer chooses to place orders there? That *The Independent* was printed at this press, no doubt, because the sponsors of *The Independent* are Tamils who sympathise with the cause of the Tamils and are friendly with the FP and TULF circles? That everything seems to have gone on happily until one fine day, *The Independent* chose to publish a spirited outburst on the Tamil question by the maverick Tamil enthusiast, R. Wijaya Indra? That in this outburst, Wijaya Indra had sought to give certain "old" and current Tamil leaders a sermon on how they had failed to solve the Tamil question? That his emotional and rhetorical piece was entitled MY APPEAL AND ADVICE TO THE ENTIRE PEOPLE AND THE TAMIL VOTERS OF SRI LANKA—FOR THE 1977 GENERAL ELECTIONS? That this appeal was published in *The Independent*? That shortly after this was published, the *Sutantiran Press*, it would appear, made it clear (through a devious manoeuvre) that it would no longer print *The Independent*? That, though in the written communications there was no mention of Wijaya Indra's "appeal", it was made clear to *The Independent* that the *Sutantiran Press*, as the sole guardian, saviour and mentor of the Tamil race, would have nothing to do with a paper which published anything from the pen of Wijaya Indra? That the long and short of the matter was that the *Sutantiran*, at short notice, refused to print *The Independent*? That, fortunately, the people behind *The Independent* were able to find another printer so that the

paper appeared without a break or interruption? That *Tribune* noted the change in the printers and made the usual inquiries? That what was revealed was the astounding fact that *The Santantiran Press*, as a commercial printer, chose to impose a "ban" for political reasons on the freedom of newspaper, *The Independent*? That a printer has undoubtedly a right to intervene if any material is libellous, pornographic, obscene or otherwise objectionable?

That it is unbelievable that a printer should object to a paper which was being printed there on commercial terms because it published material that hurt the political susceptibilities of some FP sycophants? That a political party, its leaders and its followers should respect the right of every person to entertain and express views which are contrary to theirs? That it is a total repudiation of all fundamental rights to object to *The Independent* publishing views which the owners of a Commercial Press do not like? That, if this was their attitude (end policy) they should not have undertaken to print *The Independent* in the first instance? That it is known that an FP caucus and the *Sutantiran* do not tolerate any Tamil having views which are contrary to what they have ordained as the "Tamil view"? That this kind of sole exclusive monopoly of political *diktats* which the FP caucus has sought to enforce on the Tamil people is what has kept the Tamils dis-united? That it is this kind of attitude that has already brought the TULF (especially in the post-SJV era) to the brink of a breakup? That, SJV, in his last years, had tried to bring all Tamils together? That in doing this he had reversed the earlier diehard FP line that all Tamils had to accept as gospel all that the FP ordained? That SJV was able to bring the TC and CWC into one fold because the FP was willing to give-and-take on matters of importance in policy and strategy? That even before the memory of SJV has faded, the old hardline diehard attitude of outcasting all those who differed from the line of a dominant caucus in the FP has surfaced in a big way? That one of the first symptoms of this kind of political bigotry is the attitude adopted towards *The Independent*?

That this hardline approach has already brought fissures into the TULF which will be reflected in the results of the forthcoming elections? That the *Sutantiran* and the hardline FP caucus must realise that it cannot ask for freedom and fundamental rights for the "Tamil nation" (if there is one) if it is not prepared to accord the same human rights to individual Tamils who may have views which differ from the views of the FP caucus? That it would be the height of political arrogance to ask for fundamental rights for the Tamils to be enshrined in the Constitution of Sri Lanka if the FP caucus is not willing to accord the same rights to individual Tamils? That many Tamils would dread the establishment of a separate Tamil state if a dominant (Sanjay-like) caucus in the FP insisted on imposing its peculiar and diehard views on all Tamils? That even the Pope has now ceased to extort loyalty of this kind from the believers of the Catholic Church? That at a time when there has been a proliferation of new and free thinking in the Catholic Church, it is surprising that the FP caucus should seek to decide as to who is a "Tamil" and who is not? That according to the gospel of this FP caucus it would appear that all those who do not agree with its inhibited views are not "Tamils"? That many Independent candidates have rightly protested against the thuggery, stone-throwing and other manifestations against free speech and free elections displayed by supporters of the FP and the TULF in the Jaffna area? That it is easy to assert that those out of step with the "majority" have no place in society? That if this dictum is upheld then the Tamils must accept the majority rule of the Sinhalese without question? That if the Tamils want democratic rights they must concede rights of free speech and action to minorities (political, religious, caste, etc) within the Tamil community (or nation)? That elsewhere in this issue the *Tribune* has published Wijaya Indra's piece—received a long time ago but kept out for lack of space—as a vindication of the right of free expression of a minority having unpopular views?



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